



[www.sussex-academic.com](http://www.sussex-academic.com)

# SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAQ AS FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

*Borders, Tribes and a History Shared*

JOSHUA YAPHE

---

Saudi Arabia and Iraq have a shared history, as both friends and enemies at one and the same time, and their growth as modern nation-states must be understood in that joint context. This book establishes a new narrative and timeline for bilateral relations between the two countries, while examining the work of other Arab and Western scholars, in order to excavate the biases underlying so much previous work on this topic. In doing so, it proposes a new way of looking at state formation and boundaries in the Middle East, by showing how the interactions of regional neighbors left an indelible imprint on the domestic politics of one another. .

The two different visions for managing the border that Saudi Arabia and Iraq developed in the 1920s generated mistrust on both sides, leading to a gradual process of estrangement that lasted through the 1950s and beyond. Ibn Saud made strenuous efforts to preserve the socio-economic ties that united the communities of southern Iraq with the Najd and, in turn, those efforts helped encourage a wave of Sunni Arab migrants from Iraq who helped build the Saudi state. Iraqi politicians and clerics sought to amplify their voice in national politics by rallying the public around the need to defend against Najdi Ikhwan raids; they hoped to pivot from the nationalist rhetoric of the 1920 Revolution, but in doing so they inadvertently contributed to a growing sectarian discourse. The two countries had a remarkable and long-lasting impact on one another, even as they drifted farther and farther apart through mutual fear and suspicion.

*Cover illustration:* Postcard, “Mesopotamia, A Street in Zobeir,” issued by the Army Y.M.C.A. of India, printed by the Times of India Bombay.

**Joshua Yaphe** is a senior analyst for the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), where he has focused on the Arabian Peninsula since 2009. He received his Ph.D. from American University in Washington, D.C.



[www.sussex-academic.com](http://www.sussex-academic.com)

# SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAQ AS FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

*Borders, Tribes and a History Shared*

JOSHUA YAPHE

---

Saudi Arabia and Iraq have a shared history, as both friends and enemies at one and the same time, and their growth as modern nation-states must be understood in that joint context. This book establishes a new narrative and timeline for bilateral relations between the two countries, while examining the work of other Arab and Western scholars, in order to excavate the biases underlying so much previous work on this topic. In doing so, it proposes a new way of looking at state formation and boundaries in the Middle East, by showing how the interactions of regional neighbors left an indelible imprint on the domestic politics of one another. .

The two different visions for managing the border that Saudi Arabia and Iraq developed in the 1920s generated mistrust on both sides, leading to a gradual process of estrangement that lasted through the 1950s and beyond. Ibn Saud made strenuous efforts to preserve the socio-economic ties that united the communities of southern Iraq with the Najd and, in turn, those efforts helped encourage a wave of Sunni Arab migrants from Iraq who helped build the Saudi state. Iraqi politicians and clerics sought to amplify their voice in national politics by rallying the public around the need to defend against Najdi Ikhwan raids; they hoped to pivot from the nationalist rhetoric of the 1920 Revolution, but in doing so they inadvertently contributed to a growing sectarian discourse. The two countries had a remarkable and long-lasting impact on one another, even as they drifted farther and farther apart through mutual fear and suspicion.

*Cover illustration:* Postcard, “Mesopotamia, A Street in Zobeir,” issued by the Army Y.M.C.A. of India, printed by the Times of India Bombay..

**Joshua Yaphé** is a senior analyst for the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), where he has focused on the Arabian Peninsula since 2009. He received his Ph.D. from American University in Washington, D.C.



# **Saudi Arabia and Iraq as Friends and Enemies**

Borders, Tribes and a History Shared



**Joshua Yaphe**

# Saudi Arabia and Iraq as Friends and Enemies

“Too often, contemporary Arab history is recounted as the tale of single states struggling against misshapen and artificial borders. This book uses a wealth of primary sources to build a novel dual biography of Iraq and Saudi Arabia as co-evolving siblings. It shows how borders were not just sites of competition but also cooperation at the state and societal levels. It will surely change how we think about borders and state formation in the Middle East.”

Ariel I. Ahram, author of *War and Conflict in the Middle East and North Africa and Break all the Borders: Separatism and the Reshaping of the Middle East*

“This is an important missing link in the history of the Gulf region. Using British, Iraqi and Saudi original source materials, it explains how a complex Najdi identity – political, social, economic and religious – clashed with British imperial, Hashemite, and Iraqi elite interests. It answers the question of why Saudi Arabia has been a relatively stable state and Iraq a fractured one. The most stunning achievement is the integration of the sources and complex set of events into a coherent, readable narrative that illuminates the period.”

Roby Barrett, author of *The Greater Middle East and the Cold War: U.S. Foreign Policy under Eisenhower and Kennedy, and The Gulf and the Struggle for Hegemony: Arabs, Iranians, and the West in Conflict*

“This ground-breaking research is more than just a study of Saudi-Iraqi relations, as important as that is for the understanding of current affairs. This research demonstrates that today’s multiple disputes and conflicts in the Middle East trace their roots to how states influenced each other’s trajectory, in their bilateral relations as well as their regional and domestic policies. It is a must-read both for those with a keen interest in the Middle East and those grappling to understand the region’s confusing politics.”

James M. Dorsey, author of *Comparative Political Transitions between Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, and The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer*

“This book – clear and easy to read – breaks new ground. For forty years, the frontier between Iraq and Saudi Arabia was one of the major concerns of the leaders of both governments, and here we now have an account of the friction and diplomacy between the two, which throws light on the personalities involved and how they worked to resolve the issue. It’s a world away from modern Arabia, but here one enters the mindset of the people who created that world in the last century.”

Michael Field, author of *The Merchants: The Big Business Families of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, and the Arabian Ruling Family Trees and Government Charts*

“This book fills critical gaps. It provides invaluable insights into how the governments of Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Great Britain, and the peoples who lived in the border regions, negotiated the post-WWI/post-Ottoman political order and made critical choices that continue to shape both nations to this day. It discusses how the borders impacted the daily lives and politics of people living in communities situated hundreds of miles from the frontier. Equally importantly, it shows how the question of the border and the border populations shaped both nations’ political development in ways that have long been overlooked.”

Sean Foley, author of *Changing Saudi Arabia: Art, Culture & Society in the Kingdom, and The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil and Islam*

“The scholarship is superlative. The author has canvassed original documents and relied on Saudi and Iraqi memoirs to provide the reader with a reliable narrative. Thorough, and based on original documents, this genuine contribution to scholarship will become the standard-bearer for all research efforts that delve on ties between the two societies.”

Joseph A. Kéchichian, author of *Legal and Political Reforms in Sa'udi Arabia, and Power and Succession in Arab Monarchies: A Reference Guide*

“The relationship between the two dominant Arab states in the Gulf remains as important today as it did a century before, when a new international order first emerged. Drawing upon unpublished British and Arab primary sources,

this book sheds light on the contentious and nuanced relationship between Riyadh and Baghdad, as leaders struggled to craft new orders while addressing unsettled claims. This text fills a lacuna in the academic literature, which anyone hoping to possess an understanding of the region would do well to master.”

Jeffrey R. Macris, author of *The Politics and Security of the Gulf: Anglo-American Hegemony and the Shaping of a Region*, and Deputy Director of the U.S. Naval Academy’s Stockdale Center

“Relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, long fraught with mistrust and mutual fear, are often understood in terms of competition between a oncerevolutionary republic and a conservative monarchy. This meticulous and provocative study challenges conventional wisdom, interweaving Iraqi–Saudi diplomacy with domestic politics, demonstrating how the relationship left lasting marks on political discourse and sectarian and nationalist sentiments in each country.”

David Siddhartha Patel, Senior Fellow at the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University

The views and opinions herein are solely those of the author and do not represent the U.S. Government.

# **Saudi Arabia and Iraq as Friends and Enemies**

Borders, Tribes and a History Shared

**Joshua Yaphe**



*Brighton • Chicago • Toronto*

Copyright © Joshua Yaphe, 2022.

Published in the Sussex Academic e-Library, 2022.

SUSSEX ACADEMIC PRESS  
PO Box 139, Eastbourne BN24 9BP, UK

Ebook editions distributed worldwide by  
Independent Publishers Group (IPG)  
814 N. Franklin Street  
Chicago, IL 60610, USA

ISBN 9781789761511 (Hardcover)  
ISBN 9781782847663 (Epub)  
ISBN 9781782847663 (Kindle)  
ISBN 9781782847663 (Pdf)

All rights reserved. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purposes of criticism and review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*  
A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

This e-book text has been prepared for electronic viewing. Some features, including tables and figures, might not display as in the print version, due to electronic conversion limitations and/or copyright strictures.

## Contents

*Preface*

*Illustration Acknowledgments*

*The Maps*

## **Introduction**

- History and Historiography
- Boundaries and Borderlands
- Defining the Najd
- Arab Nationalism and Pan-Arabism
- Drawing the Border
- Translations and Sources

## **1**

### **DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS**

- The Pace of Diplomacy
- Points of Contention
- The Saudi Approach to Diplomacy
- Summary

## **2**

### **SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE**

- Force Structures and Administration
- From Tactics to Strategy
- Reassessing the Role of the Ikhwan
- Summary

## **3**

### **SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY**

- Life among the Tribes
- Life among the Townspeople
- Reconsidering Identity and Affiliation
- Politics along the Border
- Summary

## 4

### POLITICS AND NATIONALISM

Iraqi Shi'a and the Najd

Public Opinion and Populism

Friends of the Kingdom

Nationalism and Identity after the 1920 Revolution

The Early Formation of Sectarian Politics

Summary

### Conclusion

Continuity and Change

Shared Narratives

Multiple Viewpoints

*Notes*

*Bibliography*

*Index*

## Preface

There are many people without whom this book would not have been possible. Joseph Kéchichian, Mouayad al-Windawi, Max Paul Friedman, Roby Barrett, Sean Foley, Saud al-Sarhan and other eminent scholars who shared their wisdom and encouraged me along the way. I will be forever grateful for their kindness and generosity, though of course they bear no responsibility for any faults or shortcomings in this work. And I have also been blessed to be part of a network of experts in the field of Middle East

studies, people whom I deeply respect and admire for their perseverance, patience and dedication. Naming them all would require a book of its own, and what's more, most of them are quite humble and unassuming individuals who would probably prefer to stay out of the spotlight. That is as it should be, because their ideas and insights are the real contributions to the field. Yet though I cherish their scholarly contributions, the most rewarding part of my job these past two decades has been getting to know them as individuals, people who carry inside them ambitions and frustrations, hopes and fears, friendships and rivalries.

Above all, there is one Middle East expert to whom I owe everything, and this book would not be complete without mention of her . . . Dr. Judith Yaphe. I asked her if she would write the preface, and explain for the readers what it means to be an expert. She is about to become a grandmother for the first time and I wanted her to share some of her thoughts about a life spent in Middle East studies with her new granddaughter. We talked about it for a long time, but she repeatedly insisted that I take the pen. In doing so, I hope I can convey just a little of all that she taught me over the years. So, what is an expert?

The most obvious answer in Arabic would be *khabīr*, but among ordinary people in the Gulf *khabīr* carries the connotation of *mukhābarāt* or *istakhbarāt* (intelligence services). The next option is *mutakhaṣṣuṣ* and it is nominally a good equivalent, but in reality it conveys nothing to the Arab listener, who has trouble understanding what kind of technical specialty the word is meant to convey. Contrary to what you might expect, the word *muḥallil* (analyst) is often fine. People in the Gulf, however, will usually associate it with *mustishār* (consultant), a profession that is of little interest to anyone outside the world of high finance and business. After many years of visiting the Gulf, I have been told repeatedly by my Arab friends and associates that the word best suited to express the role of an expert in Middle Eastern affairs is ironically the same word that carries the most overtly imperialist connotations – *mustashriq* (Orientalist). They see no shame in the idea of a foreigner showing up in their midst to learn more about their culture. In fact, they attribute a certain amount of honor to a *khawāja* who cares enough about local history and culture to spend years trying to understand and appreciate their traditions.

That would also seem at first glance to be what distinguishes an *expert* from a *specialist* in the English language – the respect that accrues to someone who spends decades devoted to a single area of study. It is a pursuit of knowledge that is not limited to academia, but rather can be found in all walks of life wherever individuals dedicate themselves to perfecting a certain art or skill to the best of their abilities. Therefore, expertise cannot be taught. Anyone at the start of their career who aims for expertise must first have the desire to be an expert. No amount of training or resources can make someone want that; it has to come from within. And no standardized metrics, such as years spent learning a language or living in the region, can quantify or prove that passion for learning.

Consider what it means for a person who feels such passion and commitment to a calling, so much so that they cannot separate their own identity from their job. That presents certain risks, though not in the way one might expect, because the motivation is never one of greed or vanity, merely knowledge. Yet the desire to know and truly understand can become a mirage in the desert, leading the wanderer into obscure paths with uncertain rewards, to the point where the person is either too willing to cut corners on proper procedure for the sake of the truth or too eager to adopt a level of uncompromising standard that isolates them from their peers. The problem is that the destination might be El Dorado, a mythical city of gold at the end of the earth whose only real truth lies in its isolation and disillusionment. “Behind the sheltering sky is a vast dark universe, and we’re just so small . . .” Paul Bowles could write that because he had lived it. It’s probably hard to imagine how personal it can all become when starting out on a journey, but quite another thing altogether at the end of a career. And besides, where to go from there?

I have never been one to call myself an expert. In fact, I have always preferred to simply say that I work on Arabian Peninsula affairs. My mother spent her entire forty years of government service as an expert on the Gulf. Her advisor in graduate school, C. Ernest Dawn, was a Levant expert. He had stacks of books of first-hand accounts from Iraq waiting to be translated, and so he encouraged her to give them a try. She applied for academic jobs after finishing her dissertation, but the U.S. Government turned out to be one of the few employers interested in hiring young post-doctoral researchers with expertise in obscure parts of the world. When I started my own career,

she had already left her government post to begin teaching, publishing and traveling around the world to meet with her own network of contacts. Though “contacts” really isn’t the right word, since the first thing I learned from her was that it is important to always treat people as friends. These experts all had strong opinions, and sometimes their competitive spirit could get the better of them, but she insisted that we must always remember that the people we meet are just as human as we are. I will be forever grateful that I had a chance to meet many of her contacts and friends, because at least for some of them, all that will be left of their incredible knowledge when they retire will be the few words they put down in writing. To get to know them, and to see firsthand how they reasoned and debated – often on the spot with no preparation – was priceless.

To be clear, my mother did not use her connections to help me get my start in my chosen career. She believed that I had to earn the respect of others just as all the experts had done at some point in their lives. What my mother gave me instead was her best advice. Analysis should never be a simple description of the known facts, even if some basic scene-setting is necessary – it must always explore second and third-order effects, lay out the warning signs or red flags, and point toward the most likely future outcome. A briefing or presentation should always take the audience into account – it must not only address events taking place in the region, but also the ways that media outlets and foreign governments try to influence the debate in Washington. It’s better to avoid prescriptive policy recommendations – decision-makers are usually far more steeped in the policy debate than you are and privy to much more information. A well thought-out argument will speak for itself – other people can use procedural rules and bureaucratic ploys to make their voices heard louder, but ultimately those are tools of the weak. The region is prone to conspiracy theories, which can be attractive at times, but often it’s best to think in simple terms about the ways that conflicts play out in society – ruling elites generally prefer to kill, co-opt or convert.

The career of a Middle East expert is not entirely the same as it was in her day. Social media can inform anyone who cares about the latest situation on the ground and the innermost thoughts of people in the most faraway places on earth. Online translation tools permit users to instantly enter into a foreign world that the language barrier would have never previously

allowed. Resident positions at some think tanks are granted not only on the basis of regional knowledge, but sometimes also for the individual's ability to fundraise. The growth of private intelligence companies is creating new career paths for hundreds or thousands of young graduates, giving them access to data analysis platforms that place enormous amounts of information at their fingertips. I personally know of at least two private sector start-ups attempting to use Artificial Intelligence to replicate Middle East analysis by using computer learning to forecast trends in the region. Someday there may be no living human experts as computers put all of us out of our jobs.

That is not to say that expertise no longer exists, or that experts will cease to be. Certain institutions will always value having a knowledgeable hand around whom they can rely upon for specialized advice and connections. Trust the digital world, but verify. And there will always be individuals like my mother who dedicate their lives to carrying out impartial, non-biased analysis with clinical precision, honesty and integrity, whether in academia or public service or other pursuits. Rather, this is to say that the honor and respect once associated with expertise is fading away. Because access to information in the digital age has made everyone an expert, even as that access has at the same time reduced the overall value that we place on expertise in the marketplace of Middle Eastern studies.

My original intention was to go to the Riyadh International Book Fair (*ma'rid al-Riyād al-dawlī lil-kitāb*), where this year's special theme was Iraq, and write the preface there about the timeliness and relevance of this book. The last day of the Fair, October 10, happened to coincide with parliamentary elections in Iraq. I needed to speak to a prominent Saudi publisher who was considering an Arabic translation of my manuscript. At the time, writing this preface seemed so easy. A month later and a dozen conversations with my Mom, and now I'm not so sure. Perhaps each generation simply improves on the last, thanks to new technology and resources, and this generation of computer-assisted learning will lead to an even better generation of machine-integrated analysis. "Expertise" might be little more than hagiography. Perhaps we mythologize our profession's past in the hope that the honor and respect we accord our predecessors will accrue to us.

Even if that were true, the pursuit of knowledge doesn't have to be selfish or futile. Some of the greatest experts devote themselves to the common good, and we are doing a disservice to their careers if we do not account for their public commitment. Maybe that commitment will justify the need to retain experts even after much of their work has been replaced by algorithms. Books will still have to be written, so that future generations can find some useful bits of information to help them in their own quest for understanding – even excruciatingly detailed accounts of obscure conferences and treaties that at first glance bear no relevance for the problems of today or tomorrow. And as for the rest of it all, perhaps for those of us who choose to pursue a career in Middle East studies it will be enough to enjoy the time we get to spend with friends and family.

## Illustration Acknowledgments

The author and publisher gratefully acknowledge the following for permission to reproduce copyright material. Every attempt has been made to identify the copyright owners for these works and to obtain permission to publish them. The publishers apologize for any errors or omissions in the list below and would be grateful to be notified of any corrections that should be incorporated in the next edition or reprint of this book.

Captions to the maps on pages xvi–xx are detailed below; captions to the illustrations (placed after page 98) are in situ with the pictures.

### Maps

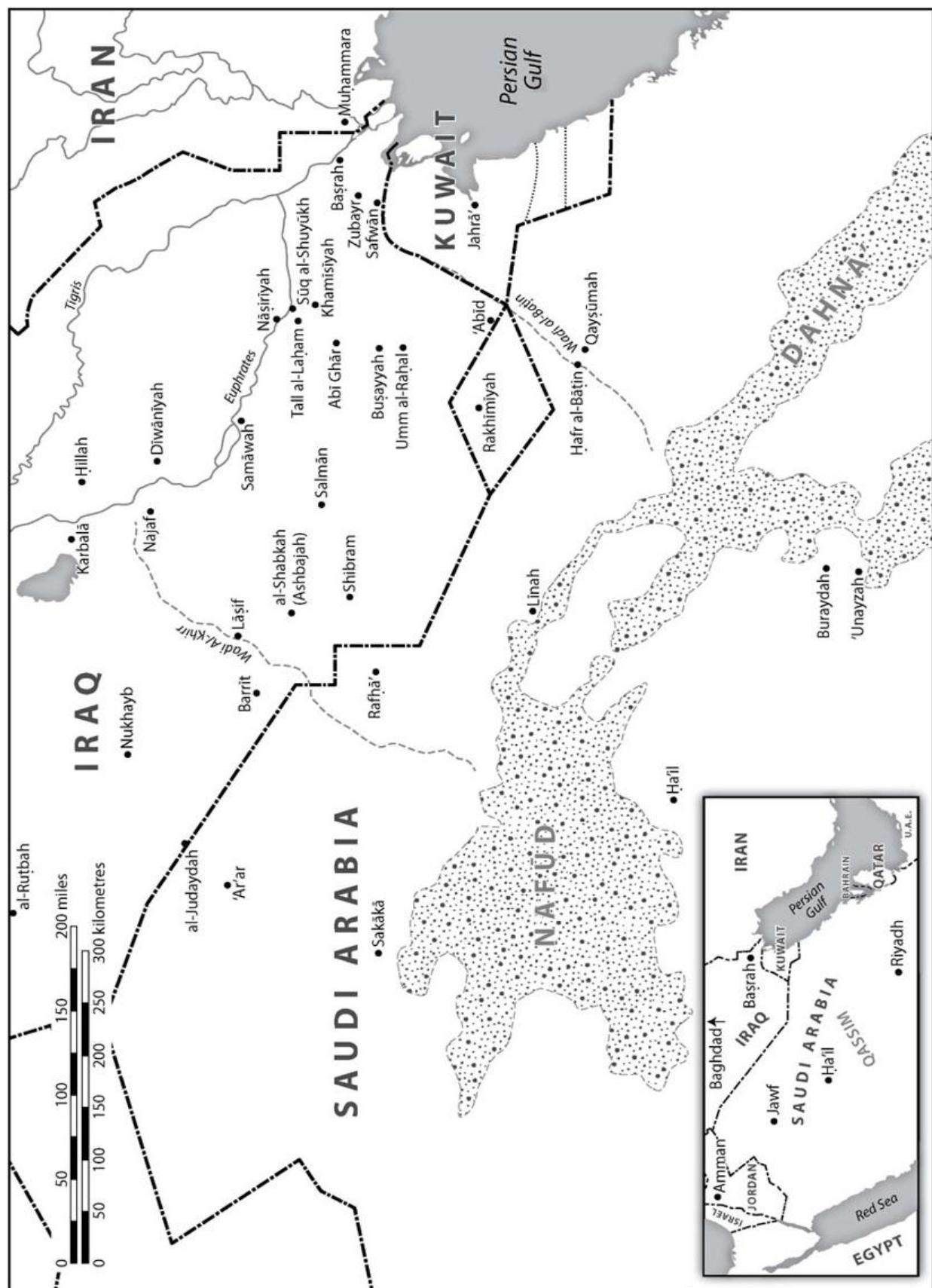
- 1 Map of the borderlands with selected locations in 1922, and inset map of border in 2022 in relation to major population centers in the region. Outline based on “Map of Arabia” from G.S.G.S. 2957, in HMG Naval Intelligence Division, *Western Arabia and the Red Sea*, Geographical Handbook Series (Oxford: University Press, 1946). (PAGE xvi)
- 2 The Iraqi police created a series of access roads extending into the southern desert and guesthouses with modest public services. The purpose was to facilitate police movement and exert greater influence over the tribes. This map shows the southern desert from the perspective of the Iraqi police around 1940. Reproduced with permission of the al-Rawi family. (PAGE xvii)
- 3 Sir Percy Cox drew the border using a map that contained numerous mistakes regarding places and names, and that map was subsequently misplaced. In this copy, red has been used to label those places granted to Iraq and blue for Najd, black for the line proposed by Cox in April 1922 and yellow for the Neutral Zone compromise of November 1922. Royal Geographical Society (RGS) on behalf of the General Staff of the War Office in 1917 (Asia 1:1,000,000, Basra, North H-38, “Geographical Section, General Staff, No 2555”). (PAGES xviii–xix)
- 4 Many of the key Najdi trading outposts were positioned along the railway from Başrah to Nāṣirīyah. The railway was effectively the only secure position from which British and Iraqi forces could reasonably guarantee the safety of the tribes during the fiercely competitive grazing season. RGS, Asia 1:1,000,000 (Basra, North H-38, 1917). (PAGE xx)

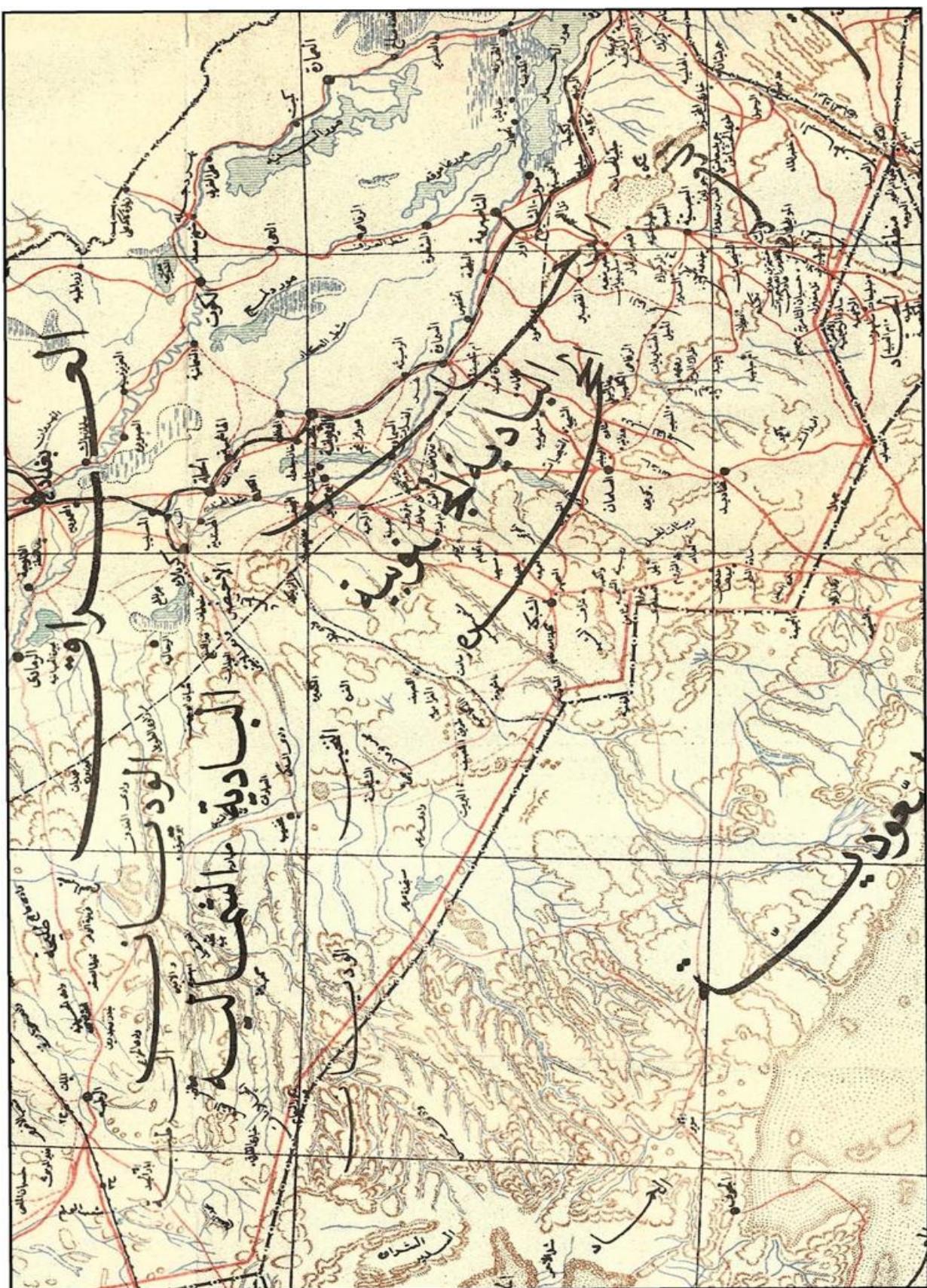
## Illustrations

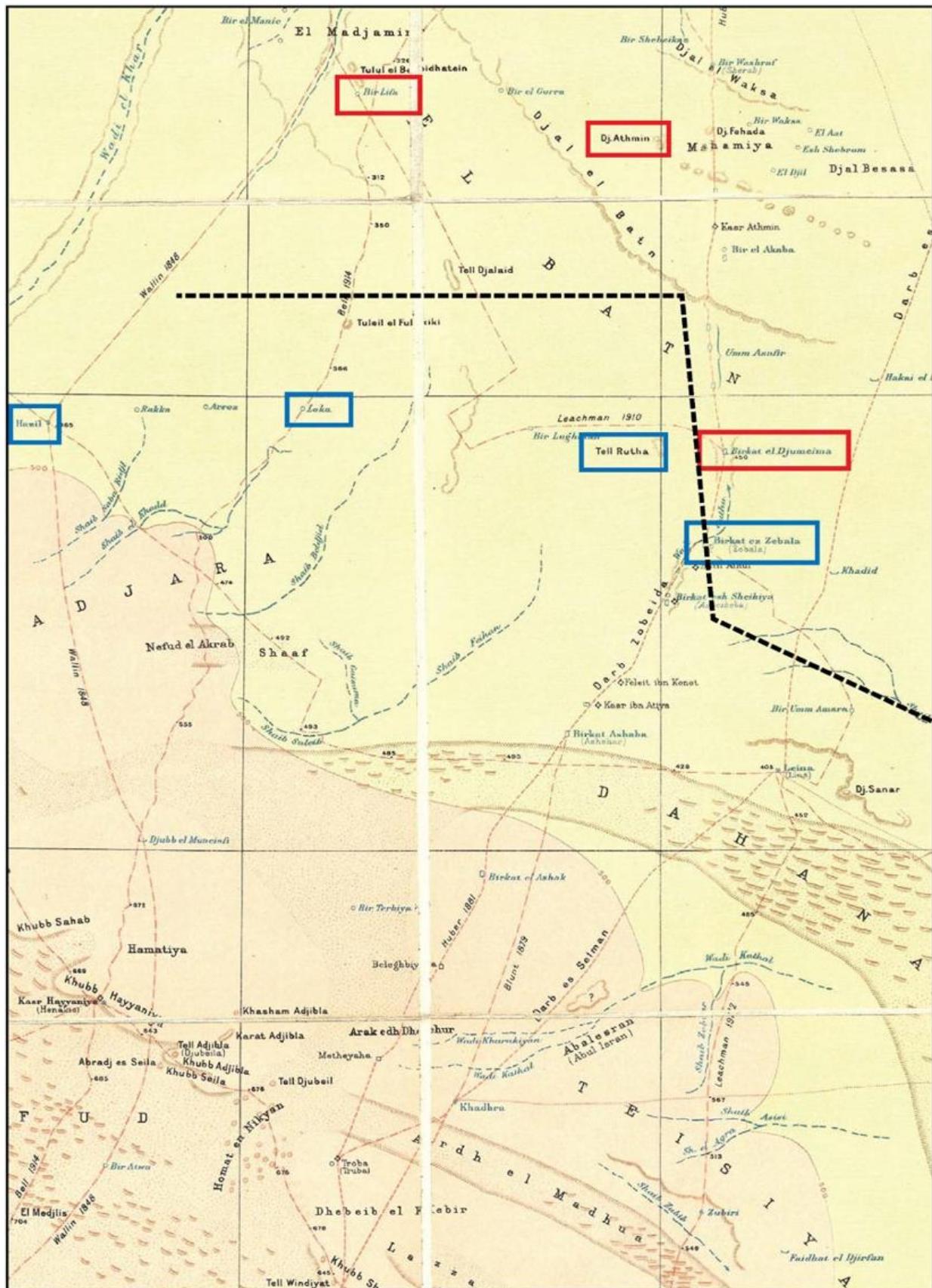
- 1 Postcard, “No. 47: Zobeir market place,” issued by the Times Press Bombay.
- 2 Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University.
- 3 Crossroads of Civilization Museum (CCM), Documentation Center (DC), Special Saudi Files (SSF), document 104, “Number 1/1/16, Saudi Legation in Baghdad to the Iraqi Royal Court” (December 21, 1935).
- 4 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 90, “Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbors” (1932).

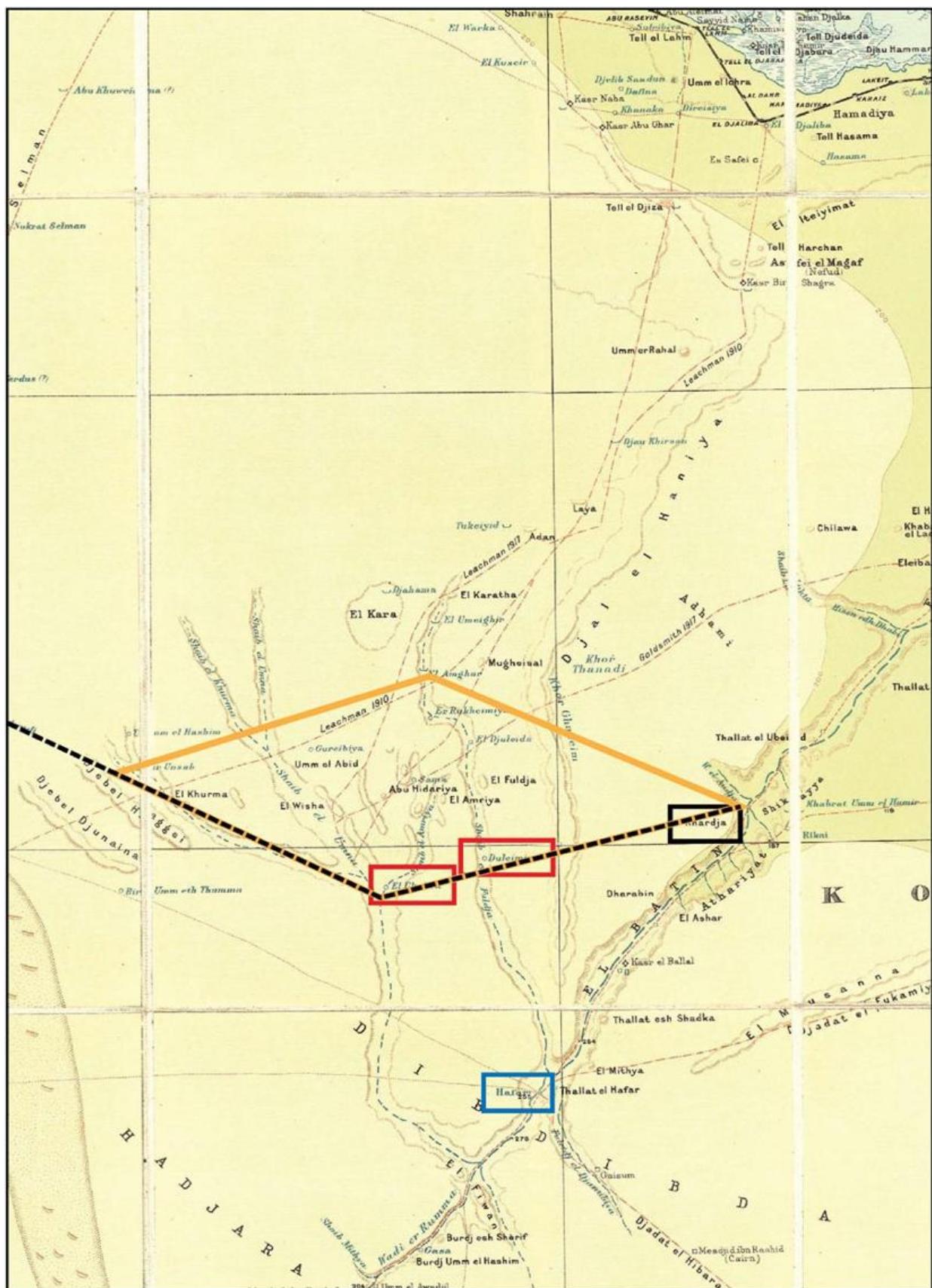
- 5 “Ibn Saud and King Faisal together together onboard the HMS *Lupin*.”  
© ullstein bild Dtl. / Getty Images. [www.gettyimages.co.uk](http://www.gettyimages.co.uk). Reproduced with permission.
- 6 Private collection of Omar Salem al-Damlouji; reproduced with his permission.
- 7 Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 3rd ed. (Baghdad: 1972), 510. Reproduced with permission of the al-Rawi family.
- 8 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 508. Reproduced with permission of the al-Rawi family.
- 9 Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University.
- 10 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 252. Reproduced with permission of the al-Rawi family.
- 11 ‘Abd al-Āl Wahīd ‘Abbūd al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt al-Wahhābīyah ‘alá al-‘Irāq fī sanawāt al-intidāb al-Brītānī 1920–1932: Dirāsah tārīkhīyah” [Wahhabi raids on Iraq in the years of the British Mandate, 1920–1932: An historical study], (Ph.D. diss., University of Kufa, 2008), 71. Reproduced with the permission of the author.
- 12 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 203, from IRMI 37/3, G/77, “Capt. Glubb, Salman Telegram to Akforce, April 7, 1928,” 32.
- 13 U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Maryland. No. 59-G-243-VS-3500-1-57 (left) and 59-N-VS-611-57 (right).
- 14 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 202, from IRMI 3713, no. 6177, “Capt Glubb, Busaiyah, Telegram to AKforce” (April 7, 1928), 30.
- 15 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 3. Reproduced with permission of the al-Rawi family.
- 16 British Library (BL), IOR/R/15/1/584, fol. 130, “Rough sketch showing autumn, winter + spring migrations of lower Euphrates sheep, donkey + camel tribes,” Qatar Digital Library (QDL).
- 17 Postcard, “Mesopotamia, A Street in Zobeir,” issued by the Army Y.M.C.A. of India, printed by the Times of India Bombay.
- 18 Postcard, “Holy shrines of Zubair near Basrah,” J.S. Hoory (Baghdad), n.d.
- 19 Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University.

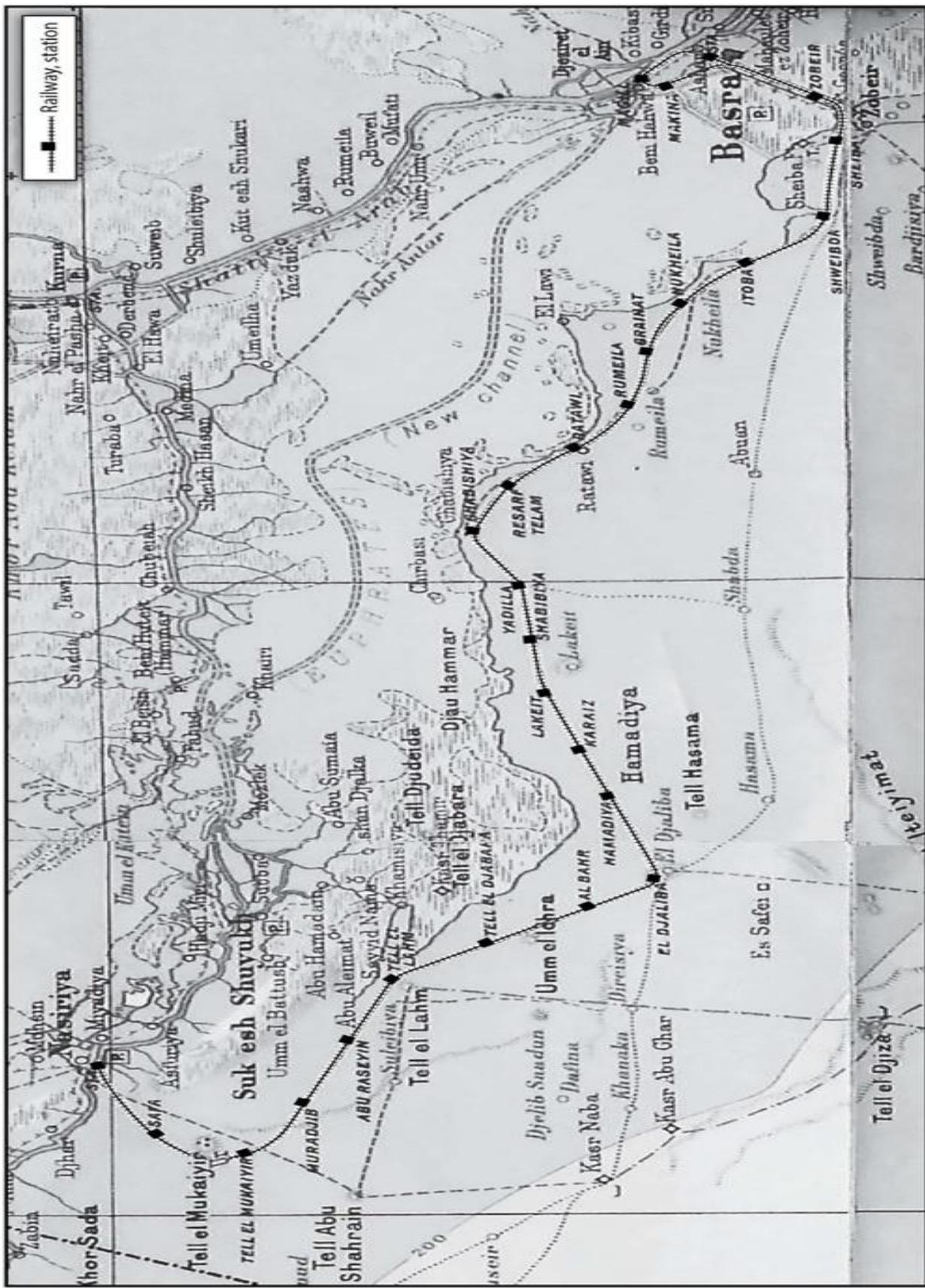
- 20 Left: Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University; Right: ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *al-‘Irāq fī dawrī al-ihtilāl wa-al-intidāb* [Iraq in the period of independence and the mandate], 2 vols. (Syria: Matba‘at al-‘Irfān, 1935), 195.
- 21 Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University.
- 22 Left: al-Ḥasanī, *al-‘Irāq fī dūrī*, opposite page 168; Right: Muḥammad Mahdi al-Baṣīr, ca. 1930.
- 23 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” attachment no. 5 (January 25, 1928). Reproduced with permission of Dr. al-‘Issāwī.
- 24 Ayatollah Mahdī al-Khāliṣī, ca. 1921.
- 25 NARA, College Park, Maryland. No. 59-G-188-VS-2216-57.
- 26 From right to left: “Pilgrimage Occasion,” 35 fils, November 1978, SG 1359; “Pilgrimage,” 25 fils, October 1979, SG 1403; and “Birthday of the Prophet Mohammed,” 50 fils, December 1982, SG 1571.











To Rachel

# INTRODUCTION

At a general meeting of the conference, Sir Percy took a red pencil and very carefully drew in on the map of Arabia a boundary line from the Persian Gulf to Jabal ‘Anaizan, close to the Transjordan frontier. This gave Iraq a large area of the territory claimed by Najd. Obviously to placate Ibn Sa’ud, he ruthlessly deprived Kuwait of nearly two-thirds of her territory and gave it to Najd . . . At about nine o’clock that evening there was an amazing sequel. Ibn Sa’ud asked to see Sir Percy alone. Sir Percy took me with him. Ibn Sa’ud was by himself, standing in the centre of his great reception tent. He seemed terribly upset. “My friend”, he moaned, “you have deprived me of half my kingdom. Better take it all and let me go into retirement.” Still standing, this great strong man, magnificent in his grief, suddenly burst out into sobs. Deeply disturbed, Sir Percy seized his hand and began to weep also. Tears were rolling down his cheeks. No one but the three of us was present, and I relate exactly what I saw.<sup>1</sup>

History is a way of thinking about life and the universe, an entire mode of consciousness, which is inherently incomplete, impossible to measure or systematize, and whose ultimate ironic objective is an endless quest for a greater understanding of humankind through memorial and remembrance.<sup>2</sup> That is because the past cannot exist in and of itself as a sealed artifact, fixed in place for all time under the scientific gaze of experts and technicians, but rather it must constantly form part of a reciprocal interaction with the present, as each new generation seeks to find its bearings and face the challenges of the future.<sup>3</sup> It has been one hundred years since the first diplomatic exchange between the Saudi and Iraqi Governments, and today it is commonplace to speak of the many growing ties between them, including the re-opening of border crossings and proposals for an electricity grid interconnection. Yet just five years ago, the relationship would have been defined by Saudi support for unifying the Iraqi Sunni community and

encouraging their participation in elections. Fifteen years ago, the relationship would have been defined by the failed attempts of U.S. and Coalition planners to re-integrate Iraq with its Sunni and Arab neighbors and limit Iran's influence. Thirty years ago, the relationship would have been defined by well over 100,000 refugees from the 1990–91 Gulf War temporarily housed in Rafhā' and nearby villages, some being stateless residents of Kuwait fleeing Saddam Hussein's invasion and others being Iraqi citizens scared at retaliation for their uprising against Saddam's regime. A man in his 40s from Buraydah can remember all of those events, but for him the relationship might be defined instead by memories of meeting his Iraqi cousins from Sūq al-Shuyūkh at a family reunion in Riyadh and hearing their strange but familiar dialect.

All of these images of the bilateral relationship are true and all can exist in our imagination at one and the same time, but each one makes different assumptions about the two countries and their motivations for engagement or disengagement. Each one reflects a different relationship between a living person and an imagined past, between an experience felt in the present moment and an expectation for the future, with the sum total of these images – impossible to tally and elusive to the touch – somehow comprising a history of these two countries.<sup>4</sup> The task of any historiography is not necessarily to determine a single logic standing outside of time as some sort of immutable truth that defines its subjects for all eternity, but rather to delve so deeply into events that we can unfold all the many different experiences of time that compete for our attention and our imagination.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, any history of these two countries must seek to explain our assumptions about the past and present, just as much as it seeks to explain the events themselves through causality and intention.

To say that current Saudi outreach to Iraq is a belated recognition of the imperative of re-integrating Iraq into the region following the 2003 invasion is to make the false assumption that Iraq and Saudi Arabia ever had normal relations, and such an assumption is more the result of a desire for a present that could have been rather than the past that was. The last few years have seen attempts by the Saudis and Iraqis to create the kinds of normal bilateral relations that never previously existed, or had only arisen in passing as rare exceptions to the rule. That new outreach is to be celebrated and congratulated, but it should also be recognized that for most of the last one

hundred years the two countries generally maintained cordial yet distant ties, occasionally descending into periods of frigidity and backbiting. It is hard to know where that narrative of mutual fear and suspicion begins or ends because there is no history of these two countries that tries to explore in an open and transparent manner the intense yet distant relationship they had toward one another.

Perhaps the most pivotal turning point in the relationship came in the story quoted above. This was the penultimate session of negotiations held at the port of ‘Uqayr on December 1, 1922 – a moment in time that in many ways defined Saudi–Iraqi relations almost to this day – and had it turned out differently it could have possibly resulted in a very different future for both countries. Lt. Col. Harold Richard Patrick Dickson was serving as translator for the British High Commissioner, Sir Percy Cox, who was pressing Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman al-Faisal Al Saud (Ibn Saud) to capitulate and agree to the new border between Najd and Iraq. Dickson’s detailed eyewitness account offers us what is perhaps the most perceptive and sympathetic portrait of the Saudi ruler. He uses a play on words to hint at Ibn Saud’s physical size of around 6 feet and 6 inches with a heavy build, while at the same time referring to his stature as a Great Man, in the tradition of other modern political leaders who had a decisive historical impact on their countries through force of will and character.<sup>6</sup> Ibn Saud’s exploits were renowned, due in no small part to his penchant for recounting them in theatrical detail in the presence of foreign journalists, diplomats and biographers.<sup>7</sup> However, this passage is a rare instance when we are allowed a glimpse of the Saudi monarch’s inner emotions, as this giant poured out his grief in tears.

It is far more common to read flattering depictions of Ibn Saud’s monumental courage and heroism, the epitome of which would have to be this U.S. State Department assessment in 1931: “There is little doubt that Ibn Saud is the most important factor in the Arab world today and by some observers he is considered the greatest Arab since Mohammed.”<sup>8</sup> Nonetheless, there are other recorded instances of Ibn Saud falling into tears. He cried the night his father ordered him to divorce his wife, Nūra al-Sabḥān, on the suspicion that she had poisoned her newly-wed husband.<sup>9</sup> He reportedly cried when he arrived at the battle of Turbah and witnessed the enormous destruction wrought by his religiously-motivated Ikhwan

warriors.<sup>10</sup> These stories presumably circulated for the purpose of humanizing the man, to demonstrate his deep and abiding love of family, and his concern for the fate of all Arabs and Muslims. That was not the case at ‘Uqayr, where his tears represented a loss of control over the situation, an inability to influence the negotiations, and perhaps a touch of fear for the future of the land and its people.

When negotiations started at ‘Uqayr, the Iraqis had made the extraordinary demand of a border that would encompass Ḥā'il, Medina, Yanbu‘, Qatīf and Hofūf.<sup>11</sup> Ibn Saud countered with a similarly maximalist position that the borders of Najd should extend as far as the bedouin roam, from Aleppo and the Orontes River to the right bank of the Euphrates and down to Baṣrah. Both sides having discarded these opening gambits, Ibn Saud then requested sovereignty over the tribes that had been subject to his forefathers, including the large tribal federations of Shammar, Dhafir and ‘Aniza, making legal arguments about their status under Ottoman rule and the British continuation of those Ottoman traditions during the war.<sup>12</sup> This came as an insult to the tribal leaders who had been brought to the conference by the British and Iraqi Governments in support of Iraqi territorial claims. The British compromise was the Neutral Zone, a patch of desert 7,044km square that Iraqi Minister of Labor and Transportation Sabīḥ Nish‘āt nicknamed the “baklava” for the way its diamond shape resembled a tasty treat.<sup>13</sup> As Ibn Saud’s friend and translator Ameen Rihani noted at the time, it was hardly a solution for anything: “. . . common ground for quarrel and strife. For who shall water his camels first, and who shall have the best pasture, but the strongest?”<sup>14</sup>

So Ibn Saud laid out a more nuanced proposal. He spoke of a flexible border in which all tribes could access their wells and pastures, arguing that the ownership of most wells was common knowledge and a committee of local experts would be consulted where there was doubt. The southernmost wells and pastures belonging to the Iraqi tribes would therefore have been Iraqi territory, even if they were physically located on the Najdi side of the border, and the Iraqi tribes could freely migrate to them in the winter season without need for a travel or residency visa. The same would hold for Saudi or Kuwaiti tribes with wells and pastures beyond their borders. It was not given any serious attention by the British or Iraqi negotiators: “At a private

meeting at which only [Cox], Ibn Sa'ud and I were present, [Cox] lost all patience over what only he called the childish attitude of Ibn Sa'ud in his tribal-boundary idea.”<sup>15</sup> These were two diametrically opposed concepts for security and governance, and the Iraqis won the day by backing the British state-centric concept of total sovereign control over people and territory.

In the end, the border imposed by the British became a barrier between communities on either side. Governments in Baghdad and Riyadh competed for influence and authority on the frontier, leading to mutual fear and misunderstandings that obstructed meaningful dialogue and cooperation, a hardening of political attitudes, and the emptying out of whole towns and villages through migration. There is no loud cataclysmic event to explain how such animosity could exist under the surface of outwardly cordial ties. Just a quiet meeting in a tent at ‘Uqayr, where one man overcome by emotion acknowledged the seemingly insurmountable challenges that lay ahead. The reasons why these two countries diverged, the importance of their bilateral relationship, and the incredible influence they had on one another have largely been forgotten over time. The story has been subsumed under layers of historical writings that bear the weight of false assumptions and prejudices, often inherited from the colonial powers themselves, and almost entirely divorced from their social, economic and political contexts. The truth is that the widening chasm that formed between the two countries was already present at the start.

## **History and Historiography**

Any bilateral relationship is rooted in the exchange of people and commerce, and shaped by defense and security threat perceptions, all of which give rise to diplomatic engagement and political debate. Accordingly, each of these issue areas will be dealt with in separate thematic chapters, as we consider the central question of how Saudi Arabia and Iraq could grow so distant through mutual fear and suspicion, yet at the same time manage to have such a strong influence on one another. There are naturally many answers to that question, as any bilateral relationship is inherently multi-faceted. The two sides had divergent, competing or incommensurate views in a range of areas, not necessarily based on any well-formulated or articulated concepts of

nationalist or religious ideology, but rather shaped in response to structural political and economic constraints. The Saudi Government faced one set of domestic pressures to preserve the socio-economic ties that linked the central Arabian region of the Najd with the tribes and towns to the north in Iraq, while the Iraqi Government faced a very different set of domestic pressures arising from civic and religious leaders seeking to use cross-border attacks from the Najd as a pretext for advancing their political agendas.

Despite these differences in their respective domestic situations, politics and policy-making in Iraq did not stand in isolation, but rather had direct and indirect consequences for Saudi Arabia, just as the actions taken by the Saudi Government and its affiliates had a reciprocal impact on Iraq. Not only were the foreign policies of these countries an outgrowth of their domestic politics, but more than that, the domestic politics of either country were deeply affected by interaction with the other. That implies an incredible amount of inter-dependence between the two countries, which is not at all self-evident in the literature. Saudi Arabia makes only fleeting appearances in histories of Iraq, and Iraq is given short shrift in histories of Saudi Arabia. While the theme of interdependence is common in Middle East studies, the notion that inter-actions among regional neighbors might come to shape and transform their domestic politics is not. Yet the issue of foreign policy shaping domestic politics lies below the surface throughout the region. Gamal Abdul Nasser was quite clear and consistent in the propaganda he disseminated about the Free Officers movement that the Revolution did not begin in Egypt in 1952, but rather on the frontlines in Palestine on May 16, 1948, and that military victory in Palestine to restore the pride of the Arab world could only be achieved after sweeping political change in Cairo.<sup>16</sup> A strong case can also be made that polarizing sectarian violence in Syria was partially an outgrowth of a chain of events in Lebanon, from the Palestinian training of Sunni extremists in the mid-1970s, to the attacks on regime targets culminating in the Aleppo Artillery School massacre, and the accompanying Syrian military intervention in the Lebanese civil war.<sup>17</sup>

Such a degree of mutual influence between Saudi Arabia and Iraq was due in part to the amorphous and evolving nature of the nationalisms that were emerging in both countries during the period of state formation in the late 1910s and early 1920s. While concepts of national identity existed, they were not yet so stable and fixed as they would later come to be, which

implied a more fluid sense of what it meant to be Iraqi or Najdi. Individuals and collectives could have overlapping or shifting identities, and they had a considerable amount of control over how to define those identities. Almost as a consequence, however, Najdis who sought to maintain their close ties of kinship and trade on both sides of the border were eventually forced to make hard choices about their citizenship and migration. Similarly, competing visions for national identity among political actors in Iraq opened up a space for public debate in which the role of Ibn Saud and his Ikhwan warriors became a defining wedge issue with sectarian overtones. In terms of the historiography of the period, we might consider the era of state formation in the 1920s and 30s as a conjuncture marking a transition between two large structural periods on the *longue durée* of social unconsciousness.<sup>18</sup> The peoples of the region were slowly becoming acclimatized to new modes of social interaction, organized around regime loyalty and state institutions in terms of a nation, and whether individuals were fully aware of it or not, such new patterns of society would soon become a part of their everyday lives.

Naturally, the ways in which communal and national identities were being transformed in Iraq and Saudi Arabia during that era were influenced by the unique nature of politics in Baghdad and in Riyadh, as well as the very different approaches the governments took toward exerting influence over their populations. In more subtle ways, however, identities in either country were also formed through cross-border interactions. Demonstrating that reciprocal influence will be a challenge on two levels. The first is in terms of establishing an inclusive narrative that shows the connections between the two countries during this formative period of their growth and development. The second is in terms of confronting the historiographical biases in the existing scholarly literature, much of which was written by Iraqi scholars heavily influenced by British colonial attitudes or Arab nationalist ideologies. In order to tackle these two separate, yet interlocking, sets of challenges, each chapter is divided into two halves – the first half laying out a historical narrative that demonstrates the intersections between the two countries, and the second half reconsidering the scholarly literature in light of that new shared historical narrative. The decision to place the historical narrative before the literature review has been made consciously, taking into careful consideration the many inaccuracies and contradictions in the secondary literature on the one hand, and on the other hand the need to

detach the historical narrative from the Arab and Iraqi nationalist views of many previous scholarly writings. What will emerge is a history that these two countries shared and a joint narrative that developed for both of them equally over time. We can test our understanding of that narrative against the assumptions and assertions of previous historians, but we should not hold that new narrative hostage to older accounts by mixing the two and thereby having to shadow-box against their time-worn assumptions.

Chapter 1 (“Diplomatic Relations”) will argue that the diplomatic disputes of the 1920s were never fully resolved, which resulted in a high level of mistrust that lasted for decades. Historical narratives that emphasize a gradual reconciliation between Ibn Saud and the Hashemites on the path to Arab unity ignore those diplomatic failures and what they can teach us about Saudi diplomacy. Chapter 2 (“Security and Governance”) will argue that competition between the British, Iraqi and Saudi Governments for access and influence among the tribes hindered their ability to develop cooperative relationships at the working-level. Historical narratives that privilege state control over the use of force minimize the ways that government competition inadvertently empowered local actors and thereby contributed to even greater insecurity along the border. Chapter 3 (“Society and the Economy”) will argue that certain tribes and towns in Iraq had sizeable communities that affiliated with the Najd, and the Saudi Government made efforts to keep them linked to Najd for the sake of domestic social and economic stability. Historical narratives that assume religious motivations for Saudi outreach to the tribes in Iraq fail to account for many of the socio-economic concerns that led Ibn Saud to target specific segments of the population. Chapter 4 (“Politics and Nationalism”) will argue that deeply-entrenched fears of Wahhabi raids among the Iraqi public helped shape politics and policies in Baghdad, Najaf and Karbalā’. Historical narratives that stress a broad and inclusive Iraqi nationalism at the founding of the state miss the ways in which Saudi Arabia became a focal point for Iraqi political discourse and the rise of sectarian entrepreneurs. These are different narratives in a sense, representing different experiences of time by different participants in what were often overlapping or simultaneous events. To privilege one over another is to give voice to one perspective at the expense of others, which would not do justice either to Iraqis and Saudis then or now,

who themselves have been shaped in their worldview by all of these strands of history.

This is a tale not just of two families, the Al Saud and the Hashemites, but of two countries. It is a tale of diplomatic failures, security missteps, economic competition and cultural pride, involving politicians with years of military service, émigré advisors from other Arab lands, merchants maintaining lines of trade across multiple borders, and tribes seeking water and pasture for their flocks. These were two states struggling to exert their independence while building their institutions of governance according to two separate sets of rules and values. And what started as a fierce personal rivalry between Ibn Saud and Sharif Hussein in the mid-1910s quickly became irrelevant by the mid-1920s, overtaken by much larger events and concerns as these two governments and their border populations evolved and drifted in different directions. The difference in bureaucratic culture and decision-making processes between the two governments must be kept in mind throughout. We can only imagine how it felt for a Saudi official like Fouad Hamza to go to Baghdad and find Iraqi officials choreographing his meetings with cabinet ministers, or how it felt for a senior Iraqi official like Ali Jawdat al-‘Ayoubi to go to Riyadh and hope for sufficient face time with the King in order to accomplish his mission. It is in those divergences between the two countries and the different paths they took in the mid-1920s, not in the pale reflection of a family rivalry from the mid-1910s, that this story of bilateral relations takes place.

Nevertheless, previous historians have typically subordinated diplomacy, security, governance and trade to a master narrative of the personal rivalry between Ibn Saud and Iraqi King Faisal, the son of Sharif Hussein, in line with British diplomatic correspondence. As one Foreign Office report of 1930 succinctly opened:

Ibn Saud's relations with Iraq are complicated by many factors but none is more potent than this, that King Feisal is the most important representative of the Hashimite family of Sherifs of Mecca, hereditary enemies of the house of Saud, and the son and brother of the last two Hashimite Kings of the Hejaz, Hussein and Ali. The feud is exacerbated by frontier quarrels and by the feeling that Feisal, under the aegis of Great Britain, is the king of a comparatively rich country.<sup>19</sup>

This focus on family rivalry comes despite the fact that there is so little direct evidence of the inner thinking of the two kings beyond their rare official correspondence and statements they made to Western officials, which were as much intended to influence as to inform. The resulting storyline generally tells of: 1) Ibn Saud's rivalry with Sharif Hussein in the western Arabian region of the Hijaz and feelings of encroachment by the Hashemites on all sides; 2) King Faisal's attempts at retribution for his father's loss of the Hijaz, followed by his magnanimous acceptance of the reality on the ground; and 3) the ultimate rapprochement of the two onboard the HMS *Lupin* in 1930, paving the way for positive and friendly relations between the two states.

This is not to say that the traditional narrative is untrue. Competition certainly existed. Ibn Saud was a candidate for the position of king of Iraq in 1921 and upon learning that the British were backing Faisal bin Hussein, he wrote to British High Commissioner Sir Percy Cox to say "how impossible it will be for him to accept such a development; and that even if he did his people would never follow suit."<sup>20</sup> As Sir Gilbert Clayton recalled in 1925, Ibn Saud was quite explicit about his fears of encirclement by the Hashemites: "He had Faisal on one side and Abdullah on the other, both new creations fencing him in on either side and both hostile towards him."<sup>21</sup> But it is one thing for historians to make the claim that the personal rivalry overshadowed all other affairs, and quite another to explain precisely what that phrase means and what impact it has had, which is where the narrative begins to fray at the seams. 'Ali al-Wardī, surely one of the most eloquent and insightful of Iraqi historians, devoted an entire volume to the Al Saud–Hashemite rivalry: "This [book] includes extensive details about the struggle between al-Hussein bin Ali and Abdulaziz bin Saud . . . an existential struggle where each party believes that he has the only right, and that he is the hero against his enemy."<sup>22</sup> Yet even al-Wardī does not attempt to demonstrate the direct impact of the family rivalry on policy-making through documentary evidence of cause and effect. Rather, his strategy is to juxtapose incidents in the lives of Sharif Hussein and his sons with events in the life of Ibn Saud, relying on old tropes of territorial ambition and prestige to fill in the many gaps in our knowledge.

Is that enough to assess these rulers' inner motivations and feelings? Perhaps. Or perhaps not. So much of our understanding of Saudi–Iraqi

relations is tied to “Great Man” theory that it is hard to tell where the gaps in our knowledge are due to a lack of sources and where they are due to analytical bias. The epistemological problem is compounded by our poor understanding of the milieu in which these two rulers were raised, as Christine Moss Helms notes: “In order to understand the role of the Saudi family in the emergence of Saudi Arabia as a geopolitical entity, one must look not only at the policies of an individual man or family group, but beyond to see them as products of their culture and as innovators within it.”<sup>23</sup> Some general observations about Ibn Saud’s worldview do come across repeatedly and consistently in a range of stories that the reader will encounter throughout these chapters. 1) Ibn Saud sought to solidify his base of power, not just as a tribal leader, but also as an emerging ruler on the world stage; 2) he was concerned with tribal cohesion, whether they be tribes from the Najd, the Hijaz, Kuwait or Iraq; and 3) he cared above all about maintaining access to water for his people.

Regardless, any discussion of policy-making in Riyadh or Baghdad must also account for the populations and lands along the frontier to which they both laid claim, the social and economic ties that brought the two governments together in the early stages of state formation, and the political forces that pushed them apart shortly thereafter. If we take our reading of the period from the starting point of these broader trends and structural factors, then we will arrive at the following conclusions:

- (1) Iraqi–Saudi bilateral engagement in this period was marked by a failure to develop a shared understanding for each other’s political and policy concerns, in spite of good-faith efforts by the Hashemites and the Al Saud to resolve their personal disputes.

(2)  
The  
misu  
nder  
stan  
ding  
s  
~~~<sup>1</sup>

and  
mist  
rust  
gene  
rated  
in  
the  
1920

s  
persi  
sted  
thro  
ugh  
the  
1950

s  
and  
beyo  
nd,  
as  
both  
sides  
grad  
ually  
retre  
ated  
from  
activ  
e  
enga  
gem  
ent.

- (3) The actions of Ibn Saud and his associates along the border had unintended consequences in terms of shaping Iraqi politics, and

similar Iraqi efforts had unintended consequences for shaping Saudi Arabia.

The two countries had an unwritten influence upon one another at this formative moment in their respective histories, and that influence had repercussions almost until today. Accordingly, this book is not just a story about two states co-existing side by side, even if that is how they behaved towards one another at times. Rather, it is a shared history in which their actions and reactions had a mutual influence on each other's development.

## **Boundaries and Borderlands**

The border was only one element of a larger patchwork of relations between the two countries in this period (Map 1), and problems linked to the physical borderline were manifestations of deeper, underlying disagreements and divergences in approaches to governance and politics. Neither government launched military forces to seize territory and claim land from the other side. Rather, both sides disputed the very nature of the border itself – whether the free movement of people and goods should be allowed, what should be done with tribes claiming pastures or desiring a change of citizenship, whether security outposts would be permitted and under what conditions, and so forth. Ibn Saud wanted to preserve a community of tribes and townspeople living in southern Iraq that were connected to the Najd through long-standing socio-economic ties, while the Iraqis wanted a system of roads, police stations, public services, customs and passport inspections that could re-orient the populations in the southern provinces toward Baghdad (Map 2).

Consequently, a reassessment of roles and identities in Iraq and Saudi Arabia during the period of state formation took place on two separate levels in the first half of the twentieth century: 1) a widening gap between nomads (*badū*) and settled (*hadar*) populations, determined in part by governmental efforts to control the tribes and in part by changing economic and technological realities; 2) a sharpening of the distinction between what it meant to be a Najdi as opposed to an Iraqi, determined in part by political propaganda and in part by the growth of media and access to information. A similar process of colonial powers designing political borders and creating

new geopolitical realities, national identities and communal divisions, was playing out across the Middle East in the 1920s, 30s and 40s in Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Kuwait and Iran.<sup>24</sup>

The significance of the border should not be overstated in terms of leadership motivations and intentions, but it does appear as a signifier for a range of other problems in the bilateral relationship. That is true in terms of the diplomatic efforts employed to regulate it (Chapter 1), the security measures taken to protect it (Chapter 2), the cultures and societies spread out across it (Chapter 3) and the problems it generated for publics and politicians in the capitals (Chapter 4). After all, a border is not just a line on a map:

Frontiers mark the boundary between domestic politics and international relations – between internal order, maintained by police and the courts, and international order promoted through diplomacy and alliances. As the modern state has consolidated its hold on its territory and its inhabitants, the old concept of a frontier as a region in which the distant authority of one state faded into the distant authority of another has given way to a more sharply defined and defended boundary. The modern nation-state is defined partly by its international frontiers.<sup>25</sup>

Borders reinforce identities, separating the “native” from the “foreign,” and in that regard governments can use them to more closely align the public’s sense of national consciousness with loyalty to the state.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, political actors can even use the fear of security threats along the border or the hope of territorial expansion to mobilize the population. This is the intersection of nation-building and state-building. If the state only exists by virtue of a set of practices that must be constantly repeated, then borders are created as one such tool to help reproduce the state.<sup>27</sup> They are not permanent fixtures embedded in the minds of ethnic and religious groups from time immemorial, but rather they are constructed according to the needs and capabilities of socio-political elites at any given time. Competition for resources and prestige leads states to contest borders and lay down markers of power and control, and during a period of state formation this can have immediate benefits for elites in the capital and even notables in the provinces. However, it can also prevent states from acknowledging areas where the nature of the population or the terrain lend themselves to overlapping authority, identity and citizenship.

The ways that governments shape national narratives, in order to inculcate loyalty and a sense of shared interests among the public, are

themselves negotiated processes. Border populations may have their own identity that is more internally cohesive or closely linked to a neighboring country, manifesting in areas of daily life where the state is unable to articulate power.<sup>28</sup> It is important to recognize that state formation is not a straight-forward process of extending central government control over territory and populations from the capital to the borders, especially given that no state has total control and authority at all times. Rather, provincial populations in this region maintained their own traditions and networks of influence, often collaborating with the central government in mutually beneficial ways. Yet those provincial narratives and networks in the twentieth century were often subordinated or distorted according to a national narrative depicting central government conquest and control.<sup>29</sup> As Lois Beck notes of state formation in Persia under Mohammad Reza Shah: “Once state officials perceived that the many diverse tribal and ethnic groups of Iran were pacified and depoliticized, they began to develop programs to exploit the fragmented remnants of such groups as exotic, picturesque elements of the Iranian landscape for the benefit of elite, middle-class, and foreign consumption.”<sup>30</sup>

In practice, boundary formation is also a negotiated process, dependent on a wide range of political and security factors that can change over time. Much of the notion of hard boundaries came from Western Europe as a consequence of centuries of warfare, and as Malcolm Anderson notes, political, economic and cultural identities are often contested among governments and between states and their citizens.<sup>31</sup> We can see that malleability reflected in colonial debates about boundary formation. When British colonial authorities confronted the issue of designing borders for the rather mobile populations under their control, they experimented with different models, even if they generally settled for European-style frontiers after the war. The word *frontier* is apt in this context, because even if these borders were not entirely the result of military fronts in a European historical context, they were in a sense viewed as such by local and colonial officials who feared Saudi military expansion.<sup>32</sup> In January 1925, the British Government informed Ibn Saud that any “attempts to spread his influence” beyond Jawf would be met by a military response.<sup>33</sup>

In response to the existence of vast ungoverned spaces and frequently migrating tribes, the British adopted special laws and regulations in places like the Northwest Frontier between India and Afghanistan. Arnold Toynbee advocated a similarly flexible approach to drawing the boundaries of Iraq while serving at the Foreign Office during WWI.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, when serving as a political officer in Muntafiq province, Dickson believed he had only succeeded in maintaining the peace after convincing Percy Cox to let him adopt flexible tribal boundaries internally among districts of southern Iraq. From that experience, he concluded: “In my opinion a serious error was made at Ojair in 1922 when an arbitrary boundary of Western type was decided on between Iraq and Najd, which resulted ultimately in Bin Saud for the first time in History almost restricting the annual natural movements of Najd tribes towards the North.”<sup>35</sup>

The related concept of protection for refugees was also a Western import, originating with the appointment of the first High Commissioner for Refugees at the League of Nations in 1921 and motivated primarily by the desire to assist Russian and Armenian populations.<sup>36</sup> The Great Powers in the interwar years found it in their self-interest to temporarily aid these displaced populations, who were perceived to have a homeland or at least the right to one. In most of the literature on Saudi–Iraqi relations, the term refugee (*lāji’*) is uncommon outside of polemical debates held within the Iraqi parliament and press, while readers of the academic literature far more often encounter people who are displaced (*nāzih*) or expelled (*tarhīl*). This is not to deny the transformative experience of forced or involuntary migration, or downplay the interconnected nature of political, economic and social factors in motivating people to move, as Dawn Chatty has detailed in other parts of the region.<sup>37</sup> But it is to say that the concept of a refugee status was brought to Iraq by the British and applied to tribes like the Shammar Najd, based on British assumptions about their supposed political opposition to Ibn Saud and desire for religious freedom from Wahhabism.<sup>38</sup> The British held fast to the principle that tribes should not be compelled to return to Najd, and encouraged the Iraqi and Jordanian Governments to refuse extradition requests (even if the British themselves would violate that rule in forcing the Banī ‘Atṭīyah to cross the border and face punishment following the Ibn Rifada revolt in 1932).<sup>39</sup> But above all, such claims of refugee status served

British interests at the League of Nations by demonstrating Britain's care for the people living under its mandate authority.<sup>40</sup> Hence, the British responded to raids by Ibn Saud's Ikhwan warriors against these refugees, not by sending shipments of medical and food supplies, but rather by sending intelligence officers to monitor and report on their dire circumstances.<sup>41</sup>

Such claims may very well have represented the heart-felt sentiments of British officials and even some tribesmen, but they also served the interests of the Iraqi Royal Court in propagandizing against the Saudi Government, as the British mediator at the Kuwait conference noted: "I am afraid there is no doubt that this principle is here adopted by the Iraqi Government . . . as a cloak to entice away the subjects of the Sultan of Nejd . . . "<sup>42</sup> The Najdi Government never subscribed to the concept of tribal "refugees," with Hafiz Wahba in particular trying to articulate the idea that tribes do not have a concept of high politics and there are no ethnic minorities within the Najd. As he saw it, there was only convenience of pastures and water on the one hand, and on the other hand the desire to raid and avoid punishment for raiding.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, it was not the case that Ibn Saud failed to understand the principle of political refugee status, since he himself was providing refuge to Ahmad al-Sanūssī, asking the British for clemency in the Libyan leader's desire to return to his homeland.<sup>44</sup>

As much as Saudi official language was dismissive of tribal claims to refugee status, Iraqi official language was routinely expansive and grandiose, describing Iraq as a "city of refuge" for tribesmen from Persia, Turkey, Syria and beyond – a civilized community to which the public would be outraged if their ruler were to forcibly return people of whom "no crime had been proved against them."<sup>45</sup> This playing up of public sentiment by the Iraqi Government was disingenuous. These were not disputes between Najd and Iraq over how to apply international humanitarian norms to actual displaced populations, but rather talking points derived from two rather different world views on how to govern the tribes, with few shared terms of reference and little agreement on their application. In that regard, the dispute over "refugee" status for certain tribes was similar to disagreements about the construction of security outposts along the border – these were issues related to the border that could either strengthen or weaken the burgeoning nation-states of Najd and Iraq. To contest such issues was a

way for one state to assert its authority over the other state, as well as over its own population.

## Defining the Najd

There is a problem that must be addressed in how we refer to the Najd and what we mean by nationalism in central Arabia. There is no literature on these topics comparable to scholarship on Iraq, which will be discussed at length in Chapter 4. The term “Najd” itself is generally taken to mean a solid elevation or ascent, a high plateau, in contrast to the depression along the coast known as the “Tihama.” There are no historical markers to define the limits of the Najd, if only because it was never a fixed political entity until the early twentieth century, and even then the borders were constantly changing with Ibn Saud’s rapid conquest and expansion. The one thing that historical accounts generally agree upon, according to Badrīyah al-Bashir, is that the Najd lies to either side of the escarpment that runs roughly north to south in central Arabia, with Jabal Tūwayq and Riyadh at the center, the Wādī al-Duwāsir below and the Rawdat Sudayr above.<sup>46</sup> Farther north, the area of Qassīm is often included in the geographic definition of the Najd, and sometimes even Hā'il and Jawf. The problem becomes one of politics at that point, since Hā'il was its own emirate in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and Jawf was contested in the nineteenth century between the rulers of Hā'il and the Sha'lān family. The Sha'lān were often resident in Damascus, but maintained a palace at Kāf. We have less information about the political cohesiveness of the Najd before the mid-eighteenth century religious reform movement of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, and even in the years following Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's death there were fierce debates among religious scholars of the Najd about how to interpret key concepts of *takfir* and *hijra*.<sup>47</sup> Uwaidah al-Juhany has done remarkable work combing through unpublished manuscripts in private collections to conclude that there was a high degree of political fragmentation:

For reasons not precisely known to us, Najd had lost a great number of its sedentary population and settlements during the period that followed the first three centuries of the Muslim era. [ . . . ] From the middle of the 9th/15th century, a clear, but nevertheless gradual, movement of resettlement and repopulation of the sedentary regions of Najd began. [ . . . ]

Over two-thirds of the most active and most frequently mentioned settlements during the 11th/17th and the 12th/18th centuries were either newly established or old settlements revived by groups other than their original inhabitants.<sup>48</sup>

Regardless of its historical consistency and political unity prior or subsequent to the mid-eighteenth century, this concept of a single polity extending through Jawf was operable in the minds of Najdi Government officials at the time of state formation in the early 1920s and beyond, even if it was not spelled out in detail and demarcated. Apparently they did not consider the birth of the Wahhabi reform movement as the defining factor in constituting an historical Najd. Rather, after months of negotiations in early 1924 during which the Transjordanian Government's delegation adamantly refused to accept any historical claims for Najdi control over Jawf (up to and including the entire Wādī al-Sirhān), Director of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdullah Damlouji finally tried to explain Ibn Saud's insistence in the following terms: "The habits, customs and way of living of the inhabitants of Wadi Sirhan are exactly the same as those of the people of Najd and their relationship with Najd well known."<sup>49</sup> This was not a claim based on some ancient or mythical image like that of "Mesopotamia" or "Phoenicia," and it was not based on convenience or expediency in terms of petroleum interests or colonial rule as in Iraq and other places. Instead, government officials in Riyadh were making a claim to territory based on living cultural practices, familial ties and commercial trade.

Admittedly, religious practices could probably also be classified under "ways of living," and Damlouji certainly had religion in mind, proposing at the Kuwait conference later in the same year that all residents of Iraq who accept the teachings of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab should be allowed to leave and adopt Najdi citizenship.<sup>50</sup> But far more than that, he meant a way of life, an '*asabīyah* (group solidarity), that the government in Riyadh believed to be operative throughout the heartland of Najd, and even in places farther afield like the town of Zubayr in Iraq (Figure 1). Political allegiance and fealty were also important in terms of defining an historical sphere of Najdi influence – for example, at the 'Uqayr negotiations in 1922, Ibn Saud demanded sovereignty over tribes that had been subjects of his forefathers, including those located in Iraq.<sup>51</sup> And again it seems likely that his concept of political allegiance came as a consequence or outgrowth of socio-

economic factors, in particular the notion that since certain tribes had paid taxes to his ancestors and received gifts or protection in return, then the same should hold true once more. Even tribes like the ‘Otayba and Harb, who considered their own ancestral lineages as extending to the Hijaz centuries ago, were included in Ibn Saud’s concept of the Najd due to their contemporary socio-economic affiliations.

Ibn Saud’s government maintained expansive claims on the territory and people of Najd based on these cultural, linguistic, ethnic and commercial affiliations, but those claims were only vaguely defined in terms of territorial limits, if at all. How did he define the territorial limits of the empire? Ibn Saud ruled as the Sultan of Najd and its Dependencies until he gained the additional title of King of the Hijaz on January 8, 1926, and his Sultanate was renamed the Kingdom of Hijaz, Najd and its Dependencies the following year. It formally became the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on September 23, 1932. The curious phrase “and its Dependencies” (*wa mulhaqātuhā*) appeared in the Bahra Agreement of 1925, months before ‘Asīr entered into vassalage, and it even appears as far back as the Anglo-Najdi Treaty (signed December 1915, ratified July 1916) in English and Arabic, well before the conquest of Hā'il.<sup>52</sup> The text of that Anglo-Najdi Treaty recognized Ibn Saud as the ruler of Najd, al-Ahsā’, Qatīf, Jubayl “and the towns and ports belonging to them,” but it seems implausible that the port of ‘Uqayr would not be considered an integral part of al-Ahsā’ – i.e. that it would be considered a territory or province of its own and thereby deserving the title of *dependency* – when ‘Uqayr at that time was merely the old Turkish guest house (*khān*) and a few thatched huts. Similarly, Dammām would not witness its growth into a settlement until the 1920s. Nevertheless, the reference to “towns and ports” is a telling one. Clearly there was a distinction here between urban spaces like towns and ports on the one hand, and the large provincial territories to which they were attached (*mulhaq*). And there were many more such towns and ports serving as economic and social lifelines to the Najd. Some of them fell in the heart of Najd (Buraydah, ‘Unayzah, Hā'il), some lay along the coast in British protectorates (Kuwait, Manama), and some were in an undefined borderland with Ottoman Iraq where sovereignty was unclear at the time of the Treaty in 1915. The latter included Zubayr, Khamīsīyah, Sūq al-Shuyūkh and

Samāwah, where most residents in the early twentieth century maintained deep family ties and traditions deriving from the Najd (Figure 2).

There is no Greater Najd in common parlance, though if you travel the countryside in central Arabia and tell people you are working on a book about the idea of a “*Najd al-kubra*,” they will immediately understand what that means and nod their approval. All of this might imply some sense of Najdi nationalism, and we do find strong socio-economic bonds forming a shared Najdi identity and serving as strong motivating factors for Ibn Saud, his government and the many parts of the population that would eventually come under his power. In all of the first-hand accounts cited in this book, ties of kinship, language, culture and trade appear as central concerns in Hā'il, Zubayr and the places in between, but there are no pamphlets, slogans, political parties or other forms of nationalist propaganda. By contrast, there is very little that would indicate a reason for the population of the Najd in the 1920s to feel a sense of collective ownership in a specific bounded territory or a recorded historical past.

A more semiotic approach to understanding the phenomenon might seek evidence for the rise of nationalist sentiment in a reiterative discourse among Najdi tribesmen and townspeople, one in which external threats from regional neighbors, encounters with colonial powers or large-scale humanitarian tragedies provoked a response of communal identification. The creation of the international borders and imposition of international norms governing them could have played that role. From a purely utilitarian perspective, Ibn Saud and his allies also took advantage of Najdi tribal raiding traditions to mobilize Ikhwan warriors in an effort to expand and legitimize his burgeoning state, but there is no evidence that Ibn Saud invented or manipulated rituals and customs to forge a national identity. Such carefully curated or staged communal activities do generally contribute to a process of nation-building, and almost from the beginning of Ibn Saud's wars of conquest there were missionaries from the Najd establishing mosques and schools in the Hijaz.<sup>53</sup> Yet, multiple concepts of nationalism can also exist simultaneously within the same population and operate contemporaneously in different classes of society, just as different conceptions of policy outcomes can contribute equally to the same decision-making process. And many different provincialisms both inside and outside the Najd continued to flourish well after the unification of the country.

The Najd certainly did not have an independent media environment or state mechanisms for disseminating propaganda as that which existed in Iraq and allowed for the spread of nationalist discourses there. The Najd did not undergo the kind of prolonged popular uprising against colonialism led by rural tribes and urban merchants as that which occurred in Syria, inspiring mass politics in the Arab world.<sup>54</sup> So, where can we look to identify symbols or ceremonies of Najdi nationalist sentiment in this period? On September 19, 1932, Ibn Saud issued a royal decree proclaiming the “Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,” stipulating that September 23 would henceforth become Unification Day, or as it is currently celebrated, National Day. During a ceremony in Riyadh involving numerous princes and tribal leaders, he delivered a speech to adoring crowds waving flags, followed by a parade with members of the armed services.<sup>55</sup> However, shortly after the first celebration in 1932, the ulema of Najd decided that only Islamic holidays were acceptable as celebrations, a religious ruling that was reaffirmed in the era of King Saud.<sup>56</sup> It was only in the mid-2000s after King Abdullah formally assumed the throne that National Day started to become a major event in which young people turned out in face paint, draped in the flag and chanting patriotic slogans. It was not until the 1960s that the Saudi Government became involved in its first organized efforts to sponsor publications through the Ministry of Education that put the history of the Saudi royal family at the center of the nation.<sup>57</sup> The government did not begin to seriously document the role of the Al Saud in the unification of the country until the establishment of the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives in 1972, and that historical narrative was not solidified until the 1985 International Conference on the History of King Abdulaziz at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University.<sup>58</sup>

With all of that in mind, proposing a definition for Najdi nationalism here, comparing and contrasting it with other nationalisms, and delineating its historical development would be an enormous undertaking requiring an entirely separate monograph. Moreover, the results of such a study would probably be contradictory and inconclusive. Mai Yamani contends that Najdis are distinguished by their dress, their dialect, their religious beliefs and their attitude towards others, but these are only very broad brush-strokes, since her project is really to define her native Hijazi culture and

place it in opposition to the Najd.<sup>59</sup> A group of government officials and Royal Court advisors in the late 1950s and early 1960s commonly known as Najd al-Fatāh (Young Najd) sought to shift the core of public and private sector activities from the Eastern Province and Jeddah to the Najd.<sup>60</sup> Some of them rose to senior positions, like Minister of Petroleum Abdullah Tariki, but this was not a movement seeking Najdi independence or territorial expansion. Their circle was very small and they had only a minor impact on political reform.<sup>61</sup>

One of the only figures espousing Najdi pride in books and articles written for a broad Arab audience during the early to mid-twentieth century was the pioneering journalist from Buraydah, Sulaymān bin Ṣālah al-Dakhīl. He had lived in India for two years assisting a prominent Najdi merchant family there, before joining his uncle in Baghdad and establishing the daily newspaper *al-Riyadh* from 1910 to 1914. His ideology could hardly be called Najdi nationalism, however. He advocated for a type of Arab nationalism in service of the Ottoman caliphate. Although one of his sisters was married to Ibn Rashid (the ruler of Hā'il) and another sister was married to Ibn Saud, al-Dakhīl was a partisan of his home region of Qassīm. In one article, he presents a genealogy of the Najdi race not in terms of a group of tribes tracing their roots back to two common mythological ancestors Qahtān and ‘Adnān as many other Arab authors have done, but rather as follows: “The people of Najd were in past times like most residents of Arab lands, mixed from various peoples, among them Arabs and Persians and Armenians and Hebrews and Assyrians and Chaldeans and Babylonians.”<sup>62</sup> He puts adherence to the teachings of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab at the center of Najdi identity, but almost in the same breath he claims that few religious scholars are left in Riyadh, and those that are left “are the ones of whom it is said that they run around wild [*khabat*] in religion, randomly casting about blindly [*‘ashwā’*]; and unquestioning religious fanatics appear who spread rumors about [religion] . . . and this when most of it is faked.”<sup>63</sup> When he fled Iraq during WWI, he settled in the Hijaz rather than the Najd, possibly out of a desire to support the Arab independence movement of Sharif Hussein, and after the war he returned to Iraq to pursue a career as a local administrator.<sup>64</sup>

If anything, al-Dakhīl was not a Najdi nationalist, but rather an example of a syncretic and patchwork form of local and Arab nationalisms that existed among Najdis resident in Iraq during the early twentieth century. We will consider these complex attitudes of the cross-border populations in Chapter 3 and the Conclusion, where the discussion will attempt to show how socio-economic ties were more important than religious beliefs or intellectual theorizing in binding this community of Najdis together and shaping Saudi policy toward Iraq, even if such ties do not quite rise to the level of a nationalism. Certainly, Ibn Saud appears to have been more focused on enforcing discipline among the cross-border tribes and encouraging trade more for the sake of peace and stability at home in the Najd, rather than for the sake of converting people to Wahhabism and killing apostates.

## **Arab Nationalism and Pan-Arabism**

There are the related concepts of Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism that must also be addressed. The belief that Arabic language, culture and history were the most important signifiers of a national identity was a concept that emerged from the Nahda (“awakening” or “renaissance”) movement taking place among Arab intellectuals in the Levant during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They believed that such cultural traits, particularly language, served as the basis of an Arab nation (even in the absence of widespread literacy and education), which is notable given that many of these intellectuals engaging in political activism were themselves religious minorities seeking a place for themselves in Muslim-majority communities.<sup>65</sup> Rising public outrage at the regional situation in the 1930s, especially after the Arab Revolt of 1936 in Palestine, pressured the governments in Cairo and Baghdad to take a more vocal stance in support of the Arab cause, eventually leading to the formation of the League of Arab States in 1945. By the 1940s, these governments were practicing a careful balance between nominal support for Arab nationalism and advocating a unity of effort among Arab states, while avoiding the more destabilizing aspects of pan-Arabism that argued for a union of Arab peoples.

However, the influence of these concepts should not be overstated as a motivating factor in organizing Saudi–Iraqi bilateral relations. Chapter 4 will discuss how there were competing visions for a specifically Iraqi nationalism in the early 1920s and how a certain chauvinism accrued within Iraqi political discourse toward what was perceived to be a backward and primitive Najd. We might therefore expect Arab nationalism to have been a sticky issue for the two countries, as Iraqi nationalist pride clashed with pan-Arabism and the bilateral relationship. Indeed, Nuri al-Said's plan for a "Fertile Crescent Union" that he presented to the British in 1943, envisioning a Greater Syria (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Transjordan) federated with Iraq and other Arab states, was just such a maneuver directed at bolstering domestic political support while marginalizing regional rivals. However, the reaction was not a Saudi-led multilateral initiative, but rather the Alexandria Protocol and the Egyptian Government's establishment of the Arab League headquarters in Cairo.<sup>66</sup> This Egyptian–Iraqi rivalry for leadership of the Arab world certainly forced Saudi Arabia to make decisions about which initiative to support and which conferences to attend, but there is no evidence that it led Ibn Saud to rethink his relationship with Iraq, much less his support for the Arab cause. The opposite argument could be made that the 1936 Treaty of Arab Alliance and Brotherhood was the signal moment in which Arab nationalism motivated Saudi Arabia and Iraq to explore real, meaningful cooperation on regional and bilateral issues. However, as Chapter 1 will seek to demonstrate, that Treaty was more likely drafted and promoted by the Levantine advisors in the Saudi Royal Court as part of what they believed to be their personal legacy as Arab intellectuals. It was ultimately drained of substantive value through British pressure on the Iraqi Government, and it was never clear whether the Treaty was actually part of any broader political or policy vision by Ibn Saud and the rest of his government.

Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism do not appear to have been guiding principles that re-oriented the axes of Saudi–Iraqi bilateral relations. Therefore, it might be best simply to outline here the role these concepts played in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, in order to note the contrasts between the two countries, and only mention these concepts in the ensuing chapters where necessary. Iraqi nationalism and pan-Arabism were fluid categories in the early twentieth century, as Orit Bashkin notes: ". . . the division between

a Pan-Arab identity and a territorial identity is too simplistic, because both groups adopted each other's metaphors and narratives and each group encompassed many conflicting elements.”<sup>67</sup> The two concepts were largely inclusive in the 1920s and early 30s, attempting to use a patriotic rhetoric to build solidarity among all Iraqis, and both the government and the media indulged liberally in propagating nationalist and pan-Arabist ideas. During the 1930s, a series of Directors General at the Iraqi Ministry of Education revised the curriculum to replace mentions of non-Arabs and North Africans, recast references to Islamic leaders in terms of their Arab backgrounds, hired Syrian and Palestinian teachers and encouraged anti-colonial speeches during National Day celebrations.<sup>68</sup>

As pan-Arabism became more ascendant in Iraq in the late 1930s and 40s, it became increasingly populist and sometimes fascist in its appeal to urban working classes and youth, with a tendency to exclude religious minorities and occasionally even justify violence against Jews and others. At the same time, Arabism became a form of purity test for political elites attempting to delegitimize their rivals. Bakr Sidqi played on such Arab nationalist sentiments when he paraded his troops through the streets of Baghdad following the army’s massacre of Assyrians in Summayl in 1933, and Șalāḥ al-Dīn al-Şabbāgh portrayed himself and his army colleagues as martyrs for the pan-Arab cause following the failure of their 1941 coup.<sup>69</sup> By the late 1950s, pan-Arabism had become a blatant tool of political elites to justify authoritarian practices, as embodied in the Hashemite Arab Union between Iraq and Jordan, and its rivalry with the United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria.<sup>70</sup>

Here again, we have a significant difference between how Arab nationalism was debated in Iraq and how it was treated in Saudi Arabia, making comparison between the countries difficult. Ibn Saud was a staunch supporter of the right of all Arab peoples to independence and self-governance, as he tirelessly advocated in his correspondence. He routinely pleaded with the British and American Governments to consider the rights of Palestinians, and he repeatedly offered his services to help other Arab leaders negotiate with the colonial powers for Syrian independence.<sup>71</sup> He may have initially adopted such vocal Arab nationalist rhetoric in response to the way Sharif Hussein successfully molded his own public image during

WWI around a more articulated and publicized stance in support of Arab rights to self-governance.<sup>72</sup> Certainly Sharif Hussein propagated an image of Islamic and Arab leadership in order to enforce his authority among the tribes of the Hijaz, extend his influence into the Najd and discourage direct Ottoman intervention in local affairs on the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>73</sup> However, in the absence of access to Royal Court archives, it is too difficult to say what were Ibn Saud's specific views on pan-Arabism, how they evolved over time, and whether he had a well-defined program of action for achieving Arab unity beyond the 1936 Treaty, which was never implemented.

## The Role of the British

The Saudi–Iraqi bilateral relationship did not stand in isolation from events taking place in the Arab world and in the West. The British had a significant role to play, primarily in the 1920s and early 30s. Winston Churchill as Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1921 helped inaugurate a Pax Britannia in which British military power became enshrined as the fundamental tool for maintaining regional security, thereby helping to ensure Britain's access to petroleum resources and transportation routes.<sup>74</sup> Britain was engaged in a covert empire in the region, attempting to secure access and control over oil concessions, agricultural resources and transportation routes to India.<sup>75</sup> This mission was carried out by agents of empire who sought to exercise their imaginations about the civilizing role of the West, while countering the media attacks of domestic critics back home in the British Isles. However, that does not mean every action of the British was designed with a malevolent or manipulative purpose in mind. Being both a close ally of Ibn Saud and the Mandatory power for Iraq, British officials tried their best to maintain peace along the border while encouraging dialogue between the two sides. This did put the British in an awkward position on more than one occasion, having to act as arbiters and resulting in decisions that tipped the scales toward one side or another, sometimes without giving due process to the concerns of both parties. The best example is the one that opened this chapter, the creation of the border.

It was certainly not the intention of the British Government to use the drawing of the border as a divisive wedge generating mistrust between the two countries. Quite the opposite, as the High Commission in Baghdad thought a hard border that was well-enforced would bring peace and security to the region. After all, good fences make good neighbors. As early as October 1921, Sir Percy Cox was issuing instructions for his team to survey prominent Iraqi civic leaders as to their opinions on where the border should be located.<sup>76</sup> By December, Gertrude Bell was finishing consultations with Fahd al-Hidhāl, shaykh of the ‘Amarat and close ally of the Iraqi Government: “One way and another, I think I’ve succeeded in compiling a reasonable frontier . . . and at the earliest possible opportunity Sir Percy wants to have a conference between him and Faisal to state definitely what tribes and lands belong to the Iraq and what to Ibn Saud.”<sup>77</sup> However, it appears that Ibn Saud had not yet been consulted. It was only on April 3, 1922, that Cox first transmitted his concept of the border by cable to his colleagues in Kuwait and Bahrain for delivery to Ibn Saud.<sup>78</sup> The very next day, he sent special instructions to tell Ibn Saud that the Najdi Government must pull back all tribes and forces behind that border, “otherwise he will be treated as an enemy both by us and by the ‘Iraq Government.”<sup>79</sup>

On April 5, the messages were handed to the Amir of Kuwait for onward delivery, copies were sent to the Royal Court in Baghdad and on April 11 someone leaked the contents to the Iraqi newspapers, apparently before Ibn Saud had time to prepare a formal response. Cox used a War Office map from 1917 containing so many inaccuracies that it does not even appear in later correspondence as a reference tool, and the coordinates had to be surveyed anew and redrawn during several rounds of negotiations in the late 1930s.<sup>80</sup> The original map with its mistakes that was used to draw the original border appears to have been lost and forgotten after that point, but I was able to obtain a copy from a private dealer several years ago. In the image of it reproduced as Map 3, I have marked the sites mentioned in Cox’s cable: red for places granted to Iraq and blue for Najd, black for the line proposed by Cox in April 1922, and yellow for the Neutral Zone compromise that was eventually proposed in November 1922.<sup>81</sup> Cox likely assumed the map was accurate, since it had been prepared by the best

available cartographers at the Royal Geographic Society using all available sources of information.

Cox later cabled his colleagues in Jeddah to say that a committee of Najdi and Iraqi representatives would meet in Baghdad under the leadership of a British officer to work out further details of the border.<sup>82</sup> However, he clearly intended to grant this large swath of semi-arid land (including what would become the Neutral Zone) to Iraq in the belief that all the tribes were loyal to Iraq, and all the wells and pastures belonged to them, based on advice from Iraqi civic leaders and with the approval of King Faisal.<sup>83</sup> Cox went into negotiations convinced that his vision for the border line was more or less final. The Iraqi Government was therefore unwilling to accept anything less than what Cox was offering, and the Najdi Government was barely consulted on the matter.<sup>84</sup> Much of what lay south of the line in Najdi-designated territory was pure desert, as shown on the map. The Iraqi negotiators claimed this had been a fair diplomatic solution, and they cried foul when Ibn Saud refused to sign the resulting Muhammara Treaty, setting the stage for the meeting in ‘Uqayr at the end of the year.

The new border symbolized modernity and opened up possibilities for competition between governments and among tribes in ways that had never existed before. British advisors could alternately punish or reward tribes for their cooperation with the state, Iraqi politicians could sway voters by pandering to public fears of Ikhwan raids, and Saudi officials could encourage migration through the distribution of passports. But the border also divided communities, creating economic and social barriers that forced both countries to turn inward and restructure their societies in ways that had a major impact on their long-term political growth and development. Politicians in Baghdad learned that they could lean on the British to extract concessions from Riyadh and Ibn Saud learned that rational arguments were not enough in diplomacy. In the decades that followed, Saudi Arabia and Iraq would experience fleeting moments of warmth and reconciliation, which were widely publicized in the media and raised high hopes for the emergence of a powerful Arab alliance. But those initial experiences in drafting the border left a lasting impact, with consequences the British could have never foreseen, and contributed to the atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion that became the hallmark of the Iraqi–Saudi bilateral relationship.

## Translations and Sources

Transliteration has been done according to ALA-LOC standards, though with a few exceptions. There are certain individuals who selected the transliteration of their own names (e.g. Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi, Sadiq Hassan al-Soudani, Dr. Abdullah Damlouji, Abdullah Tariki), their families have retained those spellings and I have chosen to respect their wishes. Similarly, certain names of leading statesmen or places have become widely accepted in particular transliterations (e.g. Ibn Saud, King Faisal, Nuri al-Said). Short vowels have been transliterated according to the Hans-Wehr Dictionary, except in the case of tribal names, where the spoken pronunciation is often idiosyncratic. In English, we employ the words *tribe* and *clan* loosely with the general connotation of larger or smaller social entities, and they will be used in that colloquial sense here. However, where it is necessary to distinguish more carefully between different levels of hierarchical organization, the more technical Arabic terms of *qabīla*, *batn*, *fakhidh* and '*ashīra*' will be used. In that regard, it will be important to note that the *qabīla* of the 'Aniza contains the *batn* of Bishr, which includes the *fakhidh* of 'Amarat. Until their internal tribal disputes broke out in the late nineteenth century, the 'Amarat contained the '*ashīra*' of the Dihamsha, which included the *fāṣīla* of the Suwaylim.

The word *bin* refers to the son of so-and-so, *al-* refers to the descendant of so-and-so (be it the person's father, grandfather or another ancestor), and *Al* refers to a well-established tribe, but the term *Ibn* requires more of an explanation. Technically it means a son, but in the central Arabian context of this study, it means the individual in question was the leader of a tribe or clan and his family had a tradition of passing down the role of shaykh from father to son (or brother or nephew) within that immediate family. In that sense, Ibn Hidhāl was the nickname of Maḥrūt al-Hidhāl, the paramount shaykh of the 'Amarat tribe ('Aniza), just as it was also the nickname of his father, Fahd al-Hidhāl, and indeed it has been used for most paramount shaykhs of the 'Amarat from the family of al-Hidhāl. Echoing that tradition, the British came to use the appellation "Ibn Saud" for King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud, thereby conveying their respect by using this nickname to reflect the glory of his most illustrious ancestor who had achieved fame in the first Saudi Kingdom. Ibn Saud accepted the nickname,

but he was far more commonly called “King Abdulaziz” within his immediate social environment. The appellation “Ibn Saud” has been used throughout this book for the purpose of consistency, clarity in passages featuring multiple Arabic names, and because it will be familiar to most Western readers.

The British often translated the Ottoman concepts of *liwā'*, *qaḍā'* and *nāhiya* as division, district and sub-district, but those English words are rather vague in meaning, even for the native English speaker. What do the first and third English terms stand in reference to, except the second? The Hans-Wehr Dictionary concedes the lack of a precise translation for all three, offering multiple options in each case. I have chosen province, district and township respectively, which at least conveys a sense of the relative geographic size of each. As for more specific locales, Map 1 attempts to locate some of the more obscure sites mentioned in this book and show them in relation to larger population centers. However, it is important to note that many of the places mentioned in the archival sources are no more than watering holes that do not appear on any modern maps or geo-location devices.

The British Government archives are extensive and many previous academics have produced outstanding works of scholarship based solely on these sources. The records relating to Iraq are mostly housed at The National Archives (TNA) in Kew Gardens, while those relating to Saudi Arabia are mostly housed at the British Library (BL). Archive Editions has published several multi-volume series that reproduce the former, while the Qatar Digital Library (QDL) has photographed and digitized the latter. Other British records are more elusive. Many of the Government of India records from the early twentieth century relating to the Arab Gulf region were left in Delhi after independence. They became difficult to access for foreign researchers starting in the 1990s, though the Indian Government has recently been exploring options to digitize and share them. The Saudi archives are even more difficult to access, though the Dārat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Riyadh very kindly allowed me to consult their resources. Many of the Iraqi Government files during the Mandate period remain in the Iraqi National Library and Archives (INLA), known in the 1960s and 70s as the National Center for the Preservation of Documents (NCPD) under the auspices of the University of Baghdad, including large volumes of administrative records

prepared by British advisors and their communications with the British High Commissioner in Baghdad. Other Iraqi records have become scattered in public and private collections around the world, including the Crossroads of Civilization Museum in Dubai, which has a valuable collection of both Iraqi and Saudi archival documents.

In order to fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge of Saudi and Iraqi intentions and motivations, this study has relied on the first-hand accounts of key advisors in Riyadh and Baghdad. Additionally, several Iraqi scholars with special access to the state archives were allowed to publish their findings with full quotes and citations, including ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī for the Royal Court and cabinet, Sadiq Hassan al-Soudani for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and ‘Abd al-Āl Wahīd ‘Abbūd al-‘Issāwī for the Ministries of Interior and Defense.<sup>85</sup> All three of these scholars deserve full credit for their diligent work, especially al-‘Issāwī, who was extremely liberal in his reproduction of quotations, charts, maps and imagery. I am also eternally grateful to Dr. al-‘Issāwī for kindly granting me permission to reproduce some of his pictures. In citing sources derived from their work, I have offered both the original archival references and the pages on which those sources are cited in the secondary literature. It should be noted that in a few cases this meant the original sources in English had been translated into Arabic by these authors and then translated back into English by me. Fortunately, these scholars’ Arabic translations of the original English were done very directly and clearly, even preserving some of the idiomatic sense of the original English.

# 1

## DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

[King Abdulaziz] said to Nuri al-Said: “What do you want Nuri?” and Nuri explained his mission. So [the King] ordered [his son, Foreign Minister] Faisal [bin Abdulaziz] to bring a notebook and pen. And he gave them to Nuri. And [Ibn Saud] said to him, “Write down all of

what you want and Faisal will sign it . . . And after Nuri finished, he gave the notebook to Faisal and [Ibn Saud] ordered him to sign. And [Faisal] tried reading what was written [in the Agreement] before signing, and [Ibn Saud] said: Don't read and don't turn away . . . sign. So Faisal in his role as Minister of Foreign Affairs signed. And he gave Nuri al-Said the document [of the draft Agreement], and said to him: I agree to it. Saying goodbye, [Nuri] departed. And after Nuri left, [Ibn Saud] said: I noticed that you got upset Faisal, due to your lack of familiarity with what is in the document. Nuri didn't show up intending to agree. Rather he wanted a dispute. And due to this I charged him with writing what he wanted, and I ordered you to sign it. And he was ingratiating toward us with it, which is what will bring mistrust to him when he renegs on what he agreed to . . . So never mind what may come of [the Agreement].<sup>1</sup>

This story was related by Faisal's son, former Minister of Interior, Abdullah al-Faisal Al Saud, in an interview he gave sometime in the mid-1960s to the editor of the Saudi-sponsored magazine *al-Manhal*, presumably its founding editor 'Abd al-Qaddūs al-Anṣārī.<sup>2</sup> He was describing the negotiating process that took place on April 6, 1940, in Rawdat al-Tanhāt, a remote site located in a lush valley about 180km north of Riyadh, as Saudi Arabia and Iraq sought accord on some of the most important issues that had divided the two countries since 1922. The final text of the Agreement directed both sides to appoint officials who would be authorized to resolve all security issues in an area up to 30km from the borderline, including cases of lost or stolen camels. This was effectively the last step in making the border a demilitarized zone, similar to the Saudi-proposed vision of the border with Yemen in the 2000s. Those sections of the Dhafir and Dihamsha tribes resident in Saudi Arabia, along with recent arrivals of the Shammar now in Iraq, would be required to move back from the border. It also banned them from crossing over without permission from the host governments.

The many conferences, treaties and agreements concluded between 1922 and 1940 had failed to identify a way forward for finding a mutual understanding and appreciation. Rather, they increasingly represented bureaucratic exercises that masked the deep-rooted mistrust on both sides. As we can clearly see in the anecdote above, Nuri al-Said and his political ambitions were partly responsible for the chronic mistrust that pervaded Saudi–Iraqi relations.<sup>3</sup> During this particular visit he was representing Iraq as Foreign Minister, but it was not his first time dealing with Ibn Saud. Exactly nine years earlier in Mecca on May 6, 1931, during his first stint as Prime Minister, Nuri had led the Iraqi delegation that finalized the Treaty of

Friendship and Good Neighbors. He had witnessed upon his return how diplomatic success with Saudi Arabia could boost his image in the court of public opinion in Baghdad.<sup>4</sup> In April 1935, Nuri had taken a Saudi-drafted proposal for a mutual defense pact with Iraq and shared it with the British Government without Saudi permission, accepting multiple rounds of British edits that effectively gutted the text of meaning.<sup>5</sup> In June 1939, Nuri leaked the contents of a letter from Ibn Saud to a Syrian reporter, falsely claiming that Riyadh was pressing Baghdad to cut off support for the Syrian and Palestinian causes, which forced the Saudi Government to issue a public denial.<sup>6</sup> Ibn Saud had merely recommended that Iraq and Saudi Arabia join forces to help the Syrians and Palestinians as mediators with the British and French colonial powers, for the sake of maintaining a united front in the midst of the looming World War. Yet Nuri had falsely led Arab journalists to believe that Iraq had documentary evidence of Ibn Saud accepting bribes from Jews and promising them political support in Palestine in return.<sup>7</sup>

As with everything about Nuri, he was searching for an angle to benefit his own political career, which often meant styling himself as the sole champion of Arab nationalism.<sup>8</sup> When Colonel Șalāḥ al-Dīn al-Şabbāgh, an arch-ponent of Arab unity, returned from Riyadh in July 1939 with two military agreements in hand, Nuri humiliated him in front of his colleagues at the Army General Staff by saying, “Hey Șalāḥ al-Dīn, you became a Saudi, even though Ibn al-Saud is a treacherous liar.”<sup>9</sup> Behind almost every diplomatic initiative launched in this period, there were individuals in Baghdad and Riyadh who sought to use the proceedings for their personal or professional gain. Sometimes their motives were noble in spirit, sometimes merely selfish and craven. Regardless, the problem in Saudi–Iraqi relations was much bigger than one or another politician. It was even bigger than the personal rivalry between Ibn Saud and the Hashemites. The problem was one of trust.

The growth of diplomatic activity came in parallel to the growth of the two states and the increasing sophistication of their administrative capabilities. The idea that two Arab governments could enter into diplomatic negotiations over bilateral issues was extraordinary to regional observers in the 1920s, most of whom still labored under colonial rule and could only dream of representing their country abroad. However, as the examination of

the historical record in the first half of this chapter will show, significant diplomatic success was never actually achieved on any issue. The two governments never developed close ties, despite numerous agreements and conferences, and that failure was in stark contrast to the high-flown rhetoric of Arab brotherhood that both sides espoused. The second half of this chapter will turn to historiography, in order to explain how narratives that emphasize Saudi–Iraqi diplomatic success in fact merely reflect their authors’ bias toward Arab unity, even as they ignore the actual record of diplomatic failure. Twenty years of diplomatic frustration, misunderstanding and mutual suspicion, resulting in cordial yet distant relations that persisted for decades thereafter, points toward two governments unable to find a common language for addressing their immediate problems along the border, rather than two states overcoming their differences on the path to Arab unity.

## The Pace of Diplomacy

From 1922 to 1940, the Saudi Government engaged in ten high-level summits with Iraq, concluding twelve treaties, agreements and protocols, most of which were signed and ratified by both sides. This is remarkable, especially given the small size and staff of the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs throughout most of that period, as well as the complexities of Iraqi domestic politics.<sup>10</sup> Iraq occupied Saudi Arabia’s attention more than any other foreign policy issue save Britain. The Saudi Legation in Baghdad was among a small group of diplomatic missions established in 1932, at a time when the Kingdom’s only accredited Minister Plenipotentiary was Hafiz Wahba in London.<sup>11</sup> The succession of Saudi Chiefs of Mission in Iraq represents a list of the Kingdom’s leading diplomats and statesmen: ‘Abd Allāh al-Khayyāl, Ibrahīm bin Muḥammad al-Mu‘ammar, Ḥamzah Ibrāhīm Ghūth, As‘ad al-Faqīya, Muḥammad bin Ḥamad al-Shabīlī and Ibrahim al-Sowayel (Figure 3). (Ibn Saud originally nominated Rashīd bin Nāṣir Ibn Layla as Consul General and Chargé d’Affairs to Iraq in late 1931, but the appointment lingered and Rashīd went to Damascus instead, where he served as Ambassador for a decade until his death.)<sup>12</sup> al-Mu‘ammar had previously been head of the Royal Court and would go on to serve for many years as mayor of Jeddah; Ghūth had previously served in the Royal Court

and would go on to become Ambassador in Tehran; and al-Khayyāl, al-Faqīya and al-Sowayel would all go on to become Ambassadors in Washington. al-Faqīya became the first director general of the Saudi foreign service, al-Shabīlī would eventually become Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and al-Sowayel was later appointed as Foreign Minister.

A similar story was true on the Iraqi side, where Jeddah was seen as a desirable and challenging post (Figure 4).<sup>13</sup> The first Iraqi Minister Plenipotentiary was Dr. Naji al-Asil, former representative of King Hussein in London, who went on to become Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1936. Kāmil al-Kaylani worked at the Iraqi consulate in Jeddah throughout the early 1930s, and with the help of his brother, Prime Minister Rashid Ali al-Kaylani, eventually became Ambassador to Lebanon.<sup>14</sup> Amīn al-Mumayyiz served at the Iraqi diplomatic missions in London, Washington, New York and Damascus before becoming chief of mission for Saudi Arabia from 1954 to 1956. He was followed in Jeddah by General Muhammad Najīb al-Rubay‘ī, who later became head of the Council of Sovereignty following the 1958 coup and then President of the new Republic until 1963.

Despite the prestige of the post for both sides and the skills of the individuals in charge, the only diplomatic issue that appears to have been resolved in the 1920s and 30s to the complete satisfaction of both parties was that of regulating a little-used transit route for Hajj pilgrims. And as for the 1940s, diplomatic engagement with Iraq was sparse. We could speculate that World War II overshadowed regional affairs, that Ibn Saud became increasingly removed from policy-making in his older years due to health issues, that some of his foreign policy advisors had either retired by the late 1940s or diverted their attentions to bickering and personal profit, and that his son Faisal as Foreign Minister was more interested in great power politics and the formation of the United Nations. Some of that was almost certainly true. In meetings with royal physicians and advisors, British diplomats picked up on Ibn Saud’s declining energy and focus, as well as an increasing contempt at court for his Levantine foreign policy advisors, even as early as 1938.<sup>15</sup> But there is a much simpler answer, which is borne out by a wealth of stories from the period in addition to the one detailed above – senior Saudi officials had simply lost confidence in diplomatic engagement with Iraq.

Before exploring the issues hindering diplomatic progress, it will be necessary first to establish a chronology, because the details are currently spread among numerous Arabic and archival sources, each of which contain gaps and inaccuracies. It will also be necessary to lay out these events in detail in order to witness up close the pace and level of diplomatic activity, since diplomacy is characterized as much by ceremony and spectacle as it is by the substance of negotiations. To intersperse the timeline with the negotiating positions of the different parties, as some Arab historians have done, only serves to convey the false impression that the fast pace of diplomatic activity somehow represented progress. There was no substantive progress and hence no progression over time, as will be seen in the discussion on negotiating positions that follows. Rather, Saudi–Iraqi bilateral engagement in this period was far more about pomp and circumstance than actual achievement.

## The Era of Summits, 1921 to 1931

In the first decade of diplomacy, Saudi engagement with Iraq involved frequent summits in which at least one of the two leaders participated, with preparation and follow-up by delegations of high-level officials from both sides. These affairs were generally characterized by the presence of a cabinet-ranked Iraqi official fully authorized to negotiate on behalf of his government, in the understanding that King Faisal would agree to the outcome. Despite their equivalent rank, Saudi envoys had less negotiating authority. This problem was solved by having Ibn Saud either directly involved in the negotiating process or having periodic breaks in talks for the Najdi delegation to consult with him. There were very few redlines or pre-conditions, which is surprising for any diplomatic negotiation. In the mid-1920s, Faisal briefly attempted to condition talks on a ceasefire in the Hijaz, and for many years Ibn Saud refused to negotiate on the construction of fortifications along the border, but otherwise the talks were relatively open and direct.

The Iraqi delegation that left Baghdad in the spring of 1922 for the first ever negotiations with Najd was armed with instructions from the cabinet to delineate the border, secure the pilgrimage route for the Hajj, guarantee protection for various *awqāf* (religious endowments), establish rules for

trade, set up permanent diplomatic missions, define the regulations for passports and travel visas, determine the nationality of the tribes and their grazing rights, and demand compensation for damages received during Ikhwan raids on Iraqi tribes and lands.<sup>16</sup> These points can be grouped into three main baskets of issues: 1) status of the tribes, 2) criminal justice, and 3) fortifications and outposts, as we will see below. Virtually all future negotiations dealt with the exact same issues, and they would remain on the table in one form or another right up until the last substantive talks in 1940, at which point these issues became relegated to diplomatic notes delivered through embassy staff. With that in mind, this section will first present the basic facts of the conferences, treaties and agreements as a reference aid. It will then proceed to a more detailed look at points of contention and fundamental differences between the two sides, separating out these issues of substance, rather than presenting a combined chronology of events and issues, which might falsely create the impression of real diplomatic progress.

The first such conference began when British High Commissioner Sir Percy Cox invited the parties to convene on April 28, 1922, at the Faylīyah palace in the emirate of Muhammara, where the local ruler Shaykh Khaz‘al was considered a neutral party friendly toward both sides. Cox had pressed Ibn Saud to meet in person with Faisal as early as November 1921, proposing Kuwait as the location, but it was not until the press outrage over the Ikhwan attack on the fort at Abī Ghār on March 11, 1922, that the idea of a larger conference gained traction.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, this was not the first time that the British attempted to broker talks between the Al Saud and the Hashemites. In October 1919, Foreign Secretray Lord Curzon tried to convince Prince Faisal bin Abdulaziz to arrange a meeting between the two sides to settle the borders of the Najd and the Hijaz, and just a couple weeks later in Paris, Major Norman Bray arranged a tense and ultimately unproductive meeting between senior Najdi diplomatic envoy Ahmad al-Thunayān and then-King of Syria Faisal bin Hussein.<sup>18</sup> The conference at Muhammara simply marked the beginning of an era of committed diplomatic engagement between the two parties.

From the British side, Assistant High Commissioner Major Bernard Bourdillon hosted the talks at Muhammara, the Iraqi delegation was led by Minister of Labor and Transportation Ṣabīḥ Nash‘āt, and the Najdi delegation was led by Ahmad al-Thunayān with support from Dr. Abdullah

Damlouji.<sup>19</sup> The **Muhammara Treaty** was concluded by all three delegations on May 5, 1922, approved by the Iraqi cabinet on the ninth and ratified by Faisal on the fourteenth, but Ibn Saud refused to sign, arguing that his delegation had not accurately represented his instructions.<sup>20</sup> Attacks along the border continued and Cox proposed another conference, this time on Najdi land at the port of ‘Uqayr, to ensure Ibn Saud’s direct participation. Dickson and Major Frank Holmes accompanied Cox in the British delegation, the Najdi side was led by Ibn Saud with Damlouji and Ameen al-Rihani, and the Iraqi delegation was led by Şabīh Nash‘āt accompanied by a team of boundary experts and tribal leader Shaykh Fahd al-Hidhāl (‘Amarat). On December 2, 1922, Ibn Saud signed the Muhammara Treaty and two annexes known as the **‘Uqayr Protocols**, which were approved by the Iraqi cabinet and ratified by King Faisal on the twenty-third.<sup>21</sup> Cox insisted on defining a hard border, offering Ibn Saud only two compromises, neither of which fully addressed Najdi concerns. The first was the creation of the Neutral Zone, and the second was a clause in Article 3 of the First ‘Uqayr Protocol that banned the construction of forts or the deployment of troops near the border, though that provision would be violated the next year as the Iraqis began planning for outpost construction with the encouragement of the British.

After another series of tribal raids and an acrimonious exchange of letters about the proper status of the Shammar Najd, the new High Commissioner (Sir Henry Dobbs) called for a meeting of all parties in Kuwait under the auspices of Shaykh Ahmad al-Jaber Al Sabah. The British delegation was led by Colonel S.G. Knox, Political Resident in Kuwait, while the Iraqis were represented by then-Mayor of Baghdad Şabīh Nash‘āt, Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh al-Misfir al-Midāyfi and Salmān Shaykh Dāwūd (both from the Royal Court), and the tribal leader of the Shammar in Iraq, Shaykh ‘Ajīl al-Yāwar. Transjordan was represented by Minister of Information ‘Ali Khulqī al-Sharāyrī, while the Hijazi Government refused to participate. Najd was represented by Damlouji, Ḥamzah Ghūth, Abdulaziz al-Gosaibi, Hāshim bin Sayyid Ahmad al-Rifā‘ī and Hafiz Wahba.<sup>22</sup> The opening of the conference was repeatedly delayed as Faisal demanded a ceasefire from Ibn Saud’s forces in the Hijaz.<sup>23</sup> Talks eventually took place from December 17 to 26, 1923, but Iraq insisted that any agreement would be conditional on

Najd-Hijaz reconciliation.<sup>24</sup> The delegations returned to their capitals for consultations and the British made an unsuccessful effort to encourage Hijazi participation, as King Hussein went to Transjordan complaining he had not been consulted sufficiently before the conference. A second round of talks was convened from January 18 to 26, 1924, but ran aground again over Najdi demands for assurances on the status of the Shammar Najd and Dihamsha tribes. A third round of talks were planned but never materialized due to Ikhwan raids on March 14. Shortly thereafter, the Najdi Government published the “Green Book,” a compilation of official correspondence and leaked British cables documenting the unfairness of the Kuwait conference proceedings and the Najdi delegation’s sincere efforts at peace. The Iraqi response was an unpublished draft known variably as the White or Red Book, planned as a refutation of the Najdi claims and authored by Șabīh Nash‘āt.<sup>25</sup>

Senior British officials invited the parties to reconvene later that year and chose Bahra, a location along the Red Sea coast in Najdi-occupied Hijazi lands. This was a concession to Ibn Saud, creating the appearance of tacit British acceptance of Najdi occupation, in the hopes Ibn Saud would reciprocate with concessions of his own.<sup>26</sup> King Hussein had ceded control of his Kingdom to his son Ali and their forces had pulled back to Jeddah; they were largely out-of-the-loop on the negotiations between Najd and Iraq. The British delegation was led by Sir Gilbert Clayton with George Antonius functioning as translator, while the Najdi side included Ibn Saud, Yusuf Yassin and Hafiz Wahba. The Iraqi Government sent Tawfiq al-Suwaydi, Director General of the Ministry of Justice, but the British reserved the sole right to negotiate. As a consequence, al-Suwaydi mostly sat in Jeddah, only meeting with Ibn Saud towards the end to offer positive words of encouragement. The parties held sessions from October 10 to 30, 1925, signing the **Bahra Agreement** on November 1 with rules governing how tribes cross the border and how the two governments should interact with them.<sup>27</sup> It was approved by the Iraqi Council of Deputies on February 1, 1926, and by the Council of Notables on February 15, after heated debate over the meager Iraqi participation at the talks.

In the aftermath of Ikhwan attacks on the Iraqi police station at al-Buṣayyah in November 1927, the British pushed for another conference between Iraq and Najd. Clayton led the British delegation, while Iraq was

represented by Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, Advisor to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, and John Bagot Glubb, Administrative Inspector for the Southern Desert of Iraq. Ibn Saud was supported by Yassin, Damlouji, Wahba, and Fouad Hamza. Talks took place in Jeddah from May 8 to 20, 1928, with Transjordan participating in the last sessions.<sup>28</sup> Cornwallis presented a draft text of a Treaty of Friendship that would recognize Ibn Saud's takeover of the Hijaz and allow for an exchange of consular representation, all intended as incentives to gain Najdi cooperation on other issues. However, talks broke off when Ibn Saud refused to allow the construction of security outposts along the border. At a second round of talks from August 1 to 9, the Iraqis sent Tawfiq al-Suwaydi and Bahā' al-Dīn Nūrī, an Iraqi army officer and expert in tribal affairs, while Harry St. John Philby joined the talks from the Najdi side.<sup>29</sup> Negotiations failed as the Iraqi Government held firm on the right to build police stations and Ibn Saud insisted the Dihamsha were Najdi subjects.

Following Ibn Saud's suppression of the Ikhwan in January 1930, he signaled his desire for a meeting with Faisal. Delays ensued over the location, until the new High Commissioner in Baghdad, Sir Francis Humphreys, offered the use of the British warship offshore in the Gulf. Ibn Saud proposed a preparatory conference at the working level to resolve substantive issues, since he would only have two days with Faisal before returning to Najd for the ‘Īd al-Fitr holiday. Fouad Hamza went to Baghdad on January 28, 1930, to discuss logistics and from February 10 to 14 he joined Hafiz Wahba and Ibrāhīm al-Mu‘ammar in Kuwait for negotiations with Iraqi Minister of Interior Nājī Shawkat and Director of Municipalities Khalīl Ismā’īl al-Bustānī.<sup>30</sup> The Iraqis held firm on their right to build police stations and place limits on extradition requests, while the Najdi delegation rejected both positions outright, so decisions were deferred to the meeting of the two rulers.<sup>31</sup>

Ibn Saud and Faisal met onboard the HMS *Lupin* approximately fifteen miles from al-Faw on February 22 and 23 with Humphreys present in a supporting role. The Iraqi delegation included Prime Minister Nājī al-Suwaydi (Tawfiq's brother), Cornwallis and Glubb, as well as ‘Abd Allāh al-Midāyfī, Muḥammad Rustom Ḥaydar, and Tahsīn Qadrī (members of the Royal Court), Faisal's personal physician Dr. Sanderson, a photographer and four journalists. (‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, who would later become a

renowned Iraqi historian, was one of the reporters, representing the Baghdad office of the Egyptian newspaper *al-Ahrām*.)<sup>32</sup> The Najdi side included Fouad Hamza, Hafiz Wahba, Yusuf Yassin, Abdulaziz al-Gosaibi, Ibn Saud's personal physician Dr. Midhat Shaykh al-'Ard, Ibrāhīm al-Mu'ammar, Mohammed Almana as translator and 150 armed guards.<sup>33</sup> Conversations between the monarchs were entirely private and they pledged to convene their advisors at a future date to resolve substantive issues. The occasion was one of grand spectacle and regal splendor. Humphreys later recounted the Iftar dinner that was hosted by Ibn Saud on the first evening: "King Ibn Saud started the proceedings by breaking the ribs of the sheep opposite with his clenched fist and ladling out the contents of its stomach on to my plate with his hands. This delicate attention, His Majesty informed me, was a sign that he wished the bond of friendship, which we had just begun to form, to be permanent."<sup>34</sup>

Following up on the Lupin conference, Hafiz Wahba and Fouad Hamza went to Baghdad on March 9 and 10, 1930, to finalize the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbors. Naji al-Suwaydi initialed it the day before submitting the resignation of his cabinet, but Ibn Saud refused to sign until an extradition treaty was completed. The process was concluded in Mecca on April 6 to 7, 1931, and both sides signed the **Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbors ("Bon Voisinage")** and the **Protocol of Arbitration** on April 7 and 8 respectively.<sup>35</sup> The Iraqi delegation was led by newly-installed Prime Minister Nuri al-Said, along with Army Chief of Staff Tāhā al-Hāshimī, Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mawfiq al-Alūsī and Secretary to the Minister of Defense Ahmad al-Munāṣfī, bearing a gift of a tray, two coffeepots and a carton of coffee, all made by a Sabean who engraved the name of Ibn Saud on it.<sup>36</sup> For the first time, no British representatives were present. The two sides signed the **Agreement on Criminal Extradition** on April 8, 1931, but they reached no common understanding on police stations and postponed discussion about cross-border travel and customs issues.<sup>37</sup> Nuri felt confident that Iraq had been promised the right to maintain an embassy in Mecca, which was a compromise from an earlier understanding that Riyadh would be the seat. However, Fouad Hamza later insisted that all diplomatic missions had to reside in Jeddah.<sup>38</sup>

## Diplomacy Adrift, 1931 to 1941

In the years after 1931, the era of summetry ended. In one sense it is ironic, because the signing of a major bilateral treaty of friendship often results in the formation of what we might call a Strategic Dialogue or a Joint Consultative Committee, with routine high-level consultations on an annual basis and follow-up at the working level. High-level visits did occasionally occur after 1931, though they did not have any treaty negotiations attached to them or any clear deliverables resulting. Treaties and agreements continued to be negotiated at the working level, focusing on more specific aspects of previous accords whose details had not been clearly defined. The only new item up for discussion was the notion of a mutual defense pact in 1936, which was drained of substance in negotiations over its final wording. A draft of that text had proposed that, “a conference consisting of representatives of the two high contracting parties shall be held . . . at least once a year, in rotation in each of the capitals,” but the language was later dropped and the conference never occurred.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps it is therefore most appropriate to say that the era of summetry ended, but diplomatic engagement carried on, without the excitement and energy that the diplomacy of the 1920s had entailed.

Political instability in Iraq increased with the rapid turnover of governments in which many of the same players simply rotated in and out of the same positions. Oftentimes, politicians sought to use diplomatic engagement with Saudi Arabia, not with the goal of exploring new areas of cooperation, but rather as a public relations tool for boosting domestic support. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Abdulaziz visited Baghdad from July 8 to 11, 1932, coming overland from Khamnequin after concluding a stopover in Tehran and signing a treaty with the government of Reza Shah.<sup>40</sup> He received a warm welcome with banquets and celebrations, and Ibn Saud cabled King Faisal to praise his generosity, saying that the brotherly trust between the two countries was entirely due to the Iraqi ruler’s efforts.<sup>41</sup> The cabinet of Ali Jawdat al-‘Ayoubi that entered office on August 27, 1934, negotiated the **Agreement on the Desert Route of the Hajj** with Hamzah Ghūth representing Saudi Arabia in the talks, and the Agreement was signed on February 12, 1935.<sup>42</sup> It had provisions for maintaining security and road repairs, escorting the vehicles of pilgrims travelling to

Mecca, and collecting transit fees when appropriate.<sup>43</sup> The concept was to boost pilgrim's use of a route from Najaf to Medina by way of Ḥā'il, and seventy-three Iraqi boy scouts journeyed overland to meet with Ibn Saud in celebration of the event.<sup>44</sup>

Whereas the Hajj Agreement garnered real working-level cooperation, with representatives of both sides testing and surveying the route starting in 1932, such was not the case for any other issue area.<sup>45</sup> Working-level meetings between the Governor of Dulaym province and the Saudi inspector for the northern borders took place in Ramādī beginning on December 4, 1934, with the goal of settling tribal claims for compensation, but little was achieved.<sup>46</sup> The idea of alliance or mutual defense arose around this same time in February 1935, as al-'Ayoubi corresponded with Hafiz Wahba about a broader regional treaty of brotherhood between Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.<sup>47</sup> However, the al-'Ayoubi cabinet fell, to be replaced by Jamil al-Midfa'i and followed in short order by Yassin al-Hashimi, whose cabinet only lasted until October 29, 1936, when the coup of General Bakr Sidqi ushered in the Hikmat Sulayman cabinet. Amidst the Iraqi political turmoil and major Shi'a uprisings in the Middle Euphrates River Valley, King Ghazi bestowed the Hashemite Order on Ibn Saud and newly-installed Foreign Minister Dr. Naji al-Asil visited Riyadh to deliver the insignia.<sup>48</sup> Yusuf Yassin arrived in Baghdad on January 20, 1936, to begin real negotiations on the **Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance**, which he and Nuri al-Said signed on April 2, 1936.<sup>49</sup> It was approved on April 14, though it was not finalized until the formal exchange of signed documents until November 14.

Crown Prince Saud bin Abdulaziz visited Baghdad on the invitation of Bakr Sidqi and Hikmat Sulayman from March 28 to April 3, 1937. The normally diminutive and shy King Ghazi was distant and aloof throughout the week, only interacting with Saud in official receptions to deliver very formal remarks.<sup>50</sup> The Iraqis followed the visit by sending Foreign Minister Naji al-Asil to Damascus and Turkey for the purpose of signing cooperative agreements, which raised eyebrows in Riyadh regarding Iraqi intentions for a possible regional security pact.<sup>51</sup> (It is useful to note in this context that even as Saudi-Iraqi bilateral diplomacy cooled in the late 1930s and 40s, Iraq pursued a number of new regional security initiatives with Jordan, Turkey and Iran, while Saudi Arabia boosted ties with Egypt and the United

States.) The assassination of Bakr Sidqi on August 12, 1937, and the fall of the Hikmat Sulayman cabinet brought Jamil al-Midfa‘i back to power, and an exchange of letters led to the signing of an **Agreement Administering the Neutral Zone** and an **Agreement on Pastures and Water Resources** (sometimes referred to as the Agreement on Visas and Passports) on May 19, 1938.<sup>52</sup> These set out the principles for resolving disputes in the Neutral Zone and allowing the tribes access. The **Agreement on the Nationality of the Tribes** was signed on May 24, defining the ‘Amarat and Dhafir tribes as Iraqi nationals and a division of the Shammar tribes as Najdi nationals. However, the last two of these Agreements were not approved by the Iraqi Parliament.

During Nuri al-Said’s fourth cabinet, Foreign Minister Ali Jawdat al-‘Ayoubi and Colonel Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh went to Riyadh from June 26 to July 7, 1939, to discuss further delineation of the borders, the status of the Hashemite *awqāf* and other properties in the Kingdom, and compensation for goods looted during raids. al-Ṣabbāgh alleged that while there he secured Ibn Saud’s signature on two draft agreements for military cooperation that he had been working on ever since he was Director of Operations at the Ministry of Defense in 1937. However, upon his return to Baghdad, Nuri al-Said scuttled the effort: “Meanwhile, Nuri had what he wanted, and he killed the two agreements . . .”<sup>53</sup> We do not have the texts – al-Ṣabbāgh left the documents in the cabinet of the Army General Staff and did not possess his own copies when he published his memoirs years later – but presumably these two agreements were more robust than the notional military training programs that were outlined in Article 7 of the Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance.

On August 3, 1939, Iraqi Prime Minister al-‘Ayoubi sent a note concerning suppression of smuggling in the Neutral Zone and on April 6, 1940, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal reciprocated his government’s intention to cooperate. Tensions on the ground among the tribes and the flight of several Shammar tribal leaders to Iraq prompted both sides to revisit the Agreement on the Nationality of the Tribes. One of the stipulations of that Agreement was that tribesmen had to return to the country of their assigned nationality within six months of the document’s signing. Accordingly, following the formation of Rashid Ali al-Kaylani’s cabinet on March 31, 1940, Nuri al-Said went to Saudi Arabia in the role of Foreign

Minister to sign the **Rawdat Tanhat Agreement**, where the two sides formally agreed to relocate the border tribes.<sup>54</sup> The text was finalized in Baghdad on April 8, 1940, and ratified on May 19. The British proposed a meeting of Ibn Saud and the Iraqi Regent at this time, but Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah rejected the idea, also expressing his intense dislike for the Saudi Ambassador in Baghdad.<sup>55</sup> Over the course of the next year, Iraqi and Saudi representatives met several times to discuss the deportation of all Shammar Najd tribesmen from Iraq as stipulated in the Rawdat Tanhat Agreement, resulting in an exchange of notes confirming the full implementation of the accord.

## Points of Contention

The fervent pace of diplomacy described in the chronology above was quite impressive, especially given the state of colonial rule present in much of the rest of the Arab world and the restrictions that Western powers placed on local governments conducting their own foreign affairs. One might almost think that there was actual diplomatic progress. The following section will describe the substantive issues under negotiation, which remained surprisingly static over that twenty-year period and largely frozen after 1940. One constant in all these diplomatic talks was the impetus for hosting them. Cross-border raids, criminal extradition demands and inadequate policing capabilities, when combined as a constellation of security issues along the border, served as recurring irritants in the bilateral relationship. And the persistence of those security issues provided the nominal pretext for continued diplomatic activity: 1) raids occurred with seasonal regularity as tribes competed for water and pastures, 2) the aggressors often escaped quickly over the border, and 3) security forces on either side lacked the capacity on their own to respond in time.

All three problems were interconnected and in many ways inseparable, as evidenced by the events that prompted Cox to convene the first conference at Muhammara. Tribal attacks and counterattacks in February 1922 had ended in the defeat of an inadequately-equipped Iraqi Government-backed unit of tribal irregulars on March 11 in Abī Ghār (see Chapter 4). The Iraqi Government then urged the British to arrest Ibn Saud's

representative ‘Abd al-Rahman bin Mu‘ammar and local ally Shaykh Ḥamūd Ibn Suwayt (Dhofir), who had just recently left Iraq to join the Ikhwan in Najd.<sup>56</sup> In a similar manner, the Kuwait conference was motivated by Shammar refugees resident in Iraq crossing the Euphrates and raiding the border regions during the spring of 1923. Iraqi Government forces were incapable of stopping them despite repeated promises by Iraqi and British officials to Ibn Saud that they would do so.<sup>57</sup> The Bahra conference was prompted by a series of deadly attacks and counter-attacks between the Dhofir and the Ikhwan, first in December 1924 and then again on a much larger scale in June 1925. The Iraqis claimed 166,884 rupees’ worth of goods had been looted and the British threatened Ibn Saud with bombing runs.<sup>58</sup> It was chronic insecurity that provided the pretext for a formal convening of talks.

And these recurring security issues led to two sets of very different and conflicting policy responses. The first was a state-centered approach of hard borders with security outposts and strict travel regulations, requiring careful identification of the nationality of each tribe, which was favored by Cox and Faisal as a means of increasing Iraqi central government authority and tax revenues. The second was a community-oriented approach of flexible access for the tribes, allowing them to reach their wells and pastures, which was a key element of Saudi proposals over the years. At one point in March 1925, Ibn Saud even suggested that the Iraqi and Najdi Governments adopt a *laissez faire* attitude to policing the tribes, maintaining neutrality and allowing them to raid one another without interference.<sup>59</sup> However, negotiations on these issues were further complicated by the fact that many Iraqi negotiators put forward contradictory positions even in a single meeting, while the lack of precise definitions in the provisions of the treaties and agreements allowed both sides to reinterpret clauses to their own advantage. As a result, these differing policy approaches and negotiating challenges repeatedly converged on three main issue areas that were never fully resolved:

## (1) Status of the Tribes

At Muhammara, the Iraqis pressed for control over the Muntafiq, ‘Aniza and Dhofir tribes on the basis that they resided on Iraqi lands, while Ibn Saud

argued for Najdi control over the Dhafir and parts of ‘Aniza, especially the Dihamsha. At this early stage, Ibn Saud still insisted on a border where tribes could maintain complete control over their wells and pastures on either side, though Cox wanted a fixed line beyond which the tribes would not cross.<sup>60</sup> The second paragraph of Article 1 of the Muhammara Treaty was an attempt at compromise, recognizing the Najdi distaste for hard borders and acknowledging the right of the tribes to continue possession of their ancestral wells and lands. However, Cox imposed his will at ‘Uqayr with a hard border, and the only recourse for Ibn Saud was Article 2 of the First Protocol committing Iraq to allowing Najdi tribes access to their wells. Subsequent discussions even retreated from that core principle of a collaborative effort to delineate the tribal ownership of wells and pastures, devolving instead into squabbles over who owns which tribes. (Kuwaiti ruler Shaykh Ahmad al-Jaber Al Sabah would later claim sovereignty over the ‘Ajman, Mutayr and ‘Awazim tribes, also using a drawn-out process of diplomatic negotiations while pushing for flexible boundaries. His explicit motivations were quite similar to those of the Iraqi and Najdi Governments, in that each had an economic imperative to preserve the tribes as a dependable base of manpower and income from taxes and trade.)<sup>61</sup>

At the Kuwait talks, the Najdi and Iraqi delegations agreed in principle to discourage migration and limit all government correspondence with tribal leaders to official channels of communication, in response to mutual accusations that one side or the other was attempting to lure tribes across the border. The result was Article 4 of the Bahra Agreement, in which both sides agreed “to refrain from offering presents of any kind whatsoever to refugees from the territories of the other Government and to look with disfavour on any one of their subjects who may endeavour to attract the tribes to the other Government or to encourage them to move from their own country to the other.” Nevertheless, both sides did continue to offer incentives to (and threaten punishments against) the border tribes well into the 1940s, and they justified these practices on a variety of grounds.<sup>62</sup> Ibn Saud reinterpreted Article 1 of the Second ‘Uqayr Protocol to claim that it conferred Najdi citizenship on the Shammar and Dihamsha tribes, since (in his view) as Najdi subjects sheltering in Iraq they were “outside the [Najdi] boundaries and not subject to [the laws of] either Government.”<sup>63</sup> The British responded that the provisions regarding unassigned tribes only applied to those tribes

not designated at the time of the Muhammara Treaty, e.g. Syrian tribes seeking refuge in Najd or Iraq. The Agreement on the Nationality of Tribes in 1938 was intended to fully resolve the matter, stipulating that any Dhafir or Dihamsha tribesmen living in Najd would forfeit their Iraqi citizenship, and Shammar still resident in Iraq would do the same. However, the Iraqi Parliament refused to ratify the Treaty.<sup>64</sup>

The approach of successive Iraqi cabinets up through 1940 was a diplomatic dance – finesse the language in amendments to past diplomatic agreements that had never been ratified or implemented in the first place.<sup>65</sup> From the summer of 1923 onwards, the Royal Court in Baghdad sought to define the Shammar in Iraq as “political refugees,” claiming that commonly-accepted international norms forbade it from sending them back to Iraq. This was rather disingenuous on several accounts, as mentioned in the Introduction above. The British Government may have encouraged Baghdad to label these tribes as refugees, but the only officials on the ground observing their humanitarian conditions were intelligence and security officers, whose agenda included demonstrating to the League of Nations that Britain was a responsible mandatory power.<sup>66</sup> On October 22, 1925, Cornwallis issued instructions to officials in the provinces not to use terms like “Shammar migrants” or “Ikhwan migrants.”<sup>67</sup> The Iraqi Government also resorted to legal arguments, pointing out that the Muhammara and ‘Uqayr accords technically made no mention of the Shammar, and in 1924 the Iraqis passed the Law of Nationality making citizens out of everyone resident in the country as of August 6, nominally including the Shammar.<sup>68</sup> The status of the Shammar Najd would not be fully resolved until the Rawdat Tanhat Agreement in 1941, and by then processes of migration and settlement had already determined much of their fate.

A secondary issue related to the tribes had to do with fears that tribal leaders were in direct communication with officials from the other side. The Iraqi delegation opened the Kuwait conference with a demand that the Government of Najd channel all communications with shaykhs in Iraq through a designated agent based in Baghdad.<sup>69</sup> Following the Bahra Agreement, Baghdad delegated authority to the governors of the provinces to communicate directly with the Emir of Hā'il, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Musā‘id, for the purpose of resolving tribal disputes, with the only requirement being

that they provide copies of all correspondence to Baghdad.<sup>70</sup> Another secondary issue related to the tribes had to do with taxes and fees. The Najdi Government repeatedly sought the right to collect from its tribes wherever they reside, while the Iraqi Government offered a number of alternative arrangements, for example collecting taxes upon a tribe's return at the end of the grazing season or only if they reside on one side for more than four months.<sup>71</sup> Relatedly, at the preparatory meeting for the Lupin conference, the Najdi delegation tried to insert language for the free trade of goods for all tribes and open access to markets on both sides.<sup>72</sup>

## (2) Criminal Justice

At the Kuwait talks, the issue of criminal extradition first came to the fore, with Dr. Abdullah Damlouji insisting that raids were common crimes requiring the return of the criminals. Ibn Saud's view at Bahra was categorical, according to the memorandum of the conversation prepared by Clayton: "So long as it remained possible for certain tribes to leave their Government and seek shelter under another Government, so long would there be no peace whatever. [ . . . ] It meant that each Government, in His Highness' view, should undertake, at the request of the other Government, to return any tribe or portion of a tribe or party of individuals which might seek refuge in the territory of the other government."<sup>73</sup> When Clayton asked him whether this was a common occurrence, Ibn Saud noted that: "There were exceptions in the case of the Shammar and other tribes, but generally speaking he knew his own people and did not think they would leave him in any appreciable number, although trouble was always liable to be caused by intrigues."<sup>74</sup>

Ibn Saud's point was not immediately clear to Clayton, but here we have the crux of the argument. Anyone could go across the border and do anything they liked – claim political asylum or curry favor with the Iraqi Government or simply loot for profit – and in doing so, others might see and thereby lose confidence in their Sultan. In the example Ibn Saud provided, he ascribed all three motivations to the actions of Yūsuf al-Mansūr Al Sa‘dūn. The latter had come to Najd falsely telling the tribes he was acting on Ibn Saud's behalf, then raided and looted the tribes across the border in

Iraq, and finally went to King Faisal explaining it was all a game to annoy Ibn Saud, for which Faisal rewarded him.<sup>75</sup> The motivations, whether real or imagined, were hardly the point though, because the outcome was all one and the same: Ibn Saud had been made to look like a fool, everyone might think he was politically weak, and the only remedy to restore his authority would be to punish low-level tribesmen who could barely have known they were being exploited. That was unjust and unacceptable to Ibn Saud, and therefore he asked the British to intervene with the Iraqis. It was an argument tied to Najdi domestic politics in a country that, nominally at least, had no domestic politics, so it is not surprising that the point was lost on Clayton.

By contrast, the Iraqi side held firm that Najdi tribesmen on Iraqi soil were refugees, whether political dissidents or asylum-seekers displaced from conflict, and the British Government vocally supported them in that position.<sup>76</sup> Therefore extradition would have to be accompanied by an official request from Riyadh with proper justification, and the most Iraq could do was to instruct its officials to discourage tribal migration. Any exceptions for Najd would open up Iraq to complaints from Syria and Turkey for similar treatment. The resulting compromise was Article 10 of the Bahra Agreement, stipulating that a separate agreement on criminal extradition would be concluded within a year. The Jeddah conference attempted to put definition to such crimes: assault with force, banditry (cutting the road or *qata' al-tarīq*), looting, theft, injury, killing and raiding.<sup>77</sup> However, as late as the Mecca conference in 1931, Ibn Saud still insisted that extradition could only work if all crimes were to be considered political or none at all, contending that it was all one and the same to the tribes. He eventually conceded the point grudgingly to Nuri al-Said, signing the Agreement on Criminal Extradition with the caveat that crimes against the lives of royal personages would be subject to extradition and the Iraqi Government would provide written assurances of the other categories of punishable crimes.<sup>78</sup>

Even with the Agreement signed, it was rarely implemented. From 1931 to 1936, the Iraqi Government did not submit a single extradition request, while the Saudi Government had made six requests for nine individuals, of which only one person was actually handed over.<sup>79</sup> From early 1929 until the

meeting onboard the HMS *Lupin* in 1930, Ibn Saud held up negotiations over his demand for the return of Shaykh Farhān Ibn Mashhūr (Ruwalla), to which the Iraqis only finally agreed in 1931 on the premise that Ibn Mashhūr would receive a pardon. Even then, the prisoner was rendered into his own custody and transferred by way of Syria, where he escaped into the care of his tribe.<sup>80</sup> The only truly successful extradition case was the Saudi request in 1939 for the return of four Shammar tribal leaders. The Iraqi Ministry of Interior determined that the first two were Iraqi and the second two had arrived in Iraq more than five years before, hence none of them had to return to Saudi Arabia.<sup>81</sup> Yet despite Regent Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah providing the Shammar leaders with assurances they would not be returned, Prime Minister Rashid Ali al-Kaylani intervened to have them extradited.<sup>82</sup> Ironically, the most famous Iraqi extradition request turned out to be Rashid Ali Kaylani himself, who fled from Berlin to Riyadh in 1945 and found shelter there until Ibn Saud’s death in 1953.

In a related matter, the Iraqis pushed for monetary compensation for looted goods taken during raids, which prompted Najd to make its own demands for compensation, and a debate ensued about what should be the *terminus post quem* for considering such claims and how the amounts should be determined. The Bahra Agreement stipulated an arbitration court would be created to consider compensation beginning from the signing of the ‘Uqayr Protocols, as a concession to Ibn Saud, who held that Cox had given him assurances that earlier claims would not be under review.<sup>83</sup> There was a solid logic to forfeiting all claims prior to ‘Uqayr, since up until that point no boundaries had been fixed and the tribes had not been given nationality.<sup>84</sup> The Iraqis insisted on the arbitration court and they had well-defined notions of the value of lives and property lost, although different parts of the Iraqi Government generated different numbers at different times, seemingly with little coordination. For example, the head of the Shāmīyah district in February 1925 recommended compensation of one hundred rupees for the family of every person killed, fifty for a horse, thirty for a camel and three for every head of sheep, while just two months later the head of the Samāwah district recommended two hundred rupees for victims’ families and eight for sheep.<sup>85</sup> In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the tribes of ‘Afak in Dīwānīyah province had to pay eight dinars if they killed anyone in the

Jabbūr tribe, twenty-two dinars for killing a tribesman of the Al Sa‘īd, twenty-five dinars for a member of the Al Fatlah and thirty dinars for killing a sayyid of the Al Bu Adayhām.<sup>86</sup>

The Bahra Agreement’s arbitration panel never met, however, and the issue was ultimately resolved onboard the HMS *Lupin* with Ibn Saud recommending a lump sum payment and Faisal presenting a request of £30,000, lowered from an original estimate of £70,000 and an even earlier proposal of £100,000.<sup>87</sup> Iraq had reduced the amount requested in the hopes Najd would drop its own claims to compensation, but Riyadh persisted in making a counter-claim for £20,500 and requested that its previous payment of £7,000 be credited to the £30,000 debt. Najd eventually paid in annual installments from 1930 to 1932.<sup>88</sup> This was hardly a substantive negotiation resulting in a new mutual understanding and a consistent way forward. Moreover, none of this was according to Ibn Saud’s wishes and the idea of lump sum payments was simply an expedient move to resolve a fundamental disagreement over the issue. He ruled Najd through acts of collective punishment that were designed to motivate urban communities and tribes alike to police themselves, not through bureaucratic committees considering the merits of individual claims. After the final suppression of the Ikhwan in January 1930 and the arrest of the rebel leaders, British representatives discussed with Ibn Saud proposals for returning all the camels the Ikhwan had stolen in recent weeks: “Ibn Saud . . . first suggested that the tribes should be collected at some place, such as Jahrah, that we should decide how many camels, &c., they required for their bare subsistence, and Koweit, Iraq and Nejd representatives should divide up the balance.”<sup>89</sup> This was a hard justice that penalized entire tribes for the actions of a minority, denied the individuality of tribal members, reaffirmed that there was only one ruler and sent a signal to other tribes to stay in line. The Saudi Government could not understand why the Iraqis would not take a similar approach.<sup>90</sup>

### (3) Fortifications and Outposts

In the Muhammara negotiations, King Faisal issued instructions that Najd must not militarize the site of Ḥafr al-Bātin and no military outposts should be constructed along the border until the two countries completed

negotiations and improved bilateral relations.<sup>91</sup> The Iraqi Government quickly announced it would build its own border outposts anyway, only to reverse course again when Ibn Saud and Cox objected. Consequently, Article 3 of the First ‘Uqayr Protocol stated: “The two Governments mutually agree not to use the watering places and wells situated in the vicinity of the border for any military purpose, such as building forts on them . . .” Regardless of that provision, the Iraqi Government with British encouragement decided again in August 1923 to go ahead with establishing forward operating bases, eventually resulting in the construction of a series of outposts from 1925 to 1927 (see Chapter 2). The Iraqis justified this approach by reinterpreting Article 3 of the Bahra Agreement, i.e. if Iraq has an obligation to prevent raids, then it has an obligation to construct facilities for that purpose.<sup>92</sup>

The existence of security outposts was a major concern for Ibn Saud and the Najdi tribes for three reasons: 1) the fear that outposts might be used for offensive military operations; 2) the fear they would occupy locations atop wells and thereby deny these water resources to the tribes; and 3) the fear they would be used to cordon off oil infrastructure and exclude Riyadh from developing its oil resources. The first two ideas were tangible and immediate, as we will see in the next chapter, while the third fear was a bit more inchoate. At the Jeddah talks in August 1928, Philby argued strenuously that the British Government wanted the outposts to secure an oil pipeline route from Kirkuk to Haifa, though he had trouble articulating how such outposts would be threats.<sup>93</sup>

The al-Busayyah site that was attacked by the Ikhwan in November 1927 became emblematic of this dispute. The Iraqi Government argued that the language of ‘Uqayr banning outposts did not apply to their site at al-Busayyah, because it was not big enough to be a fortification (*istihkāmāt*) and because in common parlance the normal understanding of “areas of the borders” (*fī atrāf al-hudūd*) meant “within 75 miles,” to which al-Busayyah was slightly beyond that limit.<sup>94</sup> For all of Ibn Saud’s objections to Iraqi fortifications, he too considered the idea of building fortifications, and he understood the vital importance of protecting proposed oil pipelines.<sup>95</sup> At the Jeddah conference, the British/Iraqi delegation even encouraged Ibn Saud to set up joint police stations with Iraq in Rakhīmīyah to monitor movements within the Neutral Zone, yet the Najdi Government insisted there was no

need for any police stations whatsoever.<sup>96</sup> A cooperative, peaceful approach was on the table from the time of the Bahra Agreement, in the form of both sides appointing border inspectors, but as the Iraqi Government's instructions to Tawfiq al-Suwaydi at Bahra stipulated: "... little importance is attached to this point owing to the doubtful value of such officials."<sup>97</sup> The British encouraged the two sides to establish a five-member arbitration panel to review border posts at the Lupin conference, which would have been primarily focused on laying boundary markers but could have been used for arbitrating security issues as well. However, neither side could agree on who would be the fifth tie-breaking vote.

## Fundamental Differences

As the discussion above demonstrates, twenty years of negotiations were largely focused on process (regulations for crossing the border, definitions of criminal behavior, compensation mechanisms) rather than principles (categories of travel visas, rules on double taxation, joint security patrols), and mostly at the insistence of the British and Iraqi delegations. Many of the terms of debate were defined by the Iraqi Government using frameworks derived from the Civil and Criminal Regulations on Tribal Claims that Percy Cox and the British occupying military authorities issued in February 1916.<sup>98</sup> Those regulations were modeled after British ordinances passed in India during the late nineteenth century with the goal of creating a separate justice system for the tribes and increasing colonial control over the countryside. In the Tribal Claims Regulations of 1916, Article 7 gave the political authorities the right to determine claims according to tribal law, Article 8 established councils of tribal leaders and experts for evaluating compensation, Article 27 permitted the authorities to punish entire tribes for the acts of individuals, Article 35 banned the construction of fortifications that might be used against the government, Article 42 allowed government officials to demand pledges (written guarantees or other securities) from tribal leaders not to engage in acts of violence, and so forth.<sup>99</sup>

In effect, successive Iraqi cabinets in the 1920s and 30s were taking colonial-era regulations handed down by the British for managing tribes at a time of war, and attempting to convince the Najdi Government to apply those methods and procedures to its own citizens. It was a complete

misunderstanding of the value and importance of tribal law, as well as a misunderstanding of Riyadh's vision of governance in the provinces. In common tribal law ('urf), the sum for compensation was typically determined by a tribal leader based on precedent, the capacity for fulfillment of payment, and above all the need for the leader to publicly demonstrate both justice and fairness. Yet the British instead envisioned a mechanical process that governments could learn and enact themselves, taking the shaykh out of the equation altogether. In preparation for the long-anticipated meeting of Najdi and Iraqi officials for the Bahra claims tribunal, Major Trenchard Fowle, the officer put forward to preside over the body, demonstrated his government's ignorance of the issue: "In the matter of compensation for men killed, camels and sheep looted, etc., is there a rate recognised by both sides? [ . . . ] In short, how much tribal law is common to both parties? A report on this point would be very useful to the Tribunal."<sup>100</sup>

That focus on tactical *outputs* came in place of developing a shared vision for desired strategic *outcomes*, which could have been anything the two sides desired – from militarization of the border to joint policing efforts, permanent evacuation of the tribes to accommodation of their pastoral lifestyles – had such issues been properly discussed. Instead, these short-term stop-gaps did not even result in confidence building measures as one might expect in normal diplomatic negotiations. The British and Iraqis increasingly tried to frame the issue of constructing outposts in terms of boosting policing capacity for the joint benefit of both sides, but this did not get any traction on the Najdi side. At their peak, the discussions about the citizenship of various tribes devolved into a short-sighted Ockham's razor approach. For example, the Iraqi delegation at the second round of the Jeddah conference recommended a plebiscite among the Dihamsha, with those choosing Najdi citizenship ordered to depart Iraq within three months.<sup>101</sup> Issues that simply could not be resolved, such as the compensation for goods looted during raids or the rules for constructing police stations, were referred to elaborately-designed arbitration tribunals that never convened in their intended state.<sup>102</sup> In some cases, dialogue was abandoned altogether for lack of agreement on the basic terms of the debate. For example, at the preparatory conference for the Lupin meeting, the Iraqis recommended setting a specific distance from the border at which police stations could be built, and Fouad Hamza retorted that it was not a matter of

distance but rather establishing the freedom to drink water and graze on pastures for the tribes.<sup>103</sup> In such moments, the two sides were like ships passing in the night.

The diplomatic negotiations of the 1930s were remarkable not for the types of issues that were raised, but rather for the slowly increasing Iraqi Government awareness that the Najd had an entirely different set of ideas about how to govern the border. During negotiations over the Neutral Zone in February 1936, Advisor to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior Cecil J. Edmonds rejected the notion of simply dividing the area, while the Iraqi negotiators commented that it may be necessary to identify which tribes have the right to use which wells, providing them with access on the basis of tribal law ('urf).<sup>104</sup> This brought the Iraqis closer to the original Saudi position of fifteen years' prior, and Yusuf Yassin argued in favor of a joint Saudi–Iraqi administration of the area, stating that the Neutral Zone could not be divided because tribes on both sides would lose ownership of their wells.<sup>105</sup> Even more remarkable, Edmonds then compromised by proposing measures for exempting some tribesmen from visas and residency permits when crossing the border and even granting them equal access to property rights and government services.<sup>106</sup> This was all a tacit acknowledgement that Ibn Saud's original vision for flexible borders based on the needs of the tribes for water and pasture might finally have to be incorporated on some level. And, for the most part, by the 1940s after two decades of failing to regulate tribal movements, the Iraqi Government defaulted to a position of allowing the Najdi tribes to graze across the border.<sup>107</sup>

There had always been a tension in Iraqi policy and an ambivalence among some Iraqi policy-makers, so that even as early as 1922 in Article 2 of the first 'Uqayr Protocol the Iraqis had nominally pledged to allow Najdi tribes open access to any of their wells found on the Iraqi side of the border. At the second round of the Jeddah conference in 1928, Tawfiq al-Suwaydi made a desperate attempt to gain Ibn Saud's approval for Iraqi police stations with a corresponding offer to allow the freedom of grazing in Iraqi lands for all Najdi tribes.<sup>108</sup> Similarly, in considering the freedom of movement for tribes across the border, the Iraqi delegation at the preparatory meeting for the Lupin conference showed both its general willingness to accommodate and its deep apprehension of the challenges that might entail.

The delegation pressed for language in Article 7 of the Treaty of Good Neighbors requiring all tribesmen to carry a document stamped with a magistrate's seal stating his identity, the name of his tribe, the size of his tribe's household and the number of its cattle, which must be presented to the nearest security outpost upon arrival across the border.<sup>109</sup> By and large, however, Iraqi negotiating tactics – heavily influenced from the outset by British advisors – had adopted a path of state-centric boundaries, regulatory measures and law enforcement mechanisms, arguing for them as an end unto themselves, almost as a sign of Iraq's modernity and progress. Certainly that image of modernity played into public sentiment in some quarters of Baghdad, as represented by those Iraqi politicians and journalists who liked to contrast alleged Iraqi civilization with supposed Najdi backwardness (see Chapter 4).<sup>110</sup>

## **The Saudi Approach to Diplomacy**

The timeline and discussion above show intense diplomatic efforts to resolve a constellation of issues that may have been sparked by border security incidents, but ultimately comprised a broader set of concerns relating to citizenship, extradition and national defense. The actual negotiations themselves never progressed much farther than diplomatic formalities and bureaucratic exercises, in part due to the very divergent concepts of how these two countries envisioned the border. However, the negative dialectic outlined above, of diplomatic engagement leading to estrangement and the formation of deep-rooted mistrust, is not how later historians depicted events. The prevalent narrative has instead been one of Ibn Saud and Faisal permitting tribal raids as part of their personal rivalry, and the diplomacy of the 1920s slowly overcoming those problems on the path towards a deep mutual understanding between the two monarchs and reconciliation between their families. In the second half of this chapter, we will explore that discrepancy between the reality of diplomatic failure as depicted above and the received historical narrative of diplomatic success as portrayed by other scholars.

Sadiq Hassan al-Soudani wrote the master narrative of diplomacy that subsequent historians have echoed, concluding his study with the Lupin

conference and the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbors: “And with that, the year 1930 was decisive in the history of relations of the two countries and their struggle, since it put down a basis of resolving differences between them, so that we no longer hear after it any conflict with dangerous aspects as had happened before the conference.”<sup>111</sup> Of course, on the very next page al-Soudani admits that some raids did continue after 1930, but the two governments did not let the raids hinder their diplomatic progress, a progress that al-Soudani did not describe because it was outside the scope of his study.

Indeed, the renowned Iraqi historian ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Hasanī had previously reached the same conclusion.<sup>112</sup> And other historians have extended that narrative to spell out what is only implied in al-Soudani. According to Muḥammad Sa‘īd Ḥamdān: “And we can say in brief that the Lupin conference played a significant role in improving relations between the two Arab Kings of Faisal and Ibn Saud, and the two neighboring countries of Iraq and Saudi Arabia; and strongly increased understanding and cooperation in what followed, in accord with the goals of joint nationalism, and that the two parties sought to achieve it in friendship and sincerity.”<sup>113</sup> For Ḥamdān, that nationalism means Arab nationalism, and accordingly his research on the later period from 1931 to 1953 is largely a comparison of Iraqi and Saudi policies on Syria, Palestine and the Arab League, attempting to show areas of agreement between the two Kingdoms in their support for these regional Arab issues.<sup>114</sup> “Meanwhile, the tide of nationalism at that time was accompanied by the emergence of Ibn Saud as a strong personality in the 1930s, dazzling many of the Arabs with his ability to build a strong state . . . this in addition to the position of his country in the middle of the Arab Mashreq, making the country the natural Arab core for any Arab accord or federation . . . ”<sup>115</sup> Indeed, there were contemporary witnesses who shared Hamdān’s view. As‘ad Dāghir wrote in his memoirs that King Faisal told him, “federation [*al-itihād*] among the Arabs is the only means to success and it is necessary to seek accord with Ibn Saud,” so Dāghir was surprised to hear the issue had not been announced onboard the HMS *Lupin*, “but I said to myself: surely it is the first step and surely it will hasten the steps that will come.”<sup>116</sup>

In this version of the story, the Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance of 1936 was an example of two independent Arab states throwing off the yoke of colonialism and taking a step forward on the road to Arab unity. The failure to ultimately achieve that unity in the 1940s was consequently the result of wartime pressures on Saudi Arabia to support the Allies (despite their colonial ambitions), and the self-interested political ambitions of actors in Baghdad and Riyadh. Such a narrative is only possible if we are to take Ibn Saud's rhetoric of Arab unity at face value. As the following discussion will attempt to show, however, Ibn Saud's appeals to Arab unity were part of his routine manner of speech, and while they were almost certainly reflective of his personal opinions, they must also be treated as part of his overall approach to public diplomacy, and therefore separate and distinct from his decision-making process on bilateral affairs.

## **Understanding the Lupin Conference**

Regarding the first claim that the Lupin conference marked a watershed moment in improving relations between Ibn Saud and Faisal (and by extension their families and their countries), there is no doubt that the correspondence between the two monarchs was warm and cordial – before, during and after the meeting (Figure 5). Regarding the second claim that the focus of diplomacy in the 1930s was to combine efforts in support of the broader Arab world, there is also no doubt that Ibn Saud held deep sympathies for other Arab populations. As evidence of these two defining aspects of the watershed moment onboard the HMS *Lupin*, many historians have pointed to the welcoming remarks of Ibn Saud upon his arrival. The main account comes from Ahmad 'Abd al-Ghafūr 'Attār, who recorded that Ibn Saud thanked the British representatives for hosting and then said to everyone assembled: "Certainly, it is a duty for the Arabs and their emirs that they seek out, continuously striving, for unity and accord."<sup>117</sup>

'Attār was the founder of the reputable newspaper Okaz and an occasional advisor for the Saudi Royal Court, he went to great lengths to describe the timing and locations of the day's events in excruciating detail, and it would generally be safe to assume he cared deeply about accuracy in reporting. It seems like a rather awkward remark for the King to have made in front of his British hosts, but it does conveniently play into the narrative

that the Lupin conference was a momentous shift away from local border squabbles in the 1920s, toward a more high-minded Iraqi–Saudi dialogue on achieving Arab unity in the 1930s. It would be hard to assess whether a comment such as this – wholly typical of Ibn Saud in most of his correspondence – represented some deeper philosophy or practical program of concrete support by Ibn Saud for Arab unity. He entertained a great many leaders of the Syrian nationalist opposition on their visits to the Kingdom and repeatedly cautioned the British and Americans against allowing a Jewish state in Palestine that would come at the expense of the Arabs living there.

There are two more accounts of that initial greeting onboard the HMS *Lupin*, as different from each other as they are from ‘Aṭṭār, and each one is crucial for understanding this initial interaction between the two monarchs. Indeed, the preparatory meetings in Kuwait that preceded Lupin were inconclusive, while the sessions between the two monarchs during their meeting onboard ship were entirely private. Rihani relates the following about the initial interaction of the two Kings:

[Faisal:] Right now, it is not Faisal bin Hussein talking to Abdulaziz Ibn Saud. But rather I am King of Iraq and you are King of the Hijaz and Najd. So, if you were looking to me in this meeting of ours in my role as Sharif Faisal the son of King Hussein – that which was between you and him being what it was – then you will despise me. But I am meeting you as Faisal, King of Iraq. And in this role of mine, I desire and hope that the country of Najd and the Hijaz should be happy and that it should have fidelity with the country of Iraq. We did not build them [i.e. the police stations] out of hostility for the people of Najd, but rather as assistance for them, my brother. We built them in order to deter the tribes, your tribes and our tribes, from raids and trespassing. And if the Ikhwan come asking, we will respond to them by turning them down, and they will get used to obeying the rules, and [the police stations] make it easy for you since they restrain [the Ikhwan]. And likewise I say to the Iraqi tribes. The police stations are in the interests of your country and Allah and my country.

[Ibn Saud:] I swear by Allah [*‘aqṣam bi-Allāh*] that there is not a bit of hatred or contempt in my heart for [you] Faisal, other than love and respect. By Allah, by Allah the Lord of Mecca [*wa-Allāh wa-Allāh wa rab al-bayt*], I came following my heart to this meeting. And I ask Allah to grant us all of what is good for the Arabs.<sup>118</sup>

This account certainly has the advantage of seeming more true-to-life in the use of language, matching other accounts of Ibn Saud’s spoken rhetorical flourishes.

The third version of this story of the opening of the Lupin conference comes from Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, who claims to have a full description of

the event from Yusuf Yassin, Ibn Saud's private secretary and head of the political division of the Royal Court. Indeed, Yassin was present onboard the HMS *Lupin* and on all voyages of the King abroad.

Abdulaziz clarified for Faisal that he had never before shown the Sharif Hussein nor any of his sons animosity or quarrel. But when [Hussein] was appointed by the Turks as Sharif over Mecca, [Hussein] was the first one who openly declared [hostility] with [Ibn Saud]. Immediately [when Hussein] arrived at [Mecca] he took up a force from the Hijaz and went with it to Najd and lured away a group of 'Otayba by deceiving [Ibn Saud's] brother Sa'd bin 'Abdulrahman, then detained [Sa'd] when he was in the middle of the Najd. And [Ibn Saud] mentioned that he was forced at this time to rise up in confronting [Hussein], so he went to defend himself, and that matter ended in peace and Sa'd was returned. So this first beginning for the quarrel was not preceded by any provocation [by Ibn Saud], and King Hussein continued in not hiding his own impulses, until it was the day of the battle of Turba and [Ibn Saud] followed him into the Hijaz. And here King Faisal did not hesitate in directing some of the blame to his father, and he said: Surely the first instigator for it was Khālid Ibn Lawī,<sup>119</sup> their meeting in Jeddah first and [second] their arrival in the Hijaz from Istanbul, and he said to them if they want to establish a king of the Hijaz then it is not possible to install this King [i.e. Sharif Hussein] and Sultan Abdulaziz bin Saud in Najd.<sup>120</sup>

The most noticeable feature of this report is the very lengthy and verbose recounting of the history of Saudi-Hijazi relations, with Ibn Saud repeatedly shifting responsibility for the rivalry onto the shoulders of Faisal's father. It may not have been particularly sensitive to Faisal's feelings, but the general approach to the conversation was typical of Ibn Saud, and indeed it has been a typical trait of almost all subsequent Saudi kings in their meetings with foreign heads of state to spend the first hour reviewing the history of the Kingdom.

It is quite possible that all three accounts are true. Ibn Saud may very well have greeted the assembled group with the short statement quoted in 'Attār, the two monarchs then exchanged personal greetings as quoted in Rihani, and what Yassin is reporting is what he later learned of Ibn Saud's private meeting with Faisal. Ibn Saud was often prone to sprinkle his letters and speeches with mentions of the Islamic umma and the need for Arab unity, as we see in all three accounts. And as a senior advisor, Yassin would almost certainly have sought a read-out of the private meeting from his boss. But just because Ibn Saud expressed a positive attitude toward the future of relations with Iraq and warm sympathies for the Arab cause, that does not therefore mean his words were some sort of true reflection of his innermost feelings about Iraq, the ruling Hashemite family, or any concrete plans for

eventual Arab unity. Nor does it necessarily make the meeting onboard the HMS *Lupin* a watershed moment. By examining these differing accounts of the meeting, we can conclude that the sources are vague and ambiguous in terms of the substance of the discussions, and Ibn Saud's thoughts and feelings are hidden behind layers of second-hand transmission. Distinguishing Ibn Saud's heart-felt sentiments from his simple platitudes and separating all of them from his actual policy assertions is difficult.

## Public Messaging

Consequently, it will help us to take a step back and place this historic moment in 1930 in a broader context of Ibn Saud's diplomatic mannerisms.<sup>121</sup> In fact, Ibn Saud was remarkably consistent in displaying outward warmth and kindness toward successive Iraqi leaders and other Arab governments throughout the period of this study. There was undoubtedly a rivalry with King Faisal himself as early as 1921, given that one part of the British Government had favored Faisal for King of Iraq and another part of the British Government had favored Ibn Saud. However, even upon learning of Faisal's nomination and addressing his complaint to the British High Commissioner in Baghdad, Ibn Saud still had the presence of mind to send a letter of congratulations to Faisal while the latter was passing through Başrah on his way to Baghdad to assume the throne. And in this letter, as in much of his future correspondence, Ibn Saud expressed his desire for cooperation for the benefit of all Arabs and to remove any differences that existed purely on a personal level with the father, King Hussein.<sup>122</sup> After every major diplomatic exchange, Ibn Saud was diligent in sending a positive note to his counterparts and whenever the British demarshaled him on Ikhwan raids he was quick to send his regrets and reassurances.<sup>123</sup>

Let us consider another exchange that exhibits the kind of passive aggressive approach echoed in the remarks recorded by Yassin above. On August 16, 1934, Foreign Minister Tawfiq al-Suwaydi sent a letter asking for the Saudi Government to recall its first ambassador in Baghdad, Ibrāhīm al-Mu‘ammar, after less than a year in office. Yassin replied with the following comments loosely dictated by Ibn Saud and reframed in the third-person.<sup>124</sup>

Certainly, our relations with Iraq are above individuals and above all personal considerations, and that His Majesty is ready to recall Ibn Mu‘ammar for the sake of improving relations with Iraq and binding them. Indeed, he is ready to sacrifice in this way any one of his sons, and the issue of Ibn Mu‘ammar is among the simplest of issues that can be resolved in a friendly way, so long as there is not found an intention to touch upon dignity or hinder the friendly relations between the two countries. And the important thing is not the person of Ibn Mu‘ammar, but rather the important thing is removing misunderstanding, and all of what concerns him mars the purity of friendship between the two countries. And if the Iraqi Government insists on this

transferring of him, then we are okay with it, but we wish to delay this for a period to settle affairs between the two countries, so that in the Arab country of Iraq there will be seen gathering us together with it a single nationality and race and language and religious purpose, and more than this, it will be seen that Iraq in relation to the heart of the Arabian Peninsula is like the Dam of Marib. And the one who breaches this dam in the morning will be touched in the Peninsula of the Arabs after breaching the dam as only Allah is capable. And for the sake of this, we see His Majesty [Ibn Saud] taking every care for all of what preserves for Iraq its independence and its lands, because aggression against it is aggression against all Arabs. And it is for the sake of this that he welcomes with every thought to reconsider in the relations between Iraq and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia the [two of them] being a single front for the defense of their countries and to cooperate on what strengthens the Muslims and the Arabs. And he wishes to receive an answer concerning this subject, which he believes it a duty and truly necessary in the throat of all Arabs, for the sake of the Arab umma and the Arab cause.<sup>125</sup>

In this letter, Ibn Saud kindly acknowledged Iraqi concerns, reassured Baghdad of his good intentions, reminded everyone there were higher goals to be achieved, and welcomed sincere cooperation at achieving a positive outcome for all Arabs and Muslims. It is not necessarily any indication of an evolving stance toward Arab nationalism, and the talk of the Arab umma had absolutely nothing to do with issue at hand. In this instance, he did not actually commit to recalling his ambassador, and in fact al-Mu‘ammar would stay in the job until 1936.<sup>126</sup> al-Mu‘ammar had the trust of the King – he was able to communicate with Ibn Saud directly and he kept his monarch informed of issues of keen interest, such as negative public opinion towards the Hashemite family and Saudi dissidents operating out of the Shi‘a holy city of Najaf.<sup>127</sup> The Iraqi Government accused him of unauthorized contacts with private citizens, including journalists, and of visiting trading posts in Najaf to issue orders that Najdi tribes should not pay any livestock taxes without his personal authorization, but those activities could all have been viewed as exercising his office in the pursuit of Saudi national interests.<sup>128</sup>

Regardless, the point is that it is worth having quoted the above passage in full to see precisely how Ibn Saud approached moments of diplomatic tension, by deflecting with high-flown language of Arab unity in order to distract attention from the more pressing problem at hand. And it is valuable to undertake this comparison with the remarks onboard the HMS *Lupin*, because for all of the positive language coming out of the Lupin conference, there is little evidence that attitudes concerning Iraq had fundamentally

changed in Riyadh as a result of the meeting between the two Kings. Even on a personal level, at the very end of the Lupin conference, when Faisal insisted on striking out the title “King of the Hijaz” in an official letter to Ibn Saud, the latter flew into a rage in front of the British High Commissioner and accused Faisal of back-stabbing yet again.<sup>129</sup> Each of these examples (and countless more) help us to understand the public diplomacy aspects of Ibn Saud’s style of engagement with foreign leaders and the press, but we still have the remaining problem of how to understand the inner motivations and strategic intentions of the Saudi King and his government.

## **Arab Nationalism in Riyadh**

It is hard to pierce the veil of Ibn Saud’s approach to diplomacy and arrive at his inner thoughts on Arab unity or pan-Arabism, in part because he used Arab unity as a routine conversational device in moments of tension with his Arab neighbors and in part because archival records of Ibn Saud’s personal thoughts are so hard to come by. There is one major outlier in this history of bilateral relations that should, in theory at least, indicate Ibn Saud’s strategic intentions vis-à-vis Iraq to support Arab unity or even pan-Arabism. That is the Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance of 1936, not in its final product but rather in the initial Saudi-proposed concept of a mutual defense pact to which other countries such as Yemen could participate. It was sharply distinct from the many other treaties, agreements and conferences that were mostly devoted to political, economic, judicial and consular issues related to the border and the tribes. It was also different from other bilateral treaties and agreements that Ibn Saud negotiated with other regional neighbors, such as Yemen and Iran, in the way it pointed toward broader multilateral participation.

As early as February 1931, the Iraqi press reported that Ibn Saud had invited Nuri al-Said to visit Jeddah to discuss a treaty of alliance, but Yusuf Yassin denied the rumors at that time. He asserted that the visit was entirely Nuri’s idea, that there would be no alliance with Iraq, and that telegrams from Nuri would be published in Mecca to reveal the truth of the matter, all because the “Hejaz government could never trust Iraq which always gave false turn to things . . . ”<sup>130</sup> The British Foreign Office apparently agreed that this was a political stunt of Nuri al-Said and not a serious overture, as

evidenced by Nuri's showboating for the Iraqi press, and his unwillingness to communicate directly or convey a fixed agenda to his Saudi interlocutors in preparation for the visit.<sup>131</sup> Yet the question remains about Saudi intentions in the years that followed. Did Ibn Saud and his advisors harbor these ideas of Arab alliance all through the 1930s? Was the 1936 Treaty a pioneering attempt by Ibn Saud to forge a pan-Arab alliance as prelude to an Arab federation? If so, then previous historians would be justified in their characterization of the Lupin conference as a watershed moment on the path to overcoming petty personal rivalries and moving towards the path of joint Saudi–Iraqi efforts to promote Arab unity – a promising new horizon for diplomatic activity in the 1930s that was only thwarted by the intervention of Western powers and the rising tide of WWII.

As mentioned above, British archival documents show discussions between Hafiz Wahba and the Iraqi Government about a treaty of alliance beginning in earnest in February 1935. The Saudis delivered a first draft in April that underwent at least three revisions before Yusuf Yassin renewed negotiations in January 1936 for the final version that was signed three months later.<sup>132</sup> These revisions were due to heavy British emendations submitted through Nuri al-Said, weakening the language on the pretext that the treaty would conflict with Iraqi's pre-existing obligations to Britain and the League of Nations.<sup>133</sup> "Nuri Pasha explained that what was now in contemplation was a treaty of friendship – not of alliance – providing for consultation in certain emergencies, and subject to the provisos he had mentioned, i.e. no obligation to take measures against any Arab State or to take any action incompatible with the terms of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty."<sup>134</sup> The British Consul in Jeddah suspected that the Saudi Government was motivated by fears of Iran and Turkey striking their own pact with Iraq.<sup>135</sup> There was probably some truth in that. A Turco–Iraqi–Iranian Non-Aggression Pact was signed in Geneva that fall, and the Saudi Foreign Ministry had not been consulted and did not want to participate in it.<sup>136</sup> The change in attitude, from Saudi rejection of an alliance proposal in 1931 to Saudi support for one in 1935, could have been in response to these changing regional alliances.

We do not have sources that explain Ibn Saud's evolving thoughts on the 1936 Treaty, only that he weighed in at the end to attempt to resolve the

British complaint about Iraq's obligations to the League of Nations.<sup>137</sup> He was in direct communication with Syrian nationalist leaders like Jamīl Mardam in mid-1935, and these Syrian nationalists appear to have been encouraging a Saudi–Iraqi front in support of Arab unity and the Syrian cause.<sup>138</sup> However, just before the final exchange of ratified documents, Ibn Saud was clear in a telegraph to his Ambassador in Baghdad that the most he could hope to attain from Iraq on pan-Arab cooperation was to keep up appearances for the public: “On our part, what concerns us in connection with this position is that all people should know that we are in unity in happiness as well as in misfortune, and to avoid any news, big or small . . . regarding discord in our endeavours . . . All our worry was that this might be heard by outsiders.”<sup>139</sup> However, even if we are unsure about Ibn Saud’s full intentions, we can be much more certain about the motivations of his advisors who wrote and negotiated the draft texts, and that will tell us something about the impetus for the Treaty itself.

Yusuf Yassin was born in Latakia, Syria, where he learned the Quran before traveling to Jerusalem to study religious law. He joined the Arab Revolt during WWI and fought alongside Faisal bin Hussein at Aqaba, later serving in Amman and Damascus before joining Faisal again at Aleppo and fighting at the battle of Maysalūn in 1920.<sup>140</sup> He returned to Syria, but by 1924 had left again for Najd to join Ibn Saud on the campaign for Mecca. Hafiz Wahba was born in Būlāq, a neighborhood of Cairo, where he studied Islamic law.<sup>141</sup> He fled when Britain issued an arrest warrant for his participation with Sa‘ad Zaghloul in the 1919 Egyptian revolt, took up a teaching post in Bahrain under the protection of Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh bin ‘Issa Al Khalifa, and fled to Kuwait and then Najd when faced with deportation yet again by the British authorities. Dr. Abdullah Damlouji was born in Mosul, where he learned Arabic, Ottoman Turkish, Kurdish, English and Farsi (Figure 6). He went to Istanbul to study at the military officer’s medical academy, but he did not have time to obtain a specialization before he was sent to the war in the Balkans in 1913.<sup>142</sup> He became close friends with Nuri al-Said when the two were part of the underground Arab officers society al-‘Ahd, and when the Ottoman Government cracked down on the group, they both had to flee. They went first to Egypt and then to Basrah, where Sayyid Talib al-Naqib was fostering his own Arab independence

movement, before they parted ways, with Nuri staying in Iraq and Damlouji journeying south to Riyadh. Fouad Hamza was born to a Druze family in Abey, Lebanon, and studied in Beirut where he joined the American University, but did not complete his studies. He worked for the Arab government in Syria in 1919, and fled to Jerusalem with the advance of French forces in 1920, running again in 1926 after hearing rumors the British had ordered his arrest for involvement with the Syrian Revolt.<sup>143</sup> (Harry St. John Bridger Philby was not often involved in diplomacy with Iraq but occasionally contributed to decision-making in Riyadh on the issue.)<sup>144</sup>

They were part of a team of Arab advisors who surrounded Ibn Saud, travelling with him and contributing to foreign policy.<sup>145</sup> They believed strongly in Arab independence from the colonial powers and Arab unity of purpose on the road toward progress and modernity. Hāshim al-Rifā‘ī, ‘Abd al-Latīf al-Mandīl and Ameen al-Rihani sat on the golden sands along the shores at ‘Uqayr in 1922 and shared their innermost thoughts about the factors preventing Arabs of the Peninsula from rising up and shaking off their repression.<sup>146</sup> Hafiz Wahba in particular was a champion of Arab union. In his account of the formation of the Arab League, he paid homage to Ibn Saud’s efforts to unify the Arabian Peninsula, he honored other Arab thinkers like Rashīd Rīdā and ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Kawākabī, but above all he placed himself front and center. In fact, he claimed that the original concept of an Arab federation was his alone:

And in 1925, the Sultan of Najd completed the unification of the East of the Peninsula and the West of it, and this was a localized union, though a well-loved union. And were it not for the presence of the English in Iraq and Jordan, the Sultan of Najd would have been able to gather together the North of these regions with the Arabian Peninsula. But the English were a powerful rock and Ibn Saud could not remove them from his path, so he preferred to understand and cooperate with his neighbor in all of what pertained to the Arabs for the better. Thus in 1934, I passed by Iraq as is my custom, and the government at that time was headed by Sayyid Ali Jawdat al-‘Ayoubi, and I talked with the current government and with the great men of Iraq like the late Sayyid Naji al-Suwaydi and Yassin Pasha al-Hashimi and Hikmat Sulayman and all the other thought leaders. And I showed to them a preliminary proposal that could be the core of an Arab union, which is summarized as follows: 1) unite military arms; 2) lift customs barriers; 3) end travel visas between countries; 4) unify currencies; 5) unify postal services. And this recommendation satisfied all of them, but the circumstances of the countries did not aid in overcoming the obstacles.<sup>147</sup>

The implication here is that Hafiz Wahba had been shopping around the idea of an Arab federation in Baghdad during the two years prior to the Saudi submission of a draft treaty of alliance. And despite the ingratiating and deferential tone in which he addressed his boss, Hafiz Wahba was clear that he alone was the driving force behind the Saudi Arabian Government's push for Arab unity. It seems likely that the Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance was mostly a vision of Ibn Saud's Levantine advisors, who sought to reconnect with their imagined community of Arab intellectuals in the eastern Mediterranean, even as Ibn Saud supported its broad principles and Nuri al-Said found political advantage in attaching his name to it. According to the British Ambassador Reader Bullard, that is precisely how Ibn Saud viewed the situation in December 1937: "Ibn Saud said . . . there were people there [in Iraq] who were bringing forward schemes for Palestine, not from love of Palestine or of the Arabs, nor from friendship towards His Majesty's Government, but from personal ambition. I concluded that he was referring to the project of Nuri Pasha's . . ."<sup>148</sup> The rivalry with the Hashemites in Iraq and Jordan might very well have been a more immediate concern for Ibn Saud than Arab unity, right up until the end of his life, despite the intense passion and fervor that he and his advisors felt for Arab nationalism.<sup>149</sup>

## Summary

Most diplomatic engagements are motivated by a range of distinct yet overlapping policy objectives, and it is not uncommon for different policy-makers to reach consensus around a shared diplomatic approach despite their different understandings of the policy outcomes. Ibn Saud could have had true heart-felt sentiments for the health and well-being of all Arabs without necessarily wanting to compromise his country's sovereignty for the sake of Arab unity. His Levantine advisors in Riyadh could have pursued an agenda of Arab unity for the purpose of preparing their legacy, all at no cost to Ibn Saud or the Saudi Government. Ibn Saud, his sons Saud and Faisal, and other senior Saudi officials, could have held successive Iraqi governments at arms' length out of suspicion and fear for the constant political turmoil in Baghdad, the opaque political machinations of leaders like Nuri al-Said, and

the desire to balance Iraqi demands with those of Britain. All of those policy objectives could be true at one and the same time, wrapped up in the same series of diplomatic engagements like the Bahra or Lupin conferences. The suppression of the Ikhwan and the resulting meeting onboard the HMS *Lupin* in January 1930 hardly formed a watershed moment in overcoming personal rivalries on the path toward a vision for Arab nationalist cooperation. In fact, in 1932 the British representative in Kuwait could report that the leader of the ‘Ajman tribe hiding out in Iraq ever since the Ikhwan revolt was now on the payroll of King Faisal, which shows how little had changed even after the 1930 meeting of the monarchs.<sup>150</sup>

Rather, the underlying fissure in the relationship was the border region, including the tribes, wells and pastures contained within it, which made apparent a much deeper chasm dividing the two countries in terms of their divergent attitudes toward governance. This, in turn, generated misunderstandings and mistrust that pervaded bilateral relations throughout the period of this study and beyond. The many conferences, treaties and agreements concluded between 1922 and 1941 had not been successful steps in the right direction toward finding a mutual understanding and appreciation. Instead, they increasingly represented bureaucratic exercises that masked the deep-rooted mistrust on both sides. They were indicative of the failure of the two governments to find a shared vision for the border, the tribes living along it and the means of regulating it. We can see the outcome of twenty years of failed negotiations in the Rawdat Tanhat Agreement of April 1940. It was designed to solve the last problem lingering between the two countries over the status of the tribes, with all Shammar tribesmen that had recently arrived in Iraq being obligated to return back to Saudi Arabia. To the very end, the British Political Agent in Bahrain tasked with following the issue believed that the settlement would quite rationally and logically involve “the establishment of a zone on both sides of Frontier to be administered by joint commission with powers of summary jurisdiction.”<sup>151</sup> In truth, implementation would not be reached for another year and the solution would be a forced march through the desert, as we will see in the next chapter. As late as January 6, 1940, the Saudi Embassy in Baghdad sent a letter to the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs that demonstrated just how little had changed since 1922:

These criminals of Shammar who have settled on the frontiers, without a single exception, were not led by any national or political motive to leave their original home nor were they compelled to go out by oppression or the attacks of enemies. Here in their own country are their friends and kinsmen enjoying a full share of comfort, tranquility and good care. Those people only migrated to Iraq when they realized that their original country could not possibly allow them to make raids against Iraq or to cause disturbance on the frontier. They attained their desire and lived under the protection of the Iraqi Government and continued their disturbances and wrongdoing. The surest proof of that is the list of looted property which I sent to the [Iraqi] Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It amounted to 798 camels, 20 (loads of goods), one mare, 13 rifles, 11 pounds and 570 riyals . . .<sup>152</sup>

Here we have Saudi complaints of Baghdad failing to enforce security on the border, demands for criminal extradition and requests for compensation. The diplomatic process begun in 1922 that was predicated on a state-centric model of modern international norms had failed to resolve the issues it was intended to address. By this point, complaints were so routine that they could be summarized by embassy staff without need for much documentation. It was emblematic of how little had been accomplished in two decades and how much less would be yet to come.

## 2

# SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE

As for the second aspect, I did not review it with Baghdad, though I requested from al-Shanīfī to give those pastoral nomads expelled from Iraq to Najd a period of forty-five days for the sake of the ‘waking days’ [i.e. middle summer] ending and [thereby] saving them from inevitable death, both they and their livestock, because the road they walk is devoid of water. And al-Shanīfī rejected my request, saying: “Let them die and go to hell.” So, I desired from him to cable the King [Abdulaziz] to mention to him my viewpoint and my request, and that giving them this period of time is the humanitarian way, so he agreed, and after two days he informed me that “the King agreed to the request of al-Rawi . . .”<sup>1</sup>

The author of the passage, Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi, was uniquely skilled for the special mission of negotiating implementation of the Rawdat Tanhat Agreement. He had formerly served as Chief of Police for the southern

desert region of Iraq in the early 1930s, during which time he personally designed many of the facilities, procedures and command structures for the Iraqi security forces there. At this meeting on August 10, 1940, he was negotiating the process by which all Shammar tribesmen who had taken shelter in Iraq over the past five years would be returned to Saudi Arabia.<sup>2</sup> Both sides now understood that the long-standing diplomatic impasse could no longer be resolved regarding tribesmen who had fled before that point, and 1935 would have to be the new *terminus ante quem* for enforcing their return. These negotiations happened to be coming at the start of summer, with only one path designated for the movement of those who were being deported – straight through the desert. al-Rawi's counterpart was Shaykh Sulaymān al-Shanīfī, the authorized representative of Ibn Saud and emir of the town of Līnah. The town was a staging ground for tribes passing through the barren area of the Bātin, and it was a place al-Shanīfī had probably used himself when he led cross-border raids on Iraq in the late 1920s.<sup>3</sup> The exchange that al-Rawi describes was emblematic of the miscommunication and poor coordination between security services and local administrators that characterized Saudi–Iraqi relations throughout the period of this study. That was just as true among officials of different governments as it was true of officials working for the same government.<sup>4</sup>

It is in the career of al-Rawi, this extremely skilled Iraqi police officer and civil servant, that the full complexity of governance and security in the border regions is revealed. He dedicated years of his life in pioneering work attempting to overcome misunderstandings between Najd and Iraq for the betterment of a vast expanse (*bādiya*) along the border that he deeply loved. Yet even with a clear humanitarian mandate, years of experience in working with his Saudi counterparts on issues of the tribes, and a Saudi interlocutor who knew and understood the issues perfectly well, al-Rawi still had to appeal to Ibn Saud to grant these returnees extra time for safe passage. (And, indeed, Ibn Saud eventually responded with kindness and granted clemency by postponing the deadline.) It appears that of the two key tasks al-Rawi had set himself upon arrival in the *bādiya* in 1929 – shifting governmental authority from the British to native Iraqis, and improving working-level cooperation with Saudi Arabia – ten years had passed and only the first of those goals had achieved modest progress.<sup>5</sup>

The divergent attitudes of the two governments toward security and governance contributed to an inability to come to a mutual understanding on the terms of reference or even routine channels of communication. The various measures adopted by the Governments to impose their control over the *bādiya* came at the expense of institutionalizing positive working relationships and designing a common approach to governance in the border region. The first half of this chapter will examine the types of force structures employed by the three governments and the ways their security policies evolved over time, in order to show how miscommunications were the result of Iraq and Saudi Arabia adopting divergent attitudes toward policing and governing their own populations. The second half of this chapter will then show how historiographical narratives emphasizing state control over the use of armed force are misleading, exaggerating these governments' culpability for cross-border violence while ignoring the significant historical agency of local actors.

## **Force Structures and Administration**

During the early 1920s, the British Mandate for Iraq was still establishing institutions of governance in Baghdad and Ibn Saud was pushing westward in an attempt to seize control of the Hijaz. State formation was taking place in the capitals of Riyadh and Baghdad, and to a lesser extent in the major urban centers of the provinces, but there was little in terms of security or service provision in the remote desert regions at the borders. Over time, the Iraqi and Najdi Governments would move toward modern, Westernized forms of policing and administration that subsumed and eventually displaced older traditions of governance.

### **The British Government**

British forces in the southern and western desert areas of Iraq, as of 1921, involved one regiment in Dīwānīyah, one battalion at the regional headquarters in Samāwah, and one company detached to Nāṣirīyah.<sup>6</sup> The British occupation during WWI also left in place a network of officials who were tasked with advising their Iraqi counterparts and reporting to London

through the British High Commission in Baghdad (i.e. the British Legation or *dār al-i ‘timād*). A British national was attached to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior in the role of Advisor and he commanded a series of Administrative Inspectors, all of whom were British nationals. They worked in the provinces with a staff of native Iraqis supporting their efforts.<sup>7</sup> All other ministries in Baghdad and governors of the provinces had similar arrangements, as part of Great Britain’s pledge to the League of Nations that it would help set up functioning institutions of governance in preparation for eventual Iraqi independence.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, Iraqi officials routinely dealt with an Administrative Inspector involved in political affairs (writ large), an Officer Inspector of Police, a Special Security Officer handling military intelligence, and during kinetic operations, a Royal Air Force (RAF) representative.<sup>9</sup> The active duty officers changed frequently, since they were on two-year rotations, and they often looked down on the advice of civilian contractors, especially ones who might be more knowledgeable of the desert.<sup>10</sup>

The southern desert was a free-wheeling environment for the British officers administering it. An intelligence report in the morning could lead to a military operation in the evening. For example, on December 26, 1924, John Bagot Glubb (then serving as a low-level military intelligence officer) received news of Najdi tribes raiding Umm al-Rahal. He rushed to the nearest telegraph to scramble three airplanes and jumped into one of them himself, carrying out bombing and strafing runs on the raiders twenty-five miles north of the Neutral Zone at al-Abūwayb.<sup>11</sup> The high level of autonomy granted to the British officers and the lack of regular oversight left them in the position of mediating interactions between the local population and the Iraqi Government. The local tribes gave these British officers nicknames, developed very personal relationships with them, and treated them as though they were the sole government authorities in the desert. (Glubb was known as “Abu Hunayk” [Mr. Jaw] from an injury to his face that he had suffered during WWI.) al-Rawi relates one such anecdote: “ . . . and on this evening, a badū came to me complaining that their camels had been looted from them, and when [Associate Director of Police] Mahmūd Shukrī asked them about the location where they were looted, they answered him that they were looted in English lands . . . ”<sup>12</sup>

A handful of these British officers and contractors, assisted by less than a hundred Iraqi bedouin, a couple dozen airplanes and armored cars, and the occasional support of a company of Iraqi infantry, were routinely tasked with deterring raids in which the opposing force could reach several thousand fighters. Yet they struggled to convince Baghdad and London of the need for greater resources.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, many of these officers even struggled to understand what the mission was really all about. The Administrative Inspector for Dīwāniyah in 1924 wrote: “It seems that we fought for the sake of nothing, it seems on principle that it didn’t deserve this much, and there is an enormous desert without any benefit, just like the people who reside in it for six months of the year. There are no corridors of trade passing across the desert and whatever happens there, it will have maybe a small impact on developments in Iraq. We didn’t even try to run it, because there is nothing there to run.”<sup>14</sup>

## The Iraqi Government

In response to the national uprising against British occupation known as the 1920 Revolution, the British put forward a plan for a constitutional monarchy to be confirmed by popular referendum, a bicameral parliament and an executive branch of ministries. The first Minister of Defense, Ja‘afar al-Askery, and the General Staff of the Armed Forces began planning for a national army in January 1921. The most common form of native Iraqi security at the time was provided by irregular levies known to the British as the “camel corps” or the “camelry,” and known in Arabic as the *bayrq al-hajjāna*, which continued to operate in one form or another through the 1940s.<sup>15</sup> The Ottoman governors in the nineteenth century had supported these types of tribal levies in various parts of Iraq as a means of extending central government authority. They would appoint a tribal leader as commander with a salary in return for his loyalty and his willingness to mobilize against other tribes. The British and Iraqi authorities adopted similar practices after WWI, with a British officer assigned to each of the *bayāriq* and around two hundred *hajjāna* in each unit. The Director of Police for the province had some degree of control over deployment and operations, while the budget was approved by the Ministries of Interior and Finance in Baghdad. King Faisal personally intervened to select the tribal leaders in

command, including ‘Ajīl al-Yāwar among the Shammar tribe in the west and Yūsuf al-Mansūr Al Sa‘dūn among the Muntafiq tribe in the south, who were each expected to provide their own camels.<sup>16</sup> As of August 1927, two units of *hajjān* were actively deployed at any given time in the southern desert, one for Muntafiq province stationed out of Tall al-Lahām and one for Dīwāniyah province stationed out of al-Buṣayyah.<sup>17</sup> Each of the hundreds of members of the various *bayāriq al-hajjān* spread around the country on active duty had an assigned serial number, though the overall figures were highly variable over time and prone to exaggeration.<sup>18</sup> The French authorities in Syria ran a remarkably similar system in the 1920s.<sup>19</sup>

The Ministry of Interior began expanding police facilities in early 1923, but it was not until 1925 that the first forward operating bases for Iraqi military and police forces were constructed in the *bādiya* (Figures 7 and 8). Abī Ghār and al-Qaṣūr were headquarters for police and staging grounds for military operations from 1925 to 1927, while at the same time al-Rutbah was being expanded from a small tent to a more permanent facility in the west and al-Buṣayyah was being planned for the south. An internal Iraqi Government chart from around 1927 summarizing measures that were taken to prevent Najdi raids, stipulated that there were four outposts established that year (Khān al-Rahbah, Qā’im, Hīyāthīyah [*sic*, al-Habbāniyah?], and Nuqrat al-Salmān), three completed in the south (Abī Ghār, Tall al-Lahām and al-Buṣayyah) and two more planned there (Shukrah and Niba‘ah).<sup>20</sup> That document was completed by the Administrative Inspector for the Southern Desert [Glubb] at a time before the Iraqi Government assumed full control of policing in the provinces, and it therefore probably included sites that were set up as forward operating bases by the British Government with the intention of jointly operating them with the Iraqi security services. That list did not, however, include the major hubs used solely for British intelligence activity and aerial reconnaissance in the 1928 to 1931 period, located at Samāwah, Jalīdah and Ashbajah.

The Iraqi Government accelerated construction in 1928, and in 1929 appointed Ḥasan Fahmī al-Midfa‘ī as the first Iraqi national to serve as Director of Police; he reported to the Director General of Police for operations and to the Ministry of Interior for administration.<sup>21</sup> By the time that al-Rawi documented the state of affairs in the late 1940s, there were

three police directorates, with the third (the Bādiya Jazirah) having only recently been established after 1940:

- (1) **Bādiya North**: Headquarters in al-Ruṭbah, set up by al-Rawi while he was still a junior officer as a simple tent in 1925, and serving as an important point for relaying post and telegraph communications to Syria and Palestine. It had subordinate outposts in al-Nukhayb, Miḥayūr and al-Muḥammadiyāt.

(2)

**Bād**

**iya**

**Sout**

**h:**

Hea

dqua

rters

in

Nuq

rat

al-

Sal

mān

with

subo

rdin

ate

outp

osts

in

al-

Buṣa

yyah

**sai**

wān,

al-

Shab

kah

and

al-

Khīy

ām

(serv

ing

the

Neut

ral

Zon

e). A

smal

l

earth

quak

e

occu

rred

in

al-

Shab

kah

in

1944

colla

psin

g the

stati

on

there

,

with  
the  
ruins  
accu  
mula  
ting  
a  
smal  
l  
pool

of  
rain  
wate  
r  
that  
local  
tribe  
s  
used  
for  
grazi  
ng  
their  
herd  
s.<sup>22</sup>

- (3) **Bādiya Jazirah:** Headquarters were set up in the ruined castle at al-Ḥādar with planned outposts in Sinjar and ‘Ānah that remained unfinished by the late 1940s.<sup>23</sup>

The police districts for the Bādiya North and Bādiya South were separated by the Wādī al-Khirr, while the Bādiya Jazirah district was bounded by Tall Afar and Sinjar. Police officers lived at the outposts. Already by the early 1930s, the Bādiya North and South districts were equipped with armored cars outfitted with machine guns and rifles, beat cops on foot, mounted

camel police and wireless communications. The Iraqi police were expeditionary units, using armored cars to conduct reconnaissance patrols, engaging with the tribes to gather information, sometimes arresting smugglers or thieves, and at other times retreating in the face of armed confrontation.<sup>24</sup>

Iraqi police labored under difficult conditions for inadequate pay. In an after action report reviewing the eventful bilateral cooperation to defeat the Ikhwan in late December 1930, the Administrative Inspector at al-Rutbah reported that upon further investigation it had become apparent that Yusuf Yassin and associates had not just come to al-‘Abīd to spend the night.

[The Najdi delegation] approached our [Iraqi] wireless operators, our police car drivers and our machine gunners. They ascertained the pay of each, and then spoke to many of them secretly telling them that they were mad to continue serving the Iraq Government for such paltry sums, while Ibn Saud was offering £25 to £40 a month and a house and wife to drivers, operators or machine gunners who had done a proper course of training. They urged them, and especially the N.C.O.’s, to leave the service of the Iraq Government at once and come over to Ibn Saud. Two motor drivers and one corporal machine gunner who had been several years in the police, agreed to do so. The first agreed at once and his resignation was accepted. When the second resigned, he was told that he would have to wait till a replacement could be found . . . Since then, two more machine gun corporals have resigned . . . All the time that this was going on, Ibn Saud’s men were guests in our camp, enjoying the use of our wireless set, and receiving supplies of petrol from us.<sup>25</sup>

## The Saudi Government

As Ibn Saud increasingly achieved his military goals in conquering the Arabian Peninsula, he attempted to move his tribal/religious army of Ikhwan warriors (also colloquially known as *mutadayyīnah* or simply *muslimūn*) onto reservations (*hajar*), keeping them occupied with pastoralism and agriculture when they were not needed for combat. Several Ikhwan leaders, chief among them Faisal al-Duwaysh (Mutayr), felt slighted at not being granted the opportunity to govern cities in the Hijaz in return for their service in battle. Upon returning to their *hajar*, they grew restless,

conducting raids into Iraq and suffering occasional retribution from RAF strafing runs. al-Duwaysh and several other Ikhwan leaders lost a pitched battle against Ibn Saud at Sibilla in 1929, and suffered complete defeat in a second uprising later that year. The remaining Ikhwan fighters and their descendants were given stipends and many were eventually incorporated into the White Guard, later known as the National Guard, though without any real expectation of training or deployment. Even up until the early 1980s, some would gather in groups known colloquially as the mujahidin, and every so often they would roam the countryside of Qassīm and the far north with rifles in hand as a show of pride and strength.<sup>26</sup> This institutionalization and celebration of the Ikhwan exemplified the dichotomous process of nation-building that Homi Bhabha has described, in terms of a society continuously accumulating the symbols of a national culture, while at the same time recursively performing a narrative that seeks to draw in a growing circle of participants.<sup>27</sup>

Up to 1930, Najd had no well-trained army built on mass conscription with a professional officer corps and centralized administration that could inculcate loyalty to the regime across a broader swath of society – just volunteers and tribal levies. In fact, prior to 1947, the military largely consisted of a small group of former Ottoman officers with a shell of a Directorate for Military Affairs and nominal agreements on paper for training programs with the Italian, British, Turkish and Iraqi Governments.<sup>28</sup> The officers were few in number and largely illiterate, the equipment pre-WWI, the budget severely underfunded, and the training programs barely active. Up until the expansion of the British training program in 1947, the nascent air force never progressed beyond an occasional Italian or Russian trainer and a few British aircraft that were almost permanently grounded in Dhahran, where the U.S. Air Force based its own aircraft from 1945 onward. Even as the British made preparations for military training in 1946, Saudi Minister of Defense Mansour bin Abdulaziz Al Saud only envisioned creating a small contingent of Special Forces, and Ibn Saud rejected a larger training mission that would have included Sunni Muslims from India.<sup>29</sup> A British intelligence account of Saudi forces in March 1932 estimated the Saudis had thirteen officers and 206 soldiers for a military, and thirty officers and 525 beat cops for the police, noting that: “The public opinion is that they could not be depended upon in an emergency unless the required action gave

promise of loot.”<sup>30</sup> There was little administrative or technical distinction between army and police up to at least June 1938, when a royal decree was promulgated calling to reorganize the military along more professional lines.<sup>31</sup>

Sometime in the mid to late 1930s, the Saudi Government divided the north of Najd into four security districts with armored cars and troops mounted on camels (i.e. *hajjāna*) stationed in al-Ahsā’, Hā’il, Jawf and Tabūk, according to Fouad Hamza.<sup>32</sup> However, the government avoided large-scale projects for mobilizing legions of uniformed, well-trained and equipped defense and security units, out of fear of the types of coups that were sweeping other parts of the region. As of 1950, security for the border only really extended as far as Sakākā with very limited patrols of armored cars beyond that point, “since no permanent facilities exist[ed] between Sakaka and the border capable of supporting a large body of troops.”<sup>33</sup> When military bases were constructed in the 1950s, Ministry of Defense facilities were positioned at the farthest corners of the country with National Guard bases usually located halfway between the military bases and the capital, to further insulate against a military takeover. This was a state in which patronage and peer pressure encouraged compliance with the law, and the *mutawwīn* (religious police, numbered at a ratio of about one for every fifty civilians, according to Philby) could go around the village at dawn rapping with sticks on the doors of residents who were absent from mosque.<sup>34</sup>

In terms of provincial administration, from the beginning of Ibn Saud’s conquests in the 1910s he carefully chose representatives in each provincial capital based on their loyalty and their tribe’s loyalty, sometimes displacing one locally-dominant family in favor of another.<sup>35</sup> Distant relatives of the Al Saud and occasionally Ibn Saud’s personal bodyguards (i.e. slaves) were appointed as agents (*wakīl*), enforcing his orders in the provinces and reading out his decrees at the main Friday mosques. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Musā‘id al-Jiluwi (Ibn Musā‘id) was a maternal cousin of Ibn Saud and a paternal cousin from a distant collateral branch of the Al Saud family, having played a pivotal role in helping retake Riyadh in 1902. He led the Ikhwan forces that conquered ‘Asīr and was rewarded with the governorship of the Qaṣṣīm region. Other local emirs were in charge of various towns and

villages, but Ibn Musā‘id was ultimately responsible for protecting Ibn Saud’s interests, not just in Ḥā'il and Qassīm but throughout the entire north and beyond the border into Iraq. Similarly, ‘Abdallah bin Jiluwi bin Turkī Al Saud (Ibn Jiluwi) was governor of al-Ahsā’, with expansive authorities that extended to the Gulf coast and up into Kuwait. These men were expected to spread the word of jihad and raise fighters for military campaigns. From the founding of the state to the end of Ibn Saud’s reign, the regional emirs were often the final arbiters in the provinces of whether a tribe had to pay taxes, what kind of protection they might expect to receive, and under what terms fugitives might be allowed to return to Najd.<sup>36</sup>

## Competition for Influence among the Tribes

The primary objective for all three governments was to manage the tribes, who were the center of gravity for security in the *bādiya* and will be discussed more in Chapter 3. It is important to note here that raiding and racketeering were commonplace during the seasons of migration, as some tribes sought to steal the goods of others and some shaykhs demanded money to protect the weak from predation. In addition to the security challenge of armed clashes and extortion, the governments also had to contend with the high prevalence of guns among the tribes and associated arms smuggling. According to the Inspector General of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, in February 1925 there was an average ratio of about three rifles to every household among some of the larger tribes along the border.<sup>37</sup> And these were problems for Ibn Saud just as much as they were concerns for British and Iraqi officials, frequently hindering diplomatic talks. On March 4, 1924, in the midst of negotiations in Kuwait, Ibn Saud sent a letter to Baghdad complaining about Shammar and Mutayr tribesmen in Iraq who had conducted raids on Najdi tribes, relaying the complaints of his own tribesmen and adding that: “[Iraqi] nationals are now in a state of rampage and incitement, it might not be possible to rein them in to carry out the process of meeting.”<sup>38</sup>

However, while the issues of inter-tribal violence and the proliferation of arms would remain challenges well into the 1940s, the intelligence capabilities of the tribes would provide opportunities. In fact, the tribes were often better at obtaining more detailed and accurate knowledge of affairs on

the other side of the border than any of the three governments could manage on their own. After rainfall, a shaykh would typically send out a man to scope out suitable pasture, a process that might take as much as ten days for scouting, and when the pasture was finished the process would have to start again, with the tribe moving three or more times in a single season. An Ikhwan raiding party would have to make a forced march of sixty miles in the night to gain the element of surprise with an attack at dawn, sending scouts to count the number of tents and campfires, or even planting a spy amidst the Iraqi tribes as a chance guest.<sup>39</sup> Shaykh Mahrūt al-Hidhāl informed Nuri al-Said in March 1928 that he had reconnaissance scouts all the way beyond the border at Līnah, and by April he was reporting to the British that Ikhwan forces were amassing nearby there.<sup>40</sup> Ikhwan leader Faisal al-Duwaysh allegedly had tribal scouts monitoring the Iraqi military base of Abī Ghār and the wells of Shukrah in September 1924.<sup>41</sup>

For the tribal leaders who had to make the critical decisions about when to move their encampment and in which direction, it was essential to have the right information provided in a timely manner that they could act upon. For the governments, information was a valuable commodity, especially in terms of anticipating raids by large parties amassing on the other side of the border. So much so, that the British and Iraqi authorities might on rare occasions exchange favors with the tribes providing them intelligence cooperation, including transit passes for caravans that could be quickly revoked for any reason.<sup>42</sup> However, even basic statistics could be hard to come by. The Iraqi Government struggled to survey their own tribes using second-hand intelligence sources, because tribal law (*'urf*) in some places prevented a census, which might have shown the tribe's abject poverty and thereby shamed the tribesmen.<sup>43</sup> As a consequence, British, Iraqi and Saudi officials were using cut-outs and intermediaries among the tribes on both sides, without any one side consulting the other two.

We may never know the full extent of governmental collaboration and collusion with tribes along the border, but we can make some general observations that point to an equivalence in behavior among the three sides. During WWI, the British army of occupation consciously began “cultivating political relations with the border tribes, who, by reason of their intermediate position between ourselves and the enemy, were not only able to put their

services up to auction, but in practice sold their good offices to both sides and kept faith with neither.”<sup>44</sup> The Administrative Inspectors in southern Iraq in the 1920s were permitted to settle disputes among the tribes, with budget authority to dispense funds. That effectively gave a British national the latitude to detain and release tribesmen, order the confiscation or return of property (i.e. livestock), and recommend the Ministry of Interior provide stipends to favored shaykhs. By late 1928, Glubb sought to institutionalize this practice: “It seemed to me that all that was now necessary was to organize spies, similar to those used by the Ikhwan, to sit in their camps and slip away at night and report to us, as soon as a raid set out. I accordingly set myself to organize such an espionage service.”<sup>45</sup> When al-Rawi became Director of Police, he attempted to consolidate all of those authorities in his own person, though with only modest success. The Ministry of Interior acknowledged that it preferred to shift responsibility from British to Iraqi nationals, but the Ministry was unwilling to question the British or interfere in their business. As al-Rawi noted: “I wrote to the Ministry of Interior [to inform them that] surely, I found in al-Salmān a building for the British Intelligence Officer, though the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty [of 1930] says, *the British have no right to construct buildings other than the locations of al-Habbānīyah and al-Shu‘aybah*; yet I received the response [from the Ministry] that this is a restaurant.”<sup>46</sup>

By contrast, Ibn Saud’s provincial administrators (e.g. Ibn Musā‘id in Qassīm) had large entourages of attendants and agents of their own, who were tasked with venturing out among the tribes to undertake religious proselytism (*da‘wa*), receive oaths of loyalty (*bay‘ah*), and collect taxes (*zakat*) and fees (*khāwa*). (*Zakat* is traditionally a form of religious tithe, but all of these terms had particular meanings in the way the Najdi Government applied them, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.) In a sense, these “tax-collectors” (*jabāyah*) performed all three functions for the sake of ensuring fealty among the tribes, because each of these performative acts implied an acknowledgment of Ibn Saud’s sovereignty over the tribe. For example, in the early 1920s ‘Abd al-Rahman bin Mu‘ammar was Ibn Saud’s emir of Jubayl, tax-collector for all of al-Ahsā’ and agent responsible for the tribes of the Muntafiq province of Iraq.<sup>47</sup> He could call in armed support from the Ikhwan, as he allegedly did in March 1922, for the purpose of entering Iraq and retaliating on behalf of a pro-

Saudi clan that had been raided by its own pro-Iraqi cousins.<sup>48</sup> In 1923, the Iraqi Government arrested Ibn Saud's agent Șālah bin 'Adil for collecting *zakat* from the Iraqi tribes in Khān al-Nakhīlah, prompting Ibn Saud to demand that he be released in a respectful manner befitting his honor.<sup>49</sup>

Similarly, King Faisal personally and repeatedly sought to cultivate relationships with particular Iraqi and Najdi tribes that had taken shelter in Iraq, with an eye toward sponsoring cross-border attacks.<sup>50</sup> During the Iraqi Government's forced relocation of Mutayr, Harb and 'Otayba tribesmen in the summer of 1925, a group of them broke off towards Jeddah with support from King Faisal to join the Kingdom of the Hijaz in its last stand against Ikhwan forces. According to a British intelligence source, they had "seen the King and explained that they wish to leave Iraq as they could not live by raiding to which they had become accustomed, and that the Palace was supplying the necessary funds for their journey to Emir Abdallah [of Transjordan], who would arrange for them to be sent on to King Ali [of the Hijaz]."<sup>51</sup> When King Ali bin Hussein was expelled from the Hijaz and sought shelter with his brother Faisal in Baghdad in late November 1926, he reportedly goaded Faisal into sponsoring attacks against the Najd as revenge.<sup>52</sup>

Faisal was repeatedly discouraged by the British from attempting to mobilize these "refugees" against Ibn Saud and the Ikhwan, but as with everything in these early years of the monarchy, Faisal felt that he should be able to design policy and issue orders to the cabinet outside of his constitutional authorities.<sup>53</sup> The High Commissioner in Baghdad was firm in a letter on November 9, 1924, telling Faisal: "While the British Government is prepared to defend any illegitimate attack on Iraq from the side of the Ikhwan, it will change this if an aggression takes place first from the side of the Iraqi tribes . . . "<sup>54</sup> The issue of the Najd was a touchstone for the British High Commission in their dealings with King Faisal – British calls for restraint were a reminder that Faisal would have to stay within the lines as dictated by the constitution. Yet even if Faisal struggled to exert his independence, several other prominent Iraqi tribal leaders who were closely associated with the Royal Court in Baghdad, such as Fahd al-Hidhāl, had much more freedom of movement. They frequently gave support to the

Najdi tribes sheltering in Iraq, often for the sake of currying favor with the Iraqi Government.

## From Tactics to Strategy

In the discussion above, we already see glimpses of the different approaches to security and governance chosen by the Iraqi and Saudi Governments – Ibn Saud's agents had much more administrative autonomy, while Iraqi forces benefitted from superior British firepower. Both had a decided interest in working through the local tribes, who could potentially serve as a force multiplier. And for both governments, their policies on security and governance evolved over time as they came to realize that in order to gain the confidence of the tribes more would have to be done to hold their attention and secure their loyalty. It was not enough to simply train, equip and deploy forces into the field. As for the British, despite the terms of their Mandate in Iraq requiring an incremental transition to Iraqi independence, most of the measures they adopted in the early to mid-1920s were done out of expediency, for the sake of lessening the British military footprint and exposure to risk.<sup>55</sup> Similarly for the Najdi Government, their Ikhwan forces had been cobbled together from volunteers in the Najd during a period of rapid territorial expansion in the late 1910s, and by the late 1920s Ibn Saud had to consider the problem of demobilization. As might be expected in such situations, militia units of irregulars proved weak and disorganized, and tribal leaders serving as proxies tended to ignore government orders. Iraqi forces became dependent on British firepower and finances, while Ikhwan fighters and their families became dependent on Saudi Government subventions.<sup>56</sup>

By the early 1930s, a more far-sighted Iraqi vision evolved for refashioning their police stations as outposts of modernity in the desert, providing public services in an attempt to bolster the legitimacy of the central government and inculcate loyalty to the regime. (The Government of Transjordan modeled its approach on that of Iraq beginning a little later in the 1930s, though never reaching the same level of imposing central government force or redistributing land in its southern desert regions.)<sup>57</sup> By contrast, the Saudi Government avoided that kind of fixed presence in the

countryside, only adopting very limited forms of provincial policing and public services in the north. It is especially important to lay out the timeline and details of British and Iraqi security policies below, because so much of the existing scholarly literature either gets the timeline wrong or makes excessively broad generalizations. The security policies on all sides were constantly changing, and these changes can be grouped into six categories according to the order in which they were developed and implemented.

## **(1) Establishing an Armed Presence**

The first method for policing the border came with attempts to establish an armed presence, primarily organized in the early 1920s by the British Government with the full-throated support of the Iraqi Government, in the belief that the most effective tools for punishment and deterrence were British armored cars and RAF sorties. As Cornwallis, the Advisor to the Ministry of Interior, said in a report from June 1923: “When the tribes learn that raiding parties will be dealt with by airplanes or armored cars, they will think twice before raiding.”<sup>58</sup> These operations came with substantial risks. It was not uncommon for British aircraft to come under attack during their reconnaissance patrols, and planes were occasionally shot down, creating situations where tensions might escalate and the British could potentially become a belligerent in a regional war. For example, during a reconnaissance flight on March 14, 1922, Ikhwan raiders shot down one airplane and damaged another, causing the RAF to conduct bombing and machine-gun strafing that crossed over the border into Najd.<sup>59</sup> During a strafing run conducted by the RAF against Najdi raiders on November 10, 1927, the wireless operator on board one of the planes was injured, forcing it to land in order to tend to the wounded.<sup>60</sup> During a reconnaissance flight over Jirayshāt on February 19, 1928, a British aircraft was hit in the fuel tank and had to land for repairs, and the next day another plane was hit resulting in a fire that killed the pilot.<sup>61</sup> During an RAF punitive run over Najdi raiders in Dārah on March 3, 1929, a wireless operator in one of the planes was killed.<sup>62</sup> Yet the inability of Iraqi forces to enforce law and order on their own led them at the national, regional and local levels to request British military support at the first sign of trouble.<sup>63</sup> This Iraqi dependency on the

British reflected the growing gap between aspirations and realities. In April 1925, the Governor of Dīwānīyah reported to the Minister of Interior about the Ziyād tribe raiding a Shammar Najd caravan outside Samāwah, and admitting that he was unable to police his own tribes: “Our view is silence about these actions of theirs . . . it is not in our ability to restore these camels except by compensating the owners of the things that were looted.”<sup>64</sup>

At first, advanced British equipment was staged in the rear to provide rapid deployment to police stations in more remote parts of the desert. For example, as of December 1926, a unit of armored cars was stationed in Ramādī to support the forward operating bases of al-Rutbah and Mihaywīr that protected the road from Iraq to Jordan.<sup>65</sup> Even then, the terrain of the *bādiya* put limits on the effectiveness of quick reaction forces, as noted in a review of defenses organized by the High Commissioner in Baghdad in December 1924.<sup>66</sup> His final report concluded that: 1) the length of the desert from Najaf to Başrah was too far to maintain continuous surveillance; 2) from Shanāfiyah to the elevation of Ḥanīyah there were patches of shifting sand (i.e. virtually quicksand) extending for an unknown distance; 3) the only road from the Euphrates into the *bādiya* that was passable all year round was the road from Najaf to Abu Ṣakhīr and al-Rahībah; 4) the best grazing pastures were within forty miles of the border, too far to respond in time before the raiders escape; 5) armored cars were unable to drive at full speed in the hot desert sands, so airstrips for RAF planes would have to be established all around, starting with Abī Ghār; 6) the tribes had the best information on imminent raids and they should be encouraged to share it with the authorities; and 7) a survey of wells and cisterns was necessary for defense and security planning.

Problems were apparent from the outset and none were fully resolved until the withdrawal of British occupying forces decades later. Cox described the core problem in 1922:

A difficult situation thus arises. Feisal demands that aeroplanes be sent to bomb the Akhwan. On the face of it this is justifiable but such a course might involve complete rupture of our own, as well as Iraq’s, relations with Bin Saud and consequently cannot be taken lightly. [ . . . ] It is quite certain that [Ibn Saud’s] friendship and treaty with us is the only thing which has prevented him from attacking Hedjaz or from quarrelling with Feisal. If we bomb Akhwan now and if Bin Saud wishes to free himself from the obligations to us he will be able to make our action an excuse for doing so. [ . . . ] This aspect of the question has been explained by me to Feisal but he considers that the interests of the Hedjaz must be disregarded and urges very

strongly that unless we retaliate by bombing at once he cannot carry on his government. He contends that, if we are the mandatory, it is our bounden duty to defend Iraq from such aggression, and, if we do not, to stand aside and let him rally his tribes to attack Bin Saud's Akhwan. Of course Akhwan may possibly have acted against or without Bin Saud's orders. In that case if former are well bombed, latter may think it prudent to continue negotiations with us, and to disown them . . .<sup>67</sup>

Setting aside Cox's prescient understanding of Ibn Saud's relationship with the Ikhwan, the precarious position of the British was clear in this passage. Limited British military support was essential, both in order to fill a security void and in preventing Faisal from taking matters into his own hands by covertly sponsoring Iraqi tribal attacks on the Najd. It was a delicate balance to maintain, because if the British played their hand too strongly, it could result in inadvertently having to choose sides in a war between Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Moreover, as we will see below, maintaining this political-military balance required additional lines of effort to alleviate the pressure on Britain.

## (2) Developing Proxies

The second method for policing the border came in attempts to develop proxies, which the British had mixed feelings about due to the difficulty of maintaining operational oversight and fiscal control. Yet even if the British did not support Faisal's desire for covert action, they did encourage the Iraqi Government to openly work with the tribes to incentivize their cooperation and discourage recalcitrance.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, officials in Baghdad did just that. From at least 1923 onwards the Iraqi Government relied primarily on two key tribal leaders to help put an end to the cross-border raids. The first was the paramount shaykh of the 'Amarat tribe of the 'Aniza confederation, Fahd al-Hidhāl (Figure 9, later succeeded by his son Mahrūt), and the second was the paramount shaykh of those parts of the Shammar confederation that had long been resident in Iraq, 'Ajīl al-Yāwar (Figure 10). Other tribal leaders or tribal entrepreneurs, like Yūsuf al-Mansūr Al Sa'dūn (Muntafiq) and Nāyif bin Ḥamīd ('Otayba), were provided with resources to establish their own *bayāriq al-hajjāna*.

These forces never excelled in battle, as one Administrative Inspector noted: "The camel corps and rural recruits (tribal levies) are no use for

protection from the Ikhwan, whether at the command of Yūsuf Bey or any other person, and will not be worth the money . . . ”<sup>69</sup> Such tribal leaders often promised all sorts of assistance to the central government in return for salaries and equipment, but their local agendas complicated any attempt at effective implementation. Regardless, it was al-Hidhāl and al-Yāwar that King Faisal and other senior officials leaned upon to help them develop strategy and implement policy. In September 1925, the Iraqi Government made exceptions of these two by releasing them from their pledge not to raid Najdi tribes, as long as they kept to very limited rules of engagement.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, Shaykh ‘Ajīl and Ibn Hidhāl agreed upon resuming raids against select Iraqi tribes, which was a vital source of income, and the government grudgingly went along on the understanding that raiding would only occur in rural areas far from cities and roads.<sup>71</sup>

Iraqi officials made steps to formalize and expand their relationship with these proxy forces. Faisal kept his own representatives in the *bādiya* among the tribes, handing out gifts and issuing orders without informing the Ministry of Interior, and he apparently intended to organize a raiding force that could go all the way to Ḥā'il.<sup>72</sup> At a meeting with senior Iraqi Government officials on March 7, 1928, King Faisal approved a plan for establishing a tribal force that would be more directly under the control of the government.<sup>73</sup> It was to be headquartered in Samāwah with tribesmen from all across the area, under government command with rifles provided by the state. However, Maḥrūt al-Hidhāl (recently installed as shaykh) was able to convince the British that he deserved the command of his own *bayrq al-hajjāna* with a salary of fifteen thousand rupees.<sup>74</sup> Maḥrūt then fell short of the recruitment numbers he had been paid for, according to the British Special Security Officer in Baghdad, who wrote: “And with all the assistance that I gave him, it doesn’t seem there is a good reason for [the fact that] he does not have his full force. And in all likelihood he needs close supervision to urge him to act, since it appears that he lost his determination through his complete dependency on us for protection.”<sup>75</sup>

### (3) Forward Operating Bases

The third method for policing the border came in attempts to construct forward operating bases, which contravened both the letter and the spirit of Iraqi–Najdi diplomatic agreements going back all the way to the ‘Uqayr conference, as mentioned in the previous chapter. The first proposal for constructing outposts deep in the desert came on August 20, 1923, in a decision taken by a cabinet committee in Baghdad with Faisal’s approval.<sup>76</sup> The Iraqi Government continued to discuss the idea throughout 1924, Faisal proposed it to the High Commissioner in October that year, and construction began in January 1925 with British planning and equipment.<sup>77</sup> However, the more expansive plan for a line of police stations running parallel to the entire length of the Euphrates River, with routine ground patrols and telegraph lines connecting them, did not take off until late 1927.<sup>78</sup> Systematic organization of these police stations into full-fledged community centers did not really occur until after 1930, under al-Rawi’s command.

One guiding principle was notable for all of these stations – the outposts should sit atop the wells, so that the police could make use of the water, and raiders passing through the area would be denied access to it. Even as early as October 1926, when Ministry of Interior officials put forward recommendations for a permanent outpost at al-Buṣayyah to house a camel corps unit, the wells were of key importance in the planning (Figure 11).<sup>79</sup> Despite the Iraqi Government’s claims that these strictly defensive posts would be a benefit to both sides, Ibn Saud was adamant about the threat they posed: “The posts at Sulman and Shabichah [Ashbjah], [Ibn Saud] maintained, were indisputably sited on watering-places which were recognised throughout the desert as being the rightful resort of the Nejdi tribes, and Busaiyah, he contended was sited on such bad water that sooner or later the Iraq Government would be compelled to move the post elsewhere.”<sup>80</sup>

These “police stations” were really fortified outposts facilitating the movement of heavy weaponry through the desert, built over wells that were critical to the survival of tribes moving through the desert, all of which was in direct contravention of Article 3 of the First ‘Uqayr Protocol. To get a sense of the typical equipment and costs associated with maintaining one of them, consider the proposed expenses for Mihaywīr in the year 1927 with all values in rupees (Rs): 1) Equipment (3,000) – two machine guns with

attachments (2,500), three rifles (300), miscellaneous (200); 2) Personnel (5,220) – chief of police with a salary of 75 per month (900), two policemen with a salary of 45 per month each (1,080), special bonus for operating the wireless for three men valued at 90 for each of them (3,240); 3) Wireless Equipment – single system (4,500); 4) Uniforms – three men at a value of 180 per year for each of them (5,040).<sup>81</sup> The total estimate was 17,760 Rs, which did not include expenses for munitions and fuel storage for aircraft and armored cars, as these would have come out of the Ministry of Defense budget. That sum was the equivalent of £1,366 in 1927 (at the official exchange rate of 13:1), which today would have the purchasing power of £86,380 GBP or \$112,851 – quite a large amount when multiplied over several police stations on an annual basis.

The Saudi Government occasionally put mounted camel police units on patrol inside Saudi territory near the border and attempted to erect buildings to house them in early 1935, though this was met by protests from the Iraqi Government.<sup>82</sup> The Saudis established customs inspectors at four sites on the edge of the Neutral Zone in 1936, collecting duties of two hundred *fils* on every camel-load of goods imported from Iraq.<sup>83</sup> The first large-scale permanent Saudi security outpost located at the border itself was only established in May 1941 at Judaydat al-‘Ar‘ar, and the Iraqi Government immediately demanded its removal on the grounds that the location was in Iraqi territory.<sup>84</sup> It remains the only official border crossing between the two countries, with Iraqi and Saudi guard posts on either side.

#### **(4) Relocating the Tribes**

The fourth method for policing the border came in attempts to relocate the tribes, which held great promise at its inception but quickly devolved into a tactic of last resort for all three governments once they realized the difficulties in enforcement. As the winter grazing season approached in late 1924, the reality that no amount of British firepower or Iraqi tribal proxy forces could completely prevent raids was apparent, so British and Iraqi officials in Baghdad discussed the idea of regulating tribal movements. Carl Shook points to the raids by the Mutayr, Harb and ‘Otayba from December 25 to 27, 1924, as the events that spurred the governments to consider tribal

relocation as a policy.<sup>85</sup> These raids prompted outrage due to allegations that Iraqi tribal leaders had colluded with the Ikhwan and used the opportunity to scavenge after the initial attack. To some extent that is all true, but the policy actually had its origins earlier in the year in a slightly different form. In a memorandum from October 30, 1924, the High Commissioner proposed a line running east to west starting from Umm al-Rahal, with government protection only assured for tribes above the line.<sup>86</sup> The Ministry of Defense objected on the grounds that in the process of alerting the tribes, bad actors would only be encouraged to raid below this protective line, knowing the British had no intention of defending anyone beyond it. Even Umm al-Rahal would have been a stretch for government forces to protect – the only truly defensible line of protection was within proximity to the railway (Map 4).

The shift in tone to a more proactive stance in handling the tribes did not displace the softer policy recommendations that had previously been the mainstay of the Iraqi Government. The Iraqi Minister of Interior in October 1925, for example, renewed the guidance for governors to collect a pledge (*sanad*) from every shaykh to avoid raids on Najdi tribes, hold the shaykhs responsible for any violations by their tribesmen, and impose fines for every camel looted.<sup>87</sup> This had formerly been a tried and true method of the Ottomans. But the total ineffectiveness of using pledges by tribal leaders as guarantees against raiding soon pushed the British to conclude that the only solution was relocation. That meant temporary displacement in the case of preventing imminent raids on Iraqi tribes, and permanent resettlement in the event that Najdi tribes based in Iraq provided support to the Ikhwan or provoked raids themselves. Tit-for-tat incursions escalated in January 1925, leading officials in Nāṣirīyah to recommend deporting all such “refugees” back to Najd or resettling them in the northern Jazirah.<sup>88</sup>

As the policy debate in Iraq over how to manage the tribes broadened in scope and application, the policy recommendations became more categorical and absolute. One radical attempt to separate feuding Najdi tribes resulted in a pointless tragedy. It began with a meeting of Iraqi and British officials in Nāṣirīyah on April 2, 1925, in which Shaykh ‘Alī Abu Shūwayribāt (Mutayr) and several associates were interrogated by the police about their role in the recent December and January raids on Najdi tribes. They appeared to have been coached by an agent of the Royal Court in Baghdad to

provide evasive answers.<sup>89</sup> So, on April 11, the Iraqi Ministry of Interior issued instructions for provincial governors to hold this group of tribal leaders in Nāṣirīyah until the ‘Otayba, Mutayr and Harb tribesmen dwelling in Iraq had either departed to Najd or to the northern Jazirah, all while under observation by government forces and leaving behind any looted goods.<sup>90</sup> A massive forced march through the desert during the hot summer months ended in late August with one group outside Ramādī under the protection of Shaykh Fahd al-Hidhāl and the other at Fallūjah, though Glubb noted: “In the course of the ensuing year, all the refugees, with the exception of four tents, slipped back to Nejd, where they rejoined the Ikhwan in raiding Iraq.”<sup>91</sup> Accordingly, Iraqi Government policies to intervene among the tribes and settle them peacefully far from the border were having the adverse effect of convincing many tribesmen to pack up and leave the country.

Despite the atypically plentiful rains in December 1927 and all the tribes wanting to go to the Neutral Zone to take advantage, the British officials in al-Buṣayyah again recommended relocation. By late 1928 and 1929, the Iraqi Government was routinely asking tribes to move, usually to points immediately behind security outposts like al-Buṣayyah, al-Salmān, Abī Ghār and Ashbahah, though with little success. To deprive the tribes of their habitual pastures and wells in the winter months would have been to force them into greater poverty and starvation, yet other government measures to protect and deter attacks had proved ineffective to date. Even as late as 1938, Article 4 of the Agreement on the Nationality of Tribes obligated the Iraqi Government to take those Shammar Najd tribesmen who chose Iraqi citizenship and remove them beyond the Euphrates River, while it similarly obligated the Saudi Government to relocate those Dhafir tribesmen who chose Saudi citizenship beyond the Dahnā’. The Saudi Government supported this approach, but confidently believed the Iraqi side was not committed to implementation, and threatened to publish documentation proving as much.<sup>92</sup> To a great extent, the Saudis were right, as Edmonds in Baghdad admitted in 1940: “This is an elementary neighbourly duty . . . But in view of the large numbers now involved, it might be necessary to limit the expulsions . . . to those who have come over in the last three or four years . . .”<sup>93</sup>

## (5) Public Services and Outreach

The fifth method for policing the border came in attempts to expand public services and outreach, which marked a substantial shift away from tactics toward strategy. This longer-term approach to managing security came from the need to overcome the challenges described above, but it was also due to a growing recognition from 1926 onward that it was just as important to provide security as it was to be seen providing security. Law and order was about more than just arrests, it was about maintaining a visible presence, and if the public felt insecure, then it would lose confidence in the central government. According to a debriefing of Ibn Ḥallāf (Dhafir) in November 1928, the Shaykh told Glubb that his tribe would remain in the Neutral Zone despite the insecurity, because “having seen no sign of Government forces, they do not appear to consider the attitude of the Government to be a factor of any importance in the situation.”<sup>94</sup> The cabinet agreed on instructions to be issued to tribal leaders in February 1927, publicizing that the government places a priority on arresting bandits who intercept cars or caravans, that it will fine the entire tribe for any member who has looted goods, and it will convene an arbitration council to adjudicate claims of theft.<sup>95</sup> And in March, the cabinet drafted what would become Law no. 47 on Raiding and Pillaging of 1927, which stipulated punishment of hard labor or imprisonment for a period not to exceed three years and/or a fine for any resident of Iraq, regardless of nationality, who is found raiding, looting or “cutting the road” (i.e. banditry).<sup>96</sup>

As was typical for the early outposts from 1925 to 1929, the plan for al-Salmān envisioned a heavily fortified compound, an aerial runway, a barbed-wire perimeter and mud walls six to eight feet high, with room for armored cars, camels and ordinance (Figure 12).<sup>97</sup> However, in line with evolving security policy, that vision for hardened positions behind multiple barriers changed after 1930. al-Rawi relates that upon taking command of the headquarters for Bādiya South at al-Salmān, the site became a “small village containing government buildings, housing for officials and their families, pumps devised for water and to provide for livestock and farm-work, and small machines for generating electricity.”<sup>98</sup> In addition to all this, the station in al-Rutbah came to have a madrassa, clinic and marketplace, a fuel depot and a rest house equipped with electric lights, fans and an ice plant, so

that passengers taking the Nairn Eastern Transport Company Ltd. postal route could rest overnight.<sup>99</sup> al-Rawi similarly pushed for the oil pipeline outposts to have “paved streets, trees planted along the sides . . . guesthouses [*marāfiq al-rāhah*] and water fountains . . . the same as in one of the European villages.”<sup>100</sup> It is in this period of 1927 to 1931 that we see the Iraqi Government taking more direct control of security priorities and eventually expanding its concept of policing the desert to include government services and public outreach, not just hardened fortifications.<sup>101</sup> By laying down roads, digging wells and installing well-pumps, the government made it possible for tribes to obtain water faster and more conveniently, obviating the need for long-range migration during the rainy seasons and thereby reducing the chances for inter-tribal conflict.

Much of this was initiated in southern Iraq by the early 1930s. But in the northern border regions of Saudi Arabia, significant investment in infrastructure and services didn’t come until the American engineering company Bechtel began laying down the Trans-Arabian Pipeline (Tapline) in 1947.<sup>102</sup> Pumping stations were installed at al-Qayṣūmah, al-Sha‘bah, Rafḥā’, al-‘Uwayqīliyah, ‘Ar‘ar, Ḥazm al-Jalāmīd and Turayf, in order to maintain pressure on the line (Figure 13). The Arab American Oil Company (Aramco) arranged for the construction at these sites of clinics, schools, entertainment and restaurants (serving hamburgers, steaks and ice cream), primarily at the administrative center of ‘Ar‘ar, but to a lesser extent at the others as well.<sup>103</sup> In 1956, the Saudi Government finally came around to the same understanding the Iraqi Government had reached in the late 1930s, namely that it was necessary to link security outposts with water resources for the sake of monitoring and policing tribal movements. (In May 1956, Aramco even shut down several wells at Tapline stations with notional plans to drill new ones in closer proximity to military bases, with the goal of reducing smuggling.<sup>104</sup>) Outside of the petroleum facilities, however, the provision of public services did not take off for many more years to come, as al-Ageili notes: “The first water-pump to be introduced in the Northern Province was in 1956 and even in 1966 the number of water-pumps did not exceed five.”<sup>105</sup>

## (6) Land Grants and Settlements

The sixth and last method for policing the border came in attempts by the Iraqi and Saudi Governments to use land grants and settlement construction to fully eliminate the problems generated by large tribal populations roaming through vast expanses of desert terrain that simply could not be adequately policed. Government policies in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, as in most other parts of the region, eventually came to favor the distribution of cultivatable land as a long-term means to settle the tribes and increase government control. Beginning in 1929, the British brought in Sir Ernest Dowson to do a comprehensive study of land reform, which led in 1932 to the establishment of a Settlement Department under the Ministry of Finance, with British nationals appointed to head up Land Settlement Committees in the provinces.<sup>106</sup> At the same time, the Iraqi Government made tentative efforts at land reform with the aim of encouraging tribal settlement through property ownership by passing the Law on Land Settlement and the Law on the Rights and Duties of Cultivators in 1933. However, under these laws, sharecroppers and laborers could not leave the land if in debt (as they often were) and landowners could punish the families of laborers if they absconded. Middlemen in the form of lesser shaykhs and sirkals profited by extracting fees and produce on behalf of absentee landlords, and the increasing size of landholdings had created such disparities that, by 1958, 67.1 percent of registered land in Iraq was held by landlords with large estates and only 15.7 percent owned by small farmers or sharecroppers.<sup>107</sup> It was an echo of nascent policies initiated by the Ottomans in the late nineteenth century, now carried out to their logical and disastrous ends.

Thousands of tribesmen from the southern desert regions fled poverty and the heavy-handed practices of landlord shaykhs in the 1940s and 1950s. Many escaped to Baghdad, where the government of Abd al-Karim Qasim later created the “Revolution City” neighborhood to house them.<sup>108</sup> Within the first one hundred days of the July 14 Revolution in 1958, the government introduced direct taxation of agricultural landlords, abolished the Tribal Claims Regulations and repealed the 1933 laws. It also passed the Law of Agrarian Reform, which set limitations on the size of landholdings, expropriated and redistributed excess lands, banned the eviction of tenants, set a minimum wage for laborers and permitted the formation of unions. Peasants in Kūt and ‘Amārah provinces looted and burned down landowners’ residences, destroyed accounts and rent-rolls, seized machinery

and chased away overseers.<sup>109</sup> This had a chilling effect on property owners in southern Iraq, which in turn only further encouraged migration.

Ibn Saud had taken a very different approach to governance from the outset. He attempted to persuade the tribes of northern Najd to sell their flocks and take up agriculture on planned settlements (*hajar*), making them dependent on him personally for resources and facilitating their mobilization as a reserve military force. The first such settlement was established by a group of Mutayr tribesmen at the wells they themselves dug in al-Artawīyah in late 1912, with the goal of forming their own ideal Islamic community according to strict adherence to the teachings of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab. This first settlement would later be commanded by Faisal al-Duwaysh and would eventually reach upwards of ten thousand residents.<sup>110</sup> With Ibn Saud’s encouragement, these *hajar* very quickly spread to encompass more than a hundred thousand tribesmen in over a hundred locations, though the numbers vary wildly in multiple accounts.<sup>111</sup> As John Habib notes, they were “military cantonments which served as outposts of loyalty and collection points of intelligence at the farthest distances from Riyadh during peace; in war they became springboards of mobilization . . . and since many of them were located close to the traditionally sedentary places . . . they acted as a disciplinary influence on those towns, keeping them safely within the Wahhabi fold.”<sup>112</sup> It was as good a method for inculcating loyalty to the regime and fostering a sense of paternalism as any scheme for authoritarian rule devised in the twentieth century, complete with reprints of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s religious treatise that were distributed among the Ikhwan in 1918 and 1920 to assist with indoctrination.<sup>113</sup> This was a period of early state formation that was driven more by military conquest and the need for fiscal revenues to sustain such armed expeditions, and less by hydrocarbon revenues fueling the bureaucratic consolidation of central authority as would later become the norm around mid-century.<sup>114</sup>

However, such settlements were curtailed in 1930 after Ibn Saud suppressed the Ikhwan rebellion, and most of the inhabitants returned to their tribal lands. Ibn Saud even ordered the villagers of al-Muzāhmīyah to strip the wood from the houses of the second-largest and oldest *hajar* nearby (al-Ghatqat), banning anyone from re-occupying the ruins.<sup>115</sup> A Saudi Ministry of Labor study in 1965 “described the site of the Hijar as ghost

villages, the houses were demolished, water wells were polluted and the farms were abandoned.”<sup>116</sup> The period in which Ibn Saud maintained a personal connection to the tribes and issued orders to the shaykhs either in-person or by messenger, was over. During the 1950s, the Saudi Government created new layers of government bureaucracy, appointed many of the shaykhs as local officials and in 1953 subsumed all tribal land to the state.<sup>117</sup> Other settlements were built in the 1940s to recruit and house workers for oil infrastructure (mostly in the Eastern Province), while experimental farms manned by migrant Arab labor were attempted in a handful of places like al-Kharj in the 1950s.<sup>118</sup> Aramco was the main driver behind installing these projects, with start-up assistance from the U.S. Foreign Economic Administration and trained personnel from the American southwest.<sup>119</sup> These projects didn’t take off until the 1960s, they were very rare in the northern areas, and they were markedly different in nature from the 1920s – intended less to order, control and indoctrinate, and more to simply provide public services. The first school in the Northern Borders province was established in Sakākā in 1942, though by 1970 the number of students in the entire province was still only “about 4,200 in the elementary grade, 700 students in the intermediate and 150 in the secondary grade.”<sup>120</sup>

## **Reassessing the Role of the Ikhwan**

The discussion above presents a picture of three governments attempting to develop rational approaches to securing the border, though from different perspectives and not in coordination. Centralized Iraqi security forces tried to establish a regimented order through systematic and sweeping measures designed to control large segments of the tribal population, while provincial Najdi authorities had wide latitude to use their personal discretion for targeted interventions among tribal leaders. However, previous scholars have not placed these two countervailing trends on the same level. Rather, the historiography of this period is weighted down by a mid-twentieth century notion of Modernity that emphasizes a state monopoly over the use of force and the passing of outmoded traditions like tribal raids and seasonal migrations.<sup>121</sup> Hence, the Iraqi approach to hard borders and modern policing is privileged over the far less regimented Saudi approach. It is

commonly portrayed that after Faisal al-Duwaysh's raid on the police station at al-Busayyah in November 1927, Ibn Saud reassessed his relationship with the Ikhwan. The implication is that Ibn Saud was not just addressing his immediate problem with the Ikhwan, but also re-evaluating his entire world-view. In turn, the suggestion in the secondary literature is that his move to suppress the Ikhwan in December 1929 marked a turning point in bringing the tribes fully under state control. For example, as Kostiner notes: "Ibn Sa'ud's strategy of state building had achieved a decisive victory, and the Saudi state was undergoing a process of change."<sup>122</sup>

There are any number of publications from the early to mid-twentieth century that reflect this narrative of state over tribe in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and more broadly in other parts of the Middle East.<sup>123</sup> Gertrude Bell had a particularly imperial way of putting it: "Instead of devastating hordes, sweeping like locusts over cornfield and pasture, the surplus population of Arabia may find in a Mesopotamia reconstituted by good administration [i.e. the British Mandate] not only abundant means of livelihood but far-reaching possibilities of social and intellectual advance; and they will be received with welcome in a land of which the unlimited resources can be put to profit in proportion with the labour available."<sup>124</sup> Stephen Longrigg characterized the same process as: "To penetrate, break up, weaken, and thus 'civilize' the tribe became and remained the policy of the 'Iraq Government, as it had been of the Ottoman."<sup>125</sup>

The reality was that no state ever has an absolute monopoly on the use of force. Moreover, the nature of imperial rule shifted the focus of local government resources away from external defense and more onto internal security, and this led states to explore flexible relationships with non-state actors, as part of what Ariel Ahram describes as a negotiated process over defense and security.<sup>126</sup> It is a false dichotomy to say that there was some sort of ideological battle between civilization and modernity, represented by states on the one hand and tribes on the other. Improvements in technology, transportation, agriculture and education may have transformed rural life in the region and encouraged urbanization to the detriment of some traditional modes of living. However, that does not mean that governments undergoing the process of state formation in the early twentieth century were always responsible for imposing that change, or that tribal modes of living

disappeared as a result. Moreover, Ibn Saud was granting an honored place in society to tribal traditions and culture, weaving their stories into the national narrative, even as he was suppressing their ability to offer armed resistance to his state. Similarly, as we will see in Chapter 4, many Iraqi politicians used the rhetoric of nationalism to subsume the tribes into their narrative, even as they pursued their own political agendas.

The tribes had their own historical agency, impacting events much larger than their *diyār*, and this agency was enabled and encouraged by the actions the British, Iraqi and Saudi governments themselves. There are two key cross-border incidents that bring to the fore these problems of defining to what extent the governments were responsible for insecurity and to what extent local actors bore responsibility for their own actions. The governmental competition for influence and access to the tribes, along with their ever-evolving methods of policing and providing services, provoked and encouraged local tribal actors to take a more independent role of their own, in ways that officials could not fully control or monitor.

## **The Attack on al-Buṣayyah**

On November 5, 1927, after 5 p.m. just as the sun was going down, a group of approximately sixty armed fighters mounted on camels from the Mutayr tribe under the command of Musayr bin ‘Abd Allāh al-Muhammad Al Mājid (the son of the sister of Ikhwan leader Faisal al-Duwaysh) rode toward al-Buṣayyah, arriving under cover of darkness. This was according to a survivor of the attack – a guard who escaped behind the building, ran from the gunfire of the attackers, jumped on a horse and staggered into Abī Ghār the next morning, with the officer on duty immediately transmitting the details by telegraph to Baghdad.<sup>127</sup> Back at al-Buṣayyah, those members of the *bayrq al-hajjāna* who were present at the time of the attack were killed, along with an engineer, twelve domestic workers and one woman (the wife of one of the camel mountees). One policeman and two other camel mountees were wounded and five rifles taken.<sup>128</sup> It was the sheer violence of the raid that was shocking. Raids were often undertaken for booty or prestige or mutual defense of allies, but there were certain rules common to raiding across the Peninsula, including not looting the tent of the shaykh, not touching the women, and not killing unless in revenge for a heinous crime. It

was not uncommon for Ikhwan attacks to lead to casualties, though here the victims were not only Iraqi police and *hajjāna*, but also a woman and several day laborers, with no intent to loot whatsoever.<sup>129</sup>

Two British officials set off the morning of the sixth by car and then by plane to Abī Ghār, where they ordered airplanes to prepare for punitive shelling of the Ikhwan raiders and directed all available ground units to al-Buṣayyah. Despite conducting sorties into the Neutral Zone around Dulaymīyah, the reconnaissance planes failed to locate the raiders, who were unencumbered by any looted goods and thereby swiftly rode across the border back into Najd.<sup>130</sup> Beginning on the seventh, the Iraqi Government forces began a show of force in the surrounding countryside in order to restore confidence among the public (especially the panicked Bani Ḥuchaim tribe), with a division of armored cars doing patrols.<sup>131</sup> Rumors spread among the tribes and within official circles that Faisal al-Duwaysh and other leaders from the ‘Ajman, ‘Otayba, Harb, Dhafir and Subay‘i tribes were preparing another raid, so some shepherds pulled their flocks out of the desert toward the town of Zubayr, while others threatened to pack up and depart for Najd altogether.<sup>132</sup> Ibn Saud sent an official condemnation of the raid to British and Iraqi officials, while the Office of the High Commissioner in Baghdad demanded that Riyadh provide full compensation and assurances it will not happen again: “The Government of His Majesty the King of Britain received the astonishing news of the unprecedented attack and they are convinced that it is impossible that it took place with your permission, though you are not able to remove yourself from responsibility . . .”<sup>133</sup>

Some Iraqi journalists and historians have suggested that the British colluded with the Ikhwan to provoke the attack, in order to pressure the Iraqi Government into signing the 1927 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty on British terms.<sup>134</sup> It was certainly common for British officials and advisors to collude with the tribes on the ground in general, and the British likely took advantage of this particular situation to pressure the Iraqi Government in Treaty negotiations, but the Ikhwan nonetheless had their own motives for conducting the attack. Faisal al-Duwaysh and his son Abdulaziz had complained for weeks about the construction of the fortifications at al-Buṣayyah, claiming they were offensive positions that would allow the Iraqi Government to attack the Najdi tribes. If we examine this claim more closely, there is some merit in it.

As mentioned above, the aspect of water was critical for sustaining the Iraqi police forces in the desert and for preventing tribal raiders from accessing the most vital resource they needed on their long marches, so that Iraqi outposts were purposefully built on top of wells. Glubb wrote in an April 1928 report: “I do not believe that [Ikhwan leader] Ibn Ḥamīd will attack al-Salmān after departing Līnah [because] there is no water except in al-Salmān itself [a sizeable Iraqi police station] and al-Hindāniyah; if he cannot wait until watering there, then the horses will die . . . ”<sup>135</sup> But whether or not tribesmen were coming to al-Salmān to raid or simply passing through for trade or pasture, the simple fact is that the Iraqi security forces would be aware of their presence and would be able to permit or deny them vital water resources.

Ibn Saud distanced himself from the raid on al-Buṣayyah, but he reiterated that the construction of fortifications along the border was prohibited by the ‘Uqayr Protocols and he remained adamant in his position, as we saw in Chapter 1. That distinction was clearly an important one for Ibn Saud, as it should be for historians seeking to understand Ibn Saud’s motivations. The Saudi ruler wanted to clarify that his intentions were directed at influencing the Iraqi Government and not condoning violence – condemning the raid, but at the same time condemning Iraqi policy. In fact, as Glubb acknowledged in April 1928, “Ibn Saud pushed to cut off the raids for a period of five months during the conference with Clayton,” as a rare example of a confidence-building measure in conjunction with diplomatic talks.<sup>136</sup> Even with a punitive British military campaign well under way in April, Faisal al-Duwaysh had to reprimand his own Mutayr tribe for violating the ban on raiding. al-Duwaysh sent his slave, Abū Ḥūwās, to the location of ‘Akbah in order to deliver the message:

I am ashamed of you, Mutayr, since [you] did not understand and did not respect the orders of your Shaykh, al-Duwaysh, who sent to you instructions repeatedly to not raid or steal or harass anyone, the aim being not because [al-Duwaysh] is afraid or that the Muslims [i.e. the Ikhwan] are afraid. You will see this once the cold weather comes. You will be led by the flag of al-Duwaysh into war and will drive back the unbelievers from their outposts like a man drives back a gerbil from its hole. But the time now is to regain pastures that you currently enjoy and to complete your provisions from Iraq.<sup>137</sup>

The function of the Ikhwan at this point in time with regards to Iraq was not to actively impede diplomatic negotiations, but rather in a sense to facilitate

their progress. Whether or not Ibn Saud had turned a blind eye to the raid on al-Busayyah, the attack had made a point and quite effectively, a point that Ibn Saud himself had tried and failed to communicate through diplomatic channels for months.<sup>138</sup> In other words, the fears of the Najdi tribes were real – that Iraqi police stations would cut off access to water and be used for other offensive purposes – even if those fears were not very well defined. A new permanent military post constructed at Ashbahah in 1928 was located on an excellent water supply in the tribal lands of the Dihamsha, with British officials fully conscious of the need to use the fort as a tool for maintaining Dihamsha loyalty to the Iraqi state.<sup>139</sup>

Surely the tribes on the Najdi side of the border were cognizant of the speed and manner of the Iraqi Government's construction of these fortifications. The fort of al-Busayyah was quickly rebuilt and made fully operational for use by British forces just four months after the Ikhwan attack in 1927 (Figure 14). The outpost was hastily reassembled, because from January to May 1928 the British military needed it to launch Operation AKFORCE, designed “to sweep the country up to the border, and for a distance of 70 miles beyond, clear of all Nadjd tribes,” in direct response to the al-Busayyah attack.<sup>140</sup> Indeed, Britain openly informed Ibn Saud in December 1927 of its intent to conduct these cross-border offensive operations, even as Ibn Saud was issuing ceasefire instructions to the Ikhwan.<sup>141</sup> The tribes had feared that the police stations would be used offensively against them, leading them to attack the station, and now that fear was in fact coming true. The tribes had made a reasonable assumption even before the al-Busayyah raid, given the forward positioning of armored cars with wireless communications capable of calling in air support. (They also feared the stations would be used to spread European ideas, though its much harder to evaluate that claim.)<sup>142</sup> We can see in these events that there was a game of chess playing out between senior British, Iraqi and Saudi officials on the one hand, as they tried to signal their concerns over the border. And on the other hand, we can see the Ikhwan trying to negotiate their position within that framework, sometimes taking more license in their actions and getting out in front of Ibn Saud, out of fear for their own security.

## The Final Stand of al-Duwaysh

The second event identified as pivotal by most historians in Ibn Saud's consolidation of authority is his final suppression of the Ikhwan in 1929, resulting in the rebel leaders serving out the short remainder of their lives in one of Ibn Jiluwi's prisons.<sup>143</sup> In the first outburst of revolt on March 30, 1929, Faisal al-Duwaysh and his rebel Ikhwan associates were swiftly defeated at Sibilla, al-Duwaysh was wounded and his son killed. The Ikhwan leaders fled and later surrendered, with Ibn Saud granting them a pardon on condition of abandoning all political activities. They did not stay quiet for long, however, and by December al-Duwaysh had gathered forces again for another stand. On December 29, 1929, al-Rawi came to the southern desert to assume the job of Director of Police for the region, arriving at the headquarters in Nuqrat al-Salmān only to be told that a major operation was underway along the border. The Ikhwan leaders were shedding forces as their followers defected to Ibn Saud, and they requested refuge in Iraq in order to regroup. The next day, al-Rawi went to al-'Abīd in the Bātin, where he found the British officers responsible for the southern desert sitting alongside a delegation of Ikhwan leaders.<sup>144</sup> "The Administrative Inspector [Glubb] said to ['Ajman Shaykh] Ibn Hithlayn, one of the insurgent leaders: 'I had issued orders that your location would be near Zubayr,' and [Ibn Hithlayn] answered him that 'we only want to remain in the *bādiya* with Abu Ḥunayk [i.e. Glubb] or in Baghdad with the British Commissioner . . .'"<sup>145</sup>

It is hard to judge in this instance whether or not Glubb had been actively colluding with the Ikhwan up to this point, since al-Rawi himself offers no further proof. However, it is unlikely al-Rawi would have included the incident in repeated editions of his book and in his memoirs had he not suspected as much.<sup>146</sup> The Iraqi Ministry of Interior files do, however, state that Ikhwan leader Faisal al-Duwaysh requested a meeting with Glubb, and Iraqi Minister of Interior Nājī Shawkat issued instructions that no such meeting should take place and no refuge should be offered.<sup>147</sup> (Similarly, Ibn Mashhūr had previously visited Dickson in August as an envoy of the Ikhwan with the purpose of proposing an alliance with the British and seeking shelter in Iraq.)<sup>148</sup> The implication is that Glubb could have been encouraging the Ikhwan revolt, presumably for the purpose of dividing the

Najdi tribes and cultivating a militia for use against Ibn Saud. An alternative theory is that King Faisal had approached the Ikhwan for the same purpose, and in a moment of crisis the Ikhwan leaders went to Glubb thinking he could fulfill promises on behalf of the British and Iraqi Governments.

The conclusion would then be that Nājī Shawkat knew of such collusion and had to personally intervene with explicit instructions to put a stop to it. Certainly these British nationals advising the Iraqi Government had long-standing contacts with tribes on both sides of the border, likely to include the Ikhwan, which would have been typical of the types of relationships that emerged in the *bādiya* during the 1920s.<sup>149</sup> The Iraqi historian ‘Abd al-Āl Wahīd ‘Abbūd al-‘Īssāwī was able to find at least two similar examples in the Ministry of Interior archives for 1924, in which G.C. Kitching, Administrative Inspector of Dīwāniyah, may have given the green light to Najdi refugees sheltering in Iraq to conduct cross-border raids back into Najd, reportedly telling them “the Iraqi tribes should not be hurt.”<sup>150</sup> And apparently Kitching gave members of the Ziyād tribe notice that, “the government if it was not able to protect them in the Shāmīyah, then it could allow them to undertake preparations of their special arrangements.”<sup>151</sup>

However, if it is true that these British nationals who were advising the Iraqi Government were also encouraging or inciting Ikhwan raids – either through support for Iraq-based tribes against the Ikhwan, or through support to the Ikhwan against Ibn Saud – then we must be careful to distinguish between British Government and Iraqi Government intentions. In response to repeated accusations in early 1929 from the Najdi Government and its official newspaper (*Umm al-Qura*) that Glubb was colluding with Najdi tribes to undermine Ibn Saud in violation of numerous treaty provisions, the Foreign Office in London concluded: “Apart from the fact that no proof of any kind is adduced in support of the sweeping accusations brought against Captain Glubb, it has been the experience of His Majesty’s Government in the past that allegations of provocative action on the part of the Iraqi authorities have frequently preceded a series of raids from Najd . . . ”<sup>152</sup> This was the British Government’s full-throated support of Glubb, calling the Najdi accusations baseless and only delivered as a false pretext for Najd to pursue its own raids on Iraq. Yet even with that, the British Government clearly had its own suspicions, because in the same report Austen Chamberlain wrote that British diplomats in Jeddah should: “request Fouad

Hamza orally . . . to produce, in original, the documents alleged to be in Captain Glubb's handwriting and stated to prove his interference in the affairs of the Najdi tribes. You should, in making this request, explain that His Majesty's Government had no previous knowledge of the existence of these documents and clearly cannot accept them as genuine without close examination of the originals, said to be in the hands of the Hejazi Government.”<sup>153</sup>

In parts of the region where representatives of the British Government were in direct control, such as Kuwait, the policy was much clearer. For example, Colonel Dickson met with al-Duwaysh's top lieutenants and told them in no uncertain terms that anyone in rebellion against Ibn Saud was barred from entry and trade in Kuwait.<sup>154</sup> Yet in Iraq, British officials were well aware that King Faisal had sent messages of encouragement and some financial support to the Ikhwan rebels, with the British High Commissioner reporting that: “His Majesty makes no secret of his sympathy for the rebels, who, he thinks, are certain to succeed in overthrowing King Ibn Saud's rule in the near future.”<sup>155</sup> As early as February 1928, King Faisal informed the British that he wanted to send messengers to meet with the Ikhwan leaders to engage in direct talks about their demands, to which the British Government demurred.<sup>156</sup>

The role of Glubb appears critical, yet difficult to rationalize. Was he encouraging the Ikhwan against Ibn Saud or acting as a conduit for the Royal Court in Baghdad? Was he merely gathering intelligence, with no intention of goading the Ikhwan into rebellion? The answer is probably the latter, but the broader circumstances most likely led the Ikhwan to think it was the former. Glubb would later write that, in his mind at least, the British and Iraqi Governments had to prevent the Ikhwan raids into Iraq in order to cut off al-Duwaysh's base of support and prevent him from rallying the Najdi tribes in a successful overthrow of Ibn Saud.<sup>157</sup> Yet al-Rawi's account above leaves no doubt that al-Duwaysh felt he could expect support from Glubb and his forces, probably encouraged in that belief by previous contact between members of his circle and Glubb's espionage network. The final surrender of al-Duwaysh and his associates on January 5 in Jahrā', Kuwait, certainly came as a result of Ibn Saud's determined stance to suppress the rebel movement. But it was probably also a result of the British

Government's pressure on King Faisal, as well as the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's issuance of firm instructions for officials like Glubb to finally cut off all contact with them.<sup>158</sup> And with that, it seems reasonable to assess that the various attempts by these governments to influence the tribes and the Ikhwan had led Faisal al-Duwaysh and his associates to believe that they had more independence and official support than they actually had, with disastrous consequences for their followers when governmental support was not forthcoming. al-Duwaysh realized his folly as he sat with the British officers in Kuwait awaiting extradition back to Najd:

Dawish . . . was perfectly consistent throughout, and reiterated his readiness to return to Ibn Saud, and his gratitude to His Majesty's Government for having saved his life. He himself remarked to Colonel Dickson that Ibn Hithlain had the mind of a child, and it was quite impossible to argue with him as he changed his mind half a dozen times a day. I may mention that Ibn Hithlain and Dawish are closely related by marriage. I have made no reference to Ibn Lami, the third rebel leader. He, however, is a very petty shaykh, who has only sprung into notoriety because he happened to be with Dawish when he surrendered. He is a person of no real importance, however, and was quite ready to return to Ibn Saud, and in the ordinary course would have gone back with the tribesmen and not with the rebel leaders.<sup>159</sup>

It lends credence to Ibn Saud's complaints to British interlocutors in the summer of 1929 that for the first time he questioned British intentions and suspected British nationals were aiding al-Duwaysh in the attempted destruction of his Kingdom.<sup>160</sup> Ibn Saud had tried to present detailed evidence to the British that King Faisal and other regional leaders were back-channeling funds to al-Duwaysh and promising the rebel Ikhwan leaders that "the British Government will help them when it sees from them active war operations against Ibn Saud."<sup>161</sup> The British and Iraqi Governments had to send troops to the border against al-Duwaysh if only as a visible show of force to diffuse tensions with Ibn Saud.<sup>162</sup> The fine line that Sir Percy Cox had tried to walk in 1922 – offering limited support for Iraqi ambitions to punish the Najdi Government and its tribal allies, while reining in King Faisal's more flagrant impulses – had been crossed, and the only way to avert a war involving all three governments was to remove the one element at the center of it all, the Ikhwan.

## Summary

We can say with some degree of confidence that the overlapping authorities of the three governments, along with the complicated relationships among actors on the ground, were major factors that hampered Saudi-Iraqi collaboration at the working level. The British, Iraqi and Saudi Governments all had the same goal of extending their authority and imposing order among the tribes, and to greater or lesser degrees each one faced the possibility that its influence and authority might be undermined by the other two. Heavy-handed British tactics or the withholding of subsidies could lead shaykhs to defect to the other side, Iraqi forces' inability to patrol the remote desert regions could lead the tribes to lose confidence in the government, and Ibn Saud turning a blind eye to Ikhwan raids could generate escalating violence. The continuing cross-border raids spurred senior officials to explore new policies that should (in theory, at least) have required inter-governmental cooperation, just as the diplomatic engagements we saw in Chapter 1 should have necessitated close collaboration between the two sides.

Yet just as with the diplomatic track, such working-level cooperation was not forthcoming. As an example, at the time that al-Rawi took over as Director of Police, the standing orders were that no agent of the Najdi Government was permitted to communicate with shaykhs on the Iraqi side of the border under any circumstances.<sup>163</sup> Police patrols were to monitor any Najdi agents found inside Iraq, the agents were to be informed in writing that their presence was a treaty violation, and then they were to be asked to return to Najd. In al-Rawi's own words: "It had appeared to me that the only reason for bad relations [with Najd] was the treatment by Iraqi officials of Saudi officials who were entering Iraqi lands to collect *zakat* from the tribes, and that when they entered it, they were brought in as criminals and stopped . . . in spite of their apology [or excuse] that they didn't know the border . . . I ordered the requirement of border-crossers being hosted and guided to the border, then I began going out [myself] and communicating with Najdi officials along the border and consulting with them, and resolving all the problems that existed between our tribes and theirs . . ."<sup>164</sup>

al-Rawi did all of that largely on his own initiative, motivated by his personal vision for improving relations, but his efforts were exceptional and almost unique (Figure 15). Not everyone was similarly inspired, and the competing interests of the three governments combined with various economic incentives only encouraged local actors to take the law into their

own hands. There were times when the Ikhwan responded to Ibn Saud's commands and times when they did not, times when they obeyed in order to bolster Ibn Saud and times when they went along for their own benefit. Security on the Iraqi side was equally a patchwork of individuals motivated at different moments by loyalty to the state or by self-interest. There is no hard evidence that Glubb was actively plotting an uprising against Ibn Saud with covert support for the Ikhwan, but his intelligence activities combined with the friendly overtures from the Royal Court in Baghdad led the Ikhwan to believe that he was. And that perception of British and Iraqi support contributed to the reality of the rebellion.

To appreciate the full extent of the decentralized nature of governance along the border and the effect it had on bilateral cooperation, one anecdote will suffice. At the end of July 1928, a group of Mutayr raided a caravan near al-Salmān taking seventy-five camels, for which the Iraqi authorities seized thirty-six camels on August 20 from a Mutayr caravan as recompense.<sup>165</sup> On September 24, Ibn Musā'id protested the seizure by telling Glubb: "If you go about insisting on this, then it will lead to a big incident . . . the Ikhwan can take *wasga* [i.e. seizing livestock as a form of ransom] at a greater amount than what [your] government can do . . . [and your] government, if it plays this game, then the Muslims [i.e. the Ikhwan] will get the better of it."<sup>166</sup> So Glubb convinced the Ministry of Interior to de-escalate tensions with an exchange of camels and sent an Iraqi policeman, Raja‘ān bin Thunayān (Shammar), as messenger to deliver the letter. When Raja‘ān arrived in Hā'il, he commented on the behavior and profanity of the entourage around Ibn Musā'id, to which the members of the entourage called Raja‘ān a servant of unbelievers (*kifār*).<sup>167</sup> Ibn Musā'id informed Raja‘ān that: "The Suwaillem [from Dihamsha] are Najdis and for a period of the past three years they paid *zakat* and the issue is none of your business [i.e. the original seizure of the seventy-five camels was lawful]."<sup>168</sup> Raja‘ān rode back home on his horse with little to show for the visit, stopping in al-Shu‘aybah for the evening as a guest in the tent of Milājī bin Mustā'a. A posse from Hā'il led by Firmān bin Mashūr (Ruwalla) arrived the next day looking for the Iraqi "unbeliever" and Milājī explained he had left already, so they slashed Milājī's tent and smashed his coffeepots before departing.<sup>169</sup>

Under these conditions, it is hard to imagine how any working-level cooperation between governments could have succeeded.

# 3

## SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY

[King Abdulaziz] said: You should understand our order regarding this sinner [*fājir*], the Sharif. Every Muslim who fears Allah, if he is a man having a brain, will know [Hussein's] wicked aims toward us. And when things in the past were such that the intentions were [commercial] interests, selling and buying, with benefits for the people and the Arabs, we left things alone. But the current situation today, this is certain [*ta 'in*] for everybody befriending [Hussein] or serving him or selling to him or purchasing, [such a person] is outside of the faith and the religious life, and he is an unbeliever [*kāfir*] in his faith, and evil [*mārj*] in his religious life. And those people who go to [Hussein] and anyone calling himself 'Uqayli and others selling and buying, nothing will come of him except what we said. And this is destined for him by Allah, in adopting what is [due] to him, and he will disappear [i.e. be killed], if Allah wills it [*insha 'allah*]. And I would like to clarify for you all so you will be sure of this and it will be known, I swear [*wallāhī*], for whoever goes to the Sharif or visits with him . . . for the sake of Allah he will be killed and everything we find that is of value to him we will destroy . . . we will take him and we will take his belongings. And to you, Ibn Mu'ammar – every 'Uqayli who is with the Ashraf and comes back, I pardon him . . . But as for people that the month of Shawwāl passes and they don't come back, or the one who travels after this letter of ours, from all of Qaṣṣīm, whatever is found of his money, take it, and throw out his womenfolk [*muḥaramuhu*] so they will not settle among us in Najd. And whosoever comes to you apologizing [i.e. making excuses for these others] or wanting to help them . . . make his way the same [as those who were expelled]. And this ban is on Mecca and Medina and all of the entourage of the Sharif . . . and of my letter read it to the people on the day of Friday prayer. This is what must be known. Peace [be upon you]. 29 [Sha'bān] 1337.<sup>1</sup>

In this letter to his representative in Buraydah, King Abdulaziz was attempting to assert control over the basic socio-economic building blocks of trade and communication that bound together the tribes and villages residing in the sprawling expanses of the Arabian Peninsula. His executive order imposed sweeping sanctions on anyone from Najd having dealings with Sharif Hussein and the Kingdom of the Hijaz.<sup>2</sup> The letter is remarkable in many ways, not the least of which are the inclusion of Mecca and Medina in

the prohibition, the penalties of confiscating a person's possessions and evicting his family along with him, and the order to punish in similar manner anyone attempting to make excuses for the accused. The issue at stake is not doctrinal, and offenders are not being punished for any real or perceived violations of Salafi tenets, even if the language is couched in religious terms. Rather, the issue is that of a trade embargo combined with targeted sanctions, and this letter from Ibn Saud established procedures for notification, enforcement and appeals.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the Iraqi Government with the approval of King Faisal would impose its own ban on trade with the Najdi tribes in late 1923, again in the spring of 1924, yet again in the summer of 1928, and once more in the winter of 1929, which was a lesson for Ibn Saud that just as he could impose sanctions on people trading with the Hashemites, the same could be done to him.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the imposition of international borders could now be used to divide the very same tribal and commercial networks that had previously sustained communities across the region.

There is a telling remark in the letter above that really gets to the heart of Ibn Saud's concerns. Notice how the 'Uqaylat are treated as a separate category, different from other subjects of the Najdi Government, and therefore eligible for a pardon. At this point in 1919, before the establishment of international boundaries, the 'Uqaylat were citizens of no country in particular. Yet as Ibn Saud knew full well, these descendants of Najdi migrants to Iraq – skilled traders providing security and access for caravans passing from Damascus and Mecca to Buraydah and Başrah – were key components of his economy. The lines of commercial enterprise that they facilitated needed to be sustained in spite of political disputes and international boundaries, for the sake of security, stability and prosperity in the Najd. In the decades that followed they and many others like them would be confronted with their Najdi identity in new ways, as they were forced to choose their citizenship, their paths to economic opportunity and their status in society. We will return to the 'Uqaylat in the discussion on Najdi identity below.

The first half of this chapter will describe the social and economic ties of dependency that existed between tribal and urban populations on both sides of the border, and how they informed Ibn Saud's approach to maintaining the integrity of that community. These issues were a core part of the disputes

taking place in the diplomatic negotiations we saw in Chapter 1 and they were exacerbated by the different approaches to policing and governance that we saw in Chapter 2. The second half of this chapter will aim to show how scholars have largely overlooked these fundamental imperatives of social cohesion and economic survival in favor of broad generalizations about religious fanaticism, as part of their attempts to understand Saudi Government actions. However, socio-economic ties had a more powerful effect than religion in binding communities on both sides of the border to the Najd. Such ties may not have formed a coherent platform for expressing nationalist sentiment in the way that politics were being shaped in Iraq after the 1920 Revolution. Yet these ties created a broad-based, reiterative process of civic engagement that was more direct in people's lives, and less mediated by politics and the Saudi state.

## **Life among the Tribes**

For most of its history, the Najd was not a unified political entity under a single rulership with fixed boundaries for any sustained period of time, even if there were phases in which some elements of that general characterization held true. It was rather a vast region suffering from repeated droughts, famines and conflicts that often drove its residents far afield in search of more stable living conditions. Over the centuries, this led to a dispersal of individuals to faraway places like the towns and pastures along the southern banks of the Euphrates River, where many of those emigrants retained social, linguistic and cultural ties with the Najd. In the Najd itself, specific patches of desert had very specific names, including the very large stretches of the Dahnā' and the Nafūd. By contrast, the Iraqi Government typically labeled all of its southern and western desert regions with the broad descriptor of *bādiyah*, even applying the term indiscriminately to the entire wilderness stretching from Kuwait to Jordan. We have to remember that at the beginning of the twentieth century, much of the population of the Najd lived along the edges of deserts and therefore the desert was a core part of their daily existence, while a desert was usually only at the far periphery of most Iraqis' lives.

The verb *badā* means to look (to seem or to appear) and hence the common verbal phrase *yabdu an* (it seems that). The noun *bādīyah* therefore carries the connotation of being the place where you can see out for a distance and across vast expanses, or conversely a place where things can be seen from far away. Think of it as the flatlands or the expanses, much as in the Midwest of America folks speak in a general sense of the prairies. It is not strictly “desert” (*sahra*), which in some parts of the Arabian Peninsula might have the connotation of a truly dead and lifeless terrain. Rather, the borderlands between Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are filled with scrub and brush fit for camels, and even grasses during the rainy season that are capable of feeding thousands of sheep. For a person seeing for the first time a carpet of grass spreading across a vast expanse of sand during the first heavy rains in December, it doesn’t take a great leap of the imagination to believe the Hadith of the Prophet that on Resurrection Day the deserts will turn green.

The verbal noun *bidāwa*, which can be found throughout the Arabic literature cited in this book, has the connotation of that which shares in the qualities of badū life and behavior, i.e. badū-ness or bedouinity. There really is no translation for it, and frankly no precise definition. British, French and Ottoman colonial powers attempted to categorize these populations for the sake of controlling them or exploiting them, employing fixed binary categories of *nomadic* vs. *sedentary*, which were in reality far more fluid.<sup>5</sup> State-building strategies of demarcating land, constructing housing and determining who would receive public services, all contributed to concretizing identities of badū and ḥāḍar.<sup>6</sup> Regardless, in the scholarly literature there are at least some common features among badū that can help us characterize what life was like in the desert. Nomadic or semi-nomadic peoples in these regions shared certain experiences of climate and terrain that resulted in hardship, scarcity, competition and occasional deprivation, leading most or all badū to develop similar relationships with their environment, with each other, and with the outside world of urban society.

## Subsistence and Survival

For the purpose of setting out a definition at the outset, a tribe in the Middle East can be viewed as a cultural, linguistic and political unit that controls

some degree of territory or resources.<sup>7</sup> The identity and name of the tribe are intimately bound up with the name and locale of their communal lands (*dīrah*, pl. *diyār*), often invoking the name of some ancestor whether real or imagined. With sources of water and pasture (*mar‘an* or *rata‘wa*) so rare and geographically spread out, it was almost impossible for any one group to exert total dominance over sufficient resources to enable population growth, let alone subsistence in many cases. The corporate structures of tribes were therefore shaped when groups had to compete for control of scarce resources like water and pasture, and these same structures were weakened whenever economic alternatives become available, such as crop cultivation or military recruitment.<sup>8</sup> The political agency of a tribe derived from the cognitive link individuals made to the rights of the collective, as symbolized by their claimed agnatic lineage. To put it another way, their belief in communal rights to water and pasture was precisely what allowed the tribe to mobilize individuals to effectively control those resources.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the corporate nature of the tribe developed from the many socio-economic strategies their leaders deployed for maintaining communal strength and extracting resources from others.

The anthropological definition is important, because it should show that the concept of a tribe is not dependent on a particular time or place or family, but rather a set of structural constraints, economic conditions and strategies for collective action. We cannot allow our modern, state-centric notions of territorial sovereignty and political organization to mislead us into projecting backwards a high level of stability and structure onto pre-modern tribal networks.<sup>10</sup> Regardless, particularly in the Najd and even more broadly in the Arabian Peninsula, both bedouin tribes and settled communities sought to document and preserve their lineages from the late eighteenth century onwards. This was to establish a family’s reputation in society, their claims to religious or political authority, their right to inheritance or blood payment, their suitability in marriage, and their obligation to serve in war. Pastoral and nomadic groups had aspects of their narratives subsumed into the identity of the modern state-building enterprise during the 1910s and 20s, and settled populations increasingly sought to trace their lineages to these nomadic tribes. As Nadav Samin notes: “Asserting a lengthy genealogy through a historically recognized Arabian tribe connects Saudis to their history in a way that feels meaningful to them, and grounds them in a sense of continuity

with the past that is difficult to locate along the strip malls and endless highways of the modern kingdom.”<sup>11</sup> Over the last two decades, many Saudi citizens have even tried to re-appropriate tribal narratives and values in support of their perceived rights to government resources and prestige. In that regard, Sebastian Maisel can accurately point to a new wave of “tribalism” in Saudi Arabia.<sup>12</sup> And the same can be said for tribes in Iraq that have established their own social media platforms online.

Studies like those of Samin and Maisel point to differences in tribalism and tribal attitudes over time, so that the nature of a tribe today is not the same as it was a hundred years ago. Nevertheless, it is not essentializing or dehistoricizing to broaden the scope of discussion and say that all these concepts of tribe share the common element of individuals seeking to build networks for the sake of obtaining greater access to resources. Such a characterization would be true of most social networks. In the case of northern Arabian tribes in the era immediately preceding the extraction of oil and the growth of rentier states, such strategies for commanding resources included intermarriage binding one tribe to another (or to a government official) in alliance, with the children often raised in the household of the mother’s family and entering into trade and business ventures with maternal cousins. Strategies also included the specialization of roles among tribesmen and their coordination of work in teams, including routine functions like herding, well maintenance and date palm harvesting, but also roles requiring more esoteric knowledge, like that of the guide (*ma’rūf* or *dalīl*) who knows the locations of wells, types of brands (*wasm*) and ownership of pastures.<sup>13</sup> While tribes were often at odds with colonial powers and the newly independent states of the early twentieth century, they also collaborated and cooperated as part of an effort to command greater resources. This book, however, is mostly interested in strategies of coercion. And not just the ways in which one tribe would coerce another into paying protection or land use fees, but also how and why a government would feel compelled to do the same, as both the Iraqi and Saudi Governments frequently did.



1 There are a remarkable number of photographs still surviving of the town of Zubayr in the late 1910s and early 20s. Daily life among the residents resembled that of their compatriots in the Najd in their dress and mannerisms, reflecting the close connections between some of the towns of southern Iraq and the Najd.



2 “Suq ash Shuyukh (Group of Arabs in front of walled town),” W\_128. Gertrude Bell, 1916. Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University. Many of the Sunni Arab families that had lived in trading centers along the Euphrates for generations would later move to the Najd and take up Saudi Arabian citizenship, helping to build the new Saudi state.



**3** The Saudi embassy in Baghdad was a prized posting, with several Chiefs of Mission later rising to the senior-most ranks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



**4** The Iraqi diplomatic mission to Saudi Arabia was originally based in Mecca, a sign of prestige and distinction for the Iraqi Government until they were asked to move to Jeddah and join the other diplomatic missions there.



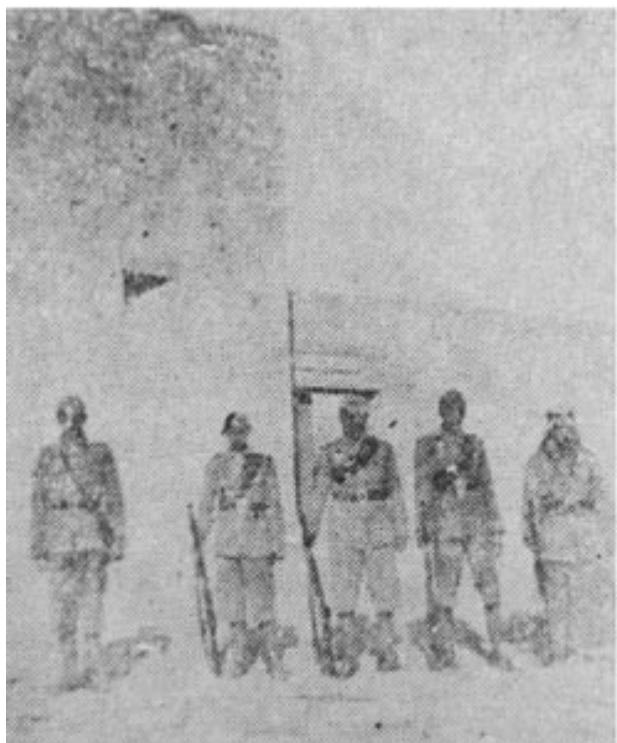
5 King Faisal and Ibn Saud met aboard the HMS *Lupin* in 1930 for the first head of state bilateral summit between the two leaders. They spoke in private and reached no resolution on the many outstanding issues, but the event itself was positive in tone.



6 Dr. Abdullah al-Damlouji was one of the last of the Ottoman generation, born in Mosul and trained in Istanbul before entering the service of Ibn Saud. The photo on the left was taken in 1918, not long after Damlouji had set up the General Directorate of Foreign Affairs. The photo on the right was taken in 1928 in Baghdad, just after he left the employ of Ibn Saud, with (l to r) Khalid Abdullah, Salem Farouk, and Faisal Farouk al-Damlouji. Dr. Abdullah would later serve as Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs and maintain his friendly ties to Saudi Arabia, right up until his last pilgrimage to Mecca in 1962, when he was invited to wash the Ka‘bah.



7 Iraq relied on units of mounted camel police (*bayāriq al-hajjāna*) in the 1920s, at a time when the government had few armored cars and struggled to keep them forward deployed in the southern desert.



**8** Nuqrat al-Salmān was a key outpost for Iraqi police forces in the southern desert from its establishment in 1927. It was the headquarters for the Bādiyah South police district and the staging ground for government offensives along the border.



**9** “Tribesmen and child at encampment of Fahd Beg – Ibn Hadhdhal – ruler- of part of the Northern ‘Anazeh,’ X\_087. Gertrude Bell, 1916. Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University. Fahd al- Hidhāl was a close ally of the Iraqi Government and his son, Mahrūt, staunchly defended his tribesmen, but the ‘Aniza struggled to maintain cohesion in the modern era.



**10** ‘Ajīl al-Yāwar was nominally responsible for the welfare of all Shammar tribesmen in Iraq, including those sections of the confederation that had emigrated from the Najd for a variety of reasons. He demonstrated vision and flexibility in dealing with the pressures of modern living by encouraging settlement regardless of the consequences for the tribe.

الرسم رقم ٢/٣٦

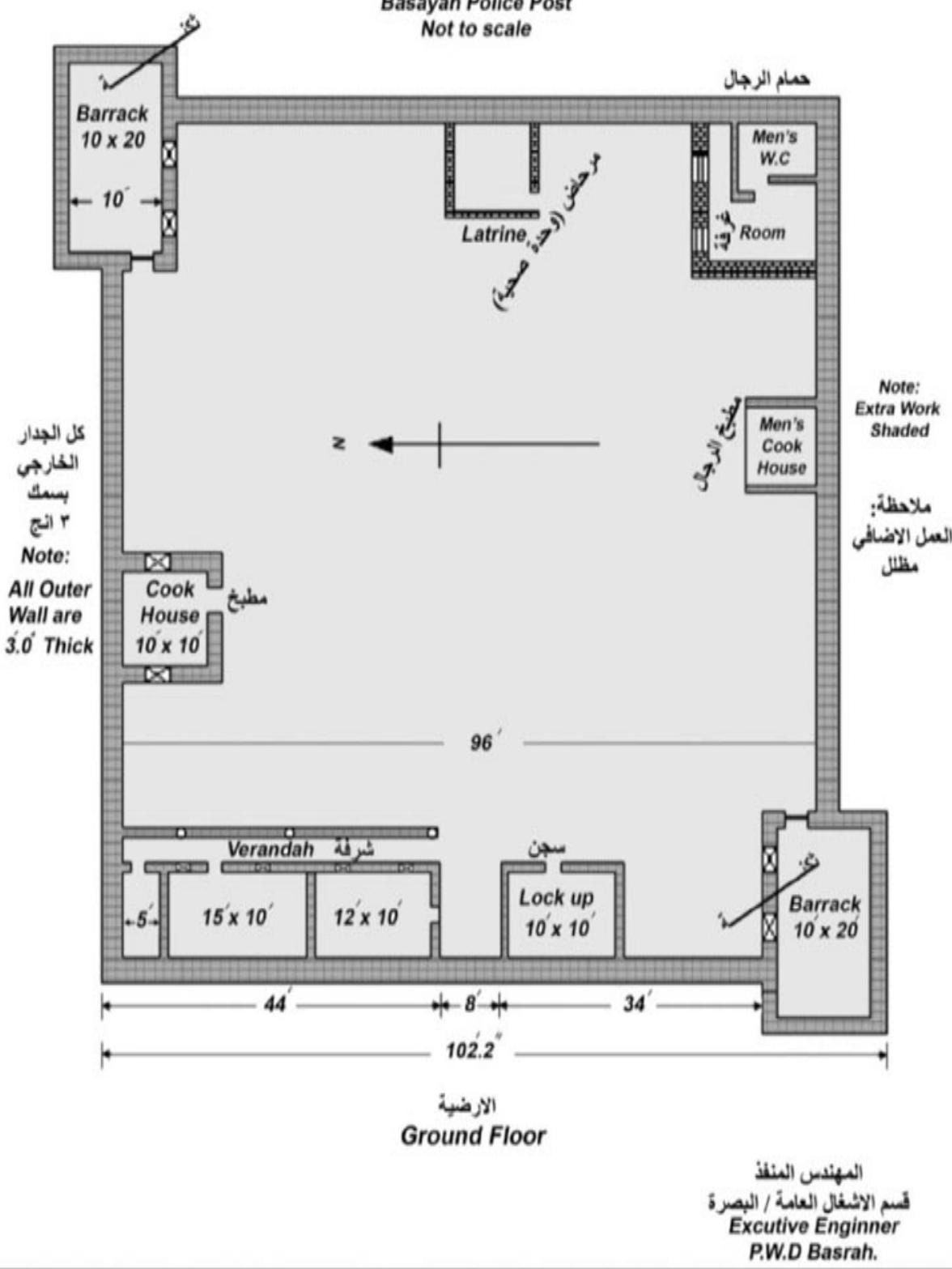
Drawing No.2/36/1

موقع شرطة بصرية

Basayah Police Post

Not to scale

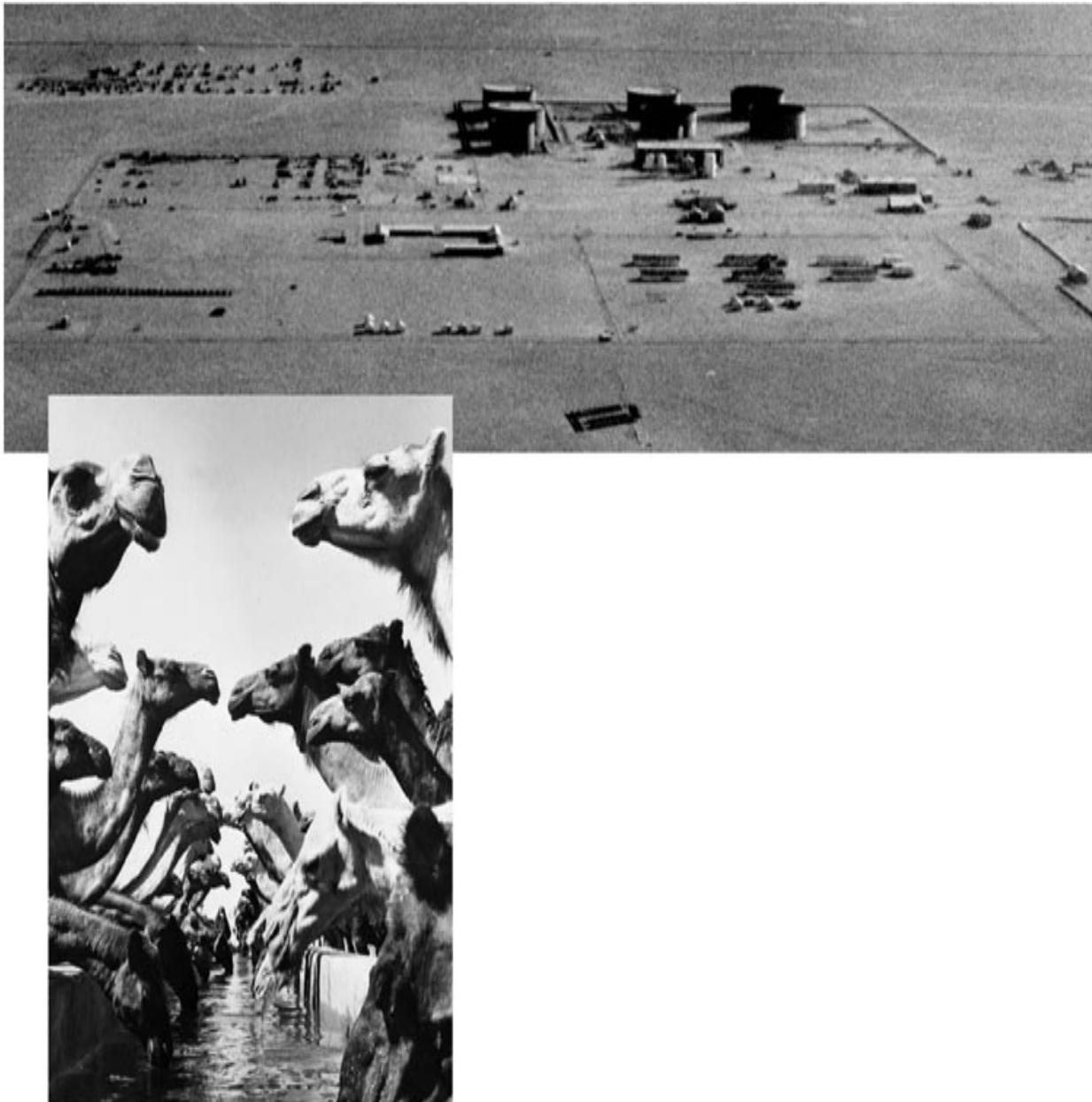
حمام الرجال



**11** The base at al-Buṣayyah was planned in late 1926 as a heavily fortified outpost to house both Iraqi police and military forces. This diagram is reproduced with the permission of Dr. ‘Abd al-Āl Wahīd ‘Abbūd al-‘Issāwī.



**12** By the early 1940s, Nuqrat al-Salmān had grown from a police and military outpost into a small village with electricity and water services to benefit the local population. This aerial photograph from 1928 shows the RAF planes and runways used for bombing runs against the tribes.



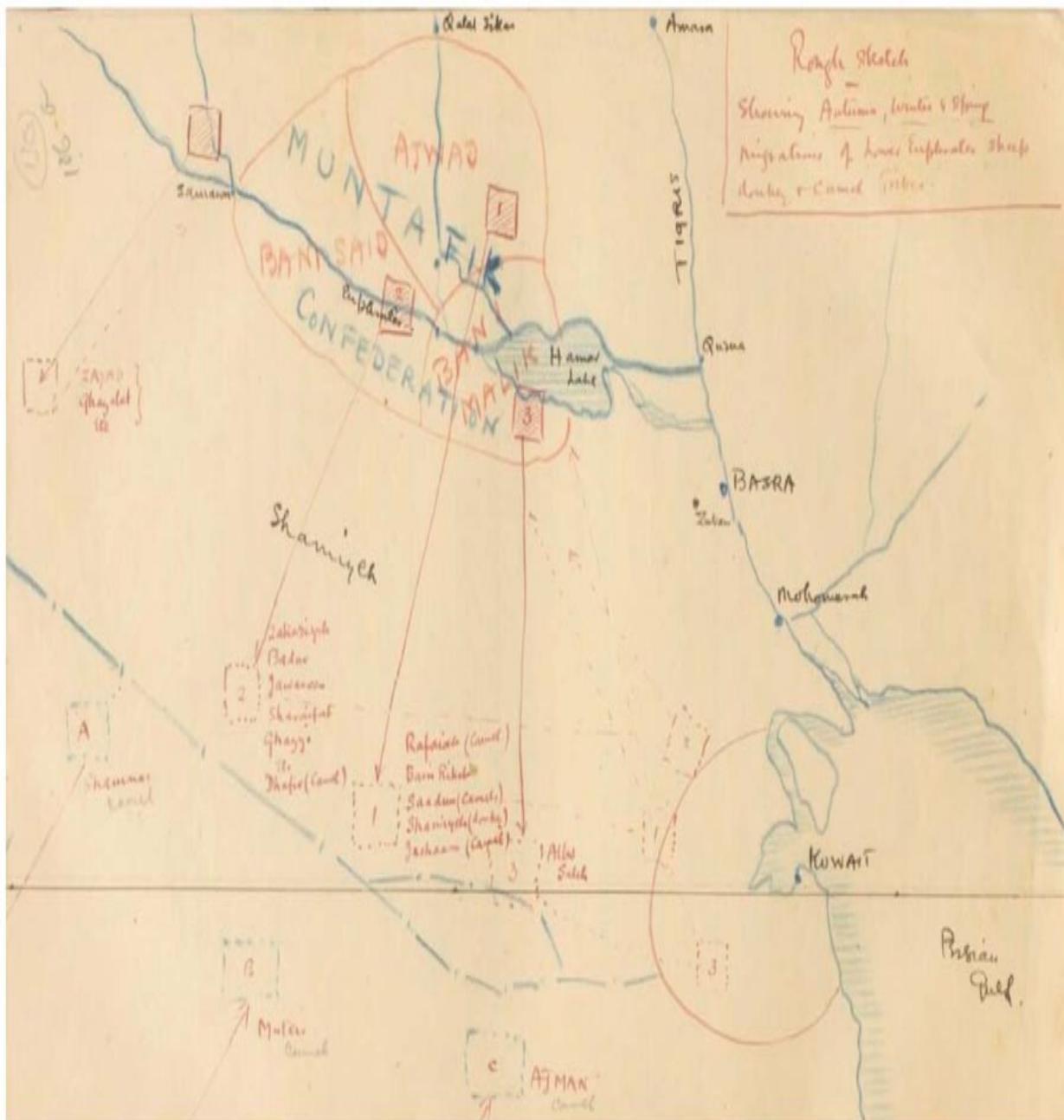
13 As Bechtel and Aramco constructed Tapline across northern Saudi Arabia in the late 1940s, they increasingly brought public services to the northern borders. Pumping stations like this one at Qaysūmah received electricity, wells and troughs for camels, helping the government to monitor the movements of the tribes and gain their trust.



14 Aerial imagery of an armored car unit at al- Buṣayyah in 1928 shows the outpost as it was rebuilt shortly after the Ikhwan raid of November 5, 1927. The attack sparked a public outcry, influenced treaty negotiations, and resulted in an Iraqi and British military action that could have led to war.



**15** Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi, dedicated civil servant and author, spent the better part of his career trying to improve security in the southern desert region in a way that would build trust and confidence on both sides of the border. He took a principled stance on the need for peace and understanding between the two countries, and his memoirs offer an honest and unflinching account of the challenges he faced.



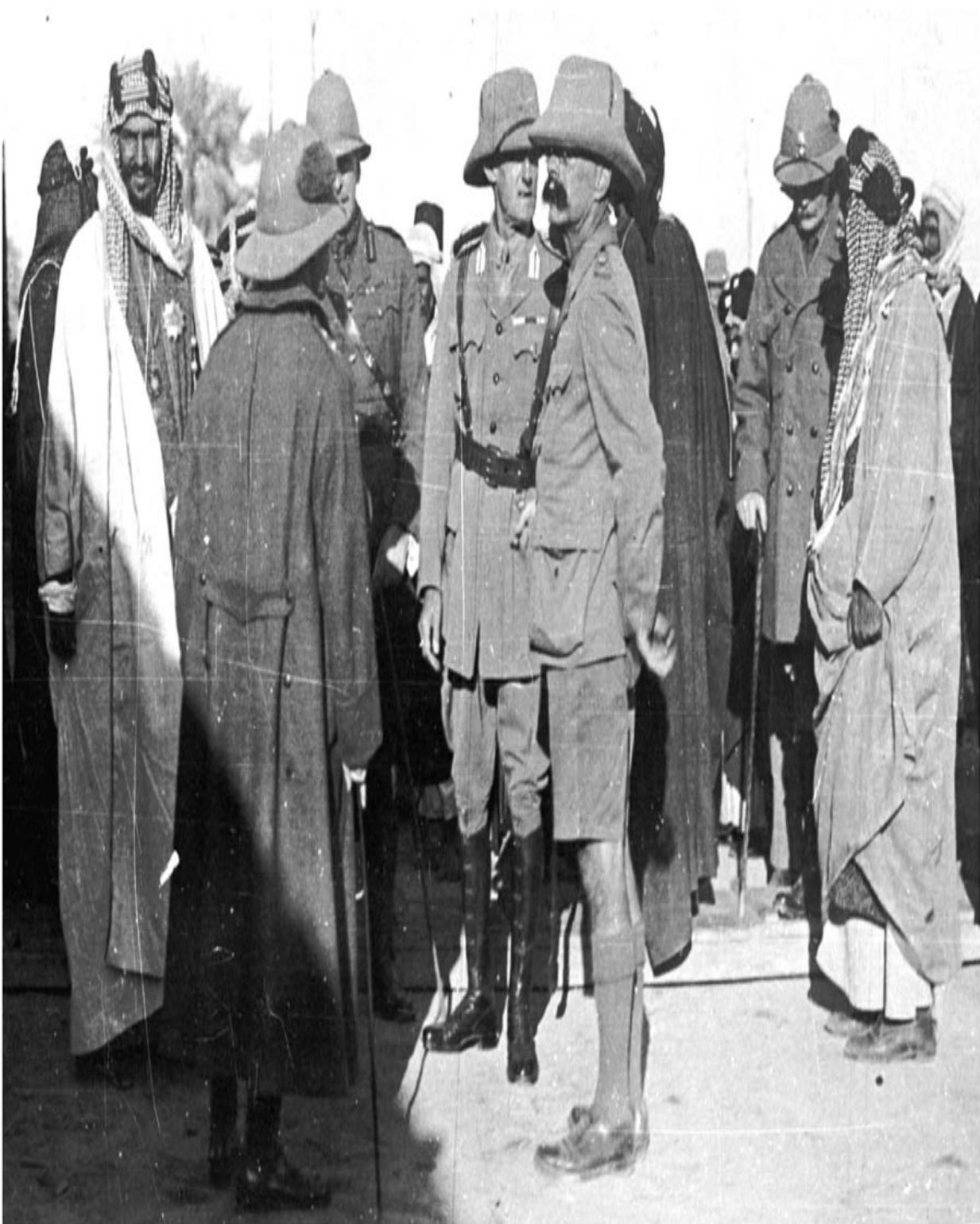
16 Every rainy season from around late October to early March, tribes flooded into the Neutral Zone looking for water and pastures that could help their flocks. Nomadic tribes struggled to maintain a basic subsistence living, meaning that every winter the border region was a place of intense competition for scarce resources. This rough sketch by H.R.P. Dickson mapped out some of those seasonal tribal movements, based on his many years of experience in the region.



17 The marketplace in Zubayr was a hub of activity for Najdi merchants and tribesmen, some of whom maintained long-standing ties of intermarriage and commerce. Though a few of the buildings of old Zubayr still survive, everything else has changed in the century since this postcard was issued.



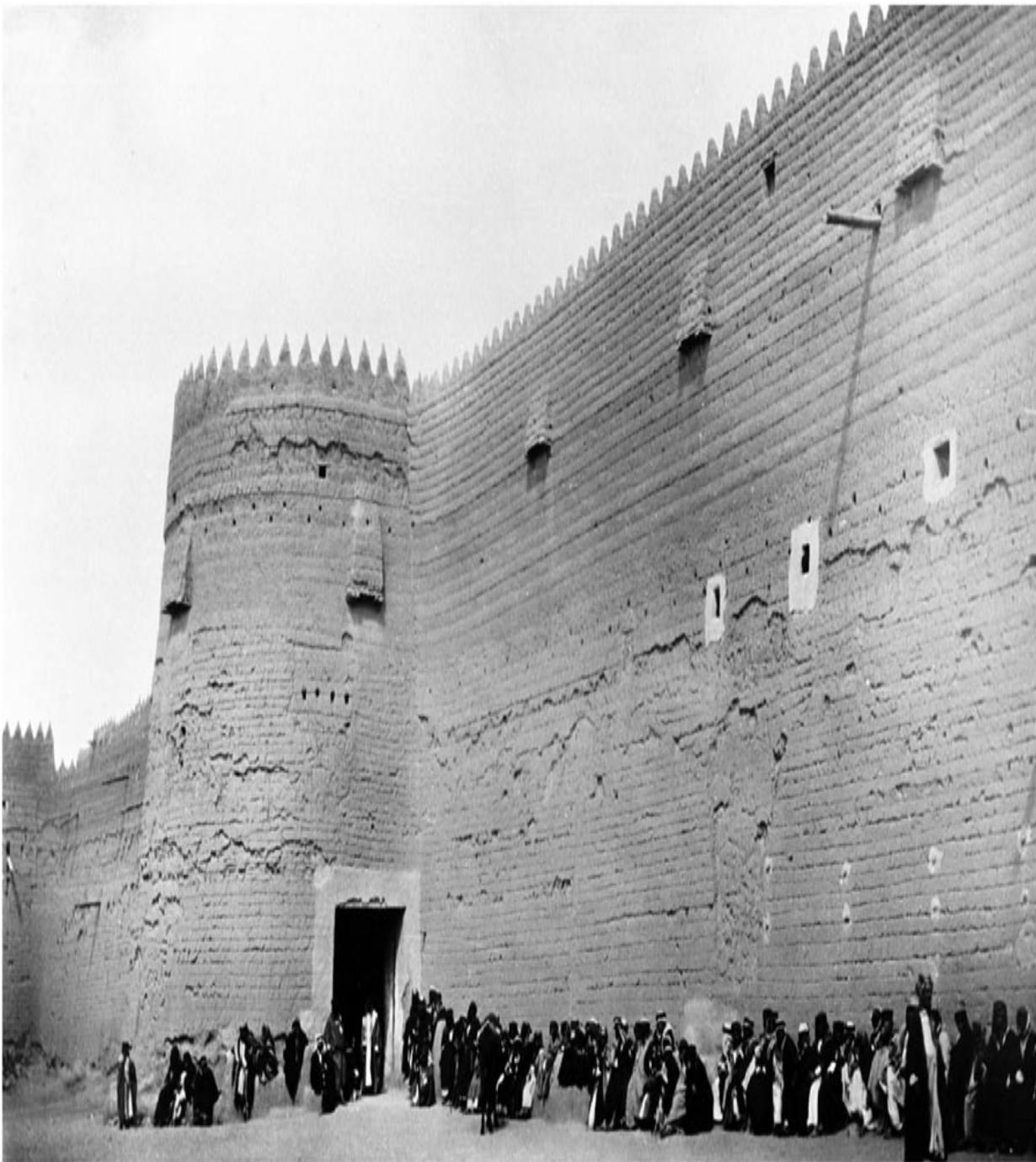
18 The shrine of al-Zubayr al-'Awām existed in the town of Zubayr since at least the fifteenth century and served as a key site of pilgrimage. It attracted a growing population of migrants who wanted to live near the shrine, though later adherents of the reforms of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab preferred to establish their own mosque and madrassa.



19 “Abdul Aziz Ibn Sa’ud – Sultan of Nejd, Sir Percy Cox and British army officers beside train during Ibn Sa’uds visit to Basrah,” W\_043. Gertrude Bell, 1916. Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University. During this visit, Ibn Saud was received with honors by Sir Percy Cox in Başrah, and stayed at the home of the Mandil family in Zubayr.



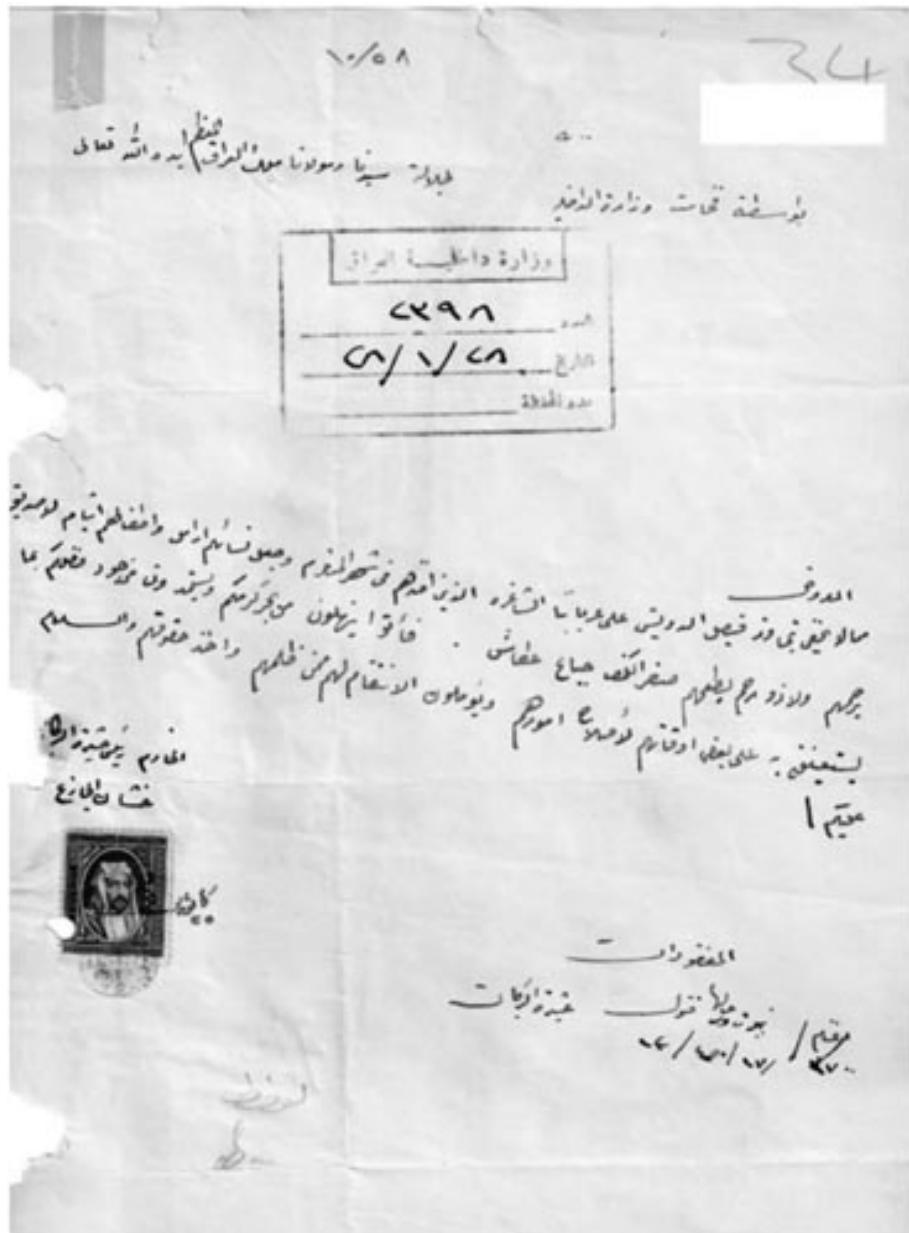
20 “Abdul Latif Mandil (Arab man standing on balcony),” W\_019. Gertrude Bell, 1916. Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University. As one of the leading notables of Zubayr with business interests in Başrah, a senior Iraqi government official and an old family friend of the Al Saud, al-Mandīl skillfully navigated the world of high politics in both Baghdad and Riyadh.



21 “Hail, Arab townsmen beside city walls,” X\_067. Gertrude Bell, 1914. Reproduced with permission from the Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University. The city of Hā'il with its defensive walls was a position of strength for the Ibn Rashid (Shammar) family before Ibn Saud and his forces laid siege in 1920. Ibn Saud’s relative and loyal compatriot, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Musā‘id al-Jiluwi (Ibn Musā‘id) later controlled security in northern Najd from his base of operations in Hā'il.



22 The Shi‘a community in Iraq after the 1920 Revolution contained a diverse range of voices and perspectives, such as the poet Muḥammad Maḥdi al-Baṣīr. He exemplified the push and pull of competing visions for Iraqi nationalism that existed even within Najaf and Karbalā’.



**23** Ikhwan attacks on Iraq led to an outpouring of grief and sympathy among the Iraqi public and calls for government action, including this letter from Shaykh Khashān al-Jāz‘a to King Faisal. Whether or not media reports and popular accounts of the scale of the damage were entirely accurate, politics in Baghdad meant that the government had to mobilize resources and show that it cared.



24 Shi‘a clerics in Iraq, such as the leading authority Ayatollah Mahdī al-Khāliṣī, sought to rally public fear and anger over Ikhwan raids and translate those sentiments into political action. Their efforts were couched in terms of Iraqi nationalism and they sought support from a wide spectrum of society, but their demands ultimately only appealed to a narrower segment of Iraqi society.



25 By the 1950s, the bilateral relationship was on auto-pilot, punctuated only by brief moments of diplomatic revival, such as the 1957 visit by King Saud to Baghdad. The Regent, Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah, had little of the diplomatic charm and finesse that King Faisal I had demonstrated in the 1920s, but all negotiations with the Royal Court in Baghdad had to go through him.



26 These stamps of the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina, the Ka‘bah, and Mount ‘Arafat are typical of the Islamic propaganda issued by the Iraqi Government in the late 1970s and 1980s. By this time, images and rhetoric associated with Saudi Arabia had become so stylized and detached from their original context that they served very different symbolic purposes within the Iraqi political scene, having little to do with Saudi Arabia itself or the bilateral relationship.

Tribes with neighboring territories, such as the Mutayr and Dhafir who lived on either side of the Iraqi–Saudi border in the 1910s and 20s, often fought over control of the boundaries of their pastures, creating long-standing rivalries and prompting either side to seek allies in more remote tribes that did not have an immediate stake in the disputed wells and pastures at hand. Arguments could escalate and feuds might result in *ghāra* (raids with the intention of taking property) or *ghazw* (raids with the additional intention of wounding or killing), though in many cases the terms were used almost interchangeably.<sup>14</sup> All raids typically involved looting (*nahab*), but there were other forms of theft that could take on either licit or illicit guises depending on one’s perspective. Highway banditry or “cutting the roads” (*qita’ al-turuq*) was considered by governments to be outside the law,

especially since there were a limited number of paths through the desert with sufficient wells to water herds, and everyone had to use them. Nevertheless, a tribe might lamely argue that it was simply extracting tolls. In contrast, grazing fees (*khuda*) were routinely collected by tribes and governments alike depending on the ownership of the pasture and the user, just as the U.S. Government today charges fees for ranchers who graze their herds on public lands.

Protection fees (*khāwa*), however, were controversial. Both the British and Iraqi Governments tried to put a stop to the practice in the mid-1920s, though with little effect. If one tribe passed through the lands of another tribe and requested protection from raids, it might be expected to pay one head of sheep per household, or perhaps more if it did not have a prior relationship with the owner of the land. At the lowest end of the totem pole were *salabī*, commonly thought of as gypsies with no tribal affiliation but who might possibly have been remnants of Christian communities in central Arabia.<sup>15</sup> They had to pay *khāwa* to everyone and not the simple *jizya* tax on non-Muslims, even if they were serving as smiths or armorers to a tribe.<sup>16</sup> Najdi Government officials issued standing orders to collect these fees from tribes crossing over the border, though they often called these payments by the more dignified term of *zakat* (religious tithes), and there was little that either the British or Iraqi Governments could do about it. To see how the practice worked for the Najdi Government, we have a letter that was sent by the emir of Jawf, Turkī bin Ahmad al-Sudayrī, to the shaykh of the ‘Amarat in Iraq, Mahrūt al-Hidhāl:

Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His blessings forever. So, my brother, our checkpoint at al-Judaydat ‘Ar‘ar informed us that you entered our borders and had nomads with you. And they asked *zakat* from you, and you replied to them in words unfitting of your honor. And consequently we wanted to inform you in this letter, clarifying for you that all persons entering our borders, great or little, must pay *zakat* or else depart our homeland . . . either they pay the *zakat* and they are safe from punishment, or else they have to leave our borders, and if they do not do one of the two things, then the guilty will not be forgiven. It has been made known to you.<sup>17</sup>

Article 5 of the Muhammara Treaty required tribes on either side to pay their *khuda*, Article 2 of the Second ‘Uqayr Protocol urged both governments to put an end to *khāwa*, but *zakat* technically had a legitimate place in Islam and could not be regulated by treaty or law.

Without the right connections and the appropriate pay-outs to tribal leaders and local government representatives, you were an easy mark in the desert. Upon returning to Najd in November 1923, a Shammar caravan of seventy camels led by Nida‘ ibn Nuhayr was raided once by the Mutayr and then a second time by the Dhafir near al-Buṣayyah.<sup>18</sup> An aggressive form of coercion was *wasga* (a term more often used in Iraq), in which a tribe might seize another’s camels or sheep and hold them in lieu of a payment owed, which effectively meant holding the property as ransom. Tribal law regulated the practice, stipulating that the owner had to track his lost camels to another tribe, then call upon the tribe to return them, and then only if there was no response could he seize their camels. The governments also engaged in this practice, keeping careful count of the damages from raids and seizing livestock from cross-border caravans to pressure the other side to pay up. In May 1923, Iraqi Minister of Interior Naji al-Suwaydi estimated that Ibn Saud owed thirty thousand sheep and two thousand camels that had been taken as *zakat* from tribes in Muntaqi province.<sup>19</sup>

The revenues were important for the tribes as well as the governments, and attempts to regulate these taxes and fees became fights over who would receive the income. At the end of 1925, when the Iraqi Government sought to implement the Bahra Agreement and prevent raids (e.g. requiring pledges from the shaykhs), several tribes approached the government demanding compensation for being prevented from raiding, which the officials in Baghdad refused.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the rules of the game were complicated. When Shammar tribesmen from Iraq wanted to graze across border, they had to pay fees to Najdi Government representatives, but in doing so they faced potential arrest upon return to Iraq.<sup>21</sup> These strategies for extracting resources and building alliances were essential to any sort of economic prosperity, since most tribesmen barely scraped a living together from the sale of camels and camel products (milk, fur and meat).<sup>22</sup> The common saying among the tribes along the border was, “cut off the nose but don’t cut off the fees” (*qata‘ al-khashūm wa la qata‘ al-rasūm*), which meant *khāwa*, *wasga*, etc.<sup>23</sup> It is hard for us today, living in a world where oil revenues provide a social safety net for these societies, to appreciate just how much these populations lived on an economic razor’s edge. A herd successfully put out to pasture, or a fee paid out to a rival, could mean the difference between

feast and famine. This level of detail on the economic constraints of life in the desert may seem excessive, but they must be kept in mind when we seek explanations for the numerous cross-border raids taking place during the period of this study, the substantial amount of resources the Iraqi Government committed to maintaining security, and the repeated attempts by Ibn Saud's agents to redirect taxes from border populations toward the Najdi Government.

The relationship of economics to security becomes apparent when we consider cross-border migratory patterns. Living at the level of subsistence forced nomads to drive their flocks through the desert every year to reach the pastures that flourished in the rainy season from December to March. In the off-season, tribesmen might work on date palm plantations or other agricultural farms, often being paid in produce, but when the rains came it was a mad scramble to get flocks to pasture. That meant that every October and November, tribes flooded into the Neutral Zone to claim their territory, and every March and April, they returned home either to the banks of the Euphrates or to the edges of oasis towns and villages (Figure 16). Sometimes a tribe would split up in both directions. Certain divisions of the Dhafir owned a breed of camel that was immune to deadly sleeping sickness from a microbe carried on a species of fly found along the Euphrates River and they could therefore graze there in the summer, while other sections of the tribe had to remain in the desert or risk losing their herds.<sup>24</sup>

It was essential to find safe sources of water before the summer heat arrived, and if a pastoral tribe along the Euphrates River denied permission for a nomadic tribe from the desert to encamp there in the summer, it would have been tantamount to a declaration of war.<sup>25</sup> Following a series of interviews with members of the 'Aniza tribes, one British official reported that by their calculations a camel could only go six days in the heat of summer before suffering, with a well-to-do head of household owning maybe around sixty camels.<sup>26</sup> The economics of life in the desert were in many ways the root causes of insecurity there, and the increasing tripartite governmental interference only served to circumvent the normal conflict-resolution processes that would otherwise have taken place among the tribes.

## Government Revenues and the Tribes

These tribes were critically important for Ibn Saud in terms of his country's economic prosperity and his government's fiscal stability. As J.E. Peterson has detailed, Ibn Saud was heavily reliant on British subventions in the early years, with the fiscal situation becoming bleaker in the late 1920s and early 30s due to his administrative and military commitments to the Hijaz, the flagging numbers of pilgrims during the Hajj, and the impact of the Great Depression.<sup>27</sup> Notes from a meeting between Ibn Saud, Dickson and Political Resident for the Persian Gulf H.V. Biscoe in late January 1932, give us a sense of the precarious nature of finances at the Royal Court:

He made no attempt to disguise his financial difficulties, to which he referred repeatedly. He stated that the expenditure of the Hejaz was a million pounds and its revenue about eight hundred thousand, and of all the revenue of Hasa one-fourth went to Qusaibis (presumably against advances received from them), one-fourth went to Ibn Jiluwi for the administration, and one-fourth was remitted to the Hejaz. He was in such straits that he had written to his leading Shaikhs informing them that in future he could only receive them on certain stated occasions, and that they were not to visit him at other times. He mentioned that he himself had no private estates and that the Beit-al-Mal which formerly went to the privy purse was now paid into the general revenues and that literally he hardly knew how to support himself and his family. On the other hand his expenditure on motor cars must be enormous. I was told that he had between five and six hundred, and there is no doubt that they are run on the most wasteful lines. The wear and tear on a car across desert tracts is of course very high and I have no doubt that he is robbed right and left by his chauffeurs. Apart from this, if he is to stop his tribes raiding, he must give them allowances and this must be a very heavy drain, and there is no doubt that his position financially is a parlous one.<sup>28</sup>

There were times in the late 1920s and 30s when the Saudi Government couldn't even pay its chauffeurs, let alone its bills for foreign military hardware.<sup>29</sup> A series of excise taxes (*makūs*) were levied, despite complaints from the ulema that such things were banned in Islamic law. Besides, most of this revenue came from tobacco consumed largely in the Hijaz, though anyone found smoking publicly might receive lashes or other punishment, so prices were high and sales largely clandestine.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, being a shaykh among shaykhs, Ibn Saud was expected to show his generosity toward all guests, and indeed, he personally enjoyed the act of generosity. In early 1929, when the treasury was depleted

following the battle of Sibilla, Shaykh Ahmad al-Jaber Al Sabah of Kuwait visited Riyadh, where “His Majesty had somehow managed to provide them all with cars, gold, silver swords, slaves and sums of money.”<sup>31</sup> As Philip Carl Salzman has noted, “in the provision of hospitality, as well as in the distribution of valuable gifts, the chief’s patronage offered material benefits and esteem in exchange for information and political support.”<sup>32</sup> As part of his representation of authority, Ibn Saud even granted pensions to potential rivals and families of his foes, including the presumptive ruler of Mecca, Sharif ‘Alī Haydar, and the widow and sisters of Faisal al-Duwaysh.<sup>33</sup> While it is certainly true that the position of a chief in a tribal society is also sustained through his ability to negotiate effectively with governments and sedentary populations, his capacity for using coercive force, and the societal need for an arbiter in resolving disputes, this aspect of gift giving cannot be discounted.

In order to maintain the high level of generosity that was expected at court in Riyadh, the Saudi state needed multiple revenue streams, not just the foreign assistance from Western allies, and tax collection in the provincial countryside played a key role in the fiscal and political stability of the Kingdom. British officials in 1932 recorded that the Najdi Government charged a tax of three riyals on every camel load in each caravan returning from Iraq, and permission to trade could be granted or taken away from tribes depending on their cooperation with the government.<sup>34</sup> Farhan al-Rahman, a well-informed observer passing through Riyadh in the summer of 1920, noted:

The Imam [Ibn Saud] today levies ‘zifikat’ from all the Badia tribes at the rate of one rial per forty rials (2½ per cent). ‘If any one tries to hide’ part of his property in order to escape from zifikat, he is declared to be a ‘kafir’ (apostate) and as soon as such concealment becomes known the whole of such property becomes liable to confiscation as it is a crime against the ‘Bait-Al-Mal’ (Public treasury) to conceal property and evade payment of ‘zifikat’.<sup>35</sup>

Increased engagement with tribes brought further financial burdens, however, especially when Ibn Saud was competing with the Iraqi Government for the tribes’ attention. Royal Court subventions known as *iikrām* (respects) or *‘atīya* (givings) included gifts for visitors who were logged into a register as guests of the ruler (*al-shārhā*, annotation), annual

payments for those who had volunteered for military service or performed other services to the state (*al-qā'ida*, baseline), clothing and foodstuffs like rice or tea granted upon request (*al-barā'*, free), and special requests from petitioners for such things as money for a wedding or a house (*al-mu'āwana*, assistance).<sup>36</sup> And since the economy was largely predicated on the import of both staples and luxury goods, all expenditures on commodities involved outflows of hard cash from the domestic economy. The state was often in debt, but if there were any savings, they were usually invested abroad, especially in India.

Hence, in an effort to maximize trade with ports under which he held more sway and to restrict trade with others, the government pursued a range of measures. Ibn Saud imposed an extended blockade on Kuwait beginning in 1920 and periodic bans on trade with Iraq, in an attempt to shift commerce towards Manama, Jubayl and 'Uqayr. These were all places where the Gosaibi family (bankers to the Al Saud), in cooperation with several al-Ahsā' families, had secured a quasi-capitulatory status over and above their Indian or Persian competitors. His government also tried to limit all caravans to single points of crossing in order to more efficiently impose taxes: Līnah for caravans to Samāwah and Najaf; Ḥafr for caravans to Zubayr and Nāṣirīyah.<sup>37</sup> And his officials surveyed work for a new port at Ras Tanura, though there was not enough fresh drinking-water at the time to sustain construction and operations.<sup>38</sup>

All of this discussion of revenues and expenditures at the Royal Court brings us to the key questions of what purpose did raiding serve and was there any economic motivation for raiding? When we consider the motivations for raids and Ibn Saud's culpability for organizing them, such raids hardly compare in their economic potential with these kinds of large-scale plans Ibn Saud pursued in the same period. Raids largely garnered livestock, much of which ended up in the hands of the raiders themselves or local emirs who used them as favors for their entourages, not revenues for the central treasury in Riyadh. By contrast, consider the other lines of effort proposed in the mid-1920s to control trade among the tribes and direct it towards improving the Najdi economy. They were more aspirational than the projects mentioned in the previous paragraph, yet they were similarly on an order of magnitude far greater in type and scope than cross-border raids:

□

He

requ  
este  
d the  
Briti  
sh  
gran  
t  
him  
a  
requ  
este  
d  
per  
miss  
ion  
from  
the  
Briti  
sh to  
colle  
ct  
dutie  
s in  
Bahr  
ain  
and  
Kuw  
ait  
for  
good

trade  
corri  
dor  
to  
Syri  
a or  
som  
e  
form  
of  
neut  
ral  
zone  
, to  
facil  
itate  
the  
mov  
eme  
nt of

□

Ibn  
Saud

s tribe  
imp s  
orte and  
d cara  
into vans  
the with  
Najd assu  
. ranc  
es  
  
This their  
was good  
desp s  
ite and  
the pers  
fact ons  
that woul  
for a d  
deca not  
de □ be  
Bahr He subj  
ain ect  
had pres to  
gran sed Syri  
ted the an  
him Briti or  
a sh Iraqi  
conc and Gov  
essio Fren ern  
nary ch ment  
rate Gov restr  
of ern ictio  
two ment ns,  
perc s for even  
ent fina if  
on ncial they  
good supp

|       |        |                   |
|-------|--------|-------------------|
| s     | ort    | carri             |
|       | to     | ed                |
| re-   | rebu   | wea               |
| expo  | ild    | pons              |
| rted  | secti  | for               |
| to    | ons    | self-             |
| Najd  | of     | defe              |
| , a   | the    | nse. <sup>4</sup> |
| rate  | Hija   | 1                 |
| so    | z      | This              |
| low   | Rail   | was               |
| that  | way    | a                 |
| Bahr  | that   | non-              |
| ain   |        | start             |
| lost  | were   | er                |
| over  | destr  | for               |
| one   | oyed   | the               |
| lakh  | duri   | Briti             |
| (a    | ng     | sh,               |
| hund  | and    | due               |
| red   | after  | to                |
| thou  | WW     | Briti             |
| sand  | I, in  | sh                |
| rupe  | orde   | desir             |
| es)   | r to   | es                |
| annu  | incre  | for               |
| ally. | ase    |                   |
| The   | the    | sove              |
|       | traffi | reig              |
| Briti | c      | n                 |
| sh    | from   | cont              |
| oppo  | pilgr  | rol               |
| sed   | ims    | over              |
| the   | to     | a                 |
| requ  | Mec    | futur             |
| est   | ca     | e oil             |

|        |                    |                   |
|--------|--------------------|-------------------|
| on     | and                | pipel             |
| the    | Med                | ine               |
| grou   | ina.               | passi             |
| nds    |                    | ng                |
| that   | Disc               | from              |
| such   | ussi               | Iraq              |
| fees   | ons                | to                |
| were   | drag               | Tran              |
| char   | ged                | sjord             |
| ged    | on                 | an,               |
| for    | from               | thou              |
| servi  | 1925               | gh                |
| ces    | to                 | Gilb              |
| rend   | 1938               | ert               |
| ered   | until              | Clay              |
| (wha   | the                | ton               |
| rves,  | Briti              | did               |
|        | sh                 | try               |
| ware   | deter              | to                |
| hous   | mine               |                   |
| es,    | d                  | offer             |
| light  | that               | Ibn               |
| ing,   | they               | Saud              |
| cran   | woul               | vagu              |
| es,    | d                  | e                 |
| etc.), | gain               | reass             |
| whic   | no                 | uran              |
| h the  | polit              | ces               |
| local  | ical               | at                |
| gove   | or                 | the               |
| rnm    |                    | Bahr              |
| ent    | milit              | a                 |
| prov   | ary                | conf              |
| ided.  | bene               | eren              |
| 39     | fit. <sup>40</sup> | ce. <sup>42</sup> |

Some demands were clearly out of Ibn Saud's control. At one point in the winter of 1925/6, he sent messengers to Kuwait to inform Ahmad al-Jaber Al Sabah that, "it is not permitted under any circumstances to build a permanent road between Başrah and Kuwait."<sup>43</sup> Yet even this impossible request demonstrates Ibn Saud's sustained preoccupation with finding new sources of revenue and his belief that he was in stiff economic competition with his neighbors, making control of the tribes and their trade across the border a vital concern.

The local revenues from the tribes and their trade may not have substantially contributed to central coffers in Riyadh, and Ibn Saud may have been far more focused on macroeconomic concerns. Yet revenues from the tribes certainly helped sustain the Najdi Government's nascent local administrative apparatus in the provinces as the state was expanding in the 1920s and 30s, and in that we can see how local emirs had reasons to benefit from colluding with the tribes in raids or at least turning a blind eye to them. Tribes paid *zakat* with livestock and most of these receipts went directly to local and regional emirs, like Ibn Musā'id and Ibn Jiluwi. Such income helped these provincial administrators to maintain their own retinues and attendants, redistributing some of the wealth to maintain order and stability. As an example, in July 1928 a group of Mutayr tribesmen looted seventy-five camels from the Dihamsha near al-Jihāma, the British complained to Ibn Saud about the raid and rumors spread that the Mutayr would be punished with RAF attacks, so the Mutayr replied that they had a right to *wasga* based on a previous theft of their own camels.<sup>44</sup> Faisal al-Duwaysh's representative, Abu Ḥūwās, intervened to mitigate any fall-out, seizing forty-five camels from the Mutayr tribesmen. But instead of returning them directly to the Dihamsha, he took them to al-Duwaysh in Hafr al-Bāṭin. al-Duwaysh kept five or six for himself, gave two or three to Abu Ḥūwās and his companions, sold some of the rest, and sent the remaining fifteen to Ibn Musā'id in Hā'il with a recommendation to give them to Abu Ḥūwās as a wedding present. Ibn Musā'id allegedly kept the best of them and handed a few to his servants. At each stage, the healthy and strong camels kept by al-Duwaysh and Ibn Musā'id and their retainers were swapped out for ill and scrawny camels, so that in the end forty or

more camels would be returned to the Dihamsha, but not the good ones they had lost.

## Life among the Townspeople

Aside from the purely economic discussion and the question of Najdi Government motivations in allowing cross-border raids, the discussion above also helps us to put some degree of definition to this notion of *bidāwa*, which would not be complete if we did not consider the towns and villages of *hadar* (settled peoples) who lived on the edge of the desert and interacted with the tribes in it. Indeed, our consideration of the economic and societal pressures on Ibn Saud and his decision-making vis-à-vis Iraq would only be half-complete without a look at the towns, which comprise one part of an integral whole of this border society. Written traditions stretching back to the time of the Sumerians replicate a dichotomy between *hadar* and *badū*, the Self and the Other, which Ibn Khaldun defined in terms of a binary opposition and tension between “people of mud houses” and “people of hair tents.”<sup>45</sup> The Saudi Government distinguished between settled people and nomads in their official statistics. Although the numbers published in the 1940s and 50s were almost certainly unreliable, the population of the country was likely majority *badū*.<sup>46</sup> By the time of the first national census of 1962/3, which was probably rather accurate, those numbers had been reversed – the era of camel and sheep-herding was on the wane and urbanization was growing in the major centers of Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammām.<sup>47</sup> This was the result of a process of sedenterization and urbanization that had slowly been underway in Iraq since the 1930s.

Tribal society was never denigrated or derided in the Najd, inasmuch as most educated urbanites viewed bedouin life with a certain amount of respect and dignity, even well after the oil boom of the 1970s had begun. This view was encouraged by the government, resulting in merchants and other social climbers seeking out any possible evidence of noble tribal family origins. While an element of nostalgia for an idealized past probably contributed to tribal affiliation during the mid-century oil boom years, it was more likely the growth of the state and the concomitant benefits accruing to descendants of tribes loyal to the Al Saud that encouraged this

process. The pre-eminent Saudi scholar of the tribes, Hamad al-Jāṣir, contributed to the official storyline in his numerous mid-century compendiums that carefully delineated the tribal origins and affiliations of the populace. Under that narrative framework, the bedouin were noble but corruptible, and the greatest accomplishment of the modern state was to recondition them, settle them and integrate them into a more stable society.<sup>48</sup> According to Nadav Samin: “Al-Jāṣir had risen from peasant farmer to join the ranks of the elite, sedentary tribal families of central Arabia, and his *Jamhara* was in many respects a defense of that order and the social privilege it hoped to maintain through the upheavals of the oil era.”<sup>49</sup>

## Trade and Commerce in the Desert

Setting aside these neo-tribal narratives, Dr. Sa‘ad al-Sowayan points out that in the Arabian Peninsula there has historically been more of a continuum of behavior, with both *badū* and *hadar* sharing traditions, kinship and (most importantly) mutual ties of economic dependence. “The contact between them is renewed every year during the summer when tribes collect round tribal wells and villages. This contact is not limited to economic exchanges, but it also includes social and poetical exchanges. The strong bonds and intimate friendships that develop between them through such contacts are amply documented in their poetry.”<sup>50</sup> Above all, the interdependence of these urban and rural populations came from *musābila*, the barter that tribes undertook when they stocked up on essential provisions, like rice, wheat and clothes.<sup>51</sup> Often it would come in the summer, when tribes encamped near urban areas with reliable sources of water, but more often in the fall after the date crop was ripe. At various times, great caravans from Najd would carry goods from the entire tribe to market in Iraq, selling fats, wool and camels in order to purchase dates, rice, wheat, tea, sugar and cloth.<sup>52</sup> The exchange was unequal from the outset. And since tribesmen sometimes came as a group to shop, it was common for merchants to raise their prices in anticipation and thereby take advantage of the surging demand.

There were two common solutions for the savvy tribesman. The first was to hire a trustworthy local to do the buying for you and pay him a commission for every camel-load he procured. The second was to build a long-term relationship with a particular merchant in town who would quietly seek out the best deal for you every year. This second approach was made easier when there was a settled merchant in town who came from the tribe or who had married into it, even if that relationship was at two or three generations removed. And reciprocal relationships developed, because just as the townspeople were the only ones with direct access to goods coming in from the major ports nearby, so too the tribes were the only ones able to provide security outside the walls of the towns in the *bādiya*.<sup>53</sup> In some cases, entire villages with forts were established by groups of tribesmen who had rebelled from their shaykh and chosen to set out on their own, which was an especially common phenomenon along the Trucial Coast in the mid to late nineteenth century.<sup>54</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, a network of trading centers was established from Bahrain and Kuwait up into Iraq and Persia, which linked the interior of central Arabia with the broader regional economy. “This system was dependent on the institution of market towns to link Gulf merchants with sources of capital, an ample supply of goods, and mechanisms for the distribution of regional commodities.”<sup>55</sup> Najdi traders occupied market stalls in secondary market towns lying in the interior, in places like Jahrā’, Safwān, Zubayr, Sūq al-Shuyūkh, Khamīsiyah and Samāwah. Unlike big ports such as Basrah, these locales were small enough to avoid customs inspectors and therefore they held a tax-haven status similar to that of Kuwait. They developed partly as a result of the repeated drought and famines in Najd that created a widespread migration of tribesmen to the north and east, and partly as a result of the power vacuum along the coast that emerged following the Saudi defeat of the Banu Khalid federation. They were further encouraged by Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms, in which large tribal confederations were allowed to establish mercantile towns (e.g. Sūq al-Shuyūkh, Nāṣirīyah) to support the new agricultural settlements of their tribesmen and transform shaykhs into tax-farmers.<sup>56</sup> It is notable that these trading centers were in direct competition with the oasis towns of the Najdi interior, as a comparison of prices prepared by a

British intelligence officer in 1928 showed: a camel-load of dates cost 9 rupees in Zubayr and 20 rupees in Buraydah, while a camel-load of rice cost 15 rupees in Zubayr and 50 rupees in Buraydah.<sup>57</sup>

Ibn Saud had reason to be concerned about currency flight as his population spent their money on imported goods at bazaars located just beyond the new international borders, which could not be regulated by his government. There was an interdependent socio-economic relationship between rural and urban populations in Arabia that could never be fully regulated and controlled by tax officials, and both governments and the public alike understood that fact. In the winter of 1921/22, residents of Riyadh and nearby towns petitioned Ibn Saud to lift his embargo of Kuwait because of rising prices on their imports.<sup>58</sup> Much of the point of the embargo was precisely to break the economic links the ‘Ajman and Mutayr tribes had there, in order to integrate them into Najdi markets (Jubayl or Hofuf) and the emerging state, according to Anthony Toth.<sup>59</sup> But it was neither simple nor easy for Ibn Saud to re-engineer Najdi society to direct trade inward rather than outward, given the size and complexity of the commerce. The average amount of trade between Kuwait and Najd was around 800,000 rupees in the 1920s, and anyone could evade the Najdi Government’s embargo with the help of sympathetic tribesmen.<sup>60</sup>

## The Township of Zubayr

The discussion above explored the economy of the borderlands, the interdependence of the tribes and the towns, and their importance for the Saudi Government. In the sections that follow, we will examine some of the political and cultural consequences for these populations living along the border, particularly those townspeople in southern Iraq who self-identified their heritage with the Najd. They traded with Najdi tribesmen, they claimed descent from villages in the Najdi heartland and many of them maintained traditions of dress, dialect and faith that were derived from the Najd. Yet by virtue of the fact that they lived in Iraq at a time of the growth of the state and the imposition of the border, they were faced with hard choices about how to retain their Najdi identity on one hand, while asserting their place in Iraqi society on the other. There is no better case study than

the town of Zubayr, if only by virtue of the rich literature on its history (Figure 17).

Zubayr lies about eight miles southwest of Baṣrah and five miles south of Shu‘aybah, in a valley first called the Wādī al-Nisā‘ and later known as the Wādī al-Sibā‘a, with the name of the town itself deriving from the grave of the Companion of the Prophet, al-Zubayr bin al-‘Awām (d. 38 AH).<sup>61</sup> It sits on top of a site that was once occupied by a large depression, and hence a naturally-forming cistern in the rainy season, which was used for staging camels before their march across the desert in caravans. Such a topographical feature is often called a *mirabid* in Arabic, and this one was in active use with a marketplace during the time of Old Baṣrah in the first few centuries of Islam.<sup>62</sup> In fact, some of the ruins of Old Baṣrah were still visible just three miles from Zubayr as late as 1908.<sup>63</sup> Along the coast near the port of Umm Qasr, there was a jetty known as “the approach” (*al-majdam*), where ships from Kuwait would unload goods specifically for Zubayri merchants in order to avoid problems from bandits on the overland path from Kuwait. Jabal Sinām to the southwest is the only elevation in the vicinity at 150m above sea level, and the Wādī al-Bātin running below is part of an ancient river valley that once flowed all the way from Medina. Camel tracks were the only path leading either southwest through the Bātin to the town of Līnah, or south to Safwān with its freshwater wells and date palm plantations owned by the al-Suwayt (Dhafir) and several Zubayri elites, and which was the last oasis for caravans to rest before they entered a sprawling desert. Today the Wādī al-Bātin forms the border between Kuwait and Iraq, and Safwān the border post for police and customs inspectors.<sup>64</sup> When the British arrived, they built an earthen road from Zubayr to Baṣrah for cars and installed a telegraph from Baṣrah in 1915, which must have been a shock to a conservative town that until recently had a notable lack of coffee-houses or smoking, and considered bicycles to be the work of the devil.<sup>65</sup>

A shrine to al-Zubayr al-‘Awām probably existed at least since the end of the fifteenth century, according to the testimony of multiple travellers who witnessed an inscription on the door.<sup>66</sup> And it seems likely that the town grew due to the arrival of people who wanted to live nearby the saint (Figure 18). The population probably included recent arrivals from various

parts of Najd escaping drought and famine, but also some residents of Baṣrah who sought to escape bouts of plague and Persian invasions. Contemporary biographies of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab recount that he preached in Baṣrah during the 1720s, but fled to Zubayr, where he found a more sympathetic audience.<sup>67</sup> It also appears that Zubayr grew dramatically in size in the mid-1750s from Najdis who either rejected the Wahhabi movement or were expelled from Najd by the Al Saud, such as the Waṭbān or Mādī families.<sup>68</sup> The contemporary Danish traveler, Carsten Niebuhr, recorded that: “Zobayer, the ancient Basra, which had decayed to little better than a hamlet, has been peopled by these refugees, and is now a large town.”<sup>69</sup>

It was around this time that the “Najadi” mosque was built, so that those residents who were adherents to the Salafi reforms could avoid praying in the Friday mosque that contained the grave of the saint, and subsequently a Hanbali madrassa attached to the Najadi mosque came to rival Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s own school in Diri‘yah.<sup>70</sup> A bitter rivalry took place among families whose origins went back to two small villages in central Najd just northwest of Riyadh: Ḥuraymlā’ (e.g. the Zuhayr and Rāshid families) and Ḥurma (e.g. the ‘Aoun family).<sup>71</sup> In many cases, these were descendants of families that had fled the Wahhabi movement and had even supported the Ottomans against the Al Saud in the early nineteenth century, yet by the 1910s they were part of a society that had diverse and syncretic attitudes toward religion and politics.

One Ottoman officer who was based out of al-Aḥsā’ just before WWI offered the following description to his Iraqi audience: “Certainly, the town of Zubayr is Najdi before it is Iraqi and it does not resemble Iraqi cities, not even Baṣrah close by it, in its buildings and its marketplaces and its people, and whoever desires to see al-Aḥsā’ or Ḥā’il or Riyadh or other places, should see Zubayr.”<sup>72</sup> Almost uniquely for the Najd, however, the leadership of the town was not strictly hereditary, inasmuch as the town elders typically met to decide who would become Shaykh, a position that was funded in part by taxes on the caravans. That statement needs to be qualified on several fronts, however, since particular families attempted to control the office of Shaykh, sometimes with the support of the Ottoman authorities or Baṣrah notables. In the late nineteenth century, the Ottomans

encouraged the formation of the position of Director to assist in expanding their authority, which led to clashes with the Shaykh. On the one hand, the ruler of Zubayr enjoyed great privileges and immunities from such things as military conscription, while on the other hand, government authorities relied on key families in Zubayr to provide them with vital intelligence on events and personages in the desert beyond.<sup>73</sup> The position of *shaykh al-himāra* (later named the *shaykh al-mukhtār*) was created to assist the head of the township in enforcing security and defending the gates, which in reality meant punishing the Shaykh's enemies.<sup>74</sup>

In light of that decentralized power structure and the efforts by outside actors to influence it, we can now examine how the residents of Zubayr reacted to political change in Iraq and how they sought to preserve Najdi culture through political engagement and education. The example of 'Abd al-Laṭīf bin Ibrāhīm al-Mandīl will serve as an example of the former, and Muhammad Amīn al-Shanqītī will serve as an example of the latter. These residents of Zubayr, native and non-native, were part of a society caught up in conflicting identities between Iraq and Saudi Arabia in the modern era of statehood and borders.

### **'Abd al-Laṭīf bin Ibrāhīm al-Mandīl (ca. 1868–1940)**

Many leading families from Zubayr sought to build relationships with political leaders in Baghdad and Baṣrah just as much as they welcomed relations with Ibn Saud and his emirs. 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Mandīl (ca. 1868–1940) was a case in point. In 1837, his father left Jalājil in the Rawdat Sudayr region of Najd for Zubayr and with his six sons established a business empire of enormous date palm plantations and palaces in Baṣrah, Baghdad and India.<sup>75</sup> When Ibn Saud visited Baṣrah in 1916 at Percy Cox's request to finalize a deal for British military support to Najd (Figure 19), he stayed at al-Mandīl's house in Zubayr, just as Ibn Saud's father ('Abd al-Rahmān) had stayed with 'Abd al-Laṭīf's father (Ibrāhīm) in the summer of 1893.<sup>76</sup> Ibrāhīm al-Mandīl had managed 'Abd al-Rahmān's stipends and other financial affairs with the Ottomans at the turn of the century, and similarly both 'Abd al-Laṭīf and his full brother 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Mandīl had power of attorney for Ibn Saud. When Ibn Saud issued a decree in

August 1923 inviting all Najdis in Iraq to buy shares in a proposed venture for oil exploration in al-Aḥsā’ and Qatīf, he designated al-Mandīl as his representative for collecting subscriptions.<sup>77</sup>

At the same time, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Pasha hosted King Faisal on his visit to Zubayr on June 21, 1923, when the King danced the ‘*arda* (a Najdi tradition) with local residents, and al-Mandīl later lobbied the Royal Court in Baghdad for funds to divert water from the Shatt al-Arab to the town.<sup>78</sup> He was even close to Sayyid Talib al-Naqib, joining the latter’s Reform Party of Baṣrah as a member of the administrative council, and he went so far as to sneak Sayyid Talib out of Baṣrah in 1914 in order to broker a meeting with Ibn Saud in Buraydah.<sup>79</sup> He was a versatile politician and adapted well to changing circumstances. In fact, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf’s political career in Iraq began as a member of the Wilayat Council for Baṣrah during Ottoman rule and then as a member of the Majlis al-Ashrāf set up in Zubayr to coordinate with the British occupying authorities during the war. In 1921, he helped present a petition to Percy Cox demanding semi-autonomy for Baṣrah province under British protection.<sup>80</sup> He was appointed Minister of Trade in 1921 and again in 1922, briefly Minister of Awqāf that November, elected to the lower house of Parliament in 1924, and a member of the upper house from 1929 to 1934 (Figure 20).

His efforts to maintain a foot in both worlds and bridge the divide between Iraq and Najd ultimately failed to satisfy political leaders on either side. The reasons for al-Mandīl maintaining positive relations with Baghdad were similar to those of other wealthy families in Baṣrah and Zubayr – a desire to safeguard their vast land-holdings and win development support from the central government for their localities. However, as Minister of Trade in 1922 he helped round up support in the cabinet to block King Faisal’s attempt to launch a military attack against Najd, leading Faisal to demand the resignation of al-Mandīl and the other ministers involved.<sup>81</sup> On the other side, Muhammad Almana records that Ibn Saud was personally aggrieved by the decision of the al-Mandīl family to take Iraqi citizenship, and Ibn Saud “became very frosty if their name was mentioned,” after so many decades in which they had profited from their association with the Al Saud.<sup>82</sup>

## Muhammad Amīn al-Shanqītī (1876–1932)

Aside from trade and commerce, some local residents of Zubayr also maintained their connection to Najd through education and religion, specifically the Hanbali school of Islamic jurisprudence with an emphasis on the teachings of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab. During the late nineteenth century, the main school of higher learning in Zubayr was an Ottoman institution using a curriculum modeled after the French educational system and taught in the Turkish language. The British closed it down during the occupation of WWI and opened their own school, but in either case the families of Zubayr generally preferred to avoid such colonial institutions.<sup>83</sup> In 1909, a leading member of the Al Sa‘dūn family wanted to establish the first Arabic-language school of higher learning and sent a messenger to Medina for an imam to run it. A leading scholar there nominated his Mauritanian student, Shaykh Muhammad al-Shanqītī, who had studied in Cairo and was then on a tour through the Gulf, having stopped over in Qaṣṣīm along the way where he adopted the Hanbali method of Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>84</sup> By the time he arrived in Zubayr, he found that Al Sa‘dūn had died and the schoolmaster position had been taken up by another imam appointed by relatives of the ruler of Kuwait, so he married a local woman and became an itinerant preacher.<sup>85</sup> When war broke out in 1914, he and his friend Hafiz Wahba were expelled from Kuwait for advocating civil disobedience against the Kuwaiti ruler’s policy of support for the British and their allies in the region.<sup>86</sup> It was around this time that al-Shanqītī preached among the Ottoman troops on the frontlines at Kūt, possibly fought against the British at al-Shu‘aybah on April 12, 1915, and (after the Ottoman defeat) fled through Samāwah to Hā'il and eventually ‘Unayzah.<sup>87</sup>

Once in Qaṣṣīm, students flocked to al-Shanqītī, so Ibn Saud went to meet him. al-Dulayshī transmits a story told by Muhammad al-‘Asāfī, whose uncle used to host al-Shanqītī at their home in Baghdad and was one of the founding donors to al-Shanqītī’s madrassa in Zubayr:

King Abdulaziz Al Saud when he came to Qaṣṣīm . . . found Shaykh al-Shanqītī at the majlis [of Muhammad al-Shabīlī],<sup>88</sup> so he welcomed [al-Shanqītī] and escorted him to the seat of honor, and praised his learning, even though he had glimpsed him from afar, wisely in order to adhere to neutrality and not give an excuse to incite violence against the English – as had been done in Kuwait and Iraq – thus creating trouble for him [i.e. Ibn Saud], problems he

didn't want. So then he went to tell al-Shabīlī, *ma 'rradatan*<sup>89</sup> – and al-Shanqītī heard – that the English had written to him demanding the surrender of al-Shanqītī to them, and he requested of al-Shabīlī to inquire of al-Shanqītī's view on this . . . but al-Shanqītī did not stir and did not show any anger or emotion or fear or affect or request for protection or anything resembling this, but rather responded with confidence, composed and calm, saying: "My view is the view of His Majesty, and He has the right to do what he believes is the interest for the policy of His country and the affairs of His Kingdom, and He bears no blame in all of what He does for the sake of this." So [Ibn Saud] smiled, impressed with his courage, and reassured him that he responded to the English by not agreeing to his surrender, for at any rate it was not the Arab habit to surrender their guests and their neighbors, but rather the habit was to protect them and defend them . . ."<sup>90</sup>

al-Dulayshī (probably accurately) concludes that Ibn Saud admired al-Shanqītī and allowed him to stay in 'Unayzah during the war, but did not want him permanently in the middle of Qaṣṣīm preaching jihad against foreigners and foreign influences. With the end of WWI and a general amnesty issued by the British for all exiles, in late 1918 al-Shanqītī left for Kuwait and then Iraq, settling once again in Zubayr as the guest of its Shaykh, Ibrāhīm bin 'Abd Allāh bin Ibrāhīm Al Rāshid. In 1922, he established what would become the most famous school of Zubayr, the *madrassat al-najāh al-ahlīyah* (the People's Salvation School), accepting donations from many of the leading Najdi families of Zubayr and overseas fund-raising support from 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Mandīl.<sup>91</sup> This was an elite school of higher education for local families of Zubayr who had a self-consciously Najdi cultural bent, led by a schoolmaster from the Hanbali tradition, designed to free young people from evil and set them on the true path of Islam, yet teaching a wide range of subjects including geography, engineering, accounting, history and the English language.<sup>92</sup> The school walked a fine line between receiving funding from the Ministry of Education while still offering the teachings of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, leading to arguments among officials in Başrah about its adherence to government curriculum and repeated attempts to cut off its funding.<sup>93</sup> The *madrassat al-najāh al-ahlīyah* contributed to the town's reputation as a hub of learning where families from the Najd could send their boys for education and where local Zubayri families could, in turn, groom their children for positions in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and elsewhere.

## Reconsidering Identity and Affiliation

As we turn to a consideration of the historiography and the question of Ibn Saud's motivations towards the tribes of Iraq, we should keep in mind that the arguments above do not indicate that Ibn Saud and his associates were actively and indiscriminately trying to convert, coopt or kill the tribes and townspeople living along the border. Certainly not for the sake of raw conquest and plunder, even if he and his agents did lend support to some individuals whose actions may have had that effect. Rather, the discussion above suggests that they saw themselves exercising their authority to tax and punish populations that already self-identified as Najdi, and they did so because preserving ties between populations on either side of the border was necessary for the sake of the social stability and economic prosperity in the Najd.

However, academic and journalistic accounts instead tend to focus on religion as the overarching motivating factor behind the legitimization of the state, the mobilization of resources and the prioritization of policies.<sup>94</sup> The tale of the growth of the Saudi state usually begins in academic accounts with the alliance in 1745 between Muhammad bin Saud and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, the former being the head of the Al Saud political dynasty and the latter the founder of a religious creed preaching a radical return to the fundamental tenets of the Prophet and his companions. As Gary Troeller framed it: "During this period the rise of a united Najd began under the political, military, and religious force of the Sa'udi-Wahhabi theocracy. [ . . . ] The plunder of those beyond the pale was a characteristic of Wahhabism. Indeed the Bedouin's natural tendency towards the raid (*ghazzu*) was galvanised, fuelled and sanctioned by this religious doctrine."<sup>95</sup> It is a story of religious fervor and fanaticism, almost indiscriminate violence and territorial greed, from the 1740s all the way until 1930 and even beyond, depending entirely on viewing these actors' intentions in terms of "Wahhabism," which itself is something of a misnomer.<sup>96</sup> Some scholars frame the discussion in terms of the writings of fourteenth-century scholar Ibn Khaldun, who asserted that while tribal solidarity is necessary for creating an emirate, its long-term survival depends on being wedded to religious ideology.<sup>97</sup>

It is not the aim of this study to define or debate Salafi thought in this or any other part of the Muslim world. The reader is welcome to consult some of the extensive scholarly literature on Salafism and Wahhabism.<sup>98</sup> Religious fervor certainly was a motivating factor among Ibn Saud's forces, and sometimes in ways that would surprise the lay reader, like religiously-motivated attacks against Salafis.<sup>99</sup> Despite the technological edge and superior training of Hijazi forces at the battle of Turba in 1918, Abdullah bin Hussein had to be dragged away from his tent to safety in the face of Ikhwan fighters who fearlessly put down their lives for a cause: “ . . . the Akhwan losses were unprecedentedly great, for they were mown down by hundreds as they came blindly on under [my] machine-guns.”<sup>100</sup> Religious ideology was the predominant factor at other times in Saudi history and inspired numerous military campaigns against regional neighbors, as Hala Fattah notes of the early nineteenth century: “The Sa‘ūdī expansion into eastern Arabia, the Hijaz, Oman and the fringes of Iraq was thus considered to be a necessary function of the Unitarian ‘aqida, for military-political initiatives went hand in hand with a reformist message.”<sup>101</sup> Yet the same ideas and objectives that motivated Saudi expansion in the mid-eighteenth century were probably different from the ideas and objectives that motivated Saudi expansion in the late nineteenth century, and both were surely far different still from the ideas and goals of Ibn Saud in the 1920s and 30s.<sup>102</sup> It is my contention that this strand of religious thought was just one marker of cultural identity for Najdis in the early twentieth century, and the broader socio-economic imperative of preserving that Najdi community was at least as important in motivating Ibn Saud and his top associates.

There is no better example of the salience of trade, kinship and culture as markers of Najdi identity – separate from, and more relevant than, religious affiliation – than the ‘Uqaylat. The outline of their history is surprisingly well-documented, and the challenges they faced in the late 1910s and 20s with the imposition of the border and the growth of modern states were emblematic of the same issues faced by other communities straddling the border in this period. The ‘Uqaylat were not a single tribe in any patrilineal sense (real or imagined), but rather their ancestors had come from a variety of tribes, leaving the Arabian Peninsula in pursuit of a better life.<sup>103</sup> They did not give themselves the name ‘Uqayli. It was given to

them early on during their arrival in Iraq in the mid to late eighteenth century, probably in relation to the black cords ('iqāl) worn to this day by many residents of the Gulf around their head.<sup>104</sup> The first mention of them in battle was of a group of Najdis assembled from the town of Zubayr and called in to restore order to Baṣrah in the wake of two waves of Persian invasions in the mid-1770s, eventually becoming a tool in the hands of rival Ottoman governors vying for control over Baghdad.<sup>105</sup> They grew into one of the many ethnic-based units employed by the Ottomans in Iraq, probably distinguished by their headdress in the same way that other Ottoman-backed militias featured their own distinctive headdresses as a type of uniform.<sup>106</sup> Their military organization and loyalty to the state gave the 'Uqaylat certain privileges, such as the right to bear arms and avoid many customs duties. So they took up the role of providing protection for caravans, crossing in a loop from Baṣrah to Baghdad to Damascus to Mecca to Buraydah, and in the colonial era they protected the postal mail convoys between Baghdad and Damascus.<sup>107</sup>

Those characteristics of the 'Uqaylat marked them as Najdis, with the two terms synonymous in the minds of late eighteenth-century observers, and that provides us with the closest thing we have to an early definition of "Najdi-ness." While most did not hold onto their ancestral tribal names, they did maintain a sense of tribal order, with leaders assuming the role of shaykh. They were neither strictly country folk (*badū*) nor townspeople (*hadar*), inasmuch as they could navigate both worlds. They were first, second and third-generation immigrants to Iraq, while continuing to visit and trade with the Najd. And they had achieved social mobility due to their ability to project an image of strength, discretion and capability. They were an integral part of the Najdi economy. And when Ibn Saud imposed a ban on trade with the Hijaz in 1919, he had to carve out a notable exception for the 'Uqaylat, as we saw in the passage at the beginning of this chapter.

Ibn Saud's actions were accordingly motivated by the need to maintain the socio-economic stability of the Najd, over and above any desire to convert the masses to Wahhabism. We can see this in the way that: 1) certain populations mattered to Ibn Saud (e.g. the Shammar Najd, Dhafir and Dihamsha), while the many other tribes in southern Iraq did not; 2) many of these people were not Wahhabi in any strict sense, yet they self-

consciously maintained commercial and social links to the Najd; and 3) large numbers of these people eventually did choose to migrate to Saudi Arabia. Their self-identified connections to the Najd, whether or not they gave allegiance to the Saudi Government, is what set them apart in a special category for Ibn Saud. Again, it's important to stress here that it was these socio-economic ties that mattered, not necessarily any racial or hereditary claim to the Najd. The Harb and 'Otayba, let alone the Dhafir and the 'Aniza, did not claim ancestral descent from the heart of the Najd. Rather, most placed their origins in the Hijaz, with centuries of migration having brought them up through the Najd to southern Iraq. (In that regard, one might even wonder whether Ibn Saud's attempts to include them as his constituents were not part of an effort to redefine Najdi society.)

While Ibn Saud provided support to Salafi publishers and periodicals abroad, such as Rashīd Riḍā's *al-Manhal* in Egypt, he did not go so far as to repeatedly hand out passports to dozens or hundreds of individuals sight unseen as he did for the residents of Zubayr, as will be discussed below. Indeed, a group of expatriate Yemenis mounted a sustained lobbying effort for Ibn Saud's financial support from 1934 to 1936, offering to establish a network of Salafi-inspired schools in the Hadhramawt and to take over a free port along the Hadhrami coast, but they reportedly received little more than platitudes.<sup>108</sup> In a similar vein, on July 14, 1933, the Saudi Government announced that, "... owing to the state of uncleanliness which is in general in the country and especially in the Haram on account of Takrunis [black Africans] and certain Yamanis . . . those who have no work with which to support themselves, and are a source of harm to the country should depart from this country to their original homes . . ."<sup>109</sup> Committees were formed in Mecca and Jeddah to examine residents' nationalities, leaving the British Ambassador to conclude: "I do not think we shall be very far wrong if we take it as axiomatic that the Government would like to naturalise as [citizens] all foreign elements of value to them and to get rid of the rest."<sup>110</sup> Other Arab Gulf rulers in the early twentieth century, such as the Al Maktoum in Dubai, developed similar policies of selectively encouraging emigration for ethnically and linguistically closely-related Arab populations, seeking to bolster domestic support through demographic means.<sup>111</sup>

Ibn Saud's policy in Iraq was focused on these "foreign elements of value" – segments of the Sunni Arab population with cultural ties to the Najd – precisely because he saw them as extensions of his core constituency. As the British Ambassador in Jeddah noted: "He is fond of saying that the Iraq Arabs are from Nejd, but he regards the country as largely non-Arab in policy as well as in population . . ."<sup>112</sup> And it was not just Ibn Saud, since this policy was firmly entrenched in the Saudi Government at least until 1973, when the Ministry of Interior issued a decree "granting Najdis resident in Iraq the opportunity of return to the citizenship of the original homeland after confirming there are no notifications against them and they are proven to be an individual or one of his sons to the fourth degree related to Najdi origins . . ."<sup>113</sup>

These populations living beyond the borders of the Saudi state posed challenges and opportunities for the Saudi Government, not only in terms of foreign relations, but also in terms of domestic policy. There was the need for military manpower, so that at the Kuwait conference his delegation insisted on the right to call up Najdi subjects for military service, even if they were resident in Iraq.<sup>114</sup> There were serious economic considerations, as described above. And there was the prospect that allowing tribes along the border with Iraq to flaunt the rules and evade punishment might send a signal to tribes residing inside the Saudi borders that they could do the same. The Ibn Rifada revolt is a perfect case in point of that last political concern. Hamīd bin Sālim Ibn Rifada (Billi), having already attempted rebellion once in 1928, spent time abroad in exile gaining support from members of the Transjordanian Government and Royal Court.<sup>115</sup> In late May 1932, he returned by way of Ḥaql at the head of hundreds of tribesmen, gathering many more as he went and fighting a losing battle near Jabal Shār. Ibn Rifada and many of his followers were killed, but not before a group of Banī Attīyah tribesmen on the Transjordan side of the border mobilized to join him, while a leader of the Ḥuwayṭāt sent word of similar intent.<sup>116</sup>

## Politics along the Border

Given all these considerations, we can see that religion was only one factor (and hardly the primary one) for Ibn Saud's approach to alternately entice and punish the tribes on the Iraqi side of the border. Even a place like Zubayr, with its Salafi institutions of learning, held a variety of diverse and sometimes syncretic attitudes toward religion and education. He had no use for indiscriminately incorporating other Arab populations into the Najd, and even among the tribes there were only really three that mattered to him in Iraq. We will now examine them in order to consider the factors that motivated some of them to side with the Iraqi Government and others to go over to the Saudi Arabia. In each instance, we will see religion playing only a minor role in determining choices of migration to the Najd, while the factors that seemed to actually drive divisions and splits among these tribes were contestations for power, the quality of tribal leadership, and the erosion of the economic viability of traditional nomadic lifestyles. That competition had been encouraged and supported by the Ottoman Government in the late nineteenth century as a means of controlling the desert regions through offers of tax-farming rights and official recognition for loyal shaykhs.<sup>117</sup> By the time of WWI and the founding of the modern states, tribal leaders on both sides had learned how to play the game and, in turn, how to manipulate governments on either side for their own ends.

## **Shammar: Multiple Power Centers**

It will be necessary first to summarize the history of the Shammar in the region, both for the purpose of this discussion about identity and migration, but also because the Shammar played such a prominent role in the diplomatic and security discussions that we saw in Chapters 1 and 2. At the time that Ibn Saud laid siege to Ḥā'il in 1920, one group of the Shammar existed in eastern Syria led by Mish'āl bin Fāris bin Farhān Al Jarbā, another in the Jazirah of Iraq with Dihām bin Hādī bin 'Aṣī bin Farhān Al Jarbā and 'Ajīl "al-Yāwar" bin 'Abd al-'Azīz bin Farhān Al Jarbā competing for its leadership, and the third spread out across the Nafūd under the Al Rashid family.<sup>118</sup> The broad geographic spread of the tribe came about through migration in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries due to drought and war, and as is typical for very large confederations, there

was no acknowledged paramount shaykh. In the Jazirah, Farhān had sixteen sons to inherit his shaykhdom, and the Ottomans effectively managed to divide and manipulate them. The British attempted to hold a conference in Mosul in 1919 to offer government recognition and subventions to several hand-picked tribal leaders, but with little effect as many of the Shammar tribes joined the 1920 Revolution against British rule.<sup>119</sup> Almost immediately upon assuming the throne in Iraq, King Faisal wanted to reward the Al Jarbā for their support during the Arab Revolt, and both Dihām and ‘Ajīl competed for Faisal’s blessing to become paramount shaykh. According to al-Rawi, Faisal offered his support to Dihām on the condition that his renowned grandfather would resettle in Iraq, but the octogenarian ‘Asī refused, preferring to remain with his loyal followers just on the other side of the border in Turkey, exercising a moral influence over the tribe.<sup>120</sup>

In the end, Faisal and the British Civil Commission in Baghdad decided in favor of appointing ‘Ajīl as shaykh of shaykhs, with the ability to decide how to distribute other government salaries among the tribe, the right to collect government taxes and issue official passes for tribesmen to access urban markets, and enough resources for a *bayrq al-hajjāna* of two hundred men that would be suitable for patrolling the entire northwest.<sup>121</sup> His slaves formed the original core of the force, which was under the authority of the Director of Police for Mosul province, but garrisoned at the private residence of ‘Ajīl in Akhdīrwān (close to the village of al-Ibrāhīmīyah).<sup>122</sup> al-Rawi, who took charge of this *bayrq* as his first command appointment on February 20, 1922, said the Shammar tribes rushed to support ‘Ajīl when they saw the funds he was able to secure from the government. He noted: “The shaykh of the shaykhs of Shammar ‘Ajīl al-Yāwar was tall-standing, good of manners and morals, popular, good of reputation before becoming shaykh. He was successful when he had led raids, and he had good behavior in distributing spoils.”<sup>123</sup> Dihām left for Syria hoping to find support there, but the French threw their weight behind Mish‘al, and Dihām was left with a meager French subsidy and an axe to grind with ‘Ajīl, targeting ‘Ajīl’s base of support with raids and highway banditry.<sup>124</sup>

The Rashidi family had established an emirate in Hā'il in the 1830s, wielding influence over the rest of the ‘ashīra of the Shammar ‘Abdu, as

well as other conquered nomadic groups and the settled populations of Jabal Shammar, which was an area encompassing the various oases located between Jabal Aja and Jabal Salma.<sup>125</sup> Declining revenues in Hā'il, a power struggle within the Rashidi family and their failure to secure the trust and support of the British gave Ibn Saud an advantage in swaying some sections of the tribe. Following negotiation, siege and eventual military conquest, Ibn Saud's forces entered the gates of Hā'il on November 3, 1921, and accepted the town's surrender, removing the leaders of the Rashidi family to Riyadh and placing another Shammar leader in charge, Ibrāhīm bin Sālim al-Sabhān.<sup>126</sup> Ibn Saud offered a temporary amnesty for all Shammar returning to Najd in early 1923 and he pressed the Iraqi Government to expel all those who had fled, partly in order to prevent their flight and armed resistance from inspiring rebellion amongst other Najdi tribes.<sup>127</sup> However, over the next decade, successive waves of outward migration by Shammar tribesmen and urban merchants to Iraq and elsewhere left the marketplace in Hā'il empty and a number of houses in ruin (Figure 21).<sup>128</sup> Some of these Shammar who fled Hā'il to Iraq continued raids on Najd throughout the 1920s, despite Iraqi Ministry of Interior attempts to control their movements, while King Faisal tried to convince the British that Iraq could lower the barriers to migration and thousands of Shammar would flock to him.<sup>129</sup>

The aftermath of the conquest of Hā'il contributed to a patchwork of Shammar tribesmen in Iraq just at the time Faisal assumed the throne. Some were long-established for decades or centuries with Shaykh 'Ajīl al-Yāwar in the lead, and others were impoverished newcomers bearing grievances with no clear overall leadership and a penchant for raiding Najdi caravans visiting Samāwah, Nāṣirīyah, Zubayr and Najaf. A small group of Shammar 'Abdu families under the leadership of 'Akab al-'Ajīl, who had been father-in-law and senior advisor to Ibn Rashid before the fall of Hā'il in 1921, continued to reside in the Jazirah of Iraq long after 1935, by which time most other Shammar refugees had returned to Najd.<sup>130</sup> Some didn't fit into any simple category, such as several households of the Shammar Toman under the leadership of Mish'al al-Timyāṭ. Before WWI, Mish'al's father Bargash had brought a section of the tribe over from Najd to reside with the Shammar Sayīḥ north of Baghdad in Jabal Ḥamrīn; he even set down roots

by intermarrying with the ‘Amarat (‘Aniza), so that one of his daughters was actually Maḥrūt al-Hidhāl’s mother.<sup>131</sup>

These were hardly refugees by any definition of the word: “Following a quarrel with the Dahamsha, Mishal al-Timyat went to Nejd in 1932 and for three years received a salary from the Saudi court. In 1935 he fell foul of the Amir of Hail and returned to Iraq.”<sup>132</sup> Similarly, a section of the Shammar Sinjara from Najd with no relation to the events of Ḥā’il resided in Iraq well into the late 1930s, making frequent visits to Najd and receiving gifts from Ibn Saud.<sup>133</sup> There was little that ‘Ajīl al-Yāwar could do to manage the situation of the Shammar Najd crossing the border, considering all of the other complications within the Shammar and his dependency on the government for resources. At the seventh session of the Kuwait conference on December 21, 1923, ‘Ajīl burst out in anger at the Najdi delegation and their demand for the return of all Shammar Najd, saying that “it would appear that [the Najdi Government] consider them like sheep or animals who can be driven to the slaughter house . . . ”<sup>134</sup>

## Dhafir: Shaykhs Playing Both Sides

When the borders were drawn in 1922, the Dhafir under the leadership of the Suwayt family occupied lands across much of the Neutral Zone, grazing all the way up to Abī Ghār, al-Buṣayyah and al-Salmān. Their larger neighbor, the Muntafiq confederation, was under the leadership of the Sa‘dūn family, who were Sunni even though a majority of the Muntafiq tribes and smaller affiliates were Shi‘a.<sup>135</sup> Rapacious practices by the Sa‘dūn to accumulate land, rents and labor from the tribes of the Euphrates River valley had often led the sheep-herding clans of the Badūr (Muntafiq) and the Ziyād (Bani Ḥuchaim) to side with the Dhafir, and raids frequently developed as a result.<sup>136</sup> The situation was exacerbated after WWI when the Iraqi Government appointed Yūsuf al-Mansūr Al Sa‘dūn as commander of the Muntafiq province camel police.<sup>137</sup>

Shaykh Ḥamūd Ibn Suwayt continued to accept his stipend from the British Government, but frequently clashed with the Iraqi Government and thus increasingly explored relations with Ibn Saud starting in 1922, despite warnings and threats from Sir Percy Cox. Other Dhafir shaykhs also visited

Riyadh and accepted gifts from Ibn Saud, including Lizām Abā Dhirā‘a and ‘Alī bin Dūwayhī Al Suwayt.<sup>138</sup> After Ḥamūd’s death, the Iraqi Government recognized his son ‘Ajmī as shaykh on December 7, 1926, but he also soon shifted allegiance and moved part of the Dhafir to Najd in 1927, where Ibn Saud gave him a salary and a stipend to distribute to other Dhafir shaykhs, a little less than half of whom settled in Najd during this period either temporarily or permanently.<sup>139</sup> The Iraqi Government then settled on Lizām Abā Dhirā‘a, anointing him as paramount shaykh, but none of the government’s efforts seem to have brought cohesion back to the tribe.<sup>140</sup>

As an incentive and reward for their move, Ibn Saud granted some shaykhs of the Dhafir permission to help enforce the ongoing blockade of Kuwait by seizing goods from unauthorized travellers and transferring the camels to Ibn Saud’s official representatives.<sup>141</sup> While ‘Ajmi and his followers remained in Najd, other parts of the tribe moved back to Iraq within the year, feeling they were not receiving enough financial support and refusing to pay *zakat* to Ibn Saud’s armed representative, Ibn Khraymis.<sup>142</sup> ‘Ajmi’s brother Jida‘ān felt personally humiliated by Ibn Saud’s insistence that he acknowledge his younger brother’s leadership of the tribe and so departed for Iraq in December 1931, but upon arrival he was equally embarrassed at being detained by the Iraqi authorities, so in 1932 he sought refuge in Kuwait.<sup>143</sup> The fact that the Dhafir resided in the Neutral Zone itself made them particularly prone to switching sides in their loyalty. They rarely received protection from Iraqi security forces being so far south and consequently felt aggrieved at having to pay taxes, while their close proximity to the Najdi border left them open to frequent Ikhwan attacks. The divisions within the Dhafir and the choice of some to migrate to Saudi Arabia appear to have been entirely motivated by political and economic factors, not religion, and it would appear that Ibn Saud understood that and provided the appropriate political and economic incentives. That same cost-benefit calculus will be even more apparent as we examine the ‘Aniza.

## **‘Aniza: Internal Rivalries and Feuds**

The ‘Aniza all claim descent from a common ancestor, Wā’il, unlike the patchwork of lineages claimed by the various Dhafiri tribes, or the mix of ancient lineages and modern agglomerations claimed by the Shammar.<sup>144</sup> The *qabīla* contains the *fakhidh* of ‘Amārāt, as well as those of Fida‘ān, Suba‘ah, Ḥusinah, Walid ‘Alī and Rūwalla, some of whom pushed eastward from the northern Hijaz and Jabal ‘Aniza in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, bringing them into stiff competition with the Shammar. However, much like the Madhhaj confederation in Yemen, the ‘Aniza had become too big and too dispersed to maintain a single leadership at the level of the *qabīla*. In Iraq, authority devolved to Fahd al-Hidhāl of the ‘Amarat, but the lack of cohesion even among his own ‘ashā’ir meant that the only way for Ibn Hidhāl to exert his authority among other parts of his *fakhidh*, let alone other parts of ‘Aniza, was with the support of government officials in Baghdad. This proved a difficult challenge for his son Mahrūt, who took over from his father in 1927 and did everything he could to secure government income and rifles (see Chapter 2). Rival parts of ‘Aniza and even subordinate sections of the ‘Amarat frequently ignored him and developed their own relationships with the Saudi and British Governments. In 1937, both Ibn Saud and his son, Crown Prince Saud bin Abdulaziz, took wives from among the sisters of the leader of the Ruwalla, Shaykh Fawwāz Al Sha‘lān.<sup>145</sup>

The Dihamsha were a subset of the ‘Amarat in the nineteenth century, but pushed for independence from Ibn Hidhāl in the 1890s. This led to the killing of a Dihamsha shaykh in Ibn Hidhāl’s tent, which nearly sparked a war.<sup>146</sup> Consequently, they sided with Ibn Rashid against Ibn Hidhāl, and many Dihamsha fled the Najd in 1921 after Ibn Saud’s forces took Ḥā’il.<sup>147</sup> Muḥammad bin Turkī bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Qā’id Ibn Majlād, one of the leading shaykhs of the Dihamsha in the 1920s, rejected the idea of subordinating himself to Fahd Ibn Hidhāl and competed with him for government attention.<sup>148</sup> Yet he refused to deal directly with the Najdi Government either, instead pledging his loyalty to Baghdad and calling upon the Iraqi Government for assistance in recovering looted goods from Najdi tribes.<sup>149</sup> His cousin, Jizā‘a bin Rākān, was arrested and released by the Iraqi Government, which confiscated the flag of Ibn Saud that he had been carrying as a banner demonstrating his loyalties.<sup>150</sup> Jizā‘a left for Najd

with some followers, and periodically returned to conduct *da‘wa* for Ibn Saud among the Dihamsha in a bid for his own leadership of the tribe.<sup>151</sup> That exposed Muhammad and other members of the al-Majlād family resident in Iraq to both punitive Ikhwan raids and Saudi Royal Court subventions, as the Najdi Government sought to sway the tribe with carrots and sticks.<sup>152</sup> This was evidenced in April 1927, when Ibn Musā‘id organized a massive raiding party of almost four hundred men to punish Muḥammad bin Turkī, while at the same time Ibn Saud was sending missives to the Iraqi Government insisting the Dihamsha were a Najdi tribe.<sup>153</sup> According to the tally of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, as of 1940 around 1,600 Dihamsha households still remained in Iraq, around one hundred tents had gone over to Najd in 1924 because of a grievance, and another one hundred tents had been in Najd going back all the way to the capture of Ḥā’il.<sup>154</sup>

## Confronting Modernity

These three critical tribes were positioned at the center of Iraqi–Saudi bilateral relations in the 1920s, in the period when the border was established and citizenship conferred. But the problem of their nationality was not immediately solved, as we saw in Chapter 1, and migration continued up through the 1950s and beyond. To understand the factors that influenced migration even after the initial phase of state-building, we must consider the fate of those who stayed in Iraq and the decisions their tribal leaders made in relation to the government in Baghdad. Here we have a fundamental difference between the fate of the ‘Aniza and Shammar tribes in the era of modern states and international borders. Both ‘Ajīl al-Yāwar and Mahrūt Ibn Hidhāl exhibited great generosity and kindness, welcoming in tribesmen from Najd and providing them with protection and access to basic resources throughout the 1920s and 30s. That was a matter of humanitarian assistance and showing support for the government’s policies, but it was quite another matter when these two men had to consider the best interests of their own immediate tribes (*fakhidh* and *‘ashīra*).

‘Ajīl, much like his more distant relatives Muḥammad al-Anjarfī and the brothers Ḥumaydī and Badr bin Farhān, was already supporting

settlement projects by the late 1910s for all of the Shammar. He was actively encouraging anyone among the Shammar who wanted to settle down and take up agriculture north of Baghdad and along the Tigris River, using his own money to purchase large tracts of land and dig wells with motor-driven pumps in order to encourage agricultural use in Tikrit, Tel Afar and Sinjar.<sup>155</sup> His tribe and even his own extended family had become so penetrated by the Ottomans, and then by the British and Iraqi Governments, that ‘Ajīl could hardly hope to maintain any influence unless he fully committed to the course laid out by the new state. He supported settlement, even if that meant losing control over the tribesmen as they drifted more and more into the orbit of the government and jobs in the cities. His son Ahmad carried on that trajectory in the 1940s and 50s, contributing to enormous wealth disparities between land-owning tribal leaders and landless tribesmen, until the July 14 revolution and the attempts by the Qasim government to redistribute land and wealth.<sup>156</sup>

Mahrūt Ibn Hidhāl, on the other hand, was fiercely defending the rights and privileges of his closest tribal relatives and associates, attempting to maintain his relevance as leader and provider over the ‘Amarat, the same way his father Fahd had exhibited such strength at the turn of the century. As one contemporary author noted in a personal aside:

On June 14, 1955, I was at a meeting with a pleasant man, Sayyid Sa‘īd Quzāz in the Ministry of Interior, and I found Shaykh Mahrūt al-Hidhāl in the Ministry of Interior and he was complaining of a section of the Dihamsha “‘Aniza” tribe coming to one of the wells that belong to a section of the Jabal [also ‘Aniza] tribe. And I thought, what with my knowing that among these sections all of them are from ‘Aniza, that this complaint was exaggerating grudges and malevolence into a big deal, and rather that it was possible to overcome such as these difficulties without communicating them to the government authorities. Surely Shaykh Mahrūt al-Hidhāl is a straight-laced man, religious [and] trustworthy, lacking the flexibility that developments of the times demand and [that] require leniency.<sup>157</sup>

As with much of his book, Mekki al-Jamil was trying to use the story as a polite way of pointing out the failures of tribal leadership in the era of High Modernity: 1) the inability of the ‘Aniza tribes to unite was to their detriment in bargaining for government resources and attention; 2) by trying to control how and when government resources would be deployed, Mahrūt was missing the larger picture; 3) tribesmen who didn’t like how they were treated could now just pack up and leave for the cities; and 4) if the tribes

couldn't resolve their problems quietly and efficiently, they were inviting the government to do it for them on terms they might not like. It must be understood that all tribal leaders were under intense pressure after the 1920 Revolution in Iraq – British administrative reports record a proliferation of incidents in which tribesmen rose up and murdered their shaykh rather than pay him taxes, and many shaykhs refused to go among their tribes unless backed up by British bayonets.<sup>158</sup> The situation never did revert back to the semi-autonomy these tribal leaders had enjoyed in the 1910s.

Mekki al-Jamil contrasted Mahrūt al-Hidhāl's approach sharply with what he observed of 'Ajīl al-Yāwar:

The trend toward settlement of the 'Aniza imposed on them heavy and severe conditions, so that heavy and difficult conditions were not easy to be overcome, as we find [with] the tribes of Shammar since the era of their chief Shaykh 'Ajīl al-Yāwar [who tried to] make easy this project and sought to find land for them in extending the areas of their roaming in the *bādiya* of the Jazirah . . . and the aforementioned 'Ajīl did not pay mind to the fragmentation of his tribe and their settlement wherever they found land on both shores of the Tigris River from the approach of Mosul to Samarra . . . However, the tribe of 'Aniza or rather its chief Shaykh Mahrūt al-Hidhāl requested that this be completed first in "its *dīrah*" and that wells should be dug especially for his tribe where no one from outside his tribe benefits, and that these wells should not be shared among the tribes of Jabal and Dihamsha from "'Aniza," and that they should not be along the regional borders of either tribe . . .<sup>159</sup>

Consequently, the Dihamsha were left to their own devices in Iraq, and their armed clashes continued well into the early 1950s, even with other 'Aniza tribes such as the Jamīl and the Ṣakūr. In January 1952, the killing of a Dihamsha leader inside Saudi Arabia had led the Dihamsha to retaliate by committing a deadly raid on Shammar tribesmen residing inside Iraq.<sup>160</sup> On May 29, 1952, a Ministry of Interior committee finally determined to resolve the matter by obligating the Dihamsha to settle in the southern desert in return for a government commitment to dig new wells, rehabilitate others and set aside pastures for them in the area of al-Shabkah.<sup>161</sup> Lacking protection from other tribes and facing continual feuds with neighbors ultimately forced tribes like the Dihamsha to choose sides between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, which may have been a blessing in disguise. Other parts of the 'Aniza confederation did not want to choose any nationality, even long after the international borders were drawn, to which the tribesmen developed a saying: "'Aniza is not limited by borders" ('*Aniza mā tahaduhā*

*hudūd*). Sadly, as a result, the ‘Aniza came to represent a disproportionate amount of the bidoon (stateless people) living in the Iraq–Kuwait–Saudi tri-border region until this day.

## Summary

State formation gave these tribes and townspeople access to information about the Najd. It gave them a shared narrative of their history and contemporary events that conveyed expectations about how they should or should not relate to that imagined community. And it gave them a new-found historical perspective of conquest and sovereignty that pushed them to reassess their own place in society. Many of them identified as Najdis on some level of culture, language, politics or economics, and some of them affiliated with the Najd for personal or communal gain, but it is only after the formation of the modern state in Najd in the late 1910s and early 20s that they became aware of the presence of a structured nation to which they might belong. Some tribesmen continued their traditional way of life well into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, but the structures that had once defined their social existence were fundamentally changing. In the words of Fernand Braudel: “We are born into a particular social arrangement (meaning at once an attitude of mind, frameworks, a civilization, and above all an economic civilization) the same as several generations before us have been familiar with, and then the whole thing can crumble in a lifetime.”<sup>162</sup>

The rise of state-centric borders, regulatory regimes and real law enforcement mechanisms created inevitable barriers, not only to the free flow of goods and services, but also to social networks that sustained a Najdi identity. Just as with the ‘Uqaylat, all those who self-identified as Najdis would have to choose a nationality, abiding by the laws of that state and pursuing their livelihoods according to the economic realities they encountered. And while they were gaining citizenship, they were potentially losing the ties to one or another community that had sustained their identity for so long. For Ibn Saud and his administrators, these were Najdis, based on a shared culture that was sustained by kinship and trade. And they were part of his core constituency, with Ibn Saud even telling Knox after the Kuwait conference in 1924 that he was not concerned with possession of

land and expansion of his empire as much as he was concerned with defending his subjects, their trade and their souls, and not exposing them to danger.<sup>163</sup> A shared sense of Salafi religious beliefs contributed to that sense of community in some instances, but Ibn Saud recognized (accurately) that what inspired the migration of these populations from southern Iraq were political and economic interests, just as political and economic interests motivated Ibn Saud to conduct outreach to them. It would even be more credible to assert that Ibn Saud pursued an aggressive influence campaign among the tribes and towns of southern Iraq out of fear of Hashemite encirclement, rather than adopt a hypothesis of fanatical Wahhabi zeal as some scholars have done. Either way, the historical evidence would seem to favor socio-economic factors as the motivation both for the actions of both the Saudi Government and the local populations.

The question remains about the idea of nationalism, which is a hard concept to pin down in the Najd. The discussion above would imply that after the imposition of borders and the growth of the states, residents of southern Iraq and northern Najd became more self-aware of their relationships to one another and to the nations of which they were a part. As Benedict Anderson notes: “In much the same way, since the end of the eighteenth century nationalism has undergone a process of modulation and adaptation, according to different eras, political regimes, economies and social structures. The ‘imagined community’ has, as a result, spread out to every conceivable contemporary society.”<sup>164</sup> In some cases, it was a real sense of pride and belonging to the Najd that led some of these residents of southern Iraq to seek a permanent home in Saudi Arabia. According to Mohammed Almana:

At the turn of the century my birthplace, Zubair, was a bustling prosperous town, lying on the main trade route from Iraq to Najd, in Arabia. For the Arabs, Zubair was the gateway to Iraq and beyond, and the town was almost entirely populated by Najdi merchants. My father, who was himself originally from Najd, dealt in Arab horses . . . I maintained a keen interest in the affairs of my native Arabia, where a great new leader by the name of Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud had arisen. I was fascinated by the exploits of this extraordinary man, and I determined to serve both him and my country.<sup>165</sup>

Almana went on further to describe an experience he had as a youth in making a principled stand in support of a Najd that he had barely known up until then:

One of the first Ikhwan attacks against the Iraqi border was launched by one of the groups which had withdrawn from the Saudi forces besieging Jeddah. Under the leadership of Faisal Ad-Dawish, the group attacked the border at a place called Ichlawa, where the Bani Hussein Bedouin of Iraq had an encampment. Ichlawa is near my village, Zubair. I happened to be in Zubair on a short visit home from India at the time. The British military authorities at the Shaibah base wanted to go and investigate the damage caused by the raid. They begged the Amir of Zubair to let me go with them as interpreter. However, I refused to accompany them, saying that I would take no part in any action against the Ikhwan.<sup>166</sup>

In that regard, it's interesting to see the very different choices Almana and al-Mandīl made about whether to pick up and move across the border to become more directly part of the state-building enterprise in the Najd. The former very much felt he was part of the community of Najdi society and that was sufficient to pack up and leave, while the latter felt he could remain in Iraq and still be of service to the Al Saud and his ancestors' homeland. Perhaps the difference between them was a generational divide – al-Mandīl had grown up and achieved modest political and economic success before the border forced him to choose sides, whereas Almana was still young at that time and had his whole future ahead of him. ‘Ajmī al-Suwayt and Jizā‘a al-Majlād were somewhere in between, at a stage in their lives when social pressures meant that they had to distinguish themselves as leaders at the same time that the border became a reality. Regardless, they were all conscious of that decision they were making regarding their nationality and what it meant, in a way that the ‘Uqaylat in the late nineteenth century could not have fully imagined. This was something akin to nationalism in the sense of a Najdi community living on both sides of the border joined together in a self-awareness of their shared beliefs, common practices and mutual interests, but it was not articulated, defined and negotiated for political and diplomatic purposes in the way that we usually ascribe to nationalisms.

# POLITICS AND NATIONALISM

Persons coming from outside [i.e. intruders from Persia] who were not related to the issue of Iraq – the interests of the people and the land did not concern them really. And they made up sayings that they alleged they had extrapolated from religious strictures. And they only intended with this to disrupt the progress of the elections and deceive public opinion with their spreading announcements and their posters on walls, in order to delay the advancement of administrative progress . . . Those reckless strangers having encouraged railroading with disinformation until they eventually violated the sanctity of the holy sites [*muraqid*] with actions that completely violated religious mores . . . and this by sticking upon the shrines of the people (peace be upon them) and the walls of the sanctuary corrupting and inflammatory publications under the guise of faith, and in the name of that which molests the sanctity of the holy threshold, making [the people] liable to implement these deceitful objectives that are only based on bad intentions . . .<sup>1</sup>

This statement from a renowned poet of the 1920 Revolution is testament to the complex and contradictory landscape of Iraqi nationalism in the years following the popular uprising. Muḥammad Mahdi al-Baṣīr was a staunch nationalist and keen observer of events (Figure 22). Born in Ḥillah to a family from Karbalā’, he was one of the founders of the cross-sectarian *Hirās al-Istiqlāl* (Guardians of Independence) in 1919, and editor of the independent newspaper *al-Istiqlāl* in late 1920 and early 1921. He was deported for participation in anti-British demonstrations, and upon his return in 1923 became active as a member of Ja‘far Chalabi Abu al-Timan’s Iraqi National Party.<sup>2</sup> The trajectory of his career mirrored that of nationalist politics in the early years of the state. In this passage from 1923, he essentially accuses leading Shi‘a clerics in Najaf and Karbalā’ – many of whom were Persian nationals – of undermining Iraqi democracy by calling for a boycott of elections.

If the 1920 Revolution had brought to the surface a growing awareness of Iraqi nationalism and the introduction of an Arab government in 1921 had allowed a flourishing of free debate, then the 1922 attempt by Shi‘a clerics to join political forces with the tribes was both a triumph (of propaganda) and a failure (of political organization) in testing out these new ideas. Despite the high-flown rhetoric of the 1920 Revolution, Iraqi nationalism was not monolithic. By the time of the elections in 1923, it was

already clear that separate ethno-sectarian communities had different and sometimes incommensurable ideas of what nationalism meant. Nominally, everyone was a nationalist. But to the government, nationalism meant a troubling mix of populism, democracy and anti-colonialism, all of which were potential threats to the Hashemite royal family and the ex-Ottoman officers who had followed Faisal from Syria. The British were aware of ethno-sectarian political cleavages emerging after the war and the growing divide between center and periphery, but felt they had few tools at their disposal to diffuse tensions: “The growth of national intelligence [i.e. consciousness], deliberately hindered by rulers who saw therein a menace to their own authority, may call for a prolonged exercise of high qualities of sympathy and mutual forbearance, but such foundations alone can assure the permanence of the ‘Iraq kingdom . . .’”<sup>3</sup>

In the passage above, al-Bāṣīr was taking aim at the senior-most Shi‘a cleric, Ayatollah Mahdī al-Khālīṣī, his son and associates in Najaf and Karbalā’, many of whom had been born and raised in Persia and who were boycotting Iraq’s first elections. They hoped to take the rallying cry of anti-imperialism from the 1920 Revolution and pivot that message towards criticism of Baghdad, claiming the Sunni-dominated government was incapable of defending its citizens. Such clerics were using the specter of Wahhabi violence to build their own political coalition and define nationalism on their terms. In this way, Saudi Arabia would play a key role in Iraqi domestic politics during the period of this study, less on account of actual diplomatic exchanges, security incidents or economic competition, and more due to the ways that Iraqi politicians, journalists and clerics used it as a lightning rod for other political debates, with real consequences for growing sectarian discourse. The first half of this chapter will examine how public fears of the Ikhwan and attitudes toward the Najd became a part of that Iraqi political discourse, in ways that shaped and constrained Iraqi policy-making. The second half of this chapter will then attempt to show how historiographical debates on Iraqi nationalism fail to adequately account for an increasingly sectarian form of politics that existed even at the founding of the state, one in which Ikhwan cross-border raids became a wedge issue.

## Iraqi Shi‘a and the Najd

Iraqi Shi‘a held traumatic associations with Wahhabi raids extending back to the early nineteenth century, and by the 1920s their fears had settled into a pattern of public discourse heavily influenced by media sensationalism and cultural chauvinism. Their sense of a nation, as Ernest Renan would have defined it, involved a “rich legacy of memories . . . a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion . . . One loves in proportion to the sacrifices to which one has consented, and in proportion to the ills that one has suffered.”<sup>4</sup> And for many Iraqi Shi‘a, that suffering and sacrifice came at the hands of Wahhabi attacks, which in a sense echoed the sacrifice of the early partisans of Imams Ali and Hussein at the hands of the Ummayads. In this section, we will explore the nature of the Shi‘a population in the major urban centers, their relations with the tribes of the southern desert, and their fears of the Najd, as we widen our lens outward starting from the perspective of the clerics in Najaf and Karbalā’ who played such a key role in Shi‘a politics.

The Shi‘a community in Iraq contained a diverse range of historical and cultural identities at the time of state formation in the 1920s. In the mid-eighteenth century, Persian clerics flooded into Najaf and Karbalā’, riding a wave of victory in the doctrinal debate of ‘Usuli interpretation (allowing for reason) over Akhbari beliefs (relying on revelation).<sup>5</sup> The triumph of ‘Usuli thought had legitimized and increased the status of clerics in society, even strengthening their drive toward proselytism and conversion in target-rich environments like the tribes of southern Iraq.<sup>6</sup> By the early twentieth century, Najaf was around two-thirds Arab and one-third Persian, with some clerical families who could trace their roots to the tribes in the surrounding desert.<sup>7</sup> Completion of the Hindiya Canal in the 1800s resolved many of the city’s most dire water shortages, increased the traffic of pilgrims and encouraged the migration of tribes, many of which converted to Shi‘ism. Two Arab factions, probably recruited after 1803 to defend the city from Wahhabi raids, eventually came to dominate the streets of the urban center and in May 1915 joined forces to expel the Ottoman troops, leading to the short-lived declaration of independence for Najaf.<sup>8</sup> It is important to recognize that the Iraqi Shi‘a historical narrative contains

within it the strong implication that this revolt in Najaf would have led to an independent state in the south: “This audacious incident encouraged many other cities of [southern] Iraq to revolt against the injustice and the tyranny of the Turks, and throw off their control of the district, so the city of Karbalā’ revolted after a month of the Najaf revolt against the Turks, and following it the city of Ḥillah and Daghārah and others.”<sup>9</sup> In that sense, British military occupation of Najaf in 1917 pre-empted an abortive state-building project by Iraqi Shi‘a – a project that some clerics were not willing to completely abandon even after the war.<sup>10</sup>

Karbalā’ lies on the plain about fifty-five miles south of Baghdad, where Imam Hussein died in the pivotal battle against Yazid in 680 that helped to define Shi‘ism. As of the 1910s, around three-quarters of the residents of Karbalā’ were Persian and Indian Shi‘a.<sup>11</sup> The British allowed the Kamūnah family to control the city during the war and provided Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Kamūnah with a stipend, while his brother Fakhri maintained relations with the Ottomans. On October 24, 1915, Muḥammad ‘Alī sent a letter to the British Government proposing an independent state extending from Najaf and Karbalā’ to Samarra and Kadhimayn, with himself at the head of a hereditary rulership, but the British ignored the request. While the Kamūnah family was Arab and well-established in Karbalā’ for several generations, that was not generally the case for most civic leaders who dominated the large Shi‘a urban areas in southern Iraq during this period. Decades of Mamluk-appointed Sunni rulers followed by direct Ottoman military rule beginning in the 1840s had broken the power of local Arab gangs and left Persian families in control of civic and religious institutions there. Indeed, many of the leading clerics (known to the British as “mujtahids”) in the four major Shi‘a centers of Najaf, Karbalā’, Kadhimayn and Samarra were of Persian origin and did not adopt Iraqi nationality in the 1920s. Most were politically quiescent in the late nineteenth century, though some, like Muḥammad Hasan Najafī, cultivated close relationships with senior Persian officials in order to gain favor with the Shah.<sup>12</sup> The 1905 Constitutional Revolution pushed others toward reformist intervention in Persian political affairs. Overall, however, activist clerics were a minority, with many Shi‘a standing outside of Iraqi politics prior to the 1920 Revolution, as ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Shawī noted to Gertrude

Bell in the run-up to the first elections: “ . . . whereas the population of Iraq is mainly tribal and Shiah, in the course of four general elections held under the Turks no tribesmen or Shiah has been returned.”<sup>13</sup>

Much more of the Shi‘a population of Iraq was to be found among the tribes, and most of them (Muntafiq, Zubayd, Khaz‘al, Bani Lam, Al Bu Muhammad, Rabi‘a, Bani Ka‘b, Bani Hasan, Bani ‘Asad and parts of ‘Ubayd) had only converted to Shi‘ism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They did so partly in response to Ottoman attempts to settle the tribes with offers of irrigated lands and title deeds. (Sources of water and pasture that were essential for their flocks and farms were located along the canals just outside the holy cities of Najaf and Karbalā’.) This is not to say that all tribesmen became Shi‘a, as many tribes such as the al-Tayy’ continue to this day to have both Sunni and Shi‘a members. And it is not to say that all tribesmen had a very well-defined or fixed notion of what it meant to be Shi‘a. Moreover, as much as clerics from the holy cities facilitated this process of conversion for ideological reasons, religious leaders sometimes had their own expedient motives for wanting to expand their base of co-religionists. According to Yitzhak Nakash: “The Wahhabi attacks of Najaf and Karbalā’ reinforced the sectarian identity of the Shi‘i ulama and increased their motivation to convert the tribes.”<sup>14</sup> As an example, the religious authorities in Najaf proselytized among the Khazā‘il in order to recruit a force capable of defending the city against the raids, thereby protecting the pilgrims, the revenue from the shrines and the privileged status of the Persian clerics. An ambitious young cleric in the 1810s named Sayyid Hassūn bin Sayyid ‘Alī Makwātir even recruited tribesmen to form a vigilante force in repelling Wahhabi raids, and after the first Saudi kingdom had been defeated by the Egyptians, Hassūn tried to reshape the volunteers into a religious force for promoting virtue and preventing vice.<sup>15</sup> Proselytism and conversion also offered direct political benefits for leaders in Karbalā’ and Najaf, as Meir Litvak notes: “The mujtahids’ influence over the tribespeople enabled them to serve as mediators between them and the government, and consequently bolster their standing *vis-à-vis* the Ottomans.”<sup>16</sup>

One experience that all of these Shi‘a communities in Iraq shared was the lingering trauma of the Wahhabi sacking of Karbalā’ in 1802.

Throughout the late eighteenth century, waves of Najdi migrants had fled central Arabia to southern Iraq in order to escape drought and war, which led Ottoman Governors in Baghdad to make efforts to restore order in the Middle Euphrates Valley Region. The Mamluks lent support to a number of attacks by Muntafiq tribal leaders deep into central Najd, culminating in a Muntafiq raid on a Najdi caravan in 1799 outside Najaf that was viewed as an act of war.<sup>17</sup> Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud led his forces to ‘Ānah and Kubaysah, where they destroyed the religious shrines. He then divided the Iraqi forces and exhausted them in skirmishes before camping outside Karbalā’. The assault came on April 22, 1802, with Saudi forces quickly entering the poorly-defended town, destroying the shrines and leaving late that same day.<sup>18</sup> In one of the most thorough studies of these events, ‘Abd al-Hasan al-Fayyād concludes that the Wahhabi fighters were mostly focused on looting and destroying the shrine of Imam Hussein.<sup>19</sup> They left those residents who had remained inside their houses relatively undisturbed, while killing any individuals they found in the streets. al-Fayyād assesses that it was probably other local Arab tribes that took advantage of the chaos to loot and plunder after the Wahhabi forces had departed.

These events generated fears among the Iraq Shi‘a lasting well into the twentieth century, and even until today in some quarters. This was partly due to the feeling of abandonment by residents of Najaf and Karbalā’ when the Ottomans failed to come to their aid in a timely manner, and partly because of the dramatic accounts of savagery that were relayed to Baghdad by survivors. The Mamluk representative in Karbalā’ had fled the scene at the first approach of the Najdi fighters, while the Ottoman force deployed in response to the events lingered in and around Hillah for two months rather than pursue the Wahhabis back into Najd.<sup>20</sup> Even worse, the Mamluks moved the treasury of the Rawdah Haydarīyah charitable society from Najaf to Baghdad, nominally out of fear it too would get looted. News of the event quickly spread to Persia, where the Qajar rulers offered to intervene, and an account of events published by a Persian traveler was translated into English, French, Dutch and Arabic.<sup>21</sup> The raids would have direct repercussions for months and years to come. On November 2, 1803, a man from Iraq journeyed all the way to Diri‘yah where he assassinated Imam Abdulaziz bin Muhammad Al Saud in revenge. Saudi attempts to raid

Karbala' and Najaf continued on and off until 1811, when the Ottomans convinced Mehmet Ali, the Governor of Egypt, to launch a punitive campaign into Arabia that ultimately defeated the first Saudi state.

## Public Opinion and Populism

The section above described the diversity of the Shi'a community in Iraq, while noting that the horror of Ikhwan attacks in the early nineteenth century (as amplified and widely disseminated in written accounts) became a common unifying point of reference for all Iraqi Shi'a. In this section, we will see how those shared memories and fears came to inform politics at the founding of the state over a hundred years later. The goal here is not to present a chronology of the development of these fears and the ways they were applied to political discourse, because much of that discussion will take place in the second half of the chapter as we consider the particular case study of the Karbalā' conference. Rather, the aim in this section is to show how so many different aspects of the political process became impacted or constrained by the issue of relations with Saudi Arabia. All of the memories of the Wahhabi sacking of Karbalā', whether real or exaggerated, were brought back to life in the tropes of Ikhwan attacks that surfaced in press coverage and public sentiment during the 1920s. The images of Karbalā' in 1802 lingered in the minds of many Iraqis – images of violent fundamentalist Wahhabis marauding the countryside, putting the holy cities to the sword and carting off vast riches accumulated from the *khums* (tithes) of devout Shi'a, with victims abandoned by the government drifting into the towns seeking urgent assistance.

These were the standards by which Iraqi Government authorities were being judged during the Ikhwan raids of the 1920s. In the first week of January 1928, 196 men, women and children fleeing recent Ikhwan raids on their tribes arrived at Samāwah, where the municipality converted a newly-built school to house them and feed them for six days, providing clothing for 116 of them.<sup>22</sup> Shaykh Khashān al-Jāz'a sent a letter (Figure 23) to King Faisal demanding that the King take up retribution for the twelve people who died and the 3,700 heads of sheep, 450 camels and seventeen horses looted: "The attack [of al-Duwaysh] caused many of their women to

become widows, and their children to become orphans, [with] no friend to have mercy on them nor a relative to feed them, nothing to stop the hunger and thirst.”<sup>23</sup> The government was under public pressure to aid the victims. The Governor of Muntafiq province asked the Ministry of Interior to help, and the Minister of Interior asked the Minister of Finance, but there was not enough money in the budget. So the newspaper *al-‘Ālam al-‘Arabī* (The Arab World) advertised a public fundraising campaign, and when donations came pouring into their office in Baghdad, the Minister of Interior instructed the Governor of Baghdad to appoint a cross-sectarian committee of notables from Baghdad to oversee the dispersal of funds.<sup>24</sup> This *lajnah lil-asa ‘āf al-mankūbīn* (Committee for the Aid of the Afflicted) was eventually replicated in other provinces, combining resources and channeling them through the Ministry of Interior to reach the families of victims of Ikhwan raids.

This pattern of public outcry, followed by demands for a government response to Ikhwan attacks, became a political act of protest in the Mandatory era. Anyone with an axe to grind against the government could credibly hold up the letters of victims who had witnessed Ikhwan atrocities against Shi‘a, whether such incidents had occurred in Iraq or elsewhere. On May 25, 1926, the newspaper *al-‘Irāq* published a letter from a Shi‘a man living in Medina who described the conquest of the Hijaz by Ibn Saud as follows: the arrival of chief judge Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh bin Sulaymān al-Bilayhid, his instructions to the local residents that visiting graves was forbidden, the fear of the populace, and the eventual looting and destruction of the shrines by Najdi forces, with a plea for assistance from Muslims everywhere.<sup>25</sup> Shi‘a clerics in Najaf, Karbalā’ and Kadhimayn announced a period of mourning and assembled gatherings to read out similar letters to their audiences. Senior ulema at the *hawzah* in Najaf met and issued the following statement:

It is clear that the laws of Islam and the duties of religion require for the ulema to guide the umma . . . . The Wahhabi group that is led astray, who [pretended to] wear the clothes of religion when they are [in fact] naked of it, and claim Islam when they have [in fact] left it due to having committed that which is prohibited and having profaned the blood of Muslims . . . by way of the people of Iraq . . . What is this silence after raising the voice? And what is this scattering after the meeting? And what is this let-down after the collaboration? We call you to accord . . . and to cooperate and join your voices with the voices of your Muslim

brethren in all countries and to unify your actions in order to repulse [push out] this great catastrophe . . .<sup>26</sup>

They also sent a cable to Reza Shah in Tehran alerting him to the destruction and essentially inviting his armed intervention in the Hijaz: “It is certain that protecting the laws of the Islamic faith in general and the Ja‘afari *madhab* [Twelver Shi‘ism] in particular is in the care of the Ja‘afari King [Reza Shah].”<sup>27</sup> Upon the destruction of the Prophet’s tomb in Medina, Ibn Saud was labeled a tyrant in the Iraqi press and the day of the destruction (the eighth of Shawwāl) became an annual memorial in Najaf and Karbalā’, with public mourning, processions of flagellants and the closure of the marketplaces.<sup>28</sup> King Faisal, desperate for a fatwa from the *hawzah* supporting national military conscription, visited Najaf and promised the senior clerics there that the future army would be used to retake Mecca.<sup>29</sup> Senior ulema spread wild rumors to embarrass the Iraqi Government and the British Mandate: “ . . . Syd. M[uhammad] as SADR informed visitors to his house that Ibn SA’UD was massing large forces on the ‘Iraq frontier. He said that this force was equipped by the British and included Artillery and aeroplanes.”<sup>30</sup>

Such public pressure had an impact on politicians eager to burnish their reputation as true humanitarians and demonstrate their credentials on national security issues. On September 18, 1924, the cabinet asserted that Ibn Saud’s entry into Mecca and Medina would cause traumatic harm to Iraq, and force all of the tribes along the Euphrates to convert to Wahhabism.<sup>31</sup> The cabinet then sent a letter to the High Commissioner demanding to know what he would do about it, almost certainly expecting that the contents would be leaked to parliament and the press. This was enough to scare local officials into chasing down even the smallest of rumors. By the end of the month, an employee of the Department of Awqāf in Najaf took steps to investigate police reports that Ibn Saud had sent a group of spies to prepare for attacks on Najaf and Karbalā’, rumors that were allegedly confirmed by local resident al-Hājj ‘Abbūd al-Qissām, who had seen the spies disembark at Baṣrah.<sup>32</sup> (Apparently all of this commotion prompted the clerics in Najaf and Karbalā’ to attempt a conference in late

1924 of ulema and tribesmen, similar to the one of April 1922 that will be discussed in the case study below.)

The Iraqi Government was often caught in a tight position between public demands for a military response on the one hand, and the British Government's preference for working through diplomatic and legal channels on the other. During a parliamentary grilling on April 21, 1927, some deputies complained that the new Laws on Preventing Raids and Looting tied the government's hands behind its back and gave the Najdi tribes free reign to raid and pillage.<sup>33</sup> They demanded the government instead strengthen fortifications. All Prime Minister Ja‘afar al-Askery could do in response was to make the feeble argument that Iraq must pass such laws as a sign of its civility.

Parliamentary debates often devolved into politicians delivering populist talking points designed to appeal to nationalist sentiment, rather than having a substantive debate about Saudi–Iraqi relations. For example, it was not uncommon for Iraqi politicians to pepper their speeches with comments comparing the civility of Iraq to the backwardness of Najd, as Prime Minister ‘Abd al-Muhsin Al Sa‘dūn told parliament on February 15, 1926: “Iraq is a civilized land while the land of Najd is completely badū . . .”<sup>34</sup> During a grilling over the Bahra Agreement, deputies focused criticism on the fact that the Iraqi Government had paid the expenses for Gilbert Clayton to negotiate on its behalf while a perfectly good Iraqi national (Tawfiq al-Suwaydi) sat on the sidelines in Jeddah.<sup>35</sup> Some speakers complained that Britain had been the one to determine the parameters of the Agreement, and others asserted it was impossible to negotiate with a bedouin government in Najd that preferred raiding, looting and stealing. This was far more an argument about Iraqi sovereignty and independence, colored by strong feelings of national pride, and much less a serious conversation about Iraqi–Saudi bilateral cooperation.

All of this populism and pandering to public fears about the Ikhwan had real consequences in moments of crisis, particularly during negotiations over the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty and the issue of building a national army. It was not just a matter of newspaper editorials, parliamentary speeches and government assistance – major policy decisions could be impacted too. To understand why, however, we must first take a step back and describe the

relationship of dependency that existed between the Iraqi Government and the British military. The ex-Sharifian officers and administrators who had fought with the Arab Revolt and supported Faisal in Syria occupied a position of privilege after the British allowed them to return in 1921. Ja‘afar al-Askery, Ali Jawdat al-‘Ayoubi, Nuri al-Said, Yassin al-Hashimi and Naji al-Suwaydi had each adopted slightly different stances on the issue of the British Mandate, yet they all relied on the British military presence in the country to maintain stability and their ability to govern. Even as they sat in exile in Aleppo in 1919 petitioning the British Government to establish an Iraqi Government and allow them to return, they were careful to append a letter reassuring the British that the RAF would still be needed for the foreseeable future.<sup>36</sup> Ja‘afar and Nuri were not out to expel the British, they were rather intent on keeping British forces in place for as long as it took to form an expanded, professional Iraqi army of their own. These were career military officers, confident in their abilities following the Arab Revolt and occupation of Syria, and certain that they could control a professional Iraqi army and wield it in service of the state. A smooth transition from British military forces to an Iraqi army under their control remained Ja‘afar and Nuri’s vision for political longevity, even as anti-colonial protests and nationalist politics forced them to speed up their efforts, ignoring the likely budget shortfalls and recruitment challenges.

On October 25, 1927, Prime Minister al-Askery opened up negotiations to fulfill his campaign pledge to conclude a third Anglo-Iraqi Treaty on more favorable terms for Iraq. Yet the British Government refused to amend the military and financial agreements attached as annexes to the first Treaty of 1922, rejected the idea of Baghdad raising an army of conscripts, and insisted on postponing Iraq’s entry into the League of Nations. This prompted al-Askery to depart for Baghdad, and King Faisal submitted an angry letter in protest. Although al-Askery had left Dover on November 27 with the intent of returning to Baghdad, while transiting Alexandria on December 5 he received a cable from Faisal asking him to go back to negotiations, and he returned to London on December 30.<sup>37</sup> The third Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was quickly signed, provoking the question: What made Faisal and al-Askery change their minds so quickly? Iraqi historians have responded with suggestions that the Ikhwan attack on al-Buṣayyah on

November 5, 1927, particularly the outpouring of public anger directed at government inaction in the weeks that followed, pressured al-Askery to return to London and make compromises in the Treaty negotiations.

The assertion that the Iraqi Government caved into British pressure because of cross-border attacks by the Ikhwan has interesting implications, but it is hard to prove. al-Hasanī uses editorial remarks from an article in the Westminster Gazette to justify this conclusion and draws a parallel to Emir Abdullah signing the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty under pressure of Ikhwan attacks.<sup>38</sup> al-Soudani goes one step further and cites Iraqi press clippings that accused the British Government of actually inciting the Ikhwan attack at al-Busayyah with the express intention of rousing Iraqi public anger and forcing al-Askery back to the negotiating table.<sup>39</sup> The British had a clear motivation for manipulating the situation in their favor and strong-arming the Iraqi Government into concessions – on October 14, 1927, British petroleum engineers discovered large deposits of oil around Mosul, and continuing the Mandate would allow British control over those finds. The official Najdi press issued denials of Najdi Government support for the raid and collusion with the British, and there is no direct evidence that the British Government sponsored the attack (see Chapter 2 above). All the same, the theory that al-Askery ran back to London knowing that he would need British military support in a hurry, in order to respond to the Ikhwan attack and tamp down public anger, does have real explanatory value. That is especially true if we consider the extended Akforce campaign launched by the British deep into Najdi territory in the months that followed. Such an expansive and highly visible British military campaign targeting the Ikhwan on both sides of the border could very well have been a *quid pro quo* designed to pave the way for Iraqi Government acceptance of the lightly-revised Treaty.

## **Friends of the Kingdom**

If the discussion above described public fears and the ways politicians catered to those fears, we must at the same time acknowledge that there were also plenty of political actors who found benefits in positive engagement with Saudi Arabia. The political discourse in Baghdad on the

issue of the Najd was not entirely negative. We can group the motivations for positive engagement with Saudi Arabia in terms of three categories: 1) professional duty, 2) familial relationships, and 3) personal or political gain. In that first category, there were undoubtedly politicians in Iraq who sincerely engaged in a policy debate about Iraq's relationship with Saudi Arabia for the sake of genuinely resolving the full range of outstanding issues. Șabīḥ Nish‘āt is exemplary in that regard. While it is true that he stood firmly at the ‘Uqayr conference in favor of a border at least two hundred miles to the south of the Euphrates, it was really not his decision. That position was already written in stone by the Iraqi Cabinet, the Royal Court and the Iraqi press, with the encouragement of Sir Percy Cox.<sup>40</sup> Șabīḥ Nish‘āt merely entered into talks aiming to get the best deal possible for his country, following the instructions issued to him by his government.

Much better insights into his genuine attitude can be found in the transcripts of the Kuwait conference, in which Șabīḥ faithfully represented the wishes of his government while at the same time putting forward clear arguments with the goal of finding a middle ground.<sup>41</sup> On February 15, 1926, he addressed the Iraqi Council of Notables to share his experience of leading three rounds of negotiations (Muhammara, ‘Uqayr and Kuwait), as he helped to push for ratification of the Bahra Agreement:

. . . so we met in Muhammara and the goal of this meeting was to assign the border between us and Najd, and it was not easy to assign the border between Iraq and Najd considering the Badiya, since between one place and another a hundred miles apart are only found wells, and considering the habits of the badū that these wells and lands are for the tribes, and such-and-such lands are considered belonging to such-and-such tribes . . .<sup>42</sup>

What is most remarkable about this quote, which is entirely representative of the rest of his lengthy and detailed testimony before parliament, is that Șabīḥ Nish‘āt didn't editorialize. He leveled no accusations against Ibn Saud, made no off-color comments about the savagery of Wahhabis, and offered no broad generalizations about Saudi motivations. He simply had a job to do in representing Iraq and he did it. Perhaps the most endearing portrait of Șabīḥ came from Ibn Saud's one-time advisor, Hāshim al-Rifā‘ī, who recorded how Șabīḥ endeared himself to the Najdi delegation at the Kuwait conference in 1923–24 by speaking candidly and directly about the challenge of managing the Neutral Zone.<sup>43</sup>

There were also political actors who sought engagement with Ibn Saud because of the close familial and cultural ties they had with the Najd. ‘Abd al-Latīf al-Mandīl is a case in point, as mentioned in Chapter 3. Interestingly, Ibn Saud was quite familiar with some of the more important families in Iraq and even corresponded with them from time to time. Tawfiq al-Suwaydi recorded his private conversation with Ibn Saud at the Bahra conference as follows:

Ibn Saud welcomed me warmly and greatly, and he mentioned to me that he had spent his youth in Basra and Kuwait, and he knew Iraq well and he knew its famous families. And one of those he mentioned was the family of al-Alūsī, then the family of al-Suwaydi, and he said that he did not know my father personally but that he had been satisfied from time to time [to engage] in correspondence with him on some occasions . . .<sup>44</sup>

Yet there were also Iraqis who simply sought dealings with Saudi Arabia for their own personal or political benefit. Within a week after the Bakr Sidqi coup in 1936, newly-appointed Prime Minister Hikmat Sulayman asked the Saudi Ambassador in Baghdad to complete the ratification of the Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance as soon as possible in order to demonstrate a show of Arab support for the new government.<sup>45</sup> A far more spectacular case of obsequiousness, however, was Rashid Ali al-Kaylani. Throughout the 1920s and 30s, he had served in a number of official roles, including Minister of Justice, head of the Royal Court, President of the Council of Deputies and Prime Minister. But he was never part of the al-‘Ahd crowd of ex-Ottoman officers and he was often at loggerheads with Nuri al-Said. For example, when Nuri came back from Saudi Arabia in 1940 with a final status agreement on the tribes, Rashid Ali pledged to uphold its provisions and fulfill Ibn Saud’s extradition requests (see Chapter 1), even though Nuri and Regent Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah balked.

The outbreak of WWII is really where this story begins, however. ‘Abd al-Ilah and Nuri aligned with the Allies, while Rashid Ali made strong overtures to Germany. As the war progressed and Britain moved through North Africa, ‘Abd al-Ilah pressured Rashid Ali to step down as Prime Minister and the latter resigned on January 31, 1941. On April 1, four leading military officers (the “Golden Square”) put Rashid Ali back into power and installed Sharif Sharaf as Regent; ‘Abd al-Ilah was driven by the American Ambassador in an embassy vehicle to the British military base in

Habbaniya, where he was later joined by Nuri al-Said, Ali Jawdat and Jamil Midfa‘i, and from there flown to Amman.<sup>46</sup> Britain refused to recognize the new government fearing that Rashid Ali would support the Axis powers, and Winston Churchill ordered troops and equipment to redeploy from India to Başrah. On May 2, RAF units at Habbaniya successfully broke the siege of the encircling Iraqi forces and by the end of the month British forces were bearing down on Baghdad.<sup>47</sup>

In all of this, Saudi Arabia was a curious sidelight, more interesting for its lack of major involvement than for anything else. Throughout early 1941, Ibn Saud tried to diffuse tensions by reminding Britain that Rashid Ali’s stated policy was neutrality in the war, while at the same time he urged Rashid Ali to resolve his issues with Britain.<sup>48</sup> After military clashes broke out in Habbaniya, Rashid Ali sought to invoke the Treaty of Brotherhood and Arab Alliance by calling in Saudi Ambassador As‘ad al-Faqīya and requesting military support to cut the Jordan–Iraq road and block the British reinforcements.<sup>49</sup> The Iraqi Government prematurely broadcast that it had the support of Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia, and it sent Minister of Finance Naji al-Suwaydi to Riyadh, but Ibn Saud held firm that the Treaty did not apply, in light of the fact that Iraq had not consulted Saudi Arabia before making any of these moves. al-Suwaydi confessed to Ibn Saud that Iraq was in negotiations for financial and materiel support from the Axis powers and in return Germany would probably demand both control over Iraq’s oil and the expulsion of the British.<sup>50</sup> Ibn Saud finally cut off communications altogether when Rashid Ali crossed a red line and restored diplomatic relations with Germany, welcoming back German Ambassador Grobba.

With British forces approaching Baghdad, Sharif Sharaf, Rashid Ali and the military command slipped over the border at Khanneqin to seek refuge in Iran and from there dispersed to Germany, Italy and Turkey.<sup>51</sup> At no point does it appear that Saudi Arabia was a desirable option, which is what makes Rashid Ali’s later choice of refuge in the Kingdom seem even more craven. After Germany surrendered to the Allies in 1945, Rashid Ali (now a wanted war criminal) joined up with two Syrian friends and escaped through France, taking a boat from Marseilles to Beirut and from there overland to Damascus. He used a fake Syrian ID card under the name of

Ahmad ‘Abd al-Qādir (professional sheep-trader from Deir al-Zour) to travel across the Jordanian–Saudi border to Riyadh, and attended the mosque where Ibn Saud typically led prayer.<sup>52</sup> Apparently Ibn Saud had never met Rashid Ali face-to-face, since it was necessary for him to reveal his identity to the King after they finished prayers. In an interview with the author Amīn Sa‘īd at a hotel in Damascus in 1958, Rashid Ali recounted the King’s confusion:

I spoke with him alone, and there was no one listening to us speak, and I said to him, “I am Rashid Ali al-Kaylani.” And he responded immediately, saying – “Seek refuge in Allah, for there is no might and no power except in Allah.” So I resumed my words and I said: “I resided in Syria in disguise and I came here in disguise without anyone knowing a thing of my affair, and I wish to be near you and take shelter in your protection, and if you see [fit] to protecting me I will stay, and if you see that the interest of your country requires my travel [away from here] I will return where I came from, and in the same manner, in the utmost discretion so that no one knows that I came and that I returned. The land of Allah is vast.” And after listening, he called “come here” to his Crown Prince . . . who was in the mosque, and he said to [Prince Saud]: “Take this man and keep him by you until I return.”<sup>53</sup>

Ibn Saud granted shelter to al-Kaylani, informing the British that Arab custom would not allow him to give up a man under his protection and he would not allow his name to be an object of ridicule in the Arab world for having done so.<sup>54</sup> The British and Iraqi Governments lodged numerous complaints, but Ibn Saud very generously built al-Kaylani a large house, and provided stipends to his children.

It is hard to escape the fact that al-Kaylani had turned to Saudi Arabia only as a refuge of last resort and Ibn Saud only assisted him out of kindness. al-Kaylani’s physical presence in the Kingdom severely antagonized the Iraqi and British Governments, which may have humored Ibn Saud on some level, but he never seems to have used al-Kaylani’s presence as a bargaining chip in any way. And sure enough, shortly after Ibn Saud died, Rashid Ali was asked to leave the Kingdom. It was the last comfort he enjoyed, as he spent the next decade living a meager existence in Cairo and Beirut, attempting a triumphant return to Baghdad after the July 14 Revolution in 1958, only to receive three years’ imprisonment under accusations of fomenting an elaborate plot to overthrow the government.<sup>55</sup>

## Nationalism and Identity after the 1920 Revolution

The general scholarly consensus is that nationalism played a major role in motivating Iraqis to participate in the 1920 Revolution, and that Iraqi politics emerged in the midst of this swell of popular nationalist sentiment. However, the description in the previous chapter, of Sunni Arabs from southern towns decamping for the Najd, should already suggest that the picture was more complicated than it might otherwise appear. Sami Zubaida contends that the idea of a nation was contested in the imaginations of Iraqis from different religious, ethnic and regional backgrounds.<sup>56</sup> There was not one imagined community, but many separate or overlapping ones that were projected onto the national stage, and each image was treated as though it were an authentic expression of the entire nation. As Zubaida notes, the government's regulation of the economy, provision of employment, development of education and encouragement of the media were more the end-products of a colonial arrangement and less the pre-conditions for state formation and national identity.

In that regard, the 1920 Revolution was not simply a pivot point in which the masses, long-struggling under colonial rule, awoke as a collective to their desire for national independence. Rather, it was more a fragile coalition of diverse interests and motives, out of which grew the use of nationalist language and slogans that would later be deployed by different communities in ways that suited their own political purposes. Shi'a, Sunni and Kurdish politics existed, at least in terms of local communities seeking to advance their own provincial interests, but there was not yet a zero-sum game of competitive exclusion and state capture playing out at the national level. Opinions were malleable. Civic leaders who might never play a concrete role in organized party politics could nonetheless have a major impact on political debate. Even during the Revolution, as Abbas Kadhim has shown, key (Shi'a) leaders such as Sayyid Muhsin Abu Tabikh and Ayatollah Mīrzā Muhammad Taqī al-Shīrāzī had very different attitudes toward the (Sunni) al-'Ahd Association of Sharifian officers and their Arab nationalist ambitions.<sup>57</sup>

Similarly, while Iraqi armed opposition leaders in 1920 drew inspiration from the nationalist sentiments of the 1919 Egyptian Revolution, common everyday people were also often motivated by their negative personal

interactions with specific British officers in Iraq. And just as the principal actors of the 1920 Revolution entered battle with diverse motivations and goals, so too did the journalism of the revolt reflect different images of what nationalism should mean. Two short-lived publications in Najaf, *al-Furāt* and *al-Istiqlāl*, took up the call to arms in the defense of rights and freedoms.<sup>58</sup> By contrast, *al-Lisān* avoided articles calling for revolution in favor of a more generalized promotion of patriotism, and the newspaper *al-Sharq* glorified the British role in Iraq while at the same time acting as a vehicle for Sayyid Talib al-Naqib's political ambitions in Baṣrah.

All of these concepts of nationalism, patriotism and resistance could coexist as long as independence was a long, slow process of shared authority with a colonial power, not a violent rupture achieved by one ruling faction determined to impose its founding narrative on the rest of the nation. That would be attempted after 1958 with 'Abd al-Karim Qasim, and it would succeed after 1974 with Saddam Hussein's consolidation of power and the Ba'ath Party's attempts to rewrite history. But in this period of state-building there was no single power center in Baghdad with a monopoly on the use of the pen and a determination to eliminate all other voices. There were instead many different political actors split up among King Faisal and his Royal Court, the Iraqi officers who had fought in the Arab Revolt and the British officials administering the Mandate. Toby Dodge quite accurately notes that their violent disagreements, "had their roots in differing conceptions of the role and nature of the state they were building, its relation to Iraqi society, and ultimately, what the Iraqi nation was and what it should become."<sup>59</sup> Consequently, the 1920s witnessed a flourishing of debate over nationalism and statehood, in a process that was at times brutally imposed by the colonial authorities on the public, but that was at other times contested and negotiated between the people and the government.

The 1920 Revolution might not in and of itself have created a class consciousness or fully defined the concept of what it meant to be Iraqi, but it was an inflection point in which the language of nationalism became popularized and intellectuals could enter into an open debate about the nature of the state. It was a debate that eschewed sect and ethnicity, at least to a certain degree and for a limited period. As Orit Bashkin notes: "In

1921–1923, when the state had not fully consolidated its power, there was more room for the simultaneous existence of various views in the public domain. Intellectuals saw themselves as agents of nationalism and democracy who envisioned ideal forms of governance.<sup>60</sup> Sunni, Shi‘i, Christian and Jewish intellectuals in Iraq shared an overlapping print culture, absorbing similar influences from debates on reform taking place in Istanbul, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, India and Iran, reading Darwin and Spencer, and translating works from English and French. Intellectuals may later have drifted toward cynicism in the 1930s, viewing the broader population as uneducated and unprepared for democracy, framing the concerns of other ethno-sectarian communities as national security problems, but at least in this early period of state formation an attempt at a hybridized sectarian discourse existed. Indeed, Sunni and Shi‘a Iraqis had cooperated in political activism as early as 1919, both in the formation of *al-Mandubūn* (The Delegates) that petitioned the British for greater freedoms, and the *Hirās al-Istiqlāl* that came to take a leading role in the uprising the following year. Eric Davis concludes that: “The 1920 Revolution set a precedent for subordinating ethnic and confessional loyalties to commitment to a larger national entity. However, neither Great Britain nor the fledgling Iraqi state it formed in the wake of the revolt encouraged this spirit of cooperation.”<sup>61</sup> The scholarly consensus is that sectarianism did not define Iraqi politics or even Iraqi intellectual debates about politics during the early years of the monarchy, inasmuch as there were just as many pressing societal divides between urban and rural communities, the capital and the provinces, and the rich and the poor.

However, that is not the same thing as saying that sectarian discourse did not exist or that it did not play a role in politics and governance both before and after WWI. It is one thing to downplay sectarian divisions at the founding of the state in order to demonstrate that we cannot simply map the sectarianism of 2011 onto the politics of 1921, but it would be another thing to say that sectarianism was entirely absent. Muhammad Ḥasan al-Shīrāzī, the *marja-i taqlid* (“source of emulation” or senior-most authority) in Najaf moved his *hawzah* to Samarra in September 1874, resulting in occasional riots between the influx of Shi‘a visitors and the Sunni residents of the city.<sup>62</sup> The Ottomans initially responded by building a new bridge to

facilitate Shi‘a pilgrims, and renovating the shrine housing the tenth and eleventh Imams, but by the 1890s, they were sending Sunni religious leaders to the city, building two new Sunni madrassas and appointing government officials to oversee the shrine.<sup>63</sup> Ottoman policy was not overtly prejudiced toward one side or another in Iraq in this period, but just as with the British after WWI, government authorities had to respond to communal tensions on the ground and maintain some sort of peace. When the British welcomed in Faisal as King, they focused attention on his family’s descent from the house of the Prophet and used that as propaganda to appeal to the Shi‘a majority population. But the truth is that the cabinets of the 1920s were dominated by Sunni Arabs, with the ex-Sharifian officers who had fought in the Arab Revolt forming a powerful clique.<sup>64</sup> These officers feared that nationalism might lead to populism, unbridled democracy and anti-colonialism, all of which were threats to their hold on power. Accordingly, in a private conversation in late 1923, Ja‘afar al-Askery told the High Commissioner about the efforts of the ex-Sharifian officers to establish a branch of their party in Başrah in order to counter the political influence of the Shi‘a clerics in Najaf and their supposedly pro-Persia agenda.<sup>65</sup>

King Faisal was deeply concerned about the fragmentation of national identities, he genuinely cared about public opinion and he recognized the great divide between the government in Baghdad and the broader population.<sup>66</sup> As a result, he insisted on having at least one Shi‘a in his court and one in the cabinet. One such person was Muhammad Rustom Haydar, head of the Royal Court during much of the 1920s, who served in several cabinets after Faisal’s death.<sup>67</sup> The provisional cabinet under ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Kaylani included Muḥammad Maḥdī al-Ṭabāṭabā’i as Minister of Education and four more Shi‘a as ministers without portfolio, though this high number was due in part to the fact that Cox applied pressure on the Prime Minister to include them.<sup>68</sup> The position of Minister of Education became a place-holder for a token Shi‘a in many future cabinets. ‘Abd al-Muhsin Shallāsh was Minister of Education in 1922 despite having a background in the banking sector in Najaf; he resigned in November 1922 (nominally for the purpose of pursuing his business interests), to be replaced by another Shi‘a, ‘Abd al-Husayn Chalabi.<sup>69</sup> It

was not until 1953 that a cabinet would be formed with half the members being Shi‘a, thereby more accurately reflecting demographic realities.<sup>70</sup>

That raises the question of where to assign blame for the growth of sectarianism, and some scholars assign fault to the exclusionary practices of Sunni Arab officials in Baghdad and the British administration.<sup>71</sup> Certainly racism and prejudice existed among some members of the central government. High Commissioner Dobbs said about Prime Minister ‘Abd al-Muhsin Al Sa‘dūn in November 1922: “It must, I fear, be admitted that one of ‘Abdul Muhsin’s few faults is a fanatical dislike of the Shi’ahs and he could not be brought to share the King’s wish to show impartial severity towards both sects.”<sup>72</sup> In late January 1927, the Ministry of Education issued a textbook in the schools written by a Syrian teacher in Baghdad that had “many passages calculated to offend Shiah religious feeling,” which generated a wave of protests and petitions in Najaf.<sup>73</sup> Demographic fears played a key role in pushing Sunni politicians to compromise in treaty negotiations with the British in the mid-1920s, scared that the withdrawal of British forces might result in the Kurds breaking away and leaving the country overwhelmingly Shi‘a. And those demographic fears were compounded by suspicions that Shi‘a clerics were taking advantage of the situation in the north. According to Charles Tripp, for King Faisal and much of his government: “They recognised that Iraq needed British support and protection if Mosul was to be retained . . . To many in Baghdad the Shi‘i *mujtahids* appeared to be using the pretext of the generally unpopular treaty to organise opposition to the emerging Iraqi state, dominated as it was by a Sunni elite.”<sup>74</sup>

Yet we still have to be cautious in how we use the phrase “sectarian politics” in this era and understand that negative ethno-sectarian attitudes were not as widespread or categorical as they have become in recent years. Shallāsh would return to government service in 1923 as Minister of Finance in the cabinet of Ja‘afar al-Askery, finally making use of his banking experience, and he would serve as a helpful back-channel between the Royal Court and the mujtahids who were living in quasi-voluntary exile in Persia.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, it might be going one step too far to be as categorical as Eric Davis in asserting that sectarianism was an outgrowth of the British conspiring with the ex-Sharifian officers around King Faisal to

systematically exclude Shi‘a from power.<sup>76</sup> While that is certainly true to a great extent, the clear marginalization of Shi‘a in Baghdad can also be attributed in part to the strident political demands and radical rhetoric of many clerical leaders in Najaf, Karbalā’ and Kadhimayn. Their politically divisive rhetoric and the absence of an organized, sustained Shi‘a political party apparatus attempting to work within the system also contributed to sectarian tensions. The next section will examine a case study of early Shi‘a clerical attempts to organize a political coalition in response to Ikhwan raids, with the aim of showing the central place that the Najd occupied in sectarian discourse in this period. It will also attempt to contribute to the scholarly debate above by demonstrating some of the ways that Shi‘a community leaders were themselves partly responsible for shaping an increasingly divisive national political discourse.

## **The Early Formation of Sectarian Politics**

Given the discussion above, ethno-sectarian politics were far more amorphous and fleeting in this early period of the modern state of Iraq than today, but they did exist. And even if regional neighbors were not directly involved in stoking sectarian tensions, they were drawn into these domestic political disputes in ways that came to shape the terms of reference for Iraqi politicians and publics alike. It was in this uncertain and rapidly shifting era of experimentation with democracy that a Shi‘a vision for national politics emerged, taking as its inspiration an incident involving Ibn Saud’s Ikhwan. All of the elements that we saw above – 1) deep-rooted Iraqi Shi‘a fears of the Ikhwan, 2) politicians exploiting a crisis to promote their agendas, and 3) nascent provincialisms with ethno-sectarian overtones that masqueraded as patriotic nationalism – united in a singular event that reverberated in Iraqi politics for years to come.

## **The Initial Incident near the Border**

On March 11, 1922, Ibn Saud entered into the fray when the Ikhwan raided Abī Ghār. Although it is difficult to assess the motivations of Faisal al-Duwaysh or the level of involvement by Ibn Saud himself, we can safely

assume that their target was the newly-formed *bayrq al-hajjāna* of Yūsuf al-Mansūr Al Sa‘dūn, which was using the old castle at Abī Ghār as a barracks. Al Sa‘dūn had temporarily removed his force to conduct a patrol, leaving eight camel mountees to protect the base camp, of whom six were killed and one wounded by the Ikhwan. If the Iraqi camel cavalry had been previously deployed in offensive operations against the Najd, or even if it had been perceived in Riyadh as being potentially directed against Najdi interests, then we might consider Abī Ghār a legitimate military target. The Ikhwan attack would therefore have been intended to send a signal to Baghdad. Certainly Ibn Saud believed Al Sa‘dūn was a criminal who should be arrested and extradited, as we saw in Chapter 2.<sup>77</sup> Cox quickly cabled Ibn Saud on March 16 requesting an explanation, and Ibn Saud provided a carefully worded and highly diplomatic response:

It appears that the issue is as you say, though I was not previously informed before I received your cable, and I almost doubt the veracity of the news. Before they went, I sent word to them . . . to return, and they came back to the vicinity of al-Hafr, and this was the last I heard news of them. [ . . . ] I cannot imagine that the Ikhwan attacked without reason, though I cannot answer before getting the details . . . of this issue that results from such a thing as a misunderstanding, which is often what happens among the badū . . . Be reassured that I will judge and I will cut down all who are found sinning and I will strive to abolish all pillaging and looting.<sup>78</sup>

That response disavowed all official knowledge or responsibility for the attack, giving Ibn Saud plausible deniability. However, the Iraqi press certainly picked up on the implication that this raid was organized and intentional, because the target was military in nature. *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah* (The Iraqi Times) on March 18 confidently reported that a second raid had been initiated on the tribe of Al Ziyād near Samāwah, and Ibn Saud had sent a messenger to call off the attack due to the fact that the tribe was resident in Iraq.<sup>79</sup> “So, if His Excellency the Sultan of Najd prevented attacking the Ziyād for the sake of their being in the *bādiya* of the state of Iraq, but rather and more appropriately he exposed his commander to the risk of [facing] the government’s army [i.e. by attacking the *bayrq al-hajjāna* instead], then the riskier of these two is the [latter] risk, which is equivalent to two governments, Iraqi and British.”<sup>80</sup> The editors clearly saw that the attack on Abī Ghār had little other purpose than to destroy a

military outpost, a decision that could not have been taken lightly. And they added in the Iraqi Government's defense that, "we do not believe the Iraqi Government has ambitions in Najd . . . and the army of *hajjāna* was not formed intending hostility to the great Sultan of Najd."<sup>81</sup>

Ibn Saud's delicate response might have been the end of the matter, and the governments could have publicly dismissed the affair as one more tribal raid among many with the overall point having been made, if not for the way local Iraqi actors exploited the situation for their benefit. Our first character in this tale is Ḥamūd al-Suwayt, the shaykh of the Dhafir who we encountered in Chapter 3. He had a reputation for banditry, and had recently looted a sizeable amount of cash (25,000 Turkish liras) from a Mosul trader.<sup>82</sup> Several merchants approached the King to complain, so Faisal issued orders for the local government to bring him in, but Ibn Suwayt ignored the summons. He felt threatened by the appointment of Al Sa‘dūn as head of a camel cavalry unit and the prospect that this *bayrq al-hajjāna* might be used to police his own activities, so he traveled to Riyadh to pledge loyalty to Ibn Saud, then went back to assist ‘Abd al-Rahmān bin Mu‘ammār in collecting *zakat* from the Iraqi tribes, even going so far as to join al-Duwaysh in the attack on Abī Ghār on March 11.<sup>83</sup> We can only imagine the panic this created among the other Iraqi tribes, to think that one of their own was fighting alongside the Najdi forces, supporting the Wahhabi *da‘wa* and routing the Iraqi Government's expeditionary force in their own military camp. Again, it was not the issue of al-Suwayt's raid that sparked public interest in the story – indeed, Ḥamūd al-Suwayt and Yūsuf al-Mansūr Al Sa‘dūn would continue to spar throughout the following year – it was the way that the sparring between the Iraqi tribal leaders had invited the interference of the Ikhwan from Najd.<sup>84</sup>

## The Political Firestorm in Baghdad

The issue quickly snowballed, thrusting the Ikhwan attacks onto the regional and national political stage. The Governor of Muntaqi province saw the tribes rushing to pay *zakat* to Ibn Saud and he immediately tried to calm the public by promising the full protection of the Iraqi Government, despite having no real guidance from Baghdad.<sup>85</sup> Over the following

month, the government conducted military maneuvers as a show of force, with cavalry patrols in the wilderness around Shāmīyah district and a squadron of airplanes staged in Hillah.<sup>86</sup> On April 25, 1922, RAF planes conducted a punitive run against Ḥamūd al-Suwayt and dropped one ton of bombs on the Dhafir.<sup>87</sup> ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Ṭabāṭabā’i and his colleagues at *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah* began a series of in-depth articles, replete with front-line reporting, confidential government sources and editorial commentary.<sup>88</sup> They printed the full correspondence from Cox pressuring Ibn Saud to agree to a summit at which Najd would accept a provisional border and rules preventing the tribes from crossing over. The Royal Court and/or the High Commission probably leaked the cables to show the public that they were making a good-faith effort and any failure to achieve results at Muhammara would be solely the fault of the Najdi Government. When it appeared that Ibn Saud might not attend the Muhammara conference in person, the press openly questioned the wisdom of diplomacy and whether the Iraqi Government was negotiating from a position of strength: “There is no doubt that Ibn Saud in his forcing the two tribes of al-Badūr and al-Dhafir to pay the *jizya* had strengthened his position in the negotiations that will be conducted about the western Iraqi border.”<sup>89</sup> Even the use of the term *jizya* was intended to carry condescension toward the *da‘wa* of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab.<sup>90</sup> In all of this, the coverage was highly charged with nationalism and tinged with xenophobia:

And we are the first to say that the Iraqis are superior as a civilized people to the Ikhwan, and that [what the Ikhwan do] is not at all appropriate. And while we see Iraqis taking broad steps toward political and moral and economic advancement, we see the Ikhwan still in [the midst of] savagery, and that it is necessary that there should be borders for them in the west and south of Iraq at a great distance from the Euphrates, securing our tribes from their brutal aggression. [ . . . ] This, and there is no need to prove to our respected colleagues [at other newspapers] that *The Iraqi Times* is Iraqi first in its goals, and Arab second in its features. So those who read it daily know the truth of this. And . . . this newspaper and its writers are pure Iraqis and there is no goal other than serving their nation.<sup>91</sup>

On March 18, the Cabinet organized a three-member fact-finding committee led by Nuri al-Said (in his new role as Director General of Police), which traveled to Nāṣirīyah to take depositions from Al Sa‘dūn and various local officials. The committee reviewed an account prepared by the

Governor's office of compensation claims and broadly agreed with the amounts proposed, calling in a panel of experts in tribal law to further refine the numbers.<sup>92</sup> Nuri used the opportunity of the committee's final report to insist that any negotiations with Ibn Saud must result in a border that would grant Iraq sovereignty over all of the southern desert regions pertaining to its tribes. Moreover, he pressed for the creation of a real national army, pointing out that only thirty-five members of Al Sa'dūn's *bayrq al-hajjāna* were armed and they were only capable of sustaining fire for ten minutes in combat: "And it is self-evident that a force composed of two hundred *hajjān* and formed on the *badū* model is not capable of protecting this area exposed to constant danger and unrest."<sup>93</sup> He spoke on some authority, having recently served as Chief of Staff for the nascent Iraqi Army. Minister of Defense Ja'afar al-Askery attached a much lengthier report asserting that since the British aimed to maintain positive relationships with Ibn Saud, and indeed all the ruling families and governments of the region, it was incumbent upon Iraq to develop its military capabilities to defend its own borders.<sup>94</sup>

The committee presented its findings along with the Ministry of Defense report in a full Cabinet session on March 27, sparking an intense and polarizing debate between those advocating for rapid military expansion and others deferring to the British as the country's primary security guarantors. King Faisal pushed for armed intervention, but Minister of Interior al-Hājj Ramzī Bey refused to support military escalation, followed by four of his colleagues: Naji al-Suwaydi (Justice), 'Abd al-Latīf al-Mandīl (Trade), 'Izzat Pasha al-Kirkūklī (Labor and Transportation), and Hinā Khayyāt (Health). In his annual administrative report to London, Cox described the situation as thus: "His Majesty, considering that certain Ministers showed by their ineffective attitude in Council that they had not realized to the full the gravity of the situation or the necessity of taking immediate steps to meet it, sent for three of them and called upon them to resign."<sup>95</sup> It is remarkable in that statement to hear Cox side with Faisal against the majority of the cabinet in favor of a military response that, as Tawfiq al-Suwaydi described it, would have effectively served as a declaration of war.<sup>96</sup> And indeed, it was the majority of the cabinet that walked out, because shortly thereafter Minister of Finance Sassoon Hasql

tendered his resignation in protest, asserting that it was unconstitutional for the King to demand their resignations or for the Prime Minister not to step down. And, once again, the news of internal squabbles in the cabinet leaked into the press.<sup>97</sup>

## Mounting Opposition in Najaf and Karbalā'

It might seem a bit of a stretch to refer to opposition politics in this early phase of statehood before the first national elections had even been held. Yet Shi'a clerical leaders in Najaf and Karbalā' seized upon the policy divisions in the capital and the leaks in the press to put forward their own political alternative. They rallied around a focused message and mobilized the masses in support of that cause, with a media outreach campaign that attempted to target a broad swath of Iraqi society. While the government committee was wrapping up its investigations in Nāṣirīyah, senior clerics in Najaf deliberated and decided to convene ulema and tribal leaders for a conference in Karbalā'. They sent the following cable to Iraq's most venerable and widely-respected Shi'a cleric (Figure 24).

Baghdad: al-Kadhimiya

[To] the honorable Hojjat al-Islam Shaykh Mahdī al-Khālīṣī, may His blessings endure. Certainly, it is not necessary to depend upon the promise of the British authorities in eliminating the evil of the *khawārij* Ikhwan from the Muslims. And based on that, we hope for your participation in Karbalā' of a trip for a few days. And the leaders of the tribes are being ordered, like Sayyid Nūr and Emir Rabī‘ah and all of the leaders, after notifying them of our welcoming to participate, just as we admonished those leaders in our parts [of the country] for the purpose mentioned, inshallah.

Muhammad Ḥusayn al-Gharawī al-Nāyīnī [and] Abu al-Hasan al-Mūsawī al-Īṣfahānī<sup>98</sup>

The term *khawārij* was intentionally incendiary, deriding Ibn Saud's warriors by using a pejorative term for fanatical rebels in the early centuries of Islam and suggesting that it was the Ikhwan who were not true Muslims. Ayatollah Mahdī al-Khālīṣī took up the request and began issuing invitations to tribal leaders all across the country (Figure 22). According to *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah*, this was the actual text of the letter of invitation:

To the head of the tribe, the respected \_\_\_\_\_:

O people of Iraq, you have enabled the shepherd of the flock even to take possession from you of the frontier, and the uncivil ones are raiding your country, and whosoever are raided while in their very own homes, it is their humiliation.

Those Ikhwan (Wahhabis), they violate the borders of Iraq and one flees from them in fear. And of those who graze about the pastures about to enter in, they have awoken from a deep sleep before putting on a humble thobe. And it has been decided for solving this difficult issue to gather the ulema and leaders of tribes in Karbalā' the day of the tenth of the present month of Sha'bān until the day of the fifteenth, and participation is required at the time specified.

Mahdī al-Kazīmī al-Khālīṣī<sup>99</sup>

Here we have a call to rally a coalition of support among civic leaders from across the nation in defense of the right of all Iraqis to have peace and security. It clearly references reports of recent Ikhwan raids as the pretext for gathering these diverse factions of Iraqi society around a common cause. Such attacks only affected small segments of the population of southern Iraq, yet the Shi'a clerics of Najaf believed all tribes would recognize a common threat emanating from the Najd and they would come to the defense of each other and of the nation. The terseness of the language is a consequence of having to fit everything on a telegram. Awakening from a deep sleep hearkens back to the perceived renaissance of the 1920 Revolution and its cross-sectarian cooperation. The “humble thobe” again plays on that metaphor, as the tribesman puts on his garment in the morning, while also hinting at the alternate meanings of the words, i.e. regaining consciousness or receiving a gift from Allah. Either the poetic language was too hard for some recipients to understand, or perhaps there were multiple versions of the cable in circulation, because al-Bāṣīr in his book chose to publish this shorter, more coherent version: “On the occasion of the Ikhwan violating the borders of Iraq, it is decided that the ulema and all the leaders of the tribes will be present in Karbalā’ on the tenth day of the month of Sha'bān, and your participation is required on the day mentioned in Karbalā’.”<sup>100</sup> This was an implicit act of opposition to the government, operating outside of the political establishment in Baghdad, a problem the clerics tried to mitigate by inviting King Faisal to chair the conference.

al-Khālīṣī sent some 150 of these cables, and when the government instructed the Department of Telegraph and Post to shut it all down and refuse delivery, he went ahead and sent messengers to hand-deliver written

letters instead.<sup>101</sup> Before leaving Baghdad, al-Khālisī held a reception with 20,000 followers, many of whom joined him on the journey to the conference. They passed through Najaf before arriving at Karbalā' on April 9, where he and his entourage stayed at the residence of Ayatollah Muḥammad Taqī al-Shīrāzī, who accordingly led the first session of the conference. At the request of the Royal Court, Minister of Interior Tawfīq al-Khālidī traveled to Karbalā' to observe at first-hand and report back, while hundreds of government forces were deployed to Karbalā' to ensure security. Ja‘far Chalabi Abu al-Timan, the man who had been secretary of the *Hirās al-Istiqlāl* before the Revolution and would later found one of the first licensed political parties in advance of the 1923 elections, delivered the closing speech on April 13. In it, he effusively praised the ulema for their care and attention to the peace and security of the nation. He also “simplified for his listeners some of the facts of the Ikhwan that they had undertaken against the Hijaz Government and threatened Mecca and headed to Iraq in recent days, and . . . [he] amplified and described the atrocities that were committed by the Ikhwan around Abī Ghār and close by Samāwah.”<sup>102</sup>

Then the final communiqué was passed around to conference participants and read out for the assembled crowd of some 200,000 that had gathered at the shrine of Imam Hussein bin Ali that day:

We the undersigned *sādāt* [gentlemen] and *zu ‘amā’* [leaders] and *ashrāf* [descendants of the Prophet] of the cities of Iraq, on behalf of ourselves and acting for our delegates in response to the call of the *Hujāj* [pilgrims] of Islam, extend their blessings to those who represented us and the general Islamic viewpoint, having participated in the meeting convened in Karbalā' to review the issue of the Ikhwan. This meeting began on the tenth of Sha'bān and ended on the fifteenth of it, and based on what was inflicted by the *khawārij* Ikhwan on our Muslim brothers from barbarous acts of killing and pillaging and raiding, all of us agreed whereby not one of us was left out of all of what is necessary for the interests of our country in general and [that which] preserves the holy places and graves of the patriarchs in particular and keeps them safe from all crises of aggression, especially the return of the Ikhwan. And we decided on cooperation with the tribes in all of it. And our ability and our capability to defend from the Ikhwan and fight them derives from the order arranged by the will of His Majesty King Faisal the First, of vigilance in preserving our independence and the independence of our country. And based on our attachment to the throne of His Majesty, we ask of His Majesty to show kindness in coming to the aid of the request of the umma related to the relief of those affected by the incidents of assault, and compensate them for the ensuing losses, and we have organized for this compact [i.e. charter] two copies, one of them we present at the doorstep of His Majesty and the second to the ulema, may Allah help us.<sup>103</sup>

The conference organizers may have thought they were appealing to a national audience, but with this communiqué we are right back in the prejudicial language of the very first cable that the ulema of Najaf sent to al-Khālisī at the end of March. In fact, al-Khālisī had assembled a committee of Shi‘a scholars in Baghdad before the conference, including Sayyid Nūr al-Yāsirī, Sayyid ‘Alwān al-Yāsirī, Sayyid Kāzim al-‘Awādī, Shaykh Muḥammad Bāqr al-Shabībī and ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn al-Chalabi, and this committee had already drafted the thirteen-point memo that would effectively become the final communiqué of the conference.<sup>104</sup> They were drawing upon deep-rooted Shi‘a fears of Wahhabi violence that went back to the sacking of Karbalā’ in 1802, as well as feelings of being an oppressed class in society despite the considerable demographic size of the Shi‘a population in Iraq. The predatory nature of the recent Ikhwan raids fueled those feelings of abandonment, neglect and defenselessness directed at successive governments in Baghdad.

It is hard to judge whether the clerics of Najaf succeeded in winning any hearts and minds with their anti-Saudi rhetoric. Tens of thousands of Shi‘a pilgrims would have been arriving in Karbalā’ anyway to celebrate *layla al-nisf* on the night of 14/15 Sha‘bān (the last night of the conference), which is the anniversary of the birth of Imam al-Mahdi and an auspicious moment when prayers are answered. The clerics notably rushed out cables in the midst of the conference urging more tribal leaders to participate, even naming and shaming tribal leaders who failed to show up by reprinting the cables in the newspapers.<sup>105</sup> British officials observed that: “No Sunni tribesmen obeyed the summons. [ . . . ] Feeling ran high and ended in the refusal of a group of tribal leaders from the Middle Euphrates area to sign any document whatsoever . . . ”<sup>106</sup> And after the conference, Shaykh ‘Adāyi al-Jariyān (head of the tribe of Albu Sultān) wrote to the High Commissioner claiming that the clerics had used the sessions to launch accusations against King Faisal and the Iraqi Government.<sup>107</sup> (al-Jariyān had supported the British since the 1920 Revolution, and had actually been in Hillah receiving an award from local Iraqi and British officials for his service to the state just as al-Khālisī had arrived in Karbalā’.)<sup>108</sup> Tribal leaders who were worried about another uprising and damaging their

relationship with the government discussed sending a counter-petition, though the idea was later dropped.

The conference leaders made valiant efforts to explain that they were not opposing the government, thereby trying to walk a fine line between criticizing the government's policy and not the policy-makers. However, their message was interpreted by the press as an implicit criticism of the government and a disparagement of the diplomatic negotiations in Muhammara, especially in light of Ibn Saud's absence at the talks.

This is the foundation of the living umma and in this way the good people of Iraq [will] step up to political events that touch upon their dignity and threaten the existence of their government. And with such a demonstration as this, appearing in these days, it represents an awakening and readiness for all emergencies occurring in this country, and proving the most intense strength and dignity of the soul and courage toward recent incidents – the incidents of the Ikhwan. [ . . . ] However, and regrettably, our hearts were broken that the government committed itself to a restricted stance and clung to negotiations only.<sup>109</sup>

al-Khālisī's 21-year old son, Muhammad, went even further in public speeches and editorials for the newspapers, by linking the Wahhabi attacks to British machinations over the signing of the second Anglo-Iraqi Treaty. In an editorial for the paper *Sabāh* on September 8, 1922, he claimed that the British had tried and failed to gain acceptance from senior Shi'a clerics for the Treaty. He then claimed the British had threatened the King saying that without the Treaty the elections would not take place. And finally, in a foreshadowing of the conspiracy theories surrounding the 1927 Ikhwan attack and British Treaty negotiations mentioned above, Muhammad said that the British "induced the Wahhabis to attack [in the belief] that 'Iraqis, who are attached to tombs and shrines while Wahhabis destroy them, would surely prefer to accept the treaty rather than see their shrines destroyed."<sup>110</sup> In this narrative, the Karbalā' conference was not only a successful defense of the Iraqi people from Najdi aggression, along with the salvation of national unity, it was also a rally against British colonial oppression in the face of government inaction. According to Muhammad al-Khālisī: "The Prime Minister declared that if it had not been for the Karbalā' meeting, the Ministers would have signed the treaty."<sup>111</sup>

## Aftermath of the Events

Of course, the Iraqi Government did eventually sign the Treaty with the British on October 10 and preparations for parliamentary elections did go ahead as planned. Shi‘a clerics in Karbalā’ and Kadhimayn quickly issued fatwas banning participation in the elections, and that had a somewhat chilling effect in those urban communities, though voter registration among the tribes apparently continued apace.<sup>112</sup> At the same time, the sons of some of the leading mujtahids, including Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī, were meeting with multiple Turkish military officers and the Soviet Ambassador in Persia to organize possible military assistance. The elder Mahdī al-Khāliṣī refused the offer of Bolshevik support, but did approve a fatwa forbidding hostilities against the Turks.<sup>113</sup> Both the Iraqi Ministry of Interior and the British High Commission were aware of these contacts between the Turks, the Bolsheviks and Najaf. By adopting their own agenda and operating outside the framework of elite politics in the capital, these Shi‘a leaders were risking arrest and deportation, and it was only a matter of the government finding the slightest pretext for moving against them. On July 28, 1923, based on allegations that he had issued fatwas boycotting elections and condemning the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, government forces cordoned off Kadhimayn in the middle of the night and quietly removed al-Khāliṣī from his home while the residents of the neighborhood slept.<sup>114</sup> al-Khāliṣī and his sons were first sent to Aden, from where they travelled to Mecca to perform the Hajj at the invitation of Sharif Hussein. They next went to the port of Bushehr at the invitation of Persian Foreign Minister Mossadeq, and then to the holy city of Qom, where they were received by Shaykh Husayn al-Nāyinī and Sayyid Abū al-Hasan al-Mūsawī al-Īsfahānī.<sup>115</sup> (The latter individual had been among the clerics in Najaf who had solicited al-Khāliṣī’s support in leading the Karbalā’ conference in the first place.)

There were no major security disturbances in Baghdad after the government deported al-Khāliṣī, but nine senior religious scholars from Najaf signed a fatwa condemning the government’s actions. Accompanied by twenty five of their students and a large number of followers, they marched to Iran in protest.<sup>116</sup> They proclaimed that al-Khāliṣī had served the nation of Iraq faithfully and his exile was an insult to the entire community. While in Iraq, they formed a “Higher Organization of the

Representatives of Iraq in Tehran” and set up their own newspaper.<sup>117</sup> Before they would agree to return, they demanded that King Faisal order the withdrawal of all British advisors, dismiss the cabinet, and delete any language from the constitution granting equal treatment to all religions.<sup>118</sup> Above all, in private letters with the Royal Court, they promised to end their election boycott if the King agreed to allow a Shi‘a-led cabinet.<sup>119</sup> They were immediately undercut by their own compatriots. A group of Shi‘a notables from Baghdad approached the King in November 1923 to express their loyalty and renunciation of the demand for a Shi‘a Prime Minister, so that the most the ulema received was consideration for a second Shi‘a minister in the cabinet.<sup>120</sup> Even within the Shi‘a community there was a variety of political views and the same event could spark radically incongruous responses all claiming to represent the good of the nation and nationalist pride.

Iraqi officials believed they had come out of it for the better, with the clerics losing their veneer of Iraqi nationalism the longer they remained guests of the Persian Government, while the British remarked how the “departure of the ‘ulema has resulted in a noticeable diminution of political agitation.”<sup>121</sup> Persian officials publicly congratulated the ulema and protesters thronged the streets around the British Residency in Bushehr, but privately the Persian Government tried to corral the ulema to the more remote city of Mashhad and quietly begged the Iraqi Government to take them back.<sup>122</sup> A situation report prepared by the High Commission in Baghdad noted: “In Mosul the news of the deportation of Mahdi al Khalisi has been well received, the majority being relieved that the Government has at last shown signs of recognising its responsibilities. [ . . . ] A large proportion of Sunnis approve of the action taken by the Government on purely religious grounds.”<sup>123</sup> The ulema in voluntary exile failed to galvanize national sentiment and the government weathered the storm, though this was ignoring the underlying problem. The actions of the mujtahids were couched in nationalist terms, but they were perceived by others through an ethno-sectarian lens, and that had a corrosive effect on society. It was clear in the run-up to the elections that the boycott by the clerics was scaring people away from participating in the election oversight committees in Najaf and Kadhimayn, and emboldening candidates to

campaign against the British presence, just as al-Başīr commented in the quote at the top of this chapter.<sup>124</sup> When the Iraqi Government finally allowed the ulema to return from Persia on April 22, 1924, there were crowds of well-wishers gathered to receive them in Kadhimayn, Karbalā' and Najaf.<sup>125</sup> al-Nāyinī and al-Isfahānī reportedly promised the Iraqi Government they would never again interfere in politics, a key condition for their return, but in spite of British and Iraqi Government efforts to reconcile with al-Khālisī, this man of faith, principal and dignity remained in Iran where he died on April 10, 1925.<sup>126</sup>

## Summary

Most historians have emphasized the growth of cross-sectarian Iraqi nationalist sentiment during and after the 1920 Revolution, even if some scholars are careful to qualify that account by highlighting how different segments of society had different notions of what nationalism meant. However, more than that, it would appear that an issue like Iraqi policy toward the Najd served as a convenient excuse for individuals to pursue their own personal and political agendas, sometimes with strong sectarian overtones, and from a very early date. Nationalist rhetoric, in many instances, was therefore more representative of a kind of political opportunism among individuals seeking to capitalize on the popularity of the 1920 Revolution and forge new political alliances. In a very short amount of time, really no more than a month, many different Iraqis would find something in this affair of the March 1922 Ikhwan raid on Abī Ghār to use in furthering their political agenda.

It was beginning with that event that Ja‘afar al-Askery and his brother-in-law Nuri al-Said would make the formation of a national army based on conscription a keynote issue in their political agenda for the next decade. In their view, the inability of the Iraqis to defend themselves from Ikhwan attacks and the British unwillingness to take more severe measures against Ibn Saud became symbolic of a much larger problem of British-Iraqi ties. In the resignation letter Prime Minister al-Askery submitted to King Faisal on May 25, 1927, he summed up his frustrations of the past five years – what the Iraqi Government gains in British military support it loses in army

morale, and British promises of support are always followed by excuses about how the Iraqi Government cannot afford the costs of maintaining an army. “Surely it is a difference of opinion in the issue of recruitment [i.e. conscription] between the Iraqi Government and the British Government, and news of this difference was leaked to mouths of the public, building on the hesitancy and delays in presenting the Law of National Defense to the Parliament and the lack of progress in achieving the desires that the Iraqi people had waited to achieve for a long time.”<sup>127</sup> According to Charles Tripp, this crucial issue would “provide the background and justification for the militarism that became so much a part of Iraqi public life in the 1930s.”<sup>128</sup> And even though the issue came to prominence during negotiations for the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, these policies in favor of national conscription were defined at the founding of the state in response to the Najdi incursions across the border in March 1922.

The Ikhwan raids continued to reverberate in Shi‘a political circles as well. Ulema in Najaf and Karbalā’ would try again to build a coalition around the issue in 1924 and 1927, but there was little appetite among tribesmen in the provinces to support an urban Shi‘a vision for nationalist politics. This weak tribal support for a thinly-veiled Shi‘a political movement was partly a consequence of British efforts to incentivize tribal participation in the political system by granting two votes to tribesmen (effectively guaranteeing them forty percent of parliamentary seats), and Faisal’s efforts to grant many of them tax exemptions.<sup>129</sup> However, as discussed above, it was also a consequence of the fragmentation of nationalisms after the 1920 Revolution, with mujtahids in Najaf, Karbalā’ and Kadhimayn miscalculating the national appeal of their message. Even in other urban centers of southern Iraq, clerical politics struggled to gain a following. As Reidar Visser comments about the lack of political mobilization in Baṣrah during this period: “In April 1925, a small branch of the Hizb al-Nahda (The Party of the Awakening), a Shi‘i party based in Baghdad and emphasizing sectarian demands, was opened in Basra. . . . in May 1926 the organisation was described as ‘moribund’.”<sup>130</sup> The organizers of the Karbalā’ conference were wrong to think their vision of a united Iraqi society was the same as that of other communities in Iraq or that there might ever be a single vision for Iraqi nationalism. They did succeed in

elevating the issue of the Ikhwan to one of national importance, forcing politicians to take a stance and pressuring the Iraqi Government to respond. In that regard, Saudi Arabia truly left a lasting mark on Iraqi politics.

# CONCLUSION

Frequent diplomatic engagement in the 1920s and 30s failed to resolve the underlying problems in the bilateral relationship (Chapter 1), while competing and conflicting approaches to border security contributed to miscommunication and mistrust (Chapter 2). The Saudi Government was preoccupied with the need to preserve the socio-economic integrity of a Najdi community spanning the border (Chapter 3), while the Iraqi Government was constrained by the rise of sectarian entrepreneurs who sought to use the Najd to promote their political agendas (Chapter 4). Decisions made in one country that were intended to further a domestic policy goal for the benefit of that country's national interests did not stand in isolation, but rather had unforeseen consequences for the other country. For example, the Ikhwan raids on Iraqi security outposts at Abī Ghār in 1922 and al-Buṣayyah in 1927 may have been intended by the Saudi Government to signal to the Iraqis that militarization of the border was a redline, but such attacks inadvertently contributed to stoking long-held fears among the urban Shi'a populace of Iraq, which Iraqi religious and political actors used to their advantage. Iraq and Saudi Arabia were intimately and inextricably linked, despite their growing estrangement.

The very different nature of political discourse in both capitals was partly to blame for erecting barriers to productive collaboration. The circular nature of Iraqi politics became ever more self-absorbed in agenda-laden polemics of nationalism and populism, with a small clique of elites resorting to increasingly cynical methods of preserving their tenure in office. Saudi decision-making processes never expanded beyond the King

and a very small number of trusted advisors, with substance matter experts limited to a purely advisory role behind the scenes. The Saudis felt they did not have a partner on the other side ready to have a serious discussion about the needs of the people living along the border, in terms of providing them access to pastures and wells or safe conduct for trade with distant markets. Even when the Saudis were able to converse with rational actors who could see the utility of a flexible approach, the discussion was always diverted by the nationalist political rhetoric in Baghdad of defense and security. For their part, Iraqi officials felt they did not have an interlocutor in Riyadh who was prepared to understand and appreciate the nuances of the political debate in Baghdad and work around the domestic constraints that Iraqi politicians faced. Some Iraqis believed that Ibn Saud was intentionally seeking to undermine the relationship for the purpose of territorial and financial gain. Both sides had justifiable grievances.

Two very different societies and cultures developing in two very different directions, yet strangely tethered to one another and maintaining a mutual influence over each other's political development in so many subtle ways. We might conceive of Iraqi attitudes toward Saudi Arabia as a case of political elites seeking a scapegoat in the form of a Wahhabi menace, in order to serve as a distraction from the domestic economic and political chaos that could only be papered over temporarily through corruption and patronage in Baghdad. We might also conceive of Saudi attitudes toward Iraq as a case of political elites seeking to reach out to Sunni tribesmen and cultural Najdis across the border in an effort to reinforce the narrative of one Saudi society, united in its beliefs and rising above the clamor of identity politics in Iraq and elsewhere. There is at least one framework in the field of political philosophy that might help to explain this situation, and it comes from French social theorist and political advisor Jacques Attali: "Festival, whose aim is to make everyone's misfortune tolerable through the derisory designation of a god to sacrifice; Austerity, whose aim is to make the alienation of everyday life bearable through the promise of eternity – the Scapegoat and Penitence. Noise and Silence."<sup>1</sup> Two regimes on either side of a shared border with very different strategies for maintaining social stability, each one taking advantage of the differences between them to reinforce a particular national narrative, yet at the same time each one

experiencing its own social changes as a direct consequence of the mutual interaction.

## Continuity and Change

The sudden collapse of the Hashemite monarchy on July 14, 1958, was a shocking episode for both governments, though it did not mark a significant change in relations overall, especially given the malaise that had already settled over the relationship in the late 1940s and 50s. King Abdulaziz still considered the Hashemites his implacable foes, as he explained to the U.S. Government in giving his reasons for initially rejecting a military training mission in July of 1945: “My enemies, especially the Hashemite rulers of Iraq and Transjordan, would defame me as a weakling whose internal affairs are managed by a foreign army.”<sup>2</sup> A joint commission nominally existed for arbitrating disputes among the tribes in that period, though it appears the few cases it reviewed lingered for years with little resolution.<sup>3</sup> King Faisal II made a twelve-hour stopover in Dammām with his yacht on September 20, 1956, and a trip to Riyadh on December 5, 1957, with Royal Court Director and Ambassador-at-Large Dr. Abdullah Damlouji following up with multiple visits of his own, aimed at enticing Saudi Arabia to join the Baghdad Pact.<sup>4</sup> King Saud reciprocated with a visit to Baghdad on May 11 to 18, 1957, with a side trip to Baṣrah and Zubayr, where he received a huge reception from crowds bearing his portrait. The U.S. Government held great hopes that the exchange would usher in full Saudi–Iraqi rapprochement and a Saudi move away from Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser.<sup>5</sup> al-Damlouji and al-Mumayyiz were part of an Iraqi team that escorted King Saud from Riyadh to Baghdad, and Iraqi Air Force planes accompanied the delegation from the border. A military parade was scheduled, but cancelled due to rain.<sup>6</sup> While in Baghdad, King Saud criticized Egypt and Syria, pushed for more support to Jordan, and offered mild encouragement for the Baghdad Pact and the fight against communism (Figure 25).<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, Saudi foreign policy under Crown Prince and Foreign Minister Faisal remained committed to maintaining the Kingdom’s independence in the region.<sup>8</sup>

The Saudi Government continued its outreach to those tribes that concerned it most, including financial payouts. As a young American diplomat in Baghdad (and future Ambassador to Saudi Arabia) Hermann Frederick Eilts discovered:

Sometime after the Uqair conference of 1922 . . . the Saudi Arabian authorities – with the concurrence of the Government of Iraq – began making payments to the family heads of those Shammar elements who had emigrated to Iraq. The purpose of these payments was to keep those elements quiet and prevent any Shammar attempt to seek to reestablish a Shammar Amirate in northern Najd. The fact of the matter is that these payments have been taking place regularly ever since that time and with the full knowledge and tacit consent of the Iraqi authorities.<sup>9</sup>

The fact that these tribal leaders were on the Saudi payroll can help explain at least part of Ibn Saud's frustration with Shammar raids on Najdi tribes from Iraqi territory. Eilts concluded that by the 1950s, the payments had little practical purpose, as the paramount shaykh of the Shammar was close to the Iraqi Government and the lesser shaykhs were politically unimportant. Other Saudi payments to families like the Al Sa‘dūn in the 1940s and 50s were not authorized by the Iraqi Government, and the Iraqi Government's sudden detection of these gifts prompted a discussion in Baghdad about how to better incentivize tribal loyalty to the Iraqi state.<sup>10</sup> It does not appear to have sparked a diplomatic row, as apparently the Iraqi Government was simply used to such Saudi behavior by this point. The Iraqi Ministry of Interior was slightly more perturbed by the grand reception King Saud received from Mishal al-Timyāt (Shammar), Rashīd bin Muhammad al-Turkī al-Majlād (Dihamsha) and leaders from the Iraqi tribe of Al Ziyād, while the Saudi ruler toured the northern borders regions of his Kingdom in 1954.<sup>11</sup> In early 1958, authorities in Baghdad even discovered that Husayn al-Jida‘ah (Dhafir), the nephew of the Deputy Police Commissioner for the Bādiya South, had somehow become a trusted associate of Saudi Prince Muhammad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and was delivering letters to the Iraqi tribes on his behalf.<sup>12</sup> However, it appears that by this point the bilateral relationship was on autopilot, and both sides had adjusted to the new normal whereby there would be no consequences for improper activity as long as it remained out of the public view and below a very high threshold.

The collapse of the monarchy in Iraq came abruptly. At about three in the morning on July 14, the Free Officers (Nājī Ṭālib, ‘Abd al-Salām ‘Ārif, ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb Amīn, et al.) took command of the Twentieth Brigade and diverted the troops to the center of Baghdad, summarily executed the King, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and turned some of their bodies over to the mobs rampaging through the streets. The coup ushered in a broad coalition cabinet that was tolerant of the communists, committed to removing every symbol of the monarchy from public life, and open to Gamal Abdul Nasser’s encouragement of a potential union with the United Arab Republic.<sup>13</sup> Several members of the extended Hashemite royal family fled to the Saudi Embassy in Baghdad, where the wife of Ambassador Ibrahim al-Sowayel asked her husband to provide them with shelter out of humanitarian concern. Ambassador al-Sowayel brought them in and cabled to Riyadh for instructions, to which King Saud ordered that they would be safeguarded until they could be moved outside Iraq, with Saudi Arabia compensating them for their lost property.<sup>14</sup> The Saudi Embassy became the protecting power for the Jordanian Government, whose own embassy had been ransacked by a mob, leaving several Jordanian officials dead.

The 1960s were a period of frigid relations, punctuated only by fleeting moments of cooperation born out of necessity. Successive military-led republican governments in Baghdad sought to intervene in the affairs of the smaller Arab Gulf states, with Qasim threatening the invasion and annexation of Kuwait in 1961, and the Ba‘ath Party providing financial support and military training for insurgent groups in Yemen and Oman in the late 1960s and early 70s.<sup>15</sup> (Even here there was little that was new, as King Ghazi in the 1930s had called for the annexation of Kuwait and welcomed Bahraini and Kuwaiti dissidents to operate out of Başrah as part of the Propaganda and Publicity Bureau in the Arab Gulf.)<sup>16</sup> The overthrow of the Shah in Iran in 1979 and the Islamic Republic’s stated intent to export the revolution led Saudi Arabia to provide financial support for Saddam Hussein during the Iran–Iraq War. The cessation of that assistance after 1987 and Iraq’s mounting debt led the Iraqi Government to establish a short-lived Arab Cooperation Council, including Egypt, Jordan and North Yemen, effectively as a rival to the Saudi-led Gulf Cooperation Council

(GCC). During Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait, Iraq fired 46 Scud missiles at Saudi Arabia and on January 29, 1991, Iraqi tanks struck as far as Khaffji before the combined GCC Peninsula Shield forces repelled them back across the Saudi–Iraqi border.

In the decades that followed the collapse of the Hashemite monarchy, Saudi Arabia and Iraq remained neighbors, but increasingly treated one another as strangers. They had drifted so far apart that in many ways their original reasons for the divide were long-forgotten, as they stared at each other across the great divide of the desert, experiencing only brief moments in which they found themselves allies of convenience or implacable foes. Indeed, they were alternately one or the other at different times during the Iran–Iraq War, but their relationship never again assumed the form of a normal diplomatic exchange. The many years of distance and estrangement left either side with no more impression of the other than that of a symbol or token. There is no better example than the many stamps issued by the Iraqi Government in the late 1970s and 80s featuring the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina (Figure 26). As many parts of the Iraqi public turned toward religion in the mid-1970s, Saddam Hussein admitted the need to welcome some form of Sunni-Shi'a ecumenical identity.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, the Ba'ath Party increasingly allowed an Islamicization of its rhetoric, with senior regime figures and official announcements adopting a religious terminology that was not explicitly Sunni or Shi'a.<sup>18</sup> Images of the pilgrimage to Mecca, even if copied from Saudi Government-produced propaganda, were preferable to images of Najaf and Karbalā', which might encourage sectarian pride. By the mid-1990s, symbols of Saudi Arabia could be bandied about as a many-layered semiotic game. Amatzia Baram even cites instances of members of Saddam's inner circle using accusations of supposed Wahhabi infiltration to carry out their own personal feuds by proxy in the newspapers.<sup>19</sup>

When the United States launched Operation Iraqi Freedom and entered Iraq in 2003, it did so over the objections of Saudi Arabia.<sup>20</sup> The Kingdom publicly distanced itself from the decision to invade and the chaotic aftermath that resulted, though Riyadh did not undergo a lengthy and concerted inter-agency policy-review to consider all options and weigh them against national interests. A policy debate did take place in

Washington over how to restore stability, counter Iranian influence and encourage Sunni Arab participation in the political process. One line of effort that emerged was an attempt to “re-integrate” Iraq into the Arab world, asking Saudi Arabia to take a positive role in reaching out to Baghdad to restore bilateral ties as a show of support for the new Iraqi Government.<sup>21</sup> The concept of “Iraq and its Neighbors” has even been revived as a think tank-led initiative within the last couple years.<sup>22</sup>

This was all predicated on the belief that Iraq had at one point maintained close bilateral ties with Saudi Arabia, and it was merely a matter of convincing both sides to restore those relations. The reality was much more ambiguous. The two countries had shared a long history of mutual interaction and influence, but not close collaboration or cooperation. Bilateral relations are founded upon the exchange of people and commerce, giving rise to considerations of defense and security for the protection of lives and property, necessitating diplomatic dialogue that can be easily influenced by domestic politics. All of that existed in the early to mid-twentieth century, and it did create a close-knit relationship of mutual influence, but not in terms of mutual warmth and understanding, and certainly not in terms of forming a solid basis of cooperation.

## Shared Narratives

There is a cottage industry among practitioners of interfaith dialogue and academics engaged in peace and conflict studies that is devoted to examining the narratives employed by opposing sides. The idea is that historical writings and public rituals can become so laden with national pride, territorial claims and layered interpretations of the past that they serve as obstacles to politicians and civic leaders who must make compromises for the sake of peace. “Insofar as narratives affect our perceptions of political reality, which in turn affect our actions in response to or in anticipation of political events, narrative plays a critical role in the construction of political behavior.”<sup>23</sup> Israeli and Palestinian scholars have been at the forefront of these studies, using publications to showcase their open and frank debates in which they question and challenge the underlying assumptions of each other’s narratives.<sup>24</sup> As Amos Oz once noted about the

competition among all sides of a conflict to promote their own image of victimhood: “This tragic inclination, on both sides, to see the other not as he is but as the old enemy incarnate calls for a removal of stereotypes, for learning each other’s culture and history, for an imaginative literary dialogue.”<sup>25</sup> Catholic and Protestant scholars in Northern Ireland, as well as Turkish and Armenian scholars, have similarly participated in such exercises. This naturally creates a dialogue that tends to skew toward elite or politically-moderate contributors, and the dialogue can uncover formerly hidden nuances that might potentially complicate the peace-making process. The impact of such efforts really only comes when the results of such scholarly discourses are translated into curriculum reform in primary schools, public statements by community leaders, and media programs that acknowledge alternative views. The first and most difficult step in that process is for intellectuals in one country to reexamine their own narrative before they begin to engage others in the discussion.

This type of exercise does not have to be limited to conflict zones.<sup>26</sup> Such efforts to develop a shared history between two countries, even if they are not at war, can have an enormous value in helping to bridge the gaps between governments and populations. That is especially true where there is still a living memory of communities that overlapped the border, such as the Najdis who once lived in southern Iraq. Varying degrees of forced displacement or voluntary migration led to their dispersal, but appreciating their role in a shared Saudi–Iraqi history can help shine light on their contribution to both societies. It is also true when a society like Iraq today is undergoing its own upheaval and trying to find ways to overcome ethno-sectarian divisions. Reconsidering Iraq’s past and its relations with Saudi Arabia can thereby help Iraqis appreciate the roots of their own internal conflicts. Finally, it is true wherever a particular identity promoted by a state has come to overshadow or drown out other identities. In such cases, illuminating the shared history of a close neighbor can provide cover for individuals to explore their own personal or communal narratives in a safe way that doesn’t have to pose a threat to other communities.

## Multiple Viewpoints

This book has made the case that there is a shared and inseparable history between the two countries, even if it was fraught and distant at times. That being said, there can still be multiple approaches to designing that shared historical narrative, and there is also a need to confront and address the assumptions and agendas that underline each of those viewpoints.

## The Iraqi Perspective

The Iraqis entered their first diplomatic negotiations with Ibn Saud in 1922 bearing several key assumptions about governance that they had borrowed from the British: 1) It was imperative to fix a hard border that granted Iraq full sovereignty over the lands of the southern desert; 2) The tribes and towns of the borderlands had to be reoriented toward the central government; and 3) The visible exercise of authority and discipline was necessary to demonstrate resolve and legitimacy to domestic audiences, regional neighbors and the international community. Those assumptions were later echoed in the memoirs of Iraqi politicians and military commanders, the accounts of journalists and the historical writings of scholars, many of which have been quoted throughout this study. They served to reinforce a cultural bias that envisioned Iraq as a player on the world stage, a modern nation poised for independence by virtue of its sophisticated laws, efficient administration and tolerant society, all in supposed contrast to an archaic, backward and brutal Saudi Arabia. ‘Alī al-Wardī pinpointed the historiographical problem of these biases on the Iraqi side:

Surely, the reader when he sees the appearance of excessive intolerance by the Ikhwan, like their prohibition on the telephone and telegraph, or on bikes and planes, might become surprised since he is unable to imagine how it is possible for human reason to descend to such an incredible low as this. Surely, the reader does not know that his mentality is no different from the mentality of the Ikhwan in a way, in that both of them are of a single nature, but the circumstances that created the mentality are those that made him think in this or that manner. [ . . . ] Surely, human reason is subject in its thinking to models that are infused with their social environment.<sup>27</sup>

To prove his point that the religious extremism of the Ikhwan could just as easily have been carried out by Iraqis as by Najdis, al-Wardī named five books by Iraqi authors that had declared the shaving of a beard to be

religiously prohibited. He concluded by admitting the terrible horrors committed by the Ikhwan and acknowledging their barbaric acts, but he insisted they cannot be compared to Nazi gas chambers and concentration camps.<sup>28</sup> This is a rare example of an Iraqi scholar attempting to consciously excavate the historiographical bias inherent in both his analysis and that of his colleagues.

## The Saudi Perspective

There is no significant body of literature expressing the Saudi Arabian perspective, and it is not my place to speak for the citizens of the Kingdom.<sup>29</sup> But a case could be made that the Saudi Government's mistrust of Iraq derived from the patronizing and heavy-handed manner in which the first negotiations were carried out in 1922, setting the stage for everything to come. Ibn Saud was the ruler of an independent Arab nation, yet decisions about the border were being made without serious consultation and with complete disregard for his concerns. The resulting boundary divided families and tribes from the Najd, cut off a vital part of its economy and offered refuge to criminals and political opponents. He was repeatedly ignored in his efforts to warn against constructing fortifications that would threaten tribes' access to water, constrict their movements and coerce them into intelligence cooperation.<sup>30</sup> Instead, he received ambiguous responses from the British containing veiled threats, and personal media attacks from the Iraqi press.<sup>31</sup> And not only did the Iraqi Government adopt a maximalist position in early 1922 that would have extended the Iraqi border all the way Ḥā'il, Medina, Yanbu‘, Qaṭīf and Hofūf, but moreover the next year King Faisal even joined his brother Emir Abdullah in pressuring the British for Transjordanian control of most of the northern Hijaz (Wādī al-Sirḥān, Kāf, Sakākā, Madā'in Ṣalih and Taymā') with a popular referendum on the Jawf.<sup>32</sup>

This was the very definition of encirclement, as the Hashemites attempted to use their influence with the British to claim large swaths of Najdi-controlled territory – trying to gain through diplomatic negotiations what they had not achieved with their military forces. It would be too much to draw out a psychological portrait of Saudi Government decision-making,

especially in the absence of archival sources that get more directly to the inner thoughts of Ibn Saud. However, given the manner in which the British and Iraqi Governments handled the relationship during this very early and critical phase of state formation in Riyadh, we should not be surprised if it left a lasting mark on Saudi policy-making, in terms of a type of bunker-mentality or siege-mindset.<sup>33</sup> Seen in this light, it is no wonder that almost until this day many Saudi officials have developed a defensive approach to diplomacy, avoiding direct confrontation or open policy debate. Head of State meetings with senior foreign officials that result in an hour or more of recounting the lengthy history of friendly relations between the two countries and culminate in no more than a few minutes of substantive conversation about pressing issues in which no conclusions are reached or assurances granted – seen in a different light, such meetings should not be viewed as a failure to address the issue at hand or a consequence of a lack of strategic planning, but rather they should be viewed as a conscious decision to avoid becoming the innocent victim of another country's internal political feuds by being put on the spot to provide promises and assurances that are later manipulated in the international press. Such was exactly what happened to Ibn Saud during his first entry on the international stage with his negotiations with Iraq in the 1920s. His goals and ambitions were clear, and his desire for a negotiated solution in which the international community recognized his authority was sincere, yet his mounting frustration with diplomatic engagement was evident as early as 1924 in this letter to his negotiating team at the Kuwait Conference:

As for that which I mentioned, it is as before when I informed you of it and to work on it, and I do not advise you to do anything other than to adhere and hold very much to what is in line with all of our rights and our borders, and never leave off anything from it and do not compromise with it. It is not hidden from you that these Ashrāf – respecting the fact that we and they have the same Lord [*Allāh rabnā wa rabhum*] – they are not a state to be relied upon or upon their promises, since they keep their promises when they are weak and once they feel themselves powerful they leave aside their promises. This thing doesn't need confirmation, everybody knows it . . . As for the English, they don't have a way to force us to abandon anything from among our rights or our lands. And we don't ask anything from them except what is stipulated in our Treaty with them, in which it mentions that I am the ruler of Najd and its appendages [*tuwāb ‘ihā*] and its dependencies [*mulhaqātuhā*] within the rights and kingdoms of our fathers and grandfathers, or something like what you see mentioned in the English Treaty . . .<sup>34</sup>

It is rare that we get such a candid and fulsome account of a Saudi monarch's personal feelings on diplomacy, and these words reveal no conspiracies, no plots, no deceptions – just a lingering fear by Ibn Saud that ultimately no one can be completely trusted.

## The Perspective of the Border Communities

As for the border communities themselves, their descendants produced a significant body of literature memorializing their traditions. This historical narrative crystallizes around the 1900s and 1910s, the heyday of the towns and tribes of southern Iraq, when their leaders had a certain degree of political autonomy and economic stability. That prosperity was not to last. In 1909 and again in 1914, the Ottomans had considered transforming Zubayr into its own district, and the British had contemplated a similar move during the war. Yet by 1921, the position of Shaykh was converted into the more bureaucratic function of *qā'imaqām* and the Iraqi Government took away the town's right to collect fees from the caravans.<sup>35</sup> In April 1922, Baghdad tried to impose a household tax on Zubayr for the first time, to the tune of ten percent.<sup>36</sup> The position of *qadī* (chief legal authority), often overlapping with that of *muftī* (chief religious authority), was transferred to Başrah in 1924, and from that point onward officials in Başrah oversaw the issuance and certification of contracts for Zubayr.<sup>37</sup> Over time, the towns of Iraq that served as entrepôts for Najdi traders and tribesmen (Zubayr, Sūq al-Shuyūkh, Samāwah, Khamīsīyah) largely emptied out of their Sunni Arab populations, as a younger generation either took up Saudi citizenship or departed for other regional capitals.

This literature on the borderlands projects an almost unified Najdi cultural identity back into the past in a monolithic way that probably never existed in reality. As Dawn Chatty notes: "A community, whose roots have been cut by dispossession and forced migration, creates new roots in imagined places in order to maintain and sustain social coherence. The narratives of the past and the creation of new symbolic traditions tied to the homeland take root and are infused with timelessness."<sup>38</sup> However, we can get a glimpse of the diversity of opinion that actually existed when we note Muhammad Amīn al-Shanqītī's willingness to adopt the secular curriculum

of the Iraqi Ministry of Education, or Ibn Saud's frustration at 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Mandīl's refusal to adopt Saudi citizenship. That being said, the simple fact is that the history of this border community was largely shaped and influenced by those who later found a home in Saudi Arabia. Graduates from al-Shanqīṭī's school in Zubayr included 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥamūd, who became a member of the Iraqi Parliament before moving to Saudi Arabia to serve as a legal advisor, and Aḥmad al-Ḥamad al-Ṣālah, who became a religious court judge in Saudi Arabia.<sup>39</sup>

The Royal Court in Riyadh especially welcomed these skilled Najdis who were born or educated in Zubayr. Mohammed Almana, born in Zubayr and educated in India, served as Ibn Saud's personal translator for English, Urdu and other languages from 1926 to 1935. Mohammed Dughaither, chief of communications technology for Ibn Saud, had studied in Zubayr, as had Muḥammad bin Ḥamad al-Shabīlī, who later became a clerk in the Royal Court, then Consul in Başrah and Ambassador in Iraq, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan.<sup>40</sup> Ibrāhīm bin 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Nāṣir and Aḥmad bin Ibrāhīm al-Rabīy'a came from Zubayr and entered service in Riyadh as financial clerks for the government in the mid-1930s, as did Aḥmad bin 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Farīh, who installed the electricity in Ibn Saud's royal palaces.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, most cabinets over the last seven decades since the death of Ibn Saud have included at least one Zubayri, and sometimes several.

These were the kinds of immigrants that the Saudi Government wanted – Sunni Arabs, educated, skilled and loyal, with an appreciation for the traditions of the Najd. In 1926, fearing an Iraqi Government census and what it might mean for taxes and compulsory military recruitment, a group of notables from Zubayr met with Ibn Saud while on pilgrimage to Mecca and requested nationality papers demonstrating their Najdi citizenship.<sup>42</sup> In that same year, Ibn Saud sent to the British Government a list of names of Zubayris requesting Najdi passports and even tried to appoint his own consular officer in Zubayr authorized to issue passports and visas.<sup>43</sup> 'Abdallah bin Khalīl al-Jida'ān, a Zubayri from an old Najdi family that had originally come from Zulfi and who migrated back to Saudi Arabia as a youth, described a similar experience:

When pilgrims from the people of Zubayr came in 1951, they met King Abdulaziz in Mecca and explained their issue to him and he asked them "do you carry Saudi nationality

(identification)?” and they said to him, “some of us obtained it,” so at that very moment he ordered the Director of Security to disburse Saudi national IDs from Mecca to those not carrying it. And he said to them, “keep it in case you need it in the future.” And accordingly they settled and obtained employment and did business freely.<sup>44</sup>

The Najdi-ness of these merchants, students, clerics and tribesmen in southern Iraq was a calling card, helping them to benefit from ties to central Arabia while taking advantage of the resources provided by the Iraqi state, even as their home towns became less relevant with changing political and economic circumstances. Zubayr gradually lost its advantageous status as a premier center for trade between the coast and the interior of Arabia. Cars and paved roads altered the fundamental nature of commerce, while the enforcement of customs duties imposed new barriers on trade. Multiple rounds of Shi‘a uprisings in the mid-1930s and 40s, a seven-year drought from 1954 to 1961, and the redistribution of wealth as part of the 1958 agrarian reforms did their part as well. (In some respects, these later rounds of emigration involving a relatively homogenous border community – at least in terms of ethnicity and religion – mirrored the near contemporaneous situation in Syria, in which business elites fled Syria for Lebanon in the late 1950s and early 1960s.)<sup>45</sup> Tribesmen who refused to register and sign up to a nationality in the 1920s and 30s were often left stateless, eventually living in shanty-towns near the border or on the fringes of the cities. “At this stage of human development, Bedouin nomadism has become a closed option. [ . . . ] They are now forced to live in slum areas on the margins of urban centres. They have to pray, pay taxes, drink cows’ milk, eat chicken and eggs, smell manure, and do all the other things they once looked down upon as loathsome and denigrating.”<sup>46</sup>

There were some who rejected the idea of citizenship, borders and governmental control over their lives, and others who, with little direct connection to the Najd, nevertheless felt a patriotic calling for what they believed to be an ancestral homeland. We can see this pride infused in the work of ‘Abd al-Karīm Abā al-Khayl, a young Baghdadi who wrote a history of the land of his forefathers in 1951. He draped the cover in the Saudi flag and tried to name every locale in Najd, though he mistook most of the place names for the Iraqi spellings and pronunciations.<sup>47</sup> This was a pride in the Najd as could only be expressed by someone who had not been

raised in it – someone who had experienced what it was like to live as a Sunni Arab minority in the much wider world of Iraq, India and the British Empire. Gertrude Bell described witnessing that enormous Najdi pride at a dinner party she gave in February 1921. Shukri Effendi al-Arusi, a committed follower of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab who taught mechanics in Baghdad, hung on every word of Ibn Saud’s visiting relative Ahmad al-Thunayān:

[Ahmad]: The Imam [Ibn Saud], God preserve him, under God has guided the tribes in the right way.

[Shukri]: Praise be to God.

[Ahmad]: They are learning wisdom and religion under the rules of the Brotherhood [i.e. the Ikhwan].

[Shukri]: God is great.

[Ahmad]: Not that they show violence.

[Shukri]: God forbid.<sup>48</sup>

It was a moment of self-fulfillment, in which a Najdi man living a peaceful life in Baghdad, practicing the Wahhabi tenets of his Salafi faith and teaching his students, received a visitor from the Najd and in that moment recognized himself in the other. With that, we have the possibility for a historiography of the borderlands that sets aside the romanticism of a heyday in the 1910s that was never fully realized, and instead seeks out a narrative that reveals the vulnerabilities and reactions of the border populations as they were exposed to politics on both sides.

## Notes

### Introduction

- 1 H.R.P. Dickson, *Kuwait and Her Neighbours* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1956), 274–75. Dickson provided a similar account while stationed in Kuwait as Political Resident in 1934; “Note on Ibn Saud’s attitude at the ‘Uqayr meeting with Sir Percy Cox in November 1922 with special regard to the question of what he considered the best form of boundary between Iraq and Najd, 20 October 1934,” in Richard Schofield, ed., *Arabian Boundary Disputes*, vol. 6, *Saudi Arabia-Iraq, 1922–1991* (Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992), 41–47, or British Library (BL), IOR/R/15/5/184, “File 4/6 Kuwait-Iraq Frontier,” fols. 114r-120r, as found in the Qatar Digital Library (QDL).
- 2 John Lukacs, *Historical Consciousness: The Remembered Past*, 3rd ed. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994), 5–22.
- 3 Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 15–16.
- 4 Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (1979; New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 255–75.
- 5 Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, 3 vols. (1983; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 1: 30.
- 6 Diarmaid MacCulloch, “Is There Still Value in ‘Great Man’ History?” *History Today* 69, no. 9 (September 2019), <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/head-head/there-still-value-'great-man'-history>, last accessed August 31, 2020.
- 7 Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman bin Faisal bin Turki bin Abdallah bin Muhammad bin Saud (1875–1953), led a group of close tribal allies to take Masmak Fort in Riyadh on January 14, 1902, thereby evicting the local Ottoman affiliates and eventually restoring the kingdom of his ancestors.
- 8 “Memorandum of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs to the Secretary of State” (January 14, 1931), in Ibrahim al-Rashid, ed., *Documents on the History of Saudi Arabia* (Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1976), 3: 103.
- 9 Amīn al-Mumayyiz, *al-Mamlakah al-‘Arabīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah kamā ‘arafuhā* [The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as I knew it] (Beirut: 1963), 339.
- 10 John S. Habib, *Ibn Sa‘ud’s Warriors of Islam: The Ikhwan of Najd and Their Role in the Creation of the Sa‘udi Kingdom, 1910–1930* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 96.
- 11 Dickson, *Kuwait*, 272. Similarly, in negotiations that took place just over a year later in Kuwait, the Government of Transjordan demanded a border that would grant Transjordan control of all Jawf, including the entire Wādī al-Sirhān, Kāf and Sakākā, and extending all the way to Madā’in Shalih and Taymā’. See BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, File 61/15 II (D 44) Kuwait Conference, fols. 9r, 78r, QDL.
- 12 Ameen Fares Rihani served as translator for the note sent by Ibn Saud to Percy Cox on the first night of the conference in which Ibn Saud expressly stated about these tribes that, “they are subjects of our fathers and our grandfathers” [*hum ra‘āyā ābā’inā wa ājdādnā*]. See *al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Al Sa‘ud wa Amīn al-Rihānī: al-Risā’il al-mutabātilah* [King Abdulaziz Al Saud and Ameen al-Rihani: Letters exchanged] (Beirut: Dār al-amwāj lil-ṭibā’ah wa al-nishr wa al-tawzi’ā, 2001), 14. Rihani had come from America on an extended tour of the Middle East to reconnect with his roots, and while travelling became a trusted friend of Ibn Saud.
- 13 Sadiq Hassan al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt al-‘Irāqīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah (1920–1931): Dirāsah fī al-‘alāqāt al-siyāsīyah* [Iraqi–Saudi relations (1920–1931): A study in political relations] (Baghdad: Sā‘adat jāma‘at Baghdād, 1976), 116.
- 14 Ameen Rihani, *Ibn Sa‘oud of Arabia: His People and His Land* (London: Constable & Co Ltd, 1928), 77.
- 15 Dickson, *Kuwait*, 274.

- 16 Gamal Abdul Nasser, *Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1955), 21–4.
- 17 Raphaël Lefèvre, *Ashes of Hama: The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- 18 Fernand Braudel, “History and the Social Sciences: The *Longue Durée*,” *On History*, trans. Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 25–54.
- 19 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2085, “Coll 6/19 ‘Arabia: (Saudi Arabia) Hejaz-Nejd Annual Report,” fol. 239r, QDL. It should be noted that not every British official shared this assessment: “That enmity between Hashimite family and Ibn Saud affects the situation I admit, but so far as I can gather, main factor is economic . . . ” See “Paraphrase telegram No. 120 from High Commissioner for Iraq to Colonial Secretary, 1 March 1928,” in A.L.P. Burdett, ed., *The Expansion of Wahhabi Power in Arabia, 1798–1932* (Cambridge: Cambridge Archive Editions, 2013), 7: 607.
- 20 “Paraphrase telegram from the High Commissioner for Mesopotamia to the Secretary of State for the Colonies” (June 22, 1921) in Alan de Lacy Rush, ed., *Records of the Hashimite Dynasties: A Twentieth Century Documentary History* ([Great Britain]: Archive Editions, 1995), 10: 644.
- 21 BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, “File 1166/1925 ‘Arabia: Nejd; negotiations with Ibn Saud regarding Iraq-Nejd question and Trans-Jordan boundary,” fol. 143v, QDL.
- 22 ‘Alī al-Wardī, *Qissat al-ashrāf wa Ibn Sa‘ūd* [The tale of the Ashraf and Ibn Saud] (London: Alwarrak Publishing Ltd., 2007), 11.
- 23 Christine Moss Helms, *The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia: Evolution of Political Identity* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1981), 18.
- 24 Asher Kaufman, *Contested Frontiers in the Syria–Lebanon–Israel Region: Cartography, Sovereignty, and Conflict* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2014); Sarah D. Shields, *Mosul before Iraq: Like Bees Making Five-Sided Cells* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000); Emma Lundgren-Jörum, *Beyond Syria’s Borders: A History of Territorial Disputes in the Middle East* (2014; reprinted, London: I.B. Tauris, 2017); and Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions: Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804–1946* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- 25 William Wallace, review of *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*, by Malcolm Anderson, *International Affairs* 73, no. 2 (April 1997): 352.
- 26 William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- 27 David Campbell, *Writing Security, United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).
- 28 Hastings Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson, *Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 64–7, 154–57.
- 29 Brenda Shaffer, *Borders and Brethren: Iran and the Challenge of Azerbaijani Identity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).
- 30 Lois Beck, “Tribes and the State in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Iran,” in *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 186.
- 31 Malcolm Anderson, *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996).
- 32 See the discussion of terminology in Inga Brandell, “Introduction,” in Inga Brandell, ed., *State Frontiers: Borders and Boundaries in the Middle East* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 9–10.

- 33 "Telegram No. 82 from Colonial Office, London, to High Commissioner, Baghdad, 25 February 1925," in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7: 58.
- 34 The National Archives (TNA), FO 371/4353, "Memorandum on Future Frontiers of Mesopotamia" (December 12, 1918), fols. 383r-391r.
- 35 BL, IOR/R/15/5/184, "File 4/6 I Kuwait-Iraq Frontier," fol. 116r, QDL.
- 36 Claudena Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe: The Emergence of a Regime* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).
- 37 Dawn Chatty, *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- 38 Just as one example, on January 27, 1925, British officials briefed the Iraqi cabinet on their position that, "[t]he 'Iraq Government cannot be expected to refuse Najd emigrants refuge and to hand over at the request of Bin Sa'ud . . . ", and on February 8, the Iraqi Council of Ministers informed the Royal Court in Riyadh that this policy would form a basis of relations between their two countries. TNA, FO 686/113, "No. 359, Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, Baghdad, to H.E. the Rais of the Royal Diwan" (7/8 February 1925).
- 39 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2102, "Coll 6/36(1) 'Transjordan-Nejd Frontier Affairs,'" fol. 112r, "Telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Acting High Commissioner for the Trans Jordan," (October 19, 1932), QDL.
- 40 There is an extensive literature on the weaknesses and failures of the League of Nations, as well as the ways Western powers manipulated the system for their benefit, particularly Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). It is also important to note that there were senior officials who genuinely sought to engage with the League for the purpose of promoting a new set of principles for ensuring peace and cooperation. Peter Yearwood, "'A Genuine and Energetic League of Nations Policy': Lord Curzon and the New Diplomacy, 1918–1925," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 21, no. 2 (2010): 159–174.
- 41 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, "File 61/15 II (D 44) Kuwait Conference," fol. 241r, QDL; and see the discussion in Carl Bryant Shook, "The Origins and Development of Iraq's National Boundaries, 1918–1932: Policing and Political Geography in the Iraq–Nejd and Iraq–Syria Borderlands" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2018), 154, 209–10, 255.
- 42 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, "File 61/15 II (D 44) Kuwait Conference," fol. 60r, QDL.
- 43 BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, "File 1166/1925 Arabia: Nejd," fol. 137r, QDL.
- 44 Ibid., fol. 146r, QDL.
- 45 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 25r, QDL.
- 46 Badriyah al-Bashar, *Najd qabla al-naft: Dirāsah susyūlūjīyah tahlīlīyah lil-hikāyāt al-sha'bīyah* [Najd before oil: Sociological analytical studies of popular stories], (Beirut: Jadawel, 2013), 39–40.
- 47 Tarik K. Firro, "The Political Context of Early Wahhabi Discourse of 'Takfir,'" *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 5 (September 2013): 770–789.
- 48 Uwaidah Mutayrik al-Juhany, *Najd before the Salafi Reform Movement: Social, Political, and Religious Conditions during the Three Centuries Preceding the Rise of the Saudi State* (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press and the King Abdul Aziz Foundation for Research and Archives, 2002), 126–27.
- 49 BL, IOR/R/15/5/71, "File 22/23 III Kuwait Conference," fol. 42r, QDL.
- 50 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 163.
- 51 Ibn Saud wrote the following to Sir Percy Cox on the first night of the conference: ". . . they are subjects of our fathers and our grandfathers" [hum ra'āyā ābā'inā wa ājdādnā]. See *al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz Āl Sa'ud*, 14.

- 52 Gary Troeller, *The Birth of Saudi Arabia: The Rise of the House of Sa'ud* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 1976), 250–5.
- 53 Michael Farquhar, *Circuits of Faith: Migration, Education, and the Wahhabi Mission* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017).
- 54 Michael Provence, *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).
- 55 Samir Salama, “Saudi Arabia: How kingdom celebrated first National Day 90 years ago,” *Gulf News* (September 23, 2020), [www.gulfnews.com/amp/world/gulf/Saudi/Saudi-arabia-how-kingdom-celebrated-first-national-day-90-years-ago-1.74054541](http://www.gulfnews.com/amp/world/gulf/Saudi/Saudi-arabia-how-kingdom-celebrated-first-national-day-90-years-ago-1.74054541), last accessed October 22, 2020.
- 56 Elie Podeh, *The Politics of National Celebrations in the Arab Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 264–65; and Madawi al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 205.
- 57 Jörg Matthias Determann, *Historiography in Saudi Arabia: Globalization and the State in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 104–7.
- 58 Ibid., 109–10.
- 59 Mai Yamani, *Cradle of Islam: The Hijaz and the Quest for an Arabian Identity* (2004; reprinted, London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 15–17.
- 60 “Embassy Jidda Despatch No. 160: Progress of Transfer of Ministries from Jidda to Riyadh” (January 31, 1957), in K.E. Evans, ed., *U.S. Records on Saudi Affairs 1945–1959* (Slough, UK: Archive Editions Limited and University Publications of America, 1997), 5: 79–80.
- 61 See “Embassy Jidda Despatch No. 187: Abd al-Aziz Al Mu’ammar Expected to be Released” (May 31, 1955), in Evans, 4: 31–2; and ConGen Dhahran Despatch No. 62: Abd Al Aziz Ibn Mu’ammar offered Position . . .” (August 15, 1959), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 5: 134.
- 62 Muhsin Ghayad ‘Ajīl, *Sulaymān bin Ṣālah al-Dakhīl al-Najdī: al-Ṣāḥfi, al-sīyāsī, al-mu’arrikh* [Sulaymān bin Ṣālah al-Dakhīl the Najdi: Journalist, politician, historian] (1982; repr., Beirut: al-Dār al-‘Arabiyya al-Mawsū‘at, 2002), 45.
- 63 Ibid., 47.
- 64 Muhammad bin ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Qasha‘mī, *Sulaymān bin Ṣālah al-Dakhīl: Ṣāḥfiyyan, wa mufakaran, wa mu’arrikhan* [Sulaymān bin Ṣālah al-Dakhīl: Journalist, thinker, historian] (Riyadh: King Fahd National Library, 2004), 52.
- 65 George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (1938; reprinted, New York: Capricorn Books, 1965), 15–18; and William L. Cleveland, “The Arab Nationalism of George Antonius Reconsidered,” in James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni, eds., *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 65–86.
- 66 Adeed Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 119–24.
- 67 Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 128.
- 68 Reeva S. Simon, “The Imposition of Nationalism: Iraq, 1921–1941,” in James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni, eds., *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 95–99.
- 69 Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 62, 71.
- 70 Juan Romero, “Arab Nationalism and the Arab Union of 1958,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (January 2015): 179–99.

- 71 Tāj al-Sir Ahmād Ḥirān, “al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Āl Sa‘ūd wa al-qadīyah al-filastīnīyah” [King Abdulaziz Al Saud and the Palestinian issue], in *Dirāsāt sa‘ūdīyah: Majmū‘a min al-abḥāth al-mutakhaṣṣah* [Saudi studies: A collection of specialized reports] (Riyadh: Institute for Diplomatic Studies, 1987) 2: 13–48.
- 72 Mary C. Wilson, “The Hashemites, the Arab Revolt, and Arab Nationalism,” in Rashid Khalidi, et al., ed., *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 204–223.
- 73 Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1918* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 161–73.
- 74 This pattern was taken over by America later in the century. James A. Russell, “Whither Regional Security in a World Turned Upside Down?” *Middle East Policy* 14, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 141–48.
- 75 Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain’s Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- 76 BL, IOR/R/15/5/28, fol. 30r, “Telegram from High Commissioner, Baghdad, to Adviser, Basrah” (October 5, 1921), QDL.
- 77 Gertrude Bell, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927), 2: 629.
- 78 BL, IOR/R/15/5/28, fols. 109r, 110r, “Telegram (en clair) from High Commissioner, Baghdad, to Political, Bahrain; repeat to Kuwait” (April 3, 1922), QDL.
- 79 Ibid., fol. 111r, “Telegram (en clair) from High Commissioner, Baghdad, to Political, Kuwait” (April 3, 1922), QDL; see also “al-Ḥudūd bayn al-‘Irāq wa Najd” [The border between Iraq and Najd], *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah*, no. 271 (April 11, 1922), East View Information Services, Global Press Archive (GPA). “In light of present circumstances . . . it is necessary to adopt a provisional border without being prejudicial to the negotiations that follow. And it is necessary to inform the tribes of the two sides about this and make them understand their status. I set forth that the separation line that should be considered by the two countries is: The line begins from al-Kharja . . .”
- 80 In his personal papers, Advisor to the Ministry of Interior, Cecil Edmonds, could merely refer to the faulty coordinates of the ‘Uqayr Protocols in the following fashion: “No mention is made in the text of the map used, but a ‘translator’s note’ in the Baghdad-Government-Press print of 22nd November 1923 states that ‘the references are to Map Asia 1,000,000 Geographical Section, General Staff, War Office, 1917–1918.’” St. Anthony’s College (Oxford), Middle East Centre Archive, GB165-0095, Cecil John Edmonds Collection, Box 3, File 3, “Boundaries of Iraq,” sec. “Najd.”
- 81 Royal Geographical Society, Asia 1:1,000,000, Basra, North H-38, “Geographical Section, General Staff, No 2555” (1917).
- 82 TNA, FO 686/113, “High Commissioner, Baghdad, to British Agent, No. 227 S” (May 7, 1922).
- 83 “Iraq. Report on ‘Iraq Administration. October, 1920–March, 1922,’ p. 121, in Robert L. Jarman, ed., *Iraq Administration Reports, 1914–1932* ([United Kingdom]: Archive Editions, 1992), 7: 313.
- 84 Gertrude Bell celebrated Cox’s ability to get exactly what he wanted from Ibn Saud, commenting in her letters: “I should, however, feel much greater anxiety if I weren’t so certain of Sir Percy’s power to guide him. It’s really amazing that anyone should exercise influence such as his. I don’t think that any European in history has made a deeper impression on the Oriental mind.” Bell, *Letters*, 2: 660–61.
- 85 ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *al-‘Irāq fī dawrī al-ihtilāl wa-al-intidāb* [Iraq in the period of independence and the mandate], 2 vols. (Syria: Maṭba‘at al-‘Irfān, 1935); Sadiq Hassan al-

Soudani and ‘Ādil Taqī ‘Abd al-Bildāwī, *al-‘Alāqāt al-‘Irāqīyah–al-Sa‘ūdīyah fī ‘ahd al-Malik Ghāzī, 1933–1939: Dirāsah tārīkhīyah wathā’iqīyah* [Iraqi–Saudi relations in the era of King Ghazi, 1933–1939: An historical documentary study] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘ah al-kitāb, 2020); and ‘Abd al-Āl Wahīd ‘Abbūd al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt al-Wahhābīyah ‘alā al-‘Irāq fī sanawāt al-intidāb al-Brītānī 1920–1932: Dirāsah tārīkhīyah” [Wahhabi raids on Iraq in the years of the British Mandate, 1920–1932: An historical study] (PhD diss., University of Kufa, 2008).

# 1

## DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

- 1 Abdullah al-Faisal Al Saud, as quoted in Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *Shibh al-Jazīrah fī ‘ahd al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz* [The Peninsula in the Era of King Abdulaziz] (Beirut: 1970), 3: 917.
- 2 Hafiz Wahba describes the scene in a more positive tone, but his account is mostly concerned with the details of the gifts and awards he personally received from Ibn Saud and less on the actual negotiations. Hafiz Wahba, *Khamsūn ‘āman fī Jazīrat al-‘Arab* [Fifty years in the Peninsula of the Arabs] (1960; repr., Cairo: Dār al-afāq al-‘Arabīyah, 2001), 123.
- 3 TNA, FO 371/27061, E84, “Stonehewer to FO Ibn Saud’s attitude towards Iraq and Nuri, telegram no. 17,” (January 11, 1941).
- 4 Muḥammad Sa‘īd Ḥamdān, *al-‘Alāqāt al-‘Irāqīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah mā bayn 1914–1953* [Iraqi–Saudi relations between 1914–1953] (Amman: Dār yāfā lil-nashr wa al-tawzī‘a, 2013), 222.
- 5 Muḥammad ‘Ali Ḥilah, *al-Mu‘āhadah al-Sa‘ūdīyah/al-‘Irāqīyah (1936)* [The Saudi–Iraqi Treaty (1936)] (n.p.: Kuwayk ḥamādah al-jiraysī lil-ṭabā‘ah, 1993), 44. See also “Sir S Hoare to Mr Bateman, British Embassy, Baghdad, 29 August 1935,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 153.
- 6 The original letter from Ibn Saud to Nuri al-Said is printed in full in al-Ziriklī (3: 932–3), where the reader can clearly see the position of Ibn Saud asking Iraq to support Syria and the Palestinians by joining in negotiations with the British and French. Ibn Saud had written: “The current position [should] not be a greedy position for Iraq to annex Syria and Palestine to it. Similarly, this is not the time that we should think of it in this greedy way for ourselves and we, as you know, always want to be distanced from ambitions such as these.”
- 7 As‘ad Khalīl Dāghir, *Mudhakkirātī ‘alā hāmish al-qadīyah al-‘Arabīyah* [Memoirs from the margin of the Arab cause] (1959; repr., Beirut: Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies, 2020), sec. 11: “Qisṣatī ma‘ Nūrī al-Sa‘īd,” Kindle. Dāghir was personal friends with several Saudi Ambassadors in Baghdad.
- 8 He was Prime Minister fourteen times before his brutal death at the hands of a mob during the Revolution of July 14, 1958. Even Lord Birdwood, his most sympathetic biographer, described Nuri thus: “Until the end he retained his skill as a politician. Every move in the political game, the reactions of supporters or opponents to each move, the play of shifting loyalties, were studied with the care of the chess player. ‘Political intrigue’ is often the term applied. [ . . . ] In the Middle East the game may be more intense but it is the same game: and the Pasha was its most subtle exponent.” Lord Christopher Bromhead Birdwood, *Nuri as-Said: A Study in Arab Leadership* (London: Cassell, 1959), 190.
- 9 Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh, *Mudhakkirāt al-shahīd al-‘aqīd al-rukn: Fursān al-‘urūbah fī al-‘Irāq* [Memoirs of the martyr, the staff colonel: Knights of Arabness in Iraq] ([Damascus?]: 1956), 170.

- 10 Sabrī Fāliḥ al-Hamdī, *al-Mustishārūn al-‘Arab wa-al-siyāsah al-khārijīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah khilāl hukm al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Sa‘ūd* (1915–1953) [The Arab advisors and Saudi foreign policy during the rule of King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud (1915–1953)] (London: Dār al-ḥikmah, 2011), 29; and ‘Abd al-Rahmān bin Muḥammad bin Mūsa al-Ḥamūdī, *al-Diblūmāsiyah wa-al-marāsim al-Sa‘ūdīyah: Tārīkh, diblūmāsiyah, tanzīmiyah* [Saudi diplomacy and decrees: History, diplomacy, organization] (Riyadh: King Fahd National Library, 1999), 1: 154. The consulate was opened in 1932. Although it was only formally elevated to the status of Embassy in 1956, the Chief of Mission adopted the title of Ambassador beginning in 1941. “Amembassy Jidda, Despatch 90: Combined Fortnightly Review of Events . . .” (November 14, 1956), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 4: 407. By an odd turn of events, the Soviet Minister in Jeddah was dean of the diplomatic corps well into the late 1930s, but not due to any close bilateral ties between the two governments. See BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2071, “Coll 6/8(1) ‘Printed Series: 1929 to 1938,’ fol. 10r, QDL.
- 11 A Directorate of Foreign Affairs was established in Mecca in 1926 with four divisions (Political, Administrative, Legal and Consular) and a branch office in Jeddah, where the foreign embassies were located. Ibn Saud sent and received his own communications with foreign leaders and contacts abroad, and he maintained trusted advisors in several Arab capitals who functioned as his personal agents, such as Fawzān al-Sābiq in Cairo. The Department was elevated to a Ministry in 1932. al-Hamdī, *al-Mustishārūn*, 26–7.
- 12 Hamad ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Anqarī, “Rashīd al-Nāṣir bin Layla: al-Bāshā rajul al-dawlah . . .” [Rashīd al-Nāṣir bin Layla: The Pasha man of state . . .], *al-Majalah al-‘Arabiyyah*, [https://www.arabicmagazine.com/arabic/notice\\_.aspx?Id=16](https://www.arabicmagazine.com/arabic/notice_.aspx?Id=16), last accessed August 1, 2020. Also note “Cypher no. 6986 from King Abdul Aziz, Riyadh, to Foreign Minister, Mecca, 14 March 1933, Hejaz-Iraq relations [HW12/166],” in Anita Burdett, ed., *Saudi Arabia: Secret Intelligence records 1926–1939* (Cambridge: Archive Editions Limited, 2003), 3:467–68.
- 13 The Iraqi Government pressed hard to keep their diplomatic mission in Mecca, even welcoming British mediation on the issue, but they were ultimately forced to move to Jeddah along with the other foreign missions; “The Residency, Baghdad to Secretary of State for the Colonies, London” (July 14, 1932), in Rush, *Records of the Hashimite*, 2: 624–28.
- 14 al-Soudani and al-Bildāwī, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 10.
- 15 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2082, “Coll 6/16 ‘Future of: Royal Family. Probable happenings on the death of Ibn Saud,’ fol. 52r, “Hugh Weightman, Political Agent Bahrain, to Sir Trenchard Fowle, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf,” (November 27, 1938), QDL. See also “Report of the Joint United States Survey Group (JUSSGSA), also known as the O’Keefe report . . . Appendix ‘L’ to Enclosure, Internal Political Organization,” in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 8: 304–7.
- 16 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 96–7. The issue of the *awqāf* had to do with Iraqi charitable institutions that owed part of their revenues to the Holy Mosques at Mecca and Medina and which went unpaid after WWI. The American Embassy in Baghdad believed this issue was resolved after the Lupin conference in 1930, but it is difficult to confirm that the settlement was ultimately implemented; “American Consulate, Baghdad, Iraq: Dispute between King Faisal of Iraq and King Ibn Saud of Najd . . .” (June 13, 1930), in Rush, *Records of the Hashimite* 2: 447–50.
- 17 BL, IOR/R/15/5/28, fol. 56r, “Telegram from High Commissioner, Baghdad, to Political, Kuwait” (November 22, 1921), QDL.
- 18 Alexei Vassiliev, *King Faisal of Saudi Arabia: Personality, Faith and Times* (London: Saqi Books, 2012), 67–9.
- 19 Ahmad bin ‘Abd Allāh al-Thunayān was a distant cousin of Ibn Saud, born in Istanbul in 1889 to a Circassian mother where he learnt Arabic, Turkish and several European languages. (His brother also married a Circassian and bore Iffat Munira, the future wife of King Faisal bin

Abdulaziz Al Saud.) He came to Riyadh in 1911 to advise Ibn Saud in political and diplomatic affairs, and to assist in correspondence. Ibn Saud tasked him with supervising the deportation of the Ottoman garrison in al-Ahsā' after their defeat in 1913, helping to negotiate with the British for recognition of Najd in 1915, touring Europe with Prince Faisal in 1919, exploring peace overtures with the Hijazi Government in 1920 and again with the Iraqi Government in 1921 and 1922. He died in Riyadh circa 1923. Qāsim al-Ruways, “al-Amīr Aḥmad bin ‘Abd Allāh al-Thunayān: Sīrah wathā’iqīyah” [Emir Ahmad bin ‘Abdallah al-Thunayān: A documentary biography], *al-Majalah al-‘Arabīyah*, [www.arabicmagazine.com/arabic/notice\\_.aspx?Id=36](http://www.arabicmagazine.com/arabic/notice_.aspx?Id=36), last accessed August 9, 2020.

- 20 For the full text in the British Government’s translation: Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 36–7. For the Arabic: TNA, CO 730/37, fols. 576r–590r.
- 21 For the full text in the British Government’s translation: Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 38–40. For the Arabic: TNA, CO 730/37, fols. 576r–590r.
- 22 al-Rifā‘ī (1885–1950) was probably born in Baṣrah and raised in Kuwait, where his father occasionally hosted Ibn Saud’s father during the period when the Al Saud were in exile at the turn of the century. He was recruited as a scribe and clerk in Ibn Saud’s court in the early 1920s, later went to Baghdad and Baṣrah where he tried to set up his own newspaper, and participated in civic life in Zubayr, helping the residents to get government support for a freshwater project there. ‘Abd al-Rahmān bin Sulaymān, “Hāshim Aḥmad al-Rifā‘ī, aḥd rijāl dīwān al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz qabla iktimāl tawhīd al-mamlakah” [Hāshim Aḥmad al-Rifā‘ī, one of the men of the diwan of King Abdulaziz before the completion of the unification of the Kingdom], *al-Sharq al-Awsāt* (September 23, 2004), <https://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?issueno=9165&article=256728#.Xy56HsspDqC>, last accessed August 8, 2020. See also BL, IOR/R/15/5/71, “File 22/23 III Kuwait Conference,” fol. 82r, “Political Agency, Kuwait, to the Hon’ble the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire” (May 8, 1924), QDL. His memoirs were originally written and issued in Baghdad in 1939, their publication was relatively free of censorship and they have been republished in Hāshim al-Rifā‘ī, *Min dhakrīyātī* [From my memories] (Beirut: Jadawel, 2012).
- 23 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 159.
- 24 TNA, CO 686/135, fol. 47r, “Knox, Koweit, to British Agent, No. 35” (December 22, 1923).
- 25 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 192–6.
- 26 Ibid., 215. The location was not actually the village of Bahra, but rather a group of tents in a small patch of land nearby known locally as “Umm al-Qarūn.” Tawfiq al-Suwaydi, *Mudhakkirātī: Nisf qarn min tārīkh al-‘Irāq wa-al-qadīyah al-‘Arabīyah* [My memories: Half a century of the history of Iraq and the Arab cause], 2nd ed. (Beirut: al-Mu‘ssah al-‘Arabīyah lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2010), 117.
- 27 For the full text in English as used by Sir Gilbert Clayton: “Report by Sir Gilbert Clayton, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., on his Mission to negotiate certain Agreements with the Sultan of Nejd, and Instructions issued to him in regard to his Mission” (February 1926), in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 89–92.
- 28 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 282.
- 29 Ibid., 294.
- 30 Ibid., 322; and Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ghafūr ‘Atṭār, *Saqr al-Jazīrah* [The hawk of the Peninsula], 3 vols. (Cairo: Sharakat istāndārd lil-ṭabā‘ah al-‘arabīyah, 1947), 2: 606.
- 31 Iraqi National Library and Archives (INLA)/National Center for the Preservation of Documents (NCPD), Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file ١٧٦ for the year 1930, sec. 1, “The Iraqi–Saudi Treaties and Agreements” (February 15, 1930), 88–90, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 323–25.

- 32 ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh al-wizārāt al-‘Irāqīyah* [The history of Iraqi cabinets] (Syria: Maṭba‘ah al-irfān bi-ṣaydā, 1933) 2: 172–3. See also ‘Aṭṭār, *Ṣaqr al-Jazīrah*, 2: 607; and al-Wardī, *Qissat*, 347.
- 33 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 336. Mohammed Almana was translator at the Royal Court in Riyadh; see Mohammed Almana, *Arabia Unified: A Portrait of Ibn Saud* (London: Hutchinson Benham, 1980). Midhat Shaykh al-‘Ard was a Syrian doctor trained at the American University Beirut before becoming personal physician to Ibn Saud and eventually Saudi Ambassador in Madrid, Bern, Paris and in Geneva for the United Nations offices there.
- 34 “Sir F Humphreys, High Commissioner for Iraq, to Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 15 March 1930,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 114.
- 35 For the full texts of the English translations as published by the Iraqi Government on July 5, 1931: Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 135–39.
- 36 IRNA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file ٧/٣٧٨ for the year 1930–1931, “From the Secretary of the Cabinet to the Minister of Interior,” no. 401 (January 29, 1931), 15, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 349 fn 69.
- 37 For the full text in the English translation as published by the Iraqi Government on July 12, 1931: Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 140–41.
- 38 “Najdi-Iraqi relations: extracts from Foreign Office annual reports of 1930 and 1931,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 665; and “Cypher no. 671 from Irak Legation, Jeddah, to Minister for Foreign Affairs, Baghdad, 20 February 1932,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 2: 99.
- 39 “Draft Treaty of Friendship between Iraq and Saudi Arabia,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 151.
- 40 This followed a larger European tour that included a visit to Moscow in which the Saudis were seeking loans from Western governments, though assistance was ultimately not forthcoming; “Legation of the United States of America, Baghdad, Subject: The Visit of His Royal Highness Emir Faisal as Saud to Baghdad” (July 13, 1932), in Ibrahim al-Rashid, *Documents*, 3: 127; and “Visit to Moscow of delegation from the Kingdom of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies,” in ibid., 3: 220.
- 41 Ameen Rihani, *Faysal al-Awwal* [Faisal the First] (Beirut: Maṭba‘ah al-ṣādr, 1934), 169. The Saudi Government picked up spurious rumors that Sharif Ali bin Hussein was plotting an assassination attempt against Prince Faisal during the visit and passed the info to the British; “Decypher, Sir A. Ryan (Jedda)” (June 22, 1932), in Rush, 2: 617.
- 42 Hilah, *al-Mu‘āhadah*, 35; and “Cypher no. 5432 from The King, Riyadh, to Al Seyid Hamza, c/o Nejdi Representative, Bagdad, 9 January 1935,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 5: 138. Ali Jawdat himself had experience in the desert areas of western and southern Iraq. He had fought in the Arab Revolt and served as an administrator in Syria under Faisal. After returning to Iraq in 1921, he served as governor of Ḥillah, Karbalā‘ and Muntafiq provinces before becoming Minister of Interior in late November 1923.
- 43 “Cypher no. 1208 from Bin Sulaiman, Jeddah, to The King, Riyadh, 18 December 1934,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 5: 130–32.
- 44 One of the members of the Iraqi Boy Scout delegation later published an account of the trip; Na‘mān al-Amīn al-‘Ānī, *Fī al-Mamlakah al-‘Arabīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah* [In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-sha‘b, 1937). See also al-Wardī, *Qissat*, 353–4; and BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2085, “Coll 6/19 ‘Arabia: (Saudi Arabia) Hejaz-Nejd Annual Report,” fol. 105r, “Saudi Arabia, Annual Report, 1935,” QDL.
- 45 Christina Phelps Grant, *The Syrian Desert: Caravans, Travel and Exploration* (London: A. & C. Black Ltd, 1937), 288–89.
- 46 al-Soudani and al-Bildāwī, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 36.

- 47 Amīn Sa'īd, *Tārīkh al-dawlah al-Sa'ūdīyah* [The history of the Saudi state] (Beirut: Dār al-kātib al-'Arabī, 1964), 2: 257.
- 48 BL, L/PS/12/2085, "Coll 6/19 'Arabia: (Saudi Arabia) Hejaz-Nejd Annual Report," fol. 80v, "Saudi Arabia, Annual Report 1936," QDL.
- 49 "Cypher from The Iraqi Minister, Jedda, to The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bagdad, 18 January 1936," in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 6: 246. For the contemporary English translation that was used by the British Government: "E1974/52/25 Sir A Clark Kerr to Mr A Eden" (April 8, 1936), in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 172–75.
- 50 Wahba, *Khamsūn*, 120; 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh al-'Irāq al-siyāsī al-hadīth* [The history of modern political Iraq] (1948; repr., Beirut: Dār al-Rāfidayn lil-ṭabā'ah wa al-nashr wa al-tawzī'a, 2008), 3: 169; and Ḥamdān, *al-'Alāqāt*, 245–46.
- 51 Ḥamdān, *al-'Alāqāt*, 247–8; the concepts discussed were the Fertile Crescent project and the Greater Syria project.
- 52 For the contemporary translation that was used by the British Government: Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 203–6, 213–15.
- 53 al-Ṣabbāgh, *Mudhakkirāt*, 170–71.
- 54 For the contemporary English translation that was provided by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior to the British Government: Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 740–43.
- 55 "Telegram from Mr Houston-Boswall to Viscount Halifax, 17 March 1940," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 705.
- 56 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 75–77.
- 57 Ibid., 139.
- 58 Ibid., 211–213.
- 59 TNA, AIR 23/76, fol. 28r, "Translation of a letter no. 132 dated 5th Shaaban 1343, (1st March 1925), from His Highness Sir Abdul Aziz bin Abdur Rahman . . . "
- 60 Cox's views were quite clear even before the conference began: "I think your suggestion that Iraq and Nejd Governments should be required to prohibit their tribes from crossing 29th parallel between red and green lines will meet case. I will discuss it with Nejd delegate who is on the point of reaching Mohammerah." BL, IOR/L/PS/10/937, "Telegram from High Commissioner for Iraq to Political Agent, Kuwait, 13 April 1922," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 12.
- 61 BL, IOR/R/15/1/600, "File 61/22 I (D 116) Bahra Agreement: meeting of tribunal . . ." fols. 94r, 98r, 119r, 136r, QDL.
- 62 This was just as true of the era of King Ghazi as it was of King Faisal before him. "In virtue of the amnesty offered by Ibn Saud in 1935, most of the Saudi tribesmen who had taken refuge in Iraq returned to Saudi Arabia on favourable terms. There remained Naif-bin-Humaid, paramount shaykh of the Ataiba . . . he had decided to stay on in Iraq because, after the Bagdad *coup d'Etat*, the King of Iraq increased the monthly allowances to the Nejdi and Hejaz refugees . . ." BL, L/PS/12/2085, "Coll 6/19 'Arabia: (Saudi Arabia) Hejaz-Nejd Annual Report," fol. 80v, "Saudi Arabia, Annual Report 1936," QDL.
- 63 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 261.
- 64 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2845, "Coll 17/1 'Iraq-Nejd Relations: Bon Voisinage Agreement and Extradition; Treaty of Friendship, 1936," fol. 11r, "E1145/166/25 Stonehewer Bird in Jeddah to Lord Halifax" (February 16, 1940), QDL; and "Note by Mr CJ Edmonds, Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, 9 March 1940," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 709.
- 65 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2845, "Coll 17/1 'Iraq-Nejd Relations: Bon Voisinage Agreement and Extradition; Treaty of Friendship, 1936," fol. 17r, "Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Saudi Minister in Baghdad" (December 27, 1939), QDL. Yusuf Yassin even threatened to publicly

- release a set of evidentiary documents (to be termed the Green Paper) proving Iraqi complicity in Shammar Najd attacks, in order to underline the Iraqi Government's unwillingness to implement the 1938 agreements. See "Consul Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax, 16 February 1940," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 700.
- 66 Shook, "Origins and Development," 209–10.
- 67 Government of Iraq, Intelligence Report of the Ministry of Interior (IRMI) 2/3086, 4/3/35, "A Letter from Cornwallis, the Interior Advisor, to the Administrative Inspectors of Başrah, Nāṣirīyah, Dīwānīyah, Hillah, Ramādī, Mosul and Baghdad" (November 22, 1925), 189, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 68.
- 68 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 124, 142, 155, 166.
- 69 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file ١٤/٥/٦, "The Issue of Kuwait 1923–1924, First Session," 99–101, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 160.
- 70 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, File 65/28, "Raids between Iraqi Tribes and the Ikhwan 1926–1927," 13–17, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 250.
- 71 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file 3/6/٦ for the year 1930 sec. 2, "Iraqi–Najdi Treaties and Agreements, Final Report Filed by Naji Shawkat to the Prime Minister," as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 329.
- 72 Ibid., 328.
- 73 BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, "File 1166/1925 'Arabia: Nejd; negotiations with Ibn Saud regarding Iraq–Nejd question . . .' fol. 136r, "Report by Sir Gilbert Clayton, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., on his Mission to negotiate certain Agreements . . ." (February 1926), QDL.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 Ibid., fol. 136v. The Iraqi Government would eventually concede and ask Al Sa‘dūn to voluntarily leave the country in 1923 for the sake of de-escalating tensions, and for a period he willingly relocated to Safwān.
- 76 As Clayton told Ibn Saud: ". . . the British Government were of opinion that 'Iraq was right . . . I added that the question of extradition of tribes was familiar to His Majesty's Government and had been frequently discussed between the Governments of India and Afghanistan, but the Government of India had always refused to entertain such an arrangement . . ." BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, fol. 137r, QDL.
- 77 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 288.
- 78 Government of Iraq, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Treaties and Agreements*, 3: 39, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 354.
- 79 Of the other eight individuals, the Iraqi Government claimed that one case lacked evidence, two were Iraqi nationals, and five could not be located. BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2085, "Coll 6/19 'Arabia: (Saudi Arabia) Hejaz-Nejd Annual Report," fol. 80r, "Saudi Arabia, Annual Report 1936," QDL.
- 80 According to British Government reports, Ibn Mashhūr had taken one of the wives of his cousin, Ibn Sha‘alan, sometime around 1926 in Syria, and during the ensuing fall-out he left for Najd with his followers, adopting Wahhabi tenets; BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2, "PZ 53/31 'Disposal of Rebel Leaders – Ibn Mashur,'" fols. 66r, 125r, QDL. Ibn Mashhūr then made two failed attempts to cross the border and fight Nūrī al-Sha‘alān, during which he became tangentially involved in a bloody siege of Jawf, before joining the Ikhwan rebellion; al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 493. According to al-Suwaydi, his flight to Iraq, attempted extradition and escape in Syria may have been facilitated by Sharif Ali bin Hussein; al-Suwaydi, *Mudhakkirātī*, 120. Ultimately, it appears that Nūrī al-Sha‘alān was eventually able to compel Ibn Mashhūr to turn himself into the Najdi authorities; al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 333, 340. It does not appear that the Iraqi Government returned his stolen property to Najd or compelled his followers to return; BL,

- IOR/L/PS/12/2085, “Coll 6/19 ‘Arabia: (Saudi Arabia) Hejaz-Nejd Annual Report,” fols. 203r, 240v, QDL. See also Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 320–21.
- 81 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 537–8.
- 82 Ḥamdān, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 275.
- 83 For more background on the Najdi negotiating position, see BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, “File 61/15 II (D 44) Kuwait Conference,” fols. 3r, 5r, QDL.
- 84 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 68r, QDL.
- 85 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 61, 65.
- 86 Ibrāhīm Jāsim Muhsin Charkhī, “Nizām da‘āwī al-‘ashā’ir al-madanīyah wa al-juzā’īyah fī al-‘Irāq 1916–1958: Dirāsah tārīkhīyah” [The civil and criminal tribal claims regulations in Iraq 1916–1958: An historical study] (Master’s thesis, University of Baghdad, 2015), 75.
- 87 “Fuad Bey Hamza, Deputy Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Sir Andrew Ryan, British Minister at Jiddah, 29 July 1930,” in Schofield, 127; and BL, IOR/R/15/1/600, fol. 6r, QDL.
- 88 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file ٥/١٨, “Looted Goods and Compensation,” 45, 47, 52, 55, 57, 59, 63, 64, 66, 69, 70, 71, 73, 76, 78, 89, 90, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 357–8 fn 88.
- 89 “Lieutenant-Colonel H V Biscoe, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire, to Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 31 January 1930,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 650. Indeed, that is exactly what they proceeded to do; “Extract from a Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert, 1 March 1930,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 8: 332.
- 90 See Ibn Saud’s remarks in 1926 to the Dutch Consuls General in Jeddah: Daniel van der Meulen, *The Wells of Ibn Sa’ud* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957), 100. See also the complaints of Yusuf Yassin regarding the Iraqi Government’s handling of the Shammar tribe: “Telegram from Consul Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax, 16 March 1940,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 699. This Najdi approach became more heavy-handed in the early 1930s, impacting the reputation of the Royal Court: “Apparently in the past when two sections or individuals of a tribe quarreled and broke the peace, he, Bin Saud, used to investigate the case carefully and punish the wrong-doer. Today he ferociously seizes the best property in camels and sheep of the whole tribe for allowing, as he says, the incident to have happened. The Bedouin in other words feel that the innocent as well as guilty are being punished and resent it in proportion.” BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2082, fol. 160r, QDL.
- 91 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file ٦/٥/٣, “The Issue of the Ikhwan 1921–1922,” no. 102/ (April 6, 1922), 79, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 93.
- 92 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 266–7, 286.
- 93 al-Suwaydi, *Mudhakkirātī*, 122–23.
- 94 Ibid. There is no clear opinion in the literature as to whether al-Buṣayyah was 65, 70 or 75 miles from the border, or whether the Iraqi understanding of a 75-mile demilitarized zone applied to the border with Najd or to the northern edge of the Neutral Zone, or whether it was 50 miles from the nearest point of the Neutral Zone and 75 miles from the Najdi border. While Sa’īd (2: 246) claims the terminus was 75 miles, al-Soudani (124) claims it was 75 kilo-meters. Glubb mentions the figure of 80 miles, but comments that the Najdi Government did not use maps in this period anyway, so the whole matter was a moot point for officials in Riyadh; John Bagot Glubb, *War in the Desert: An R.A.F. Frontier Campaign* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), 193. That was not entirely true, as the Najdi Government protested that al-Buṣayyah was only 36½ miles from the border; “Paraphrase telegram No. T 114 from Resident, Persian Gulf, to Colonial Secretary, 15 December 1927,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7: 534.
- 95 At the Bahra conference, he inquired about the rules banning fortifications along the proposed border with Transjordan separating Kāf from the four valleys of Bayir, Gharra, Hasa and Hidrij:

"He wished to know exactly what he could not fortify. For instance, would he be allowed to build barracks for soldiers; could he build a wall round the place as a protection against marauding tribes, and could he place a machine gun or two on that wall without such precautions being considered as constituting fortifications." BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, fol. 144r, QDL.

- 96 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 275.
- 97 BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, fol. 161r, QDL.
- 98 Charkhī, "Nizām da‘āwī," 51–2.
- 99 Ibid., 54, 56, 62, 65, 67.
- 100 BL, IOR/R/15/1/600, fol. 68, QDL.
- 101 Government of Iraq, *Decisions of the Cabinet for the months of July and August and September 1928*, 30–34, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 296. In fact, that is exactly where the discussion ended in 1940 at Rawḍat Tanhāt.
- 102 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 300.
- 103 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file 3/6/5 for the year 1930 sec. 1 "Iraqi–Najdi Treaties and Agreements," 74, "Cable of Nājī Shawkat to the Prime Minister on 12 February 1930," as cited in al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 326.
- 104 Hilah, *al-Mu'āhadah*, 70–1; and "Sir A Clark Kerr to Mr A Eden, 8 April 1936," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 171.
- 105 Hilah, *al-Mu'āhadah*, 70–1.
- 106 Ibid., 75.
- 107 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2085, fol. 11r, QDL.
- 108 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, File 1/3/5 for the year 1928, "Iraqi–Najdi Treaties," 301–2, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 297–8.
- 109 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, File 1/3/5 for the year 1930, section 1, "The Iraqi–Najdi Treaties and Agreements," 74, 99–100, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 329.
- 110 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 307, 360. That Iraqi perception of Najdi backwardness may have been encouraged by stories of Ibn Saud's insistence on meeting only in places that were devoid of smoking, intoxicants and music; see al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 334 and al-Ziriklī, *Shibh al-Jazīrah*, 2: 509–10.
- 111 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 342.
- 112 "And the last word that we conclude with our research about the Lupin conference is that relations improved after this, improved greatly, and the raids and aggressions against the safety of the tribes ceased, and strikes on the Iraqi–Najdi border did not occur, and no one among the raiders or shepherds dared to violate the sanctity of the border . . ." al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-Wizārat*, 2: 175.
- 113 Ḥamdān, *al-'Alāqāt*, 214.
- 114 Ibid., 217–18 and 223–4, provides a survey of the literature supporting an Arab nationalist interpretation of the two monarchs' motives at this point in time, including the works of Jalāl al-'Urfalī and Sāti' al-Huṣrī.
- 115 Ḥamdān, *al-'Alāqāt*, 232.
- 116 Dāghir, *Mudhakkirātī*, sec. 10: "Fī Baghdad . . . al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz," Kindle.
- 117 'Aṭṭār, *Ṣaqr al-Jazīrah*, 2: 607–8.
- 118 Rihani, *Faysal al-Awwal*, 168–69.
- 119 In 1918, King Hussein sent military units to bring the Hijazi village of Khurma back into submission. The emir of Khurma, Khālid bin Manṣūr Ibn Lawī, was a Hashemite, but both he and many of his villagers had adopted Wahhabi doctrines. Khālid appealed to Ibn Saud for

assistance, and Faisal al-Duwaysh advocated for mobilizing the Ikhwan, but Ibn Saud did not feel it was the right time for war with Hussein. Instead, he tried to convince the Ikhwan to move against Ibn Rashid in Ḥa'il. See Habib, *Ibn Sa'ud's Warriors*, 84, 89–90. Ibn Lawī would later command the Ikhwan forces that slaughtered the inhabitants of Tā'if in 1924.

- 120 al-Ziriklī, *Shibh al-Jazīrah*, 2: 513.
- 121 It is not within the scope of this book to survey the entire corpus of Ibn Saud's diplomatic correspondence, but the reader is welcome to consult the many letters contained in 'Abd al-'Azīz bin 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Tuwayjrī, ed., *Lisurāt al-layl hataf al-ṣabāḥ: al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz, dirāsah wathā'iqīyah* (Beirut: Jadawel, 1997).
- 122 INLA/NCPD, Private files of King Faisal I, file ۱/۳/۴, "Correspondence with Emirs and Kings and Heads of State" (July 29, 1921), 25, as cited by al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 56.
- 123 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 103–4, 113, 134, 153; and Ḥamdān, *al-'Alāqāt*, 228–30.
- 124 Ibn Saud often preferred to dictate his proclamations and his letters to his scribes, retaining his precise language in the final product, even if that meant a mix of dialect and standard Arabic. His vocabulary and grammar are usually immediately recognizable, whether it comes in a letter personally signed by him or it comes in a statement issued by his government.
- 125 This appears in full in Ḥamdān, *al-'Alāqāt*, 231 fn 1, based on INLA/NCPD, File 798, nos. 40, 41.
- 126 Ibrāhīm bin Muḥammad al-Mu‘ammar (1878–1958) was head of the Royal Court from 1926 to 1932, briefly serving as head of Crown Prince Saud's diwan in 1932 and 1933. The al-Mu‘ammar family formerly ruled the town of 'Uyaynah (about 30 miles from Diri‘yah), famous as the birthplace of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Ibrāhīm was entrusted with personally escorting the prisoner Faisal al-Duwaysh back from Kuwait after the defeat of the Ikhwan in 1929. He was appointed as Saudi Arabia's first chief of mission to Iraq in June 1933 and remained in the job until 1936, when he became Mayor of Jeddah, a position he held until his death.
- 127 "Cypher no. 65 from The Nejdi Representative, Bagdad, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mecca, 5 May 1934," in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 5: 115–16; and "Cypher no. 4527 from The King, Riyadh, to The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mecca, 21 December 1933," in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 4: 119.
- 128 INLA/NCPD, file 2/12/۲، Councilor of the District of Najaf, no. 5435 (October 16, 1933) and Governor of Karbala Province, no. 199 (October 19, 1933), as cited in al-Soudani and al-Bildāwī, *al-'Alāqāt*, 18–19.
- 129 "Sir F Humphreys, High Commissioner for Iraq, to Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 15 March 1930," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 115.
- 130 "Telegram from Jiddah to Foreign Office, 27 February 1931," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 128–9.
- 131 "Najdi-Iraqi relations: extracts from Foreign Office annual reports of 1930 and 1931," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 659, 663.
- 132 "Sir A Ryan to Sir J Simon, 11 April 1935," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 146.
- 133 Hilah, *al-Mu‘āhadah*, 49–52.
- 134 "Foreign Office note on proposed Saudi–Iraqi treaty by Mr. G W Rendel, 1 July 1935," in Schofield, 148.
- 135 "Sir A Ryan, British Minister at Jiddah, to Sir J Simon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 4 February 1935," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 145.
- 136 "Cypher no. 263 from Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mecca, to Yusuf Yasin, Bagdad, 28 January 1936," in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 6:247.

- 137 “Cypher no. 8186 from The King, Riyadh, to Yusuf Yasin, Bagdad, 23 February 1936 . . . [HW12/201],” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 6: 266–67.
- 138 “Cypher from The Saudi Representative, Damascus, to HM The King, Mecca, 10 April 1935,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 5: 175.
- 139 “Cypher no. 3583 from The King, Riyadh, to The Saudi Representative, Bagdad, 10 September 1936,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 6: 280–81.
- 140 al-Ḥamdī, *al-Mustishārūn*, 127–8.
- 141 Ibid., 71–2.
- 142 Ibid., 43–4. Damlouji served as Ibn Saud’s official representative in Baghdad from late 1921 into 1922. He would later return to Iraq in 1928 and become Foreign Minister there. King Faisal adamantly opposed the appointment on the grounds that Damlouji had been the one to negotiate the evacuation of the Hashemite royal family from Jeddah in 1926, but Nuri al-Said vouched for his old friend. It is an unresolved question as to why Damlouji left the employment of Ibn Saud. See Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 661. Unfortunately, Damlouji destroyed all of his personal papers, including photographs with Gertrude Bell, immediately after the 1958 revolution, out of fear that the new government in Baghdad would arrest and sentence him and his family.
- 143 Qāsim al-Rūways, “Fūād Ḥamzah min mu’alim Lubnānī ilá wazīr dawlah Sa’ūdī,” *Okaz* (March 9, 2017), [www.okaz.com.sa/ampArticle/1532179](http://www.okaz.com.sa/ampArticle/1532179), last accessed 16 July 2020.
- 144 Philby was a British administrative officer in southern Iraq during and after WWI who joined Ibn Saud’s Royal Court and converted to Islam. He continued to draw a pension from the British Government, despite advocating against them, which infuriated British officials. See “Extracts from Sir Gilbert Clayton’s report on his mission to negotiate certain agreements with the Sultan of Najd, February 1926,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 84. After years of service to the Saudi Government and retirement in Mecca, in 1955 the government of King Saud banished him from the Kingdom on allegations of being a Communist, a Zionist agent, advocating for the Jews, proselytizing (Christianity) inside the Kingdom and criticizing both the Kingdom and the royal family in his books and lectures; al-Mumayyiz, *al-Mamlakah*, 332–3; and “Embassy Jidda Despatch No. 180: Saudi Arabia’s Philby” (May 24, 1955), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 4: 2–4.
- 145 Some examples of other advisors employed by Ibn Saud who were not directly advising on policy toward Iraq included: Khālid al-Qarqānī and Bashīr al-Sa‘dāwī, who both fought in the Libyan resistance against the Italian occupation and were exiled by the Italian Government; Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, who was born to a Kurdish family in Damascus and edited several newspapers opposed to the French Mandate during the 1920s; Jamāl al-Hussaynī, who was from the family of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, served as a senior member of several nationalist organizations and founded the Palestinian Arab Party. All of them and more were advisors on foreign affairs, whether in the Saudi Royal Court or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 146 al-Rifā‘ī, *Min dhakrīyātī*, 94.
- 147 Wahba, *Khamsūn*, 201–2.
- 148 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2072, fol. 9r, QDL.
- 149 Robert Lacey goes so far as to assess regarding the 1948–49 Arab–Israeli War that, “. . . Abdul Aziz’s halfhearted commitment had much to do with his unwillingness to further the ambitions of his ancient Hashimite enemy.” Robert Lacey, *The Kingdom: Arabia & the House of Sa’ud* (New York: Avon Books, 1981), 289–90.
- 150 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2066, fol. 24r, QDL.
- 151 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2845, “Telegram from Political Agent, Bahrain, to Political Resident, Persian Gulf” (April 7, 1940), fol. 7r, QDL.
- 152 Ibid., “Saudi Legation in Bagdad to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq” (January 6, 1940), fols. 19r, 20r.

## 2

### SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE

- 1 Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 3rd ed. (Baghdad, 1972), 538–9. The first edition of al-Rawi’s book was issued in a small run, which the Saudi Ambassador in Baghdad bought up entirely, later telling al-Rawi that this was part of Saudi history as well and Saudis needed to have access to this valuable knowledge back in the Kingdom. The first edition is impossible to find, and the one copy of the second edition that I have seen has ten pages on the tribes of Saudi Arabia removed.
- 2 Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi, *Mudhakkirāt ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Rāwī* (1898–1987) [Memoirs of Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi (1898–1987)] (Baghdad: Matba‘at al-rāīya, 1994), 166.
- 3 IRMI, 1066, no. 336, “Administrative Inspector of Diwānīyah to Ditchburn,” (April 24, 1927), 28, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 195–96.
- 4 Shammar tribesmen dwelling near al-Barrīt and Shibrām could get travel permits from the emir of Lawkah, “but Shaykh Sulaymān [al-Shanīfī of Līnah] refuses to recognize his colleague’s authority . . .”; TNA, FO 371/24585–86, “Further note by C J Edmonds, Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior, on ‘Friction between Iraq and Saudi Arabia’, August 1941,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 738.
- 5 Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi, *Mudhakkirāt ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Rāwī* (1898–1987) [Memoirs of Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi (1898–1987)] (Baghdad: Matba‘at al-rāīya, 1994), 154; and al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 523–4.
- 6 TNA, CO 730/26, fol. 106v, “Report by His Majesty’s High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration and Condition of the ‘Iraq, for the Period of October 1st, 1920 to March 31st, 1922” (Baghdad: The Government Press, 1922), 94.
- 7 The Advisors to the Ministry of Interior during most of the period of this study were Sir Kinahan Cornwallis (1921–35) and Cecil J. Edmonds (1935–45). The former served in the British intelligence outfit based in Cairo during WWI known as the Arab Bureau and finished his career as the British Ambassador to Iraq from 1941–5, arriving in May 1941 shortly before the coup of Rashid Ali al-Kaylani. The latter eventually wrote a book about northern Iraq based on his experiences there and in Persia immediately after WWI; see his *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs: Politics, Travel and Research in North-Eastern Iraq, 1919–1925* (London: 1957). Edmonds was assistant to Cornwallis in the early 1930s before being promoted.
- 8 TNA, CO 730/26, fol. 62v, “Report by His Majesty’s High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration and Condition of the ‘Iraq, for the Period of October 1st, 1920 to March 31st, 1922” (Baghdad: The Government Press, 1922), 4.
- 9 al-Rawi, *Mudhakkirāt*, 153.
- 10 Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 261–62. Glubb had fought on the Western front in WWI and came to Iraq as an officer in 1920, transferring to an intelligence role on the Air Staff in 1922 and serving in the Muntafiq province as Special Security Officer. He and his counterpart in Diwānīyah, Guy Moore, were responsible for security in the southern desert in the 1920s.
- 11 IRMI 117/46, “Extract from the Administrative Report of the Muntafiq Liwa, December 1924,” 95–6; and Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 63/57, no. 357, “Letter of the Governor of Muntafiq province to the Ministry of Interior, subject – Ikhwan Attacks on the Tribes of Muntafiq and Diwānīyah in the Shāmīyah Desert” (December 29, 1924), 63, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 57–8. For more on the British response, see Shook, “Origins and Development,” 158–61.
- 12 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 523.

- 13 Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 263–64.
- 14 IRMI 117/43, no. 364/2, “The Administrative Inspector of Diwānīyah, Kitching, letter to Lyons: Ghannama tribes of Bani Huchaim, 24 November 1924,” 10–11, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 176.
- 15 The *bayrq* (pl. *bayāriq*) was the flag of the unit and by extension the person who held the flag, so that the term was synonymous with the command of the unit. The *hajjān* (pl. *hajjāna*) was a camel intended for military purposes and by extension the mounted fighter who rode it.
- 16 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 456–7.
- 17 IRMI 9963, 10N/13, “A Letter from Bourdillon, acting for the High Commissioner, to H.M. of Britain” (August 17, 1927), 908, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 73.
- 18 See al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 75 fn 150. It appears the government budgeted for battalions comprised of 250 members and the local press routinely announced that force size. See the press announcement for Yūsuf Al Sa‘dūn’s assumption of command: “Bi-munāsibah ḥādīthat al-Shāmīyah al-ākhīrah [On the occasion of the recent incident in the Shāmīyah],” *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah* [The Iraqi Times], no. 251 (March 18, 1922), East View GPA.
- 19 Shook, “Origins and Development,” 247.
- 20 IRMI 37/2, “Akhwan Defense, Preventative Measures Akhwan Raids, Shāmīyah Desert Reconnaissance 1926,” 53, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 143.
- 21 Ibid., 486. Ḥasan al-Midfa‘ī stayed in office for less than a year before being promoted to chief of police in Karbalā’, at which point he was replaced in the *bādiya* by al-Rawi.
- 22 Ibid., 508; al-Rawi accompanied the Regent and the Crown Prince on 31 March 1944 to visit the site on their travels through the southern provinces.
- 23 Ibid., 501–512.
- 24 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 157–58.
- 25 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 109, “Office of the Administrative Inspector, Southern Desert and Hills: Activities of Ibn Saud’s Retainers at al Aubid,” (March 8, 1930).
- 26 Habib, *Ibn Sa‘ud’s Warriors*, 160.
- 27 Homi K. Bhabha, “DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation,” in Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 297.
- 28 Stephanie Cronin, “Tribes, Coups and Princes: Building a Modern Army in Saudi Arabia,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 1 (January 2013): 9; and “American Embassy, Office of the Military Attaché, Constantinople, Turkey” (September 2, 1930), in al-Rashid, *Documents*, 3: 98–99.
- 29 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2164, “Coll 6/91(2) ‘Saudi Arabia: Policy of H.M.G. Assistance to King Ibn Saud (British Military Mission to Saudi Arabia),’” fols. 8r, 32r, QDL.
- 30 TNA, AIR 23/75, “Najd – Military Forces; Regular, Irregular + Police” (March 16, 1932).
- 31 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2072, “Coll 6/8(2) ‘Printed Series. 1938-,’” fol. 18r, “E-4187/196/25, Letter from Sir R. Bullard, to Viscount Halifax,” (July 15, 1938), QDL.
- 32 Fouad Hamza, *al-Bilād al-‘Arabīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah* [The country of Saudi Arabia] (Riyadh: Maktabat al-naṣr al-ḥadīthah, 1937), 259–60.
- 33 [American Embassy] Jidda [Despatch] 69: Saudi Troop Movement from Taif to Northern Nejd” (March 1, 1950), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 221.
- 34 Harry St. John Bridger Philby, *The Heart of Arabia: A Record of Travel and Exploration* (London: Constable and Company Ltd, 1922), 1: 297–98.
- 35 When in 1921 Ibn Saud defeated the Al Rashid family that had ruled Hā'il and Jabal Shammar for over a century, he appointed Ibrāhīm bin Sālim al-Sabhān from a rival family of the Shammar tribe to rule as emir there. In some cases, Ibn Saud even moved the capital of a province altogether, for example the capital of al-Jawf shifted from Doumat Jandal to Sakākā.

- 36 IRMI 35/3/2004, no. 47, “Administrative Inspector, Başrah, letter to Ministry of Interior” (April 2, 1925), 139, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 177.
- 37 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 35/3/2, no. 192, “Letter of the General Inspector, Baghdad, to the Ministry of Interior,” (February 24, 1925), 132, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 64.
- 38 IRMI 57/63, “Raiding between Iraq and Najd Tribes or the Akhwan, 1923,” 18, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 50.
- 39 Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 231.
- 40 IRMI 37/2, no. G/305, “Glubb, G.S., to the Interior Advisor, Memorandum,” (March 30, 1928), 44–46, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 151.
- 41 IRMI 35/3/4, “Ibn Saud and the Akhwan 1924–1925,” 46, and Iraqi Ministry of Defense Files, file 35/3/2, no. 813, “Letter from Nāṣir al-Sa‘dūn to the Gov. of Muntafiq province,” (September 26, 1924), 40, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 54.
- 42 TNA, AIR 23/75, 24a, “Special Service Officer, Samawah, to Admin. Inspector, Diwaniyah” (April 2, 1925).
- 43 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 224–25.
- 44 Philby, *Heart of Arabia*, 1: 236.
- 45 Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 231.
- 46 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 528–9.
- 47 BL, IOR/R/15/1/558, fol. 103v, QDL.
- 48 al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-‘Irāq*, 3: 360.
- 49 INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file ۴/۴/۵/۶, “The issue of the Muhammara conference and the Iraqi–Najdi Treaty 1922–1923” (October 17, 1923), 58, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 130.
- 50 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 188, 203. “Report No. D/1 (a) Special Service Officer, Air Headquarters, [Baghdad], to Air Staff Intelligence, Baghdad, 9 February 1925,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7: 55.
- 51 TNA, AIR 23/82, “S.S.O. Basra to Air Staff Intelligence, A.H.Q. Baghdad, Ref. 558/15” (July 15, 1925), fol. 25, as quoted in Shook, “Origins and Development,” 192–3.
- 52 al-Suwaydi, *Mudhakkirātī*, 120.
- 53 Indeed, Faisal’s strident approach to governing was the cause of ‘Abd al-Muhsin Al Sa‘dūn’s resignation as Prime Minister on November 16, 1923. TNA, CO 370/43, 60034, The Residency, Baghdad, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies (November 22, 1923).
- 54 IRMI 117/46, “R.O., D.O., No. 277, Residency Office, Baghdad, Memorandum to King Faisal” (October 29, 1924), 2–3, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 105.
- 55 When the Commander-in-Chief for British forces reviewed budget projections in November 1921, the report came with instructions to reduce the size of the British troop presence to nine battalions and then to four, along with additional downward revisions for future Iraqi Army expenditures. TNA, CO 730/25, fols. 217r, 243r, “CO 52601, Appendix II: Report on British Forces in ‘Iraq, 8th April to 30th September 1922.”
- 56 Some British officials foresaw the general outline of these problems as early as May 1919, when the idea of Iraqi self-governance was first under discussion. TNA, FO 371/4149, 91481, “S.L.O. [Maj. Frank Lugard Brayne] 222 to D.C.P.O. Damascus,” fol. 155r.
- 57 Muhammad ‘Abd al-Hādī Ṣālah al-Jāzī, *Bādiya janūb al-‘Urdun: Dirāsah susyūlūjīyah iqtiṣādīyah, 1921–1946* [The southern Bādiya of Jordan: A socio-economic study, 1921–1946] (Amman: Dār kunawz al-ma‘rafah al-‘ilmīyah lil-nashir wa al-tawzī‘a, 2009), 118–121.
- 58 IMRI 3714, no. 1426/2, “Interior Advisor, Memorandum to the Eastern Secretary of High commissioner of Iraq” (June 7, 1923), 3, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 104.
- 59 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 47; and al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 80.

- 60 IRMI R/1093, “Akhwan Raid on Iraq, Raid of 10 November on the Ghalidh and Dhafir in the Neutral Zone, 1927,” 47, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 79.
- 61 IRMI 13/2, “Intelligence, Summaries of Intelligence of A. Ab. 1928,” 11, and IRMI 13/2, “P.O. Intelligence Summary, 20 February 1928,” 20–1, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 81.
- 62 IRMI 10, 2/13, “Intelligence Summary, Najd and Southern Desert, P.O. and Squadron – Leader” (March 5, 1929), 33, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 95. See a fuller list of RAF deaths and injuries for 1922 alone in TNA, CO 730/25, fol. 257r, “CO 52601, Appendix II: Report on British Forces in ‘Iraq, 8th April to 30th September 1922.”
- 63 See, for example, al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 54 and 61.
- 64 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 63/57, no. 1/24/2698, “Letter of the Governor of Diwānīyah Province to the Minister of Interior on 1 April 1925, Subject: Looting of the Shammar Najd Caravan,” 117, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 66.
- 65 IRMI 266, 10N/13, “Memorandum from Cornwallis, the Interior Advisor to the Secretary of the High Commissioner of Iraq” (December 22, 1926), 7, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 73.
- 66 IRMI 117/46, part 2, “Major Bovel, Report to the Interior, Recommendations for Defence of Frontiers and Protection of Tribes” (December 18, 1924), 19–21, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 108.
- 67 BL, L/PS/10/937, “Telegram from High Commissioner for Iraq to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 13 March 1922,” as found in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 4.
- 68 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 140.
- 69 IRMI 117/46, “Extract from the monthly Administrative Report of Shāmīyah for November 1924,” 8, 47, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 114.
- 70 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file number 4/3/5, no. 4134, “Letter of the Governor of Başrah Province to the Ministry of Interior on 24 September 1925, Subject: News of the Bādiya,” 182, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 185.
- 71 John Frederick Williamson, “A Political History of the Shammar Jarba Tribe of al-Jazirah, 1800–1958” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1974), 167.
- 72 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 115.
- 73 IRMI 37/5, “Tribal Raids: Akhwan Defence, Bairaqs of Tribal Forces, 1928,” 221, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 147.
- 74 Ibid., no. G5/34, “Advisor of the High Commissioner to the Air Force, and the Interior, Memorandum” (March 10, 1920), 88–9, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 148.
- 75 Ibid., no. 1/B6/2, “Foster, R.M., S.S.O., Baghdad, to the Air Staff Intelligence, A.H.Q., Letter: A Visit to Iniza in April,” 55, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 136.
- 76 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 141.
- 77 “Demi-official letter No. G.O./1107 from [Sir] H. Dobbs, [High Commissioner for Iraq], Baghdad, to Air Vice Marshall J.F.A. Higgins, Air Officer Commanding British Forces in Iraq, Baghdad, 14 October 1924,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 6: 624; and Despatch from High Commissioner for Iraq, Baghdad, to Rt. Hon. L.C.M.S. Amery, Colonial Secretary, London, 29 January 1925,” ibid., 7: 47.
- 78 Shook, “Origins and Development,” 280.
- 79 IRMI C/3050/37/4, 3/10N, “A Letter from the Interior Advisor to the Inspector General” (October 24, 1926), 25–6, and IRMI 1603/2/26, 13/10N, “A Letter from Cornwallis, the Interior Advisor to the Secretary of the High Commissioner of Iraq” (November 11, 1926), 14, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 71.
- 80 “Sir F Humphreys, High Commissioner for Iraq, to Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 15 March 1930,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 114.

- 81 IRMI 37/2, “Akhwan Defence, Preventative Measures, Akhwan Raids, Shāmīyah Desert Reconnaissance 1927,” 231, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 138.
- 82 “Cypher no. 129 from The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mecca, to The King, Khafs, 4 February 1935,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 5: 144–5. The Saudi Government had proposed joint police stations with Iraq as early as 1933 and received positive feedback from the Iraqi General Directorate of Police, but apparently those talks did not lead to implementation. INLA/NCPD, General Directorate of Police, file 96/18, “The Desert Hajj Route,” no. 21-38 (26 October 1923), as cited in al-Soudani and al-Bildāwī, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 15.
- 83 BL, L/PS/12/2085, “Saudi–Iraqi relations: extracts from Foreign Office annual reports of 1935 and 1936,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 676.
- 84 TNA, FO 371/24585–86, “Further note by C J Edmonds, Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior, on ‘Friction between Iraq and Saudi Arabia’, August 1941,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 736. It was not the first dispute over a post at Judaydat al-‘Ar’ar; see “Cypher no. 973 . . . 1 March 1932,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 2:100–2.
- 85 Shook, “Origins and Development,” 165.
- 86 IRMI 117/46, no. 2365, “Acting Secretary of the High Commissioner, Memorandum to the Interior Advisor” (October 30, 1924), 6–7, and IRMI 117/46, no. 15/7/11, “Acting Advisor of Defense, Memorandum to the Secretary of High Commissioner of Iraq” (November 1, 1924), 28, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 106.
- 87 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, Correspondence to All Provinces and their Inspectors, no. 13923 “Letter of the Min. of Interior to the Gov. of the Diwānīyah Province” (October 29, 1925), 146–7, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 69; al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 202.
- 88 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 63/57, no. 8, “Letter of the Director of Police of the Muntafiq Province (Yūsuf) to the Director General of Police, Baghdad” (February 17, 1925), 106, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 64. See also TNA, AIR 23/262, “Office of S.S.O., Baghdad, to Air Staff Intelligence, Baghdad. D1(b), 4 January 1925,” and TNA, AIR 23/3, “S.S.O., Basra, to Air Staff Intelligence, Ref. 399/7, 11 January 1925,” as cited in Shook, “Origins and Development,” 165–6.
- 89 TNA, AIR 23/9, “Subject: Situation with regard to Akhwan Refugees,” S/I455 (April 3, 1925), as cited in Shook, “Origins and Development,” 167–8.
- 90 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 4/3/35, “Letter of the Ministry of Interior to the Governor of Muntafiq Province” (April 12, 1925), 140, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 180.
- 91 Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 163; and Shook, “Origins and Development,” 205–6.
- 92 Yusuf Yassin submitted a note to the British Ambassador in early February that stressed the Najdi Government’s ambivalence: “This condition could only be achieved by removing them all, without exception, from the frontier and placing them beyond the Euphrates or in a place as far from the frontiers as the Euphrates is. For the sake of this, the Saudi Arabian Government have shown themselves willing to renounce their claim to consider these people as their subjects, but, if they are not removed from the frontiers . . . the Saudi Arabia Government cannot renounce their claim to them . . . ” TNA, FO 371/24586, “Consul Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax, 16 February 1940,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 699.
- 93 TNA, FO 371/24586, “Note by Mr CJ Edmunds, Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, 9 March 1940,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 710.
- 94 “Major J Glubb, Administrative Inspector, Southern Desert, Busaiyah, Iraqi Ministry of Interior, 17 November 1928,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 616.
- 95 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, [no file number], “Summary of the Agenda of the Cabinet on 8 February 1927,” 109, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 122.

- 96 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, “Summary of the Minutes of the Cabinet Convened on 6 March 1927,” no. 4, p. 113, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 123. See also al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 353.
- 97 IRMI 37/2, no. 181, “The Administrative Inspector of Diwānīyah to the Interior Advisor, Report: Salmān Post,” (December 7, 1927), 82, 84–5, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 141.
- 98 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 506.
- 99 Grant, *Syrian Desert*, 281.
- 100 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 503–4.
- 101 It was slightly different from how Shook (9–10) has phrased it: “From the lack of explicit discussion of the boundary formation process in the Iraqi press and in the memoirs of Iraq’s Mandate-era statesmen, it appears that the boundary was largely taken for granted as a security issue, and until 1932, security was the sole purview of the British Mandate authorities.”
- 102 For more on the long and intricate history of Tapline, see Asher Kaufman, “Between Permeable and Sealed Borders: The Trans-Arabian Pipeline and the Arab–Israeli Conflict,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (February 2014): 95–116.
- 103 “Khaṭṭ al-Tablāyin . . . nabtat ḥawlūhu ‘Ar‘ar wa-akhrīyāt . . . wa intihā bi-fa‘l thalāthah ḥurūb” [The Tapline . . . ‘Ar‘ar and others sprang up around it . . . and it ended in three wars], *Dārat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz*, <https://www.darah.org.sa/index.php/st-and-rep/darah-places/182-2019-06-26-11-50-18>, last accessed on August 25, 2020.
- 104 “American Consulate General Dhahran, Despatch No. 199: Biweekly Report of Political and Economic Developments . . .” (May 26, 1956), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 4: 341.
- 105 Mahmoud S. al-Ageili, “The Settlement of the Nomadic Tribes in the Northern Province: Saudi Arabia” (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 1986), 230. The Saudi Government formally established the Northern Borders province as an administrative unit in 1951; see “ConGen Dhahran Despatch No. 59: Political Developments in the Tapline Governorate” (January 3, 1952), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 2: 329–32.
- 106 Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950: A Political, Social, and Economic History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 214.
- 107 Uriel Dann, *Iraq under Qassem: A Political History, 1958–1963* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 4.
- 108 Faleh Abdul-Jabar, “Sheikhhs and Ideologues: Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Tribes under Patrimonial Totalitarianism in Iraq, 1968–1998,” in eds. Faleh Abdul-Jabar and Hosham Dawod, *Tribes and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East* (London: Saqi, 2003), 78.
- 109 Dann, *Iraq under Qassem*, 57–60.
- 110 Habib, *Ibn Sa‘ud’s Warriors*, 49–52.
- 111 The most detailed list of locations, tribes and shaykhs puts the number at 122 settlements; see Almana, *Arabia Unified*, 276–82. The various estimates are discussed in depth in Habib, *Ibn Sa‘ud’s Warriors*, 73–5.
- 112 Habib, *Ibn Sa‘ud’s Warriors*, 59.
- 113 Ibid., 81.
- 114 Ahmed S. Alowfi, “From Warriors to Administrators: Capital and Coercion in the Early Process of State Formation in Arabia (1900–1938)” (Master’s thesis, American University, 2015).
- 115 Habib, *Ibn Sa‘ud’s Warriors*, 57.
- 116 al-Ageili, “Settlement of the Nomadic,” 62.
- 117 The process of turning all land into communal land removed the pastoral authority of a shaykh over what had previously been a tribe’s protected territory (*haymah*), i.e. pastures that the tribe had formerly reserved exclusively for its own animals. See al-Ageili, “Settlement of Nomadic,” 82, 176.

- 118 Ibid., 75.
- 119 George Kheirallah, *Arabia Reborn* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1952), 220–1.
- 120 al-Ageili, “Settlement of Nomadic,” 267.
- 121 Kostiner is more generous, granting a certain degree of continuity and carry over for traditional security practices: “ . . . expansionary tactics had to be abandoned, adapted, or transformed in order to construct institutions that would sustain a durable state.” Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916–1936: From Chieftaincy to Monarchical State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 71.
- 122 Ibid., 140.
- 123 Nūrī Khalīl al-Barāzī, *al-Badāwah wa-al-istiqrār fī al-‘Irāq* [Nomadism and settlement in Iraq] (Cairo: Maṭba‘ah al-jablāwī, 1969).
- 124 Gertrude Bell, *The Arab of Mesopotamia* (Basra: Government Press, 1917), 2.
- 125 Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, 170.
- 126 Ariel I. Ahram, *Proxy Warriors: The Rise and Fall of State-Sponsored Militias* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).
- 127 IRMI 5988, 10/39, “Telegram AB/7 Abu Ghar, from Police Inspection Office, Muntafiq, to the Inspector General of Police, Baghdad” (November 7, 1927), 40–2, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 74.
- 128 There are slightly differing tallies of the dead and wounded in this attack; this list comes from al-‘Issāwī (74–5), who took great care in comparing multiple Iraqi Government files.
- 129 But not unheard of. The British and Iraqi Governments claimed that the Ikhwan killed eighty-seven Iraqi nationals on December 9 and fifty two on December 22, 1927. “High Commissioner for Iraq, H Dobbs, to Colonial Secretary, 27 April 1928,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 1: 187–95.
- 130 IRMI 45, 10/39, “Extract from the Intelligence Summary by S.S.O. Air Force, Baghdad” (November 7, 1927), 57, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 75.
- 131 IRMI, 10/39, “A Letter from the Administrative Inspector, Diwānīyah, to the Interior Advisor, Baghdad” (November 8, 1927), 32, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 75.
- 132 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 10/37, no. 61/، “Letter of the Governor of Başrah province to the Director of Police of Başrah province” (November 30, 1927), 152, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 77.
- 133 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 39/10, no. 397, attachment 2, “Letter of Sturges to Rashid Ali Bey” (November 16, 1927), 118–19, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 76.
- 134 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 269–71, 275, 277.
- 135 IRMI 38/2, no. 37/3, “Telegram from Glubb to the Interior Advisor” (April 3, 1928), 24, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 82.
- 136 IRMI I/189, “A Letter from Akforce to Airflight, Baghdad” (April 11, 1928), 83, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, 83; and IRMI 31, no. 37/2, “Intelligence Summary, Southern Desert, A Letter by S.S.O. and P.O.” (July 30, 1928), 80, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 87.
- 137 IRMI R/1111, no. 150, “Administrative Inspector in Charge of the Southern Desert, Nāṣirīyah, Memorandum to Interior Advisor, Baghdad” (July 30, 1928), 61–2, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 210.
- 138 “English translation of letter No. 3/M from Sir Abdul Aziz bin Abdur Rahman al-Faisal as-Sa’ud, King of Hijaz, Najd and Dependencies, to High Commissioner for Iraq, 7 November 1927,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7:523.
- 139 TNA, FO 371/12994, E [Arabia] 2803/1/91, “Secretary of State for the Colonies to the High Commissioner for Iraq, no. 232, 25 May 1928,” fol. 24, as cited in Shook, “Origins and Development,” 301.

- 140 TNA, AIR 10/1839, [C.D. 59], W.F. Nicholson, “Report on the operations carried out in the Southern Desert in connection with the ‘Iraq–Najd Borders November, 1927–May, 1928,’” 9, as quoted in Shook, “Origins and Development,” 291.
- 141 “Letter No. S.23497/S.6 from Air Ministry to Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 13 December 1927,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7: 515. The Iraqi Government even considered a military occupation of Rakhīmīyah in January 1928, though backed down from the proposal for fear that this might entail a major escalation of hostilities by effectively seizing land in the Neutral Zone; see al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 280–1.
- 142 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 266.
- 143 Faisal al-Duwaysh reportedly died of an aneurism on October 3, 1931. According to the story received by British officials from a retainer of Ibn Saud, al-Duwaysh had “fallen on the ground, blood gushing from his mouth,” following a month of complaints about swelling in his throat. See BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2066, fol. 125r, QDL. For the fate of Ibn Hithlayn and Ibn Lāmī, see BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2126, “Coll 6/59 ‘Saudi Arabia: Alleged execution of the State Prisoners handed over after Akhwan rebellion in 1929,’ QDL.”
- 144 Yusuf Yassin described al-‘Abīd as little more than a checkpoint near a place called “Kharjah,” located a couple kilometers from the borderline, comprised of tents manned by Iraqi police; al-Ziriklī, *Shibh al-Jazīrah*, 2: 509.
- 145 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 521; al-Rawi, *Mudhakkirāt*, 150. Glubb (338–39) admits as much in his memoirs, that a number of Ikhwan leaders and their allies approached his tent encampment in al-‘Abīd, providing information on Ibn Saud's movements.
- 146 al-Soudani (308–9) points out that Faisal al-Duwaysh sent a letter to King Faisal and another to Glubb dated December 15, 1929, asking for their cooperation in combatting Ibn Saud.
- 147 IRMI 13/2, no. 50, “SSOs of Başrah and Nāṣirīyah and the PO report: Intelligence of Najd and Southern Desert, General Situation in Najd” (December 14, 1929), 138, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 157. al-Duwaysh probably requested asylum in Iraq as early as mid-October, which the Najdi Government was well aware of; “Foreign Office, Taif, to Hedjaz Diplomatic Agent, Damascus, 25th September, 1929,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 1: 200.
- 148 “Letter No. 500 from Lt. Col. H.R.P. Dickson, Political Agent, Kuwait, to Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire, 26 August 1929,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 8: 171.
- 149 Glubb was in the habit of getting debriefs from tribal leaders returning to Iraq after sojourns in Riyadh. See, for example, “Mr J Glubb, Administrative Inspector, Southern Desert, Busaiyah, to the Adviser, Iraqi Ministry of Interior, 17 November 1928,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 605.
- 150 IRMI 117/43, no. 20316, “The Administrative Inspector of Diwānīyah, Kitching, Memorandum to the Interior Advisor” (September 15, 1924), 6–7, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 172.
- 151 Ibid.
- 152 “Sir A Chamberlain to Mr H Jakins, 27 March 1929,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 593.
- 153 Ibid., 594.
- 154 “Political Resident, Bushire to Colonial Secretary, London” (September 30, 1929), in Rush, *Records of the Hashimite*, 2: 420–21.
- 155 BL, IOR/R/15/5/34, “File (10/4) British relations with Ibn Sa’ud: aid given to rebels by King Faisal,” fol. 8r, “The Residency to Lord Passfield,” (October 21, 1929), QDL.
- 156 “Internal Colonial Office minutes . . . J.H. Hall to Sir S. Wilson, 29 February 1928,” in Burdett, *Expansion of Wahhabi Power*, 7: 592.
- 157 Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 233, 235, 245.
- 158 BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1240, File 57/1928 Pt 9 ‘Iraq–Nejd Relations: Discussions with Ibn Saud,’ fol. 9r, QDL.

- 159 "Lieutenant-Colonel H V Biscoe, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire, to Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 31 January 1930," in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 649–50.
- 160 Daniel Silverfarb, "Great Britain, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia: The Revolt of the Ikhwan," *The International History Review* 4, no. 2 (May 1982): 222–48.
- 161 Translation of a letter No. 3/147 . . . from H.M. the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd" (September 12, 1929), in Rush, *Records of the Hashimite*, 2: 429.
- 162 As of January 5, 1930, the British Government had deployed four armored car units comprising a total force of approximately 32 cars, each car carrying one machine gun, three or four men, enough gasoline to travel 800 miles from base and food and water for fifteen days. On January 6, the Iraqi military dispatched its own force of 120 men and 37 machine guns from Baghdad to the border. "American Consulate, Baghdad, to the Secretary of State, Washington, Subject: Faisal ed Dawish and the Border Troubles" (January 10, 1930), in al-Rashid, *Documents*, 3: 59–60.
- 163 Iraqi Ministry of Defense, file 2/37, "Memorandum of the Ministry of Interior to the Governors of the Provinces, Subject: Steps against Ikhwan Raids/Shāmīyah Desert" (May 20, 1927), 45, as cited in al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 133.
- 164 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 525.
- 165 IRMI 34, "Intelligence Summary, Southern Desert, P.O." (August 20, 1928), 88, as cited in al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 87.
- 166 Ibid.
- 167 IRMI 334, no. R/1111, "Intelligence from the Administrative Inspector of the Southern Desert to the Interior Advisor" (September 24, 1928), 169, as cited in al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 88.
- 168 IRMI 37/2, no. 35, "S.S.O., Southern Desert, Nāṣirīyah, Intelligence Summary of Southern Desert" (August 27, 1928), 93, as quoted in al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 215.
- 169 IRMI 334, no. R/1111, "Administrative Inspector in Charge of the Southern Desert, Samāwah, Intelligence from Najd, Raid by Ibn Hannaya, Memorandum to Interior Advisor, Baghdad" (September 24, 1928), 171; and ibid., "Administrative Inspector in Charge of Southern Desert, Salman, Intelligence from Najd, Raid by Ibn Hannaya, Memorandum to Interior Advisor, Baghdad" (October 25, 1928), 198, as cited in al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 217.

# 3

## SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY

- 1 This directive as it was issued by Ibn Saud on May 30, 1919, is quoted in full in Ibrāhīm bin ‘Ubayd Al ‘Abd al-Muhsin (Ibn ‘Ubayd), *Tadhkirāt ūlī al-nuhá wa-al-‘irfān* [First memories of discouragement and gratification] (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2007), 2: 269–70.
- 2 Ibn Saud had just defeated the Hashemite army in Turbah (May 25–26, 1919) marking his first major victory over the Hijaz, to which Hussein had launched a propaganda campaign against Najd in his newspaper *al-Qibla*.
- 3 Fahd bin Mu‘ammar was Ibn Saud’s agent in Buraydah in 1919. The letter also mentioned Ibn Muhawas as judge in these affairs, ruling on behalf of Ibn Saud over those in Qaṣṭīm who had violated the prohibition. The Muhawas family is prominent in Buraydah to this day.
- 4 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 146; and al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 91, 153, 182, 218.
- 5 The reader is welcome to consult the vast literature on Orientalism and the Western colonial pursuit of knowledge about the region, including: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978); Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2007); and Ali Behdad, *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution* (London: Duke University Press, 1994).
- 6 Farah al-Nakib, “Revisiting *Hadar* and *Badū* in Kuwait: Citizenship, Housing, and the Construction of a Dichotomy,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (February 2014): 5–30.
- 7 Emanuel Marx, “The Tribe as a Unit of Subsistence: Nomadic Pastoralism in the Middle East,” *American Anthropologist* 79, no. 2 (June 1977): 343–63.
- 8 Aidan W. Southall, “The Illusion of Tribe,” in P. Gutkind (ed.), *The Passing of Tribal Man in Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 1970): 28–50.
- 9 Philip Carl Salzman, “Tribal Organization and Subsistence: A Response to Emanuel Marx,” *American Anthropologist* 81, no. 1 (March 1979): 121–4.
- 10 Richard Tapper, “Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople on Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East,” in Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, eds., *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990): 48–73.
- 11 Nadav Samin, *Of Sand or Soil: Genealogy and Tribal Belonging in Saudi Arabia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 165.
- 12 Sebastian Maisel, “The New Rise of Tribalism in Saudi Arabia,” *Nomadic Peoples* 18, no. 2 (2014): 100–122.
- 13 Philip Carl Salzman, “Labor Formations in a Nomadic Tribe,” *Nomadic Peoples* 13 (July 1983): 35–59.
- 14 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 196.
- 15 Jibrail Sulayman Jabbur, *The Bedouins and the Desert: Aspects of Nomadic Life in the Arab East*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), 466–7.
- 16 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2082, fol. 72r, QDL.

- 17 INLA/NCPD, file 311/860, no. 95, dated 23 Dhū al-Hijah, 1350 AH [April 29, 1932], al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 191. al-Sudayrī was briefly emir of Jawf on two occasions in the late 1920s and early 30s before become emir of ‘Asīr for over a decade and then emir of Najran. He was the brother of Princess Hassa, the wife of Ibn Saud and mother of the Sudayri seven.
- 18 IRMI 37/10, “Tribal Raids, Akhwan Raids on Iraq, Attack on Bussayah and other Impending Raids, General Reports, 1927,” 57, as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 50.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 251–2.
- 21 al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 176.
- 22 A balance sheet for a typical ‘Aniza tribesman (ca. 1938) can be found in BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2082, fol. 73r, QDL.
- 23 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 460. A variant saying with the same meaning among the ‘Aniza is, “cut the neck but don’t cut the income” (*qaṭa’ al-‘anāq wa la qaṭa’ al-arzāq*).
- 24 Bruce Ingham, *Bedouin of Northern Arabia: Traditions of the Al-Dhafir* (London: KPI Limited, 1986), 26. See also H.R.P. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert: A Glimpse into Badawin Life in Kuwait and Sa’udi Arabia* (1949; reprinted, London: Routledge, 2015), 418.
- 25 BL, IOR/R/15/5/184, fol. 116r, QDL.
- 26 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2082, fol. 62r, QDL. Similarly, he reported that a horse or a sheep would only make it for approximately 36 hours in the August heat. A typical household might only have one horse, which was often needed to track down stray camels or sheep. An affluent family might have a flock of fifty or more sheep.
- 27 John E. Peterson, *Saudi Arabia under Ibn Saud: Economic and Financial Foundations of the State* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 15–16, 25–6.
- 28 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2066, fols. 84r, 85r, QDL.
- 29 On April 1, 1931, the British Legation in Jeddah noted: “The matter took a new and more serious turn, however, on March 27th, when a report was widely circulated that certain chauffeurs of various nationalities in Mecca, who had demanded their arrears of pay and threatened to go on strike if they did not get them, had been imprisoned and in some cases severely beaten in public.” BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2105, fol. 72r, QDL.
- 30 Helms, *Cohesion of Saudi Arabia*, 168–9.
- 31 Almana, *Arabia Unified*, 235.
- 32 Philip Carl Salzman, “Hierarchical Image and Reality: The Construction of a Tribal Chiefship,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 1 (January, 2000): 57.
- 33 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/128 14r, QDL, and IOR/L/PS/12/2066, fol. 126r, QDL.
- 34 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/3732, fol. 421r, QDL: “This is a heavy tax representing about 50% of the value of a camel load of barley, 30% of a load of wheat and 30% of a load of dates.”
- 35 BL, IOR/R/15/1/558, fol. 103v, QDL.
- 36 Habib, *Ibn Sa’ud’s Warriors*, 42–3, uses the English transliteration of “al-barwa,” which normally means a hill or heights, and is a common term in real estate. The more likely root is the verb to be free or exempt, as in a transfer of goods that bears no obligation upon the recipient.
- 37 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/3732, fols. 421r, 515r, QDL; while the source generally appears accurate, it has clearly reversed the two sites of Līnah and Ḥafr.
- 38 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2066, fols. 139r, 180r, QDL.
- 39 Ibid., fols. 230r, 231r, 362r, 454r, QDL.
- 40 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/245, fol. 11r, QDL.
- 41 BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, fols. 126r, 126v, QDL; and BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 29r, QDL.
- 42 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 47r, QDL; and BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1144, fol. 141v, QDL.

- 43 IRMI 4/55, no. 7/705, “S.S.O. Başrah, Messengers of Ibn Saud, A Report to the Air Intelligence” (January 3, 1926), 6, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 190.
- 44 For the full discussion based on multiple Intelligence Reports of the Ministry of Interior, see al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 209–16.
- 45 Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, ed. N.J. Dawoud (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 94–95, 286–87.
- 46 Samin, *Of Sand or Soil*, 40 and 214 fn 95.
- 47 K. al-Qusibi, “The Programme for Bedouin, Saudi Arabian Central Planning Organization” (Riyadh: Institute for Public Administration, 1972), as reproduced in Al-Ageili, “Settlement of the Nomadic,” 88.
- 48 Samin, *Of Sand or Soil*, 40.
- 49 Ibid., 90.
- 50 Sa’ad A. Sowayan, “*badw* and *hadar*: An Alternative to the Khaldunian Model,” in Stefan Leder and Bernhard Streck, eds., *Shifts and Drifts in Nomad-Sedentary Relations* (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2005), 371.
- 51 This approach should not be taken as a purely materialistic understanding of ‘*asabīyah* and its role in state formation. These functional relations in society can help build group solidarity, but that is separate and distinct from the ways in which charismatic elites then appropriate and manipulate the resulting social institutions for the sake of power. See Joy McCorriston, “Pastoralism and Pilgrimage: Ibn Khaldūn’s *bayt*-state model and the rise of Arabian kingdoms,” *Current Anthropology* 54, no. 5 (October, 2013): 607–41.
- 52 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/3732, fol. 420r, QDL.
- 53 There are many anthropological studies of these kinds of reciprocal relationships in the Arabian Peninsula. One classic study is of the town of Ḥuraydah in the Wadi Hadhramawt: Abdalla S. Bujra, *The Politics of Stratification: A Study of Political Change in a South Arabian Town* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).
- 54 See the many examples in Andrea B. Rugh, *The Political Culture of Leadership in the United Arab Emirates* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
- 55 Hala Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf 1745–1900* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 59.
- 56 Jabar, “Sheikhs and Ideologues,” 75–6.
- 57 IRMI 37/3, no. 1/1/9, “Air Lt. James, H. Başrah to Air Staff Intelligence, Baghdad AHQ, internal Situation in Najd” (May 31, 1928), 125, as quoted in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 204.
- 58 Anthony B. Toth, “The Transformation of a Pastoral Economy: Bedouin and States in Northern Arabia, 1850–1950,” (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2000), 273.
- 59 Ibid., 274.
- 60 Ibid., 275–7.
- 61 Yūsuf Ḥamad al-Bissām, *al-Zubayr qabla khamsīn ‘āman ma ‘nubdhah tarīkhīyah ‘an Najd wa al-Kūwayt* [Zubayr before fifty years ago with a historical portion about Najd and Kuwait] (1971; reprinted, London: Dar Alhikma), 35.
- 62 Ibid., 29.
- 63 BL, IOR/L/MIL/17/16/3, fol. 52, QDL.
- 64 ‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Ibrāhīm bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Nāṣir, *al-Zubayr wa ṣafahāt mushriqah min tārīkhuhā al-‘ilmī wa-al-thaqāfi* [Zubayr and glowing pages from its scholarly and cultural history] (Riyadh: Wahj Alhayat Communications, 2010), 55–7.
- 65 ‘Abd al-Laṭīf bin Nāṣir al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat al-Zubayr al-Najdīyah min al-nushū’ ila al-suqūt* [The history of the shaykhdom of Najdi Zubayr from the founding until the fall] (Beirut: Jadawel, 2019), 174, 177–9.

- 66 Ibid., 32.
- 67 ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Abd al-Ghani Ibrāhīm, *Najdīyūn warā’ al-ḥudūd: “al-‘Uqaylāt” wa-dawruhum fī ‘alāqat Najd al-‘askarīyah wa-al-iqtisādīyah bi-al-‘Irāq wa-al-Shām wa-Miṣr* (1750–1950) [Najdis beyond the borders: The “Uqaylat” and their role in the military and economic relations of Najd with Iraq and Syria and Egypt (1750–1950)] (London: Dar al-Saqi, 1991), 68.
- 68 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 45; and Abdulrahman Alebrahim, “The Neglected Sheikdom at the Frontier of Empires and Cultures: An Introduction to al-Zubayr,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 56, no. 4 (March 2020), 523–25.
- 69 Carsten Niebuhr, *Travels through Arabia, and Other Countries in the East*, trans. Robert Heron (Edinburgh: G. Mudie, 1792), 2: 133. The massive growth of the town in the late eighteenth century is evidenced by the fact that the first walls were only completed in 1797; al-Bissām, *al-Zubayr qabla khamsīn*, 99.
- 70 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 156.
- 71 al-Bissām, *al-Zubayr qabla khamsīn*, 102.
- 72 Muḥammad Ra‘ūf Ṭāhā al-Shaykhlī, *Marāhil al-ḥayāh fī al-fatrah al-mazlimah wa mā ba‘duhā* [Stages of life in the period of darkness and what followed] (Basra: Maṭba‘at al-Baṣrah, 1972), as quoted in al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 180.
- 73 Bell, *Arab of Mesopotamia*, 31–2.
- 74 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 163.
- 75 Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Qasha‘mī, “Mu‘tamadū al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz wa waklāwūhu fī al-khārij” [The envoys of King Abdulaziz and his agents abroad], *al-Dārah: Majalah faṣalīyah*, Dārat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, (April, 2009): 126–7.
- 76 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 184; and al-Qasha‘mī, “Mu‘tamadū,” 128.
- 77 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 191; and al-Qasha‘mī, “Mu‘tamadū,” 130. Prices were set at 1 pound sterling per share, but the venture apparently did not succeed. See also Ibrāhīm, *Najdīyūn*, 50–58.
- 78 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 167–8.
- 79 Ibid., 181.
- 80 The full Arabic text is found in al-Qasha‘mī, “Mu‘tamadū al-Malik,” 140–1. See also Reidar Visser, *Basra, the Failed Gulf State: Separatism and Nationalism in Southern Iraq* (Münster: Lit Verlag Münster, 2005), 82–86.
- 81 al-Qasha‘mī, “Mu‘tamadū,” 132.
- 82 Almana, *Arabia Unified*, 240.
- 83 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 189.
- 84 ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Dulayshī (al-Khālidī), *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn al-Shanqīṭī: Hayātuhi, mudhakkirātuhi, ‘alāqatuhu bi-mulūk wa shuyūkh al-Jazīrah al-‘Arabīyah* [Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn al-Shanqīṭī: His life, his memories, his relations with the kings and shaykhs of the Arabian Peninsula] (Beirut: al-Dār al-‘Arabīyah lil-mawsū‘āt, 2009), 90.
- 85 al-Bissām, *al-Zubayr qabla khamsīn*, 78. In 1896, Mubarak the Great assumed the throne after killing his brothers, Muhammad and Jarrah, whose sons fled to Zubayr.
- 86 Ibid., 79. See also al-Dulayshī, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn*, 112.
- 87 There are significant problems in resolving the timeline of al-Shanqīṭī’s movements, which opens up questions about his actual contribution to the Ottoman war effort. My presentation summarizes the very extensive discussion in al-Dulayshī (125–36), in which the author examined all the sources and interviewed an old man from his village who had fought with the Ottomans on the frontlines and knew al-Shanqīṭī.
- 88 See below for more information on Muḥammad bin Ḥamad al-Shabīlī. In this particular story, al-‘Asāfi was more likely referring to a close relative of the same name, probably Muḥammad’s

- father, since Muḥammad himself was not born until 1330 AH.
- 89 The word is untranslatable. Loosely, it means one person has an issue that impacts another person in a way that might possibly embarrass him, so out of politeness he broaches the matter to a trusted third person in the presence of the second through indirect speech about the affair.
- 90 al-Dulayshī, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn*, 146–7.
- 91 The Ministry of Interior granted permission for a university in late 1922, but issued a more specific permit for a primary school on 8 January 1923; al-Dulayshī, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn*, 177. A number of hand-written letters on administrative matters from the pen of al-Shanqīṭī are in ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sa‘ūd al-‘Awīd, ed., *Wathā’iq madrasat al-najāh al-ahlīyah fī al-Zubayr* [Documents of the Najāh public school in Zubayr] (Kuwait: Aafaq, 2017).
- 92 al-Bissām, *al-Zubayr qabla khamsīn*, 84; and al-Dulayshī, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn*, 175.
- 93 Taḥsīn ‘Alī, *Mudhakkirāt Taḥsīn ‘Alī, 1890–1970* [Memoirs of Taḥsīn ‘Alī, 1890–1970] (Beirut: al-Mu‘ssah al-‘Arabīyah lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2004).
- 94 For example, Tim Niblock, *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 29–31.
- 95 Troeller, *Birth of Saudi Arabia*, 13–14.
- 96 The term “Wahhabism” itself is inaccurate and misleading, inasmuch as most followers of the teachings of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab tend to prefer being described as Salafi or simply Hanbali.
- 97 See, for example, Daryl Champion, *The Paradoxical Kingdom: Saudi Arabia and the Momentum of Reform* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 64–5.
- 98 Some examples include: George S. Rentz, *The Birth of the Islamic Reform Movement in Saudi Arabia: Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (1703/4–1792) and the Beginnings of Unitarian Empire in Arabia* (London: Arabian Publishing, 2004); Hamid Algar, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay* (Oneonta, NY: Islamic Publications International, 2002); David Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006); Natana DeLong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
- 99 For example, in April 1922 a group of Shammar tribesmen accepted the da‘wa of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab and a group of Banī Ḥuwayṭat responded by raiding them, killing thirty Shammar and stealing their cattle. TNA, CO 730/25, 585, “CO 21176, Ibn Saoud’s Behaviour and Pretensions” (April 20, 1922).
- 100 BL, IOR/R/15/1/558, fol. 152r, QDL.
- 101 Fattah, *Politics of Regional Trade*, 52.
- 102 Pascal Menoret, *The Saudi Enigma: A History* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 2005), 61.
- 103 Ibrāhīm, *Najdīyūn*, 32–49. In considering the many reasons for their migration, Ibrāhīm quotes Lima’ al-Shihāb, the near-contemporary biographer of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, about conditions in the Najd in the mid-eighteenth century: “There is no authority containing everyone, and there is no leader who compels the deterrence of injustice and champions the oppressed . . .” In addition to economic empowerment, avoidance of famine and escape from conflict, Ibrāhīm suggests the Wahhabi *da‘wa* also led some ‘Uqaylat to flee Najd seeking religious freedom.
- 104 There is even one theory that asserts they were called ‘Uqaylat because they would take off the ‘iqāl from their heads and wrap it around the knee of their camel. This form of “hog-tying,” known as *ya‘qal al-ba‘ira*, is still common practice among the bedouin order to keep their camel from wandering unattended in a strange place.
- 105 Ibrāhīm, *Najdīyūn*, 72–73.
- 106 Ibid., 27.

- 107 Grant, *Syrian Desert*, 157–58, 275. Ibrāhīm, *Najdīyūn*, 172. The ‘Uqaylat may have been forced to develop this close relationship with the state due to their inability in times of trouble to revert to traditional tribal lands as safehavens, except in cases of asking special protection from a locally-establish tribal leader (i.e. *dakhālah*). See also *ibid.*, 69.
- 108 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/101, fols. 39r-40r, QDL; and IOR/L/PS/12/1465, fol. 7r, QDL. The British Vice Consul in Jeddah, Munshi Ihsanullah, was clearly ill-informed on the dynamics of Hadhrami politics, as British Ambassador Andrew Ryan notes in his cover letter. Indeed, the Irshad may not have been strictly Wahhabi, but the group was inspired by reformist Salafi ideas. Regardless, Ihsanullah’s contacts in Jeddah were solid and their attempts to message the British Government about their religious moderation should not distract from the Vice Consul’s accurate reporting of the conversations. See also Syamsul Rijal, “Internal Dynamics within Hadhrami Arabs in Indonesia: From Social Hierarchy to Islamic Doctrine,” *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 11, no. 1 (June, 2017): 1–28.
- 109 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2105, fol. 22r, QDL.
- 110 *Ibid.*, fol. 42r, QDL.
- 111 Manal A. Jamal, “The ‘tiering’ of citizenship and residency and the ‘hierarchization’ of migrant communities: The United Arab Emirates in historical context,” *International Migration Review* 49, no. 3 (Fall, 2015): 617.
- 112 TNA, FO 371/21907, “British Legation at Jiddah to Viscount Halifax, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 22 March 1938,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 190.
- 113 The document is reproduced in ‘Alī Abā Ḥussayn, *Lamḥa min tārīkh madīnat al-Zubayr: Tarājim wa wathā’iq* [Glimpses from the history of the city of Zubayr: Biographies and documents] (Bahrain: Mu’assasa fakhrāwī lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2006), 11.
- 114 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 12r, QDL.
- 115 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2102, “Coll 6/36(1) Transjordan-Nejd Frontier Affairs,” fols. 15r, 79r, 83r, 85r, 132r, 148r, 151r, 154r, QDL; C.C. Lewis, “Ibn Sa’ūd and the Future of Arabia,” *International Affairs* 12, no. 4 (July 1933): 518–34; and “Cypher no. 28, from Mohammed ibn Aqil, Wejh, from The King’s Deputy-General, Jeddah, 2 April 1928, operations against Arabian Marauders [HW12/106],” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 1: 185–86. Although King Faisal denied any direct involvement, his brother Emir Abdullah admitted that both he and Faisal may have inadvertently encouraged the rebels. BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2102, fols. 53r, 54r, 93r, QDL
- 116 *Ibid.*, fols. 161r and 162r, “Memorandum by Sir A Ryan on the possible connexion of Amir Abdullah and/or his entourage with recent attempts to undermine Ibn Saud,” (September 28, 1932), QDL. In November 1932, the British pressured Emir ‘Abdallah to expel the remaining rebels to the Hijaz, where it was hoped they might receive pardon from Ibn Saud and be less susceptible to enticements from the Hashemites. *Ibid.*, fols. 17r, 33r, 44r, 80r, 81r, QDL.
- 117 Hala Fattah and Candan Badem, “The Sultan and the Rebel: Sa‘dun al-Mansur’s Revolt in the Muntafiq, c. 1891–1911,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45, no. 4 (November 2013): 677–693.
- 118 The Shammar had originally entered the Jazirah under the leadership of Fāris al-Jarbā from the Al Muhammad family, but leadership had fragmented under his many descendants.
- 119 Williamson, “Political History,” 153, 155.
- 120 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 458–9; and Williamson, “Political History,” 161. Edmonds apparently also sent a note to ‘Asī warning him to fall in line; al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 103.
- 121 Williamson, “Political History,” 182.
- 122 al-Rawi, *al-Badiyah*, 461–2.
- 123 *Ibid.*, 462.
- 124 Williamson, “Political History,” 160, 165.

- 125 Madawi Al Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidis of Saudi Arabia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1991), 20–1, 78–9.
- 126 Ibid., 230–1.
- 127 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 138.
- 128 Al Rasheed, *Politics*, 244–5.
- 129 al-'Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 72, 193; and al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 152.
- 130 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2082, fol. 102r, QDL. Ibn Saud held ‘Akab responsible for prolonging the battle for Hā'il in 1920 after Ibn Saud felt it should have been over. See BL, IOR/R/15/1/558, fol. 33r, QDL.
- 131 Mish‘al al-'Anizī, *Mawsū'a qabā'il 'Aniza al-Wā'ilīyah fī al-Jazīrah al-'Arabīyah* [The encyclopedia of the tribe of ‘Aniza of Wā'il in the Arabian Peninsula] (Beirut: al-Dār al-'Arabīyah lil-mawsū'āt, 2008), 167.
- 132 Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 709.
- 133 These were among the four Shammar shaykhs the Saudi Government wanted extradited in 1940, as we saw in Chapter 2.
- 134 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 32r, QDL; and INLA/NCPD, Files of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file ፩4/5፪, “The Kuwait Case 1923–1924, Proceedings of the Fifth Session,” 114–15, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 169.
- 135 Ingham, *Bedouin of Northern*, 30.
- 136 Ibid., 14, 18.
- 137 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 70.
- 138 Ibid., 73, 256.
- 139 Ingham, *Bedouin of Northern*, 19–20; al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 257; and al-'Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 201.
- 140 Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 79.
- 141 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2066, fols. 124r–125r and 154r–155r, QDL.
- 142 Ibid., fols. 113r–114r, QDL.
- 143 Ibid., fols. 25r–26r, QDL.
- 144 Regarding the Dhafir, Ingham (33) notes: “Their name, according to their own tradition, signified ‘plaited’ or ‘woven together’ . . .”
- 145 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2082, fol. 66r, QDL.
- 146 Ibid., fols. 76r, 79r, QDL. Dihamsha is the plural form of the name of the tribe’s progenitor, Dahmash.
- 147 al-'Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 184.
- 148 BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 33r, QDL; and Shook, “Origins and Development,” 189, 199.
- 149 al-'Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 132.
- 150 BL, IOR/R/15/5/28, fol. 206r, “Translation of letter from H.H. Sir ‘Abdul-‘Aziz . . . to H.E. Sir Henry Dobbs” (October 8, 1923).
- 151 Ibid., 196. TNA, CO 730/43, 60035, “Intelligence Report No. 23” (December 1, 1923), 16.
- 152 It did not help that the British High Commission appears to have repeatedly pressured King Faisal to place the Dihamsha once more under the administrative control of Ibn Hidhāl; see “High Commissioner, Baghdad to King Faisal” (October 29, 1924), in Rush, *Records of the Hashimite*, 2: 138.
- 153 See the full discussion in al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 258–61.
- 154 “Note by Mr CJ Edmunds, Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, 9 March 1940,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 708.
- 155 Williamson, “Political History,” 150–1, 182–3.
- 156 Ibid., 186.

- 157 Mekki al-Jamil, *al-Badw wa-al-qabā'il al-rahhālah fi al-'Irāq* [Bedouins and wandering tribes of Iraq] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-rābiṭah, 1956), 259–60. Mekki had previously served as a Member of Parliament for Diyala province in the late 1930s and owned the newspaper *al-Hāris*. See Yūsuf Ibrāhīm Yazbik, *al-Mihrarūn* (Baghdad: 1937), 29.
- 158 A.H. Ditchburn, “Administrative Report of the Muntaqi Division for the Year 1921,” 4–5, in Jarman, *Iraq Administration*, 7: 118–119.
- 159 al-Jamil, *al-Badw wa-al-qabā'il*, 258.
- 160 Ibid., 262.
- 161 Ibid., 261–2. The committee included the Director General for Tribes, the Governor of Dulaym province, the Director General of Police and the Administrative Director of the Southern Desert. Mekki al-Jamil mentions a second committee of prominent tribal leaders, but specifies only the first committee acted, possibly implying that tribal leader involvement had been one of the obstacles to a resolution.
- 162 Braudel, “Towards a Historical Economics,” *On History*, 89.
- 163 al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 181.
- 164 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006), 157.
- 165 Almana, *Arabia Unified*, 15.
- 166 Ibid., 85.

## 4

### POLITICS AND NATIONALISM

- 1 Muhammad Mahdi al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah al-'Irāqīyah* [The history of the Iraqi issue] (Baghdad: Matba‘ah al-fālah, 1923), 504.
- 2 In September 1922, during protests staged for the one-year anniversary of King Faisal’s accession to the throne, he was arrested and exiled to the island of Henjam near the Strait of Hormuz.
- 3 TNA, CO 730/26, fol. 61r, “Report by His Majesty’s High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration and Condition of the ‘Iraq, for the Period of October 1st, 1920 to March 31st, 1922” (Baghdad: The Government Press, 1922), 1. See also TNA, CO 371/4149, 89082, fol. 136r, “From Political, Baghdad [Col. Wilson]” (June 11, 1919).
- 4 Ernest Renan, “What is a nation?” trans. Martin Thom, in Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 19.
- 5 Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 16.
- 6 Meir Litvak, *Shi'i Scholars of Nineteenth-Century Iraq: The 'Ulama' of Najaf and Karbala'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 131–33.
- 7 Nakash., *Shi'is of Iraq*, 18–20.
- 8 Ibid., 4–5, 62–72, 77–84.
- 9 Ḥamīd 'Isā Ḥabaybān al-Khazrajī, *Haqā'iq nāṣi 'ah 'an thawrat al-Najaf al-kubrā: Thawrah – 1917* [Evident facts about the great Najaf revolt: Revolution – 1917] (Najaf: Maṭba‘at al-gharī al-hadīthah, 1970), 30–31.
- 10 Ayatollah Muhammad Taqī al-Shīrāzī addressed two letters to President Woodrow Wilson in February 1919, asking for American assistance against British occupation; Peter Sluglett, “Sectarianism in Recent Iraqi History: What It Is and What It Isn’t,” in Imranali Panjwani, ed.,

- The Shi'a of Samarra: The Heritage and Politics of a Community in Iraq* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 152.
- 11 Ibid., 21–23.
- 12 Litvak, *Shi'i Scholars*, 170, 173–4.
- 13 Bell, *Letters*, 2: 579. al-Shawī's family had been key tribal leaders in the south during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, assuming government positions in Baghdad in the late Ottoman period. Under the British, 'Abd al-Majīd himself had served as mayor of Baghdad in 1919, Minister of State without portfolio in 1920 to 1921, and Governor of Dulaym province in 1922 at the time of this conversation. It is difficult to say which elections he was referring to, but Batatu makes a similar observation on the 1914 Turkish assembly; Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 95.
- 14 Nakash, *Shi'is of Iraq*, 28.
- 15 Ḥammūd al-Sā'adī, *Dirāsāt 'an 'ashā'ir al-'Irāq, al-Khazā'il* [Studies on the tribes of Iraq, the Khazā'il] (Najaf: Maṭba‘at al-Ādāb, 1974), 68–9.
- 16 Litvak, *Shi'i Scholars*, 186.
- 17 'Abd al-Hasan Bāqr al-Fayyāḍ, "Ghārāt al-qabā'il al-Najdīyah 'alá Karbalā' fī maṭla‘ al-qarn al-tāsi‘ 'ashr." *Majalat Markaz Dirāsāt al-Kūfa* 9 (2008): 112.
- 18 Ibid.: 115.
- 19 Ibid.: 116.
- 20 Ibid.: 117.
- 21 Abi Tālib bin Muhammad Khān, *Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe, During the Years 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803, Written by Himself in the Persian Language*, trans. Charles Stewart, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1814), 3: 162–68.
- 22 Iraqi Ministry of Defense Files, file number 10/58, "Letter of the head of Samāwah Municipality to the Qa'imāqam of Samāwah on 4 January 1928," no. 9, 23, as cited in al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 159.
- 23 al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," attachment no. 5 (January 25, 1928).
- 24 Ibid., "Letter of the Governor of Baghdad to Shaykh Riḍā al-Shabībī, et al., on 26 January 1928, number 1127, page 29," as cited in al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 160. The committee was chaired by the Governor of Baghdad province and included Yāsīn Chalabi al-Khadīrī (treasurer), Salīm Ḥasūn (secretary), Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī, Ḥamdī al-Pachachi, Fakhīr al-Dīn Jamīl, Ja'far Chalabi 'Aṭīfa, Ezra Menachem Daniel and Ya'qūb Sarkīs.
- 25 al-'Irāq (May 25, 1926), as quoted in al-Wardī, *Qissat*, 314–15.
- 26 al-'Issāwī, "al-Ghazawāt," 235–36.
- 27 Ibid., 315.
- 28 Ibid., 317.
- 29 "Report No. 1/Bd/40 from Flight Lt. P. Leader Plant, Special Service Officer, Baghdad, to Air Staff, Intelligence, Baghdad, 25 January 1927," in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7:390–94.
- 30 Ibid., 396–97.
- 31 Iraqi Government, Decisions of the Cabinet for the Months of September and October 1924, 48–49, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-'Alāqāt*, 199.
- 32 Iraqi Ministry of Defense Files, file number 35/3/2, "Letter of the Director General of Police to the Minister of Interior on 24 September 1924, number 239, Subject: Inquiries about the Messenger of Bin Saud, page 14," and ibid., "Letter of the Director General of Police to the

- Minister of Interior on 28 September 1924, number 242, Subject: Report of al-Hājj ‘Abbūd, page 36,” as cited in al-‘Issāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 53.
- 33 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 245.
- 34 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 69, “Proceedings of the First Round of the Regular Meeting of the 27th Session of the esteemed Council of Notables convened on Monday, February 15, 1926,” 3.
- 35 Proceedings of the Council of Deputies, First Regular Meeting 1925–1926, supplement 408 (2 May 1926), 2–8, as cited in al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 239, 242.
- 36 TNA, FO 371/4149, fol. 158r, “Ja‘afar al-Askery, Ali Jawdat and Naji al-Suwaydi to British Liaison Officer, Aleppo” (April 24, 1919).
- 37 al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh al-‘Irāq*, 176.
- 38 Ibid., 178.
- 39 al-Soudani, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 274–75.
- 40 BL, IOR/R/15/5/184, fol. 118r, QDL.
- 41 BL, IOR/R/15/5/70, fol. 15r, QDL.
- 42 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 69, Proceedings of the First Round of the Regular Meeting of the Seventeenth Session of the Council of Notables, (February 15, 1926), 3–4.
- 43 al-Rifā‘ī, *Min dhakrīyātī*, 55–60.
- 44 al-Suwaydi, *Mudhakkirātī*, 117.
- 45 “Cypher from The Saudi Representative, Bagdad, to The King, Riyadh, 4 November 1936,” in Burdett, *Saudi Arabia*, 6:289–91.
- 46 Birdwood, *Nuri as-Said*, 180–82.
- 47 Somerset de Chair, *The Golden Carpet* (1943; reprinted, London: Faber and Faber, 1946).
- 48 BL, IOR/L/PS/12/2862, “Coll. 17/10(3) Internal: political situation; relations with HMG,” fols. 102r, 103r, 104r, “From Saudi Arabia. Decypher. Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda),” nos. 44, 45, 46 (January 22–23, 1941), QDL.
- 49 “Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax, June 7, 1940,” in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 726; and Hamdān, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 285–86.
- 50 Hamdān, *al-‘Alāqāt*, 289 fn 1, based on his personal interview with Rashid Ali’s son-in-law, Dr. Najm al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī.
- 51 ‘Uthmān Kamāl Ḥaddād, *Ḩarakat Rashīd ‘Ālī al-Kaylānī sanat 1941* [The Movement of Rashid Ali al-Kaylani in 1941] (Sidon: al-Maktabah al-‘Aṣrīyah, ca. 1947–50), 129, 132–33.
- 52 Sa‘īd, *Tārīkh al-dawlah*, 2: 468–9.
- 53 Ibid., 2: 470. The sentence combines phrases from the Quran and the Hadith, with the implication that Ibn Saud was caught off-guard and was unprepared for the situation.
- 54 Ibid., 2: 471.
- 55 Dann, *Iraq under Qassem*, 128–35.
- 56 Sami Zubaida, “The Fragments Imagine the Nation: The Case of Iraq,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 2 (May 2002): 205–15.
- 57 Abbas Kadhim, *Reclaiming Iraq: The 1920 Revolution and the Founding of the Modern State* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 49.
- 58 Ibid., 100, 103, 109.
- 59 Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 137.
- 60 Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 2.
- 61 Davis, *Memories of State*, 47–48.
- 62 Sajad Jiyad, “Samarra: Shi‘i Heritage and Culture,” in Imranali Panjwani, ed., *The Shi‘a of Samarra: The Heritage and Politics of a Community in Iraq* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 42–43.

- 63 Reidar Visser, “Sectarian Coexistence in Iraq: The Experiences of the Shi‘a in Areas North of Baghdad,” in Imranali Panjwani, ed., *The Shi‘a of Samarra: The Heritage and Politics of a Community in Iraq* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 165.
- 64 According to Davis (49): “During the British mandate (1920–32), Shi‘i ministerial appointments constituted only 17.7 percent of the total despite the fact that Shi‘is comprised between 50 and 60 percent of the population.”
- 65 TNA, CO 730/43, 60035, “Intelligence Report No. 23” (December 1, 1923), 9.
- 66 al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-‘Irāq*, 9–10.
- 67 Haydar was originally from Baalbek, studied at the Sorbonne before WWI, joined Faisal during the Arab Revolt and became private secretary to the King before the latter’s accession to the throne in 1921; see Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, 162.
- 68 Bell, *Letters*, 2: 587.
- 69 TNA, CO 730/26, fol. 198v, “Intelligence Report No. 22” (November 15, 1922), 8.
- 70 Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 129.
- 71 See, for example: Zoë Preston, *The Crystallization of the Iraqi State: Geopolitical Function and Form* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003), 247–50, 266–69.
- 72 TNA, CO 730/43, 60034, “The Residency, Baghdad, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies” (November 22, 1923), 2.
- 73 “Memorandum No. 1/D/23 from Flt. Lt. R.M. Foster, Special Service Officer, Diwaniyah, to Air Staff Intelligence, Air Headquarters, Baghdad, 5 February 1927,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7:401–5.
- 74 Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 54–55.
- 75 TNA, CO 730/43, 60035, “Intelligence Report No. 23” (December 1, 1923), 8a.
- 76 Davis, *Memories of State*, 49, 51.
- 77 The Najdi Green Book was adamant on this matter: “Except the Shammar, no Najd tribes had absconded prior to the visit of Yūsuf Bey al-Mansūr to Riyādh.” BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, fol. 306r, QDL.
- 78 al-Hasanī, *al-‘Irāq fī dawrī*, 230–31. The original cable was leaked to the press, from where al-Hasanī probably got his copy of it; *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah* [The Iraqi Times], no. 269 (April 8, 1922), East View GPA. *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah* was a revamped version of *al-Awqāt al-Baṣrīyah* [The Başrah Times], the leading daily of the south that had undergone several incarnations under British patronage during the war, ending up as an Arabic-language supplement that was printed alongside the Baghdad-based English-language daily *The Times of Mesopotamia*.
- 79 This reported raid on Samāwah and another just like it are found throughout the secondary literature, both by contemporary authors and later scholars, but there is no detailed account of the events in any of these books and no sources cited by the authors. British officials themselves disputed what had happened and who was responsible; BL, IOR/R/15/5/28, fol. 120r, QDL. A newspaper correspondent in Nāṣirīyah claimed that victims of the Samāwah assault showed up at the train station providing eye-witness accounts to by-standers and British airplanes were scrambled, yet no details were recorded; *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah*, no. 270 (April 9, 1922), East View GPA. It is possible that the press confused a second or third raid with an aborted raid on Samāwah or the follow-on attack on the Muntafiq tribe that al-Duwaysh committed shortly after leaving Abī Ghār in pursuit of the rest of Al Sa‘dūn’s forces near Shukrah.
- 80 *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah*, no. 251 (March 18, 1922), East View GPA. If this was the case (and it is difficult to conclude with certainty given the lack of Najdi sources), it presaged the Ikhwan attack on al-Busayyah in November 1927 and indicated a rational approach to the deployment of the Ikhwan in Iraq even as early as 1922.
- 81 Ibid.

- 82 al-Hasanī, *al-'Irāq fī dawrī*, 227–28.
- 83 *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 251 (March 18, 1922), East View GPA.
- 84 TNA, CO 370/41, fol. 573r, [574]r, “Iraq Intelligence Report No. 17” (September 6, 1923), 17, 18.
- 85 al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 381.
- 86 *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 272, (April 12, 1922), East View GPA.
- 87 TNA, CO 730/25, fol. 248r, “CO 52601, Appendix II: Report on British Forces in ‘Iraq, 8th April to 30th September 1922.”
- 88 “al-Ikhwān ‘alá ḥudūd al-‘Irāq,” [The Ikhwan at the border of Iraq], *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 247 (March 14, 1922), East View GPA. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī had been the editor of two papers associated with Sayyid Talib al-Naqib before the war and would later serve as a local official in Zubayr and Başrah. See ‘Alī Abū al-Ṭahīn, “mā‘iyah ‘ām ‘alá ṣadūr jarīdah al-awqāt al-baṣrīyah,” *Mulāḥiq al-Madā* (November 23, 2014), <https://almadasupplements.com/view.php?cat=11429>, last accessed August 19, 2020; and Khālid Ḥabīb al-Rāwī, *Tārīkh al-ṣahāfah wa al-'ilām fī al-'Irāq mundhu al-'ahd al-'Uthmānī wa ḥattā harb al-khalīj al-thānīyah (1810–1991)* [The History of Journalism and Media in Iraq since the Era of the Ottomans and until the Second Gulf War (1810–1991)], (Damascus: Dār ṣafahāt lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2010), 40–43.
- 89 “Istiqlālat al-Wizārah [Resignation of the Cabinet],” *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 265 (April 4, 1922), East View GPA.
- 90 Najdi officials in fact collected *zakat* and not *jizya*, the latter being paid by non-Muslims seeking protection from Muslims. The connotation of the editorialist is that followers of the *da'wa* of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab look down on all other Muslims as unbelievers.
- 91 “al-'Irāq wa al-Ikhwān [Iraq and the Ikhwan],” *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 269 (April 8, 1922), East View GPA. See also *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 273 (April 13, 1922), East View GPA.
- 92 al-Hasanī, *al-'Irāq fī dawrī*, 227; and al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 380–82.
- 93 al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 380 and 382.
- 94 The Ministry of Defense report is summarized in al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 383. None of the available sources present the full text.
- 95 TNA, CO 730/26, fol. 65v, “Report by His Majesty’s High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration and Condition of the ‘Iraq, for the Period of October 1st, 1920 to March 31st, 1922” (Baghdad: The Government Press, 1922), 10.
- 96 Tawfiq al-Suwaidi, *Mudhakkirātī*, 111. King Faisal would continue to threaten the British in mid-1922 with an Iraqi military invasion of Najd if Ibn Saud’s forces could not be restrained; TNA, CO 730/41, “Paraphrase of Telegram from Acting High Commissioner of Iraq no. 467” (August 28, 1922), fol. 461r.
- 97 “Istiqlālat al-wizārah [Resignation of the cabinet],” *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 265 (April 4, 1922), East View GPA.
- 98 al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 392.
- 99 *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 269 (April 8, 1922), East View GPA.
- 100 al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 392–93.
- 101 al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-wizārāt*, 36.
- 102 al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 396.
- 103 al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-wizārāt*, 36–7.
- 104 al-Īssāwī, “al-Ghazawāt,” 232.
- 105 *al-Awqāt al-'Irāqīyah*, no. 274 (April 14, 1922), East View GPA.
- 106 “Iraq. Report on Iraq Administration, April 1922–March 1923,” 5, in Jarman, *Iraq Administration*, 7: 323.

- 107 al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 398. Note, however, that other tribal leaders denounced al-Jariyān's claims.
- 108 Ibid., 394.
- 109 Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Husayn, “The People Awaken,” *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah*, no. 275 (April 16, 1922), East View GPA.
- 110 TNA, CO 730/25, “Intelligence Report, Summary of Report No. 19” (October 1, 1922), 21.
- 111 Ibid., 22.
- 112 “Iraq. Report on Iraq Administration, April 1922–March 1923,” 26, in Jarman, *Iraq Administration*, 7: 344.
- 113 Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 1142–45.
- 114 al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-wizārāt*, 66. al-Baṣīr questioned whether the government had sufficient evidence to deport al-Khāliṣī and his sons for obstructing the elections, but the evidence can be found in TNA, CO 730/26, fols. 198r, 198v, “Intelligence Report, Summary of Report No. 22” (November 15, 1922), 7–8, where the fatwa banning participation in the elections as signed by al-Khāliṣī is reprinted in translation.
- 115 Nakash, *Shi‘is of Iraq*, 82.
- 116 Ibid.
- 117 Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 1144–45.
- 118 TNA, CO 730/43, 58636, “Paraphrase telegram from the High Commissioner of Iraq to the Secretary of State for the Colonies,” (November 29, 1923).
- 119 Ibid.
- 120 TNA, CO 730/43, 60035, “Intelligence Report No. 23” (December 1, 1923), 7.
- 121 TNA, CO 730/41, fol. 295r, “Iraq Intelligence Report No. 15” (July 26, 1923), and fol. 305r, “Iraq Intelligence Report No. 16 (advanced copy).”
- 122 Ibid., fol. 195r, “External Intelligence Report No. 24” (July 26, 1923), and fol. 588r, “External Intelligence Report No. 25” (September 6, 1923).
- 123 Ibid., fol. 233r, “Iraq Intelligence Report No. 15.”
- 124 Ibid., fol. 433r, “Iraq Intelligence Report No. 16” (August 9, 1923), 4.
- 125 al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-wizārāt*, 83.
- 126 al-Baṣīr, *Tārīkh al-qadīyah*, 506; TNA, CO 730/41, fol. 173r, “Paraphrase Telegram from the Acting High Commissioner for Iraq to the Secretary of State for the Colonies” (July 17, 1923); and TNA, CO 730/26, fol. 395r, “Intelligence Report, Summary of Report No. 23” (December 1, 1922), 1.
- 127 al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh al-‘Irāq*, 167.
- 128 Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 60.
- 129 Ibid., 55.
- 130 Visser, *Basra*, 121.

## Conclusion

- 1 Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (1985; reprinted, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 21–22.
- 2 “Enclosure III to despatch no. 150 . . . memorandum of statement by King at Riyadh, 2 July 1945,” in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 7: 131.
- 3 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 100, “Administrative Directorate of the Badiya North, Office of the Tribes, to the Ministry of Interior” (November 24/25, 1953).

- 4 “American Embassy Jidda, Despatch 69: Combined Fortnightly Review of Events . . . ” (September 22, 1956), in Evans, 4:404, 406; and “Amembassy Jidda Despatch No. 121: Fortnightly Review of Events in Saudi Arabia . . . ” (December 19, 1957), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 651.
- 5 An Egyptian–Syrian–Saudi alliance in the summer of 1955 resulted in an Egyptian–Saudi bilateral defense agreement with a commitment to mutual defense, signed in Cairo on October 27, 1955, a tripartite pact with Yemen signed in Jeddah on April 21, 1956, and an agreement among these countries to provide assistance to Jordan, signed on January 19, 1957. The Saudis agreed to economic assistance measures designed to stabilize Egypt’s foreign reserves, along with oil shipments; the Egyptians trained and equipped Saudi paratrooper units and the Royal Saudi Air Force, and provided technicians for arms manufacturing facilities at al-Kharj.
- 6 “AmEmbassy Baghdad to Department of State, Despatch No. 804: King Saud Visit to Iraq” (June 4, 1957), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 305–14.
- 7 “[AmEmbassy] Baghdad to Secretary of State, No. 1901” (May 14, 1957), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 290; and “[AmEmbassy] Baghdad to Secretary of State, No. 1963” (May 22, 1957), in *ibid.*, 302–3.
- 8 For example, “Amembassy Jidda Despatch No. 216: Fortnightly Review of Events . . . ” (May 5, 1958), in Evans, *U.S. Records*, 4: 701.
- 9 AmEmbassy Baghdad, no. 666, “Saudi Payments to Shammar Shaikhs” (February 21, 1956), in Schofield, *Arabian Boundary*, 747. Elts would later go on to become Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and a scholar in his own right.
- 10 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 101, “Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, subject: Saudi Assistance to the Sa’dūn” (ca. 1952–6).
- 11 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 106, “Administrative Directorate of the Badiya South to the Ministry of Interior” (February 11, 1954).
- 12 CCM, DC, SSF, doc. 107, “Administrative Directorate of the Badiya Jazira to the Ministry of Interior” (April 8, 1958).
- 13 Dann, *Iraq under Qassem*, 42, 51, 76.
- 14 Fātimah Sa‘īd ‘Abd Allāh Yahyā, “al-‘Alāqāt al-siyāsīyah bayn al-Mamlakah al-‘Arabīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah wa-al-Mamlakah al-‘Irāqīyah (1373–1377 H/1953–1958m)” [Political relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Iraq (1373–1377 H/1953–1958 AD)] (Master’s thesis, King Khalid University, 2017), 192–3.
- 15 Mustafa M. Alani, *Operation Vantage: British Military Intervention in Kuwait 1961* (Surrey: LAAM, 1990); and TNA, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), 8/2031, 70, “The Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Peninsula: Origins of the Dhofar Insurgency,” (July 20, 1973), as reproduced in the Arabian Gulf Digital Archive (AGDA).
- 16 Saeed Khalil Hashim, “The Influence of Iraq on the Nationalist Movements of Kuwait and Bahrain, 1920–1961” (PhD diss., University of Exeter, 1984), 96.
- 17 Amatzia Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam, 1968–2003: Ba’thi Iraq from Secularism to Faith* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2014), 10.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 180.
- 19 Baram, *Saddam Husayn*, 290–91.
- 20 Hugh Pope, “Saudi Intelligence Veteran Warns Against a U.S. Invasion of Iraq,” *Wall Street Journal* (July 29, 2002), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB1027905985837495480>, last accessed October 24, 2020; “Saudis warn US over Iraq war,” *BBC News* (February 17, 2003), news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\_east/2773759.stm, last accessed October 24, 2020.
- 21 Ellen Laipson, “The New Iraq and its Neighbors,” *The Stimson Center* (July 1, 2004), <https://www.stimson.org/2004/new-iraq-and-its-neighbors/>, last accessed October 24, 2020;

- Daniel Byman and Kenneth Pollack, “Iraq Runneth Over: What Next?” *The Brookings Institution* (August 20, 2006), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/iraq-runneth-over-what-next/amp/>, last accessed October 24, 2020; Kenneth Katzman, et al., “Iraq: Regional Perspectives and U.S. Policy,” *Congressional Research Service* (October 6, 2009), <https://www.crs.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33793.pdf>, last accessed October 24, 2020; Henri J. Barkey, Scott B. Lasensky and Phebe Marr, eds., *Iraq, its Neighbors, and the United States: Competition, Crisis, and the Reordering of Power* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011).
- 22 “Iraq and its Neighbours,” Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (July 3, 2019), <https://carpo-bonn.org/en/iraq-and-its-neighbours/>, last accessed October 24, 2020.
- 23 Molly Patterson and Kristen Renwick Monroe, “Narrative in Political Science,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (June 1998): 315–331.
- 24 See, for example: Sami Adwan, Dan Bar-On and Eyal Naveh, eds., *Side by Side: Parallel Histories of Israel-Palestine* (New York: The New Press, 2012); Sami Adwan and Dan Bar-On, eds., *Learning the Other’s Historical Narrative: Israelis and Palestinians, Parts One and Two* (Beit Jalla: Peace Research Institute in the Middle East, 2003, 2006); Paul Scham, Walid Salem and Benjamin Pogrund, eds., *Shared Histories: A Palestinian-Israeli Dialogue* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2005); Ned Lazarus, “Making Peace with the Duel of Narratives: Dual-Narrative Texts for Teaching the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict,” *Israel Studies Review* 23, no. 1 (June 2006): 107–24; and Shoshana Steinberg and Dan Bar-On, “The Other Side of the Story: Israeli and Palestinian Teachers Write a History Textbook Together,” *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no. 1 (2009): 104–22.
- 25 Amos Oz, *In the Land of Israel*, trans. Maurie Goldberg-Bartura (1983; reprinted, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1993), 253.
- 26 Shaul Shenhav, “Political Narratives and Political Reality,” *International Political Science Review* 27, no. 3 (July 2016): 245–62.
- 27 al-Wardī, *Qissat*, 372–3.
- 28 Ibid., 375.
- 29 The one monograph that comes closest is Moudi bint Mansur bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, *King Abdul-Aziz and the Kuwait Conference, 1923–1924*, trans. Basil Hatim and Ron Buckley (London: Echoes, 1993).
- 30 See, for example, BL, IOR/L/PS/10/1240, “File 57/1928 Pt 9 ‘Iraq–Nejd Relations: Discussions with Ibn Saud,” fols. 27r, 84r, QDL.
- 31 Ibid., fol. 79r: “ . . . these posts are in no way designed to interfere with the free movements of tribes, whether Najdi or ‘Iraqi, nor do they constitute any menace whatsoever against Your Majesty’s people and country. I have myself visited the posts and satisfied myself on this point by personal inspection. Provided that the situation on the frontier remains normal and peaceful there is no intention of making them anything more than police posts for the better control and administration of the desert areas of ‘Iraq.” See also “Paraphrase telegram No. T 114 from Resident, Persian Gulf, to Colonial Secretary, 15 December 1927,” in Burdett, *Expansion*, 7: 533; Ibid., “After close investigation His Britannic Majesty’s Government are satisfied that there is no foundation for the allegations which have been made against Captain Glubb’s activities which are clearly based on inaccurate reports. I am to add that the continued presentation of baseless protests can only further complicate an already difficult situation . . . ” And ibid., fol. 80r: “Captain Glubb is an officer of high principle who discharges his duties unselfishly and conscientiously, and it is intolerable that he should be subjected to continual persecution . . . ”.
- 32 Dickson, *Kuwait*, 272; BL, IOR/R/15/1/595, File 61/15 II (D 44) Kuwait Conference, fols. 9r, 78r, QDL; and “King Faisal, Amman to High Commissioner, Baghdad” (August 15, 1923), in

Rush, *Records of the Hashimite*, 2: 128–29.

- 33 As early as the ‘Uqayr conference in 1922, Cox insisted that Ibn Saud reject the offer from the Eastern and General Syndicate for oil concessions, while Cox coordinated with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company for its prospecting bid. See Lacey, *The Kingdom*, 170–71.
- 34 al-Tuwayjrī, *Lisurāt al-layl*, 509–10.
- 35 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 187–8.
- 36 *al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah*, no. 268 (April 7, 1922), East View GPA.
- 37 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 159.
- 38 Chatty, *Displacement and Dispossession*, 34.
- 39 al-Dulayshī, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn*, 179.
- 40 Almana, *Arabia Unified*, 191–2. al-Shabīlī served in the Royal Court from 1931 to 1943, went to Baṣrah that year as deputy to Consul General Shaykh Fakhrī Shaykh al-Ard, and eventually replaced the latter as Consul General in 1949, with special responsibilities for the Najdi community in Zubayr. He was later appointed Ambassador to Iraq in 1967. See al-Nāṣir, *al-Zubayr wa ṣafahāt*, 629; and ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Alīyān, *Jowāhir al-Zubayr* [The essence of Zubayr] (Riyadh: King Fahd Library, 2007), 104–5.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 al-Ḥumaydān, *Tārīkh mashaykhat*, 191.
- 43 Ibid., 192.
- 44 al-‘Alīyān, *Jawāhir al-Zubayr*, 113.
- 45 Elizabeth Picard, “Managing Identities among Expatriate Businessmen across the Syrian–Lebanese Boundary,” in Inga Brandell, ed., *State Frontiers: Borders and Boundaries in the Middle East* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 75–99.
- 46 al-Sowayan, “badw and ḥādar”: 373.
- 47 ‘Abd al-Karīm Abā al-Khayl, *al-‘Arabīyah al-Sa’ūdīyah: Ta’sīs . . . rimāl wa damā*’ [Saudi Arabia: The founding . . . sand and blood] (Baghdad: Maṭba’ah al-rā’ayī, 1951).
- 48 Bell, *Letters*, 2: 588.

## Bibliography

## **Archival Materials, Unpublished**

The National Archives (TNA) – Kew, UK.  
British Library (BL), India Office Records and Private Papers (IOR) – London, UK.  
Iraqi National Library and Archives (INLA), formerly known as the National Center for the  
Preservation of Documents (NCPD) – Baghdad, Iraq.  
Crossroads of Civilization Museum (CCM), Documentation Center (DC) – Dubai, UAE.  
East View Information Services, Global Press Archive (GPA) ([www.eastview.com/resources/GPA/](http://www.eastview.com/resources/GPA/)).  
Qatar Digital Library (QDL) – Doha, Qatar ([www.qdl.qa](http://www.qdl.qa)).  
Arabian Gulf Digital Archive (AGDL) – Abu Dhabi, UAE ([www.agda.ae](http://www.agda.ae)).

## **Archival Materials, Published**

- ‘Awīd, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sa‘ūd al-, ed. *Wathā’iq madrasat al-najāh al-ahlīyah fī al-Zubayr* [Documents  
of the Najāh public school in Zubayr]. Kuwait: Aafaq, 2017.
- Burdett, A.L.P., ed. *The Expansion of Wahhabi Power in Arabia, 1798–1932*, 8 vols. Cambridge:  
Cambridge Archive Editions, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Saudi Arabia: Secret Intelligence records 1926–1939*. 6 vols. Cambridge: Archive  
Editions Limited, 2003.
- Evans, K.E., ed. *U.S. Records on Saudi Affairs 1945–1959*. 8 vols. Slough, UK: Archive Editions  
Limited and University Publications of America, 1997.
- Jarman, Robert L., ed. *Iraq Administration Reports, 1914–1932*. 10 vols. [United Kingdom]: Archive  
Editions, 1992.
- Rashid, Ibrahim al-, ed. *Documents on the History of Saudi Arabia*. 3 vols. Salisbury, NC:  
Documentary Publications, 1976.
- Rush, Alan de L., ed. *Records of the Hashimite Dynasties: A Twentieth Century Documentary  
History*. 15 vols. [Great Britain]: Archive Editions, 1995.
- Schofield, Richard, ed. *Arabian Boundary Disputes*. Vol. 6, *Saudi Arabia-Iraq, 1922–1991*. Oxford:  
Archive Editions, 1992.

## **Maps**

- Royal Geographical Society, Asia 1:1,000,000, Basra, North H-38, “Geographical Section, General  
Staff, No 2555” (1917).
- HMG Naval Intelligence Division. *Western Arabia and the Red Sea*. Geographical Handbook Series.  
Oxford: University Press, 1946.

## **Autobiographies, Memoirs and Correspondence**

- ‘Alī, Taħsīn. *Mudhakkirāt Taħsīn ‘Alī, 1890–1970* [Memoirs of Taħsīn ‘Alī, 1890–1970]. Beirut, al-  
Mu’ssah al-‘Arabīyah lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2004.
- Almana, Mohammed. *Arabia Unified: A Portrait of Ibn Saud*. London: Hutchinson Benham, 1980.
- Bell, Gertrude. *The Arab of Mesopotamia*. Basra: Government Press, 1917.  
\_\_\_\_\_, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell*. 2 vols. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927.
- Chair, Somerset de. *The Golden Carpet*. 1943. Reprinted, London: Faber and Faber, 1946.
- Dāghir, As‘ad Khalīl. *Mudhakkirātī ‘alá hāmish al-qadīyah al-‘Arabīyah* [Memoirs from the margin  
of the Arab cause]. 1959. Reprinted, Beirut: Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies, 2020.

Kindle.

- Dickson, H.R.P. *The Arab of the Desert: A Glimpse into Badawin Life in Kuwait and Sa'udi Arabia*. 1960. Reprinted, London: Routledge, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Kuwait and Her Neighbours*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1956.
- Glubb, John Bagot. *War in the Desert: An R.A.F. Frontier Campaign*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960.
- Hamza, Fouad. *al-Bilād al-'Arabīyah al-Sa'ūdīyah* [The country of Saudi Arabia]. Riyadh: Maktabat al-naṣr al-ḥadīthah, 1937.
- Khān, Abi Ṭālib bin Muḥammad. *Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe, During the Years 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803, Written by Himself in the Persian Language*. Translated by Charles Stewart. 2nd ed., 3 vols. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1814.
- al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz Āl Sa'ud wa Amīn al-Rihānī: al-Risā'il al-mutabādilah* [King Abdulaziz Al Saud and Ameen al-Rihani: Letters exchanged]. Beirut: Dār al-amwāj lil-ṭabā'ah wa al-nashr wa al-tawzi'a, 2001.
- Mumayyiz, Amīn al-. *al-Mamlakah al-'Arabīyah al-Sa'ūdīyah kamā 'araftuhā* [The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as I knew it]. Beirut: 1963.
- Philby, H. St. J. B. *The Heart of Arabia: A Record of Travel and Exploration*. 2 vols. London: Constable and Company Ltd, 1922.
- Rawi, Abdul Jabbar al-. *al-Bādiyah*. 3rd ed. Baghdad: 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Mudhakkirāt 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Rāwī (1898–1987)* [Memoirs of Abdul Jabbar al-Rawi (1898–1987)]. Baghdad: Maṭba'at al-rāīya, 1994.
- Rifā'i, Hāshim al-. *Min dhakrīyātī* [From my memories]. Beirut: Jadawel, 2012.
- Rihani, Ameen. *Faysal al-Awwal* [Faisal the First]. Beirut: Maṭba'ah al-ṣādr, 1934.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Ibn Sa'oud of Arabia: His People and His Land*. London: Constable & Co Ltd, 1928.
- Şabbāgh, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-. *Mudhakkirāt al-shahīd al-'aqīd al-rukn: Fursān al-'urūbah fī al-'Irāq* [Memoirs of the martyr, the staff colonel: Knights of Arabness in Iraq]. [Damascus?]: 1956.
- Suwaydi, Tawfiq al-. *Mudhakkirātī: Nisf qarn min tārīkh al-'Irāq wa-al-qadīyah al-'Arabīyah* [My memories: Half a century of the history of Iraq and the Arab cause]. 2nd ed. Beirut: al-Mu'ssah al-'Arabīyah lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2010.
- Tuwayjrī, 'Abd al-'Azīz bin 'Abd al-Muhsin al-, ed. *Lisurāt al-layl hataf al-ṣabāh: al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz, dirāsah wathā'iqiyah*. Beirut: Jadawel, 1997.
- Van der Meulen, Daniel. *The Wells of Ibn Sa'ud*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957.
- Wahba, Hafiz. *Khamsūn 'āman fī Jazīrat al-'Arab* [Fifty years in the Peninsula of the Arabs]. 1960. Reprinted, Cairo: Dār al-afāq al-'Arabīyah, 2001.

## Books, Articles and Dissertations

- Abā al-Khayl, 'Abd al-Karīm. *al-'Arabīyah al-Sa'ūdīyah: Ta'sīs . . . rimāl wa dimā* [Saudi Arabia: The founding . . . sand and blood]. Baghdad: Maṭba'ah al-rā'i, 1953.
- Abā Ḥussayn, 'Alī. *Lamḥā min tārīkh madīnat al-Zubayr: Tarājim wa wathā'iq* [Glimpses from the history of the city of Zubayr: Biographies and documents]. Bahrain: Mu'assasa fakhrāwī lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2006.
- Adwan, Sami, Dan Bar-On and Eyal Naveh, eds. *Side by Side: Parallel Histories of Israel-Palestine*. New York: The New Press, 2012.
- Adwan, Sami and Dan Bar-On, eds. *Learning the Other's Historical Narrative: Israelis and Palestinians, Parts One and Two*. Beit Jalla: Peace Research Institute in the Middle East, 2003, 2006.

- Ageili, Mahmoud S. Al-. "The Settlement of the Nomadic Tribes in the Northern Province: Saudi Arabia." PhD diss., University of Manchester, 1986.
- Ahram, Ariel I. *Proxy Warriors: The Rise and Fall of State-Sponsored Militias*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011.
- 'Ajil, Muhsin Ghiyad. *Sulaymān bin Ṣālah al-Dakhīl al-Najdī: al-Ṣāḥfī, al-sīyāsī, al-mu'arrikh* [Sulaymān bin Ṣālah al-Dakhīl the Najdi: Journalist, politician, historian]. 1982. Reprinted, Beirut: al-Dār al-'Arabīya al-Mawsū'āt, 2002.
- Alani, Mustafa M. *Operation Vantage: British Military Intervention in Kuwait 1961*. Surrey: LAAM, 1990.
- Alebrahim, Abdulrahman. "The Neglected Sheikdom at the Frontier of Empires and Cultures: An Introduction to al-Zubayr." *Middle Eastern Studies* 56, no. 4 (March 2020): 521–34.
- Algar, Hamid. *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*. Oneonta, NY: Islamic Publications International, 2002.
- 'Alīyān, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd bin 'Abd al-'Azīz al-. *Jawāhir al-Zubayr* [The essence of Zubayr]. Riyadh: King Fahd Library, 2007.
- Alowfi, Ahmed S. "From Warriors to Administrators: Capital and Coercion in the Early Process of State Formation in Arabia (1900–1938)." Master's thesis, American University, 2015.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. London: Verso, 2006.
- Anderson, Malcolm. *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*. Oxford: Polity Press, 1996.
- 'Ānī, Na'mān al-Amīn al-. *Fī al-Mamlakah al-'Arabīyah al-Sa'ūdīyah* [In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia]. Baghdad: Maṭba'at al-sha'b, 1937.
- 'Anīzī, Mish'al al-. *Mawsū'a qabā'il 'Aniza al-Wā'ilīyah fī al-Jazīrah al-'Arabīyah* [The encyclopedia of the tribe of 'Aniza of Wa'il in the Arabian Peninsula]. Beirut: al-Dār al-'Arabīyah lil-mawsū'āt, 2008.
- 'Anqarī, Hamad 'Abd Allāh al-. "Rashīd al-Nāṣir bin Layla: al-Bāshā rajul al-dawlah . . ." [Rashīd al-Nāṣir bin Layla: The Pasha man of state . . .]. *al-Majalah al-'Arabīyah*, <https://www.arabicmagazine.com/arabic/notice.aspx?Id=16>, last accessed August 1, 2020.
- Antonius, George. *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement*. 1938. Reprinted, New York: Capricorn Books, 1965.
- Attali, Jacques. *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*. Translated by Brian Massumi. 1985. Reprinted, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992.
- 'Atṭār, Ahmad 'Abd al-Ghafūr. *Ṣaqr al-Jazīrah* [The hawk of the Peninsula]. 3 vols. Cairo: Sharakat istāndār lil-ṭabā'ah al-'arabīyah, 1947.
- Baram, Amatzia. *Saddam Husayn and Islam, 1968–2003: Ba'thi Iraq from Secularism to Faith*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2014.
- Barāzī, Nūrī Khalīl al-. *al-Badāwih wa-al-istiqrār fī al-'Irāq* [Nomadism and settlement in Iraq]. Cairo: Maṭba'ah al-jablāwī, 1969.
- Barkey, Henri J., Scott B. Lasensky and Phebe Marr, eds. *Iraq, its Neighbors, and the United States: Competition, Crisis, and the Reordering of Power*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011.
- Bashar, Badrīyah al-. *Najd qabla al-naft: Dirāsah susyūlūjīyah tahlīlīyah lil-hikāyāt al-sha'bīyah* [Najd before oil: Sociological analytical studies of popular stories]. Beirut: Jadawel, 2013.
- Bashkin, Orit. *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Baṣīr, Muḥammad Mahdi al-. *Tārīkh al-qadīyah al-'Irāqīyah* [The history of the Iraqi issue]. Baghdad: Maṭba'ah al-fālah, 1923.

- Batatu, Hanna. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.
- Beck, Lois. "Tribes and the State in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Iran." In *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, edited by Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, 185–225. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation." In *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K. Bhabha, 291–322. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Birdwood, Lord. *Nuri as-Said: A Study in Arab Leadership*. London: Cassell, 1959.
- Bissām, Yūsuf Ḥamad al-. *al-Zubayr qabla khamsīn ‘āman ma ‘nubdhah tarīkhīyah ‘an Najd wa al-Kūwayt* [Zubayr before fifty years ago with a historical portion about Najd and Kuwait]. 1971. Reprinted, London: Dar Alhikma.
- Bloom, William. *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Brandell, Inga. "Introduction." In *State Frontiers: Borders and Boundaries in the Middle East*, edited by Inga Brandell, 1–29. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006.
- Braudel, Fernand. *On History*. Translated by Sarah Matthews. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Bujra, Abdalla S. *The Politics of Stratification: A Study of Political Change in a South Arabian Town*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.
- Byman, Daniel, and Kenneth Pollack. "Iraq Runneth Over: What Next?" *The Brookings Institution* (August 20, 2006). <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/iraq-runneth-over-what-next/amp/>, last accessed October 24, 2020.
- Campbell, David. *Writing Security, United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992.
- Champion, Daryl. *The Paradoxical Kingdom: Saudi Arabia and the Momentum of Reform*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Chatty, Dawn. *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Charkhī, Ibrāhīm Jāsim Muhsin. "Nīzām da‘āwī al-‘ashā’ir al-madanīyah wa al-juzā’īyah fī al-‘Irāq 1916–1958: Dirāsah tārīkhīyah" [The civil and criminal tribal claims regulations in Iraq 1916–1958: An historical study]. Master's thesis, University of Baghdad, 2015.
- Cleveland, William L. "The Arab Nationalism of George Antonius Reconsidered." In *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, edited by James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni, 65–86. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Commins, David. *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2006.
- Cronin, Stephanie. "Tribes, Coups and Princes: Building a Modern Army in Saudi Arabia." *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 1 (January 2013): 2–28.
- Dann, Uriel. *Iraq under Qassem: A Political History, 1958–1963*. New York: Praeger, 1969.
- Dārat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. "Khaṭṭ al-Tablāyin . . . nabtat ḥawluhu ‘Ar‘ar wa-akhrīyāt . . . wa intihā bi-fa‘l thalāthah hūrūb" [The Tapline . . . 'Ar'ar and others sprang up around it . . . and it ended in three wars]. <https://www.darah.org.sa/index.php/st-and-rep/darah-places/182-2019-06-26-11-50-18>, last accessed on August 25, 2020.
- Davis, Eric. *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Dawisha, Adeed. *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

- DeLong-Bas, Natana. *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Determann, Jörg Matthias. *Historiography in Saudi Arabia: Globalization and the State in the Middle East*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2014.
- Dodge, Toby. *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Donnan, Hastings, and Thomas M. Wilson. *Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State*. Oxford: Berg, 1999.
- Dulayshī (al-Khālidī), ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-. *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn al-Shanqīṭī: Ḥayātuhu, mudhakkirātuhu, ‘alāqatuhu bi-mulūk wa shuyūkh al-Jazīrah al-‘Arabīyah* [Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn al-Shanqīṭī: His life, his memories, his relations with the kings and shaykhs of the Arabian Peninsula]. Beirut: al-Dār al-‘Arabīyah lil-mawsū‘āt, 2009.
- Edmonds, Cecil J. *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs: Politics, Travel and Research in North-Eastern Iraq, 1919–1925*. London: 1957.
- Farquhar, Michael. *Circuits of Faith: Migration, Education, and the Wahhabi Mission*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017.
- Fattah, Hala. *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf 1745–1900*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.
- Fattah, Hala and Candan Badem. “The Sultan and the Rebel: Sa‘dun al-Mansur’s Revolt in the Muntafiq, ca. 1891–1911.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45, no. 4 (November 2013): 677–693.
- Fayyād, ‘Abd al-Hasan Bāqr al-. “Għarāt al-qabā’il al-Najdīyah ‘alá Karbalā’ fī maṭla‘ al-qarn al-tāsi‘ ‘ashr.” *Majalat Markaz Dirāsāt al-Kūfa* 9 (2008).
- Finnie, Richard. *Bechtel in Arab Lands: A Fifteenth-Year Review of Engineering and Construction Projects*. San Francisco: Bechtel Corporation, 1958.
- Firro, Tarik K. “The Political Context of Early Wahhabi Discourse of ‘Takfir’.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 5 (September 2013): 770–789.
- Grant, Christina Phelps. *The Syrian Desert: Caravans, Travel and Exploration*. London: A. & C. Black Ltd, 1937.
- Habib, John S. *Ibn Sa‘ud’s Warriors of Islam: The Ikhwan of Najd and Their Role in the Creation of the Sa‘udi Kingdom, 1910–1930*. Leiden: Brill, 1978.
- Haddād, ‘Uthmān Kamāl. *Harakat Rاشid ‘Alī al-Kaylānī sanat 1941* [The Movement of Rashid Ali al-Kaylani in 1941]. Sidon: al-Maktabah al-‘Aṣrīyah, ca. 1947–50.
- Hamdān, Muhammad Sa‘īd. *al-‘Alāqāt al-‘Irāqīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah mā bayn 1914–1953* [Iraqi–Saudi relations between 1914–1953]. Amman: Dār yāfā lil-nashr wa al-tawzī‘a, 2013.
- Hamdī, Ṣabré Fāliḥ al-. *al-Mustishārūn al-‘Arab wa-al-siyāsah al-khārijīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah khilāl ḥukm al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Sa‘ūd (1915–1953)* [The Arab advisors and Saudi foreign policy during the rule of King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud (1915–1953)]. London: Dār al-ḥikmah, 2011.
- Hamūdī, ‘Abd al-Rahmān bin Muḥammad bin Mūsa al-. *al-Diblūmāṣīyah wa-al-marāsim al-Sa‘ūdīyah: Tārīkh, diblūmāṣīyah, tanzīmīyah* [Saudi diplomacy and decrees: History, diplomacy, organization]. 2 vols. Riyadh: King Fahd National Library, 1999.
- Hasanī, ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-. *al-‘Irāq fī dawrī al-ihtilāl wa-al-intidāb* [Iraq in the period of independence and the mandate]. 2 vols. Syria: Maṭba‘at al-‘Irfān, 1935.
- , *Tārīkh al-‘Irāq al-siyāsī al-hadīth* [The history of modern political Iraq]. 3 vols. 1948. Reprinted, Beirut: Dār al-Rāfidayn lil-ṭabā‘ah wa al-nashr wa al-tawzī‘a, 2008.
- , *Tārīkh al-wizārāt al-‘Irāqīyah* [The history of Iraqi cabinets]. 2 vols. Syria: Maṭba‘ah al-irfān bi-ṣaydā, 1933.

- Hashim, Saeed Khalil. "The Influence of Iraq on the Nationalist Movements of Kuwait and Bahrain, 1920–1961." PhD diss., University of Exeter, 1984.
- Helms, Christine Moss. *The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia: Evolution of Political Identity*. London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1981.
- Hilah, Muhammad 'Ali. *al-Mu'āhadah al-Sa'ūdīyah/al-'Irāqīyah (1936)* [The Saudi–Iraqi Treaty (1936)]. N.p.: Kuwayk ḥamādah al-jiraysī lil-ṭabā'ah, 1993.
- Ḩirān, Tāj al-Sir Aḥmad. "al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz Āl Sa'ūd wa al-qadīyah al-filaṣīnīyah" [King Abdulaziz Al Saud and the Palestinian issue]. In *Dirāsāt sa'ūdīyah: Majmū'a min al-abhāth al-mutakhaṣṣaṣah* [Saudi studies: A collection of specialized reports], 2: 13–48. Riyadh: Institute for Diplomatic Studies, 1987.
- Humaydān, 'Abd al-Laṭīf bin Nāṣir al-. *Tārīkh mashaykhat al-Zubayr al-Najdīyah min al-nushū' ila al-suqūt* [The history of the shaykhdom of Najdi Zubayr from the founding until the fall]. Beirut: Jadawel, 2019.
- Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Translated by Franz Rosenthal, edited by N.J. Dawoud. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.
- (Ibn 'Ubayd), Ibrāhīm bin 'Ubayd Al 'Abd al-Muhsin. *Tadhkirāt ūlī al-nuhā wa-al-'irfān* [First memories of discouragement and gratification]. Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2007.
- Ibrāhīm, 'Abd al-'Azīz 'Abd al-Ghani. *Najdīyūn warā' al-hudūd: "al-'Uqaylāt" wa-dawruhum fī 'alāqat Najd al-'askarīyah wa-al-iqtisādīyah bi-al-'Irāq wa-al-Shām wa-Miṣr (1750–1950)* [Najdis beyond the borders: The "Uqaylat" and their role in the military and economic relations of Najd with Iraq and Syria and Egypt (1750–1950)]. London: Dar al-Saqi, 1991.
- Ingham, Bruce. *Bedouin of Northern Arabia: Traditions of the Al-Dhafir*. London: KPI Limited, 1986.
- Īssāwī, 'Abd al-Āl Wahīd 'Abbūd al-. "al-Ghazawāt al-Wahhābīyah 'alā 'Irāq fī sanawāt al-intidāb al-Britānī 1920–1932: Dirāsah tārīkhīyah" [Wahhabi raids on Iraq in the years of the British Mandate, 1920–1932: An historical study]. PhD diss., University of Kufa, 2008.
- Jabar, Faleh A. "Sheikhs and Ideologues: Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Tribes under Patrimonial Totalitarianism in Iraq, 1968–1998." In *Tribes and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East*, edited by Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod, 69–109. London: Saqi, 2003.
- Jabbur, Jibrail Sulayman. *The Bedouins and the Desert: Aspects of Nomadic Life in the Arab East*. Translated by Lawrence I. Conrad. Albany, NY: SUNY, 1995.
- Jamal, Manal A. "The 'tiering' of citizenship and residency and the 'hierarchization' of migrant communities: The United Arab Emirates in historical context." *International Migration Review* 49, no. 3 (Fall, 2015): 601–32.
- Jamil, Mekki al-. *al-Badw wa-al-qabā'il al-raḥḥālah fī al-'Irāq* [Bedouins and wandering tribes of Iraq]. Baghdad: Maṭba'at al-rābiṭah, 1956.
- Jauss, Hans Robert. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*. Translated by Timothy Bahti. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.
- Jaṣī, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hādī Ṣalāḥ al-. *Bādiya janūb al-'Urdun: Dirāsah susyūlūjīyah iqtisādīyah, 1921–1946* [The southern bādiya of Jordan: A socio-economic study, 1921–1946]. Amman: Dār kunawz al-ma'rāfah al-'ilmīyah lil-nashir wa al-tawzī'a, 2009.
- Jiyad, Sajad. "Samarra: Shi'i Heritage and Culture." In *The Shi'a of Samarra: The Heritage and Politics of a Community in Iraq*, edited by Imranali Panjwani, 25–47. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012.
- Juhany, Uwaïdah M. al-. *Najd before the Salafi Reform Movement: Social, Political, and Religious Conditions during the Three Centuries Preceding the Rise of the Saudi State*. Reading, UK: Ithaca Press and the King Abdul Aziz Foundation for Research and Archives, 2002.
- Kaufman, Asher. *Contested Frontiers in the Syria–Lebanon–Israel Region: Cartography, Sovereignty, and Conflict*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2014.

- \_\_\_\_\_, “Between Permeable and Sealed Borders: The Trans-Arabian Pipeline and the Arab-Israeli Conflict.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (February 2014): 95–116.
- Kadhim, Abbas. *Reclaiming Iraq: The 1920 Revolution and the Founding of the Modern State*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012.
- Kashani-Sabet, Firoozeh. *Frontier Fictions: Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804–1946*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Katzman, Kenneth, et al. “Iraq: Regional Perspectives and U.S. Policy.” *Congressional Research Service* (October 6, 2009). <https://www.crs.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33793.pdf>, last accessed October 24, 2020.
- Kayali, Hasan. *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1918*. Berkeley, CA: U. of California Press, 1997.
- Khazrajī, Ḥamīd ‘Isā Ḥabaybān al-. *Haqā’iq nāṣi‘ah ‘an thawrat al-Najaf al-kubrā: Thawrah – 1917* [Evident facts about the great Najaf revolt: Revolution – 1917]. Najaf: Maṭba‘at al-gharī al-hadīthah, 1970.
- Kheirallah, George. *Arabia Reborn*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1952.
- Koselleck, Reinhart. *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*. Translated by Keith Tribe. 1979. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Kostiner, Joseph. *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916–1936: From Chieftaincy to Monarchical State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Lacey, Robert. *The Kingdom: Arabia & the House of Sa’ud*. New York: Avon Books, 1981.
- Laipson, Ellen. “The New Iraq and its Neighbors.” *The Stimson Center* (July 1, 2004). <https://www.stimson.org/2004/new-iraq-and-its-neighbors/>, last accessed October 24, 2020.
- Lazarus, Ned. “Making Peace with the Duel of Narratives: Dual-Narrative Texts for Teaching the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict.” *Israel Studies Review* 23, no. 1 (June 2006): 107–24.
- Lefèvre, Raphaël. *Ashes of Hama: The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Lewis, C.C. “Ibn Sa’ūd and the Future of Arabia.” *International Affairs* 12, no. 4 (July 1933): 518–34.
- Litvak, Meir. *Shi‘i Scholars of Nineteenth-Century Iraq: The ‘Ulama’ of Najaf and Karbala’*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley. *Iraq, 1900 to 1950: A Political, Social, and Economic History*. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.
- Lukacs, John. *Historical Consciousness: The Remembered Past*. 3rd ed. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994.
- Lundgren-Jörum, Emma. *Beyond Syria’s Borders: A History of Territorial Disputes in the Middle East*. 2014. Reprinted, London: I.B. Tauris, 2017.
- MacCulloch, Diarmaid. “Is There Still Value in ‘Great Man’ History?” *History Today* 69, no. 9 (September 2019). <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/head-head/there-still-value-'great-man'-history>, last accessed August 31, 2020.
- Maisel, Sebastian. “The New Rise of Tribalism in Saudi Arabia.” *Nomadic Peoples* 18, no. 2 (2014): 100–122.
- Marx, Emanuel. “The Tribe as a Unit of Subsistence: Nomadic Pastoralism in the Middle East.” *American Anthropologist* 79, no. 2 (June 1977): 343–63.
- McCorriston, Joy. “Pastoralism and Pilgrimage: Ibn Khaldūn’s bayt-state model and the rise of Arabian kingdoms.” *Current Anthropology* 54, no. 5 (October, 2013): 607–41.
- Menoret, Pascal. *The Saudi Enigma: A History*. London: Zed Books Ltd., 2005.
- Nakash, Yitzhak. *The Shi‘is of Iraq*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

- Nakib, Farah al-. "Revisiting *Hadar* and *Badū* in Kuwait: Citizenship, Housing, and the Construction of a Dichotomy." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (February 2014): 5–30.
- Nāṣir, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Ibrāhīm bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-. *al-Zubayr wa ṣafahāt mushriqah min tārīkhuhā al-‘ilmī wa-al-thaqāfī* [Zubayr and glowing pages from its scholarly and cultural history]. Riyadh: Wahj Alhayat Communications, 2010.
- Nasser, Gamal Abdul. *Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution*. Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1955.
- Niblock, Tim. *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Niebuhr, Carsten. *Travels through Arabia, and Other Countries in the East*. Translated by Robert Heron. 2 vols. Edinburgh: G. Mudie, 1792.
- Oz, Amos. *In the Land of Israel*. Translated by Maurie Goldberg-Bartura. 1983. Reprinted, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1993.
- Patterson, Molly and Kristen Renwick Monroe. "Narrative in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (June 1998): 315–331.
- Pedersen, Susan. *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Peterson, J.E. *Saudi Arabia under Ibn Saud: Economic and Financial Foundations of the State*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2018.
- Picard, Elizabeth. "Managing Identities among Expatriate Businessmen across the Syrian-Lebanese Boundary." In *State Frontiers: Borders and Boundaries in the Middle East*, edited by Inga Brandell, 75–99. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006.
- Podeh, Elie. *The Politics of National Celebrations in the Arab Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Preston, Zoë. *The Crystallization of the Iraqi State: Geopolitical Function and Form*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2003.
- Provence, Michael. *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005.
- Qasha‘mī, Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-. "Mu‘tamadū al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz wa waklāwūhu fī al-khārij" [The envoys of King Abdulaziz and his agents abroad]. *al-Dārah: Majalah faṣalīyah*, Dārat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (April, 2009): 109–67.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Sulaymān bin Sālah al-Dakhīl: Ṣaḥāfiyyan, wa mufakaran, wa mu’arrikhan* [Sulaymān bin Sālah al-Dakhīl: Journalist, thinker, historian]. Riyadh: King Fahd National Library, 2004.
- Rasheed, Madawi Al. *A History of Saudi Arabia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidis of Saudi Arabia*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1991.
- Rāwī, Khālid Ḥabīb al-. *Tārīkh al-ṣaḥāfah wa al-‘ilām fī al-‘Irāq mundhu al-‘ahd al-‘Uthmānī wa hattā ḥarb al-khalij al-thāniyyah (1810–1991)* [The History of Journalism and Media in Iraq since the Era of the Ottomans and until the Second Gulf War (1810–1991)]. Damascus: Dār ṣafahāt lil-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2010.
- Renan, Ernest. "What is a nation?" Translated by Martin Thom. In *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K. Bhabha, 8–22. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Rentz, George S. *The Birth of the Islamic Reform Movement in Saudi Arabia: Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (1703/4–1792) and the Beginnings of Unitarian Empire in Arabia*. London: Arabian Publishing, 2004.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Time and Narrative*. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. 3 vols. 1983. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.
- Rijal, Syamsul. "Internal Dynamics within Hadhrami Arabs in Indonesia: From Social Hierarchy to Islamic Doctrine." *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 11, no. 1 (June, 2017): 1–28.

- Romero, Juan. "Arab Nationalism and the Arab Union of 1958." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (January 2015): 179–99.
- Rugh, Andrea B. *The Political Culture of Leadership in the United Arab Emirates*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Russell, James A. "Whither Regional Security in a World Turned Upside Down?" *Middle East Policy* 14, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 141–48.
- Ruways, Qāsim al-. "al-Amīr Aḥmad bin ‘Abd Allāh al-Thunayān: Sīrah wathā’iqīyah" [Emir Ahmad bin ‘Abdallah al-Thunayān: A documentary biography]. *al-Majalah al-‘Arabīyah*, [www.arabicmagazine.com/arabic/notice\\_.aspx?Id=36](http://www.arabicmagazine.com/arabic/notice_.aspx?Id=36), last accessed August 9, 2020.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Fu’ād Ḥamzah min mu‘alim Lubnānī ilá wazīr dawlah Sa‘ūdī." *Okaz* (March 9, 2017). <https://www.okaz.com.sa/ampArticle/1532179>, last accessed 16 July 2020.
- Sā‘adī, Ḥammūd al-. *Dirāsāt ‘an ‘ashā’ir al-‘Irāq, al-Khazā’il* [Studies on the tribes of Iraq, the Khazā’il]. Najaf: Maṭba‘at al-Ādāb, 1974.
- Sa‘id, Amīn. *Tārīkh al-dawlah al-Sa‘ūdīyah* [The history of the Saudi state]. 3 vols. Beirut: Dār al-kātib al-‘Arabī, 1964.
- Salama, Samir. "Saudi Arabia: How kingdom celebrated first National Day 90 years ago." *Gulf News* (September 23, 2020). [www.gulfnews.com/amp/world/gulf/Saudi-arabia-how-kingdom-celebrated-first-national-day-90-years-ago-1.74054541](http://www.gulfnews.com/amp/world/gulf/Saudi-arabia-how-kingdom-celebrated-first-national-day-90-years-ago-1.74054541), last accessed October 22, 2020.
- Salzman, Philip Carl. "Hierarchical Image and Reality: The Construction of a Tribal Chiefship." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 1 (January, 2000): 49–66.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Labor Formations in a Nomadic Tribe," *Nomadic Peoples* 13 (July 1983): 35–59.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Tribal Organization and Subsistence: A Response to Emanuel Marx." *American Anthropologist* 81, no. 1 (March 1979): 121–4.
- Samin, Nadav. *Of Sand or Soil: Genealogy and Tribal Belonging in Saudi Arabia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.
- Satia, Priya. *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Saud, Moudi bint Mansur bin Abdulaziz Al. *King Abdul-Aziz and the Kuwait Conference, 1923–1924*. Translated by Basil Hatim and Ron Buckley. London: Echoes, 1993.
- Scham, Paul, Walid Salem and Benjamin Pogrund, eds. *Shared Histories: A Palestinian–Israeli Dialogue*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2005.
- Shaffer, Brenda. *Borders and Brethren: Iran and the Challenge of Azerbaijani Identity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.
- Shaykhlī, Muḥammad Ra‘ūf Tāhā al-. *Marāhil al-ḥayāh fī al-fatrāh al-mazlimah wa mā ba‘duhā* [Stages of life in the period of darkness and what followed]. Baṣrah: Maṭba‘at al-Baṣrah, 1972.
- Shenhav, Shaul. "Political Narratives and Political Reality." *International Political Science Review* 27, no. 3 (July 2016): 245–62.
- Shields, Sarah D. *Mosul before Iraq: Like Bees Making Five-Sided Cells*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.
- Shook, Carl Bryant. "The Origins and Development of Iraq's National Boundaries, 1918–1932: Policing and Political Geography in the Iraq–Nejd and Iraq–Syria Borderlands." PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2018.
- Silverfarb, Daniel. "Great Britain, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia: The Revolt of the Ikhwan." *The International History Review* 4, no. 2 (May 1982): 222–48.
- Simon, Reeva S. "The Imposition of Nationalism: Iraq, 1921–1941." In *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, edited by James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni, 87–104. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

- Skran, Claudena. *Refugees in Inter-War Europe: The Emergence of a Regime*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- Sluglett, Peter. "Sectarianism in Recent Iraqi History: What It Is and What It Isn't." In *The Shi'a of Samarra: The Heritage and Politics of a Community in Iraq*, edited by Imranali Panjwani, 143–61. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012.
- Soudani, Sadiq Hassan al-. *al-'Alāqāt al-'Irāqīyah al-Sa'ūdīyah (1920–1931): Dirāsah fī al-'alāqāt al-siyāsīyah* [Iraqi–Saudi relations (1920–1931): A study in political relations]. Baghdad: Sā'adat jāma'at Baghdād, 1976.
- Soudani, Sadiq Hassan al- and 'Ādil Taqī 'Abd al-Bildāwī. *al-'Alāqāt al-'Irāqīyah–al-Sa'ūdīyah fī 'ahd al-Malik Ghāzī, 1933–1939: Dirāsah tārīkhīyah wathā'iqīyah* [Iraqi–Saudi relations in the era of King Ghazi, 1933–1939: An historical documentary study]. Baghdad: Maṭba'ah al-kitāb, 2020.
- Southall, Aidan W. "The Illusion of Tribe." In *The Passing of Tribal Man in Africa*, edited by P. Gutkind, 28–50. Leiden: Brill, 1970.
- Sowayan, Sa'ad A. "badw and ḥaḍar: An Alternative to the Khaldunian Model." In *Shifts and Drifts in Nomad-Sedentary Relations*, edited by Stefan Leder and Bernhard Streck, 367–76. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2005.
- Steinberg, Shoshana and Dan Bar-On. "The Other Side of the Story: Israeli and Palestinian Teachers Write a History Textbook Together." *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no. 1 (2009): 104–22.
- Sulaymān, 'Abd al-Rahmān bin. "Hāshim Ahmād al-Rifā'ī, aḥd rijāl dīwān al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz qabla iktimāl tawhīd al-mamlakah" [Hāshim Ahmād al-Rifā'ī, one of the men of the diwan of King Abdulaziz before the completion of the unification of the Kingdom]. *al-Sharq al-Awsāṭ* (September 23, 2004). <https://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?issueno=9165&article=256728#.Xy56HsspDqC>, last accessed August 8, 2020.
- Taḥīn, 'Alī Abū al-. "mā'iyyah 'ām 'alā ṣadūr jarīdah al-awqāt al-baṣrīyah." *Mulāhiq al-Madā* (November 23, 2014). <https://almadasupplements.com/view.php?cat=11429>, last accessed August 19, 2020.
- Tapper, Richard. "Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople on Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East." In *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, edited by Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, 48–73. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Toth, Anthony B. "The Transformation of a Pastoral Economy: Bedouin and States in Northern Arabia, 1850–1950." DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2000.
- Tripp, Charles. *A History of Iraq*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Troeller, Gary. *The Birth of Saudi Arabia: The Rise of the House of Sa'ud*. London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1976.
- Vassiliev, Alexei. *King Faisal of Saudi Arabia: Personality, Faith and Times*. London: Saqi Books, 2012.
- Visser, Reidar. *Basra, the Failed Gulf State: Separatism and Nationalism in Southern Iraq*. Münster: Lit Verlag Münster, 2005.
- , "Sectarian Coexistence in Iraq: The Experiences of the Shi'a in Areas North of Baghdad." In *The Shi'a of Samarra: The Heritage and Politics of a Community in Iraq*, edited by Imranali Panjwani, 163–76. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012.
- Wallace, William. Review of *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*, by Malcolm Anderson. *International Affairs* 73, no. 2 (April 1997): 352–53.
- Wardī, 'Alī al-. *Qissat al-ashrāf wa Ibn Sa'ūd* [The tale of the Ashraf and Ibn Saud]. London: Alwarrak Publishing Ltd., 2007.
- Williamson, John Frederick. "A Political History of the Shammar Jarba Tribe of al-Jazirah, 1800–1958." PhD diss., Indiana University, 1974.

- Wilson, Mary C. "The Hashemites, the Arab Revolt, and Arab Nationalism." In *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, edited by Rashid Khalidi, et al., 204–223. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
- Yahya, Fātimah Sa‘īd ‘Abd Allāh. "al-‘Alāqāt al-siyāsīyah bayn al-Mamlakah al-‘Arabīyah al-Sa‘ūdīyah wa-al-Mamlakah al-‘Irāqīyah (1373–1377 H/ 1953–1958 M)" [Political relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Iraq (1373–1377 H/1953–1958 AD)]. Master's thesis, King Khalid University, 2017.
- Yamani, Mai. *Cradle of Islam: The Hijaz and the Quest for an Arabian Identity*. 2004. Reprinted, London: I.B. Tauris, 2006.
- Yazbik, Yūsuf Ibrāhīm. *al-Mihrarūn*. Baghdad: 1937.
- Yearwood, Peter. "'A Genuine and Energetic League of Nations Policy': Lord Curzon and the New Diplomacy, 1918–1925." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 21, no. 2 (2010): 159–174.
- Ziriklī, Khayr al-Dīn al-. *Shibh al-Jazīrah fī ‘ahd al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz* [The Peninsula in the era of King Abdulaziz]. 4 vols. Beirut: 1970.
- Zubaida, Sami. "The Fragments Imagine the Nation: The Case of Iraq." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 2 (May 2002): 205–15.

## Index

- ‘Abd al-Raḥman bin Mu‘ammār, 38–39, 71, 148  
 Abdullāh, Emir of Transjordan, 71, 115, 166, 208n  
 Abī Ghār  
     border outpost, 65, 69, 74, 79  
     Dhafīr tribe, 121  
     Ikhwan attack (1922), 38, 147–148, 155, 159  
     Iraqi response to attack, 32, 149–155, 159  
 al-‘Abīd, 66, 88, 199n  
 Abu Ḥūwās, 86, 105  
 Abu Shūwayribāt, Shaykh ‘Alī, 78  
 Abu Ṭabīkh, Sayyid Muḥsin, 143  
 Abu al-Timan, Ja‘far Chalabi, 129, 152–153  
 al-Abūwayb, 63  
 ‘Afak tribes, 43  
 al-‘Ahd officers society, 57, 140, 143  
*al-Ahrām* newspaper, 34  
 al-Ahsā’, 16, 68, 71, 104, 110, 111, 180n

- al-‘Ajīl, ‘Akab, 120, 209*n*  
‘Ajman tribe, 40, 59, 85, 108  
‘Akbah, 86  
Akhḍīrwān, 119  
*al-‘Ālam al-‘Arabī* newspaper, 135  
Al Bu Muhammad tribe, 132  
Alexandria Protocol, 20  
Almana, Mohammed, 34, 112, 127–128, 169, 181–182*n*  
al-Alūsi family, 35, 140  
‘Amarat tribe, 22, 24, 37, 75, 120, 122, 124  
Amīn, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, 162  
‘Ānah, 66, 133  
Anglo-Najdi Treaty (1915), 16  
Anglo-Persian Oil Company, 219*n*  
‘Aniza tribal federation, 122–124  
    Ibn Saud’s sovereignty request, 3, 173*n*  
Iraqi Government, 122, 123  
lineages, 24, 122  
Muhammara Conference (1922), 39  
nationality choice, 125  
origins in the Hijaz, 116, 122  
settlement projects, 124–125  
‘Uqayr Conference (1922), 3, 173*n*  
al-Anjarfī, Muḥammad, 123  
al-Anṣari, ‘Abd al-Qaddūs, 27  
Antonius, George, 33  
‘Aoun family (Zubayr), 110  
Arab American Oil Company (Aramco), 80, 81, 83, *plate 13*  
Arab Cooperation Council, 162–163  
Arab League, 20, 57  
Arab nationalism  
    Egypt, 19–20  
    Iraq, 6, 19–21, 28, 49  
    Ottoman Empire, 18  
    personal rivalries, 59  
    Saudi Arabia, 20, 21, 49, 54–58  
Arab Revolt (1916–18), 19, 56, 119, 137, 145  
‘Ar‘ar, 80  
al-‘Ard, Dr. Midhat Shaykh, 34, 182*n*  
‘Ārif, ‘Abd al-Salām, 162  
al-Arṭawīyah, 82  
al-Arusi, Shukri Effendi, 170–171  
al-‘Asāfi, Muḥammad, 112–113, 206*n*  
Ashbjah (al-Shabkah), 65, 76, 79, 87  
al-Asil, Naji, 30, 36, 37  
‘Asīr, 16, 68  
al-Askery, Ja‘afar, 64, 136, 137–138, 146, 150, 157  
‘Atīfa, Ja’far Chalabi, 212*n*

Attali, Jacques, 160  
‘Aṭṭar, Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ghafūr, 50, 52  
al-‘Awādī, Sayyid Kāzim, 153  
‘Awazim tribe, 40  
*awqaf* (religious endowments), 31, 37, 180*n*  
*al-Awqāt al-Baṣrīyah*, 214*n*  
*al-Awqāt al-‘Irāqīyah*, 148, 149, 151, 214*n*  
Axis powers, World War II, 140, 141  
al-‘Ayoubi, Ali Jawdat, 8, 36, 37, 57, 137, 140, 182*n*

*bādiya*

armed presence, 73–74  
border outposts, 65, 76–77, 80, 86, 87, 219*n*  
British governance/security, 63–64, 70, 72, 73–74, 75–76, 77–78, 79  
description of, 96  
influences on tribes, 69–72, 89  
Iraqi governance/security, 62, 64–66, 70, 71–72, 73, 75–76, 77–80, 81–82, 83, 96, 101  
Operation AKFORCE, 87, 138  
police stations, 65–66, 72, 76–77, 219*n*  
proxy forces, 75–76  
public services and outreach, 79–81  
RAF operations, 67, 73  
Saudi customs inspectors, 77  
Saudi governance/security, 66–68, 70–71, 72, 77, 79, 80–81, 82–83  
trade and commerce, 107–108  
Transjordan, 72  
tribal relocations, 77–79  
Badr bin Farḥān, 123  
*badū* (nomads), 10, 97, 106, 107, 116, 139  
Badūr tribe, 121, 149  
Baghdad, 81, 140–141, 161  
Baghdad Pact, 161  
Babra Agreement (1925), 33, 40, 41–42, 43–46, 100, 105, 136–137, 139, 181*n*  
Bahrain, 16, 104  
Bani ‘Asad tribe, 132  
Bani Aṭṭīyah tribe, 13, 118  
Bani Hasan tribe, 132  
Bani Ḥuchaim tribe, 85, 121  
Bani Ḥuwayṭāt tribe, 118  
Bani Ka‘b tribe, 132  
Bani Khalid federation, 108  
Bani Lam tribe, 132  
al-Baṣīr, Muḥammad Mahdi, 129, 130, 152, 157, 216*n*, *plate 22*  
Baṣrah  
    Bahraini and Kuwaiti dissidents, 162  
    customs inspectors, 108  
    *Hizb al-Nahda* political party, 158  
    King Saud’s visit (1957), 161

- lack of political mobilization, 158  
Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s preaching, 109–110  
Old Başrah, 109  
Persian invasions, 115  
Reform Party of Başrah, 111  
semi-autonomy demand, 111  
World War II, 140
- bayrq al-hajjāna* (camel corps/camelry), 64–65, 75, 76, 85, 119, 147, 148, 150, 191–192*n*, *plate 7*
- Bechtel engineering company, 80, *plate 13*
- Bell, Gertrude, 22, 84, 132, 170–171, 177–178*n*, 189*n*
- Bhabha, Homi, 67
- bidāwa*, 97, 106
- al-Bilayhid, Shaykh ‘Abd Allah bin Sulayman, 135
- Biscoe, H.V., 102
- border outposts
- Abī Ghār, 65, 79
  - Ashbjah, 65, 76, 79, 87
  - Bahra Agreement (1925), 44–45
  - al-Buṣayyah, 45, 65, 76, 79
  - Ibn Saud’s concerns, 34, 44, 45, 76
  - Iraqi construction, 14, 32, 39, 44–45, 46, 76–77, 86, 87
  - Jeddah Conference (1928), 34, 45
  - Lupin Conference (1930), 45
  - Muhammara Conference (1922), 44
  - al-Salmān, 65, 79, 80, 86
  - Saudi construction, 77
  - ‘Uqayr Conference (1922), 44, 45, 76
- boundary/border issues, 10–14
- Hijaz, 166–167
  - Jawf, 167, 172–173*n*
  - as a negotiated process, 11–12
  - smuggling, 37, 69, 81
  - Transjordan, 15, 166–167, 172–173*n*
  - tribal cross-border movement, 39–48, 59–60, 101
- see also bādiya*; border outposts; cross-border raids; extradition requests; fortifications; Neutral Zone
- Bourdillon, Bernard, 32
- Braudel, Fernand, 126
- Bray, Norman, 32
- Britain
- Anglo-Iraqi Treaties, 56, 70, 86, 137–138, 155, 157
  - Anglo-Najdi Treaty (1915), 16
  - border outposts, 44, 45, 46, 87
  - compensation claims, 44
  - cross-border offensive operations, 73, 87, 138
  - Faisal as King of Iraq, 145
  - Ikhwan revolt (1929), 88–91, 200–201*n*
  - Iraqi mandate, 13, 22, 41, 62, 72, 137

- Iraqi military dependence on, 72, 73–74, 137, 157–158, 194n  
Iraqi nationalism and statehood, 130, 143–144  
military in Iraq, 72, 73–74, 131, 194n  
military support to Najd, 111  
RAF operations, 67, 73, 137, 140, 149  
refugee issue, 13, 40–41, 42  
relations with Ibn Saud, 22, 67, 101–102, 142  
Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance (1936), 20, 55, 56  
Tribal Claims Regulations (1916), 46  
warnings to Ibn Saud, 12, 39  
warnings to Faisal, 71
- Bullard, Reader, 58
- Buraydah, 16, 108, 111, 201n
- al-Buṣayyah, *plate 11, plate 14*  
border outpost, 45, 65, 76, 79  
Dhafir tribe, 121  
distance from the border, 45, 186n  
Ikhwan attack (1927), 33, 45, 83, 85–87, 138, 155, 159, 214n  
Shammar caravan raided (1923), 100
- al-Bustānī, Khalīl Ismā’il, 34
- camel corps/camelry *see bayrq al-hajjāna*
- Chalabi, ‘Abd al-Husayn, 145, 153
- Chamberlain, Austen, 89
- Churchill, Winston, 22, 140
- Clayton, Sir Gilbert, 8, 33–34, 41–42, 86, 105, 137
- compensation claims, 31, 36, 37, 43–44, 46, 47
- Cornwallis, Sir Kinahan, 34, 41, 73, 191n
- Cox, Sir Percy, 1, 2–3, 4, 12, 22–23, 31–32, 38–40, 43, 74, 111, 139, 145, 149, 173n, 177–178n, 183n, *plate 19*
- Crossroads of Civilization Museum, Dubai, 25
- Curzon, Lord, 32
- Daghārah, 131
- Dāghir, As‘ad Khalīl, 49
- Dahnā’, 79, 96
- al-Dakhīl, Sulaymān bin Ṣālah, 18–19
- Damlouji, Abdullah, 15, 32–34, 41, 56–57, 160–161, 189n, *plate 6*
- Dammām, 16, 106, 160
- Daniel, Ezra Menachem, 212n
- Dāwūd, Salmān Shaykh, 32
- Dhafir tribal federation, 27, 37, 39–40, 100, 121–122  
attacks and counter-attacks, 39, 85, 100, 121–122, 149  
cross-border migratory patterns, 101  
disputes over wells and pastures, 40  
importance to Ibn Saud, 3, 116, 121, 173n  
lineages, 122  
migration to Saudi Arabia, 121–122

- origins in the Hijaz, 116  
tribal relocation, 79
- Dhahran, 67
- Dickson, Harold Richard Patrick, 2–3, 12, 32, 88–90, 102, *plate 16*
- Dihamsha tribe  
armed clashes, 125  
Ashbah border outpost, 87  
importance to Ibn Saud, 40, 116, 123  
Iraqi Government, 122–123, 125, 209*n*  
King Saud's provincial tour (1954), 161  
Mutayr looting of camels (1928), 105  
nationality choice, 27, 33–34, 39–40, 47, 125  
subset of the 'Amarat, 24, 122  
well dispute, 124, 125
- Diri'yah, 110, 134
- Dīwānīyah province, 43, 63, 64, 73, 89
- Dobbs, Sir Henry, 32, 145
- Doumat Jandal, 193*n*
- Dowson, Sir Ernest, 81
- Dubai, 117
- Dughaither, Mohammed, 169
- Dulaym province, 36, 85
- al-Dulayshī, 'Abd al-Latīf, 112–113, 206*n*
- al-Duwaysh, Abdulaziz, 86
- al-Duwaysh, Faisal  
death (1931), 199*n*  
defeat of the Ikhwan (1929), 188*n*  
*hajar*, 67, 82  
Ikhwan attacks, 83, 85, 86–87, 105, 127, 147, 148, 188*n*, 214*n*  
revolt (1929), 67, 88, 90, 91, 200*n*  
tribal scouts, 69
- Edmonds, Cecil, 47, 79, 177*n*, 191*n*, 208*n*
- Egypt  
1919 Revolution, 56, 143  
Arab nationalism, 19–20  
defense agreement with Saudi Arabia (1955), 161, 217*n*  
Free Officers movement, 5  
rivalry with Iraq, 20  
United Arab Republic, 21
- Eilts, Hermann Frederick, 161
- extradition requests, 13, 34–35, 38, 41–43, 140, 185*n*
- Fahd bin Mu'ammar, 94, 201*n*
- Fallūjah, 78
- al-Faqīya, As'ad, 29, 141
- al-Farīḥ, Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Muhsin, 169
- al-Fayyād, 'Abd al-Hasan, 133

- Fertile Crescent Union, 20  
Fida‘ān tribe, 122  
Firmān bin Mashūr, 93  
Fowle, Trenchard, 46  
France, tribal levies in Syria, 65  
*al-Furat* newspaper, 143
- Germany, World War II, 140, 141  
al-Ghaṭṭaṭ, 82  
Ghazi I, King of Iraq, 36, 37, 162  
Ghūth, Ḥamzah Ibrāhīm, 29, 33, 36  
Glubb, John Bagot, 63, 65, 70, 78–79, 86, 88–91, 134, 186*n*, 191*n*, 199–200*n*  
al-Gosaibi, Abdulaziz, 33, 34, 104  
Grobba, Fritz, 141  
Guardians of Independence (*Hirās al-Istiqlāl*), 129, 144, 152  
Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), 163  
Gulf War (1990–91), 1–2, 163
- al-Habbānīyah, 65, 70, 140, 141  
al-Ḥadar, 66  
*hadar* (settled) populations, 10, 97, 106, 107, 116  
Hadhramawt, 117  
Hafr al-Bāṭin, 44, 105  
Ḩā'il, *plate 21*  
emirate, 119  
Hajj route, 36  
Ibn Saud's siege, 118, 119–120, 122, 209*n*  
as part of Najd, 14, 16, 17, 68  
provincial administration, 68, 193*n*  
*hajar* (planned settlements), 66–67, 82  
Hajj pilgrimage route, 30, 36, 102, 155, 163  
al-Ḥājj Ramzī Bey, 150  
Ḩamdān, Muḥammad Sa‘īd, 49  
Hamīd bin Sālim (Ibn Rifada), 13, 117–118  
al-Ḥamūd, ‘Abd al-Razzāq, 169  
Hamza, Fouad, 8, 34, 35, 47, 57, 68, 89  
Ḩaql, 118  
Harb tribe, 16, 71, 77, 78, 85, 116  
*al-Ḥāris* newspaper, 210*n*  
al-Ḥasanī, ‘Abd al-Razzāq, 26, 34, 49, 214*n*  
Al Hashem, ‘Abd al-Ilah, Prince and Regent, 38, 43, 140, 162, *plate 25*  
Al Hashem, Ali bin Hussein, 33, 71, 182*n*, 185*n*  
Al Hashem, Faisal I, King of Iraq  
Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, 137–138  
Arab Revolt (1916–1), 56  
al-Askery’s resignation (1927), 157  
attacks against the Najd, 71, 74, 91, 112  
border outposts, 44, 76

- boundary/border issues, 22, 39, 166  
British promotion as King, 145  
Ibn Rifada revolt (1932), 117  
Ikhwan revolt (1929), 88, 89–90, 91, 200n  
Karbala’ Conference (1922), 152, 154  
promise to retake Mecca, 136  
proxy forces, 64, 75  
rivalry with Ibn Saud, 8–9, 48, 49, 50–53, 89–90, 95  
sectarianism fears, 145, 146, 156  
tribal relations, 42, 71, 75, 95, 119–120, 148, 158
- Al Hashem, Faisal II, King of Iraq, 160  
Al Hashem, Sharif Hussein bin Ali, King of Hejaz  
Arab independence movement, 19, 21  
Khurma military operation, 188n  
rivalry with Ibn Saud, 7, 8, 9, 51–52, 53, 94–95  
role in diplomacy, 33
- Al Hashem, Sharif Sharaf, 140, 141  
al-Hāshimī, Tāhā, 35  
al-Hashimi, Yassin, 36, 57, 137  
Hasqil, Sassoon, 150  
Hasūn, Salīm, 211n  
*ḥawzah*, Najaf, 135, 136, 144  
Haydar, Muḥammad Rustom, 34, 145, 213n  
Hazm al-Jālamid, 80  
al-Hidhāl, Fahd, 22, 24, 32, 72, 75, 78, 122, 124, *plate 9*  
al-Hidhāl, Mahrūt, 24, 69, 75–76, 99–100, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, *plate 9*
- Hijaz  
boundary/border issues, 32, 166–167  
financial position, 102  
Ibn Saud’s peace overtures (1920s), 31, 33, 180n  
Ikhwan conquest (1925), 33–34, 62, 71, 135  
Saudi–Hijazi relations, 17, 51–52, 94–95, 102, 116  
tobacco revenues, 102  
tribal origins/ancestries, 16, 116, 122\
- Hijaz Railway, 104  
Hillah, 131, 133, 149, 154  
Hindiya Canal, 131  
*Hirās al Istiqlāl*, 129, 144, 152  
*Hizb al-Nahda* political party, 158  
Hofūf, 3, 108, 166  
Holmes, Frank, 32  
Humaydi bin Farḥān, 123  
Humphreys, Sir Francis, 34, 35  
Ḥuraymlā’, 110  
Hurma, 110  
Husayn ibn Ali, Imam, 131, 133, 153  
Husinah tribe, 122  
al-Ḥussayni, Jamāl, 190n

- Hussein, Saddam, 1–2, 143, 162, 163
- Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, Muhammad  
alliance with Al Saud, 114  
biography of, 14, 109–110, 149, 188*n*  
Najdi identity, 15, 19  
impact among the tribes, 82  
influence in Zubayr, 112, 113
- Ibn Ḥallāf, 79
- Ibn Ḥamīd, 86
- Ibn Hithlayn, 88, 90
- Ibn Jiluwi (‘Abdallah bin Jiluwi bin Turkī Al Saud), 68, 88, 102, 105
- Ibn Khaldun, 106, 114
- Ibn Khraymis, 121
- Ibn Lāmī, 90
- Ibn Lawī, Khālid bin Manṣūr, 52, 188*n*
- Ibn Mashhūr, 43, 88, 185*n*
- Ibn Muhawas, 201*n*
- Ibn Musā’id (‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Musā’id al-Jiluwi) 41, 68, 70, 92, 105, 123, *plate 21*
- Ibn Rashid, 18, 120, 122, 188*n*  
al-ibrāhīmīyah, 119
- Ichlawa, 127
- Ihsanullah, Munshi, 207*n*
- Ikhwan  
attacks on tribes and outposts, 13, 33, 39, 45, 77, 83, 85–87, 122–123, 127, 138, 148, 155, 159, 214*n*  
attacks on Shi‘a, 130, 131, 132–134, 153–154, 158, 159, *plate 23*  
British response to raids, 53, 74, 200–201*n*  
Iraqi military response, 149–150, 157–158  
Iraqi public fears about, 137  
revolt (1929), 67, 88–91  
Tā’if massacre (1924), 188*n*
- Iran (Persia) 12, 133–134  
bilateral agreements with Saudi Arabia, 36, 55  
Constitutional Revolution (1905), 132  
exiled Iraqi Shi‘a clerics, 146, 155–157  
Islamic Revolution (1979), 162  
Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Iran, 162  
Mossadeq, Mohammad, 156  
Reza Shah Pahlavi, Shah of Iran, 36, 135  
Turco–Iraqi–Iranian Non-Aggression Pact, 56
- Iran–Iraq War, 162, 163
- Iraq  
Anglo-Iraqi Treaties, 56, 70, 86, 137–138, 155, 157  
Ba‘ath Party, 143, 162, 163  
border outpost construction, 32, 44–45, 46, 76–77, 86, 87  
British mandate, 13, 22, 41, 62, 72, 137  
dependence on British military, 72, 73–74, 137, 157–158

diplomatic mission in Saudi Arabia, 35, 180*n*, *plate 4*  
ex-Sharifian officers, 137, 143, 145–146  
intellectuals, 144  
Law of Agrarian Reform, 81–82  
Law on Land Settlement (1933), 81  
Law of Nationality (1924), 41  
Law on the Rights and Duties of Cultivators (1933), 81  
Laws on Preventing Raids and Looting (1927), 80, 136  
national army planning, 64, 137, 150, 157–158  
nationalism, 5–6, 17, 20, 129–130, 142–146, 156–157, 158  
Operation Iraqi Freedom, 163  
negative perceptions of the Najd, 20, 48, 136, 149, 165–166, 187*n*  
public opinion, 28, 134–138  
Revolution (1920), 64, 119, 124, 129, 142–143, 144, 152, 157  
Revolution (1958), 81, 142, 160, 162, 179*n*  
rivalry with Egypt, 20  
sectarianism, 130, 132, 144–147, 157, 158, 165  
Shi‘a community, 129–134, 143–146, 151–158  
Summayl massacre of Assyrians (1933), 21  
threat to Kuwait (1961), 162  
*al-‘Irāq* newspaper, 135  
al-Īsfahānī, Abu al-Hasan al-Mūsawī, 151, 156, 157  
*al-Istiqlāl* newspaper, 129, 143

Jabal ‘Aniza, 122  
Jabal Ḥamrīn, 120  
Jabal Shammar, 119, 193*n*  
Jabal Shār, 118  
Jabal Sinām, 109  
Jabal tribe, 124, 125  
Jabbūr tribe, 43  
Jahrā’, Kuwait, 90, 108  
Jalājil, 111  
Jalidah, 65  
Jamīl, Fakhir al-Din, 212*n*  
al-Jamil, Mekki, 124, 125, 210*n*  
Jamīl tribe, 125  
Al Jarbā, ‘Ajīl “al-Yāwar” bin ‘Abd al-’Azīz bin Farḥān, 118, 119  
Al Jarbā, ‘Asī, 119  
Al Jarbā, Dihām bin Hādī bin ‘Aṣī bin Farḥān, 118, 119  
Al Jarbā, Farḥān, 119  
Al Jarbā, Fāris, 208*n*  
Al Jarbā, Mish‘al bin Fāris bin Farḥān, 118, 119  
al-Jariyān, Shaykh ‘Adāyi, 154  
al-Jāṣir, Hamad, 106  
Jawf  
boundary/border issues, 167, 172–173*n*  
capital moved, 193*n*

- as part of Najd, 14, 15, 68  
siege of, 185*n*
- al-Jāz‘a, Shaykh Khashān, 134, *plate 23*
- Jazirah, 78, 119, 120, 208*n*
- Jeddah, 106, 117
- Jeddah Conference (1928), 33–34, 42, 45, 47–48
- al-Jida‘ah, Husayn, 162
- al-Jida‘ān, ‘Abdallah bin Khalīl, 169
- al-Jihāma, 105
- Jirayshāt, 73
- Jizā‘a bin Rākān, 123, 128
- Jordan, 13, 21, 37, 161–163  
*see also* Transjordan
- Jubayl, 16, 71, 104, 108
- Judaydat al-‘Ar‘ar, 77, 99–100
- al-Juhany, Uwaidah M., 14–15
- Kadhimayn, 132, 135, 146, 155, 157, 158
- Kāf, 14, 167, 173*n*
- Karbala’  
declaration of independence (1915), 131  
Kamūnah family, 131–132  
pilgrimage festivals, 136, 154  
Persian and Indian Shi‘a, 131  
Wahhabi sacking of (1802), 133–134, 153–154
- Karbala’ Conference (1922), 134, 136, 151–155, 156, 158
- al-Kawākabī, ‘Abd al-Rahmān, 57
- al-Kaylani, ‘Abd al-Rahmān, 145
- al-Kaylani, Kāmil, 30
- al-Kaylani, Rashid Ali, 30, 38, 43, 140, 141–142, 191*n*
- al-Khaḍīrī, Yāsīn Chalabi, 211*n*
- Khafji, 163
- al-Khālidī, Tawfiq, 152
- Khalifa, Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh bin ‘Issa Al, 56
- al-Khāliṣī, Ayatollah Mahdī, 130, 151–152, 153, 154, 155–156, 157, 216*n*, *plate 24*
- al-Khāliṣī, Muḥammad, 155–156, 216*n*
- Khamīsīyah, 16, 108, 168
- Khān al-Nakhīlah, 71
- al-Kharj, 83
- al-Khayl, ‘Abd al-Karīm Abā, 170
- al-Khayyāl, ‘Abd Allāh, 29
- Khayyāt, Ḥinā, 150
- Khaz‘al, Shaykh, 31
- Khaz‘al tribe, 132
- al-Khīyām, 65
- Khurma, 188*n*
- al-Kirkūklī, ‘Izzat Pasha, 150
- Kitching, G.C., 89

- Knox, S.G., 32, 126  
Kubaysah, 133  
Kurds, 143, 146  
Kūt province, 82, 112  
Kuwait, 1, 2, 10, 16, 89, 103–104, 108, 121, 162, 163  
Kuwait Conference (1923–24), 13, 32–33, 40–41, 120–121, 139, 167–168
- League of Nations, 12–13, 41, 55, 56, 63, 175*n*  
Lebanon, 5, 10, 20, 170  
Līnah, 61, 69, 104, 109  
*al-Lisān* newspaper, 143  
Lizām Abā Dhirā‘a, 121  
Lupin Conference (1930), 34–35, 44–45, 47–52, 59, 187*n*, *plate 5*
- Mādī family, 110  
Madā‘in Ṣalih, 167, 173*n*  
Madhhaj confederation, Yemen, 122  
Mājid, Musayr bin ‘Abd Allāh al-Muhammad, 85  
Majlād, Jizā‘a, 123, 128  
Majlād, Muhammad bin Turkī, 122, 123  
al-Majlād, Rashīd bin Muḥammad al-Turkī, 161  
Makwaṭir, Sayyid Ḥassūn bin Sayyid ‘Ali, 133  
Mamluks, 132, 133  
al-Mandīl, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf bin Ibrāhīm, 57, 111–112, 113, 127, 128, 139, 150, 168, *plate 20*  
*al-Mandubun* (The Delegates), 144  
*al-Manhal* newspaper, 27, 116  
Mansour bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, 67  
Mardam, Jamīl, 56  
Mashhad, 156  
Maysalūn, Battle of, 56  
Mecca, 94–95, 117  
Mecca Conference (1931), 28, 35, 42  
Medina, 3, 94–95, 163, 166  
Mehmet Ali, Governor of Egypt, 134  
al-Miḍāyfī, Shaykh ‘Abd Allah, 32, 34  
al-Midfa‘ī, Ḥasan Fahmī, 65, 192*n*  
al-Midfa‘ī, Jamil, 36, 37, 140  
Mihaywīr, 65, 73, 77  
Milājī bin Muṣṭā‘a, 93  
Mosul, 138, 146, 156  
al-Mu‘ammār, Ibrāhīm bin Muḥammad, 29, 34, 53–54, 188*n*  
al-Muḥammadīyāt, 65  
Muhammara Conference (1922), 31–32, 38–41, 44, 100, 139, 149, 166  
Muhammara Treaty, 23, 32, 39, 40, 100  
al-Mumayyiz, Amīn, 30, 161  
al-Munāṣfi, Ahmad, 35  
Muntafiq province, 12, 64, 71, 100, 134–135, 149  
Muntafiq tribe, 39, 64, 75, 100, 121, 133, 149, 214*n*

*mutawwīn* (religious police), 68  
Mutayr tribe, 40, 69, 71, 77–78, 82, 85–87, 92, 99, 100, 105, 108  
al-Muzāḥmīyah, 82

Nafūd, 96, 118  
Nahda movement, 19  
Naif bin Humaid, 184n  
Najaf, 104, 120, 129–136, 144–146, 157  
Najaf Shi‘a clerics  
Najafī, Muḥammad Ḥasan, 132  
Najd  
    Anglo-Najdi Treaty (1915), 16  
    characteristics of, 14–19, 96, 114  
    citizenship, 6, 15, 40, 47, 95  
    domestic politics, 5, 42  
    drought and famines, 96, 108, 109  
    government revenues, 101–105  
    national identity, 5–6, 10, 16–19, 95, 109, 114–116, 126, 127–128, 168–170  
    oasis towns, 101, 108  
    political fragmentation, 15  
    religious factor in state growth, 114–115, 118  
    security districts, 68  
    socio-economic ties, 5, 10, 16–17, 96, 115, 116  
    trade and commerce, 94–95, 103–104, 107–108, 116  
    ulema, 17–18  
    *see also* Ikhwan; tribes  
Najd al-Fatāh, 18  
al-Naqib, Sayyid Talib, 57, 111, 143, 215n  
Nash‘āt, Ṣabīḥ, 32, 33  
al-Nāṣir, Ibrāhīm bin ‘Abd al-’Azīz, 169  
Nāṣirīyah, 63, 78, 104, 108, 120, 150–151  
Nasser, Gamal Abdul, 5, 161, 162  
Nāyif bin Ḥamid, 75  
al-Nāyinī, Shaykh Ḥusayn, 151, 156, 157  
Neutral Zone, *plate 16*  
    Agreement Administering the Neutral Zone (1938), 37  
    Dhafir tribe, 121–122  
    Ikhwan attack on al-Buṣayyah (1927), 85  
    joint Saudi–Iraqi administration proposal (1936), 47  
    Kuwait Conference (1923–24), 139  
    police stations, 45  
    Saudi customs inspectors, 77  
    smuggling, 37  
    tribal presence, 79, 101  
    ‘Uqayr Conference (1922), 3, 23, 32  
Niba‘ah, 65  
Nida‘ ibn Nuhayr, 100  
Niebuhr, Carsten, 110

- Nish‘āt, Ṣabīḥ, 3, 139  
nomads, *see badū* (nomads)  
al-Nukhayb, 65  
Nuqrat al-Salmān, 65, 70, 79, 80, 86, 88, 92, 121, *plate 8, plate 12*  
Nūrī, Bahā’ al-Dīn, 34
- Okaz* newspaper, 50  
‘Otayba tribe, 16, 51, 71, 75, 77–78, 85, 116, 184*n*  
Ottoman Empire, 18, 21, 25, 57, 78, 81, 108, 110, 118, 124, 131–132, 144–145, 168  
outposts, *see border outposts*  
Oz, Amos, 164
- al-Pachachi, Ḥamdī, 211*n*  
pan-Arabism, 19–21, 54–55, 56  
Philby, Harry St. John, 34, 45, 57, 68, 189–190*n*  
Protocol of Arbitration (1931), 35
- al-Qādir, Aḥmad ‘Abd, 141  
Qadrī, Taḥṣīn, 34  
Qā’im, 65  
al-Qarqanī, Khālid, 190*n*  
Qasim, ‘Abd al-Karim, 81, 124, 143, 162  
Qassīm, 14, 67–68, 112–113  
al-Qaṣūr, 65  
Qaṭīf, 3, 16, 111, 166  
al-Qayṣūmah, 80, *plate 13*  
*al-Qibla* newspaper, 201*n*  
al-Qissām, al-Ḥājj ‘Abbūd, 136  
Quzāz, Sayyid Sa‘id, 124
- Rabi‘a tribe, 132  
al-Rabīy‘a, Aḥmad bin Ibrāhīm, 169  
Rafḥā’, 1, 80  
al-Rahman, Farhan, 103  
al-Raḥbah, 65  
Raja‘ān bin Thunayān, 92–93  
Rakhīmīyah, 45, 199*n*  
Ramādī, 36, 73, 78  
Rashīd Riḍā, 57, 116  
Ras Tanura, 104  
Rashīd bin Nāṣir Ibn Layla, 29  
Al Rāshid family, 110, 118–120, 193*n*  
Al Rāshid, Ibrāhīm bin ‘Abd Allāh bin Ibrāhīm, 113  
Rawdah Ḥaydarīyah, 133  
Rawdat Sudayr, 111  
Rawdat Tanhat Agreement (1940), 27, 28, 38, 41, 59–60, 61  
al-Rawi, Abdul Jabbar, 61–63, 66, 76, 80, 88, 90–92, 119, 190*n*, *plate 15*  
refugees, 13–14, 78, 89

- Bahra Agreement (1925), 40  
British concept of, 13, 40–41, 42  
Gulf War (1990–91), 1  
as a Western concept, 12–13  
Kuwait Conference (1923–24), 13, 39  
Shammar, 39, 40–41, 120  
Renan, Ernest, 130–131  
al-Rifa‘ī, Hāshim bin Sayyid Aḥmad, 33, 57, 139, 180–181*n*  
al-Rihani, Ameen Fares, 3, 32, 50–52, 57, 173*n*  
Riyadh, 19, 106, 108  
*al-Riyadh* newspaper, 18  
al-Rubay‘ī, Muḥammad Najīb, 30  
al-Ruṭbah, 65, 66, 73, 80  
Rūwalla tribe, 122
- Sabāh* newspaper, 155  
al-Şabbāgh, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, 21, 28, 37  
Şakūr tribe, 125  
al-Şālah, Aḥmad al-Ḥamad, 169  
Ṣalah bin ‘Adil, 71  
Al Sabah, Shaykh Ahmad al-Jaber, 32, 40, 102, 105  
al-Sabhān, Ibrāhīm bin Sālim, 120, 193*n*  
al-Sabhān, Nurā, 3  
al-Sābiq, Fawzān, 179*n*  
Sa‘d bin ‘Abdulrahman, 51  
al-Sā‘dawī, Bashīr, 190*n*  
Al Sa‘dūn, ‘Abd al-Muhsin, 136, 145, 193*n*  
Al Sa‘dūn family, 112, 121  
Sa‘dūn, Yūsuf al-Manṣūr Al, 42, 64, 75, 121, 147, 148, 149, 184–185*n*  
Safwān, 65, 108, 109  
Sa‘īd, Amīn, 141, 186*n*  
al-Said, Nuri, 20, 27–28, 35, 37–38, 42, 69, 140, 178*n*  
Arab nationalism, 28  
British Mandate in Iraq, 137  
execution (1958), 162, 179*n*  
fact-finding committee on Ikhwan raids, 150  
friendship with Damlouji, 57, 189*n*  
Iraqi national army planning, 137, 150, 157  
political skills, 20, 28, 58, 179*n*  
Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance (1936), 37, 55–56, 58  
visit to Jeddah (1931), 55  
Sakākā, 68, 83, 167, 173*n*, 193*n*  
Salafism, 95, 110, 114–115, 116–117, 118, 126  
    *see also* Wahhabism  
al-Salmān *see* Nuqrat al-Salmān  
Salzman, Philip Carl, 102  
Samarra, 132, 144–145  
Samāwah, 16, 43, 63, 65, 75, 104, 108, 112, 120, 134, 148, 168, 214*n*

al-Sanūssī, Ahmād, 13  
Sarkīs, Ya'qūb, 212*n*  
Al Saud, 'Abd al-Rahmān bin Faisal, Imam, 111  
Al Saud, Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman al-Faisal (Ibn Saud), King of Saudi Arabia, *plate 19*, *plate 25*  
access to water for his people, 4, 9, 39–40, 45, 47  
Anglo-Najdi Treaty (1915), 16  
Arab nationalism, 21, 49–50, 52, 54–55, 58  
border outposts, 31, 34, 44, 45, 76  
cross-border tribal discipline, 19, 69  
extradition requests, 41–42, 43, 140, 185*n*  
familiarity with important Iraqi families, 139–142  
financial support to Salafi groups, 116–117  
foreign affairs communications and contacts, 30, 179*n*  
generosity and hospitality, 102, 103  
government revenues, 101–105  
Ibn Mu'ammar's near recall, 53–54  
Islamic umma, 52  
letter to his Kuwait Conference negotiating team, 167–168  
al-Mandīl family, 112, 168  
Masmak Fort, 172*n*  
meeting with al-Shanqītī, 112–113  
motivations towards the Najd, 14–18, 108, 114, 115, 116–117, 118, 126  
name, 24–25  
provincial administration, 68, 193*n*  
relations with Britain, 12, 22, 101–102, 104–105  
relations with Ikhwan, 34, 44, 53, 59, 66–67, 74, 82–83, 85–87, 89–92, 147–148, 188*n*  
rivalry with Hashemites, 7, 8–9, 28, 48, 49, 50–53, 58, 89–90, 94–95, 126, 160, 173*n*  
siege of Hā'il, 118, 119–120, 122, 209*n*  
support for Palestinian causes, 28, 50, 178*n*  
support for Syrian causes, 28, 50, 56, 178*n*  
trade bans and blockades, 94–95, 103–104, 108, 116, 121  
tribal relations, 3, 9, 13, 15, 39–40, 70–71, 82–83, 84, 101, 114, 116, 119–121, 123, 173*n*, 184*n*, 186*n*  
World War II, 140–141  
Zubayr, 111, 169  
Al Saud, Faisal bin Abdulaziz, King of Saudi Arabia, 27, 30, 32, 36, 37–38, 58, 161  
Al Saud, Muhammad bin Abdulaziz, Prince, 162  
Al Saud, Saud bin Abdulaziz (1748–1814), Imam of Najd, 133  
Al Saud, Saud bin Abdulaziz (1902–1969), King of Saudi Arabia, 18, 37, 58, 122, 142, 161–162  
Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of  
    bilateral agreements with Iran/Yemen, 36, 55  
    defense agreement with Egypt (1955), 161, 217*n*  
    diplomatic mission in Iraq, 29, *plate 3*  
    Directorate of Foreign Affairs, 179*n*  
    established (1932), 16, 17  
    Iran–Iraq War, 162, 163  
    Iraqi diplomatic mission, 35, 180*n*, *plate 4*  
    Jeddah Pact (1956), 217*n*

- military forces, 37, 67–68, 160  
National Day, 17–18  
National Guard, 67, 68  
provincial administration, 68  
ties with Egypt, 37, 217n  
Al Sha‘alān, Nūri, 14, 185n  
al-Sha‘bah, 80  
al-Shabībī, Shaykh Muḥammad Bāqr, 153, 211n  
al-Shabīlī, Muḥammad bin Ḥamad, 29–30, 113, 169, 219–220n  
al-Shabkah, *see* Ashbahah  
Shallāsh, ‘Abd al-Muhsin, 145, 146  
Shāmīyah district, 43, 89, 149  
Shammar tribal federation, 118–121  
and Britain, 119, 120, 124  
branches of the Shammar, 119–120  
cross-border raids, 39, 69, 75, 120, 125, 161  
geographic spread of, 118–119, 208n  
Iraq defines as “political refugees”, 40  
Iraqi Government, 118, 120, 123–124  
Ottoman Empire, 119, 124  
refugees, 39, 40–41, 120  
Saudi payments, 161  
settlement projects, 123–124, 125  
status of, 3, 13, 27, 32–33, 38–39, 40–41, 59–60, 61, 120–121, 173n  
al-Shanīfī, Shaykh Sulaymān, 61  
al-Shanqītī, Muhammād Amīn, 111, 112–114, 168, 169, 206n  
al-Sharāyī, ‘Ali Khulqī, 33  
*al-Sharq* newspaper, 143  
Shatt al-Arab, 111  
al-Shawī, ‘Abd al-Majīd, 132, 211n  
Shawkat, Nājī, 34, 88  
al-Shihāb, Lima’, 207n  
al-Shīrāzī, Ayatollah Muḥammad Taqī, 143, 152, 211n  
al-Shīrāzī, Muḥammad Ḥasan, 144  
al-Shu‘aybah, 70, 92–93, 112  
Shukrah, 65, 69  
Shukrī, Maḥmūd, 63  
Sibilla battle (1929), 67, 88, 102  
Sidqi, Bakr, 21, 36, 37, 140  
Sinjar, 66, 124  
al-Soudani, Sadiq Hassan, 24, 26, 48–49, 186n, 200n  
al-Sowayel, Ibrahim, 29, 30, 162  
Subay‘ī (Suba’ah) tribe, 85, 122  
al-Sudayrī, Turkī bin Aḥmad, 99–100, 202n  
Sulayman, Hikmat, 36, 37, 57, 140  
Sūq al-Shuyūkh, 16, 108, 168, *plate 2*  
al-Suwaydi family, 140  
al-Suwaydi, Naji, 34, 35, 57, 100, 137, 141, 150

- al-Suwaydi, Tawfiq, 33, 34, 45, 47–48, 53, 137, 139–140, 150, 185*n*  
Suwaylim, tribe, 24, 92  
Al Suwayt, ‘Ajmī, 121, 128  
Al Suwayt, ‘Alī bin Dūwayhī, 121  
Al Suwayt, Ḥamūd Ibn, 39, 109, 121, 148, 149  
Al Suwayt, Jida‘ān, 121  
Syria, 5, 20, 137, 161, 170  
colonial powers creation of political borders, 10  
French tribal levies, 65  
Ibn Saud’s interest in, 28, 50, 56, 104–105, 178*n*  
independence issue, 17, 21  
sectarianism, 5  
United Arab Republic, 21
- al-Ṭabāṭabā’i, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, 149, 215*n*  
al-Ṭabāṭabā’i, Muḥammad Mahdī, 145  
Tabūk, 68  
Tā’if massacre (1924), 188*n*  
Ṭālib, Nājī, 162  
Tall Afar, 66, 124  
Tall al-Lahām, 64, 65  
Tapline (Trans-Arabian Pipeline), 80, 81, *plate 13*  
Tariki, Abdullah, 18, 24  
Taymā’, 167, 173*n*  
al-Tayy’ tribe, 132  
al-Thunayān, Aḥmad, 32, 170–171, 180*n*  
al-Thunayān, Iffat, 180*n*  
Tikrit, 124  
al-Timyāṭ, Bargash, 120  
al-Timyāṭ, Mish‘al, 120, 161  
Toynbee, Arnold, 12  
Trans-Arabian Pipeline (Tapline), 80, 81, *plate 13*  
Transjordan  
*bādiya* policy, 72  
boundary issues, 15, 166–167, 172–173*n*  
Fertile Crescent Union, 20  
Ibn Rifada revolt (1932), 117, 118  
Jeddah Conference (1928), 34  
Kuwait Conference (1923–24), 33  
*see also* Jordan  
Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance (1936), 20, 21, 36–37, 49, 55–56, 58, 140, 141  
Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbors, 28, 34–35, 48  
tribes  
‘Adnān and Qaḥṭān, 18  
‘arda (dance), 111  
‘asabīyah (group solidarity), 15, 204*n*  
concept of, 16, 47–48, 97–101, 106  
ghāra and ghazw (raids), 99

*khāwa* (protection fees), 70–71, 99, 100  
*khuda'* (grazing fees), 99, 100  
*nahab* (looting), 42, 63, 99, 105, 123, 133  
*qaṭa' al-tarīq* (banditry), 42, 79, 80, 99  
*ṣalabī*, 99  
*sanad* (pledges by tribal leaders), 46, 78, 100  
smuggling, 37, 69, 81  
'urf (tribal law), 46, 47, 70, 100, 150  
*wasga*, 92  
wells and pastures, 4, 9, 37, 39–40, 44, 45, 47, 76, 86, 87, 97–99, 101  
*see also* Iraqi tribes; Najdi tribes

Turayf, 80

Turbah, battle of (1918), 3, 51–52, 115, 201n

Turkey, 10, 37, 56

Ubayd tribe, 132

*Umm al-Qura* newspaper, 89

Umm al-Rahāl (1924), 63, 78

Umm Qasr, 109

Ummayads, 131

'Unayzah, 16, 112, 113

United Arab Republic, 21, 162

United Nations, 30

'Uqaylat, 94, 95, 115–116, 126, 128, 207n

'Uqayr, 16, 104

'Uqayr Conference (1922), 1, 2–4, 15, 23, 39, 40, 44–45, 47, 76, 86, 100, 139, 172n, 173n

'Uqayr Protocols, 32, 40, 43, 44, 47, 76, 86, 100, 177n

al-'Uwayqīliyah, 80

'Uyaynah, 188n

Wādī al-Bāṭin, 61, 88, 108–109

Wādī al-Khirr, 66

Wādī al-Sirhān, 15, 167, 172–173n

Wahba, Hafiz, 13, 33–34, 35–36, 55, 56–58, 112, 178n

Wahhabism, 15, 19, 110, 114, 116, 130, 139, 206n,

*see also* Salafism

al-Wardī, 'Ali, 9, 166

Waṭbān family, 110

World War I, 63, 70, 104, 112

World War II, 49, 140–141

Yanbu', 3, 166

al-Yāsirī, Sayyid 'Alwān, 153

al-Yāsirī, Sayyid Nūr, 151, 153

Yassin, Yusuf, 33, 34, 47, 51–52, 53–54, 56, 66, 184n, 196n, 199n

al-Yāwar, Aḥmad, 124

al-Yāwar, Shaykh 'Ajīl, 33, 64, 75, 120–125, *plate 10*

Yemen, 36, 55, 162–163, 217n

Zaghoul, Sa‘ad, 56  
*zakat* (religious tithes), 70–71, 92, 99–100, 105, 121, 148, 149  
al-Ziriklī, Khayr al-Dīn, 51–52, 178*n*, 190*n*  
Ziyād tribe, 73, 89, 121, 148, 161  
Zubayd tribe, 132  
Zubayr, 15, 85, 108–111, 116, 120, 161, *plate 1*, *plate 17*, *plate 18*  
attitudes toward religion and education, 118  
caravan taxes, 104, 168  
education, 112–114  
family rivalries, 110  
growth of, 109, 110, 205*n*  
Hanbali madrassa, 110, 112, 113–114, 169  
leadership of the town, 110–112  
location, 109  
loss of trade status, 170  
market prices, 108  
Najadi mosque, 110  
Najdi heritage, 16, 17, 108–109, 110–111, 127, 168–169  
Ottoman period, 110, 168  
Salafism, 110, 118  
World War I, 168  
al-Zubayr bin al-‘Awām, 109  
Zuhayr family, 110



Thank you for reading this Sussex Academic e-Library book.

Sussex Academic serves the international academic community and promotes learning and scholarship to a global audience. The editorial and production staff are committed to publishing to the highest standards across a wide range of academic subject disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The Press supports authors through strong editorial and development skills, and is committed to serving the world of scholarship by promoting our authors' writing and research endeavours so that they make the maximum impact on their readership and profession.

The Press publishing programme addresses issues of contemporary relevance and debate in Middle East topics, Theology & Religion, History, and Literary Criticism. University editorship and publishing cooperation with universities mostly falls under the Sussex Libraries of Study, which include Latin American, First Nations, Spanish History, and Asian studies.

Full details of the Press publishing programme can be found at the Press website

[www.sussex-academic.com](http://www.sussex-academic.com)

E-book availability of titles are indicated on the Press website book title pages by the logo



*"Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations ... Their authors are a natural and irresistible aristocracy in every society, and, more than kings and emperors, exert an influence on mankind."*

HENRY DAVID THOREAU, 1817–62

