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THE SULTAN AND THE REBEL: SAʿDUN AL-MANSUR'S REVOLT IN THE MUNTAFIQ, C. 1891–1911

Abstract
From 1891 to 1911, a disenfranchised shaykh of the Muntafiq tribe, Saʿdun al-Mansur, led a large uprising against Ottoman rule in southern Iraq. Feeling that he had been disinherited from properties that were his birthright, he fought battle after battle against rival family claimants, shaykhs in Arabia and the Gulf, and reformist Ottoman governors in Baghdad and Basra. This article analyzes Saʿdun's insurgency both within the context of his life and against the background of shifting socioeconomic and political events in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf at the turn of the 20th century. One of the last rebellions against Ottoman central authority in southern Iraq, the insurgency was also notable for the indirect but intriguing links between the rebel shaykh and his nominal overlord Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II, who paid special attention to the rebel's fate.

Over the last few decades, scholars of the Ottoman Empire have displayed a renewed interest in the policies of governmental centralization in the imperial hinterlands of Anatolia, the Balkans, and the Arab provinces.[1] The provinces of Baghdad, Mosul, and Basra in present-day Iraq have received much of this attention, with monographs and articles appearing recently on such subjects as the "legitimating ideology" behind Hamidian policy as reflected in government strategies; the relationship between religious revival and sectarian identities in the formulation of imperial policy; the innovations and adaptations undergirding Ottoman administrative practice; and the consequences of tribal movements and political reform in the hinterlands surrounding urban centers.[2] Specific topics that seem to have attracted the most scholarly interest are the interplay between Ottoman imperial strategy and tribal movements in the center and south of Iraq, sometimes but not always accompanied by religious revival on the ground; separatist sentiments in the port town of Basra; wavering urban loyalties in Baghdad and Mosul; and the continuous infringement by Britain on perceived Ottoman prerogatives, especially on the Gulf littoral.[3] In this scholarly literature on Iraq during the last decades of Ottoman rule, the question of the settlement of Iraqi tribes has taken pride of place—as it must, considering the importance assigned to tribal sedentarization by Tanzimat-era *vali*s and

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the various steps taken by Ottoman officialdom in Baghdad to apply the letter of the law to the more remote parts of the Iraqi tribal countryside.

The settlement of nomadic local tribes was a recurring motif of Ottoman policy in Iraq during the second half of the 19th century, as evinced by the many dispatches between the central government in Istanbul and its local representatives.[4] Drawing on this important corpus of evidence, historians of late Ottoman Iraq maintain that from the 1860s onward, novel administrative policies pursued by the local governments of Baghdad and Basra with regard to the land question transformed developments in the agricultural belt. Building upon reform attempts by earlier governors to resolve the vexed land question, Midhat Pasha introduced the Ottoman Land Law of 1858 two months after his arrival in Baghdad in 1869. The law was meant to transform land tenure in south-central Iraq through the registration of agricultural lands in the names of the individual peasant owners who actually tilled them, but it was not a complete success. Although *ṭāpu* (or permanently leased state) lands were pioneered in some areas, only in districts such as Hindiyya and Hilla-Diwaniya did peasant cultivators actually become the owners of title deeds and expand production.[5] In other districts, urban merchants, notables, tax farmers, and, most important for this article, tribal shaykhs grasped the potential for profit far more rapidly than did the peasantry. Availing themselves of the new opportunities presented by the reformist state, they became absentee landlords of tribal lands that were previously held collectively.

There were several ways that the Porte could affect changes within the tribal administration of the rural periphery. One historian has termed the sum of measures taken by the Baghdad government to curb the tribes as the "carrot and stick approach."[6] The stick was exemplified by Ottoman troops' deterrence of aggressive and expansionist tribes and by forceful economic measures instituted to bring the tribes in line. While government forces were occasionally defeated by tribal insurgents, military offensives undertaken under the aegis of strong *vali*s such as Namiq Pasha and Midhat Pasha were largely successful in the second half of the century.[7] In conjunction with the threat of force, the "carrot" policy included pressuring tribal shaykhs to accept the systematic diminution of tribal lands through government appropriation in return for their investiture as tax farmers in their home districts. Some tribal shaykhs did not agree as readily as others to this concession, so the Ottomans had to diligently woo the shaykhs who did break with tribal tradition by offering them substantial rewards.[8] This policy thus sowed further divisions among already fractious tribes, by rewarding one shaykh with governmental recognition as a state appointee while disregarding the claims of his rival. The Ottoman policy of quelling local tribal rebels largely followed the traditions of setting the rebel's relatives against him by means of bribes or promises of government posts and, as a last resort, of attempting to militarily crush rebellious shaykhs.[9]

It was only with the registration of communally owned tribal lands in the name of paramount shaykhs that a more consistent policy of creating a feudal class wedded to the steady growth of agricultural profits became a reality. Yet some scholars of both Ottoman Iraq and the Ottoman Gulf have pointed out that these state centralization policies were not completely successful in the 19th century and may even have been counterproductive.[10] The Muntafiq districts are a case in point. Midhat Pasha's strategy of creating an Ottoman imprimatur in what had been a tribal frontier zone—by attempting to settle the Muntafiq tribes in Nasiriyya, the new Belgian-designed showpiece that

became the "capital" of the Muntafiq *liwāʾ* (subgovernorate) in 1871—eventually sowed the seeds for a sustained rebellion led by one of the tribal confederation's own sons. Shaykh Saʿdun al-Mansur's uprising against the Porte's policies in south-central Iraq created a headache for the central government, and particularly for Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II, who followed the rebellion very closely.

In this article, we argue that, unlike the protonationalist movements erupting in other parts of the Ottoman Empire in this period, Saʿdun al-Mansur's rebellion was not so much an anti-Ottoman insurrection as a personal quest to reconstitute the totality of the Muntafiq *imāra* (chieftaincy) in all its former glory, with Saʿdun as the paramount shaykh. His quest thus harked back to an era before the Ottoman Tanzimat, which had circumscribed his world. If the historic Muntafiq state of the 16th to the early 18th centuries, unified and supreme over all its territories, had by his time become an anomaly, he strove for it nonetheless. While he made alliances with other shaykhs and tribal leaders across the region in pursuit of this aim, the surprising feature of his rebellion was how little he strayed from his loyalty to the Ottoman sultan. At the same time that regional notables in Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Arabia were deserting the Ottoman government and staking their futures on British power, Saʿdun continued to communicate regularly with the Porte (albeit through intermediaries), and at times hoped the sultan would forgive his excesses and grant him a reprieve with a state salary. And while his death was attributed to imperial treachery even in his day, our research reveals that Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II had no hand in the matter. In sum, although Saʿdun's rebellion only makes sense when viewed against the backdrop of the shaykh's quest for regional autonomy, that worldview still incorporated a certain idea of the sultanate (if not the Porte as a whole) as an arbiter of the last resort and a mediator in times of crisis. As a corollary, evidence exists—slight though it may be—to suggest that Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid's view of Saʿdun was sometimes more charitable than that of the Porte's men on the ground, the *vali*s of Baghdad and Basra.

PROLOGUE TO SAʿDUN AL-MANSUR'S REBELLION

A brief historical overview of the changes introduced in the administration of the Muntafiq districts will help to explain the difficult legacy of Ottoman/Muntafiq relations in the context of Saʿdun's revolt. Albertine Jwaideh has argued that in the process of rationalizing the agricultural and commercial potential of the Iraqi provinces for the benefit of the imperial treasury, Ottoman policies created severe disruption in established practice.[11] This was not completely the work of reformist Ottoman *vali*s but partly the consequence of the troubled nature of the Muntafiq itself. The unsettled state of the tribe usually arose from the endemic infighting between paramount shaykhs and their competitors for the post, first, of *multazim* or tax farmer appointed by the government (a position that allowed paramount shaykhs of the big tribal confederations to collect tax revenue both for themselves and the central government in Istanbul) and, after 1871, of *mutaṣarrif* or governor of an administrative district carved out of the tribal domain. In addition to internal struggles within the tribe brought about by long-term crises between peasants, *sirkal*s (midlevel shaykhs), and paramount shaykhs, the off-and-on application of centralization policies to the Muntafiq region by Baghdad-based governors from the 1850s onward initiated a serious realignment and fragmentation of tribal power, such

that by the turn of the 20th century the Muntafiq was a fractious collection of tribes, sections, and families.

In 1863–64, the *vali* of Baghdad, Namiq Pasha, appointed shaykh Mansur Rashid al-Saʿdun—one of the scions of the Saʿdun family, the traditional leaders of the Muntafiq tribal confederation—to the post of *qaʾīmaqām* (deputy governor) of Suq al-Shuyukh, then the chief administrative center of the vast Muntafiq district and its most important market town.[12] He also became the *multazim* of the region. This was the second time that Mansur al-Saʿdun had been granted the latter post, and it was to be his last. Mansur may have accepted the Ottoman administrative title of *qaʾīmaqām* in order to underline his victory in the internecine wars with his brothers and cousins, which was sealed by his acceptance of the ultimate prize within the tribe itself, the title of *shaykh al-mashāyikh* (paramount chief) of the Muntafiq. Mansur received this particular honorific after a bloody battle with his brother Faris, but held it only temporarily before another brother, the celebrated Nasir al-Saʿdun, paid a higher tribute to the government of Baghdad for the privilege of acting as *multazim* by collecting the prescribed revenue for the Porte. In 1867–68, Nasir became the paramount shaykh of the Muntafiq, ousting both Mansur and Faris.[13] Ottoman recognition of Nasir's primacy came only after the alienation of vast tracts of Muntafiq territory to the government of Baghdad, inevitably weakening the Saʿduns' hold on the Muntafiq tribe. Continuing until 1863–64, when the last detachment of former Muntafiq districts took place, this process had always been accompanied by force—both as a result of the internecine wars between the brothers Faris, Mansur, and Nasir for the coveted, long-held title of *multazim* and as a consequence of the battles fought against government troops by various Muntafiq shaykhs, which continued into the early 20th century.

After Nasir defeated his brother Mansur (and other Muntafiq contenders) to become the *qaʾīmaqām* of Suq al-Shuyukh and an Ottoman tax farmer, the Muntafiq shaykhs disenfranchised by his appointment were to witness yet another threat to the control of their ancestral lands. In 1870, Midhat Pasha prevailed upon Nasir to become the first *mutaṣarrif* (governor) of the newly created *liwāʾ* of the Muntafiq. In addition to consolidating the remaining Muntafiq *dīra* or tribal domain into a compact taxpaying district, Nasir supervised the building of a new town, Nasiriyya, named after himself, and pledged to keep the whole area peaceful. One of the grievances of Shaykh Mansur and his immediate family, therefore, was that Shaykh Nasir, Mansur's own brother, had forever turned the tables against them insofar as governmental recognition was concerned. Nevertheless, it must be noted that even before Nasir's appointment became known, some of the Muntafiq shaykhs had developed qualms about allying themselves too closely to the government. In fact, Mansur had already joined the opposition and distanced himself from the local government in Baghdad.[14] He was accompanied in his resistance by members of his immediate family, among them his remarkable son, Saʿdun, for whom the defeat must have registered deeply, as it must have for all of Mansur's kinsmen. Biding his time and planning his revenge, Saʿdun chose to retreat to the borderlands between Iraq and Persia with his father and relatives, to wait for a change in his family's fortunes.

It was not long in coming. In 1876, Shaykh Nasir al-Saʿdun, who had faithfully executed Ottoman orders in lower Iraq (even becoming governor of Basra in 1874), was sent into exile in Istanbul and replaced by an Ottoman official.[15] Although he

was appointed a member of the Council of State (Majlis al-Shura) in 1877, Nasir in effect remained a hostage in Istanbul until his death in 1885.[16] In lieu of deputizing another Saʿdun shaykh to run the Muntafiq district capital, an Ottoman contingent was dispatched to keep order, thus bringing to a close the experiment of choosing a local notable to run a tribal region in the Porte's name.

Several scholars have shown that when Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II came to power in 1876, he was determined to instill more forceful policies throughout his realm.[17] One aspect of this rejuvenated imperial policy was that centralizing Ottoman *vali*s in Iraq were provided more support in enforcing tribal strategy. In 1880, the Ottoman administrations of Baghdad and Basra seized upon a chance to manipulate local rivalries to their benefit. The context was a recurring conflict between Qasim Pasha al-Zuhair, from the Zuhair family of Zubair (a town west of Basra), and several Saʿdun shaykhs, of whom Mansur was the most prominent. Having accepted an Ottoman garrison in 1874, the inhabitants of Zubair called upon the Porte's representatives in Baghdad and Basra to help them stave off Muntafiq designs on their town.[18] Although the Porte under ʿAbd al-Hamid II's guidance initially prevaricated, local officials in Baghdad finally provoked an offensive against the rebel shaykhs of the Muntafiq.[19] This led to the 1881 battle of the *raʾīs* (or commander)—so called because the victorious side was led by the commander of the Baghdad-based Sixth Army, Brigadier ʿIzzat Pasha—in which the fragile unity of the Muntafiq *imāra* was finally exposed and collapsed altogether. With 8,000 troops at his command, ʿIzzat Pasha inflicted a major defeat on the Muntafiq tribes in the Hayy district. As Jwaideh notes, the "Saʿdun shaykhs fled and were scattered, many of the principal shaykhs eventually finding refuge in Persia."[20]A tragic consequence of the defeat was the capture in 1885 of Mansur himself, along with several of his brothers and cousins. After three years of lying low in their desert refuge, they were taken to Baghdad, "where they spent the rest of their lives under the eye of the Ottoman authorities, [with] Mansur dying there in 1886."[21]

SAʿDUN AL-MANSUR'S REBELLION IN THE MUNTAFIQ: THE FIRST PHASE

After the 1881 crisis, some of the Muntafiq shaykhs were forced to abandon their lands, while others made arrangements to lease them out to "small sectional chiefs or sarkals, thus bypassing the shaykhs."[22] After two or three years' absence, the Saʿdun shaykhs returned to find that these sectional chiefs were now cultivating shaykhly lands as if they were their own. Gokhan Cetinsaya explains:

> The real problems (from the government point of view) took place when, at the turn of the century, members of the Sadun family returned to the Muntafiq and began to claim their former lands. Though some succeeded in regaining their lands, through purchase or agreement, others encountered opposition from the sarkals. This led to a great deal of trouble in the confederation, aggravated by the tribesmens' posession of large numbers of modern rifles.[23]

Moreover, much of the land was confiscated by the state in the wake of the Muntafiq defeat. Shaykhs had to petition the central government in Istanbul to have them returned, and each case was assessed on its own merits. Thus, in 1900 Falih Pasha—son of the famous Nasir Pasha, who had cooperated with Midhat Pasha to settle the Muntafiq

tribes—received permission to return to his former lands, in part because of his probity and the respect accorded him by his followers and by the local government of Basra.[24] But even he had to pay the state 312,000 *kurus* for the return of his former lands, on which he wanted to build a mosque.[25] Similar situations multiplied, undoubtedly causing wide resentment among the chiefs of the Saʿdun family, among whom was Saʿdun al-Mansur.

During the last decade of the 19th century, these grievances helped to spur one of the more spectacular protest movements in the Muntafiq. The long military campaign was carried out by Shaykh Saʿdun al-Mansur al-Saʿdun, the son of Shaykh Mansur, whose defeat in 1881 at the hands of the Ottoman army had set off a chain reaction culminating in Saʿdun al-Mansur's uprising. Mounted simultaneously against Ottoman authority in lower Iraq and rival factions of the al-Saʿdun family, the rebellion strove to return the Muntafiq *imāra* to the status quo ante. This is quite evident in the wide swathe Saʿdun cut in the former territories of the Muntafiq. But as Saʿdun fought to regain an independence that had long since disappeared even in the most remote parts of the once-formidable Muntafiq *imāra*, his brief flashes of glory heralded another, far more dangerous, decline for himself and his tribal faction. The very fact that he had to fight on several fronts to achieve mastery was reflective of the changes that had occurred in relations between the tribal periphery and the local governments of Baghdad and Basra. No longer a supreme commander who enjoyed absolute loyalty from his own tribe and tribal allies in the region, he was to resort to murder and bribery in order to achieve his short-lived success.

Saʿdun's rebellion must be contextualized within the constellations of power in the broader region during a time of great ferment. Several influential blocs can be delineated in south-central Iraq at the end of the 19th century. There were the tribes, whose leadership had been greatly weakened by Ottoman land grabs, military offensives, and political manipulation throughout the century, all of which had contributed to the development of relatively autonomous tribal subsections wielding guns against their former shaykhs and dipping into the revenues of formerly communal lands, now technically falling under the rubric of private property.[26] There were also the urban notables of Basra and neighboring towns—merchants, landholders, and religious clerics—whose divergent interests sometimes intersected with those of regional elites in Kuwait, Arabistan (now Khuzistan, in southern Iran), northern and central Arabia, and even India. In Basra, the fulcrum of all regional trade from Bombay to Baghdad, the most powerful figures were those with large property holdings and commercial interest in rice, dates, horses, and slaves. Undoubtedly the most notorious was Sayyid Talib, a son of the Naqib al-Ashraf (the head of the families who descended from the Prophet's house), but other merchants and landowners were also important. Moreover, the influence of regional elites on lower Iraq was nothing short of extraordinary. Whether these were the Sabah amirs from Kuwait, the Rashid and Saʿud shaykhs from northern and central Najd, respectively, or the rulers of Muhammara in Arabistan across the Shatt al-ʿArab, these forces and their constantly changing alliances affected the region in manifold ways.[27] And, finally, there was the encroaching weight of Britain's pretensions to control of Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, the rest of the Gulf littoral, and southern Iraq itself, and its unceasing competition with local and central Ottoman authorities, which gave the region a dynamism as well as an instability that merited copious comments by both foreign and local observers.

From 1891, then, and especially from 1903 onward,[28] Saʿdun began a concerted military campaign to evict rival claimants to the al-Saʿdun *mashāykha* from lands he

considered part of the tribal patrimony. Prior to the mid-19th century, these had comprised vast territories from Fao to Samawa and Diwaniya on the Euphrates, lands on both banks of the Shatt al-ʿArab, plus "Kut on the Tigris southwards to ʿUzayr, and from Kut eastwards to the Iranian border."[29] The first that is heard of Saʿdun is in the Arabic sources ten years after the catastrophic 1881 battle of the *raʾīs*. Having returned from their exile in the Shamiyya desert, certain shaykhs of the Dhafir and the Budair tribes—allied with the Muntafiq—approached the incumbent Muntafiq shaykh, Falih Nasir al-Saʿdun, to reestablish a leadership council that would defend and protect the Muntafiq and the tribes allied with them from tribal raids.[30] The most crucial demand put forward to Falih by the Dhafir and Budair tribes was to resurrect the former position of the Muntafiq tribe after its devastating defeat in 1881. Shaykh Falih, known for his piety and religious devotion, apologized for not being able to lead on this issue and referred them instead to his cousin Saʿdun. The rest, as they say, is history. According to a chronicle of the Muntafiq written by one of its native sons, Saʿdun never looked back after that fateful day in 1891.[31] That said, the verdict on Saʿdun by the same author was that the righteousness of the shaykh's case was severely compromised by his violent and aggressive behavior and wanton cruelty, so that even those who saw his case as just deserted him in the end.[32]

Setting up his headquarters in Shatt al-Kar, a district between Nasiriyya and Samawa on the Euphrates, Saʿdun began raiding the tribes settled throughout the area, "from Hit to Kuwait."[33] His policy seemed to be to return all the Muntafiq territories that had slipped out of the tribe's grasp back to their former occupants. He inflicted one defeat after another on tribes and shaykhs who had taken advantage of the Muntafiq tribe's momentary weakness to inhabit those lands. But while his initial successes against tribes that had dared to break with his family's branch of the al-Saʿdun leadership established his fearsome reputation across lower Iraq, he failed to amass the revenues he was after. The socioeconomic situation in the Muntafiq territories had changed irrevocably, particularly in terms of the growing power of sectional chiefs, and he could not command a share of the harvest as readily as had his predecessors. This is seen in one of his earliest triumphs. In 1897, Saʿdun defeated his erstwhile allies, the Budair tribe, which had massed against him with the support of an Ottoman contingent, and expropriated their territory, building a fortress in a prime location to house himself and his immediate family. That citadel, variously called the Mayiʿa or Saʿdun citadel (which still stands), became his headquarters. But while Saʿdun's military victory went unquestioned, he faced resistance from the cultivators in the district when he tried to retrieve income from the lands. Only after a series of patient negotiations between Saʿdun and the district shaykhs did he finally receive what he felt was his due.[34]

Through his continuous raids, Saʿdun eventually created new tribal alliances, particularly with the Rashidi amirs of Jabal Shammar in northern Arabia. Ironically, the prelude to this coalition had been a series of epic battles pitting Ibn Rashid against a coalition of regional forces, of which the Muntafiq were one. In 1899, Saʿdun's forces attacked the Shammar tribe while they were encamped near Bughaila, in Wasit province.[35] Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAziz al-Rashid mounted a vigorous defense of his fellow tribesmen in Iraq, to no avail. Although Ibn Rashid won an early victory at Khamissiyya, one of the headquarters of the Muntafiq, the two parties then fought a three-day battle in Talil Jbara that ended with the defeat of Ibn Rashid and the return of Khamissiyya to the al-Saʿduns. With this victory, Saʿdun al-Mansur was able to prevent any Shammari tribesmen from entering a

large region, from the heights of Najaf to Kuwait, and thereby cut into the Shammar's pasturage and its livelihood for a significant time.[36]

Saʿdun's victory over Ibn Rashid presented a signal opportunity for regional leaders in the area. Shaykh Mubarak al-Sabah of Kuwait, always anxious to guard his flank from attacks emanating from Ibn Rashid at Haʿil in northern Arabia, immediately entered into an alliance with Saʿdun for that purpose. They were joined by Al Saʿud, traditional enemies of the Rashidi shaykhs of Haʿil. Outmatched though he was, the Rashidi shaykh was able to score a major victory against the combined forces of ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn Saʿud, Saʿdun al-Mansur, and Mubarak al-Sabah.[37] Nevertheless, the geography of conflict in the region created its own rules and, a mere five years later, a volte-face occurred that shook the local government of Baghdad and the central government in Istanbul. This was the sudden alliance between Saʿdun al-Mansur and the Rashidi shaykhs of Haʿil.[38] The peace treaty between Saʿdun and ʿAbd al-ʿAziz al-Rashid was to be the most enduring of Saʿdun's career, presaging an alliance that spanned the generations between various Rashidi shaykhs, Saʿdun, and Saʿdun's progeny, and strengthening these tribal shaykhs in relation to Istanbul and to regional leaders in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf.

THE OTTOMAN RESPONSE

The political entanglements of regional dynasts, tribal shaykhs, and local notables must also be situated within the context of shifting 19th-century imperial agendas. The tone for much of the century was set, on the one hand, by Great Britain's ascending naval power and the phenomenal growth of British commerce and, on the other, by the marked resurgence of a much weakened but still resilient Ottoman Empire, physically truncated and militarily uncertain but ideologically driven to retain its social, religious, economic, and political hold on Iraq and the Gulf. Since Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II's accession to the throne in 1876, Ottoman and British authorities had engaged in a subtle and indirect struggle over areas generally considered to lie within the Ottoman orbit. Ottoman officials deemed an active policy especially important in the Iraqi provinces, where British influence had been steadily on the rise from at least the beginning of the 19th century.[39] In 1871, the central government in Istanbul authorized a military campaign to reaffirm Ottoman authority in the Arabian peninsula; assisting Midhat Pasha in his endeavor to retake Najd and al-Ahsa for the Porte were two Ottoman allies, Shaykh Nasir al-Saʿdun and ʿAbd Allah al-Sabah, the shaykh of Kuwait. In the same year, the rulers of Kuwait and Qatar were asked by the Porte's emissaries to acknowledge their allegiance to Istanbul.[40] However, in November 1892 Britain finalized a nonalienation bond with the ruler of Bahrain, obliging him "not to enter into agreement or correspondence with any power other than Britain," which was followed in 1899 by an even more dramatic agreement with Shaykh Mubarak of Kuwait that bound him and his heirs in perpetuity to the British government. The Porte became very alarmed indeed.[41] Finally, after the deposition in 1909 of Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II, the Ottoman government began negotiating with Britain to establish recognized spheres of influence in Arabia.[42]

Even before the demarcation of British and Ottoman spheres of interest, the shaykhs, rulers, and merchants of the Arabian peninsula and the Arab littoral had watched the rapid turn of events with interest. From the perspective of these regional players, one of

the chief political challenges in the late 19th century lay in determining whether to shift their loyalties from the Ottoman Empire to the British Raj or remain steadfastly within the Porte's realm. Because the switch could entail military entanglements, the political choices had to be weighed carefully. In this respect, Kuwait's precedent was momentous. After it was divulged, the initially secret 1899 agreement of Shaykh Mubarak of Kuwait to give Britain control over the foreign policy and security of the shaykhdom posed a very attractive alternative for would-be secessionists in the region. While the famous but ultimately untenable separatist movement in 1920s Basra so eloquently discussed by Reidar Visser had not yet materialized, numerous cases of Arab shaykhs in central Arabia and Iraq applying for British protection are documented in British sources.[43]

In hindsight, it is surprising to note that certain shaykhs chose *not* to switch allegiance from the Ottomans to the British, even though all signs pointed to Britain becoming a powerful force in the region at the turn of the century. Whether this was because such portents were misread by regional notables, or because Islamic nationalism was still a potent influence tying the Arab provinces to the empire, or even because the British themselves chose only to uphold select Gulf shaykhdoms and not others, the reasons for individual leaders not becoming British protégés must be examined in all their specificity. In Saʿdun al-Mansur's case, as shown below, they were complex, and followed a logic peculiar to the shaykh's relations with Istanbul and particularly with the sultan himself.

In 1903, as Gokhan Cetinsaya explains, Saʿdun began to harass the settled tribes in the Muntafiq town of Shatra with demands that included payment of blood money in cases more than forty years old. After a written remonstrance by the *vali* of Basra failed to deter him, a military detachment was sent to Shatra to intervene between Saʿdun Pasha and the tribes. Owing to mismanagement on the part of the officer commanding the detachment, fifty soldiers and several officers, including the commander, were killed.[44]

In 1904, the Porte sent the formidable General Muhammad Fadil Pasha al-Daghistani to Iraq for the third time to punish Saʿdun for his intransigence. By this time, the shaykh's attacks on neighboring tribes and occasional clashes with Ottoman troops had gained him a reputation that reached even the hallways of the British embassy in Turkey. On 20 September 1904, Sir Nicholas O'Conor, the British ambassador in Istanbul, wrote to his superiors in London:

> The Minister of War has informed the Military Attache of this Embassy [that Al-Daghistani] had been specially selected to deal with the fresh disturbances which have apparently broken out in connection with Sadun Pasha and the Muntafik Arabs . . . so it is probable that the efforts of the new Wali . . . will be directed towards a thorough suppression of the revolting tribes.[45]

Interestingly, Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II, who was following Saʿdun's actions very closely, seems to have tried very hard to understand the Muntafiq shaykh's motivations, and when Saʿdun applied for a pardon from the sultan in 1904, using the good graces of Ibn Rashid, it was readily accepted.[46] He was even rewarded with a salary from Istanbul and pledges of noninterference.[47] The sultan pardoned Saʿdun once again in 1905, only to find him rebelling against the central government very soon afterwards.[48] In 1906, the Porte approached the Iranian charge d'affaires in the Muntafiq to mediate between Saʿdun and the Porte's representatives so that the two parties could enter talks, but to no avail.[49]

Even though indirect and sometimes direct communications with the palace gave Saʿdun a valuable channel to the sultan, the ultimate aims of Saʿdun's insurrection—the return of all his ancestral lands—continued to elude him. From 1904 to 1906, negotiations between him and the palace over a sizeable piece of property near Nasiriyya foundered over the sultan's hesitation to allow Saʿdun to bid for the whole territory. At the same time, Saʿdun's enemies kept fabricating stories about the shaykh's involvement in pro-British alliances that even the notoriously distrustful sultan refused to believe.[50] Remarkably, he continued to empathize with the rebel until the very end.[51] Thus, when informed that the *vali* of Basra proposed to keep a permanent contingent of Ottoman troops in the Muntafiq, the Sultan objected and wrote:

> Sadun's daring to act in this fashion, contrary to his previous assurances of loyalty, must have been produced by the misconduct and misbehavior of some officials; since it will be possible to return him to his former position by persuading him and his tribe, and by wise measures, a trustworthy and honest person should be sent to him, instead of [punishing] him and his tribe with armed force.[52]

Even a half-hearted attempt by Saʿdun to solicit British protection in 1908 was not taken seriously. In the event, Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II had by then been superseded by the Young Turks, whose representative Saʿdun had become in Basra.[53]

SHAYKH SAʿDUN AL-MANSUR'S REBELLION IN THE MUNTAFIQ: FINAL PHASE

The final phase of Saʿdun's rebellion is detailed in a fascinating report written in August 1911 by Mahmud Ramiz Effendi, the assistant public prosecutor of the Muntafiq tribal district (*sanjaq* or *liwāʾ*) in lower Iraq.[54] According to his autobiography, written in 1908, Hajji Mahmud Ramiz Effendi was a member of the court of first instance of Prizren in the *vilayet* of Kosovo; he had served the empire in various towns in northern Iraq before accepting the Prizren post.[55] As he informs us at the beginning of his account, Ramiz Effendi was appointed to his post in the Muntafiq by the imperial government to help put an end to the chaos created in the district as a result of the seemingly senseless attacks on the other tribes in the area by the Muntafiq shaykh, Saʿdun. Principally a tale of deceit and subterfuge on many different levels, the report is also about the powerlessness of outsiders, however well intentioned, to effect any lasting settlement within the irreparably fractured social and political landscape of southern Iraq. Although Ramiz Effendi was to be recalled to Istanbul for failing to bring order to the district, his report is a valuable eyewitness account of Saʿdun's last stand.

The report details the attempts by both the assistant public prosecutor (Ramiz Effendi) and some of the tribes in and around Nasiriyya to rid themselves of Saʿdun al-Mansur by any means available to them. The core of the report concerns the siege of Saʿdun's headquarters at al-Mayiʿa in 1910 (the citadel usurped from the Budair tribes) by an enraged tribal coalition drawn from the Budair and Ghazi, whose twelve most important shaykhs had been murdered and their bodies thrown in the Euphrates on Saʿdun's orders. At the same time that Saʿdun's forces were wreaking havoc in the region, he was seen on the streets of Nasiriyya, nonchalantly strolling through the town as if it were his own backyard (which, from his perspective, it was). The report also details the indifference—or

fear—of Ottoman officials in the face of Saʿdun's violent attacks, and their desire to remain uninvolved in the battles raging between the chief of the Muntafiq and the other tribes in the vicinity. The depictions of Saʿdun's allies in Nasiriyya range from "the ignorant but clever" local magnate, Sayyid Zidan [Zaydan], to the town's governor, Musa Kazim Pasha, and the commander of the Ottoman garrison, Hamdi Pasha. While Ramiz Effendi portrays the first as a crafty notable mediating between Saʿdun and other urban officials, the latter two are depicted as cowed officials who timidly stood at attention while two government ships were loaded with fuel and food to resupply the besieged fortress of al-Mayiʿa, held by Saʿdun's men. Astonishingly, on board one of the ships was Kasr, "a tribal chief and murderer" who, according to Ramiz Effendi, had killed 200 Ottoman troops alongside another "thirty bandits, and ʿAli Effendi, the *mudīr* [subdistrict administrator] of the *nāḥīya* [sub-district] of al-Bataih." Possibly—this is our surmise—the latter had been forced aboard as a hostage, to ascertain that no government troops would attack the ship in midcourse. After the mission was accomplished, Ramiz Effendi states that "there was a celebration in front of the government house where Saʿdun stood and Arabs kissed his hands in presence of the governor. Thus the public was given the feeling that Saʿdun controlled the government."

Ramiz Effendi reserves his greatest ire for two of the shadiest officials: the governor of the *mutaṣarrif*, Musa Kazim Pasha, and the subdistrict governor or *mudīr* of al-Bataih, ʿAli Effendi. According to the author of the report, they categorically stated that they had not heard of the arrest by Saʿdun of six tribal chiefs who had gone to negotiate with Saʿdun's son, ʿUjaymi, on their outstanding demands. When, after thirty days, news spread that ʿUjaymi had killed them in a "horrible" manner, Ramiz Effendi was outraged, immediately penning an angry outburst in his report: "If the governor and the *mudīr* of the *nāḥiya* had not kept silent on the arrest of the tribal chiefs and had cooperated with me instead, then these chiefs would not have been killed. Does evil come from disloyal officials or from the people?"

Meanwhile, the police commissioner, Salih Effendi, a man ostensibly sworn to uphold the law, refused to write a report on the openly corrupt environment in Nasiriyya, despite the pleadings of Ramiz Effendi. Wearily, he counseled the assistant public prosecutor: "Effendi, this country cannot be reformed by your efforts alone, because nobody works apart from you." While much of this may be construed as self-aggrandizement on the part of Ramiz Effendi, who portrays himself as an honest and incorruptible government servant, there are echoes of the truth in such reports. For example, during the course of events several days later, he notes:

> On the 20th of May, Saʿdun entered the town and stayed at the house of Sayyid Zidan [Zaydan, a powerful local notable allied to the Muntafiq shaykh]. Government officials and many Arabs went to welcome him and to gain his favors and his bountiful liras. Commander Hamdi Effendi [the head of the Ottoman forces in the district] and governor Musa Kazim Pasha also got on well [with Saʿdun] and did not take any measures against him. Men of conscience are compelled to silence while spies of Sayyid Zidan surpass those of the dethroned Sultan [ʿAbd al-Hamid II]!

Again, neither the governor nor his deputy, nor even the commander of the Ottoman garrison at Nasiriyya, made a move to arrest Saʿdun, though the assistant prosecutor general pleaded with them to do so. Even as enraged tribal sections of the Budair tribes implored Ramiz Effendi to take action against the depredations of Saʿdun

al-Mansur, all the hapless assistant public prosecutor could do was write to the governor, the commander of the troops, and the head of the police—all implicated in receiving bribes from Saʿdun—to implore them to move against the tribal chief, their patron in so many ways. His impotence visible for all to see, Ramiz ends his report with a litany of defensive comments about his mission. He writes that, due to his principles, his life was now in danger and that even though he came to Nasiriyya not for base reasons but for the purpose of bringing justice to this benighted province, he had been prevented from fulfilling his mission by the very military "brothers" (Ramiz Effendi was an honorary member of the Prizren *sanjaq* military club) that he sought to befriend. His conclusion is enigmatic: he says that although his investigation was not related to the military, it was the military establishment itself that had blocked his mission.

In July 1911, Ramiz Effendi was removed from his post by order of the Ministry of Justice in Istanbul.[56] On 17 July 1911, the grand vizier informed the interior minister:

> From local reports it is understood that the assistant public prosecutor of Muntafiq was involved in provocations and enticement to rebellion. He has immediately been removed from his post and recalled to the centre of the *vilayet*. He will be subject to legal action according to the results of the investigation. The Basra public prosecutor has been instructed accordingly by the ministry of justice.[57]

If Ramiz Effendi's removal from his post was seen as a victory by Saʿdun, it would prove to be an ephemeral one. The final chapter of the shaykh's life was about to come to a close. Several months after the departure of the assistant public prosecutor, Saʿdun was betrayed to the Ottomans by an erstwhile ally, the influential Basra notable Sayyid Talib al-Naqib, and thrown in prison in Baghdad. Sent to Aleppo for trial on a myriad of charges, he arrived paralyzed and ill.[58] While recuperating in an Aleppo hospital before appearing in court, he passed away suddenly, leading to accusations by his family and by present-day biographers that he had been poisoned by Ottoman authorities. The power of hearsay and rumor was such that his death continues to be seen as suspicious today. However, there is evidence in Ottoman documents establishing that the governors of both Baghdad and Aleppo had recommended to the Porte that he be pardoned and that the palace itself was leaning toward that option.[59] Because Saʿdun passed away before the imperial *ʿafw* (pardon) had been issued, the story of his purported murder became a convenient charge to brandish against the central government by observers in that period and since.[60]

AFTERMATH

Saʿdun al-Mansur's far-flung rebellion can be interpreted as the doomed last stand of the only remaining independent shaykh in the Muntafiq, an effort to reclaim both the power and the property of the earlier Saʿdun shaykhs in the face of off-and-on centralization and settlement policies pursued by the Ottoman governors of Iraq. But the ramifications of his rebellion did not end with his demise. In fact, there are pages of correspondence between the Porte and Saʿdun's son and heir, Shaykh ʿUjaymi, revealing that the latter was not nearly as contrite as the Porte might have hoped with regard to his father's failed rebellion. On the contrary, ʿUjaymi's burning claim to the lands of his forefathers is his single most persistent demand.[61] However, notwithstanding many cables sent to the

Porte from both ʿUjaymi and his intercessors detailing the way ʿUjaymi was treated and the actions of his enemies in undermining him, it would be a mistake to claim that the shaykh preferred to ally himself with Britain or any other power in the region. Though he remained resentful of his treatment by the governing clique at the Porte, ʿUjaymi never broke with the Ottoman government. Like his father, he remained a guarded Ottomanophile.

In the years after Saʿdun's death, ʿUjaymi's *raison d'etre* was to retrieve his father's properties. In the summer of 1912, he even proposed to Mazyad Pasha, the son of Nasir al-Saʿdun, that the two of them attack the Ottoman government in order to avenge his father's death. When Mazyad refused, ʿUjaymi set out on a punishing raid against him, expropriating many goods and 71,000 liras of cash from his encampment. With these funds he tried to gather a tribal army, but was unsuccessful.[62] Mazyad and ʿUjaymi both sent many telegrams to the Porte, some of them in Arabic, each complaining that the other had usurped his land and property.[63] Moreover, true to form, ʿUjaymi's constant harangues against Sayyid Talib al-Naqib (whom he invariably labeled "the traitor against the lawful government," in keeping with the pretensions that he himself was a loyal subject) for colluding to bring about his father's death were accompanied by beseeching notes to Sayyid Talib himself, praising his "reformist" leadership in Basra.[64] By playing both sides of the fence, a favorite tactic of the Muntafiq shaykhs (and other regional notables) in the last quarter of the 19th century, the shaykh was following a political agenda that conformed to past practice. But there was another subtext of ʿUjaymi's correspondence with the Porte, which related to breaking regional events: in continuously threatening the central government with deserting and handing over power to a "foreign" government were his protestations not heard or acted upon, ʿUjaymi was issuing a none-too-subtle reminder of Kuwait's secession from the empire. ʿUjaymi's warning that he, too, could play that game insinuated the possible consequence of the Porte's prevarications and long silence. That this proved to be yet another empty threat showed the limits of ʿUjaymi's power.

Finally, Shaykh ʿUjaymi's vehement criticism of Mahmud Ramiz is revealing in personal terms. Claiming that his father was "sent to the courts on the basis of forged papers fabricated by the assistant prosecutor Mahmud Ramiz and his friends whose unconscionable and immoral acts have been discovered,"[65] he goes on to lay further blame on the former deputy governor of Basra, Jalal Bey, who

> showered bribes (money and decorations) on tribal malfeasants, some of it at the direction of the Amir of Kuwait [and] who betrayed the local government by attacking us and trying to expel us from our large properties so that he and his coterie could hand them over to the enemy [Britain? The amir of Kuwait?], and use the revenue to fuel mutinies against the lawful government.[66]

In that totally unrepentant vein, ʿUjaymi asked his father's friend and Ottoman ally, the Amir Saʿud ibn ʿAbd al-Aziz al-Rashid, to make his case to the Porte. The latter did so willingly, beginning with a rundown of Saʿdun's capture and his controversial demise, and ending with a plea to allow ʿUjaymi to recover his father's properties, which he claimed had been unjustly confiscated by the Porte. According to Ibn Rashid

> The head of the Muntafiq, Saʿdun Pasha's fate will not be hidden from you. His tribal followers took over his properties and besieged his sons and family in the Mayiʿa citadel for six months. I

have relayed [this tale] countless times to the Porte, as has his son ʿUjaymi . . . The reality is that many falsehoods and libels were said against Saʿdun (some from his partners and *sirkal*s) and these messages were conveyed to the MirAlai Izzat Beg, who arrested him, imprisoned him, and before he had received a good idea of Saʿdun's services to the Porte, [had him] killed in Aleppo. And so this state of affairs persisted, and Saʿdun's properties were pillaged, his son ʿUjaymi Beg was expelled from his ancestral domain, and he could not find refuge . . . We are obligated to explain this situation to the Porte . . . Our advice to Your Excellency is to allow the properties to be returned to him . . . We would hope that you look into this and grant him his father's salary and domicile. Do not forget: this family has been in your service for four hundred years.[67]

Implicit in Ibn Rashid's petition is a notion of the Porte as an impartial arbitrator for Ottoman subjects everywhere in its domains, even for those who had transgressed the rules of the empire. Thus, notwithstanding the fact that Saʿdun's rebellion had wreaked havoc throughout southern Iraq and fiercely disrupted Ottoman centralization policies in the process, ʿUjaymi felt justified in appealing to Istanbul for the restitution of father's properties. In the time-honored method of countless petitioners to the central government, ʿUjaymi sought redress for his grievances by asking Ibn Rashid, yet another precarious Ottoman ally, to explain his plight to the Porte. Significantly, ʿUjaymi's protestations to the Porte concerned the return, and *only* the return, of his lands. Any other motive, hidden or otherwise, can be laid to rest based on the fact that he took up the standard of the Young Turks to fight the British in World War I. Distinguishing himself in 1915 against British forces at the battle of Shuʿayba on the lower Euphrates, he was made an *amīr liwā'* (MirAlai) or pasha by the Turkish government, which awarded him lands in Urfa (southern Turkey) to which he retired.[68] He died in Turkey, a much celebrated personality.

CONCLUSION

While the unsettling nature of late Ottoman centralization policies has been explored in the scholarly literature, there has not been much focus on the internal struggles between different Muntafiq shaykhs for paramountcy. Thus, very little attention has been paid to the defeated shaykhs who lost out in the ruthless contest to become appointees to tribal districts, even though the archival sources in Istanbul possess a fair number of reports from the vanquished shaykhs themselves as well as from Ottoman commissioners sent to the tribal districts to restore order. More or less ignored by the Porte until they mounted desperate campaigns to regain their lost power and position, these opponents of Ottoman centralization strategies in south-central Iraq must be given their due, because they form an important part of the story of reform in the tribal areas. It may have been only through such attention-grabbing attempts that rebellious shaykhs registered at all in the Ottoman consciousness, and forced the state to address some of their grievances.

Saʿdun al-Mansur's rebellion was characterized not by ideological, religious, or even nationalist motives. His movement was undertaken purely to restore the traditional geographical, social, and economic configuration of the Muntafiq prior to its dismemberment by reform-minded *vali*s—with himself as paramount shaykh. This can be seen in his constant attacks on all who occupied Muntafiq lands, tilled them without paying arrears to the paramount shaykh, and attempted to assume the mantle of the rulers of the tribal principality. Still, from the perspective of Ottoman officials in the Tanzimat era, Saʿdun

al-Mansur's actions were bewildering, even as they corresponded to certain universal traits associated with pre-urbanites from Anatolia to the Balkans. For most Ottoman bureaucrats, the dawning realization that "[r]esistance to the centralization of power and the standardization of law was naturally shared by the empire's nomadic populations"[69] was a corollary to the increasing belief that the Ottoman Empire's civilizing mission enjoined upon all loyal Ottomans the promotion of "*temeddün* (from the Arabic *tamaddun*: to become civilized, leave nomadic life, and settle in towns)."[70] That Saʿdun al-Mansur refused to be associated with this higher stage of human development made him a rebel in Ottoman eyes, but also somewhat of a curiosity. Rather than coming to terms with the fact that the era of the independent *imāra* had been irredeemably lost, he dug in his heels and attempted to return to the pristine vision of the principality his forefathers had ruled. It is this irredentist attitude that makes him a compelling, if forlorn, figure in the literature. For, notwithstanding the epithets hurled at him by Ottoman officials and local notables alike, Shaykh Saʿdun al-Mansur's campaign to wrest back by force his ancestral lands was not random or senseless by his standards. Saʿdun's raids on tribal elements in the Muntafiq, who had usurped territory he considered his heritage by family right, as well as his aggressive campaigns against the modernized Ottoman Sixth Army intent on keeping order in the "reformed" Muntafiq tribal district, were violent, tragic, and yet comprehensible all at the same time.

NOTES

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[1] See, for example, Cem Emrence, *Remapping the Ottoman Middle East: Modernity, Imperial Bureaucracy and the Islamic State* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2012); Charles L. Wilkins, *Forging Urban Solidarities: Ottoman Aleppo 1640–1700* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2009); and Michael Robert Hickok, *The Ottoman Administration of Eighteenth-Century Bosnia* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997).

[2] Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 1998); idem, "The Struggle against Shiʿism in Hamidian Iraq: A Study in Ottoman Counter-Propaganda," *Die Welt des Islams* 30 (1990): 45–62; Yitzhak Nakash, "The Conversion of Iraq's Tribes to Shiʿism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (1994): 443–63; Gokhan Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890–1908* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006); Ebubekir Ceylan, "Carrot or Stick? Ottoman Tribal Policy in Baghdad, 1831–1876," *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies* 3 (2009): 169–86; and idem, *The Ottoman Origins of Modern Iraq: Political Reform, Modernization and Development in the Nineteenth Century Middle East* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011).

[3] Reidar Visser, *Basra, the Failed Gulf State: Separatism and Nationalism in Southern Iraq* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2005); Gokhan Çetinsaya, "Ottoman–British Relations in Iraq and the Gulf, 1890–1908," *Turkish Review of Middle East Studies* 15 (2004): 137–75.

[4] For example, see Sinan Marufoğlu's translation of archival material from Ottoman Turkish into Arabic, comprising the correspondence sent to the Porte by religious leaders, tribal shaykhs, and merchants in Iraq. Sinan Marufoğlu, *al-ʿIraq fi al-Watha'iq al-ʿUthmaniyya: al-Awdaʿ al-Siyasiyya wa-l-Ijtimaʿiyya fi al-ʿIraq khilal al-ʿAhd al-ʿUthmani* [Iraq in Ottoman Documents: Political and Social Events in Iraq in the Ottoman Period] (Amman: Dar al-Shuruq Publishers, 2006). An earlier and lesser known publication is Mustafa Kazim al-Madamgha, *Nusus min Watha'iq al-ʿUthmaniya ʿan Tarikh al-Basra fi Sijillat Mahkamat al-Sharʿiyya fi al-Basra* [Selections of Ottoman Archival Texts on the History of Basra in the Court Records of Basra]

(Basra, Iraq: Basra University Press, 1982). In Turkish, see Ömer Osman Umar, "Basra ile Müntefik'te Aşiretlerin Mücadelesi ve Sadun Paşa" [Intertribal Struggle in Basra and the Muntafiq under Saʿdun Pasha], *Fırat Üniversitesi Ortadoğu Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2 (2004): 5–38.

[5]Ceylan, *The Ottoman Origins of Modern Iraq*, 169.

[6]Ibid., 134.

[7]Ibid., 140–41.

[8]Ibid., 141–44.

[9]Ibid., 135.

[10]For example, the settlement of tribes in government towns in eastern and southern Iraq saw the almost immediate diversion of trade to other, less controlled venues, forcing Ottoman officials to resort to unenforceable bans on the export of important commodities. See Hala Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia and the Gulf, 1745–1900* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1997), 185–206. For the Arabian peninsula, see Frederick F. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 167–73.

[11]Albertine Jwaideh, "Aspects of Land Tenure and Social Change in Lower Iraq during Ottoman Times," in *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East*, ed. T. Khalidi (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1984), 333–43.

[12]Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade*, 186–91.

[13]Ceylan, *The Ottoman Origins of Modern Iraq*, 147.

[14]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 88.

[15]Ibid., 88; Hamid Hamed al-Saʿdun, *Hikayat ʿan al-Muntafiq: Waqaʿi min Tarikh al-Iraq al-Hadith wa-l-Muʿasir* [Stories of the Muntafiq: Events from the History of Modern and Contemporary Iraq] (Baghdad: Dhakira Publishers, 2001), 193–200.

[16]Al-Saʿdun, *Hikayat ʿan al-Muntafiq,* 193–200.

[17]Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 1–15; Gokhan Çetinsaya, "Ottoman–British Relations in Iraq and the Gulf."

[18]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 88–89. See also ʿAbbas al-ʿAzzawi, *Tarikh al-Iraq bayn Ihtilalayn*, vol. 8 (Baghdad: al-Tijara wa-l-Tibaʿa, 1956), 53–58.

[19]Ibid., 88.

[20]Some of the Muntafiq chiefs fled to the Shamiya desert, others to the Iraq–Iran border. See Jwaideh, "Aspects of Land Tenure and Social Change," 346; al-ʿAzzawi, *Tarikh al-Iraq*, 53–58; and Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 89.

[21]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 89.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Hamid Hamad al-Saʿdun, *Imarat al-Muntafiq wa-Atharuha fi Tarikh al-ʿIraq wa-l-Mintaqa al-Iqlimiyya, 1546–1918* [The Muntafiq Principality and Its Impact on the History of Iraq and the Region] (Baghdad: Dar Waʾil Publishing House, 1999), 227–28.

[25]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 89.

[26]Jwaideh, "Aspects of Land Tenure," 345–51. See also 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, Baʿthists and Free Officers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), 75.

[27]Madawi Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidi Tribal Dynasty* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 1991), 201–22; Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf,* 16–166; and Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade*, 13–61.

[28]Shaykh Saʿdun al-Mansur assumed the post of *shaykh al-mashāyikh* (paramount chief) in 1903. See Peter Sluglett, "Al-Muntafik," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 7, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993), 582–83.

[29]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 88. See also Soli Shahvar, "Tribes and Telegraphs in Lower Iraq: The Muntafiq and the Baghdad–Basrah Telegraph Line of 1863–65," *Middle Eastern Studies* 39 (2003): 91.

[30]Al-Saʿdun, *Imarat al-Muntafiq*, 227–28.

[31]Ibid., 227–29.

[32]Al-Saʿdun, *Hikayat ʿan al-Muntafiq*, 225.

[33]Al-Saʿdun, *Imarat al-Muntafiq*, 228–29.

[34]Al-Saʿdun, *Hikayat ʿan al-Muntafiq*, 216.

[35]Al-Saʿdun, *Imarat al-Muntafiq*, 230.
[36]Ibid., 230–31.
[37]Ibid., 231–32.
[38]Ibid., 234.
[39]Çetinsaya, "Ottoman–British Relations," 138–39.
[40]Ibid., 141.
[41]Ibid., 156–65.
[42]Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 212.
[43]Visser, *Basra, the Failed Gulf State*, 73–109. See also Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 210–14; and Gertrude Bell, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (London: H.M.'s Stationery Office, 1920), 26.
[44]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 90.
[45]Robin Bidwell, ed., *Foreign Office Confidential Print: The Affairs of Kuwait, 1896–1905*, vol. 2 (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1971), 62.
[46]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 91.
[47]Ibid.
[48]Ibid.
[49]Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (hereafter BOA), BEO 2766/207433.
[50]Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 91.
[51]Ibid., 92.
[52]Ibid.
[53]Ibid.
[54]Mahmud Ramiz Efendi, "Müntefik sancağı merkezi bulunan Nasiriye kasabasına dört saat mesafede Bataih nahiyesi dahilinde Mayia mevkiinde rüesa-i aşairden Sadun Paşa'nın ikametgahı bulunan kalenin cinayat silsilesi" [The chain of murders committed at the fortress of Saʿdun Pasha of the tribal chiefs, situated in Mayiʿa within the *nāḥiya* of Bataih, at a distance of four hours to the town of Nasiriyya, center of the sanjak of Muntafiq], a 53-page manuscript written in Ottoman Turkish, dated August 1911. This unpaginated report forms part of the private library of the Mary Ann and Lawrence Tucker Foundation and was graciously offered to us by the foundation for our research. This section of the article will rely only on this report.
[55]BOA.TFR.1. ŞKT. 163/162115.
[56]BOA.DH.SYS.66/6–14 lef1–3. See also BOA.BEO 3916/293649, lef2.
[57]BOA.DH.SYS.66/6–14 lef1–3. See also BOA.BEO 3916/293649, lef2.
[58]BOA.BEO 3958/296799 lef 11.
[59]Ömer Umar, "Basra ile Müntefik'te Aşiretlerin," 36–37.
[60]See al-Saʿdun, *Imarat al-Muntafiq*, 244; and al-Saʿdun, *Hikayat ʿan al-Muntafiq*, 227–30.
[61]See Marufoğlu, *al-ʿIraq fi al-Watha'iq al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 205–11.
[62]BOA.BEO 4109/308152.
[63]BOA.BEO 4050/303700, 11 June 1912.
[64]Marufoğlu, *al-ʿIraq fi al-Watha'iq al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 205–206.
[65]Ibid.
[66]Ibid.
[67]Ibid., 217–19.
[68]Al-ʿAzzawi, *Tarikh al-ʿIraq*, 279.
[69]M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 87.
[70]Ibid., 87.