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**Reevaluating Iraq's Political History: The Culture of the State Institution and the Political  
Elites**

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### **Abstract**

As Iraq continues to see mass protests today that are similar to those throughout Iraq's monarch period, this thesis looks to reevaluate this disjuncture between the people and the state. This is done by assessing the way in which the elites have historically perceived the political world, such as their conceptualisations of the state institution, the intricacies of its functionality and its role towards the nation. Institutional culture, that is built on the interpretations and conceptualisations of those within and creates unwritten rules of an institution, creates the framework for this thesis' reevaluation of Iraq's political history. Through contrapuntal analysis of memoirs of Iraqi political elites, namely: Tawfiq al-Suwaydi; Ahmad Mukhtar Baban; and Hani al-Fkeki; I uncover the institutional culture of Iraq during the time in which Iraq's political system attempted to consolidate after Iraq's inception in 1920 and up to the Ba'ath uprising of 1963. What this thesis shows is that Iraq's political elites at the time understood the polity as comprising separate factions, such as the people and the military, all in a fight for power within an anarchic system. Through the memoirs we will see the ability of Iraq's state institutional culture to be powerful enough to withstand system change, and instead react to change by reverting back to its original form. The separation between this culture of operation and the democratic constitutional monarchy political system, points to the need to incorporate institutional culture into Political Studies, due to its ability to overrule structures and systems.

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**Introduction: Iraq's Stagnant Political Sphere**

چلچل علي الرمان  
نومي فز علي  
هذا الحلو ما أريده  
ودوني لأهلي

The pomegranate tangled over me  
The lemon came to my rescue  
This sweetness I do not want  
Take me to my people

Song: Chalchal Alaiya Arrumman [the pomegranate tree tangled over me]

Artist: Unknown

This song and its chorus presented above are an important part of Iraq's folklore, and likewise are important for this thesis. It has been popular since it came about in the early 19th century, which we know based on its lyrics as the artist that wrote this song and melody remains unknown. It is an important part of Iraq's culture today, as renditions by artists continue to be made. The words refer to the history of rule in Iraq, where the pomegranate tree branches are a metaphor for Ottoman rule due to the red clothing of Ottoman soldiers, and the oppression that 'tangled' over the population. The lemon tree refers to the British forces, known to be Caucasian and blond likened to a yellow lemon, who came to Iraq's rescue from the Ottomans; the metaphor lies in the physical difference between the lemon tree and the pomegranate tree, as the lemon tree is grander and allows more light through. The 'sweetness', which can also be translated to 'handsome', contains a double meaning that refers to both sweet lemons grown in Iraq, and the 'handsome' British soldiers. Although the British forces came to the 'rescue' of the Iraqi people, the artist portrays a distaste with their rule and prefers to be taken back to the Iraqi 'people'; the Arabic word 'people' can also be translated to 'ancestors'. This song is held very

dearly by the Iraqi people, and continues to be a popular political commentary even today, thus making it an important starting point for this thesis

I begin with this song due to its relevance for this thesis, where I look to understand the ‘people’ in rule that the unknown artist was referring to. Iraq continues to be a country struggling to have a consolidated political system, even roughly 100 years after rule was given back to the Iraqi people, and after the former British colonial rule came to an end in 1932. In this thesis, I analyse the Iraqis that influenced the modern era of Iraqi rule, which consequently set the trajectory for today’s turmoil in Iraq. The longing for Iraqi rule in comparison to its colonial history as presented by the song above is what informs this thesis. The artist was looking forward to a form of rule that would not be subservient to a foreign power and would be indigenous. The use of the Arabic word *ahly*, which translates to ‘people’, ‘ancestors’, or ‘indigenous’ in the final line of the chorus above, is the basis for this thesis. The implication of the word *ahly* is that the return to indigenous Iraqi rulers would present a form of governance more connected to the people than the previously oppressive rule of the colonial powers. However, today Iraq faces a strong disjuncture between its people and the Iraqis governing the state, pointing to the continuity of the oppressive form of rule regardless of its transition to indigeneity.

This thesis sets out to explore the apparent separation that existed between the state and the people in the formation of Iraq as a political entity in 1920 and up to 1963 when the Ba’ath regime took over. This time period signifies the formation of Iraq and the attempted consolidation of the state under the British imposed monarchy, followed by the military coup of 1958 that overthrew the constitutional monarchy and introduced an authoritarian presidency. This is important as these changes to the state institution and its role caused the political elites to engage with their conceptualisations of the state institution’s role in the nation. This chapter justifies approaching the turmoil in Iraq through the lens of historical Iraqi leaders, namely: Tawfiq al-Suwaydi; Ahmad Mukhtar Baban and Hani al-Fkeki. This thesis will explore their conceptualisations of rule to understand the basis this set for the state institution of Iraq that may inform Iraq’s struggles today. The history of the Iraqi people, their desires for progressive forms of governance, and their willingness to set aside ethnosectarian differences suggests that it is insufficient to approach Iraq’s turmoil from lenses of ingrained ethnosectarian divides and

orientalist views, which implies that the people are inherently susceptible to less democratic forms of rule.

Much of the existing approaches analyse Iraqi politics using analytics based on the historical colonial pressures, historically portraying the Iraqi nation as subservient, oppressed, or a mere reactionary to foreign powers. The foreign lens of analysis to Iraq is understandable, as the British Mandate was imposed in 1920 upon the establishment of the Iraqi state, and thus shaped the formation of the Iraqi state on a continued form of dominance (Lenczowski, 1957; Sorby, 2012). This has caused research to be constrained to understanding Iraq solely as a reactionary to colonial history, without appreciation for the autonomy and agency of the people, as this chapter will present. Conversely, an analysis of the people themselves has been an exhausted approach in the ethnosectarian domain, which posits the unnatural borders of Iraq cut through ethnic and religious identities that attempted to unify a heterogeneous population (Hinnebusch, 2011). Portraying this as the leading factor in understanding Iraq's turmoil perpetuates an approach that Iraq's issues are incurable. For the population of Iraq to be analysed solely in relation to their ethnic and religious allegiances suggests the people are inherently divided, and so a consolidated state based on a united population appears impossible. This chapter will exhibit that this is not a reflection of Iraq's history, as the people oftentimes set aside such divides in search for a representative and democratic state that was legitimately sovereign from outside influence. This has historically appeared through grassroots movements that were inclusive due to their progressive nature (Hariri, 2019), which we will see is being replicated in Iraq today.

Presently, the Iraqi people display resentment for the leadership of the state due to foreign imposition into state affairs, and lack of access to basic services. This is evident from the October Protests that began in 2019, and are still ongoing as of mid-2021. The basic demands throughout this period have been for better civil services, accountability in the political sphere and for a stop to foreign imposition in Iraq's politics (Wille, 2019; ACLED, 2020; Alaaldin, 2020). In other words, people have been demanding an improvement in democratic accountability in governance and for a stop to outside domination of Iraq as a political entity. This crucial link remains under-analysed in the study of Iraqi politics, and is foundational to this thesis. I look at Iraq's history and understand its trajectory to better understand this demand, as

these protests are operating on very similar bases to those of their predecessors during the early days of modern Iraq. The anti-British protests of 1922 that continued throughout the British Mandate and monarchical period (Kedouri, 1970, p. 243) - during which the above mentioned lyrics most likely emerged -, or the protests during the 1940s that called for a clampdown on corruption within the government (a bill was formed with somewhat soft punishments for corruption, but did not even pass parliament (Al-Hasani, 1988, p. 234)) are a few examples. To have such a historical parallel in the recurring demands of the people suggests that there is a disjuncture between the people and the state, and an unaccounted variable in trying to understand this long-standing disjuncture.

The lack of progress in Iraqi politics and the unaccounted variable in the equation of the political sphere - which I use to refer to the entirety of the Iraqi polity, including the governance structure and the people - that gives rise to such similar reactions from the people over a century, I argue, are better explained when we attend to an institutional culture that is dictating this Iraqi political sphere. By defining culture as that which dictates behaviour based on interpretations and understandings of individuals and institutions, it is clear how this can have an intergenerational effect regardless of systemic changes (Lamont & Small, 2008). Therefore, the scope of this study is on the political elites and their understandings of the state and governance, as this shapes the institutional culture that is foundational to Iraq's political sphere. Chapter 2 shows that to accomplish an analysis of Iraq's political institutional culture, we must make use of primary sources of governing elites that would display their interpretations and understandings of the political sphere. The best resource for such a method are the politicians' memoirs, as they contain direct access to their portrayals of the political world. Through the memoirs of Tawfiq al-Suwaydi; Ahmad Mukhtar Baban; and Hani al-Fkeki, we are able to note the basis of the culture of the state institution in Iraq's history that ultimately set the trajectory for the issues Iraq is facing today. Preceding the analyses of each of their memoirs (Chapters 3-5), the rest of this chapter provides a brief political history of Iraq, in particular the colonial nature of the political systems in Iraq's history, the disconnect between the state entity and the people of Iraq's political stratum, and the turmoil this has bred; this will display the necessity in analysis that approaches the Iraqi state as an institution with a history of oppression and disjuncture with the people of Iraq.

## **Iraq's Political History of Governance**

The modern state of Iraq represents the colonial desires of the British, wherein they sought to create a colony that they could indirectly rule. The three Ottoman provinces, or *vilayets*, Baghdad, Mosul and Basra represented subsections of the Ottoman Empire that the British forces sought control over (Wallach, 2005, p. 224). The foundation of the creation of the Iraqi state being a foreign imposition requires that we recognize its colonial history and its effects in any study of contemporary politics of Iraq. The subsequent creation of a political system (constitutional monarchy) led by a Hejazi (now Saudi Arabia, so effectively an outsider) King, further points to the separation between the indigenous people and what was a foreign government system. There was the lumping together of different groups of people without consideration of the potential to unify and consolidate (Hinnebusch, 2011). However, this new system led by the colonial British forces was in place of the Ottoman form of rule that was seen, at the time, as neglectful, and erasing Arabism through Turkish nationalism (Khadduri, 1946, p. 6). Therefore, to have a new system that would apparently be headed by an Arab King and an indigenous government, spelled hope. This hope was short-lived, as the system that was imposed was inherently foreign. There was a lack of consideration by the British forces that the political system available at home for the British would not be suitable in Iraq (Longrigg, 1953, p. 224). The colonial desire of domination over Iraq suggests that the system placed was merely set in appeasing the Iraqi people, whilst maintaining the same level of influence over the land and people (Lenczowski, 1957; Sorby, 2012). The very foundation of contemporary independent Iraq was built upon the dominating colonial institutions and their desire to maintain control over their previous colony. This basis ultimately dictated the Iraqi political sphere at the state level. Despite this, upon the inception of the state of Iraq, the people presented themselves to be active politically with progressive desires and a will to be involved in governance of the state.

The reason the scope of this study is on the government is because there are numerous instances during which it became clear that the necessary social foundations were available amongst the masses upon which to build a democratic institution. In other words, due to their inability to

progress politically alongside the desires of the people, the government and the political elites presented the root issue of the lack of political progression in Iraq's history. The social norms and desires for political equality and upward control of the political system (that Kimber (1989) suggests is necessary for a democracy to function) existed outside the state figureheads. The colonial forces and the political elites of Iraq were holding back the political progression of the nation and placing the scope on the people can be misleading. This is evident from the people's history, wherein displays of democratic and progressive foundations began appearing as soon as the Iraqi state was formed. For example, during the 1920 insurrection of the mid-Euphrates tribes that sought to expel British influence, British forces were pushed back for months at a time, and so political vacuums were left. What followed was a consultative process that created civil organisations tasked with services such as policing the streets and neighbourhoods, collecting taxes, organising health services, rationing water, creating judicial courts, and establishing local governments (Abu Tibikh, 2001, pp. 157-161). Claims since have suggested the British administration kept these systems in place upon their regain of control (Abu Tibikh, 2001, p. 159). The desire to be a part of the political process was new but came with vigour. During this time, terms such as 'independence' and 'freedom' into the urban literate class first proliferated, and subsequently made its way into the lexicon of commoners (Al-Wardi, 2007, p. 310).

Another example of this urge to participate in the political sphere emanated from the local authorities, as is evident from the events surrounding the election of King Faysal I, Iraq's inaugural King. Whilst a monarch, the British saw his election as important to legitimise his rule. In what was simply meant to be a political formality and nothing more, local authorities of various provinces were told to vote on the ascension of King Faysal. However, the intended performative quality of this election was not adhered to by the local authorities (Al-Hasani, 1988, p. 59; Al-Wardi, 2007, p. 114). The provinces of Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk voted against Faysal's election, whereas Mosul voted in favour of Faysal but added stipulations protecting minority rights. Basra and Baghdad, rather than vote for or against Faysal proposed a new political system altogether. Basra's delegates insisted on a loose federal system, whilst Baghdad's delegates suggested installing a constitutional parliamentary democracy that was not tied to any foreign power. Within the first introduction of the Iraqi people into the political sphere of governance, the local authorities (and by extension the people) were ready and willing to engage

in this field that implicitly questioned the assumed absolutist rule of the monarch. This instance also demonstrates the colonial influence upon the performative democracy insofar as the British forces were not seeking genuine democratic engagement with the Iraqi people. Rather, they sought an appearance of democracy that would justify King Faysal's ascension, rendering it a minor shift from the outright colonial domination to the slightly more nuanced.

Whilst this was a shift to a more democratic system than what the Iraqi people had experienced under Ottoman rule that preceded the British, it coexisted with a desire for continued dominance from the British which is mutually exclusive to a sovereign democratic system. This was a complicated conjuncture that created new opportunities for the people to be heard, but ultimately resulted in a similar standard of foreign imposed dominance. Even at Iraq's inception, the land was divided into administrative districts, where each was under the administration of British personnel, and so the people were almost completely excluded from the political sphere (Khadduri, 1946, pp. 14-15). Even after the British allowed for the indigenous rule to commence, the basis of the democratic rule was performative. The executive authority of the King and the British that had such an incredible influence on the legislative parliament (every member of parliament had to be personally agreed to by the King himself (Ireland, 2009, p. 424)), meant that changes of the parliament did not happen through an independent or even a transparent political process accountable to the people; instead, the political officials represented those that were subservient in their behaviours to the desires of the King and the British. This set a precedent that whoever controlled the King controlled parliament and therefore controlled the country. With this understanding, it would be ineffectual to analytically approach Iraq's political history by only looking at the change of personnel. Furthermore, during the monarchical period (1920-1958), the average lifespan of the Cabinet of Ministers was 5 and a half months, a testament to the constant drama and instability within the political sphere (Dawisha, 2013, p. 149). The deeply-rooted factors and mechanisms linked to this colonial arrangement of political power are important to examine. This is necessary as it supports our understanding of the ways an authoritarian form of power in the figurehead of a monarch was allowed to exist with ease in a political system that in all appearances 'operated' like a democracy. The performative nature of the newly formed Iraqi political sphere is important to understand in our analysis of the disjuncture between the people and the state.

However, in understanding the colonially dominated new political system, we cannot solely look to the British forces, as the end of the British Mandate in 1932 would be painted as a period of decolonisation of the Iraqi state. This lays the foundation for the research to be confined to understandings of colonialism that does not carry forward to the postcolonial state, and is understood to be a separate analytical matter (Lawson, 2006). My argument in this thesis is that 1932 did not prove to be the beginning of Iraq's independent democracy, and that in fact the state institution's culture was able to carry forward from the history of oppression and disjuncture from the people; I argue the institutional culture was more influential than the political system. Nuri al-Said, the politician, who held multiple positions of power, and alongside Regent Abd-al-Ilah (from 1939 to 1953, which was after the British Mandate period had ended), ruled Iraq in an authoritarian manner, were unpopular in Iraq for their heavy relation to the British. They would rarely make a decision without the consultation and consent of the British Ambassador regardless of the independent democratic system of Iraq (Al-Uzri, 1982, p. 609). In Chapters 3 and 4, I study the memoirs of Tawfiq al-Suwaydi and Ahmad Mukhtar Baban, both of which operated in the same time frame and worked very closely with al-Said and Abd-al-Ilah. Their memoirs will show that the basis of this authoritarian rule were conceptualisations of the state among political elites that understood the state to be separate from the people.

The democratic facade of the monarchical period becomes clear, and we see what existed instead was centralised rule. Further, the complete overhaul of the struggling monarchical system in 1958 did not bring about positive change. Instead, the military-backed Qasim government imposed a system with the use of a cabinet but no parliament (Farhan, 1986, p. 125). Regardless, the hint of democratic ideals behind having a cabinet, so as rule was not completely in the hands of an individual, proved performative as well, as cabinet members that stood against Qasim began to be pushed out. This represented a change that was simply a removal of the performative charade, which I will further examine in Chapter 5 in the transition from Baban's government as the last Prime Minister of the monarchical Iraqi state, to al-Fkeki (a prominent Ba'ath leader) and Qasim's Ba'ath-backed presidency. Here, the personnel and the system changed but the form of governance remained the same. This removal of performative democratic ideals and the return to the outright authoritarian continued all the way up until the 2003 US invasion. This was the time

that saw the Ba'athist regime gain power, and the eventual rise of Saddam Hussain. His understanding and form of governance is best summed up with his own words, “There must be one command pooling and directing the subsequent governmental departments, including the armed forces.” (Karsh & Rautsi, 1991, p. 38). During Saddam's era the violent tactics of oppression took an even more intensive turn than previously (Aboud, 2002, p. 138; Makiya, 1989). Although rulers such as Hussein and Qasim are understood to be violent and so unique in their form of oppression and rule, Chapters 3-5 will explore the trajectory of the institutional culture, as I argue it was a continuation of many of the standards that already existed preceding the Ba'ath rule; the violence in Ba'ath rule was, in terms of institutional culture, a return to the standards of the early monarchy era.

Ultimately, we come to present day Iraq and its post-US invasion political sphere. This is where we may be noting a return to the performative democratic institution as evident from its corrupt tendencies that is stimulating the current protests that have been ongoing since 2019. After the US-invasion in 2003, Iraq's rebuilding efforts - spearheaded by the US - was in itself building a corrupt economy (Chwastiak, 2013). This was an effort to create an economic occupation that relied on the funds coming into Iraq being monopolised by foreign private companies, in a new unfettered neoliberal Iraqi era. Other instances of corruption are evidenced in the Minister of Interior claiming his ministry was populated with individuals who have committed “terrorist and criminal operations” against the masses of Iraq (Dawisha, 2013, p. 265). Similarly, the Ministry of Electricity, where there were arrest warrants in 2006 for previous ministers due to issues of corruption, as adequate electricity was scarcely available to the Iraqi people (Kupisz, 2006). This level of corruption existed at most ministries, as Looney's (2008) article shows. Most importantly for this thesis, Zunes (2009) suggests that after the US invasion the public sector's credibility was destroyed, reiterating the disjuncture between the state and the people. These issues appear timeless and looking at the current October protests that are targeting power supply issues and corruption, we see how Iraq's political history is truly in stagnation (Wille, 2019; ACLED, 2020; Alaaldin, 2020).

Although it is clear that the mode of operation of the colonial forces of the British and U.S. in Iraq did not help pave legitimate ways for democratic ideals to operate properly and successfully

within the institution of politics, there is a further issue in that those predominantly operating at the forefront of the political structure appeared to be replicating the dominating culture of the colonial upon their people. It can be noted that the people have, historically and continuously, shown a desire for a more progressive political system that was not reflected in the political stratum. The scope of this thesis has been limited to the elites in an attempt to understand what constitutes them as a separate 'class' upheld by 'the state' as an institution of power.

### **Uncovering the Institutional Political Culture**

There appears to be a stagnant set of interpretations that are dictating the governing elite's mode of operation in conducting state affairs. The lack of successful change of the political system in line with the desires of the people – despite the recurring protests – means that there is something more intrinsic holding the political sphere in its same place. Here, I employ concepts of institutional culture as a basis for the inability of the political sphere to progress with changes of political structures or systems. The rationale behind this argument is built upon the separation between the state and the people as evident from the history of interaction between the two. This research will show the adherence of the Iraqi governance elites to a mode of operation in the conduct of the affairs of the state that relied on conceptualisations of the state as a dominant entity over the people. Ultimately, this provides a framework by which we can see the intersection between the international and the intra-national modes of operation, which under the culture framework can be understood to be one and the same. What is meant by this is if the institutional culture was built on understandings of the international sphere as an anarchic power-based system, this interpretation would be translated to the domestic sphere. Therefore, if the political elites interact with the domestic sphere as an anarchic power-based system, their desire to dominate and hold power over other intra-state factions such as the people would dictate their actions. This would set their standards of operation to be not unlike that of a foreign colonial power seeking domination over its colony, which may explain the disjuncture between the state and the people in Iraq.

This research is concerned with understanding and defining the culture dictating behaviour of the governing elites. In a study about the disparities of poverty within race, Lamont & Small's (2008) work sets a foundation of culture that is not interchangeable with race, ethnicity or social class (commonly creating narratives that perpetuate problematic stereotypes (Lamont & Small, 2008, pp. 77, 90)). The analysis by Lamont & Small (2008) interprets culture as a concept that dictates behaviour based on interpretations and conceptualisations of reality by individuals. Hall & Taylor (1996) show the way in which institutional culture can become ingrained in an institution as the individual cultures converge. This definition of culture will allow me to analyse the culture of the indigenous rulers as composing a separate socio-political group distinct from their religious or ethnic identities that tie them to the larger population of Iraq. To clarify, I do not mean these larger social categories do not matter, rather there appears to be a subculture within the state that is also worth examining more closely. Thus, to understand the ways in which those that govern the political structure behave with certain institutional cultural constraints, we must understand how they perceive and understand themselves and their colleagues as part of the state. This analysis of their institutional culture was built upon answering the following questions; these surrounded the perceptions of the elites of the political sphere, governance structure, and the way in which it was understood to rule:

- How do the political elite perceive their roles at the top of the political structure pyramid?
- How do they envision the concept of the state, and so their roles as representatives of the state?
- In what way do they see and understand their relationships to the people?
- Which dualities of this relationship are seen as valuable and important?
- What actions or events animate their reactions and attention?
- How do they conceptualise and understand challenges to authority and ideology?

The significance of these questions lies in their ability to highlight the interpretations of the state institution by the political elites, and the relationship it possessed with the people. My research period spans from 1921 to 1963, as I explore these questions by examining political memoirs and accounts of political history by those involved in the attempted consolidation of the Iraqi state

after its formation in 1920. This includes the memoirs of 3 political elites within this period namely: Tawfiq al-Suwaydi; Ahmad Mukhtar Baban; and Hani al-Fkeki. The need to examine memoirs for interpretations of the state and political history is imperative for this type of study as we cannot hope to uncover such deep-lying interpretations from official statements released by the state, or newspaper or media coverage. This is due to the fact that such official statements are not written with the same freedom of expression of a political memoir, in which an individual sets out their career in their own words, highlighting their interpretations. The political memoirs yield rich subjective and cultural data in that they present us history and accounts in the language of those who lived through and conducted the affairs of the state themselves, based on their own interpretations of the reality. This type of writing would contain more outright expressive language that would not only be more useful in its explicitly stated content, but would allow tracing careful implicit connotations that would slip through unarticulated in official state writing.

Chapter 1 will show the shortcomings of current approaches to studying Iraq, especially in their inability to remove Iraq and its people from exhausted approaches centering on corruption and ethnosectarian divides. I will argue in this chapter that these both reiterate colonial domination in their approaches to Iraq, as they either center colonial power as the main scope of the analysis or portray the Iraqi people as inherently incapable of unifying their nation. Both of these approaches are problematic, to which I argue the need to incorporate an understanding that appreciates Iraq's colonial history, whilst analysing them as a unique and complex nation with its own agency in analysis. I suggest the institutional culture framework as a means to create this form of analysis, as it acknowledges the constraint created by an institution, such as the colonially-inclined state formation of Iraq, but is also built on the individual interpretations of the state of the political figures that allows the analysis to approach them as unique individuals.

Subsequently, Chapter 2 looks to set the theoretical framework for this approach. In this chapter I argue the basis for creating a more nuanced approach to political studies of countries like Iraq, through simultaneous awareness of its colonial history and its unique agency. This informs the methodological approach, that is based on Edward Said's contrapuntal analysis method, which is, "[reading] with a simultaneous awareness both of the metropolitan history that is narrated and of those other histories against which (and together with which) the dominating discourse acts,"

which gives us the methodological tools to accomplish such a task (Said, 1994, p. 51). Utilising this approach, we can begin to see where the writers see value and importance especially considering their relationships and interpretations of the state and its people, the relationship this creates and the way they approach action in this consideration.

Following the bases set by Chapters 1 and 2, Chapters 3-5 contain the analysis of the political memoirs. In these chapters I assess the language used by Tawfiq al-Suwaydi, Ahmad Mukhtar Baban and Hani al-Fkeki; these memoirs will be read and analysed in their original Arabic so as to create a more direct interpretation of their language. Chapter 3 uses the memoirs of al-Suwaydi to set a basis of the institutional culture of the beginning of the monarchical era, where he operated as a high-ranking official from 1921, in which absolute dominance of the state institution over its counterparts, such as the people, is a major theme that features heavily. Chapter 4 analyses the memoirs of Baban, whom I use to argue the slight shift in institutional culture with time, as Baban operated predominantly at the end of the monarchical period. In this chapter we will see more of a convergence between his interpretation of the political sphere and the political system. Although slight, this shift is significant as with it I will argue that the institutional culture was beginning to experience a change. This change was going against one of the institution's core beliefs, of dominance from the top-down, to which al-Fkeki's era posits a shift back to the early monarchical culture. We will see this in Chapter 5, as al-Fkeki's experience with the Ba'ath denotes a return to the aggressively authoritarian notions of rule that al-Suwaydi operated under.

Finally, in Chapter 6 I argue the importance of utilising the institutional culture of political bodies in the field of Political Science. Through this form of analysis, we are able to uncover an institutional culture within the Iraqi political sphere that appeared completely separated and different from the political system in place. Without the interpretations and conceptualisations of the political elites, that could not have been uncovered without access to these memoirs, it would have been difficult to argue for the existence of such a deeply ingrained culture. Ultimately, the institutional culture appeared so powerful that it was almost replicated in each of the three memoirs - in a time period that saw the state undergo multiple significant re-shaping, such as the end of the British Mandate, or the Revolution of 1958. The institutional culture of the Iraqi state appeared to be built on an understanding of the political sphere as anarchic in which the nation

was perceived to be home of multiple separate factions all fighting for power. This is an important finding and may inform future studies on Iraq, as it implies the need to assess the nation and its turmoil not solely through lenses of foreign imposed political systems, but with understandings of the way in which the state and the people are perceived by those indigenous to the state.

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## **Chapter 1: Limitations to Studying Iraq: Institutional Culture as a Solution**

In this chapter I assess the literature surrounding the Iraqi state, historically contextualising it as an institution with an embedded culture of operation, by which I mean there were a set of unwritten rules and conceptualisations dictating behaviour at the elite state level. This chapter sets out to show the importance in using institutional culture as a framework of assessment in countries like Iraq, that face such long-standing issues with a lack of progression. Institutional culture creates a lens with which we can analyse the standards of operations that can commonly overrule the political system, suggesting the institutional culture lens to be more relevant to enlightening the state's approach to rule. The modern Iraqi state was formed in 1920, and the research of this thesis starts with the era of Tawfiq al-Suwaydi, who started his elite political career in 1921. This does not suggest that the institutional culture was created with the inception of the Iraqi state and its political system. Rather, as the previous chapter has shown, the formation of the Iraqi state occurred on the back of an attempted form of rule from the British. When beginning the research process for this thesis, I thought that postcolonial theory in International Relations was not able to fully explain the issues in Iraq, as it did not give the necessary agency to the postcolonial subject. However, as this thesis is attempting to uncover the trajectory of the state institution's culture, postcolonial theory is important as it touches on the trajectory set forth by the colonial past of Iraq, suggesting the need to appreciate the postcolonial and neocolonial realities of Iraq. The colonial domination also ties into the orientalist ways in which the Iraqi people are perceived, in which they have been portrayed as inherently incapable of unification based on their ethnosectarian divides, or as possessing an inherent culture that is more suitable to corruptive or authoritarian forms of rule. This chapter will show the inadequacy of these approaches to Iraq, and the necessity to approach Iraq's issues from lenses that appreciate sub-cultures within the nation, that portrays the desires and progression of the people as equally relevant to the corrupt history of the elites. This is the basis upon which I approach Iraq through the institutional culture of the state, as the previous chapter showed, was operating with a disjuncture from the people, which this thesis looks to assess more closely.

This chapter argues the importance of approaching the Iraqi political elites through the institutional culture lens on the back of the people's desire for an indigenous and progressive

democratic system, and the exhausted approaches that portray Iraq's people as incapable of possessing a unified and democratic system. This chapter will begin by assessing the literature surrounding Iraq's issues, that have utilised the discourse on ethnosectarianism as the main source of issues that set Iraq's trajectory to today's struggles. I will argue the inability for Iraq's issues to be portrayed as an inherent disjuncture among the people, as the history of political movement in Iraq has been relatively inclusive due to its progressive nature. Subsequently, I draw on the literature surrounding Iraq's state formation due to its temporal relevance to this thesis, as it was a major event from which this thesis begins its analysis in Chapter 3. We will see in this chapter that the postcolonial approaches are based on the colonial domination that dictated the Iraqi state formation process and what followed, but ultimately leads to assessments that neglect the people of Iraq and the subsections of Iraqi society. The grouping together of the Iraqi people within the postcolonial approach as mere reactionaries, does not create space for assessments that appreciate the discrepancies between subsections and the different cultures that emerge from each. Section 1.3 builds on this and emphasizes the necessity for separating the subsection of the political elites from the Iraqi people, as they were operating within their own institution. We can note that cultures can be based on interpretations of reality and the ability to respond, which dictates the behaviour of an individual. This can occur even at the institutional level, which creates a mode of operation that adheres to unwritten rules and sets the basis for approaching the Iraqi state as an institution with its own mode of operation; this then allows us to analyse its historical disjuncture with the people regardless of the system changes. Lastly, as the culture framework is based on individuals and institutions having set approaches to their actions, it allows us to approach the intertwined nature of the international and intra-national approach to rule by the same entity, implying that their approaches would be similar in nature as they are based on the same institutional cultural roots. We can discern that the literature has been dependent on system-based approaches to the overlap in domestic and international politics, which this thesis will show can be uncovered from the cultural standpoint as well.

## **1.1 Analysing Corruption in Iraq**

Attempting to explain Iraq's struggles, researchers have depended on corruption as an explanatory approach due to Iraq's perceived high level of corruption as dictated by indexes such as the Corruption Index (CPI, 2019). In doing so, the corruption framework has created an understanding of Iraq that limits its issues to corrupt elites and tendencies of corruption amongst the Iraqi people. This section will depict how the concept of corruption is in fact vague and misleading as it relies on a framework of corruption, which is the lack of adherence to a system in the search for personal gain, whilst the system had been a foreign imposition. Ultimately, this section will show the importance of approaching Iraq not solely through the lens of the political system, but the need to utilise lenses that can encapsulate the reasons behind the elites' actions; this section will also highlight the importance of avoiding the creation of a generic umbrella of corrupt tendencies based on arbitrary frameworks of corruption that do not take into account the way in which the elites perceive the political structure and their roles within.

It is difficult to define the concept of corruption, especially as it pertains to Iraq, indicating its arbitrary nature. Williams (1999) defines corruption as that which relates to the state's law, as it is manipulated for personal gain. Leff (1970, p. 510) attempts to define corruption by pairing it with bureaucracy, and that which influences it in any form. The basis of both of these approaches relies on an understanding that the bureaucratic process and the state's political structure operate on a universal standard and deviating away from them is corruptive practice. However, by creating such a broad spectrum in the definition of corruption, Le Billion (2005) shows that countries like Iraq become a ground for anti-corruptionists to exploit through selective understanding of corrupt actions to promote the personal interests of the anti-corruptionist (see Brown & Cloke, 2004). Williams (1999) suggests that the root of this issue lies in the vagueness of the concept of corruption, further implying that corruption is a social concept and can be whatever it is understood to be. It can therefore be inferred that the corruption framework operates on an arbitrary basis that is easy to manipulate. Using it as a sweeping explanation of Iraq's issues is also inadequate as the sought personal gain of a corruptive individual would not theoretically cause such a deterioration of the state for a century, as it is possible to be both corrupt and maintain some level of a state's prosperity. The reliance of the corrupt framework on the political system, that was not built by the people of Iraq, carries parallels to colonial perceptions of the subjugated as they do not operate within the confines created for them by the

colonial power. This creates standards of governance that are perceived as universal, and so the rules and regulations that corruption is cited to diverge from or manipulate are in fact the 'correct' way of governance (Brown & Cloke, 2004). It is here that corruption as a framework and explanation loses its value for analysis on Iraq's governance, as it does not incorporate the foreignness of the system and the way in which it is perceived by those cited to be corrupt.

We must therefore contextualise any lens of analysis, such as the corruption base, historically and understand them in the context of the colonial history of Iraq. Hariri's (2019) article sets a framework for the formation of Iraq that acknowledges the colonial and imperial foundation. This is accomplished through analysis of the Iraqi fight for independence in lieu of the British colonial desire for domination. Fisher (1998) suggests this as the turning point for the colonial to review their discourse and move away from justifying their domination through claims of the evangelical advancements of civilisations, to the promise of furthering the colonised state's interests, all whilst maintaining the underlying colonial practice. According to Hariri (2019), displays of the fight against the colonial that often portrayed truly progressive and unifying tendencies were ultimately oppressed in search of maintaining colonial domination. Jabri (2013) names this the policing of modernity in the postcolonial nation. Hariri portrays the British involvement, in line with the new Iraqi Monarchy, as fragmenting and weakening the grassroots independence movement that in its inclusivity and progressive nature was able to garner such support. Returning to the corruption framework, it would be misleading to analyse Iraq's issues of corruption through understanding that the political system being used was built inclusively with the Iraqi people, and so deviation from its structure would be seen as justifiably corruptive and harmful to the Iraqi people. This suggests that in our analysis, we must move away from lenses that portray the political system as containing a strong foundation in the Iraqi political sphere. This implies that the foreign origins of the system and the 'policing' of the operations within portray the use of corruption as a framework, which is dependent on the system, for Iraq's struggles as baseless. I aim to explain this disjuncture with the political system using the concept of institutional culture in section 1.3 that has dictated Iraq's political sphere at the elite level, which will provide more access to the ways in which these 'corrupt' actions are perceived and allow us to inform and contextualise the perceived corruption.

## 1.2 The Importance of Iraq's Colonial History

The necessity of the postcolonial umbrella in understanding Iraq's political history is not a blanket approach that seeks to portray every political factor, process or event as dictated by the colonial past. As we will explore further in Chapter 3, the reliance on postcoloniality as the defining umbrella of the postcolonial nation creates analysis that continues to look outside of the postcolonial state and neglects the postcolonial subject. Before proceeding to analyse the postcolonial subjects as unique and complex, it is important to contextualise the Iraqi state and its elites within its colonial history. This is due to Iraq's imposing colonial history, which ultimately dictated the formation of the state and its political system. The disjuncture between the Iraqi people and the subset of the political elites indicates a separation in thinking between the state and the people. This can partly be explained, I argue in this section, through colonial and neocolonial discourse that carries through different political systems and leadership. This informs the aim of this project which seeks to understand this disjuncture better through close readings of texts created by political elites at key political periods, such as the formation of the state or its reshaping after the revolution in 1958. This section aims to show that whilst Iraq's postcoloniality is not the most important factor in its analysis, its importance should be acknowledged, especially in a thesis that seeks to highlight the standards of operation at the elite level and its trajectory, of which the colonial powers had a substantial amount of influence.

This thesis' reliance on Iraq's history to comment on its struggles today is based on the intertwined realities of the political world, such as the understanding that the past can dictate the present, of which coloniality is an undeniable element. Said suggests there is an inability to separate the intertwined realities and interdependence of past and present (Said, 1994, p. 61), due to the trajectory set by the past that subsequently creates the present. In addition, Hobson (2012) argues that the agency of the East exists in its dictation of politics within its territorial borders, by means of interaction with the dominating West. This is a theme that has emerged in security studies as well, as Barkawi and Laffey (2006) suggest that history itself is composed of both the strong and weak, and as such should be studied with the understanding of their interwoven nature. Cooper and Stoler (1997, p. 4) further suggest that the intertwined nature of the metropole and the colony must be joined within the same analytical field. This, however, breeds

issues of generalised analyses that place the postcolonial subject in the periphery and center the colonial power as the most important base of analysis. To use the definition Ashcroft et al. (1989) supply, wherein the postcolonial was understood to encompass the effects on culture by imperial process on all that followed, is problematic due to its portrayal of postcolonial subjects as subservient and mere reactionaries. Such a definition lends itself to creating a platform where everything can be explained as being postcolonial, and in doing so removes agency from the colonised. According to Jabri (2013, p. 6), the articulation of a 'right to politics' occurs as the subject can both exist in the framework of the postcolonial and so is subjected to its power, or can make a claim to the political world in which, "this claim to the political has happened in spite of the violence and the asymmetries of power that have characterised this particular world spirit and in whose name the region has been subjected over the years" (Jabri, 2013, p. 58). This basis allows us to acknowledge and understand the political subject on its own whilst also acknowledging the forces that actively act against it. In this thesis, the forces acting against the political subject are not limited to the foreign colonial, but also includes the subset of indigenous ruling elites that are operating on a unique basis of rule, some of which can be likened or attributed to the colonial history (which we will assess in Chapters 3-5). Jabri's framework is important because it allows us to analyse Iraqi political elites as uniquely complex individuals, but also acknowledging the constraints acting in the framework of the postcolonial world (Jabri, 2013, p. 132).

Based on the colonial history, Iraq's state formation and attempted consolidation that followed cannot be entirely separated from the colonial dominance that not only preceded but also overlapped into Iraq's independence. Lawson's (2006) study analyses the emergence of the Arab state-systems after the fall of the Ottoman Empire; however, the basis used for his study is one that understands the fall of the empire, the subsequent sovereignty and the nationalism that emerged as completely separate analytical concepts. This is contradictory to the history of Iraq's state formation that was intertwined with the colonial's desire to continue its domination (Lenczowski, 1957; Sorby, 2012). Similarly, Neep's (2012) study of Syria's state formation suggests that colonial violence was essentially set aside in the narratives of the West's transformation away from the anarchic past, and in doing so, "[colonial violence] contributes little to broader theoretical debates within the disciplinary social sciences" (p. 2). The notion of

the new Iraqi state being a form of decolonisation – and should be analysed as such – is incomplete as it disregards the continued domination that followed. Furthermore, the state formation itself that created this ‘independent’ Iraqi state was based on European interpretations of the state as per the foundation of the Treaty of Westphalia (Korany, 1987; see also Halliday, 2009). The very fabric of the new Iraqi state was built upon Western understandings of the state, which saw unity as an integral element. Thus, the lack of state unity in the Arab states presents a failing state, rather than a failing state conceptualisation. It is a foreign approach to the shaping of a nation that does not necessarily align with the indigenous interpretations. Owen (2004) subscribes to the understanding that the state in the Arab World was inherited from the European understanding, due to a lack of a viable replacement (Owen derived his understanding from the work of Zubaida (1988)). The analyses tend to fall short due to the frequent reliance on lenses that center Iraq’s state formation as a foreignly installed and dominated state institution. Moreover, using these lenses to explain Iraq’s continued struggle is problematic as they are built upon state conceptualisations that do not resonate with the indigenous population. Fakouhi (2016) implies that since most of the scholarship on Iraq in international circulation is constrained by Western notions – and within Western languages – the foundation being built upon is insufficient and so the analysis that takes place deviates from the reality. As previously discussed, an approach to countries such as Iraq that creates analysis based on Western notions and understandings of the political sphere is problematic; it is labeled as such due to depictions of postcolonialism that aim to remove agency from the colonised.

The colonial implications have emanated from the discourse surrounding Iraq, where the Iraqi people are portrayed as inherently divided and so unable to create stability on the basis of the territorial state that was created by the colonial powers in the Middle East that attempted to unify a heterogeneous population. Hinnebusch (2011) suggests that the divide by Western Imperialism, brought about by the transfer to “informal” understandings of empire as the modern states of Syria and Jordan were created, carried the ingrained foundational issues as territorial borders cut across different identities (see also Murden, 2009; Buzan & Gonzalez-Pelaez, 2009). The constant struggle within Iraq’s political sphere is attributed to the misfitting nature of the spatial separation of the Arab postcolonial states, that came about without adherence to the indigenous ethnosectarian realities on the ground. In doing so, Iraq’s ability to consolidate politically is

portrayed as impossible, due to the deep ethnosectarian divides forced into the same political system. This is a problematic approach, as Abu-Lughod (1989) suggests the reluctance to move away from analyses based on religion and the tribe constrains anthropological research, and further suggests that such an approach is akin to Orientalism. The ethnosectarian divides do breed important avenues of analysis (examples include Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015; Monier, 2015), but such approaches do not appreciate the history of the inclusive people's movements in Iraq's history. Dependence on the ethnosectarian lens is not only problematic in its historical implications of the Iraqi people, but also in the West's interaction with this lack of political progression, as an evangelical need from the West was created (Pugh, 2005; Ish-Shalom, 2008; Whyte, 2016). Said's analysis of US imperialism reiterates this, as it displays the way in which concepts such as Manifest Destiny and the Monroe Doctrine contain the rationale of "world responsibility" that continues into US foreign policy in Iraq today (Said, 1994, p. 285). Sluglett (2014) suggests the state building approach by the West in the early 20th century operated on an imperial foundation, where Wilson's Fourteen Points Speech, and the Permanent Mandates Commission essentially maintained the imperial colonial legacy upon which the states of the Middle East were built. The imperial and colonial implications that the ingrained domination in the Iraqi state-building project carries must be intertwined in any analysis.

Iraq's colonial history implies that the disjuncture of the independent state with the people, tied in with the people's progressive desires, created state operations that did not consider the people. Instead, there was somewhat of a separation between the two in the political sphere, which we will explore further in the research of this thesis (Chapters 3-5). Ultimately, in the analysis of this thesis I seek to remove the Iraqi people from the 'primitivism' that is associated with Said's concept of the Orient (Said, 1994, p. 168), centering the analysis on the subset of culture amongst the political elites that requires historical contextualisation, where coloniality is a vital component. If we return to Hariri's (2019) analysis, we can see a basis for the unification of the Iraqi people as the anti-colonial independence movement of the early Iraqi State was powerful enough that it crossed over the ethnosectarian divides. Hariri argues that the colonial project was thus forced into a method of divide and conquer, so as to maintain its dominating form of rule. McDougall (2011) argues that the inherent anti-imperialist political outlook within the region withstands time not solely because of the reach of imperialism, but the effects of which installed

state institutions that were not yet ‘meaningful’ to the people. This is due to the foreign image that comes with the state despite it being relatively indigenous, furthering the disjunctured relationship between the people and the state, which informs the scope of this thesis to be limited to the political elites and their institutional culture.

### **1.3 Assessing Iraq through its Institutional Culture**

The interpretations and understandings of those within an institution can be said to create a culture by which those that operate within abide. Approaching the political institution in Iraq as capable of existing within this rubric, we can illuminate the conceptualisations of rule emanating from the elites that help us explain the disjuncture with the people and the way the rulers conceptualise the role of the state. We have seen some gestures towards the influence of European - and subsequent American – imperialism, rendering the political sphere in the Middle East as unique, and so cannot be studied by the conventional political science approaches (Anderson, 2006). However, the critiques presented of the inability to understand the Middle East do not delve deeper into the post-coloniality of governance in the region and the generational influences of such an operation. That is, there is a continued “puzzled” approach to the inability for democracy to consolidate and the persistence of authoritarianism (Heydemann, 2002; Anderson 2006). The postcolonial framework we saw is important to acknowledge due to the institutional culture cultivated by the colonial but does not encapsulate all that Iraq is, rather, we have to appreciate the Iraqi nation as simultaneously affected by its colonial past, but also a unique and complex nation that requires analysis that treats the Iraqi people as separate (Jabri, 2013). This is why I employ the literature on culture, specifically culture as it pertains to an institution, as it provides a lens with which we can approach the Iraqi political elites both as unique individuals, but ultimately operating within a larger political institution that has a history of unwritten rules and conceptualisations of governance, within which colonialism is an important element. By first moving away from problematic approaches to culture that fixate struggles to be based on tendencies of certain groups - such as gender, religion or social class -

this section will show the definition of culture I will be using in the analytical chapters (3-5). This definition will allow us to approach the Iraqi political elites beyond the political structure they were operating and give insight into their understandings of the political sphere. This approach also highlights the ability for the institutional culture's influence to disregard the understood separation of the International and the intranational political spheres in IR theory.

Other understandings of culture have used it as a way to place certain groups of people within frameworks that suggest their inherent belonging to this group makes them more susceptible to certain tendencies and has been used as an explanation for their struggles. Licht et al's (2007) study is an example of the problematic approach to culture as they center culture as what is valued in a society, concluding that there are direct and consistent correlations between culture and the governance norms within certain societies. This basis is harmful, as the discussion is centered on cultures displaying tendencies that are either compatible with 'good' governance, or incompatible. This assumption creates a framework that causes discussion on countries like Iraq to be confined to the incompatibility of liberal democracy, but only insofar as it refers to the ideas of population comfort with authoritarian regimes. Such an approach falls in hand with the aforementioned Western-centred approaches to the Middle East, as the analysis becomes based on a universal standard to be compared to, oftentimes the Western. This also creates a basis for Western intervention and domination, in the neocolonial sense, where an evangelical need is created (Whyte, 2016). Rather, this thesis aims to show that culture as it pertains to institutions is a more valuable use of the culture framework, as this is dependent on an amalgamation of individual understandings of the standards of operation within an institution and does not rely on forced groupings of subsections of society based on religion, gender, social class etc.

I will be adhering to a different conceptualisation of culture, one that operates on the basis that interpretations of reality inform the ability to act and create an individual's, or an institution's, standard practice, or culture. As I started explaining in the Introduction Chapter, the study by Lamont and Small (2008) offers a framework with which we can understand culture, not as a comparative between different regions of the planet, but as a concept based on interpretations of the surrounding environment, and how this dictates behaviour of political actors. This was done by Lamont and Small in an attempt to remove culture from understandings that problematically

ingrain it within different races or social classes (see Borjas (2001) as an example of culture of poverty). Instead, they seek a different explanation for the disparities in poverty between different races. Of the categories that they set out, the main ones that I will be using are culture as framing, culture as narratives, culture as repertoire, and culture as institutions (Lamont & Small, 2008). We will explore these fully, as each offers a basis for the institutional culture that is formed, and I use this to help explain the disjuncture between the political elites of Iraq and the people. As we will assess now, the cultures of framing, narratives and repertoire give the individualistic framework, as they consider the psychological tendencies of culture, whereas the institutional culture offers a sociological structural approach, where a set culture exists within and dictates its members.

The institutional culture is based on the cultures of individuals that prop up the institution, and so even though this thesis makes use of the institutional culture framework, the individual basis helps guide the thought processes that create the institutional culture. As such, the 'framing' approach by Lamont & Small (2008) signifies the different ways in which individuals can frame the world they perceive, thus creating a culture by which they operate. This is based on the Kantian understanding of interpretive realities, where an individual's perception ultimately shapes their reality (Kant, 1982). In relation to this, the culture of narratives suggests that individuals can only operate within the framework they possess with their experiences, and the stories they tell of their lives. Lamont and Small suggest that actions require a narrative, and not solely an incentive which is particularly important as the source material used for this thesis is based on the narratives of the Iraqi political elites, that were interwoven with their understandings of the political sphere. Within this framework, we can see the need to understand their narratives in order to better understand their actions. Culture as 'repertoire' offers a different avenue with which we can understand an individual's actions. This is a form of culture that suggests each individual can only operate within their individual abilities, that is their figurative resources. They cannot operate beyond their scope as they have not been exposed to that knowledge in any significant way. Similarly, Russett (1972) gives an analogy of a figurative 'menu' of options that an individual has to work within and can only operate within this framework. Therefore, to understand an individual's actions, we must bring together their conceptualisations of their realities, the narratives this creates, and the available possible actions

they may undertake. This shows that, in analysis of Iraq's history, to use an encompassing umbrella under the colonial framework as the explanatory is insufficient, as each individual's conceptualisations and experience shape their behaviour to an important degree.

The institutional culture forms when these conceptualisations converge and become standard practise of the institution. Sociological institutionalism offers a framework that attends to shared values, cognitive scripts and attitudes that shape institutions (Hall & Taylor, 1996). It is possible for there to be more relevance to behavioural norms and ways in which those within the institution are expected and accustomed to acting. Historical institutionalism, whilst it limits its scope to the procedural modus operandi that I have argued does not encapsulate the reality in Iraq, is relevant in its historical approach and reliance on path dependence (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Path dependence is the understanding that all occurrences in the present are limited and constrained by what has occurred in the past, and so institutions within a path dependent framework cannot be analysed solely by the current procedural process and limitations. Therefore, when my hypothesis seeks to address a stagnant political culture in Iraq over the last century, the path dependence approach suggests that certain outcomes are constrained by historically ingrained themes of operation, pointing to a simultaneous need to acknowledge the colonial past. This isomorphism is furthered by Meyer and Rowan (1977), as they denote the ways in which the multi-organisational structure of a polity becomes homogeneous rather than moving towards efficiency, remaining within a singular framework of operation. This is described in a very similar way to historical institutionalism, as both cite the historical foundations that are difficult to move away from (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Thelen, 1999). Thus, we see that the political structure of newly formed Arab states can not only carry forward the preceding cultures of operation, but create a culture that would not necessarily change with the political system, implying the institutional culture to be more powerful in its influence and so important to analyse.

Theoretically, the institutional culture in its influence over the state figureheads should overlap its standards of operation onto both the international and the intranational political spheres. As an anarchic system requires the absence of an overarching power that can regulate the behaviour of states (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985; Art & Jervis, 2005), in explanations of international politics,

Waltz's (1979) neo-realist theory suggests states operate within an anarchic international system and that states act based on the power to dominate. In addition, Durkheim (1933) considered the absolutist militaristic nature of the state as the most important attribute in its position as an imperial power, limited only by more powerful powers. Such approaches to states operate within the framework of the international, understanding a state and its relationship to others within the international sphere by their ability to dominate. The lack of an overarching power creates the framework of power-based interaction between states as their actions are not regulated, and so ability to dominate takes precedence (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985; Art & Jervis, 2005). Interesting though, is how this thesis of anarchy stops being used as an explanatory characteristic of the state when the same actors and state representatives are functioning within its territory, that is in conducting state affairs domestically. Literature on the intersection of the international and the intra-national contends that the domestic politics contain government machinery that is not replicated on the international scale, suggesting this as a reason for the separation between the two fields (Kaplan, 1961, p. 14). In other words, the lack of a governance structure to regulate the behaviour of the states within the international sphere, as governments are typically understood to regulate the field of play within a state for intra-state actors, Kaplan suggests, causes the states within the international sphere to be able to operate freely, giving way to acts of direct dominance. The method of this overarching power, as it relates to its use of violence, is furthered by Hoffman (1960, p. 206), who suggests the difference between the international and domestic spheres lies in the inability of any overarching power of the international sphere to utilise violence to create order in the same method that a domestic government could over its subjects. Van Dyke (1957, p. 14) posits the difference in frequency between civil and international war as further evidence of this separation, as the state that approaches a civil war possesses powers over its people that can act as a contingency in the event of violent behaviour emanating from below. Evidently, the theory behind the separation between the international and domestic political spheres rests on the ability of the overarching power to enforce order, which it is understood to do so in the domestic spheres. The problem with such approaches is that they rely on an understanding that the governance structure, domestically, operates as a separate entity from the entity that operates in the international sphere, even though it relies on the same political elites. In addition, the reliance on an overarching power to limit the anarchic behaviour only applies to those that have a visibly powerful entity above them, meaning that the political

elites that operate as the overarching power would not necessarily be operating with such power above them. This would in fact only occur in democratic situations where the people would be considered the overarching power limiting the behaviour of the elites (Merkel, 2014). This, though, would require a theoretically consolidated democratic system, both institutionally and conceptually.

Such approaches do not make use of the fact that the international and intranational systems are operated by the same individuals, and so behaviour may be interrelated. The institutional culture framework we have assessed suggests that the approach to rule and conceptualisations of the behaviour of the state by the state institution would replicate both domestically and internationally. The anarchic structure of the international sphere would therefore theoretically be replicated domestically. As suggested, the lack of an overarching power over the elites within their domestic system, especially with the top-down power structure of the Iraqi political system, would create the basis for the elites to operate within an anarchic framework, both internationally and domestically. Nevertheless, Almond and Coleman (1960) draw a comparison between the political system of the international and those of the developing countries, as both display similar behaviours in their attempted development (see also Alger, 1963). This sets the basis for understanding Iraq at the time of its inception, as a developing nation, within the framework of its interactions internationally being replicated in its domestic politics.

#### **1.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has sought to set the basis for the approach to Iraq's political sphere through the lens of institutional culture. By first sifting through the problematic approaches to Iraq that center on corruption and ethnosectarian divides as explanations for the turmoil in Iraq, we have noted how the scope has been limited to unsolvable issues. Simply put, the corruption basis is based on an understanding of bureaucracy that is based on the political system, which itself was imposed and so actions by Iraqis that do not fall in line with this foreign system were deemed corrupt. The ethnosectarian approach was based on the state formation of Iraq, as it attempted to bring together a heterogeneous population within arbitrary borders created by the British colonial

forces. This approach neglects the history of political movements in the country that were inclusive and able to cross over such divides. Nevertheless, the ethnosectarian and corruption lenses to analysing Iraq highlight the importance of the colonial history of Iraq, which cannot be ignored in its analysis. In this chapter, I have argued - and will explore further in the theoretical framework set by the following chapter - that studying Iraq needs to incorporate both its colonial history whilst simultaneously approaching the nation as unique and complex in its own right, as per Jabri's (2013) framework. This chapter has shown that the means with which we can accomplish this is by approaching the Iraqi political elites through a methodology that can uncover their institutional culture. It is important that the methodology relies on analysis of Iraqi elites as individuals with their own conceptualisations of the political sphere, whilst also operating within an institutional culture that can become stagnant and carry forward, signifying the importance of the institution's history of which colonialism is an important element. The following chapter will show the methodology needed to uncover this institutional culture, as I look to uncover the interpretations and conceptualisations of the state institution and its relationship to rule through the writings and language of the political elites.

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## **Chapter 2: Theorising Iraq's Colonial History: The Theoretical Framework and Questions of Method**

In a way, this thesis is a re-evaluation of the history of Iraq's political elites by paying attention to the interwoven international and intra-national cultures of operation of a state. Put differently, it is a re-evaluation of the history of Iraq through the lens of institutional culture that highlights the conceptualisation of the state and the way it was perceived at the time of its inception, that ultimately led the state to its turmoil today. As I have shown in the previous chapter, I draw this language of institutional culture as a mode of operation built on the interpretations and narratives of individuals within an institution of their surroundings, primarily from the work by Lamont & Small's (2008) and Hall & Taylor, (1996). This chapter will affirm that the analysis of the conceptualisations of the state institution – that build the institutional culture – can be accomplished through analysis of the interpretive language of political elites of Iraq. Hence this thesis' reliance on political memoirs. This source material - which we will analyse in Section 2.1 - is important as it gives us access to the language of the political elites and their interpretations of state affairs through their experiences. The theory behind this analytical approach is based on reestablishing the knowledge production on Iraq. Through the work of Edward Said's (2019) *Orientalism*, we understand the need to reestablish the relationship between entities of the West and non-West. Said demonstrates that the dominating nature of the colonial powers is replicated in knowledge production on the Middle East and other non-Western regions. Chapter 1 has demonstrated the inadequacy of an analysis of Iraq based on its colonial history, as it lacks an appreciation for the unique and complex Iraqi people that were not necessarily reactionaries to an overarching power structure of domination and postcolonial theory. This chapter looks to reestablish the relationships held by the state entity of Iraq, with both its colonial history and its people, and present the state as both influenced by the West and a complex structure that requires its own analysis. We can draw this distinction between the unique Iraqi state institution and its relevant colonial past through Said's methodology of contrapuntal analysis that allows us to simultaneously extrapolate the implicit interpretations and narratives of the political elites, whilst appreciating the dominating outside factors affecting them. I argue that in contrapuntal analysis of political memoirs of Iraqi political elites lies an approach that allows us to understand the institutional culture of Iraq's state entity as both a manifestation of colonial domination and a

unique institution built on individuals' interpretations within. By first assessing the significance of the colonial history of Iraq in theory and attempts at understanding discourse surrounding Iraq, this chapter will show the importance of appreciating the colonial past, but as an interjection into an already existing political system. The methodological discussion that follows operates on the basis that to uncover the indigenous elite-based interpretation of rule, where coloniality is a component, we must make use of direct language of political elites.

Edward Said's work on the influence of colonialism on a region or nation like Iraq, informs this thesis' approach to appreciating the influence of the colonial past, as its influence crosses over beyond the physical invasion of a territory. As per Said's (2019) *Orientalism*, the colonial domination of the non-West by the Western power in history presents numerous avenues for skewing the reality in Iraq, requiring such a reassessment. According to Said (1994), "'imperialism' means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory... [colonialism] is the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (p. 9). This distinction between imperialism and colonialism - as colonialism denotes the practical domination of a distant territory - is important for this thesis because the domination of Iraq, as it relates to the institutional culture, was not only in attitude and theory but was powerful in its invasion and subjugation of the Iraqi people, suggesting the institutional culture to be directly influenced by its colonial predecessors. Said suggests that this dominating nature is replicated in knowledge production on regions like the Middle East, as the power to dominate can be replicated in facets of the colonial subject other than the physical. He coined the term 'Orientalism' to refer to such knowledge production of the region and defines it "as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, 2019, p. 3). This knowledge production is significant in its ability to affect the reality it interacts with, "such texts can *create* not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe" (Said, 2019, p. 94). This presents a need to remove our analysis from such constraints if we are to assess Iraq and its political history in a less confining manner, which in itself can be problematic.

There are certain implications, however, when attempting to remove countries like Iraq from the colonial framework in its analysis. According to Rey Chow (1993, p. 54), writing in the context of the European colonial legacies in facets of society such as theory, literature or the media, the

‘sanctification’ of the colonial is shown to be colonial in itself due to it being dictated by similar imperial and colonial forces. The decolonisation of colonially dominated aspects of society cannot be understood to dissipate with perceived cleansings of the colonised, when the dominating power is conducting this cleansing itself, giving it another avenue of domination. When looking at Iraq, the end of the British Mandate in 1932 was understood to be the end of the colonial period which, as Chapter 1 showed, was not an accurate assessment (Lenczowski, 1957; Hariri, 2019). The sanctification of Iraq’s state institution in this sense is an example of the inability of decolonisation to occur under the umbrella of the colonial power, as their dictation of Iraq’s decolonisation was simply a means to maintain domination under a different framework. The British Mandate that ‘ended the colonial period’ led to the transfer of power to indigenous based rule that presented the lack of the British overarching colonial power as a ‘sanctification’ of the colonial, despite the British colonial forces spearheading this transfer in an attempt to maintain their dominance. Chow’s theoretical basis for reassessing decolonisation attempts, due to their colonial framework, is a core undertaking of this thesis, as the decolonisation of knowledge production on Iraq has created lenses of analysis that maintain the domination, but simply under another umbrella. We saw examples of this in Chapter 1 where attempts to analyse the people of Iraq as unique and separated from their colonial past led to portrayals of the Iraqi people as inherently lenient to corrupt tendencies or incapable of unifying. The need to decolonise the knowledge production on Iraq requires approaching the nation not through set theoretical frameworks by the colonial powers, but by understanding the way in which the Iraqi people - limited to the political elites for this thesis - perceive the political sphere and recreate the way in which the state entity is understood.

Nevertheless, Iraq should not be presented with a sweeping assessment of a nation that is explainable in the binary of the colonial and postcolonial. Ignoring Iraq’s colonial history is unrealistic due to the oppressive nature of the colonial enterprise upon which Iraq was built, whereas adhering solely to the colonial history reproduces and reinforces the postcolonial subjectivity lens, portraying the subject of oppression in the analytical peripheral. Returning to Jabri’s (2013) framework, the postcolonial subject attempts to bridge the gap between these two realities in which both the colonial history and the complexity of the individual postcolonial subject are understood to be relevant in any analysis as “this claim to the political has happened

in spite of the violence and the asymmetries of power that have characterised this particular world spirit and in whose name the region has been subjected over the years” (Jabri, 2013, p. 58). This sets a theoretical basis for Iraq existing simultaneously within both understandings of a unique and complex nation, that was also constrained due to its colonial history (Jabri, 2013, p. 132). This is interesting as it also portrays the colonial as an external dominating force that acted on an already existing political subject. In relation to the trajectory of institutional culture, this suggests that the history of the state institution needs to be understood as having influenced the state formation, even though the state institution did not exist as we understand it today, where the modern Iraqi state and its current borders had yet to be formed. Seeing as this suggests a political system can be inherited alongside its culture, Iraq's colonial history and foundation suggests its state institution may have operated with a similar institutional culture to the colonial, which in itself was influencing an existing institutional culture that had accumulated over time in the region's governing body. Theoretically, this suggests that any analysis of the institutional culture and its history that seeks to be accurate would have to incorporate Iraq's rich history. However, the stagnancy in Iraq's progression that I argue has existed over the last century also suggests this modern historical institutional culture is a replication and amalgamation of the history of Iraq's state institutional culture and the colonial dominance that affected it. This means that the institutional culture of the modern Iraqi state has carried forward the institutional culture of its history, which includes colonial domination, and so possesses a complex culture that needs to be uncovered.

Thus, the historical mode of operation that whilst indigenous, was heavily affected by the colonial enterprise and could help explain the disjuncture between the state and the people, where a subset of the political elites would be operating with a view that separates themselves and their environment from the people that they act on behalf of as we saw in the Introduction Chapter. However, McDougall's (2011) assessment of the Arab people's relationship to the state entities suggests this thinking is also replicated amongst the masses:

Anti-imperialism... has continued to resonate in the region... because of the degree to which contemporary sovereignties themselves continue to be inhabited by it, not only in their “allegiance” to external powers but in

their very constitution as states that have yet to ‘belong’ meaningfully to their people. A certain “foreignness” persists in the nature of the national polity... As any Algerian taxi driver can tell you, speaking of his nation's hard-won sovereignty (and the phrase is presumably the same in other idioms elsewhere in the region), 'C'est pas Ã nous. C'est Ã eux' ('It's not ours; it belongs to them'). (p. 61)

Here, McDougall is displaying the people's interpretation of the separation between the state entities and their people. This is not solely based on the actions of those operating as part of the state, but at the root of their origins as part of the ‘national polity’, signifying a state entity that is foreign to its own people. Therefore, when the quoted taxi driver refers to the state as belonging to the ‘other’, we see a glimpse of the foreign (colonial) manifestation in the indigenous state entity and the perceived separation between the people and the state. The significance of this analysis by McDougall lies in the understanding that the state entity was negatively connoted in its foreignness, suggesting that the Arab people required the state institution to ‘belong’ to them. This suggests that the Arab people had conceptualisations of the state entity that were not solely dictated by the colonial enterprise, as the people already possessed perceptions of the way in which the state institution must operate that was only highlighted by the colonial power. The analysis of the state's relationship with its people in the Arab world, therefore, cannot solely rely on colonial history as the basis of the Arab states. Rather, the nations possessed individual understandings of the state and the way in which it operated that preceded colonial domination. The use of the institutional culture framework, and its dependence on individual conceptualisations of the state by Iraqi political elites, is important as what it uncovers will be complex individual approaches to state rule that were only affected by the colonial past.

The knowledge production on the Orient has been problematic as it denotes an alternate form of domination, where colonial power is replicated but in a different format. Even decolonisation attempts can be colonial as they operate on the same basis of colonial domination and continue to remove agency from the colonised subjects. I have argued that the analysis of regions like the Middle East need not completely ignore colonial history, as that can be problematic in itself as we saw in Chapter 1; but by using Jabri's (2103) framework, we can both appreciate the colonial

effects whilst giving agency to the colonised. The institutional culture framework of this thesis and its trajectory did not begin with the colonial enterprise that created the Iraqi state institution, as the colonial merely acted on an already existing political system that possessed its own culture and standard of operation. For this thesis, the approach to analysis needs to be done with an understanding that the political elites of Iraq were operating on a basis not created, but affected, by the colonial.

## **2.1 Contrapuntal Analysis of the Postcolonial Subject**

Approaching Iraq's state institutional culture by relying on the interpretations of the elites cannot rely solely on a historical analysis of the state's history to provide the necessary platform for uncovering Iraq's state institutional culture. 'Basic Information', that Topolski (1999) uses to refer to statements made by historians that are free of interpretations, would lead to a simple reassessment of historical events without being able to uncover the conceptualisations that lead to such events. This thesis requires source material and a method that uncovers the conceptualisations by Iraq's political elites through their interpretive statements. It is precisely studying the subjective dimensions closely of the accounts as *interpretations* that the political elites make about their environment that would help us uncover the narratives that dictate their standard of operation. Returning to Lamont and Small's (2008) in addition to Hall & Taylor's (1996) frameworks, we require a methodology that can uncover the makings of this culture by extrapolating the interpretations and narratives upon which the institutional culture would have formed. Edward Said's work on contrapuntal analysis creates a basis with which we can look back into Iraqi history and reassess the narratives upon which the state was built, as it allows us to assess the interpretations of the political elites through their writings by uncovering what is not explicitly said, with a simultaneous awareness of the external factors that affected their writing. As this section will show, the memoirs of political elites published after their political careers for the purpose of retelling the history of Iraq through their own lenses, provide a rich set of source material due to their interpretive portrayal of history.

Contrapuntal analysis has created an avenue to approach writings that can be said to be interpretive, such as fiction or memoirs, that allows us to bring to light the authors' interpretations of reality through their writing. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said stresses the importance of 'contrapuntal' readings of texts, which he explains is "[reading] with a simultaneous awareness both of the metropolitan history that is narrated and of those other histories against which (and together with which) the dominating discourse acts" (Said, 1994, p. 51). The ability to read and absorb texts with understanding of the historical and cultural context of the writing and within which they are born gives way to a new form of knowledge, one in which "the imperialist model is dissembled" (Said, 1994, p. 52). This is significant as it allows us to approach the writings of the Iraqi political elites through a method that understands and highlights the colonial umbrella that overarches their interpretations, due to their close relation with the colonial power as they directly succeeded the British Mandate. Accordingly, contrapuntal analysis can occur in different forms. Spatial awareness focuses on how geography and location are carefully used and placed throughout, which Said shows in the literature produced by the likes of Shakespeare, Defoe and Austin, where there are examples of the way in which empowered spaces in Europe are used as a show of "design, notice and development" (Said, 1994, p. 52), in a comparative sense to the 'peripheral' as that which is a subordinate. The other form refers to temporal awareness in analysis, which suggests understanding the contextual climate during which the writing was produced, and appreciating the constraints this may have caused. For example, oppressive regimes can be seen to control information production that emanated during their rule, such as the Ba'ath Party's violent means in controlling the population, part of which related to their inability to scrutinise the ruling elites (Makiya, 1989).

Theoretically, contrapuntal analysis offers a way in which we can simultaneously operate within different fields of Political studies, as it is a method based on simultaneous awareness of different facets of the political world, creating a more nuanced understanding of contemporary political history as the analysis becomes more holistic. In an attempt to reshape the disparate International Relations field, Mustapha Pasha (2010) suggests the need to operate reconstructively rather than by simply adding analyses and theories, to which Bilgin (2016) responds with the need to make use of contrapuntal reading as a method. This need, Bilgin suggests, is based on the ability of a contrapuntal basis to bridge together the different

approaches to IR in a metaphorical sense, allowing the field to be removed from the separation of its many theories and studies. According to Bilgin, other approaches have attempted to be reconstructive, such as analytical eclecticism (Sil & Katzenstein, 2010), postcolonialism (Chowdhry & Nair, 2002) and historical sociology (Buzan & Lawson, 2015), yet Bilgin suggests contrapuntality allows the reconstruction to occur without synthesis of these fields. The reconstruction is necessary, Pasha argues, as the IR field has become home to disparate theories and approaches that confound rather than build on each other, requiring a more nuanced reshaping and reassessment of the field, rather than a continued stacking of separate theories. The reason for contrapuntality being able to accomplish this, according to Said's (1984) *Reflections on Exile*, is that exiles, by nature of adhering to more than one culture possess a plurality in their awareness, "an awareness that - to borrow a phrase from music - is contrapuntal" (Said 1984, pp. 171-72). Contrapuntal here means the ability to operate and be aware simultaneously of the native history and culture of the exile whilst adhering to the culture of the new, foreign world. This suggests the incorporation of different realities to create a deeper understanding and analysis of the subject matter, whilst maintaining the unique outlook of each approach. Biswas (2007) stresses the need to integrate contrapuntality into the IR fields as it constitutes "a method that enables the study of simultaneous and mutually constitutive (of East and West, North and South) histories against the linear, developmentalist (from Westphalia to Globalisation) historical narratives inherited by most IR scholars" (p. 133). The contrapuntal approach allows us to understand history through lenses that are not state-centric (Biswas, 2007; Bilgin, 2016), and thus "worlding" the institutions that have not only interacted with the empires of history but contain, "the hierarchies and power-knowledge nexus embedded in them" (Chowdhry, 2007, p. 105). Together this shows the importance of contrapuntality in its simultaneous awareness as it creates a basis of subject analysis that can incorporate different realities into a more nuanced singular reality.

By approaching the history of the Iraqi state institution in this contrapuntal manner, we can begin to reassess the foundations upon which the entity was created and operated, contrapuntally contextualising its development. In doing so, we may use the framework of the culture of framing, narratives and repertoire (Lamont & Small, 2008), which suggests the modes of operation employed by an individual are built upon the interpretations they possess of their

surroundings, and their experiences that shape them. These interpretations that would otherwise not emerge in a simple analysis of texts but require a deeper engagement, one in which we can see the rationale of the writers in their conceptualisations of state rule. Contrapuntal analysis would allow us to uncover the implicit understandings of the political elites within their writings, by reading the texts against themselves and displaying the hidden portrayals of the state's power dynamic in relation to the nation and the elites that operate as the institution.

As the IR field has begun to incorporate contrapuntal analysis (Biswas, 2007; Duvall and Varadarajan 2007; Bilgin, 2016), this thesis seeks to reconstruct the historical understanding of the Iraqi state by contrapuntally analysing political memoirs written in early, modern-day Iraq. Memoirs, as an art form, are important to achieve the contrapuntal analysis required for this study. Couser (2012) who specialises in American Literature and life writing defines the fundamental difference between a memoir and a novel as, "Unlike the novel, then, memoir is the literary face of a very common and fundamental human activity: the narration of our lives in our own terms" (p. 9). As mentioned, the importance lies in the 'own terms', where the writer would be operating with a freedom of expression that gives insight into their interpretations and narratives surrounding their experiences, that creates their culture. This is why the memoirs will be read in their original Arabic - where I will translate its contents in the analysis -, to maintain the perceptions of the writer as they intended it to be portrayed. Couser further suggests memoirs require a degree of reader interaction not particularly found in other genres, brought about by confession or apologia (p. 14). The reaction of the reader to the apologia sub-genre, that refers to the desire to defend oneself publicly, can shift the memoir to the confession sub-genre, referring to a memoir that, "is especially intimate in its revelations, even if it is devoid of remorse and the desire to expiate guilt" (p. 39). Reader interaction can greatly alter the perception sought by the writer, further implying the importance of the way in which a memoir is read. This is particularly important as it leads to an immortalisation of the memoir's subject, and in turn can be either positive or harmful in its effects (p. 107). Gamble (2002) argues against the use of political memoirs as renditions of history, wherein the political scientists act as 'detectives' that try to siphon through the different memoirs to find the truest form of history written. Instead, and importantly for this thesis, memoirs carry a value in their interpretive realities, where Gamble suggests this interpretive nature causes it to be inessential to the field of political science, "the

majority [of memoirs], offer relatively little to the political scientist” (p. 142). Kedourie (1974) makes use of Arabic political memoirs as a means to display the reality of the political sphere in the Arab world, but only as a reference on the character of political writers in the Middle East or as a historical narrative. The use of political memoirs for their value beyond a historical narrative appears a rarity, as the dependence on historical facts and events as the most important point of analysis seems to be the main approach. I argue that the value lies in perceptions of reality and the way in which they inform actions, as they create an institutional culture that can help enlighten the political science field in its analysis of governing bodies and their histories.

On the other hand, there have been some analyses of memoirs utilising the contrapuntal method, although these did not all belong to political elites. Aljoe (2020) uses contrapuntality to analyse the unfinished work of Florence Hall - a victim of the transatlantic slave trade who was kidnapped from Africa and ended up in the Caribbean - as an attempt to bridge the gap between the analysis afforded to published works such as Fredrick Douglass', and the unpublished narratives of enslaved individuals that remain in US archives. Aljoe suggests the importance of using memoirs under this framework due to the ability of such a method to create a more holistic picture of fragmented histories. Some political memoirs are referred to as contrapuntal narratives (Aljunied, 2016); this is especially the case with Said Zahari's memoir, a leftist activist and Singapore's longest serving prisoner, as his storytelling, “interweaves personal and political insights and experiences with the dominant historical account” (p. 514). Aljunied suggests that due to the ability of such an interpretation of history to be read against the dominant discourse emanating from the state, the memoir itself becomes a contrapuntal narrative. However, Oza (2007) displays that the contrapuntal geographies of Israel, US and India created a triad based on the discourse of dangerous Muslim terror. This, Oza argues, is built upon a “collapsed understanding of time and history that is then used to justify and deploy violent measures of repression” (p. 29). Oza suggests the convergence of history can be used to create a contrapuntal geography, where this skewing of history can facilitate the dominant acts of the state. More pertinent to this thesis, we use the memoirs of political elites to reassess the domination they displayed towards their people, and the discourse emanating from the state that justified such a disjuncture.

Memoirs create a relationship with the reader that give power to the writer as they are able to rewrite history and are only bound by their own morals. In structurally unequal relationships, such as between the state and the people, there are ethical considerations of adherence to literal truth and the rights and interests of others (Couser, 2012, p. 106). Couser (2012) uses the case of a parent and child to depict this, or the writer and the disabled, yet the foundation of this argument is the structural inequality, therefore making it possible to apply it to the state and the people, or a political elite and a subordinate. Furthermore, Couser suggests that these should be addressed within the memoirs themselves, especially in cases in which consent to write intimately about an individual was obtained. Yet, this becomes difficult practice in the space of revenge writing, where a relationship leads to both parties producing memoirs that seek to portray the wrongdoings of the other (p. 104). Here, Couser considers this as unlikely to serve unethical writing but, as is the case with Baban (Chapter 4) in his attempt to right the wrongs of Khalil Kanna's iteration of history, this produces two versions of the reality, where one would be disingenuous. Lustick (1996) suggests that skewing of reality is an exponentially greater issue when politicians invoke historians' work, or in the memoirs' case, write the history themselves. Adherence to the truth becomes an afterthought in the attempt to inflict damage, and so the reality becomes interpretive. This basis by Couser and Lustick suggests that there is a possibility that the writing by the memoirs I will analyse in the subsequent chapters contain intentionally misrepresented realities. As we will explore in Chapters 3-5, each of the memoirs I analyse have had claims against them for presenting falsified information as facts or skewing truths since their publication, such as dates of political events, or by portraying themselves as patrons of social or religious groups. Although relevant, this issue of skewing the reality does not mask the interpretations of the political sphere that is the most important access point for this thesis.

Lastly, the specific sources this thesis will be utilising are those of elite members of the Iraqi political sphere at important junctures of the early Iraqi state period. With Migdal's (1994) portrayal of the state that is based on an entity that is not a sum of all its parts, rather, the accumulation of its power within certain individuals that operate as its basis, we can justify approaching the institutional culture of the Iraqi state through three important political figures, namely: Tawfiq al-Suwaydi; Ahmad Mukhtar Baban; and Hani al-Fkeki. This decision is based on an understanding that they were important figures during the years that followed Iraq's

inception in 1920, as they each held important and powerful positions within the political sphere throughout the time period of 1920-1963. This is a time period that signifies Iraq's state formation that was followed by the end of the British Mandate in 1932 and so the beginning of the independent Iraqi constitutional monarchy; this is followed by the 1958 revolution that overthrew the monarchy and introduced a military presidency, which was then followed by a coup in 1963 by a faction of the Ba'ath Party. Each of these events saw a reshaping of the Iraqi state and with it, conceptualisations emerged in the writing of political memoirs surrounding these events. Al-Suwaydi held three Prime Ministerships at various times during this period, and was also Iraq's youngest ever premier and its 5th Prime Minister. In addition, he held high profile and powerful state positions such as Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Justice, General Authority and the Controller General of state accounts. His influence on the political sphere continued until the monarchy's end in 1958, where he had just been appointed by Baban as the Minister of Foreign Affairs before its downfall. On the other hand, Baban spent a significant amount of his political career on the Royal Court, as an adviser to the King, before eventually accepting a nomination to be the Prime Minister, which was short lived due to the 1958 revolution that overthrew his government. He was Iraq's last Prime Minister of the monarchical era and, as he suggests in his memoirs, a close colleague of the royal family. Both Baban and al-Suwaydi give us insight into the culture of the constitutional monarchy, as both were elite members throughout, and aided in its formation. Their combined time as elites spans from 1921 to 1958 which encompasses the entirety of the monarchy's life, and through their conceptualisations, we can uncover the institutional culture. Furthermore, al-Suwaydi's career beginning in 1921, and Baban's elite career beginning in 1940, signifies the ability for the coming analysis to incorporate a comparison in which we can see the trajectory of the political sphere. This will be done in an attempt to understand the trajectory that ultimately led to the coup of 1958, of which al-Fkeki was a leading culprit, being a Ba'ath member and elite from 1954 until 1963.

This chapter has shown the importance of theoretically approaching Iraq as both a manifestation of its colonial past but as a unique and complex entity that cannot be analysed solely through its postcoloniality. Through the work of Edward Said's contrapuntal analysis, we now have a base with which we can approach the analysis of Iraq with a simultaneous awareness of the past and

present, which Said suggests are interactive in their nature. The contrapuntal analysis also gives us the methodological tools to extrapolate the bases of the institutional culture from the memoirs of the political elites of Iraq. Memoirs that otherwise have only been used for historical narratives, not as a comment on the institutional culture and perceptions of the political sphere as understood amongst the elites. Through the work of al-Suwaydi, we have insight into the institutional culture of the Iraqi state at the beginning of its inception, as he held his first major position in 1921 as the Iraqi government's legal adviser. Baban gives us a comparative lens within the same era, as he experienced the peak of his political career towards the end of the monarchical era, being its last Prime Minister before the revolution. Finally, Chapter 5 will assess al-Fkeki's writing as he gives us insight into the institutional culture of the subsequent era of politicians, as the authoritarian form of rule lasted until the US invasion of 2003. Comparing Al Fkeki's work to that of Baban and al-Suwaydi will allow us to develop a more holistic picture of the trajectory of the institutional culture. Hence, we can begin to understand which conceptualisations of the political sphere were able to withstand such drastic changes to the political sphere.

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### **Chapter 3: Tawfiq Al-Suwaydi - Congruent Action and the Absolutist State**

As the first in the series of 3 chapters, this chapter examines Tawfiq al-Suwaydi's perception of the state institution and its role towards the nation in order to highlight the institutional culture of the Iraqi state at the time of its inception and during the monarchical era. The aim with this chapter is to lay the foundation for a comparison to be drawn with Baban and al-Fkeki that followed al-Suwaydi. Al-Suwaydi held his first premiership in 1929, and during the monarchy's last government before the revolution of 1958, he was Iraq's Foreign Minister. His range of experience carries across almost four decades, giving his writing historical depth. Even before 1929, he worked closely with Abdul-Muhsin al-Sa'adoun (Iraq's second Prime Minister) and served as the Iraqi government's legal adviser from 1921 to 1929 (Dougherty & Ghareeb, 2019, p. 232). In his time in the Iraqi government, he occupied numerous positions, such as: Minister of Foreign Affairs (1929, 1934, 1937-1938, 1941, 1946, 1950, 1953, 1958); Minister of Justice (1925); Minister of Education (1928); Deputy Prime Minister (1943-1944); General Authority and the Comptroller General of state accounts (1935). He was also the Prime Minister on three separate occasions, in 1929, 1946 and 1950. In short, Al-Suwaydi's influence and significance for, and as, the state of Iraq during the monarchical period cannot be understated. In the words of Iraqi historian Adeed Dawisha, al-Suwaydi was "a pillar of the monarchical regime" (Dawisha, 2013, p. 16). Through his memoirs, we will be able to explore the ways in which al-Suwaydi understood the political sphere in Iraq. His adherence to state power as separate from the people and requiring almost no input was linked to an understanding of the best way for a state institution to function, as absolute in its rule over the nation, without space for outside input or contestation for power. Al-Suwaydi's memoirs show an understanding that posits the state as requiring centralised and powerful rule, as he believed an incongruent state would not be able to function fruitfully. These standards all appear on an understanding of anarchy as the foundation of the political sphere in which it was the basis for an institutional culture that relied on power to dominate as a necessary variable.

Al-Suwaydi's position as a leading member of the monarchy's regime posits his memoirs as equally important in understanding the modern history of Iraqi politics. His memoirs have been used as a historical reference due to the weight and significance of his political experiences

(Bengio, 2015), as evident in Eppel's (1992) article, who briefly assesses the post-World War Two period in Iraqi politics, or as in Kedourie's (1988) analysis of anti-Shiism in Iraq (see also Marr, 2007; Dawisha, 2013). Bengio's (2015) review of the English translation of the memoirs suggests that there may be some factual discrepancies. For example, in al-Suwaydi's meeting with the Turkish ambassador in Iran in 1931, where al-Suwaydi suggests a month later they had agreed upon the Saadabad Pact, even though the pact was signed in 1937 (Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Turkey Treaty of Non-Aggression, 1937). Otherwise, the memoirs themselves have scarcely been analysed beyond their ability to help create the historical narratives of Iraq. This chapter diverges from such use of the memoir and turns to an in-depth dissection of the original Arabic memoirs that seeks to uncover the foundational understandings of the political sphere based on the historical narratives, where we saw in Chapter 1 his perceptions help highlight his institutional culture. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the reliance on al-Suwaydi's interpretations of the political events and the environment he operated in as a leading member of the Iraqi monarchical era does not require an analysis that is entirely dependent on factual accuracy, and thus the discrepancies problematised by previous researchers do not lessen the value of the memoir as an object of analysis. Instead, I am interested in the subjective dimension of his writing to uncover the institutional culture, utilising his deliberately chosen language to understand his interpretations of the political sphere.

Al-Suwaydi's position in the chronology of the development of the Iraqi state, as one of its earliest state figures, makes his interpretations of the state institutional culture an important position with which we can begin. This is necessary to understand the trajectory that sets in motion the interpretations of Baban and al-Fkeki in chapters 4 and 5, respectively. Even though Baban operated in the same era, the majority of his work in major state roles came between 1940 and 1958, preceding which he was governor of Mosul, a northern province, in 1926 and later al-Kut, a southern province (Dougherty & Ghareeb, 2019, p. 105). Therefore, we turn to al-Suwaydi, who held major state positions, as we have seen, beginning from 1921 through to 1958. In addition, his constant involvement in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially at the same time as his premierships (1929, 1946, 1950), gives him a simultaneous awareness of the implications of both gaining international recognition and the establishment of the Iraqi state institution. To operate on both fronts requires an interpretation of the state as an entity in relation

to the people and also in relation to the international community, providing a holistic interpretation we may not get from Baban and al-Fkeki. It is important to remember here is that this was a time where Iraq sought to gain autonomy from the British, both from the Mandate that ended in 1932 and the subsequent treaties that allowed British influence to continue, such as the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1948, in addition to the attempts to gain acceptance on the global scale in the League of Nations.

The main objectives of this chapter are as follows: (1) explain al-Suwaydi's foundational understandings of the state through the lens of those representing it, to gain insight into the mechanisms that early Iraqi political elites understood the state to operate under; and (2) understand the significance of people in this conceptualisation of state to show the perceived separation of the state with its people. In this chapter, I will argue that al-Suwaydi's perceptions of the state and its ability to function predicated on an understanding of different political bodies within the state (such as the people, the governance structure or the political elites) as separate factions that interacted with each other in an anarchic system where ability to dominate played a key role. We will see that regarding the state, which appears substantially in al-Suwaydi's work, there were two main themes operating in establishing those 'allowed' or deemed fit enough to operate as the state: competence and cohesiveness, as it relates to absoluteness of state power. These two themes bring together his understanding of the way in which the state should operate. By adhering to measures of cohesion within the state, al-Suwaydi refers to the necessity of controlling attributes, to which he refers to as competence. Otherwise, he makes use of arguments similar to Kantian rational agency, but only as a means to exclude the people that he deems are not in possession of the 'primary goods', an example being education (Darwall, 1976). This is portrayed as necessary for the state to act fruitfully, as he suggests the inability for a state to function fruitfully with intra-state battles. The relationship to the people is somewhat portrayed in the realm of irrelevance, with infrequent mention which is in itself an important indicator. The people only appear insofar as their anger as a group becomes an obstacle to the cohesive approach of the state, and only then do they gain some relevance in the form of an entity to be subdued. However, even in his limited analysis, we see that al-Suwaydi's perception of the state's relationship to the people brought forward the slight shifts to adherences to the constitution and the democratic system within the Iraqi political sphere. The institutional culture

that is built on the perceptions and interpretations of the state as a separate entity that seeks to dominate its factions in an anarchic understanding of the field of play, was slightly overlapping with non-anarchic appreciations of the constitution and the democratic system. These memoirs give us the foundation with which this argument can be made, as the rest of the chapter will show.

### **3.1 Interpretations of the State**

In this section, we will note that al-Suwaydi's understandings of the state are displayed through his interpretations of those running and representing the state; al-Suwaydi portrayed the state's requirement for cohesiveness as dependent on individuals' ability to create this standard. Representation of the state appears in the memoirs through the lens of competence. We can see that there were a particular set of assumptions regarding characteristics and abilities of an individual that allowed them to rule. I use the word 'allow' not from a bottom-up lens, where the people would allow the individual the right of rule, nor do I use it as top-down, where an overarching power would consider the individual competent enough. Rather, al-Suwaydi's memoirs will show us that this arbitrary right to rule was understood to be possessed by colleagues on the same level, within the same institution as an unwritten rule which was part of the institutional culture. The people's considerations of who should rule was seldom considered in al-Suwaydi's analysis of different leaders. Nor was the King's, as evident from al-Suwaydi's intense criticisms of various Prime Ministers, all of which, by the standards of the Iraqi political system, were nominated and endorsed by the King. As we can extrapolate from his memoirs, al-Suwaydi's deep thought on the competence required function as a state representative gives us an analytical lens through which we can understand how he interpreted the state entity itself. Evidently, aggression and the ability to maintain control were central to al-Suwaydi's parameters of competence required to represent the state. This is because it allowed one to dominate the political sphere, creating the necessary cohesive state institution.

We will observe similar themes with both Baban and al-Fkeki, both of which lead us to similar notions of competence through the lens of authoritarian characteristics. However, al-Suwaydi and Baban are particularly interesting in this regard as they were operating within the structure of a democratic organisation, one that cannot be congruent with such interpretations.

Comparatively, we will see that al-Suwaydi's understanding of these characteristics align with al-Fkeki, who operated in a military dictatorship with openly authoritarian tendencies. This is particularly interesting considering Bengio (2015), in a brief comparison between Ba'ath leadership and al-Suwaydi, notes the significantly more liberal and pluralistic value system of the Monarch period, in particular reference to al-Suwaydi. This contradiction is particularly important for our analysis as we begin to see that there were major discrepancies between the political system in place and the way it was perceived and operated from within. Al-Suwaydi allows us to begin setting the foundation for the unrelenting institutional culture of domination through his interpretations of the role of the state institution and representation of it. His memoirs will show us that his adherence to ability to maintain control occurs because a cohesive state was perceived as a prerequisite to an effectively functioning state, which requires a cohesion from within that does not leave room for intra-state opposition of any kind.

### ***3.1.1 Perception of Competence***

This section dissects the understanding al-Suwaydi and his colleagues possessed of the concept of competence in state representation. Al-Suwaydi's definition of competence pertains to aggressive forms of authority where any form of pushback was limited in the political sphere, allowing centralised rule to operate freely without contestation. His reasoning portrays similarities to concepts of rational agency, where he considers the people to be irrational due to their lack of formal education or their inability to conceive the realities of government due to their lack of experience. However, rational agency as a concept cannot adequately explain this relationship with those deemed unable to rule. This section will highlight that al-Suwaydi's understanding of the ability required to rule was not based on matters of 'primary goods', but rather powerful characteristics in which the state would be limited to those able to dominate the nation. We will see that the rationality framework would have been applicable if the 'primary

goods' were achievable matters with the advancement of the state, such as education. Yet al-Suwaydi demonstrates that the parameters shift to continue the exclusion of the people from governance, portraying his desire for a centralised form of power in the state institution. Therefore, we will explore the way in which these characteristics deemed fit to rule were used under the umbrella of rational agency, operating as a means to an end to justify the exclusion of the people from the government. By first exhibiting the way in which the certificate of competence was only distributed by the political elites, this section will show how this perception of competence gives us a lens with which we can understand the power of a state, as understood by al-Suwaydi and his colleagues.

Ulfelder (2010), influenced by the work of Dahl (1971), defines democracy as a system in which, "citizens freely and fairly choose and routinely hold accountable their rulers" (p. 4). Within this framework of democracy, as Iraq was at the time of al-Suwaydi's political life, a democracy in name and according to its political system, the people judge and hold the rulers into account. In other words, the competence of rulers is decided by the people. Yet the performative nature of this democracy was evident from the earliest days in the Iraqi state, where we see evidence of the institutional culture overruling the system. In Iraq's political system, representation of the state was not dictated by the population, but rather by those already in power as al-Suwaydi displays in his portrayal of elections. During the Arab-Iraqi conference that was held to discuss Iraqi independence from the British Mandate, the author refers to himself and others attending the conference as, "representing the Arabic Iraqi people as legal and right representation" (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 62). Al-Suwaydi's understanding of legal representation, in this case, was simply a nomination by King Faysal I, as there was no election from the people to this effect. The use of the word "representation" implies a transfer of power from the people to himself and the delegation. The British criticised, "It was reported in a communication issued by the British Government... the claim that [the Iraqi delegation] represent the Iraqi people is incorrect, because there were no special elections carried out for their dependence to this degree" (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 63). Al-Suwaydi did not view the state as reliant on a pass of power from the people, rather, their selection by the King was enough, who in this instance was deemed the custodian of state power through his ability to pass it on to his delegates. This is a theme that

appears throughout, where the legitimacy was not provided from the people, but rather from the elites, removing the Iraqi state from operating within the dimensions of a democratic state.

Seeing as representing the state appeared to be legitimised only by those deemed custodians of state power, we have to assess the criteria by which they viewed their counterparts and the basis for their decisions on legitimisation. For al-Suwaydi, this was based on an arbitrary measure of competence. As mentioned, I use the term 'competence' based on the need to find an encapsulating term that accurately represents the interpretation of state representation through the eyes of al-Suwaydi. The concept of competence appears in al-Suwaydi's writing based on two measures: education and experience. He draws these parameters in his analysis of Iraq's relatively new political system, as al-Suwaydi claims that this system was in place (referring to the King's nomination of Prime Ministers, and indirect influence on their nominations for cabinet ministers) for the King to nominate "experienced" and "educated" people to lead. He suggests that the first government did not meet these criteria and displays this as its reason for failure (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 100). The experience and education frameworks appear in varying degrees throughout his writing, in which al-Suwaydi displays the performative, or arbitrary, basis of these components he deemed necessary for rule.

The education lens of competence appears in al-Suwaydi's writing through displays of unrest with illiteracy. In his analysis of Iraq's early governments, he criticises King Faysal I's approach, which included a variety of social classes in government as an attempt to create a diverse governance structure, "those that cannot read cannot form the legislative branch." (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 102). This feeling is replicated with his assessment of the people's ability to be involved in government. At the inception of the Iraqi state, the author portrays the Iraqi people as incapable of providing any input for the constitution and that which relates, "it must be recognised in this regard that the Iraqi people at the beginning of the establishment of the state, were not in a position that they can express their opinions in a reasonable manner; because most of the people do not understand the Treaty and its intricacies or any important political matter to do with the future of the country" (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 96-97). We see an implicit assertion to the irrational nature (connotations of Kantian rational agency emerge here) of Iraq's population at the time, in al-Suwaydi's eyes. Al-Suwaydi also suggested the inability of the people to rule

themselves with a population possessing a 5% literacy rate, claiming they could have been easily in a democracy (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 98-99). This, then, would require an adherence to a sense of democracy among those that are in possession of the 'primary goods', such as education, associated with being rational agents (Darwall, 1976). In these isolated instances, it is clear how the rational agency prerogative manifests through the lens of viewing the people as uneducated, deeming them incapable of engaging in political discourse and self-governance. However, al-Suwaydi's understanding of the competence required in the political sphere was not dependent on education as a fixed measure, where an educated people would have been understood as capable and rational. Instead, as we will see throughout his memoirs, the parameters of rationality shift, hence the need to move away from the Kantian rational agent argument.

The second component of Al-Suwaydi's conception of competence was experience, and here I draw this distinction between competence and rationality. This is based on al-Suwaydi's replication of this exclusive standard with his - educated and experienced - colleagues at the political elite level, suggesting the parameters he draws to be a means of exclusion. When the Royal Court began suggesting that there was a need for new faces in government, al-Suwaydi responded that there was no one new that was competent enough to take up any position (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 346-347). His conceptualisation of competence in this regard was associated with the lack of experience any of the candidates have, by being 'new faces'. However, the arbitrary nature of this claim is evident from al-Suwaydi's analysis of the government led by Mazahem al-Pachachi, who was nominated and endorsed by Baban and his colleagues, to which the author responded that he was useless and incompetent (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 410-411). Al-Pachachi, did not lack experience in government, having served as Minister of Works, a member of parliament and ambassador to Britain in the 1920s (Dougherty & Ghareeb, 2019, pp. 179-180). Here, al-Suwaydi's writing suggests he was assessing the governments of Iraq through a framework he had set himself, built upon his own discretion, that only used the experience and education framework as a justification for the exclusive approach to governance.

The competence framework was used as a means of exclusion, in which it created a separation with the people of the state, in the same way it was used to pass judgement on the likes of

al-Pachachi, where the separation would be justified based on the perceived incompetence of the masses. The arbitrary nature of this approach is evident from the implications of al-Suwaydi's attempt to apply this competence of experience on himself. Al-Suwaydi responded to the King's request in 1929 to form a government with claims that he himself was too young and inexperienced (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 133). However, he eventually agreed, but asked the King to "hold his hand" throughout his time in office. Within this first government of his, the author took up the Prime Ministership and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and General Authority, despite his apparent lack of experience (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 149). He does not comment on the appearance of hypocrisy this line of reasoning presented, where he was both too inexperienced to be Prime Minister but was capable of handling the premier alongside two major state roles. We can understand his reasoning under two umbrellas; he was aware of the performative nature of the parameters of competence, and only by reading his reasoning against itself do we see the facade; or this foundation of thinking was so deeply ingrained in the political sphere he was not able to see the hypocrisy of his reasoning, suggesting the fight to dominate the political sphere - which we will explore further - manifested subconsciously through weak-based lines of reasoning creating an arbitrary standard. Either way, the performative nature of this competence format in assessing potential candidates points to the closed system of government that was being cultivated. The elite level politicians had an ability to shift the parameters as they saw fit, allowing them to control the level of exclusivity of the government, removing notions of democratic practice.

Al-Suwaydi did not adhere to his education and experience parameters to the same extent as that of the dominating characteristics which he viewed as the leading decider in the ability to rule. The charade-based assessment of the education and experience parameters of competence were based on an adherence to dominance as the leading variable. However, it is not clear whether this was an explicitly understood facade, or if it was subconscious. Regardless, the need for a facade suggests it to be a manifestation of an adherence to the anarchic framework of the political sphere, that bred rational agency lines of argumentation as an attempt to bridge the new democratic system with the old institutional culture of domination. The importance of domination that al-Suwaydi adhered to suggests exceptional leadership was associated with the ability to be authoritarian. Al-Suwaydi referred to the passing of King Faysal I as leaving a big

hole that his son could not fill (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 237). The hole to fill required a certain type of individual - one that could not be replicated by anyone, as the ability to dominate is unique. This further removes us from the democratic ideals, where the governance structure at its basic form would simply be a manifestation of the people's desire, wherein the type of personality of the members at the elite political level would not have to be as dominating as their requirement to fill the role of leader would be based on simply manifesting the people's desires (Merkel, 2014). In 1948, during the negotiations for the Portsmouth Treaty that considered British interests in Iraq (this was later named the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, which was a revision of the similar preceding treaties in 1930 and 1922; Sorby (2012) suggests these maintained British interests during the Mandate period) the author complains that Salih Jaber's government was too weak to handle negotiations with the British, "Salih Jaber's Ministry is weak... and is not strong enough to assume responsibility of the negotiations, and the negotiations take extensive efforts and preparations" (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 395). The requirement appears as though those leading the country must have an appearance of strength. This requirement is not portrayed to be the ability to act on behalf of the people, but rather the ability to show strength as the state of Iraq where competence is associated with the ability to lead. Implicitly, this tells us that the people were irrelevant in this equation, regardless of the endorsement (or lack thereof) they may give to their rulers.

The exceptional leadership was associated with the ability to maintain control, no matter how authoritarian the measures, portraying the parameter of competence to be through power to dominate. This was evident from the short life of al-Jamali's government (1953-1954); a government that was so focused on its relations with and aiding Syria in 1953, was eventually pushed to resign for lack of focus inside Iraq. As al-Suwaydi notes, "al-Jamali's weakness as Prime Minister was not borne out of the nature of the business that he carried out, whether internally or externally, but his weakness was borne out of his loss of leadership" (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 453). The ability to lead is portrayed by al-Suwaydi as the most important factor in prolonging government. The actions themselves, despite the fact that they might satisfy the needs of the people, are not displayed to have the same effect of an appearance of leadership. This suggests that the state was interpreted as a matter disinterested in its people, and as a separate entity. Therefore, if we place the competence parameters of education and experience alongside

ability to lead and control, al-Jamali's example points to the importance of the latter. For if al-Jamali's work in government, which al-Suwaydi portrayed in a positive and approving manner, was seen as irrelevant to his fall from government, then we see that the most important factor is the ability to control. To represent and be the state, it is more important to be able to maintain rule through exceptional leadership regardless of policy or working in the interests of the people. This also suggests al-Suwaydi viewed the state's relationship with the people not as the transactional form of leadership, where the leader would engage with the needs and desires of the people (Burns, 1978) but rather, it was based on the ability to maintain control. When the political sphere was in disarray after numerous coup attempts and conflicts within, the author likened this to a ship in a storm (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 376). The obvious solution for al-Suwaydi, within this analogy, was that the ship was in need of a "genuine captain" to steer and assert control. The state was not seen as able to operate without the control and dominance of a singular, or limited, figurehead. The storm here was in reference to the coup attempts and major conflicts. However, contextualising this with his perception of dominance within the political sphere, it appears as though he was suggesting that even issues like protest (within this analogy, that could be small waves), that are weaker in influence, need to be nullified. The requirement to be in government was not on the basis of interpretations of the people's wants and goals, but on the ability to manoeuvre a ship with little to no resistance. The exceptional leadership was tied to the ability to act without contestation from other factions within the state, connoting an authoritarian form of rule.

This authoritarian understanding of government is aided by the way in which al-Suwaydi approached the Ministers that were in government during the coup of 1941. During the early emergence of the attempted coup of 1941, the author spoke to the Ministers, suggesting they would be serving the country if they stayed away from government positions due to their perceived weakness (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 231). He further suggested that if he was in power, he would be able to do what is necessary to quash and discipline the revolutionaries (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 232). Overall, the author concludes this analysis with, "the government must take drastic measures to preserve its existence and prestige." (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 232). Evidently, al-Suwaydi interprets the governance structure as in need of an individual that can demand a standard of discipline, regardless of the means needed to achieve it, which may be tied to the

elevated perception of the state institution as prestigious. The allowance of 'drastic measures', in the eyes of al-Suwaydi, suggests that it was more pertinent for the state to maintain control of its people and factions than to adhere to non-authoritarian measures that would not allow such drastic approaches to take place. The use of words such as 'existence' and 'prestige' also further suggests the anarchic portrayal of the state within the political sphere, where its hierarchy can be threatened by intra-state factions, which I aim to explore further in the following section.

Overall, the concept of competence allowed the author and his fellow representatives of the state to act on behalf of the people, without allowing the latter's integration into the government. Returning to Ulfelder's (2010) definition of democracy where citizens hold the power over their leaders, the way in which al-Suwaydi portrayed the governance structure points to a system without a democratic basis, despite the system within which he operated. However, he admits to the fact that this system was not truly democratic but asserts that it was not a dictatorship either. Al-Suwaydi builds on this claim of lack of democracy, suggesting that if democracy truly existed, the British would not have held governmental positions in Iraq (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 103-104). He acknowledges the mutual exclusivity of colonial domination with the democratic system, but fails to admit that his adherence to the undemocratic is in line with the British form of rule. His reference to the British influence does not appear critical, rather, just a reality of the Iraqi political system. Looking inwards, al-Suwaydi suggested that a system that possesses both a monarchy and a democracy is a contradiction, as one acts against the other; he suggests the constitution was weak due to the unclear middle ground between the monarchy and parliament, citing the King's right to dissolve parliament as counterproductive (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 101). He also claimed the "reasonable" in Iraq did not mind British involvement (which he equated with removal from democratic practise), as they saw Iraqi freedom in government as worse than British freedom in government (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 104). For there to be a separation of reasonability, in which al-Suwaydi considers those that appreciated British domination even after the end of the colonial enterprise as reasonable, suggests that to be among the competent few comes an implicit understanding that the British colonial domination had not ended. This overlap of coloniality is important as it offers a rationale for the heavy influence of the culture of domination that al-Suwaydi and his colleagues carried forth into the political sphere, even after the independence of Iraq. The British domination that appeared in the neocolonial form, we will

see in the following section, is replicated in al-Suwaydi's interpretation of the way in which a state should operate. His adherence to a competence framework based on ability to control falls in line with the way in which the state is perceived to operate fruitfully, as cohesive and without limitations.

### ***3.1.2 Cohesive State Operation***

The competence framework is incongruent with the democratic consolidation thesis that posits the functionality of a democratic institution rests on the structural, behavioural and institutional elements congregating (Merkel, 2014). This is due to the reliance on political participation to uphold the electoral regime, which al-Suwaydi appears to oppose, as the previous section showed. The controlling and dominating characteristics seen to be competent were associated with the need for a cohesive state entity. Merkel's framework suggests the need for effective power to govern, where the elected officials are able to exercise political authority. This section will show that this foundation to the electoral regime is theoretically replicated by al-Suwaydi, but to an extreme extent. Merkel uses this foundation of power to govern as a pillar among others to uphold the electoral regime, yet as we will see with al-Suwaydi, he views the power that is associated with political authority as the only variable in the equation of governance. This extreme view is built on the understanding that the state cannot act fruitfully when factions within can act separately. As al-Suwaydi viewed the competence required for this position to be based on authoritative characteristics, this section will note that the congruence of all its factions under a dominant figurehead was based on the interpretation of the state as an absolutist entity that should act unanimously. Lack of cooperation between parts, or individuals, of the government was perceived as delaying the process, which was understood to be detrimental to state operations. This is evident from his adherence to the aforementioned dominating characteristics, and as this section displays the perception of an absolutist state, as portrayed through the necessity for cohesion, regardless of how this is achieved. Overall, this suggests that the democratic political system was incompatible with the institutional culture that was being

adhered to by al-Suwaydi, and appeared to exist in the peripheral of his analysis of the way in which the state should act.

As the previous section assessed al-Suwaydi's acknowledgement of the inability of democratic institutions to function alongside a monarchy and colonial domination, he also portrayed any power of intra-state factions over the other as detrimental to the state, despite checks and balances being a pillar of a democracy (Merkel, 2014). Al-Suwaydi claims that the Senate acting as a "referee" between the Executive and Legislative branches weakens the state, as this will slow down the process and create chaos (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 100). This interpretation was not limited within government, but also appears when analysing Prime Minister Abdul-Muhisn al-Sa'adoun's inability to function due to an inability to find a compromise between the British and the Iraqi people. Since they were fundamentally opposed, he would always upset one or the other (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 125-126). Al-Suwaydi portrays the larger of the issues as the people, furthering the notion that the government should be acting in its own absolute manner, "and his [al-Sa'adoun's] confusion was showing especially about what should be done to impose his politics, he does not know how to satisfy the King, and satisfy Britain, and satisfy after that the Iraqi people that are weird in their behaviour and leniencies" (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 161). The 'weird' portrayal of the people's desires reverts us back to the irrationality and incompetent display of the people. However, the impossibility of governance in relation to the other factions points to the necessity of a separate distinguishable state entity.

This feeling proves to be intense as al-Suwaydi makes a decision to move away from politics, because he could see that King Faysal was on a path of absolute dominance and control - and that he "does not allow criticism" which al-Suwaydi suggested would force them into conflict with each other (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 173). What is interesting here is that the author does not portray this issue in a deeply critical manner, rather he deems his opinions as opposing the King's and seeing as he was on a path of absolute control, it was wiser to stay out of his way.

Al-Suwaydi's understanding of the governance structure did not allow him to counteract and balance the King's actions, which he disagreed with, rather he saw it better to step away and allow the King the free reign to which he felt necessary. It appears that even when there is a figurehead acting in an opposing way to the author's beliefs, it was still seen as more important

to allow the government to operate under one approach rather than undercut each other in any way. This instance also shows the way in which al-Suwaydi understands power, as absolute and united, not allowing interjections from other factions.

Al-Suwaydi based the interpretation of the state as separate under the umbrella of responsibility (we assume to the people of the nation, although he does not say explicitly) as a distinguishable entity that can be scrutinised without avoiding blame. In his analysis of the British Mandatory rule, he criticises the unclear lines of who was governing the Iraqi people, “the mandate model and the mandate treaty failed in its application; because the responsibility got lost between the King and the High Commissioner on one end and between the Iraqi government and parliament on the other” (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 129-130). Importantly, he does not suggest the colonial dimensions of the Mandatory rule to be the most important issue, rather, the influence of the High Commissioner was muddled by the indigenous rulers. Conversely, the issue also lies in the Mandate as viewed from the indigenous ruler’s point of view that was not allowed a complete domination of the political sphere. In both instances, the major issue presented by al-Suwaydi was the failure to dominate. This notion of domination presents a contradiction with al-Suwaydi’s use of the word ‘responsibility’. To use such a word implies power is shifted from the people towards the government entity. However, for the domination of the political sphere to be in the manner wherein the state is distinguishable as its own entity, requires a separation from other factions, one of which would be the people. The scrutiny of the state by the people would therefore not yield the same effect that he portrays due to the nature of such a separation being reliant on the state operating with its own power source, and so not dependent on the people.

This contradiction, when placed alongside the scrutinisation of the democratic system that followed, points to al-Suwaydi’s preference of a political system that is not unconnected in its behaviour, where different internal parts could act independently. He portrays an understanding of the different factions within the democratic system to be acting against each other, portraying them as separate entities, “parliament disturbs the government and considers it incapable of ensuring the desires of the country in its independence and achieving the reforms it needs. And the government does not dare approach parliament and the country behind it to say the blatant truth, and it became apparent that [the government] did not have the necessary authority to do

this work” (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 129-130). Al-Suwaydi interpreted the people as being represented by parliament, which he separates in his analysis from the government. This portrays the government to be the monarchy, Prime Minister and Cabinet of Ministers, where the parliament, that represents the people, operated separately. The people’s parliament that is unable to handle the ‘blatant truth’ reverts us back to concepts of competence, where the people’s incompetence would not allow them to engage with the government on the realities of the political sphere. His reasoning that posits the need for an absolute state entity that would not be burdened by such separations returns in his criticism of the political system’s ability to limit the King in his actions, “And his majesty the King is in a critical position as he cannot reconcile between the necessity of British politics and the nature of the mandate from one end, and the claims of the country and its desire to be free of the restrictions from the other end... and this has become a heavy burden on this country, in which time and large effort was lost on it that delayed it from even improving its resources and its economic improvement and improving its social condition” (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 129-130). Ultimately, we see that the largest issue in al-Suwaydi's mind was one where the nation's ability to progress was hindered by this fight for power between the different factions, pointing to the need for a state that is cohesive and united. This would imply that al-Suwaydi was adhering to an understanding of power as requiring a hierarchy, where an overarching power would stop such hindrances by different factions, removing us from the anarchic interpretation of the state (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985; Art & Jervis, 2005). Yet this hierarchy, in al-Suwaydi’s interpretation, was only achieved by forcibly dominating other structures, and so suggests his perception of the hierarchy did not contain a singular overarching power, but rather, multiple powers in a continued power struggle.

Al-Suwaydi understood the state to be in need of limited and solidified rule, as he interpreted the method for achieving this to be weakening, and so dominating the other factions. Ministers of parliament had to be elected and when they were endorsed by the king and his select deputies, people were pushed to vote them in. These elected ministers were then made to sign a written pledge that would force them to work under the current government until it resigns (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 103). The author noted the violation of human rights that this form of corruption elicits but stated that it was necessary so that the government could operate cohesively and achieve its goals. This theme is reiterated in analysis of the fruitful nature of Nuri Said's governing strategy,

“And the reason for this [Nuri Said's government] abundant activity was the lack of any of the big politicians in his government, which made it easy for him to work with just his command and his ministry's obedience” (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 439). By weakening the people's representation in government, as parliament, the understanding was that the government would be able to act more cohesively. The cohesion was not sought on the back of a compromise between equally important factions, but was the result of a complete domination over the people's faction. The domination, that could only be brought about by certain personalities, al-Suwaydi prided himself in as he displayed in his analysis of his third premier. During his Prime Ministership in 1950, he proclaimed that his government was not cohesive, but persevered through his sheer will and personality, claiming that he was able to act in spite of those acting against him within the government (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 427). The implicit parallels he drew with this assessment points to the understanding that checks and balances, or attempts at compromise, are actions ‘against’, and so being able to quash this form of opposition is what allows a government to act fruitfully. The authoritarian notions associated with this line of reasoning we will see is replicated by al-Fkeki in Chapter 5, who operated in an openly authoritarian regime. For al-Suwaydi to employ the same thought process suggests the democratic institution was also to be dominated, and simply allow it to exist as a performance.

These interpretations naturally created the separation between the democratic system in place, and the mode of operation employed by the likes of al-Suwaydi, as such dominating understandings of government are mutually exclusive with a democratic institution (Merkel, 2014). Throughout his memoirs, al-Suwaydi portrayed the necessity of the dominating approach to rule whilst aware of the democratic nature of the Iraqi political system. He presented this incompatible mode of operation with the system as another hurdle to which he could maneuver around. What this signifies, is al-Suwaydi was adhering to institutional culture to a higher degree than the political system, portraying the ability to manipulate the system so that it would fit the unwritten rules of governance, as he understood. When forming his third government in 1950, al-Suwaydi noted that, “I cannot involve those other weak and opposing parties, if I was determined for fruitful and fast work, because those parties in the nature of their formation and tradition took it upon themselves to not keep pace with the current system, and place obstacles in the way of its path and advancement” (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 419). His separation of the use of

opposing parties (which Merkel (2014) tells us is a pillar of a democratic institution) with the 'current system', which he uses to refer to the unwritten rules that allow fruitful work through domination of the governance structure, suggests he is implicitly aware of the reality of government being different to the political system. He does not suggest, both implicitly or explicitly, that a possible reason for this was the institutional culture of governance at the elite level was incompatible with such a system, where we have seen he has passed blame on the ineducation of the masses.

The political system could not operate on its democratic basis with such an institutional culture, which begs the question of its purpose in the first place. Here, al-Suwaydi's memoirs point to the democratic desires on the ground, among the masses, being a reality in Iraq. This is evident from al-Suwaydi's awareness that the system was cultivated to appease the people and maintain their satisfaction with a charade of involvement in government (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 104). The structure did not occupy the space of complete irrelevance, but rather as a tool to maintain some form of control and oppression over their people. The political system, even in its democratic nature, was also used to dominate the people of the state. This system was able to fight through the institutional culture for short periods in the monarchical era, as Mustafa Mahmood al-Amry's new government opened Iraq up to all political parties and their activities, and the author interpreted this as a weak and non-forward leaning government (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 440). When the domination of the institutional culture over the political system began to waver, it became the center of criticism from the likes of al-Suwaydi and reverted back within months (4 months in al-Amry's case). This interpretation by al-Suwaydi equated an 'open' political system with an inability to progress, further suggesting the necessity within which he viewed the solidified and united front of governance for the progression of the state.

This cohesive understanding of governance was not limited to Iraq as it also appears in al-Suwaydi's work outside of Iraq in foreign affairs, suggesting the universal understanding he possessed of dominance in government, not just a solution to Iraq's problems. In his analysis of the lack of modernisation of the Jeddah Port, he suggested this was natural due to the lack of solidified leadership with the ongoing battle between King Hussein and Ibn Sa'ud in modern day Saudi Arabia, as he claimed that drawbacks were natural in splits of leadership (al-Suwaydi,

1999, p. 115). In his analysis of Arab leadership in relation to the Palestinian cause, where the leaders would gain the following of the people based on the vigour with which they engage in with Palestinian support, we see al-Suwaydi's understanding of the separation of the people and the state through his analysis of the Tunisian leader's approach to Palestine. Al-Suwaydi portrayed the Tunisian leader's less emphatic approach as more logical, where he suggests the people should not dictate the leader's actions, "what I mean is it is not bravery or loyalty for the leader to lower his level of thinking to that of the masses, so he provokes and manipulates these emotions, and exploits their kindness... but the real bravery and loyalty is for the leader to face his people with honesty, and face his nation with the reality, and to lead the street and not be led by the street!" (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 532). The analogy of the street demonstrates that regardless of the political structure in place, the author's interpretation does not allow him to view the leader as someone that follows the will of the people. It is inherent to al-Suwaydi's understanding that the leader is a figure above, or separate, from the people. This is a recurring theme, as he analyses Jordan's inability to progress, stating his beliefs more explicitly, "I do not see in the best interests of Jordan, that hostility, or the intense competition for rule, between men of rule." (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 526-527). His reasoning for this is based on the competition of rulers breeding a culture of conflict, where blame for all of Jordan's misfortunes is thrown around. This returns us to the contradiction of responsibility as a means of power transfer from the people to the state, which occurs despite his understanding of the state as an entity that is separate from the people and built upon its own power source through domination of its factions.

### ***3.1.3 The Independent State Institution***

Overall, we see that the state as an entity was understood to be separate from other factions, and its purpose was to exercise power over the state factions. The state was viewed as its own entity, so rather than refer to the people and the governmental structures, such as parliament, as interconnected pillars of a larger state institution, in the way that Merkel (2014) describes the factions needed for an electoral regime, we see an adherence to a methodology that places the state as a separate entity. This allowed the state to maintain dominance in plays for power that

acted upon - and manipulated - the other players, and stopped its reliance on any pass of power from the people to become the state. The foundation this dominance created was understood to be necessary for fruitful work, as anything outside of complete cohesive action in the state was understood as detrimental. Al-Suwaydi based this cohesion on an understanding of power as unified and limited, and so did not view the state as able to function unless it embodied these characteristics.

Such an understanding of governance was incompatible with the democratic political system, and al-Suwaydi's analysis displayed the different institutional culture that this system was based on. The interpretations of the power structure of rule created unwritten rules upon which al-Suwaydi and his colleagues acted, that allowed them to dominate the political system. The separation of factions this created was a state entity that was not interconnected and dependent on its people and government entities. Instead, the factions acted separately in a continuous struggle for domination. There was no overarching power that could act as the mediator in such situations, as even the monarchy that was understood to embody the power that would stop the anarchic culture from forming, failed to do so. This was due to the monarchy being engaged in this fight for power with its factions and was not able to act as the overarching power, which led to it being another faction in the field of play. This created a system constrained by an anarchic understanding of the rule of the nation, that we have otherwise understood to be a part of the international sphere, as per Kaplan's (1961, p. 14) IR basis that suggests the lack of government machinery at the international level creates the anarchic culture. Seeking the unity of the state under an overarching power appeared to be al-Suwaydi's goal, in which the successful state entity was unmatched in power and dominance. However, al-Suwaydi implicitly suggests that this was a constant battle for the state entity, as it had to continuously act against 'waves' or pushback, implying the anarchy that existed with the state was similar to the international sphere. We will see that the relationship to the people was borne out of a similar rationale. This relationship with the people as a separate faction, as per an anarchic understanding of the field of play, explains the need to subjugate and dominate the people through use of placing them under some form of political hypnosis.

### 3.2 State-People Relations

The relationship of the state with the people does not appear both implicitly or explicitly, with the same vigour of the previous section. This is, perhaps, a comment in and of itself of the importance with which al-Suwaydi portrays the state-people relationship, where the people perhaps did not occupy his thought process as a member of the governance structure.

Al-Suwaydi did not view the state as in need of any back and forth between the two, oftentimes portraying such acts as not only useless, but detrimental to the state itself. The anarchic base of understanding suggests the people would represent a faction that would have to be dominated for the state authority to operate on its own. This section will show how this was achieved through subtle gestures aimed at appeasing the people. This also suggests the fear with which al-Suwaydi and his political counterparts viewed the people, pointing to their perceived power. The appeasement manifested through a form of political hypnosis, where domination was achieved by maintaining a relationship of both fear and domination, and actions that portray satisfying the people's desires. This was necessary as the power of the people did not allow al-Suwaydi and his colleagues to simply ignore their desires, nor were they able to physically quash them, referring to them as an eternal fire that needed to always be addressed in one way or another. We will see that this also created an understanding of the people where they were only relevant as far as their anger would create enough of an issue for the elites.

To begin with, al-Suwaydi's interpretation of the state's relationship to the people was in services of economy and security. The functionality of the state in relation to its people was judged based on their abilities to provide economic welfare and maintain security from foreign invasion and domestic trouble as understood by the power of the army. Before the state of Iraq formed, al-Suwaydi was critical of the Ottoman empire's form of rule based on these two factors: economic corruption; and army capabilities (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 28). These two are portrayed to us as the outstanding issues in what was a collapsing empire. There was no mention of the heavily undemocratic rule of the Ottoman Empire (Dawisha, 2013, p. 42), indicating that it was not a major issue in the eyes of al-Suwaydi. Instead, it appears as though the behaviour at the elite level of politics, and the freedoms this breeds among the people pale in comparison to the living standards associated with security and economic welfare. The lack of input from the

people stagnates the parameters of positive government action, as it does not shift with the desires of the people, suggesting that these parameters were an understanding held by the elites such as al-Suwaydi. These standards were carried forward without the ability to rectify or reimagine them with the shifting and evolving desires of the people. This was the base understanding held by al-Suwaydi of Ottoman rule, that he carried into the inception of the Iraqi state. The desires of the masses, according to al-Suwaydi, were understood along his parameters, and his information on the desires of the people would struggle to shift to more progressive matters such as political representation, as his understanding was incredibly limited. The actions he would take towards the people, would have therefore operated on this basis, which explains why his gestures seldom carried care for the needs of the people as the people understood them, but rather through economy and security solely. This may help explain the separation between what Hariri (2019) refers to as the independent grassroots movements of the early decades of modern Iraq and the state institution, due to a stagnation in the state's understanding of the desires of the people.

A fixed understanding of the needs of the people did not allow al-Suwaydi to be able to satisfy their needs. Al-Suwaydi commented on the democratic charade the people gained through British involvement in Iraqi politics during the Mandate period (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 104). His awareness of the facade of this system points to the superficial relationship he had with the desires of the people, portraying self-rule as a means to keep the people satisfied, without actually satisfying their needs. This approach to the people set the basis for the relationship with people being superficial, where the people would only gain the genuine attention of the elites through their anger. Al-Suwaydi portrays the intricacies of this relationship through the analogy of an eternal fire, "the situation in Iraq is like a fire that every once in a while is covered by a layer of ash, and at other times circumstances expose it however it is a raging fire." (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 362). This was in relation to the continuous protests, demonstrations and attempted revolutions throughout the Monarch period, that at their very base was the removal of British (and any colonial) forces. The anger the people displayed would - at times - warrant a reaction from the elites, due to the intensity of the anger, and 'fire'. This suggests that the relationship being cultivated with the people was one where they would only gain the attention of the elites through intense rage displayed in their protests and demonstrations. Otherwise, the state was not

concerned with the faction of the people so long as the ‘fire’ was kept timid, and allowed the state to operate without interjections. This points to the antagonistic relationship between the state and the people, as there was a fundamental understanding among the elites that the state and the people were unequal.

To achieve this subjugation, al-Suwaydi depended on subtle gestures that would keep the people quiet whilst being able to maintain their dominance and power at the elite level without interjection. During al-Suwaydi's second term as Prime Minister in 1946, he decided “to choose to cooperate with me in [government], as ministers, some new faces, and strong clean components, that are known for efficiency and nationalism and integrity, and good reputation, that will make them in the eyes of the people acceptable and loved personalities” (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 359). From the previous section we understand that al-Suwaydi did not view his counterparts in government as significant beyond the inconvenience they would cause him through pushback at his dominating approach. However, here, he makes use of the perceived uselessness of other government members as he decided to create a perception among the people that this was a new government that was known for its good reputation, which he does not elaborate as to what his understanding of reputation is built on. The author accompanies this statement with, “at the same time this makes it [the government], able to cooperate with me in the ministry with harmony and loyalty” (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 359). He viewed this change of government as a simultaneous approach that both allowed him to dominate the government, as we understand from his description of the government’s characteristics as harmonious and loyal, whilst extending this domination to the people that would be subdued by this perceived adherence to their desires.

Al-Suwaydi’s actions, and his reasoning behind King Faysal II’s inauguration in 1939 furthers the culture of appeasement the elites operated in relation to the people. Al-Suwaydi and his colleagues implored the Regent, Prince Abd-al-Ilah, to leave the country to quash rumours that he was still in control behind the scenes (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 444). The reasoning for this was the fear of the rumours that were spreading amongst the people and government, and by leaving the country he would put an end to the belief that the Regent was still in control, which itself was portrayed in a negative tone. The mode of operation dictated that the issue was not the actual

meddling in the political structure of the Regent as al-Suwaydi makes no mention of this, but the issue lied in the perception. The perception held by the people in this facade was deemed important, returning us to the perceived power of the people. Yet, the solution never appears as a genuine interaction with their desires – the will of the people - but rather, a manipulation of their perception in an attempt to maintain the status quo, and so keep the people under this form of political hypnosis, where their ‘fire’ would be all but extinguished.

This state-people interaction, however superficial, also posits a shift in the mode of operation from the standards portrayed by the preceding colonial forces, or the absolutist rule of the Ottomans, both of which were not dependent on displays of interaction with the people. Al-Suwaydi displays an explicit understanding of the nature of the relationship with the people as one built on charades and appeasement. Despite this, he himself and others that compose the state demonstrated a slight advancement from the rule displayed in Iraq’s recent history; this is due to the fact that both the British invasion and the Ottoman rule that preceded were predicated on ability to impose power over an entire nation, with no adherence to the needs of their people in the process of domination. This is also evident from al-Suwaydi's portrayal of the attempted military coup of 1941, wherein military officers took over government, but could not continue with their plan to have Rasheed 'Ali al-Kaylani installed as Prime Minister. This was because the Regent Abd-al-Ilah, who served after King Faysal's death in 1933 as his son King Ghazi was not yet of age, was not available to legitimise his rule, which the constitution of Iraq dictated was necessary (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 303). They even accused the Regent of running away so that he could not do so. The adherence to the monarchy and constitution to legitimise the Prime Minister was so intense that the coup was stalled for simply awaiting the King's representative to legitimise the rule (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 314). Al-Suwaydi, in a plea with his older brother Naji al-Suwaydi to not join this “illegitimate” government, portrayed his dismay at the unconstitutional nature of this attempted rise to rule (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 315). The movement, as understood by al-Suwaydi's brother and the coup militants, led by al-Kaylani, was not in need of recognition from the rest of the country, rather it adhered to the rule of the monarchy and the constitution as the custodians of the state's power. Despite this, the legitimisation process was enough to stall the anarchic rise to power achieved by al-Kaylani’s military faction. This shows an overlap in their adherence to the state’s power and the anarchic approach to gaining power,

and in doing so posits the separation between the reality and the performative actions in the political sphere, where the anarchic based understanding allowed their actions to take place, leaving a need for a performative legitimisation of rule, despite already being in power. This particular event occurred in 1941, which was 21 years from Iraq's inception, and 9 years after the end of the British Mandate; this event allows us to argue for a significant shift from outright anarchy, however minor. Anarchy, as the lack of an overarching power (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985; Art & Jervis, 2005), allowed the British to dominate the Iraqi political sphere through mandatory rule by right of power to dominate. Almost a decade after the end of the military uprising of 1941, we can note a continuation of the anarchic base, but an adherence to the performance of the democratic constitution. In the following chapter, we will see that this was thematic to Baban's era of involvement in the political sphere.

This lack of genuine interaction with the people is evident from the lack of interest in the memoirs about what breeds such anger from the people, beyond suggestions that the people were uneducated and being manipulated. Al-Suwaydi appeared to have understood the relationship of the state with the people as a provider of goods, that did not have to adhere to a genuine interaction with the masses. The portrayal of the people as incompetent in the previous section provides the foundation for this reasoning, where al-Suwaydi and his colleagues could justify their exclusion based on their perceived inability to be a part of the political sphere. The state could treat the people as another faction in its fight for domination, which required an adherence to dominating tactics through the use of methods of appeasement. If it did not, the anger the people possessed was presented by al-Suwaydi as powerful in its own right, and so capable of creating reverberations at the political elite level if not handled carefully. This line of thought led to the relationship between the state and the people to be one built upon charades, that appeared to adhere to the people's desires, but actually strengthened the layer of separation between people and state. The dominating approach to the political sphere, as evident from the previous section, appears to have been replicated with the people. This further suggests the ingrained nature of the desire to dominate emanating from the state entity and the political elites, as we have seen it applied both to the governance structure, and the people. The institutional culture appears to have been one that was built upon the ability to dominate, and the justification of this mode of operation was replicated in the state's relationship with all its factions. This in itself was

a shift from the treatment preceding the inception, and during the Mandatory Period, of Iraq, where there was outright authoritarian control by foreign entities that did not seek any real appeasement of the people.

### **3.3 Implications**

Al-Suwaydi portrayed a fascination with those that can command and control the political sphere, that were placed within the bracket of competence, by means of excluding the majority of people within the state from inclusion in governance. This was built on an interpretation of the political sphere that posited the state as operating under an anarchic framework, where there was no overarching power that could create some form of order. This means the state institution had to depend on authoritarian traits to dominate the other factions, such as the governance structure and the people. The political culture this created was based on a particular logic and was incompatible with the democratic system. He appeared to have justified the logic upon which this anarchic foundation was built, where the democratic system was a charade used to oppress the people, whilst allowing the political elites to dominate the governance structure and keep the power centralised and maintain control, pointing to the democratic system gaining traction within the political machinery of the nation. Although this political culture may be understood as a continuation of the colonial history of Iraq, al-Suwaydi's assessment of the political sphere shows that there were signs of a shift in the political thought process, that was caught in between the anarchic interpretation of the political sphere and the attempted progression towards democratic ideals.

The necessity of cohesion was built on the back of the understanding that any form of discrepancy between entities in government, whether they be branches or individuals, was viewed as a sign of weakness and lack of progress. This was understood to be achieved by individuals with controlling personalities that could command the political structure and act against its factions. The undemocratic nature was not lost on al-Suwaydi, but he appeared to justify this claim through analysis of the weakness of governments burdened by limitations in power, and disparities within its factions. This carries authoritarian undertones, where

al-Suwaydi did not appear to disagree in his assessment of the charade of the democratic institution in place. His authoritarian interpretation of the political sphere appears to have dictated his behaviour as he acted within the authoritarian framework in his understanding of the governance structure, replicating this culture in the relationship with the people - albeit with subtle gestures towards appeasing the people through the democratic charade.

The institutional culture of the Iraqi political sphere appeared to have been built on an understanding of an authoritarian role of the state, that was not completely interconnected with its governance structure or people but managed as separate political entities. Both of these were presented as separate factions that needed to be dominated, which allows for an interesting comparison with the anarchic behaviour of the international system. The domestic stage of politics was understood by al-Suwaydi in a similar sense to the international, where each entity was operating in an anarchic system, and so power to dominate dictated their actions. The political elites appeared to have been in a constant struggle for this domination, as this chapter showed, the justifications for the exclusions from government and the portrayal of the necessities of cohesion as the state created the logic upon which this culture was built. The culture, however, was not absolute in this manner, as we saw the emergence of behaviours that were adhering to the constitution and the governance structure. The separation, as time passed, was not as clear between the intra-state entities, and there were slight, albeit hypocritical, gestures towards adherence to the democratic system. The 1941 coup attempt was displayed as stalled solely for the inability to be legitimised by the monarch, according to the constitution. The following chapter with Baban will show that the muddied waters between the anarchic framework and the adherence to the political structure, otherwise portrayed as the discrepancy between the institutional culture and the political system was slightly less visible intense, and may suggest the beginnings of the consolidation of the democratic ideals within the political elite mind.

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#### **Chapter 4: Ahmad Mukhtar Baban - Seeds of Change in Institutional Culture**

Ahmed Mukhtar Baban was one of the prominent politicians throughout the monarchical period in Iraq, having started his political career as Governor of Mosul in 1926, and being forced to retire as the last Prime Minister of the monarchical era in 1958 after the revolution. He occupied a variety of important positions and ministries, namely Minister of Social Affairs (1942-1943, 1946); Head of the Royal Court (1946, 1953); Minister of Justice (1943-1946); Minister of Education (1957); Minister of Defence (1957); Deputy Prime Minister (1954, 1955-1957); and Minister without a portfolio (1954-1955) (Dougherty & Ghareeb, 2019, p. 105). Although these roles were significant in their own right and give his writing analytical depth in assessments of Iraqi politics, his involvement as the last Prime Minister of the monarchical era gives insight into the deterioration of the state as he understood it. This is important as with it Baban gives us insight into the issues he observed within the state institution, in which he implicitly draws a comparison to the way the state institution should have functioned according to his interpretation. In addition, his self-professed close ties with the Royal family, both professionally and personally, allowed him to interact with conceptualisations of the power of a state, as he believed it emanated from the monarchy. This chapter will pay special attention to the conceptualisation of state power due to its comparative value with al-Suwaydi's conceptualisations. Precisely, we will see in this chapter that Baban, in much of his understanding of the workings of the state, operated on a similar basis to al-Suwaydi, pointing to the power of the institutional culture that had persisted. However, Baban also posits a minor but important shift, as he appeared to portray the power of the state as absolute - similarly to al-Suwaydi - but solely belonging to the King. Al-Suwaydi's anarchic foundation, where there was no overarching power (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985; Art & Jervis, 2005), and power to rule was given to those able to dominate, appears to have begun to dissipate slightly in how Baban perceived the political environment. This makes his memoirs important for us to understand the institutional culture of Iraqi politics, as we compare it to al-Suwaydi's conceptualisation of the state institution, we can note the way Baban's culture may have evolved or changed, providing more depth when uncovering its trajectory.

Preceding the analysis of this chapter, it is important to clarify the context of Baban's memories and its publication, in relation to al-Fkeki and al-Suwaydi. The memoirs are slightly different to al-Fkeki's and al-Suwaydi's, as it was not published by Baban himself, yet the memoirs do not read like a biography. Baban's son, Kamal, published the work in 1993, almost two decades after Baban's passing (Ahmad, 1993; 1999). The writing itself is presented as in Ahmad Baban's first person, with endnote commentary by his son, mostly just contextualising the events Baban was analysing. The specific year of publication, 1993, carries significance as it is also the year in which al-Fkeki released his memoirs, which I examine in the next chapter. This provides a glimpse into the political climate of the early 1990s, as authors of these memoirs felt it necessary – and safe – to publish these accounts of Iraq's political history. More so, these memoirs were released in Arabic, suggesting that the desired target audience would have included anyone affected by the events discussed in the memoirs. Iraq, at the time, was the grounds for the beginning of the Ba'ath Party's downfall, as Saddam Hussein and his followers had just concluded the prolonged Iran-Iraq war, the defeat of the Gulf War, and were governing under heavy sanctions led by the United States. This, in addition to Hussein's notorious concern with information control (see Makiya, 1989), comments on the significance of the timing, to which I argue was not coincidental. This provides us with an understanding of the basis of Baban's memoirs. Although they were published by his son, these memoirs appear to have maintained their original criticisms of the state following the monarch's downfall (or what may be portrayed in this light). It can be assumed, then, that having the memoirs be published posthumously, unchanged, was more desirable than impatiently producing writing that was perhaps more politically acceptable.

In short, Baban's memoirs will show a complex adherence to both the political system in place with the monarch as the overarching power and the anarchic foundation of al-Suwaydi's interpretation of the political sphere. I argue, through this chapter's analysis of Baban's memoirs, that this was a progression in the institutional culture, as Baban's interpretations appeared to be paradoxically adhering to the democratic political system and the power-based anarchic institutional culture of the political sphere we saw with al-Suwaydi. Baban's main timeframe within major roles of the state was between 1940 and 1958, which was almost two decades after al-Suwaydi began his political career at the elite level, in 1921. This sets the basis for slight

change in institutional culture that was significantly more conscious of the political system, but still operated with roots of the preceding culture that al-Suwaydi's political generation operated under. This chapter serves as the middle ground in bringing to light the institutional culture between the beginning of the monarch period, through al-Suwaydi, and the political culture that has followed the 1958 revolution, with al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party. Comparatively, Baban's conceptualisations of the political sphere and the institutional culture it bred, we will see, shifted to a slightly more democratic understanding than al-Suwaydi, and al-Fkeki. As I will argue in Chapter 5, this was due to Baban's form of interpretations creating progress away from the understood and ingrained culture of operation, which subsequently gave way to the violent reaction of al-Fkeki's generation, where the interpretations of the political sphere returned to a similar standard of al-Suwaydi's, but with vigour and more open, authoritarian tendencies. Baban's memoirs demonstrate that he carried forward much of the power-based structure that we saw in the preceding chapter, which tied in with competence as a means of exclusion. However, he did so with an adherence to the overarching power of the King and a reluctance to portray actions as undemocratic, suggesting his interpretation of the political sphere was subconsciously less anarchic and his institutional culture was converging with the political system. This may have been due to his career as a political elite in various roles within the governance structure as a subordinate to the monarchy, whilst also working closely with the royal family, giving him a simultaneous awareness of the role of the monarchy and the constitution. However, this was mixed in with the institutional culture that perhaps did not recognise the intricacies of the political system as it adhered more to the dominance of those able to impose themselves under an anarchic umbrella, which created Baban's paradoxical understanding of Iraq's political sphere.

#### **4.1 Interpretations of the State**

Although Baban experienced major structural changes to the state in Iraq, both the formation of Iraq and the overthrow of the monarchy, he offers little direct insight to the concept of the state as an institution. We do not see an explicit explanation of the way he understood the role of the state entity in relation to the people and the governance structure. The change of the state institution from Ottoman rule until 1918, to British Invasion until 1920, to British Mandatory

rule until 1932, to constitutional monarchy until 1958, and finally the military dictatorship that followed, represents readjustments of the state as a political institution through its roles towards the people, the way in which it sought to govern, its understanding of the power structure, and where power emanates from. Indirectly, he does reflect on the meaning of the state apparatus that he is part of, but mainly through implicit mentions that we can uncover through his analysis of his experiences in the political world. Although Baban was a high-profile politician in the political pyramid, much of his work is an interpretation of the actions of others that he deemed to be of a greater importance. For example, three of the most important politicians at the end of the monarchical period feature heavily: King Faisal II; Nuri Said; and Regent Abd-al-Ilah. Importantly, we learn about his role and the workings of the state through how he interprets others' roles and actions, and his role in relation to them, and their understanding of the institution of politics in Iraq.

The following two sections consider the framework that Baban sets for the way in which he conceptualised the state. The two lenses I use, based on the way in which Baban presents his conceptualisations, are: the power of the state; and state representation. In the first, we will see that Baban understood the state to be the basis of an anarchic fight for power, but simultaneously adhered to the power of the monarch, as an institution that acted against the anarchic framework for the political sphere. He understood the monarch's role as the power-holder of the state institution, where its ability to dominate internal state affairs was unrivalled. This presented a contradiction in his writing and interpretation, as the monarch both interacted with the political sphere by steering the state's political direction but was also presented by Baban as above and beyond the political sphere - the governance structure and the people - as an entity designed to maintain order. The second section refers to state representation and the way in which one was deemed competent enough to do so. This is similar to al-Suwaydi's conceptualisations of competence, as dominant and controlling, portraying the state as authoritarian due to its reliance on such characteristics. Nevertheless, Baban's progression beyond al-Suwaydi's purely anarchic understanding of the political sphere, where power to dominate ruled, was evident in the way in which he portrays his version of competence. The terminology he uses, where he attempts to reduce the dictatorial mantra in portrayals of his political counterparts, suggests that he was operating within an understanding of the political system that was attempting to move away from

such archaic perceptions of rule, as such authoritarian behaviour was less acceptable in his understanding.

#### ***4.1.1 Power of the State***

In this section, we will see that the state institution occupied a role of domination over other factions in the political sphere, as the monarch and those it endorsed occupied a divine level in the political sphere, according to Baban. As we will see in the analysis of Baban's memoirs, there was a contradiction in his interpretations of the concept of the state and its role at times showing no inclinations to democratic ideals, and at others, especially when analysing those below the political elites, showing himself to be relatively democratic. This culture of domination did not appear to trickle down to the lower political levels, such as the people and the lower levels of the governance structure, such as parliament. Baban believed in authoritative power at the elite level of politics, whilst simultaneously portraying the lower levels as operating within a democratic system. Through this inconsistency we will uncover the separation between the people and the state, as an authoritative figurehead designed to maintain a just field of play for the population. Yet even then, the understanding of the state maintaining a 'just' playing field was, in Baban's eyes, justifiably manipulated by the elites when they deemed necessary. This section will show Baban's understanding of state power as it emanates from the monarch, which alludes to his understanding of the role dominance plays in the political structure.

Baban presents an adherence to the monarch's power over the political sphere, which we will see translates to his understanding of the state institution as an absolute power that oversaw the people. At first glance, this framework is normal in the understanding of a monarchy, where Quigley (2005) links the power of a monarchy to the separation of the ruler or monarch from the people, and Woodacre (2019) views the power of the modern monarch to be one more akin to reign rather than rule wherein the monarch is a power structure that exists above, but is not the direct ruler of the people, and allows different governance structures to take on these roles. Baban's understanding appears to be linked to the form of reign, rather than rule. Baban writes:

And my politics [of objectivity from individuals and political parties] was successful... and I developed devotion towards the throne on the basis that the throne is above all political considerations, and should be looked to as the head of everyone's family, and so they [the people] gather around him, as for the political differences between men of politics they should stay confined between them, and does not immerse the throne in it, instead it plays the role of collecting the word, and unifying the purpose for Iraq's benefit. (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 24-25).

We see that, in Baban's interpretation, the Monarch occupied a role that placed it above all that it presided over, including politics itself. Even the political system, that was home to 'political differences', is interpreted negatively and placed as below the stature of the monarchy. Interestingly, this analysis by Baban removes the monarch from the political world, suggesting it was disconnected and a mere overseer. However, its status beyond the political sphere paradoxically places it as the ruler and enforcer of the desires of the people. This is evident from his claim that the monarch collects 'the word' - here presented as the desires of the people that are represented by politicians - and in doing so setting the course of action for the state. For Baban, this acts as a 'unifying' factor which he portrays as important for Iraq's progression. However, this form of monarchy is caught between the reign over the political system and the ruler of the nation. The process of unifying the 'word' causes the monarch to be directly involved in the political sphere, not merely as an overarching power, but through engagement with politicians in leading the political sphere, which removes the monarchy from the modern understanding of reign as it occupies the archaic role of an outright ruler. This may be the paradox of a constitutional democracy that al-Suwaydi was alluding to, that appears to elude Baban. In this analysis of the monarch's relationship to the political sphere, and by extension, the people, Baban presents the mutual exclusivity of a democratic system that is run by the people, and the power held by a monarch. Comparatively to al-Suwaydi, this lack of awareness by Baban may be explained as a shift in the institutional culture, where the interpretation of the constitutional monarchy began to become more ingrained in Baban's understanding of the political sphere and its mode of operation, as Baban was operating at the elite level 21 years after the creation of the Iraqi state and its political system.

Baban's adherence to a contradiction of the monarchy as an overarching power, that simultaneously interacted with, and led the political sphere can be understood as a continuation of the institutional culture of the state. Similarly to al-Suwaydi's absolute rule framework, the state embodied the authoritarian ruler in an anarchic system that was designed to champion those that could dominate it. This is mainly evident from Baban's analysis of voting manipulations that occurred under King Faysal I as highlighted by his analysis of the implementation of a two-tier voting system in Iraq, which was deemed easier to manipulate by the political elites than direct elections due to it creating two windows for the interjection of corrupt acts. Baban justifies this manipulation by claiming that this was a regular occurrence in Western countries (Ahmad, 1999, p. 227). There is an implication that Baban understood the contradiction these corrupt acts posed to a democratic system. The claim that this was a regularity in more consolidated democratic systems points to Baban's interpretation that corrupt acts that limit control to the elites was normal practise and was a set standard. Therefore, for Iraqi elites to be acting in this way, according to Baban's portrayal, was not a comment on Iraq but rather the standard that comes with these particular systems of rule that Iraq had inherited from the aforementioned Western countries, namely Britain. In this analysis, Baban was implicitly aware of the institutional culture that Iraq had inherited alongside the political system, which suggests this corrupt mode of operation was carried forward from the colonial past through al-Suwaydi's era and into Baban's.

Unique to Baban's interpretation, however, was a change in the language that portrayed the unacceptable nature of such corrupt tendencies. Although small, this change is noteworthy as it suggests the institutional culture was beginning to see a change in that Baban did not portray the same comfort as al-Suwaydi in an adherence to voting suppression. In his analysis of voting manipulation by tribal leaders, Baban portrays dismay at any action in that light, painting himself as a patron of democratic ideals. However, when he considers King Faysal's intrusion into voting there are connotations of necessity that appear in his writing, "In fact I do not call what was happening [voter intrusion] outside these cities [Baghdad, Mosul and Basra] an intrusion, it was closer to guidance... and it was a necessary guidance in order to prevent control of parliament by heads of tribes and clans" (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 32-33). The use of the word 'guidance', as an attempt to soften the actions of the monarchy in a removal from the framework of corrupt voting intrusion, reveals Baban's understanding that this was not an accepted practice. It is here that we

see progression from al-Suwaydi's interpretation of the state's right to dominate, where the previous chapter showed that the institution of politics operated with an understanding that voter manipulation was necessary due to the incompetence of the masses, and such corrupt tendencies were a necessity that need not be pacified. Baban, on the other hand, felt a necessity to justify these actions more so than al-Suwaydi. Baban's interpretation of the monarch's involvement in corruption, despite his understanding of it as an entity that was above the people and the political system, was still accompanied with justifications of their actions, portraying their superior status to simultaneously require a warrant for its imposition onto the people's rights.

#### ***4.1.2 The Paradoxically Democratic and Authoritarian Leader***

The other access point we can use to uncover Baban's understanding of the political sphere is the framework of state representation through the perception of competence, which was similar to al-Suwaydi's - but with modifications - as Baban was attempting to soften the dominance terminology embedded in his understanding of competence. This section will demonstrate the extent of the institutional culture's power, as the perception of competence becomes clearly replicated in Baban's dealings with a new progressive government, that we noted with al-Suwaydi in the previous chapter. Baban's framework of competence was tied to his perception of the absolute state, as we saw with his understanding of the monarch as above and beyond the political sphere. However, this competence framework, despite being tied to absolute authority, was not synonymous with the monarch that Baban viewed as the embodiment of authority. Therefore, the understanding of power in Baban's interpretation was not limited to the monarchy. Instead, he appeared to replicate al-Suwaydi's understanding that dictates those able to dominate were, by definition, competent. This tied into his understanding that absolute power as an authority, could only work with certain types of leaders, that we will see with al-Fkeki, as both carried a fascination with controlling and authoritarian leaders. This power dynamic between the leaders able to dominate and the political sphere informed Baban's conceptualisation of the state, as the controlling characteristics of the individual was tied to the absolute power of the state, further displaying the contradiction of the democratic political system and the institutional culture that Baban was adhering to. In this section, we will see this contradiction manifest

through Baban's desire to purify the legacy of the dominating leaders, portraying them as democratically inclined and attempting to remove them from being associated with dictator-themed terminology. This suggests the institutional culture of domination was becoming less desirable in Iraq's political sphere, indicating an emergence of a possible shift and progress in mentality.

The ability to dominate emerges in Baban's memoirs as instrumental to the state institution, as his perception of the state is tied to the ability to command and create order through force and personality. The authority this form of leadership created was not limited to the monarchy that Baban understood as above the political system through its divine nature of being a monarchy. The authoritarian understanding was instead praised by Baban, even when emerging in non-royal members of the state institution. Prime Minister Nuri Said was seen as worthy of praise due to his ability to restore order when he was in charge through use of force (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 51-54). Interestingly, and contradictory for Baban's analysis is the fact that this ability to dominate was able to emerge outside the divine monarchy and was extended to those able to enforce themselves on the political sphere, infusing the larger political apparatus in this fight for dominance. The praise Baban gives to the 'ability' of Nuri to restore order stresses that it is a unique skill, not attributable to all. The competence framework Baban displays here is similar to al-Suwaydi's, which portrays the political sphere as chaotic and without any sense of order or structured method of ascension to its elite level. Rather, the ability to dominate is displayed as enough of a right to do so. This fascination with certain personality types Baban makes implicitly clear when he builds on the King's ability to reconcile tribal leaders when power was taken away from them, stating that Faysal's son Ghazi did not have this ability of reconciliation (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 33-36). By implying that Ghazi was not able to offer the same level of ability as his predecessor, Baban was implying that his understanding of the monarch's power as divine and overarching, was also dependent on their individual abilities to dominate. The monarch appeared in Baban's analysis as similarly dependent on the dominating factor that emanated from individual personalities, rendering the monarch's special status as performative. The implication of this assessment by Baban returns us to the anarchic political sphere, as we saw with al-Suwaydi, however, with Baban this was a contradiction to his depiction of the monarch as the overarching power that would stop the anarchic culture from forming. Instead, it appears in his

analysis implicitly, suggesting the contradiction existed subconsciously, and he was caught in between an adherence to the political system and the institutional culture upon which it was built.

The analysis Baban provided of Nuri Said, and his authoritarian approach to rule, highlighted the contradiction in Baban's understanding of the political sphere. This is shown in how the anarchic institutional culture became interwoven with the democratic system, despite them being antithetical to each other. Similarly to the previous section, where we saw Baban attempt to justify voting manipulations carried out by the elites, he attempted to justify Nuri Said's dictator-like approach to the political sphere on the basis of Nuri Said being portrayed as an individual that did not possess dictatorial tendencies, as he "hated dictatorship", and was "democratic in his nature" (Ahmad, 1999, p. 58). This was Baban's attempt to reimagine the legacy of Nuri Said, who was known as tyrannical on the basis of his constant involvement and control of the political sphere. For example, Baban relayed the time in which Regent Abd-al-Ilah requested Nuri become Prime Minister again, and Nuri wanted to reelect a new parliament (one that he could fill with his followers) but was refused. In turn, Nuri acted behind the Regent's back and did so anyway, but Baban maintained that this occurred not because of Nuri's dictatorial tendencies (Ahmad, 1999, p. 70). In addition, Baban maintained that a dictator could not have been toppled in the way that his regime (the Monarch) was in 1958 (Ahmad, 1999, p. 59). Baban appears adamant that Nuri was not operating under the guise of a dictator, indicating that Baban understood the negativity associated with a dictator in the political system. Although al-Suwaydi appeared significantly more open in his understanding of competence being associated with authoritarian measures within an anarchic framework, Baban showed a desire to remove himself and his colleagues, such as Nuri, from this framework. However, for Nuri to be able to act in such a way, and the implications of Nuri's right to rule based on his ability to act in this way points to the deeply rooted institutional culture of domination, that despite Baban's interpretation of the monarchy as the power that stops the country falling into anarchy, was still rooted in his analysis of the political sphere.

The power of the institutional culture that Baban was adhering to, that functioned against the democratic basis of the political system, was partly based on a hierarchy established within the state through the logic of competence. Baban applied this framework to himself as part of the

institution, “A number of our family members held important ministerial positions at different times... And you can say that we would come to the ministry on the basis of belonging and competence and not on the shoulders of the people, or that the people wanted us” (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 15-16). His reiteration that these roles his family gained were not based on an endorsement by the people suggests that he was aware of how antithetical hierarchies, built on the back of an arbitrary understanding of competence, were to a democratic system. Nevertheless, he reiterates the same reasoning we saw with al-Suwaydi, in that the incompetence of the masses was based on their lack of education, and that justified this undemocratic approach to rule (Ahmad, 1999, p. 34). Al-Suwaydi’s portrayal of the importance of experience was also replicated by Baban as he portrayed his employment in the Ministry of Justice as logical due to his experience having been a judge and an Attorney General at various times (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 17-18). Baban also recalls a discussion he had with Mohammad Mahdi Kubba, who was asking for free and fair elections to be guaranteed, in which Baban responded, “You are all asking for absolute freedom to elect, and I personally encourage that, and I think that every one of us desires that there be completely free elections in Iraq as there is in France or England, but that would require that the Iraqi people reach the levels of the French and English peoples” (Ahmad, 1999, p. 229). Furthermore, when contradicting Khalil Kanna's work, which suggested that the Royal Court created candidates and was not open to the public, Baban claimed that participation in politics was open to all “qualified personnel” (Ahmad, 1999, p. 224). This is particularly important as it shows the shifting parameters of the democratic system, to the benefit or satisfaction of the elites. Baban appeared to use democratic language in his referral to open political participation, but did so with a corollary, where those seeking entry into the political structure must adhere to the arbitrary hierarchy of competence created by the elites themselves.

The similarity of interpretation of the political sphere between Baban and al-Suwaydi appeared most vivid in their analysis of attempts at creating more progressive governments in Iraq. In the previous chapter, we saw that al-Amry's progressive approach to rule, that opened Iraq up to political parties and gave them freedom in their activities, was considered a weak and non-forward leaning government by al-Suwaydi (1999, p. 440). Baban's claims that Prime Minister Mohammad Fadhil al-Jamali, who operated two years after al-Amry in 1954 and sought to impose a new progressive democratic order and in turn lost parliamentary support, was ousted

on the basis of incompetence, and Baban himself agreed that he should have stepped down due to this, despite positively acknowledging his progressive views (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 185-188). In both instances we have examples of change in the political sphere of the mode of operation, where the institutional culture of domination was set aside for policies more in line with the political system. In both instances, Baban and al-Suwaydi support the removal of this change and the leader that brought it about. This is particularly important for this thesis as it displays the inability for progressive policy to operate alongside the perception of competence adhered to by the political elites. Both commented on the incompetence of the progressive leadership, showing that the institutional culture, that they adhered to more than the political system, was powerful enough to be replicated by Baban and al-Suwaydi, despite their differences in understanding the political sphere. When we couple this with the dominating characteristics deemed justified in operating within the political elite level, such as with Nuri Said, we see that the experience and education platform of argument was a means to justify exclusion. The similarity this holds with al-Suwaydi's conceptualisation of competence shows the power of the institutional culture, where both Baban and al-Suwaydi employed similar logical standpoints in their attempt to justify the exclusion of the people from government.

Baban's interpretation of competence, however, illuminates the deeply rooted institutional understanding of the timelessness of competence, once that certificate of competence is achieved, which we perhaps did not receive to the same extent from al-Suwaydi. It is possible that this was solely Baban's interpretation but, as we will see, the justification methodology for the timelessness of competence is thematic to al-Suwaydi, as it relies on the same line of reasoning. When describing the procedure for the King's selection of a new Prime Minister, Baban admitted that an important part of the process was for the King to consult with former Prime Ministers and parliament ministers, among whom the King saw fit to consult (Ahmad, 1999, p. 98). At face value this shows that mode of operation when deciding on the Prime Minister, the individual deemed competent enough to lead the political structure, was reliant on opinions of competence as dictated by the 'former' elite. Returning to the downfall of al-Jamali, Baban suggested that the King should have consulted with Nuri on how to deal with the matter, despite Nuri being out of office. This was accompanied in Baban's analysis with a common saying of Nuri's, "I feel as though Iraq is a child I have raised, all of me cares for it, I do not

interfere for my personal goals, but the duty to care [for Iraq] dictates my stances.” (Ahmad, 1999, p. 183). Nuri was unique in his ability to be constantly involved, even behind the scenes, but, on a deeper level, this shows that the elites, once granted an appreciation of competence, at the King's discretion, would continuously have a say and an ability to influence the political sphere. The incompetence of the people is further enunciated by the fact that the decision-making process appeared to be limited to a small sub-section of the institution of politics. When Baban followed his assessment of the King's consultation process with, “I personally would hold on to familiar law and tradition” (Ahmad, 1999, p. 98), we understand the ability of such ‘familiar’, or set cultures within the institution, to manifest and create a continuous standard of operation that perpetuates itself, despite structural mechanics in place to stop this happening. The democratic system during the monarchical period, although contradictory in its structure where the King would essentially choose the Prime Minister, without having to consult the people, still relied on the people's acceptance of the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister’s working together with the people as represented through parliament, that would work as the legislative branch. However, what this approach by the King elicits, alongside the understanding of competence as an ability to dominate other branches and factions within government, is a form of rule that was dictated by a sub-section of the perceived competent rulers, who would not lose these arbitrary certificates as it was prescribed by themselves.

The arbitrary nature of this standard of competence suggests there would have been discrepancies among the elites in their understanding of the hierarchy. For the concept of competence to be dependent on the perceptions of individuals that were already considered competent - wherein they gained this status based on their ability to dominate, paradoxically creating the basis of competence to be both a given certificate and one that is taken - implies that the political sphere was home to a constant struggle for control within this subsection of political elites. The most important instance in Baban's career from which we can extrapolate this framework of competence at the elite level appears in his clash with Nuri Said’s implicit involvement in Baban’s time as Prime Minister. Nuri’s involvement appeared so intense that Baban decided to resign right before the coup of 1958. This decision was based on his reluctance to be understood as incompetent, which was an implicit suggestion in Nuri's reluctance to

relinquish control to Baban, whom he had endorsed multiple times throughout his career to be Prime Minister. When this had finally occurred, Nuri appeared to not give Baban the figurative certificate of competence, as evident from his control over parliament, to which Baban wrote, “I was not ready to be a follower to anyone [Nuri]” (Ahmad, 1999, p. 202). The concept of competence, as highlighted by this situation, did not occupy the space of experience and education as means of exclusion. Rather, as we have seen, it adhered to abilities of control and authoritarian displays of power. This occurred even among the elites themselves, as Baban who considered himself competent enough to become Prime Minister, was belittled in his time of rule by his colleague Nuri, who implicitly did not believe that Baban could handle the premier on his own. Interestingly, Baban's inability to administer his own control over parliament is in itself a portrayal of incompetence according to his - and al-Suwaydi's - understanding of competence. Baban implicitly agrees with this, as his reasoning for deciding to step down, he presents to us as a reluctance to follow Nuri. Baban's level of control did not match Nuri's and this was enough reason for him to either be subservient to this higher level of control, or remove himself from the situation completely.

Baban's reliance on this hierarchy of competence, that based itself on domination, was a suitable basis that helps explain the military coup that occurred during Baban's reign. To interpret the political sphere in a way that dictated the dominating personalities to be the ones deemed competent enough to rule, suggests that the fight for competence through domination was endless. The reliance on a hierarchy, that was only climbable through abilities to impose power on the political sphere, created a system where the top faction of the hierarchy was in constant battle for their position, as their domination had to exceed those below. This is very similar to the anarchy foundation of the international sphere that Axelrod & Keohane, (1985) and Art & Jervis (2005) show occurs without an overarching power that removes the fight for power through such means. Although Baban adhered to such an overarching power in the monarchy, he also subscribed to the anarchy institutional culture of competence, that we saw with al-Suwaydi. Following this chapter, al-Fkeki's interpretations will display similar fascinations with the characteristics and power of leadership, but in a more outright approach to the aggressive domination. What is important is that even though they operate under significantly different systems (Baban under the constitutional monarchy, al-Fkeki under the authoritarianism that

followed), their bases for interpretations were both predicated on guises of dominance and absolute authority. Baban's operation as the last Prime Minister of the monarchical era, within the trajectory of the institutional culture, suggests that the perception of competence he adhered to was not dissimilar from both al-Fkeki and al-Suwaydi. The means to attain power within the state did not appear to experience the same level of change that we saw in the previous section with Baban's analysis of state representation and rule. Using Baban's interpretations as a basis for al-Fkeki suggests that the means with which one becomes the state representative was synonymous throughout, where the standard was one etched in an anarchic understanding of ascension to power. However, for the purposes of understanding the change in institutional culture that brought about al-Fkeki's institutional culture we need to focus on the other areas, such as the understanding of state-people relations.

#### **4.2 State-People Relations**

There are a number of themes that emerge when Baban touched on the relationship of the state with the people. We see consistent references to themes of the state having to maintain a sense of popularity among the masses, connoting Baban's appreciation of democratic ideals in rule. This is particularly interesting considering these democratically inclined understandings of the state and its people are mutually exclusive to Baban's understanding of the competence required to represent the state institution, where the latter adheres to strict measures of power to dominate within an anarchic framework. However, similarly to the analysis of Baban's interpretation of state representation and rule, there is a contradiction in Baban's writing and interpretation that shows his understanding to be caught between the adherence to the democratic state system and the institutional culture of domination. This contradiction appears through interpretations of the population having power, but only under the guise of a matter to be dealt with swiftly. His ideas of state interaction with the people was based on tokenistic gestures to keep the people subdued. This paints a picture of the concept of popularity of rulers, as Merkel (2014) explains is central to the creation of an electoral regime where the people pass power to elected officials, and was seen as an issue, more so than a matter that needed genuine interaction. Baban's adherence to an understanding of the people requiring subjugating actions from the state, was built on an

understanding of the powerful nature of the people, that appears more explicitly in Baban's writing than al-Suwaydi's. This points to the slight progress in institutional culture, where the mode of operation both attributed the state to a dominating entity upon the people, but with Baban this occurred on the back of a more intensified fear of the people, one that implicitly gives power to the masses.

Baban refers to the idea of the political elites being constrained by the people on a number of occasions, where his writing suggests he understood the power dynamic of the state in a democracy adheres to a pass of power from the people to the state. When Baban discusses the sudden death of King Faysal I, which left his son Ghazi too young to rule, meaning Regent Abd-al-Ilah had to take over, he referred to Abd-al-Ilah's reign as illegitimate in the eyes of the people, which he believed ultimately shrouded his rule (Ahmad, 1999, p. 120). Baban was giving value to the people's opinions of the ruler of the state, as his use of the word 'illegitimate' suggests that legitimacy was dependent on the people. We see this again when he refers to Abd-al-Ilah's reliance on the British, which was not seen in a positive light by people that were tired of foreign intrusion into their political sphere (Ahmad, 1999, p. 122). Baban goes a step further and blames Abd-al-Ilah's downfall (and that of the Monarch) on his insistence on standing with the British, claiming that to do so was to stand against the people. He even suggested that Abd-al-Ilah, and by extension the royal family who represented the state, should have shown more fear and respect to the grievances of the people. For this stand against the people by the royal family to be portrayed by Baban as the reason for their downfall implies he was aware of the transfer of power required in a democratic state. Baban was implicitly adhering to Ulfelder's (2010) framework that placed the people as the power-holders in a state. Under this framework, the power-holders were seen as the basis of legitimacy in government. To blame the downfall of the monarch on a lack of legitimacy suggests he understood the need to engage with the people, and seek their endorsement as a means for legitimisation.

From such an analysis we would understand that Baban saw the state's relationship with the people to be one of dependence, from the bottom-up, contrary to his perception of the power of the state as a dominating entity as we saw previously. However, as suggested, the contradictory theme is highlighted more deeply in the perceived relationship of the state with the people.

Baban appeared to perceive the people as powerful, but his solution was not an adherence to their desires, and for the state to be subjugated to their power, rather, it was the opposite. Falling in line with the theme of domination, Baban saw that the power imposition of the state could continue to manifest if the people were subdued by subtle gestures of appeasement. This is similar to al-Suwaydi's desire to place the people under a form of political hypnosis, wherein the people were given facades of democratic power as an attempt to keep them occupied and subdued. However, with Baban he appeared to understand the people's power to be more significant than that of the state, which may be due to his position as Prime Minister at the time of the monarch's downfall, having experienced the people's rage and power firsthand. This approach of appeasement, where the act of domination was not solely dependent on aggressive acts of subjugation but also an appearance of satisfying the desires of the people, is evident from Baban's analysis of Faysal II's lack of mingling with the people (Ahmad, 1999, p. 168). Baban understood this importance not from the lens of genuine connection to the people, but rather a performative lens that leads to political gain. Here, political gain was portrayed within the framework of the acceptance from the people, as Baban writes, "So King Faysal the second, and his uncle Abd-al-Ilah, and the successive Iraqi governments and Royal entourage should not have allowed this valuable opportunity [the people's affection for Faysal II] to slip from their hands, an organised program for direct contact with the sons of the people should have been set" (Ahmad, 1999, p. 168). An interesting turn in thought considering his interpretation of the state, and so the Monarch, was that their competence and divinity allowed them to exist on a plane beyond the people and the political sphere. One that was not required to adhere to their grievances on the basis of their ability to understand the situation better.

The contradiction emanating from Baban's understanding of the political sphere appeared more underlined in his analysis of the British's relationship with the people of Iraq, as we begin to see that the anarchic umbrella under which he understood the Iraqi state was prevalent. He suggested that the British could have maintained some form of rule over Iraq had they only appeased the people by giving up some privileges. In one such instance it was two air bases the British had held on to from the 1930 Treaty, but Iraqis were attempting to claim them back (Ahmad, 1999, p. 246). Baban also brought up the large salary gap of British officials working in Iraqi institutions, and the overzealous approach to the oil in Iraq taken by the British (Ahmad, 1999, p. 248).

Interestingly, Baban suggested throughout his writing that he understood the nature of the British mandate and colonial approach to Iraq. This means he understood that their interests were to satisfy their needs before anything else, suggesting they would be acting on a political level beyond that of the intra-state squabbles of Iraqi government. Yet, he also suggested that they caused the anti-colonial and anti-foreign sentiment that manifested into the 1958 revolution by occupying this separated role. Their separation from the Iraqi intra-state issues was not expressed by the people to the same extent that the British appeared to understand it, suggesting that the separation was simply a perception, and in reality, through the power and rage of the people, they were forced to interact as al-Fkeki and his colleagues managed to overhaul the system and push the colonial forces out. The British, according to Baban, thought they were occupying the space of an entity beyond the political sphere, however, as the state institutional culture was understood to be anarchic, the British were merely another faction in the political sphere, and so were dealt with within the hierarchy of domination, showing the power of the institutional culture in that it was able to override the perceived role of the British.

The power of the people is highlighted in Baban's two discussions of governmental executions, where he portrays the actions of the state to be dependent on the feelings of the people, suggesting to act as the state hinged on a transfer of power from the people. The first was Shafiq Ades, whom Baban insisted should not have had his sentence lessened, solely on the basis of the desire of the people (Ahmad, 1999, p. 226). In Baban's response to an attempt at bribing him to influence Ades' sentence, Baban emphatically claimed that the, "entire Iraqi people are urgently asking for the sentence of execution to be carried out... and the government is completely convinced" (Ahmad, 1999, p. 226). The desires of the people appeared to be conceptualised by Baban as reason enough for the state to act, portraying the state's basis of action to be the people, as if the power transfer began with the masses. The second instance was in Baban's own sentence by the new regime in 1958. In this scenario, Baban uses in his defence the fact that the people have never spoken ill of him, suggesting this be enough to presume his innocence, in the revolution's court (Ahmad, 1999, p. 268). For Baban to use this defence strategy, we must presume that even in the new regime there was a belief that the people as a whole carried weight in the political sphere. Therefore, it would make sense that the state interpretation, as an entity above and able to subjugate, was premised on the understanding that the people have a

significant amount of power. For Baban to conceptualise these two executions as dependent on the desires of the people points to the state as being reliant on the people's legitimisation in their actions, however, this line of thought did not manifest into allowing the masses to lead the political sphere, rather the state attempted to manipulate the masses through methods of appeasement so as to maintain their own dominance

Baban portrayed the people as strong but unfocused, signifying the ease with which one can manipulate and subdue them, and pointing to the institutional culture of the state being predicated on dominance from one faction onto another. We see throughout his analysis of events leading to the downfall of the Monarch that he did not interpret the people's desires and grievances to be in need of direct attention. Rather, he portrayed this relationship to be easily maintained with subtle gestures of heroism, "[the people] would see any understanding with the English in the circumstance like the one that Iraq went through [the 1941 insurrection against the British] as a betrayal, and any clash with them no matter the result as nationalistic championing" (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 122-123). Baban did not see the acts by the people as nuanced, which ties into his understanding of their incompetence that we saw in section 4.1.2. Baban believed that to satisfy the people as the state you need only approach them with the understanding that appearing to act on their desires is satisfactory, and conversely, any actions that appear against the will of the people would be understood as treason, implying that the people occupied the space of an abstraction and never actual living people and communities. This was evident in his analysis of the 1941 insurrection, wherein an attempt at taking the rule away from the British and those that followed was carried out by nationalist military personnel led by Rasheed 'Ali al-Kaylani. Baban made clear that the British reaction to this was to be extremely aggressive, in that they sought to re-invade Iraq had they not been talked out of such drastic measures by those deemed (by the people) to be 'pro-British' leaders such as Nuri Said and Abd-al-Ilah (Ahmad, 1999, p. 122). Furthermore, the Portsmouth Treaty of 1948 that negotiated a number of British withdrawals from Iraq had a similar effect on Baban's interpretations of the people (Ahmad, 1999, p. 127). The people viewed this negotiation with the British as legitimising their rule over Iraq, whereas Baban and others at the elite level of politics' saw the fact that it also meant that there would be less official British personnel in Iraq. Baban viewed this grievance by the people as their inability to grasp the reality of the treaty, this is because he viewed the treaty as

successful as it is portrayed to be a step closer to the people's overall goal of less foreign imposition in Iraq. Interestingly with al-Suwaydi, we saw that he referred to the people as 'weird' in their desires (al-Suwaydi, 1999, pp. 161), and this was his basis for the lack of interaction with the desires of the people. Baban, however, presented the same desire of the Treaty being signed, but did so with an adherence to the desires of the people, skewing its reality to create a relationship with the people. Baban and al-Suwaydi approached the 1941 coup in the same manner, as they both sought to remove the uprising, but the means of interpretation present to us a shift in the understanding of actions at the elite state level, and so perhaps a progress in the institutional culture, as Baban had begun to understand the importance of the people in relation to the state. Baban approached this event from the lens of portraying the way in which the leaders of the political sphere were in fact aiding the people, by calming the British reaction. Although both al-Suwaydi and Baban understood the power of the people as in need of subjugation, this event displays Baban's behaviour that adhered to the desires of the people, as evident of his interpretation of the events through the way in which it affected the people. The institutional culture that was rooted in domination was maintained by both Baban and al-Suwaydi in this example, but it shows that Baban's era was understood as more related to the power of the people, and so conceptualising events through their eyes, more so than the less inclined al-Suwaydi, whose implicit appreciation of the people's power did not reach the same level.

Baban's fear of the people, however, points to the fact that like the British, the monarch and the state institution could not exist beyond the people, as it was forced to cater to their rage. This is also what al-Suwaydi suggested was the state's main lens of interaction with the people and created a need for the state to interact directly with the people. The parallels such behaviour and relationships between factions of the state - the state institution and the people - points to a form of anarchy not dissimilar to the anarchic approach to representation of the state that section 4.1 showed, as the state was occupied by those able to exert their dominance, operating in a field that did not appear subjugated to an overarching power. The contradiction of Baban's analysis, that portrayed the monarch as this overarching power, appears here as an interactive faction with the people, where the people and the monarch occupied separate factions within the nation, that were in a constant battle for domination with no real overarching power between the two. The basis of

this understanding was Baban's appreciation of the people's power, that emerged through a form of elitist prejudice that did not allow him to conceptualise an interaction with the people beyond mere appeasement to keep them subdued. This may appear similar to al-Suwaydi, but the difference in the lens of analysis they used illuminates the shift in institutional culture. The 1941 coup, we saw, was analysed by al-Suwaydi solely through the lens of the leaders of the coup and the statesmen of Iraq at the time, that al-Suwaydi deemed incompetent for their lack of dominance that allowed the coup to nearly be successful. Baban's reliance on the people's viewpoint during his assessment of the 1941 shows the acknowledgement of the power of the people, and so the shifting culture from al-Suwaydi to Baban.

### **4.3 Implications: Democratic Contradictions**

This chapter has illustrated that Baban both operated with the institutional culture based on domination within an anarchic understanding of the political sphere, built upon an understanding of different intra-state bodies as separate entities that need to be dominated. However, this perception existed alongside an adherence to sections of Merkel's (2014) bases of a democratic institution, such as the state acting on the people's discretion. The implication of the similarities between Baban's conceptualisation of the state and al-Suwaydi's, points to the deep rooted institutional culture that can ingrain itself beyond changes in personnel. Importantly for the trajectory of the institutional culture of the state was the differences between Baban and al-Suwaydi. Although the differences only point to slight shifts in conceptualisations, such as the interpretation of the 1941 coup, the intensified fear of the people's power, the attempt to remove the legacies of colleagues from 'dictator' terminology, and the understanding of the monarchy as the overarching power stopping the plunge into anarchy. These differences point to a shift in Baban's conceptualisation of the state, as he showed more of an adherence to the political system than al-Suwaydi. The system, which was a constitutional monarchy, was democratic at its base, and so Baban's simultaneous adherence to it alongside the institutional culture that set domination through force and ability to do so as an important variable, shows he was operating with a contradiction in his understanding of the state. Fundamentally, his mode of operation was ingrained in the power structure inherited by the British forces and the Ottomans preceding, so

much so that progressive ideals were incapable of being installed in whatever new system that may appear. This final section will demonstrate this paradoxical culture that Baban appears somewhat unaware of, and in doing so displays the power of the ingrained culture of operation that was able to override Baban's thought process.

Baban did not view democracy in a philosophical absolutist light, as a system built entirely on the desires of the people. As we saw in section 4.1.2, he believed it could not operate without the competence of those deemed educated enough to carry out its process, even though this could come directly against the voting outcome of the people, thereby neglecting its democratic basis. This contradiction continues in his direct assertion for what 'real democracy' is. In Baban's recollection of his meeting with Ali Jawdat, the recently appointed Prime Minister of the time, Jawdat was struggling to convince his potential ministers to take the roles he wanted for them, and in doing so continued to hold meetings to settle the issue (Ahmad, 1999, p. 95). To this, Baban claimed that these meetings were pointless, and if the King has appointed him as Prime Minister then he did not have to listen and adhere to the desires of these potential ministers, instead he should have made a list of his desired appointments and presented it to the King, for, "this is real democracy" (Ahmad, 1999, p. 95). Baban's interpretation of democracy in this sense adhered to the monarch as an absolute power, that need not engage with its desired governing structure, this itself removes the democratic basis of power emanating from the bottom-up, as the people would have not been the basis for decisions in this electoral regime (Merkel, 2014).

Democracy, for Baban, could operate within the levels below the King to full effect, but not as something that is beyond the King's control. This paradox, which al-Suwaydi was able to acknowledge, appeared lost on Baban, for in his interpretation of this was a systematic design of democratic practice. Instead, we can see in Baban's interpretation that he simultaneously did not view the political system to be anarchic to the same degree we saw with al-Suwaydi. His adherence to the monarch was precisely built on the need for an overarching power that did not interact with the political sphere on the same level, but on a level above (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 24-25). Baban, however, implied that democracy requires a pass of power from the bottom-up, as he implicitly suggested the contradiction of having a monarchy alongside a democracy. His proclamation that King Faysal II was the most democratic leader based on the fact that he passed

legislation that lessened the monarchy's power over parliament, ultimately making the king less influential (Ahmad, 1999, p. 167), was perhaps a portrayal of his struggle within both systems of democracy and monarchy, but also the institutional culture built on domination within an anarchic system, and the state being influenced by the people's desires. Baban's interpretation of the political sphere replicated al-Suwaydi's essence of control and domination, but simultaneously showed an advancement to more progressive ideals that did not see the political sphere as purely anarchic.

Baban's understanding of dissent within a dominating system also highlighted this contradiction. There were three instances of the concept of speaking to a ruling power emerging in Baban's writing. First, Baban portrayed Kamel al-Chaderji's imprisonment and the subsequent removal of his newspapers as Kamel's fault for speaking too aggressively against the ruling power (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 153-154). Baban portrays al-Chaderji's approach to dissent as inappropriate as he suggests the speaking tone to be too aggressive and malicious. Secondly, when Nuri sought to impose a new law that would take citizenship away from those that affiliated themselves to Communism, Baban fought back but only because he saw it as satisfactory that it was already against the law to be a Communist (Ahmad, 1999, pp. 72-73). Lastly, when protests and demonstrations broke out against the British and those that they deemed followers of the British, the protests began making their way into government buildings. Baban decided to meet a group of them, during which he claims that these matters they were speaking of were up to the King and not them, implying that they have no power over anything at the elite level of politics (Ahmad, 1999, p. 134). These three instances show that ideological opposition was not seen by Baban as a pillar of democratic process. His version of democracy appeared to be skewed to a form in which different ideologies could neither speak with intensity to the ruling power, manifest through ideologically opposing parties such as the Communist Party, nor were these matters even up to the people. He saw that the overall political structure in Iraq was one in which democratic system implemented itself as a charade. Despite this, we saw in section 4.2, that Baban carried an understanding of the people of the state as a powerful entity that should be feared, and needed direct attention - although not genuine, as in the form of appeasement, but attention nonetheless.

Baban's interpretation of democracy shows his mental struggle with the concept that I have been arguing was based on the shift in institutional culture. Preceding this chapter, we saw al-Suwaydi interpret the political sphere in very similar ways, that adhered to dominance as an important variable, manifesting through an understanding of the political sphere being an anarchic field of play, upon which different intra-state factions attempted to impose their power. Baban, showed a similar approach, but intertwined within his interpretations were adherences to a state system that respected, and feared, the power of the people, and a monarchy that stopped the anarchic culture from forming. Although we saw that Baban implicitly understood the contradiction of a monarchy and a democratic system based on the desires of the people, he was still operating in between these two - slightly - more progressive approaches than al-Suwaydi's. This is evidence of a shift in the institutional culture, where Baban's era of rule was beginning to show signs of a battle between a progression alongside the people, and the historic state institutions, that based on al-Suwaydi, the British colonial forces, and the Ottomans, was one of complete domination, where power emanated from the top and was used to subdue other factions within the state, treating the political sphere as an anarchic field. Al-Fkeki presents a return to this understanding, however, even more outright in his adherence to the dominance of authoritarian rule than al-Suwaydi. The similarities between al-Fkeki and al-Suwaydi in this respect suggests that al-Fkeki's era represented a return in institutional culture, despite the complete overhaul of the political system in 1958. Baban having displayed slight shifts can be placed in this trajectory as a shift in the institutional culture that was met with an aggressive retraction to its original, and more set, form, where Baban's slight adherences to progressive ideals was experienced as the beginnings of change, and ultimately led to such a reaction from al-Fkeki and his colleagues.

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### **Chapter 5: Hani Al-Fkeki - A Return to Centralised State Power**

Having joined the Ba'ath Party four years before the revolution in 1958 that overhauled the constitutional monarchy and installed the military regime, Hani al-Fkeki's reports of his experiences included important interpretations of the state as a powerful institution designed to dominate every section of the political sphere. Al-Fkeki was a leading member during the revolution of 1958, and during the Abdul-Karim Qasim presidency that followed and was eventually expelled in 1963, after the Ba'ath Party's right-winged Iraqi faction carried out the infamous Ramadan Revolution that officially installed the Ba'ath regime. Al-Fkeki's time as an elite Ba'athist came exactly at the time of the deterioration of the monarchy and its political system, which was followed by approximately 40 years of military dictatorship. The trajectory that the al-Fkeki's political generation set Iraq on proved to be one of its most significant, making his interpretations of the change in the political sphere important, as we seek to uncover the reasons and conceptualisations that justified these events and acted as the foundation. I use al-Fkeki's interpretations as a comparative to Baban who we saw held strong ties to the monarchy and, relative to al-Suwaydi and the institutional culture, was adhering to the political system. Al-Fkeki's adherence to authoritarian understandings of the state, and the way it should operate that was the foundation to the revolution in 1958, shows a drastic change from Baban, who also adhered to dominance of powers in the political sphere but not to the extent of the Ba'ath. Al-Fkeki's similarity in the open attachment to understandings built on power to dominate in the political sphere, when compared to the preceding system shows that the change from al-Suwaydi, to Baban and finally al-Fkeki was not linear. Instead, as I argue in this chapter, it was a regression that was brought about by the beginnings of change in the institutional culture emanating from Baban's era.

As in the previous memoirs, I precede the analysis with a contextualisation of the memoirs. Again we have some form of analysis of al-Fkeki's memoir mostly taken as a source of a historical account, and in his case more specifically, as it relates to his portrayal of sectarianism. Al-Azmeh's (2007) keynote speech analyses al-Fkeki's work from the viewpoint of the interaction with sectarianism, and the cultivation of his memories in relation to his Shiism. Otherwise, his important role in the Ba'ath Party makes him a prime candidate for insight into the

time around the party's ascension (Makiya, 1989; Dawisha, 2013; Marr, 2017; Saeed, 2019), but only as a method for creating the historical narrative. His experiences, however, around the reformation of the state of Iraq from the Monarchy, to the Presidentship of Abdul-Karim Qasim and his downfall, gives us the foundation for the shift in institutional culture, that we can only see through al-Fkeki's own interpretive language. This reformation of the state and its systems creates a foundation by which his, at the least, implicit analysis can display conceptualisations of the state and its relationship with the people.

I will illustrate how al-Fkeki's interpretations of the state institution draw an image of dominance over the political sphere in all of its factions, in a similar manner to al-Suwaydi. As we saw in the previous two chapters, the state at that time was incorporating implicit conceptualisations of authoritarianism in the political sphere, alongside fear and appreciation for the people's desires, that led to an anarchic culture of battle between intra-state factions for dominance. Al-Suwaydi differed in his more open adherence to dominant figures within the state institution that he viewed as necessary for the state to function. Al-Fkeki and his colleagues, however, show a more intensified form of al-Suwaydi's understanding of the state, where the mental battle Baban was exhibiting between the institutional culture and the democratic political system appeared to dissipate. This chapter illustrates the transition - back - to intensified authoritarian understandings of the state entity, whilst showing that the return to al-Suwaydi's understanding of the political sphere manifested in a more authoritarian and oppressive form, where al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party was operating on the basis of the culture al-Suwaydi had sought to achieve within the political sphere. This is apparent from the intense relationship between the leader and the follower that the Ba'ath Party adhered to, which suggested the state institution occupied a position of complete domination over the political sphere. Section 5.2 will show that the perceived domination of the state entity over its nation, in relation to the people had been achieved as they were treated with neglect, or as a tool within other intra-state battles, but never feared or seen as in need of subjugation as Baban and al-Suwaydi did. Finally, section 5.3 will show that the fear of other factions within the state manifested in the state's relationship with the military that, unlike the people, was seen as powerful, and so could be allied within the state entity's fight for power. The difference in the conceptualisation of the people and the military emanating from the elites shows the need to understand the changes within the institutional

culture as occurring on the same spectrum, where regressions are possible, rather than a constantly evolving linear matter, as section 5.4 will discuss.

## **5.1 The Role of the State Institution**

This section will show, through al-Fkeki's conceptualisations of the role of the state institution within the nation, a regression to the non-democratic understandings of the political sphere. After the monarchy, and the attempted displays at democratic ideals, al-Fkeki represented a new wave that appeared to be unapologetically power-driven and authoritarian. I use the term authoritarian due to the somewhat intertwined democratic practices in the Ba'ath Party such as elections, or Abdul-Karim Qasim's use of a Cabinet of Ministers, that signifies the basis of modern authoritarian regimes and their ability to forestall democratisation through performative democratic ideals (Brancati, 2014). The lens to approach al-Fkeki's interpretations of the state appear in his analyses and portrayals of the concept of leadership, as he viewed the leader as a figure that embodied the absolute power of the state, and that portrayed dominance in their relationship with their subjects. This conceptualised power emerged on the basis of an intensive relationship between the Ba'ath leadership and the follower, that we will see created a basis for absolute domination of the follower. This falls in hand with al-Suwaydi's perception of competence relying on the dominating characteristics of the individual that would represent the state, where al-Fkeki portrayed the Ba'ath leadership as having achieved this level of power over their followers and the political sphere.

### ***5.1.1 The Relationship Between Leader and Follower***

Al-Fkeki portrays his interpretation of leadership as transformative rather than transactional. In the study of leadership, the concept has been dissected and split into two main categories, the transactional and the transformative (Burns, 1978; Baker, 2007). The transactional occurs when the leader enters in agreement with their subjects and offers something of value in return for their following. This form of leadership requires the satisfaction of the follower in terms of a

transaction, where in a political setting, the people transfer the power of leadership upwards, in return for policy-based actions that satisfy their needs and desires. For this to operate it requires an implicit understanding that the power is emanating from the bottom in the state model and so the interpretive reality of the leader must be one of reliance on the people. Baban's fear of the people's power was the closest comparative we had in this thesis to the foundation of the transactional leader. Al-Suwaydi's, and now we will assess al-Fkeki's, understanding was reliant on the transformative framework which is when the relationship between subject and leader becomes one based on "higher needs", wherein the relationship is more intense and they fully engage with each other. This form of relationship between the leader and the subject is built on the understanding that the leader's goal is the change of a system, in which the source of change would emanate from the leader. The main obstacle to this change is the needs and wants of the subject - that the leader would be operating on the basis of - are unrecognised by the followers, meaning the change is achieved through an elevated purpose or goal that the follower is unaware of which requires such an intense trust between the leader and the follower.

Al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party were engulfed with this intense relationship with the leadership of the Party, similarly to Baban's interpretation of the monarch's stature. Al-Fkkei's introduction of the Ba'ath Party co-founder and leader, Michel Aflec, repeatedly refers to him in a passionate manner portraying him as divine by comparing him to Jesus or a Prophet (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 79). According to al-Fkeki, Aflec replicated this understanding, as his form of leadership was dependent on the complete subjugation of his followers to his demands. This slightly moves us away from the Burns (1978) framework that understood the transformative leader to engage with the follower in the sense that they would influence each other equally. However, the influence may have manifested in a different form as the intensity of the following surrounding Aflec was so immense that when he was seeking to retire, he was heavily opposed and was 'begged' to remain (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 200). The followers in the Ba'ath Party managed to influence his decision, but only insofar as it related to Aflec remaining in power within a structure that allowed him to operate with relative freedom. This draws similarities to the divinity associated with monarchies (Woodacre, 2019), that we saw Baban adhere to in his reliance on the monarchy as an overarching power. We saw in the previous chapter that this was evidence of Baban's understanding of the monarchy as the power that would stop the state from operating within an

anarchic framework. However, with al-Fkeki, his understanding of the divinity and power of the leader was significantly more intensified than Baban's, where the leader did not simply occupy the space of an overarching power for the political sphere, but of the source of power that dictated everyone's actions.

The relationship with the leader that manifests from transformative leadership created a framework that, unlike the transactional leadership, suggested the leader's personality to be the means for effective leadership and political dissatisfaction emanating from below the leader was based on the individual leader's person, not their policies and actions. During a Party conference the Ba'ath members sought the stepping down of Aflec and Salah al-Din al-Bitar, another Ba'ath Party cofounder, based on their decision to conspire against the United Arab Republic led by Abd-al-Nasser. However, al-Fkeki maintains that this decision would have been made by the same members seeking the punishment of Aflec and al-Bitar, and that their dissatisfaction was based on Aflec and al-Bitar's personalities not their actions (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 197). The relationship with the leader led to an importance of personality in both support and dissent. The transactional understanding of leadership would lead to the relationship being built, and destroyed, based on the actions taken in the political sphere, where personality would matter significantly less. In relation to al-Fkeki himself, he portrays astonishment by re-reading his old political reports while leading the Karrada district of the Ba'ath party, "I was amazed at the political language and ideas that were contained [in these publications] that I found were in the language of backwardness," to which his colleague at the time in the Karrada leadership, Fa'eq al-Bazzaz, responded, "the disaster was not in what we wrote, but that thousands of people were willing to die under this backward consciousness" (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 172). Al-Fkeki appears aware - in this instance - of the power of leadership as it was understood within the Ba'ath Party, where even their 'backwards' approach to the political sphere could be followed with such intensity that their followers were willing to die to help them succeed. The implication here is that the actions and policies themselves do not matter to the extent that of the leader's ability to command a following that is absolute in its subservience.

This adherence to personalities at the elite level of politics created an institutional culture wherein the individual leading the political sphere was the most important figure in the equation

of state rule. To create change at that level it was understood that there needed to be a change of personnel as the importance lay in the individual and not policy. Under this standard of operation the opposition manifested in the form of intensified anger against the person, oftentimes leading to violence. Makiya (1989) analyses the way in which political dissent formed, and was dealt with, by the Ba'ath Party from 1968 to 1980, in which he recounts the various forms of violence that occurred in the political sphere in the Ba'ath Party's attempt to maintain control. Al-Fkeki's memoirs show us that his institutional culture, built on such a strong relationship with the leader, was the foundation to the violence that Makiya analysed in the ascension of the Ba'ath Party. They understood their relationships with leaders to be passionate and so resulted in absolute subservience or violent opposition. As this thesis has been arguing, the basis for this can be traced back to al-Suwaydi's era of rule, as we see the similarities in al-Suwaydi's interpretation of rule where he considered the requirements of leadership to be in the ability to dominate the political sphere in an absolute manner, suggesting the political sphere to be anarchic. Al-Fkeki's insight into the Ba'ath Party shows that they understood leadership similarly, but we see a more personified manifestation of dominance, as the individual needed to rule was embodied in certain individuals like Aflec, whereas the previous two chapters we saw it was an arbitrary call for characteristics to dominate. The evidence lies in the reliance on violent actions to end disputes, or differences in desired leadership. In 1963 the Ba'ath Party faced issues of decentralised rule, and during their attempts at solving this issue the Party began to split into separate factions. Saddam Hussein, a Ba'ath member at the time, offered to solve their issues with the current Ba'ath leadership by assassinating Ali al-Sa'adi, a powerful Ba'ath member who worked in the Abdul-Karim Qasim government that was eventually overthrown in 1963 (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 325). Al-Fkeki adds two exclamation marks at the end of the sentence making this claim suggesting it was not a normal occurrence but does not offer more analysis beyond this. However, when placed alongside the interpretation of intense leadership we see that this form of violent behaviour was rational within the institutional culture. The interpretation of leader-follower relationships, when we appreciate the centralised rule of the Ba'ath Party, suggests the state entity's relationship with the people of the state to fall within this framework. The intensity of the relationship sets the basis for the institutional culture of domination of the political sphere as the following becomes either completely subservient or violently opposed.

The following section will show how this dominance manifested through the language used by al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party.

### ***5.1.2 Dominance of the State Entity***

The dominance of the political elites was based on the understanding of leadership and rule as a centralised concept where the relationship with the state manifested through the relationship with the individual leader. This section will show the way in which this interpretation of intense relationship with the leader is transferred to the state acting as a dominating entity, in the form of absolute rule. We will see an adherence to some democratic language that Brancati (2014) shows is expected in modern authoritarian states as it helps extend their rule and forestall the democratisation process. Interestingly, we will see that although the Ba'ath Party era occurred after the complete overhaul of the constitutional monarchy and its system, the use of the performative democracy occurred in a similar fashion (albeit to a lesser extent) to al-Suwaydi, and even Baban. The performative democracy on the basis of a dominant state entity appears to be fundamental to the institutional culture across all three chapters, which comments on the inability to approach leadership of the state without some adherence to democratic ideals. This section will show how this manifested through the Ba'ath understanding of the state and leadership, wherein the dominating approach appears more vivid than both Baban and al-Suwaydi, but still replicates a similar institutional culture. This points to the slight change we saw with Baban after al-Suwaydi to be occurring on the same spectrum of institutional culture, where al-Fkeki represented a return to the understanding of al-Suwaydi, only the understanding of dominance was more pronounced.

Al-Fkeki presents a similar contradiction in his interpretation of state rule to Baban, as they both suggest they understood the state as an entity capable of embodying democratic ideals alongside a centralised and absolutist form of rule. Baban's contradiction appeared more implicit in his interpretations, as we saw in the previous chapter he would reiterate the importance of the constitutional monarchy system and adherence to its structure, but also showed the reliance of the political sphere on a perception of competence that only allowed the dominating character to

rule. Al-Suwaydi understood this similarly, but did so with less of a contradiction in his interpretation where he gave us an understanding of the state that relied on dominance that could be achieved by force within an anarchic system, with less of an attachment to democratic ideals. Al-Fkeki, however, depended on power and dominance to a higher extent in his interpretation of the political sphere, but also presented us with the similar contradiction that we saw with Baban through the performative democratic ideals, although with al-Fkeki it appeared solely in language rather than action. As al-Fkeki recounted the beginnings of the overlap between the Syrian-based Ba'ath Party's mantra and the Iraqi-based faction in 1960, he gives us insight into the wide range of understanding of rule within the Ba'ath Party as he portrays the pillars of this mantra to be democratic participation of the people and, "dictatorship and authoritarianism" in rule (al-Fkeki, 1993, pp. 104-105). Al-Fkeki offered no analysis of the contradiction of having democratic ideals alongside authoritarianism and dictatorship. Baban's contradiction appeared more subconscious as his writing was contradictory in its interpretations of the state's rule, as opposed to the explicit contradictory language that we see with al-Fkeki. The performative nature of these democratic ideals in the Ba'ath Party is evident in al-Fkeki's recount of the decision for the assassination of Qasim. A vote was carried out by the Ba'ath party (al-Fkeki included) but was fought against by Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, who at the time was a Ba'ath elite, and would later become the 4th President of post-monarchy Iraq in 1968, stating that important matters should be decided by the few (al-Fkeki, 1993, pp. 224-225). Interestingly, for there to be a vote shows the adherence to democratic ideals within the Party's leadership, meaning the Ba'ath Party had built in democratically inclined standards of operation at their elite level. The pushback received, however, is thematic for the way in which we see al-Fkeki portray the understanding of democracy within the Party, as al-Bakr could not fathom allowing such a decision, and the power that comes with it, to be shared within the Party. Furthermore, when portraying the evolution of the Party after the 1958 revolution, al-Fkeki suggests he began to notice the intensive form of following and obedience emerging among the Party's members, "that are very disciplined reaching the point of blind obedience to the orders of the leadership and the limitless preparedness for sacrifice" (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 167). We saw in the previous section how this feeling could manifest through the intense relationship with the leader, but this instance shows the power possessed by the leader over the follower. For those following to be prepared to the degree of 'sacrifice' implies that their actions would not only be harmful to

themselves but completely neglects any notion of power emanating from the bottom-up, as 'blind obedience' is evidence for the level of top-down domination understood to be necessary within the Ba'ath Party. This centralised form of rule was evident from Aflec's decision to dissolve the entire party on his own whim (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 148), which Devlin (1991) suggests was evidence of the Ba'ath Party's move from elected commands to top-down control. However, as we have seen, Devlin's reliance on this demonstration by Aflec as the basis upon which the top-down form of rule began does not appreciate the institutional culture that was forming and preceded Aflec's actions.

The culture of operation was built on the ability of the leader to occupy the role of the highest level of dominance within the political sphere, that would demand such an intensified level of following. This bears resemblance to al-Suwaydi's constitution of the personality required to be competent, as we saw in Chapter 3, he understood the leadership of the state to be built on characters able to dominate without space for dissent or pushback. The difference lies in al-Fkeki's more explicit understanding of dominance, as he reiterates common Ba'ath Party sayings such as, "execute [orders] and then discuss" or, "conscious commitment to the orders of the Party" (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 168). The Party leadership, different to al-Suwaydi whose interpretations of dominance emerged implicitly, was able to incorporate language that was directly understood to be reliant on dominance as the leading factor within the political sphere. This standard of dominance was so deeply ingrained that al-Fkeki portrays Abdul-Salam Aref's betrayal of Qasim, to whom Aref was a subordinate, in the coup of 1963 to be a decision made on the basis of obedience to the Ba'ath Party's desires. Aref justified the betrayal of his leader stating that the Ba'ath Party had made the decision, implying he was powerless to stop it (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 249). It would make sense that this could be an excuse used by Aref to gain power, however, shifting the responsibility to the Ba'ath Party after already succeeding, where there may have been no need for justifications of his actions, carries implications. Implicitly we see that the Ba'ath Party occupied a role of the sole power in question within the political sphere, as it carried not only the role of dictating the actions of its subordinates but simultaneously took responsibility. Although logical for the decision provider to take responsibility, it tells us that the power and dominance of the political sphere emanated from the leader. The difference to al-Suwaydi here is that al-Fkeki's writing implies that the entirety of the power was understood

to be culminated within the leader. Al-Suwaydi's anarchic understanding showed that the power was spread among different factions within the state, such as different individuals, branches of government, or the masses. He portrayed to us an understanding of the political sphere as a field of play in a fight for power, wherein the state entity and its leadership *attempted* to occupy the role of the sole power. Al-Fkeki presented the Ba'ath leadership as having accomplished this by the time of the coup of 1963, as the understanding had shifted to a more intensified version of al-Suwaydi's perception of the state, implying the Ba'ath leadership to be the sought form of governance from al-Suwaydi's era.

### ***5.1.3 Interpretations of the State***

The previous two sections have shown how al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party conceptualised how the state ruled. In section 5.1.1 we approached the way in which leadership was understood within the Ba'ath Party as a lens to understand the relationship between the state ruler and those that follow within the governance structure. Although some of these interpretations emerged before the Ba'ath Party had risen to power, the institutional culture they were adhering to would eventually be replicated upon their ascension. We saw this replication of culture in section 5.1.2 as we assessed the institutional culture of dominance that had emerged during the Ba'ath Party's time in rule, even under the Qasim government. The two sections highlight the way in which al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party adhered to intense relationships between the leader and the follower, which required the leadership literature to help conceptualise the relationship with the leader. By using the framework set by Burns (1978), we managed to ground the interpretations of al-Fkeki within the terminology of different forms of leadership by portraying the intense relationship between leader and follower as similar to Burns' transformative leadership. Although transformative leadership requires a mutually equal level of input between the leader and follower, which we saw was not the case in al-Fkeki's understanding, Bass' (1985) application of Burns' framework to organisational management shows that the transformative leaders need not apply themselves to the needs and desires of their followers, and requires the leader to depend on the ability to engage with their follower on a deeper level. Al-Fkeki showed us that the understanding they had of leaders like Aflec adhered to such intense feelings,

however, this was not on the basis that Aflec or other Ba'ath leadership was to engage with their following in an attempt to elevate them - as Burns suggests is a basis of transformative leadership - it was an act of dominance over the political sphere seen as necessary to achieve the goals of the Party. The institutional culture appeared to adhere to the Ba'ath leadership as the power-source within the state, as they understood their relationship to their followers to be one of absolute subservience.

The similarities with al-Suwaydi appeared in the adherence to singular dominant entity within the state, as he interpreted this as a struggle where the state entity had to subdue other factions in an anarchic structure. Al-Fkeki shows us that the return to al-Suwaydi's institutional culture occurred in a more intense format that gave way to the understanding that the singular controlling entity within the state was not to be in a power struggle with other factions, but was the only source of power. It appears to be a part of the institutional culture when we place the previous two sections together, as we see the adherence to intense forms of following of the leader as a mode of domination within the state, was a conceptualisation of the singular power source that need not be in any struggle with other factions, giving way to the blind obedience. There is a similarity to Baban's understanding of the Monarch, which may be evidence of the remnants of the institutional culture that preceded al-Fkeki, but a manifestation that intensified the more dominant understandings of al-Suwaydi's institutional culture. The adherence to dominance as the foundation in the relationship between the ruler and the follower within the governance structure appears central to the Ba'ath Party's institutional culture, as the following section will show the relationship with the people operated within the same framework.

## **5.2 State-People Relations: Neglect and Manipulation**

According to al-Fkeki the governance structure operated with an understanding of centralised power as it did not give way to other factions within the structure itself. This moved us away from al-Suwaydi's conceptualisation that adhered to political elites fighting for domination within the political sphere, where al-Fkeki's understanding had regressed to a more dominant culture that did not consider power to exist outside the elites. This perception of the state entity

as a central power that was not able to manifest to the same degree it did within the governance structure as it did with the people. This section will show that the people were treated as a separate faction that needed to be dominated, as has been replicated with Baban and al-Suwaydi in their anarchic perception of the political sphere. Interestingly, we will see that al-Fkeki's interpretation accepted the people to be a somewhat powerful faction within the state that required dominance from the state entity, but did so in a significantly less power-appreciative manner than what we saw in the previous two chapters. The separation of the people as a faction, however, was not an exact replication of the anarchic structure we saw with al-Suwaydi and Baban, but rather, the people's power was never seen as threatening to the political elites and the Ba'ath leadership and was instead used as a tool for the elites. Although we will see that Baban's progression in institutional culture managed to implant itself slightly in al-Fkeki's, the institutional culture and understanding of the people had (re)entered a realm that, while similar to al-Suwaydi's interpretation of the people, was more authoritative in its understanding.

Whilst Baban had shown an acceptance of the people as a powerful entity, to which al-Suwaydi had understood them to be less relevant, al-Fkeki appeared at times to neglect them completely. This neglect is apparent in the memoirs through the lack of importance given to the people at times of planning. During talks of taking inspiration from Egypt (in 1952) and Iran (in 1953) to use the military to take down the current Iraqi monarchy and government and their ingrained issues, there was no mention of the general masses in this Ba'ath meeting according to al-Fkeki (1993, pp. 49-58). A matter of this magnitude was seen as enclosed to the elite level of politics, with little to no relevance to those below. The Ba'ath planning of the 1958 revolution, in al-Fkeki's portrayal, displays the people as irrelevant. Even if the people had been considered within this meeting, for al-Fkeki to limit their mention in the portrayal of this meeting points to the neglect and lack of importance attributed to the people in what was a decision that would considerably change the entire nation and significantly affect the lives of the masses. This points to the regression from Baban and al-Suwaydi as public opinion did not appear to matter, where the previous chapters showed the adherence to appeasement methods in the relationship to the people was no longer required. Al-Fkeki replicates this sentiment, this time explicitly, when commenting on the goals of unity, in Iraq and Arab states that, "created a preparedness among us to jump over the crowds and achieve this on their behalf" (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 90). The

unimportance with which al-Fkeki presented the people is particularly telling, as it shows the power separation of the elites from the people. Al-Suwaydi, even in his power-dominated understanding of the state still portrayed the people as somewhat powerful and worthy of direct attention from the state, but within the framework of subjugation - Baban attributed even more power to the people as he represented a sense of fear emanating from the elites - al-Fkeki's interpretations show us a regression to an understanding of the people as almost irrelevant. The irrelevance implies that the occurrences at the elite state-level were the most important consideration within a nation where the people occupied the space of a bystander similarly to the mode of operation of the British colonial enterprise as evident from their desire to implement their own political system in Iraq as a means of continued subjugation (Lenczowski, 1957). The similarity between the neglect shown to the people of Iraq by the British and by al-Fkeki suggests that the Ba'ath Party's interpretations of the political sphere had regressed the institutional culture to the standards set by those preceding al-Suwaydi.

The basis al-Fkeki presents to us for this neglect of the people appears in his distrust for democracy as an efficient method for rule. In the previous section we saw that the leadership, along with the state, was considered to rule as the sole entity with power. Naturally, when assessing the possibilities of democratic involvement of the people, al-Fkeki did not appear to interpret such ideals as desirable or able to aid the nation's progression. A repeated statement by al-Fkeki refers to democracy as a matter that, "can not achieve the nation's ambitions" (al-Fkeki, 1993, pp. 64, 77). This understanding that democracy cannot push the nation forward and help it progress we saw in al-Suwaydi's analysis of al-Amry's government in 1952, that had opened up the political sphere to political parties and their activities, to which al-Suwaydi referred to as weak and non-forward leaning (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 440). The similarity between the two interpretations of democratic ideals further demonstrates the ingrained institutional culture that is portrayed in both the interpretations of al-Suwaydi and al-Fkeki, who operated in completely different political systems, one a constitutional monarchy and the latter in a military dictatorship. Rather, democracy for al-Fkeki, was a vernacular used as a means of dissent against the Ba'ath leadership. In his comparison of the Syrian and Iraqi Ba'ath Party between 1959 to 1960, al-Fkeki portrayed the dissent for the dictatorial approach to rule and the repression caused as unique to Iraq, as he suggested that, "a lot of the Ba'athists [in Iraq] that exaggerate in their

speech about the repression and the torture and the persecution were upset as they were not partners in the dictatorship, and their annoyance did not stem from a care for democracy that did not occupy much of their attention” (al-Fkeki, 1993, pp. 150-151). Al-Fkeki interpreted the democratic basis of argument against the leadership that followed the monarchy in 1958 to be unfounded, despite it operating a significantly more oppressive mode of operation than what preceded. It appeared more fathomable that democratic stances to be a mere desire for more power within the political sphere, suggesting that al-Fkeki's interpretation of the political sphere to be significantly based on a power structure where actions were only based on an attempt at ascension, rather than being ideal-driven. This reliance on power as a basis of the institutional culture suggests that statements such as, “absolute submission to majority rule,” and, “central democracy,” that featured in Ba'ath, and al-Fkeki's, lexicon was merely a method of oppression as it only did so alongside dictatorial terminology such as, “execute [orders] and then discuss” (al-Fkeki, 1993, pp. 104-105, 168). The Ba'ath Party, similarly to al-Fkeki's assessment of the dissent forming in Iraq in 1960, was making use of the democratic terminology as a means to impose power.

With al-Suwaydi and Baban, we saw an adherence to democracy as a performative ideology with which one could appease and subjugate the people through the charade of self-rule. Al-Fkeki's interpretation of the people, as we have seen, was based on neglect and an understanding that they were not a threat to the power of the ruling entity, and so begs the question as for the need for the democratic terminology, especially with such an open adherence to dictatorial and authoritarian forms of rule. A possible reason lies in the continuation of the institutional culture of Baban's era, that we saw began to display more of an adherence to the people as a powerful entity, giving their performative democratic ideals more necessity in the attempt to appease them. Therefore, al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath may have carried forward the terminology from their predecessors that otherwise lost any meaning or semblance to real notions of democratic practices, more so than Baban, and were merely a form of cultural residue from the constitutional monarchy.

Alongside neglect, another interpretation of the people appeared in the pawn-like fashion within the state, as they could be manipulated in the attempt to harm other intra-state factions. There

was a contradiction in the interpretations of al-Fkeki that, similar to al-Suwaydi and Baban, could not completely ignore the power the people of the state possess, although al-Fkeki came the closest with his neglectful approach. The difference, however, lies in the comparison of the people's power to the state's, as al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath did not perceive them as a threat to the elite's power, instead portraying them to be operating on a different platform. Evidence of the perceived power emerges in al-Fkeki's memoirs through his portrayals of government action, which he perceives as only relevant insofar as it could incite a reaction from another political elite. During Qasim's presidency, he attempted to implement a new farmer law that would take control of land away from landowners, which al-Fkeki referred to as a method to scare local political foes, by gaining the farmers' favour (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 120). This form of reference appears again when al-Fkeki analyses Qasim's new women's rights laws that were enacted and then subsequently retracted which al-Fkeki suggests the retraction was a challenge to the Ba'ath Regional Leadership (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 130). In both instances, according to al-Fkeki, it was understood that the actions of Qasim in relation to the population were only acts of attempted domination by Qasim upon the Ba'ath Party. This understanding appeared to be a standard of the institutional culture as it was replicated within the Ba'ath Party as well, as Saddam Hussein attacked al-Fkeki's leftist faction, claiming they were bribing farmers and workers for their support (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 337). The vehement portrayal of actions in favour of the people suggests that to do so was never an act of submission to the wills of the people, but rather attempts at winning favour at the expense of another political faction, which al-Fkeki portrays as ingenuine.

Al-Fkeki thus portrayed the people's desires and ideologies as irrelevant, and only mattered insofar as their - manipulated - anger or support could influence other factions. Despite the Ba'ath Party's ideological struggle with the Kurdish people and their secession, they were willing to work with them in an attempt to antagonise Qasim (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 191). This approach to manipulation is incredibly similar to al-Suwaydi's understanding of the people, where he suggested that their relevance in the political sphere only appeared with their anger (al-Suwaydi, 1999, p. 362). Importantly for the trajectory of the institutional culture, al-Suwaydi did not refer to the anger of the people as a power to be used against other factions within the state, nor did he present them as able to aid elites in their fights against other factions within the state. The

institutional culture we see with al-Fkeki appears to have intensified the manipulative approach to the people wherein it was conceivable to push their anger onto other factions to aid the Ba'ath Party in gaining power, not solely through the Party's ascension but through the other factions' forced descent.

Lastly, we see the more intense approach to the people manifest in al-Fkeki's understanding that it was a rational matter for the Ba'ath Party to have to face the people, not through manipulation and cunning subjugation, but in outright oppression. The lack of democratic bases in the governance structure is reiterated by al-Fkeki's portrayal of the planning to overthrow Qasim's government (which eventually came to fruition in 1963). In this discussion al-Fkeki presents to us the planning based on the need to prepare for any civilian fightback against their attempted coup (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 219). Here, we see the shift away from the interpretations of al-Suwaydi who, although appreciated the people as a somewhat powerful faction, displayed the need to appease them and keep them in a state of political hypnosis. Al-Fkeki on the other hand, as evident from his portrayal of the planning for the 1963 coup, shows that it was conceivable for their decisions to be directly and openly against the desires of the people, where the political elites could act in a way that would cause an internal conflict between the people and the government.

The state's relationship with the people according to the interpretations of al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party appeared to intensify the manipulation and neglect we saw with Baban and more relevantly, al-Suwaydi. The ability of the Ba'ath Party to conceptualise the people, not only insofar as they could be manipulated and subjugated as al-Suwaydi displayed, or the fear of the people's power we saw with Baban, but as an entity that could be used as a weapon in the fight for power, or openly quashed and fought against which displays a more desensitised approach to rule that was thematic to the Ba'ath. The institutional culture appeared to be constant through the lens of the people having some form of power, but varied within each of the eras we have analysed. The era pertaining to al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath has shown that they understood their relationship with the people to be suitable for aggressive oppression and acts of manipulation to oppress other factions. The idea that the people have power and could be used against other factions that also have their own power, points to the anarchic understanding of the political

sphere being fundamental to the institutional culture in Iraq through these three memoirs. Of the three elites we have analysed, Baban showed the most signs of slightly shifting away from the anarchic understanding in his adherence to the monarchy as a power that would stop the descent into anarchy. The following section will show, more explicitly, as has been thematic with al-Fkeki, that the anarchic understanding of the political sphere allowed the military to manifest into its own faction within the fight for power.

### **5.3 State-Military Relations**

In this section we will see that the fear and power Baban associated with the power of the people did manifest in al-Fkeki's understanding of the military as he portrayed them as a powerful and separate entity. This form of conceptualization placed the military within the bracket of an entity that operated on a similar power-level to the state elites and so needed to be subdued which returned al-Fkeki's understanding back into the anarchic culture we saw in the previous chapters, but only as it related to the military's power. This section will show that the military was understood to be powerful, but capable of embodying its own political faction, that could possess its own political stances and ally itself with other intra-state factions. There has been some research done that portrays the military involvement in al-Fkeki's era as a continuation from the monarchical period, however, I will argue that al-Fkeki's memoirs represents a change in the institutional culture as the military was no longer interpreted as an extension of state power, instead achieving a new political embodiment of an independent entity.

Al-Fkeki portrays the military, not as an extension of the state institution's power and violence, but as capable of occupying the role of a foreign power, as its foreign-ness to the state was built on the understanding that the military was not an extension of state power, but rather, capable of operating on its own accord. Returning to the planning for the 1958 revolution, the Ba'ath elites contemplated allying with the military as they were inspired by the military involvement in Egypt and Iran during their revolutions that had preceded (al-Fkeki, 1993, pp. 49-58). This portrays the military as completely separate and not required to adhere to the state institution's power. Instead, the military was understood as a power on its own, with no particular profound

allegiances, and could be convinced or manipulated to harm the entity that it was conventionally understood to represent. This implies that al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath were also operating on the anarchic culture we saw with al-Suwaydi and Baban, with the difference of viewing the power of the military as more relevant than that of the people. We saw in the previous section that the planning for this coup did not entail any considerations for the people, but simultaneously sought to incorporate the military into its plans. This shows that the anarchic understanding existed but the people were simply not viewed to possess the power worthy of direct attention, creating the culture of neglect and manipulation we saw in the previous section.

The military was afforded this worthiness of attention based on their power, implying that the capability to dominate was understood as the relevant variable for the state elites' attention within the political sphere. We saw in the previous section that ideological standings of the Ba'ath Party were set aside for the sake of political gain, such as the stance against Kurdish secession. This was replicated with the involvement of the military in the Ba'ath Party's Syrian faction to which al-Fkeki presented reluctance, but necessity, to aid the Party's power (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 329). The Ba'ath Party was against military involvement in high levels of authority, suggesting the military was not understood to be able to engage on the elite level of politics, as they were portrayed as a power limited to the lower level of politics. This is a contradiction to the way in which the Ba'ath Party ended up operating in al-Fkeki's era, implying the reluctance for military involvement was merely a fear of giving elite political power to military factions, that had the backing of hard power at their disposal. When the Ba'ath Party began to see cracks within its leadership before the coup of 1963, Aflec allied himself with the military personnel to force the Ba'ath Party to stay on his course (al-Fkeki, 1993, p. 345). To this, al-Fkeki presented his surprise at Aflec's willingness to "ally" with military power in his attempt to maintain control. For Aflec to act in this way implies the understood superior power of the military within the state in comparison to other factions such as the people, as allying with the military gave him a position of power he otherwise would not have been afforded had he not allied with the military faction. The military's perceived separateness appears more vivid in the use of the word "ally", as it implies that it was a disconnected state faction that did not occupy the space of state power through subservience to the state entity's desire. It was possible for it to be persuaded and

act on its own accord, in which it aligned itself with another intra-state faction, such as Aflec's Ba'ath contingent.

The study of the military's relationship to the state in Iraq's history has shown that it was born out of the state's need to force cohesion in Iraq the time of its inception which suggests al-Fkeki's interpretation of the military to have been built on the preceding culture of the monarchy. Tarbush (1982), in a historical analysis of the Iraqi army's involvement in politics, traces the roots of this to the lack of cohesion in Iraq at the time of its formation suggesting that this was the Monarchy's solution, and that the army was used to force a form of cohesiveness which led to a need to strengthen the army. The snowball effect of this is what Tarbush considers the cause of the subsequent politicised military officials. Slugett (1976) even suggests that the Iraqi military was more involved in political bargaining than in military action. It appears the institutional culture of military involvement in the political struggle within the state elite level had started before al-Fkeki's time. This implies that the culture al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath were subscribing to was a continuation from King Faysal I's use of the military to create a cohesive state. The reason this analysis of state-military relations only appears in al-Fkeki's chapter, and not the preceding two chapters, is due to the lack of mention and awareness Baban and al-Suwaydi present in their memoirs to the military involvement in the political sphere. This is perhaps a comment on the military, that although was involved in politics at the time, it was controlled by King Faysal I making it an extension of the state's - monarch's - power, whereas al-Fkeki's era was displaying a military that was separate and able to ally itself with certain factions within the political sphere. Al-Fkeki's more explicit understanding of the military involvement shows a change within the institutional culture that understood the military's relevance in politics beyond solely as the state's power, instead, a separate faction with its own desires and leniencies.

## **5.4 Implications**

As this chapter has sought to argue, the institutional culture al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath Party was operating under was a regression as evident from the strong similarities to al-Suwaydi's

understanding of the political sphere. The slight progression we saw with Baban that manifested in an appreciation for the monarch's power as overarching and so limiting the anarchic approach to the political sphere that we saw with al-Suwaydi, appears to have dissipated at the time of the Ba'ath ascension. The regression of the institutional culture appeared more violent, however, as the institutional culture regressed beyond al-Suwaydi's in some instances to more authoritarian-based understandings of the political sphere. In addition, as al-Fkeki's memoirs is the last we will analyse in this thesis, we see that a major finding that has emerged in all three chapters is the anarchic portrayal of the political sphere, where separate intra-state bodies are understood to be in a fight for dominance. Al-Fkeki differs slightly, as both Baban and al-Suwaydi saw the people as separate and powerful, requiring some form of subjugation, whereas al-Fkeki's interpretation did not view the people to be operating within the same playing field as the state. Rather, the people appeared either completely irrelevant or were used as a tool in the state entity's fight for power, portraying the people as occupying a different space to the state power which implies the domination of the people sought by al-Suwaydi had reached fruition under the Ba'ath institutional culture.

Importantly for this thesis is the difference in al-Fkeki's conceptualisations of the state-people relations and the state-military relations that we analysed, as it shows the extent of the regression in the institutional culture, with a simultaneous continuation of al-Suwaydi's perception of dominance but simply more pronounced. The overall anarchic umbrella appeared in al-Fkeki's understanding, that understood the Iraqi polity to be home to separate intra-state factions such as the people and the governance structure. However, the implications of al-Fkeki's interpretations of the people as a significantly weaker faction (relative to Baban's and al-Suwaydi's interpretations), that did not pose a threat to the governance structure, shows that there was a change in the institutional culture between al-Suwaydi and al-Fkeki. The regression to understandings of the state entity as dominant and powerful, that al-Suwaydi portrayed to us as the sought form of governance, appeared to be somewhat achieved under al-Fkeki. The ability of the state to not only ignore the desires of the people, but to actively act against them, suggests the people's power in the elites' interpretations had significantly diminished during the Ba'ath ascension to power. This is the basis for suggesting the change in the institutional culture, from al-Suwaydi, to Baban and to al-Fkeki, was not merely linear, but returned along the same

spectrum. Al-Fkeki was apparently operating with an understanding of the state that al-Suwaydi had idolised, which was similar to the preceding form of rule under the British colonialism and the Ottoman rule, as both relied on strong dominant state figureheads that gave little room for input from outside the state entity. However, al-Fkeki's understanding of the military's power shows that the overall understanding of the political sphere was still anarchic, despite adherence to a strong state entity as central and unique. The military had managed to inhabit the space of a foreign power, within intra-state fights for power. This adherence to separate intra-state factions emerged in all three chapters of analysis suggesting it to be central to the Iraqi political institutional culture, as even within Baban's and al-Fkeki's adherences to singular and powerful state entities, the anarchic understanding managed to manifest through their conceptualisations of the state power's relationship with other intra-state factions.

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## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

By closely analysing the memoirs of al-Suwaydi, Baban and al-Fkeki, we have been able to bring to light the interpretations and conceptualisations of the political sphere that created the Iraqi state's institutional culture between 1921 and 1963. Through the analyses of the three memoirs in Chapters 3-5, we have been able to uncover the institutional culture as it pertained to the Iraqi political elites through their interpretive language. In Chapter 3, al-Suwaydi's memoirs allowed us to lay a foundation of the institutional culture, with which we were able to compare Baban and al-Fkeki's interpretations of the political sphere, in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively. The chronological value of the analysis, as al-Suwaydi preceded Baban and al-Fkeki followed with the Ba'ath Party's ascension, was necessary as it helped bring light to the trajectory of the institutional culture. There were four main findings in this thesis: the institutional culture of the Iraqi political elites centered on the ability to dominate, allowing them to exclude different sections of society from rule; the need for dominating practice in rule was based on an understanding of the political sphere as encompassing separate factions, such as the people and the military, wherein they acted in an anarchic system with no overarching power, not unlike the international system; the institutional culture was able to withstand drastic changes within the political sphere pointing to its perpetual nature, where the slight progress we saw with Baban suggests the violent regression saw of al-Fkeki's era to be based on this perpetuity; finally, the methodology proved important as we were able to uncover a completely different perception of the political sphere when looking beyond the political system, suggesting the need to incorporate institutional culture into future analyses of Political Studies, whilst not rely solely on structures and systems in analysis. In this chapter, following a summary of findings, I explore the limitations of this study due to its abstract nature, but ultimately suggest the importance of institutional culture in analysis of polities due to its ability to overrule system and structure.

The path trajectory of the institutional culture from al-Suwaydi to al-Fkeki is one of the most important findings of this thesis. Using al-Suwaydi's institutional culture, we managed to truly comprehend the conceptualisation of the state institution and its mode of operation at the time of the Iraqi state's inception. We saw that al-Suwaydi used an arbitrary framework based around competence, but only as a means of excluding the masses from rule. The conceptualisation of

those able to act at the elite state level appeared to be based on a requirement to be dominating and able to command those around him, whilst completely limiting pushback. Leadership of the state was, therefore, not based on some form of legitimacy from the people or from the monarch, as al-Suwaydi did not interpret either to be able to pass power through endorsement of individuals. Rather, the governance structure appeared anarchic as power was given to those able to take it. This was replicated in his understanding of the state's relationship to the people who were understood as a separate entity to the state institution. Al-Suwaydi portrayed them as powerful but only required some form of subjugation, such as appeasement, that would leave them hypnotised. The new political system Iraq was working under, of which al-Suwaydi was a pioneer, was poorly connected to the institutional culture of al-Suwaydi and his political counterparts at the time. With the forced installation of a foreign system, this appears logical but implies that systems can be connected and can carry institutional cultures within them that would be installed alongside the political structure and system. In short, for the colonial forces to operate with an institutional culture that may have been replicated by al-Suwaydi, suggests that the foreign political system was installed alongside its own institutional culture. This furthers the understanding that culture is not indigenous to a land or population, and the orientalist 'corruption' discourse that posits certain race-based cultures to be the causes for countries like Iraq to fail, can be misleading.

Baban showed us a very similar understanding to al-Suwaydi, but also displayed a change of thought process, indicative of a change in institutional culture. The change emerged in Baban's understanding of the monarch's power, which he presented to us as absolute and overarching the nation, indicating a shift away from anarchic understandings of the state institution. Baban also showed a reluctance in interpreting the dominating acts of individuals within the political sphere, such as Nuri Said, as authoritarian or dictatorial. Whilst simultaneously acknowledging the necessity for such dominating actions, he adhered to a similar arbitrary basis of competence that understood the ability to dominate as the most important factor. Baban also displayed a change in language, where he was accepting the negative connotations associated with authoritarian measures. This suggests that there was a shift in understanding that such dominating actions within the political sphere are not suitable for a democratic state, which we did not see with al-Suwaydi. This coupled with Baban's heightened appreciation - relative to al-Suwaydi - of the

people's power, that were still understood as separate from the state institution and required subjugation, showed that the power of the state and the people were beginning to amalgamate in Baban's mind. The important shift from al-Suwaydi to Baban in institutional culture points to the possibility of the political system and the unwritten rules of the institutional culture to become synonymous with time. Although slight, the progression signified the ability of institutional culture and political system to gradually converge, suggesting time to be an important factor in the process of installing new political systems.

Lastly, al-Fkeki presented regression from Baban's conceptualisations to al-Suwaydi's and beyond, wherein the institutional culture witnessed a violent return away from the progression we saw with Baban. The negative connotations associated with dictatorial terminology was overturned, as al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath adhered to strictly authoritarian measures in their understanding of rule. This emerged through his conceptualisation of the leader's relationship with the follower, which existed on an intensified level that allowed the leader to completely dominate the political sphere, leaving no room for influence from any other intra-state factions. Al-Fkeki's interpretation of dominance in rule was very similar to al-Suwaydi's, as they both understood the governance structure to be in need of a dominant character that can centralise power. The change in institutional culture lies in al-Fkeki's interpretation of complete dominance being a manifestation of the type of rule al-Suwaydi appeared to be working towards, where al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath represented the desired and efficient form of rule, as per al-Suwaydi's framework. The people, therefore, in al-Fkeki's interpretations did not occupy the space of a power that was acting on the same level as the state institution under an anarchic umbrella, rather, the people's power had appeared to diminish leading to a culture of neglect or manipulation. The faction that was acting on the same level as the state institution was the military, otherwise understood to be an extension of state power, but with al-Fkeki it appeared to occupy the space of a foreign power that was feared and could ally itself with other intra-state factions.

The recurring theme from all three memoirs, and an important finding in this thesis, is the anarchic understanding of the political sphere was based on the Iraqi polity being home to separate factions, such as the people, the governance structure or the British forces, all of which

operated in a fight for power and dominance. This separation appeared on the basis of the inability to conceptualise the nation as a united concept with some form of overarching power - whether from below or from above - that would stop the anarchic culture from forming. Even Baban and al-Fkeki, who both understood their allegiances to their ruling power, the monarchy and the Ba'ath, to be based on their centralised power source within the state that would remove anarchic interpretations of the state. Yet, despite this, Baban understood the people and the British in the format of a separate power, and al-Fkeki understood the military and the people similarly. Al-Suwaydi did not appear to adhere to a centralised power source, other than that of those able to dominate the political sphere and forcibly create this overarching power. All three of these political elites presented factions such as the people and the governance structure not as interconnected state pillars, but as separate entities that acted against each other in an attempt to dominate the political sphere.

I argued that al-Fkeki presented a regression in institutional culture based on Baban's apparent change, reverting us to a similar form of interpretation as al-Suwaydi. This argument was based on the interpreted power source of the state as displayed in their memoirs. Al-Suwaydi understood the power to be available to those able to take it within the political sphere and create a dominant, powerful structure based on their characteristics. Although al-Suwaydi presented the people as powerful and in need of subjugation, Baban displayed more of an appreciation of the people's power, whilst simultaneously viewing the monarch as the main source of power within the state. This contradictory simultaneous awareness for the people and the monarch to possess the state's power, is a comment on Baban's adherence to the political system of a constitutional monarchy that displayed the beginnings of a convergence between the institutional culture and the political system. On the back of this, I argued that al-Fkeki and the Ba'ath violent reaction in the revolution of 1958 and the subsequent 1963 coup that placed the Ba'ath in power, was based on the shifts in culture emanating from Baban's era that saw some form of progression. Albeit small, the shift caused the institutional culture to return, not only to al-Suwaydi's era, but to an even older format that existed in the outright oppressive rule of the British invasion and the Ottoman Empire. The institutional culture's ability to be ingrained in the thought processes over a substantial amount of time - the similar basis of culture shown in this thesis occurred over a span of 63 years - implies that it can be so deeply rooted and ingrained in the state institution.

This suggests that changes within the interpretations that create the culture would cause a reaction that attempts to revert it back to its perceived original format. These findings present the importance in studying polities not solely as they are represented by their political systems and the individuals within, but as institutions with deeply rooted cultures of operation that can dictate behaviours. This may explain the inability for the political systems to consolidate in countries like Iraq, where calls for corruptive tendencies are misleading as they do not consider the institutional culture that overrules the foreign imposed political systems. Another avenue of analysis also opens in that there is the possibility that the imposition of systems suggests the imposition of a culture to the same effect, making it imperative to understand the institutional culture alongside the system in any analysis.

What this thesis has been able to show is that there is an ability to draw out understandings of the political sphere from the interpretive language of politicians that would otherwise not emerge from other sources. Importantly, this allowed us to display the unique anarchic intra-state interpretation of the Iraqi polity, that based its understanding on the separation of intra-state factions such as the monarchy, the governance structure - that had its own internal factions - and the people. Through the broad stroke approach by selecting three political elites across 62 years in Iraq from 1921 to 1963, allowed us to set a foundation for such studies that can uncover the trajectories of the institutional cultures upon which political systems operate. This study has sought to highlight the importance of understanding the interpretive realities of those within any polity, as it can create a mode of operation that is completely different from the political system in place. Establishing the disjuncture in the reality between the Iraqi political system and its perception by the elites, provides another basis for appreciating the need for incorporating politicians' methods of understanding their political spheres in Political Studies. This is not solely as a comment on the individual politician's personality but displays the reality of the unwritten rules that dictate political spheres, implying they are just as important, if not more, than the political systems in place.

## 6.1 Limitations and Future Research

This approach is not without its limitations due to its reliance on a very particular type of source, namely memoirs, and the possible conjecture in its analysis. There are numerous published memoirs from the monarch era that could be analysed and create a more nuanced understanding of the institutional culture, where we would be able to track a more intricate progression from al-Suwaydi to Baban and then to al-Fkeki. The limitations in length of a Masters thesis did not allow enough time to engage in more sources, especially as the analysis required to uncover their interpretations is deep. However, engaging in all available published sources would still not be a definitive portrayal of the institutional culture, as we would be operating on the bias of those that were willing and desired to publish their memoirs, suggesting they had some form of gain in retelling Iraq's political history through their lens. The dependence on such individuals causes the neglect of those without published writings who may have possessed perspectives that would change our understanding of the institutional culture. Nevertheless, the source availability dictates this form of study as it relies on the interpretive language of those that operated at the elite level of politics. In addition, the analysis of the interpretations as they appear in memoirs require a deep level of analysis so as to not create speculative comments that would skew the assessed interpretive realities. Numerous readings and deep level analysis that understands the extracted statements not as unique stand-alone comments but as dependent and informing the entirety of the memoirs helps limit conjecture-based analysis. However, with this type of study that does not rely on explicitly stated content the conjecture is important, but only insofar as it is backed with a strong based line of reasoning and logic, that is in itself based on the writing and interpretations of the politicians themselves, as I have attempted to accomplish in the previous chapters. Human error is a reality in any study and so this study has sought to limit this by solely making use of comments made in the memoirs that gave us direct insight into the perceptions of the politicians.

In reflection, this study appeared more fruitful in its reliance on interpretive language than I had originally anticipated, in doing so allowed me to uncover a new appreciation for the difficulty but necessity of such an approach. The texts themselves appeared rich in logical bases and analysis that when read against itself brought to light an entirely separate system of

understanding of the political sphere. As I began the research, the words of the political elites made it immediately clear that the interpretive language of politicians should carry as much weight in political analysis due to how disconnected it was to the political system. It was surprising to say the least, that there could be an entirely different political standard in operation through institutional culture than what is portrayed to the outside world through analysis that relies on systems and actions in history solely. It also became clear with the reading that the ability to translate the Arabic language directly - which at times was difficult due to the inherent differences in language between Arabic and English - allowed this study to be as fruitful as possible. It would have been difficult to conduct this study, one that relies on specific language and portrayals by the elites, without direct engagement with the words they wrote as they had intended to express them, where Arabic plays a vital role. Within the same logic, an important analytical tool became clearer after reading all three memoirs which was the ability to approach each individual political elite as unique and complex in their own right. An important foundation of this study was to aid in producing analysis of postcolonial subjects that do not center their colonial history as their most-defining feature. Within the same bracket, and due to this project's reliance on individual interpretations, the analyses of Chapters 3-5 required an understanding that they would not portray the information of their institutional culture in the same manner; each elite would require a specific form of analysis, such as uncovering Baban's understanding of the political sphere through his complex relationship with democracy, or al-Fkeki's analysis of military involvement in government. This allowed each chapter to bring forward analysis that both appreciated their individual leniencies and the way in which they approach the political sphere, whilst simultaneously uncovering their institutional culture within a similar framework. Ultimately, this thesis has shown the power of an institutional culture within the political sphere. In doing so, this thesis suggests that future studies, especially on countries with consistently changing structures and systems, can make use of culture as a means of bridging the gap between the behaviour of elites and the political system. It would also be interesting for this study to be used in comparison with non-Arab nations and their institutional cultures, in countries with consolidated democracies. This may help uncover the true disparity between struggling democracies like Iraq, and countries with long-standing democracies that are otherwise portrayed as superior in this sense, where their institutional cultures may point to less of a disparity pointing to the importance of external factors in the consideration of democratic systems.