

**Steady Mobbin' (OK, you're a Goon, but what's a Goon to a Goblin?):
Redrawing the Theoretical Map of the Middle East**

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In this paper, I explore the theoretical approaches undertaken by scholars of alliance politics in the Middle East during the mid-20th century and propose an alternative method. I embark on this project in three stages: first, I employ a critical reading of Walt and Barnett to demonstrate the need for a new theory; second, I offer an alternative approach building on the insights of Bourdieuzian sociology; finally, I conduct a limited application of that approach to the Baghdad Pact. In order to comply with mini-APSA requirements, I will be presenting only the first two-thirds of this project (pages 2-25) on the 29th. I include the remainder of the paper as an illustration of the method, in order to allow interested parties to see the model in action.

In his short story, "On Exactitude in Science," Borges lampoons an overcommitment to both empiricism and granularity (and pretensions to universalism) at the expense of usefulness and tractability. The story reads:

...In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciplines of Geography.

—Suarez Miranda, *Viajes de varones prudentes*, Libro IV, Cap. XLV, Lerida, 1658¹

Yet perhaps security analyses of the Middle East suffer from a related malady -- their maps are so minimalist as to be unreliable guides to the politics of the region, yet assert themselves to be universal enough to blanket the territory of relevant knowledge. Sadly, the dominant approaches display an excessive credulity in creating a political cartography that eschews the complex interrelatedness of personal, ideological, historical, and narrative terrain in assaying the causes and consequences of security competition between the Euphrates and the Nile. The purpose of this essay is to reconstitute an alternate mode of mapping that strikes a better balance between the

¹ Borges, J. *Collected Fictions*, trans. Andrew Hurley. Downloaded 12 March 10 from <http://www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/users/08/bblonder/phys120/docs/borges.pdf>

endless precision of deep ethnography and rigorous historiography and the smooth efficiency of parsimonious political theories.

I propose to undertake this redrawing in two stages. First, I will outline the borders of extant political theories and the applicability to the Middle East, beginning with the simplicity of realism and Walt's description of Arab balance of power politics, moving to Barnett's inclusion of Arab Nationalism as a distinct and adjacent arena of normative competition between state leaderships, and concluding by adding the legend offered by Bukovansky's constructivist account of legitimacy crises and their impact on systemic competition. I will then make my theoretical intervention, in which I suggest that previous efforts are mired in under-theorized and two-dimensional representations of complex politico-social process and become much more effective with the expansion of their representational space along additional axes. In the second stage, I venture into the Deserts in order to compare the effectiveness of the two-dimensional and n-dimensional maps against the scraps of radical empiricism to be found in historical and anthropological accounts of Iraqi politics. I believe strongly that n-dimensional mapping provides a polyvalent theoretical approach and could effectively utilize quantitative approaches to historical analysis, but given the constraints of this mode of writing, I will instead employ a somewhat looser, more contingent, and more speculative mode of evidence-gathering and argument. The goal is not to make decisive and final claims about Hashemite Iraq, nor is it an exercise in theory-building as such. Rather, it is to demonstrate the potential power of n-dimensional thinking, to point toward possible directions for future research, and sketch the outline of a new, limited, but ultimately more reliable guide to Arab politics.

The World Is Flat

Whatever its explanatory deficiencies, the simplicity and power of the neo-Realist theory of international relations is breath-taking in its scope and influence. Despite the accretions of modifications that add significant explanatory power at minimal theoretical cost (offensive v. defensive dominant systems, for example) it remains an exemplar of social scientific elegance. Stephan Walt, in The Origins of Alliances, applies this tradition to the politics of the Middle East. He updates a traditional balance of power approach by suggesting that states balance against threat -- which is a combination of capacity, intentionality, and proximity.² These considerations are presumed to far outstrip the impact of ideology and “many apparently ideological alliances are in fact a form of balancing behavior.”³ It must be noted at this point that Walt’s book was published in 1987, and so by ideology he means “[t]he belief that ideology is a powerful cause of alignment implies that virtually all Marxist governments and leftist movements are reliable Soviet assets” which is to say that the main thrust of “ideology” is along the East/West axis that dominated political thinking at the time.

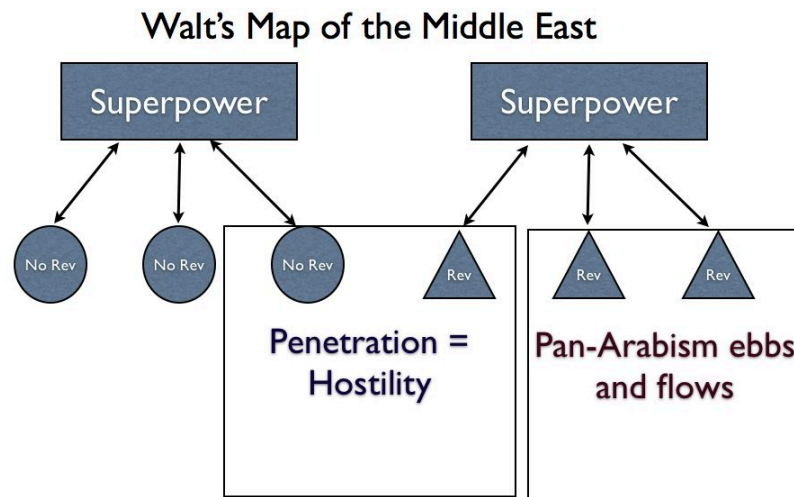
Nonetheless, it takes seriously the politics of the Middle East as such, and is focused in particular on the “youth” of the Arab states and the “intense ideological rivalries, major shifts in relative power, and significant superpower involvement” that characterized the region during the Cold War.⁴ The particular nature of the region, as he understands it, requires that penetration of the domestic system and Arab nationalist ideology be included in the consideration of alliance formation, even if only as minor

² Walt, Stephen. *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithica: Cornell University, 1987. 5.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid* 13-14

factors. But in both cases his discussion is nuanced and deserves more careful consideration, especially since his findings cry out for insight that his theory simply can not provide.



Walt considers Cold War ideology and Arab nationalism separately. He notes, rightly, the paradox that Arab revolutionary regimes often viciously suppressed their indigenous Communist parties without so much as a murmur of disapproval from the Soviet Union.⁵ Likewise, he suggests that America's Middle East allies did not seem to adhere closely to democratic or free market ideals.⁶ He does, however, note an important pattern -- the origin of a given regime is a far better predictor of its superpower leanings than is its official ideological stance:

The pattern is striking: the principal allies of the Soviet Union in the Middle East have been states whose postimperial governments were overthrown by nationalist revolutions: the principal allies of the United States in the Middle East have been the states in which the regimes created by the West remain in power. Indeed, the latter have favored the United States because they owe their positions to Western support and because leftist change poses a direct threat to their own authority. Thus the historical experiences

⁵ ibid 198

⁶ ibid 200

of both leftist and conservative regimes have conditioned their attitudes and policies toward both superpowers.⁷

This insight is then immediately lensed through the realist theoretical cartography he employs -- the foregoing is not a case of history defining interest, allies, and the appropriate methods available for the pursuit of either. It is merely that history "left superpowers and their clients with similar views on which states posed the greatest threats," and thus, in his realist conception, "balance of threat theory in fact subsumes ideological explanations."⁸ This logic also applies to his discussion of Arab nationalism -- Nasser exaggerated the impact of ideology, but failed to consider the likelihood of alliance fracture and external balancing. After some early gains, Egypt's power waned and the UAR fractured because "ideology is in fact not that powerful" and so power-based rivalry between ideologically similar states "rapidly undermine[d] the fragile alliances."⁹ As a result, "the various attempts to implement an Arab union quickly became struggles for hegemony ... In the politics of pan-Arabism, in short, nothing failed like success."¹⁰ For Walt, pan-Arabism is a tool of elites that is epiphenomenal of power relationships. Thus, the mode of propagation for pan-Arabism -- namely propaganda broadcasts and support for pan-Arab dissidents in monarchal regimes -- become simply the tools of power. Since the goal of the book is to explain alliance formation and ideology is of limited importance in doing so, the mechanism of its spread and the fact that it is often inimical to extending alliances means that Walt gives Nasserist

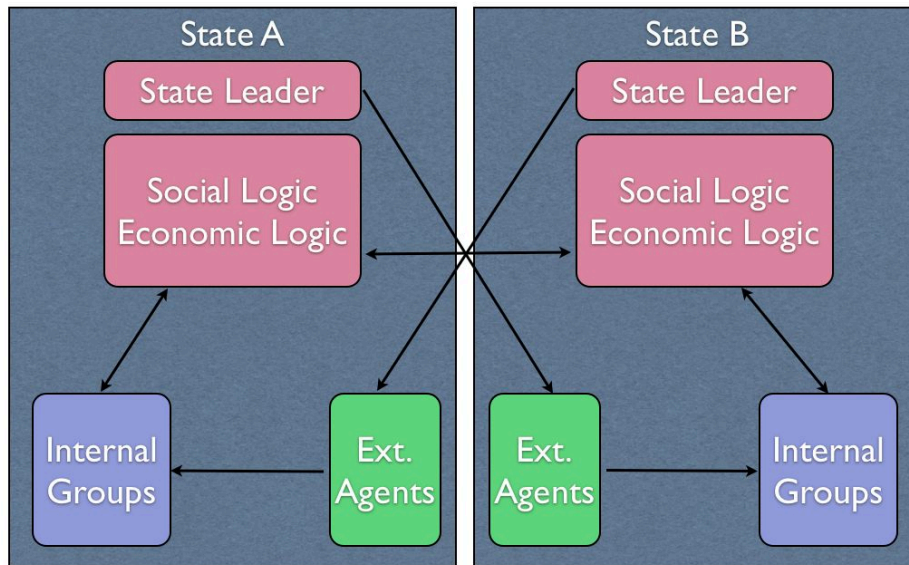
⁷ *ibid* 201

⁸ *ibid* 216

⁹ *ibid*

¹⁰ *ibid* 211

Barnett's Map of the Middle East



subversion short

shrift in his book.¹¹

Barnett's

Dialogues in Arab

Politics responds

forcefully to this

image of Arab

nationalism. In his

view, Arab politics is

rather poorly

described by Realism, which ought to predict arms races where none have occurred, misinterprets the motivations for “balancing” behavior, and gives short shrift to deeply relevant domestic considerations. Instead, he adopts a constructivist stance that argues that one of the chief concerns in Arab politics is determining exactly what that politics means and what the “rules” are which govern it -- “[t]he game of Arab politics was played by self-interested Arab leaders whose understanding of how to play the game was shaped by the underlying structures defined by Arabism and sovereignty.”¹² This double game involved competition along two axes -- it was a symbolic politics which formed “a defining element of the state’s attempt to protect its domestic situation and influence the foreign policy of other Arab states.”¹³ The purpose of doing so was because effectiveness in the symbolic arena could be “exchanged for other highly

¹¹ *ibid* 242-244

¹² Barnett. 48

¹³ *ibid*

valued objectives” such as “political capital at home and financial and military concessions from abroad.”¹⁴ Barnett develops three important and related concepts for understanding Arab political dynamics: symbolic sanctioning, symbolic competition, and symbolic entrapment. Symbolic sanctions rely on “a shared moral order”, domestic actors interested in the symbols in question, and the “technologies of communication” for Arab leaders to communicate with one another’s citizens.¹⁵ This enabled them to mobilize agents in one another’s capitols to rally, riot, and, where possible, overthrow the regime of the symbolic violator. The presence of this system of incentives compelled Arab leaders to vie for the ability to present themselves as the embodiment of the Arab nation, especially at the expense of their rivals -- yet this form of symbolic competition involves making claims and commitments that can quickly spiral as leaders one-up each other in an effort to attain the rewards of claiming to make great exertions and sacrifices in support of Arab identity without actually having to follow through. However, as events proceed, leaders become ensnared in a trap of their own making -- their competing promises have raised domestic and regional expectations of their behavior, which in turn increases the cost of backing out of their previous commitments. The need to maintain symbolic dominance then results in costly decisions -- the most famous of which is the 1967 war.¹⁶

One of the driving forces behind the salience of the symbolic competition is the need for the state to explain the rationale for its existence to its putative subjects. While Walt mentions the “youth” of the Arab states only to suggest they may not have created

¹⁴ ibid 240

¹⁵ ibid 244-245

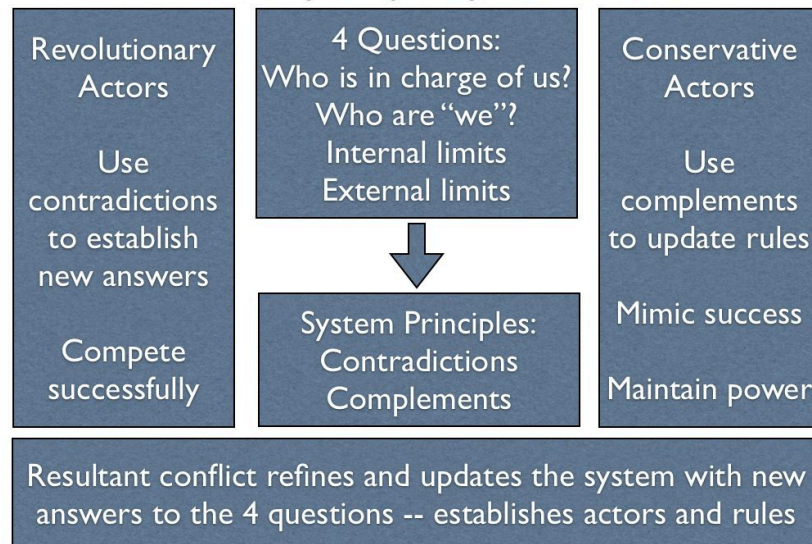
¹⁶ ibid. 248

ossified diplomatic practices, Barnett rightly notes that the state was enmeshed in both external competition between leaders and internal competition between the regime and its (potentially lethal) critics. But the nature of the competition itself was about the legitimacy of the regime, which places it squarely within Bukovansky’s analysis of revolutions in the international system.

Bukovansky inverts the map in which state behavior is a function of the particular identities of its individual members. Instead, “international political culture constitutes the terms of political legitimacy, because political legitimacy defines the relevant actors as such.”¹⁷ However, she is able to maintain a double-sidedness to her conception:

“While international legitimacy is one condition for sustaining domestic legitimacy, the reverse is also true; without domestic legitimacy a government will have difficulty mustering the resources to act as a state on the international

Bukovansky’s Map of System Conflict



scene.”¹⁸ Thus, “innovation in the political culture of the international system proceeded by means of dialectical struggle taking place both domestically and internationally

¹⁷ Bukovansky, Mlada. *Legitimacy and Power Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002. 37

¹⁸ *ibid* 212

between groups adhering to contradictory notions of legitimacy, and by the adoption and use of revolutionary conceptions of legitimacy by more conservative actors who found or manufactured complementarities between their own ideas and interests and those of revolutionary factions.”¹⁹

Interestingly, for Bukovansky these contradictions exist within a singular cultural system²⁰ that changes in response to both exogenous shocks and endogenous moves by its constitutive actors.²¹ A political culture is identified by its answers to these four questions:

1. What or who is the locus of legitimate political authority, empowered to act on behalf of the collective?
2. How is the political unit conceptualized; that is, what constitutes the collective, the “we” that the collective defines?
3. What are the internal limits of political authority, and how are they established?
4. What are the external limits of political authority, and how are they established?²²

Within the culture itself, there is room for war, conquest, replacement of hegemons, etc.

The culture’s “hegemony” (in the Gramscian sense) is function of the firmness of the rules constituting its members and their relations -- counterhegemonic threats can be suppressed by both active measures (arrests or wars) or non-recognition (eg Spruyt’s account of the Hanseatic League). But in any case -- there is a singular thing which is political culture that is the object and site of contestation.

It is the singular conception of culture that renders Bukovansky’s account unsatisfactory. While there are obviously multiple possible answers to the four

¹⁹ ibid 213

²⁰ ibid 31

²¹ ibid 48

²² ibid 24

questions she poses, they are all subsumed in a unitary field of cultural competition. This binds her to locating the source of systemic change in contradictions or complementarities within the dominant ideology -- there is quite literally no where else to turn, because every mode of political discourse has been captured by her 2-dimensional rendition of political ideology. A similar problem occurs in Barnett's map -- elites and publics are involved in a dialectic, and elites try to mobilize the opposition in competing states by appealing to the discourse of Arab Nationalism, but there is a lack of theoretical space to place elites in alignment with certain "publics" but not others, or to describe the alternative modes of identification that were common in the Arab world.

More Human Than Human

Moving from 2-dimensional maps of Middle East politics requires articulating a multi-dimensional human actor who is simultaneously a member of multiple cultures and systems, and therefore operates in multiple modalities of truth/power that inform her actions in a manner more complex than reductionist "contradictions" and "complementarities". To wit, it is not that the actors in the previous models are dehumanized, in that they act strategically in response to progressively larger sets of incentives; rather, we need actors who are more human than those humans to develop a map of sufficient detail to be a reliable guide to the Middle East. Instead of working from the system down, this approach will require build from the individual up -- asking how we establish "truth", how truth relates to power, how power constitutes itself, how matrices of power inculcate themselves in individuals, and how power takes on its own logic and becomes a system. Once we have done so, it will be possible to draw maps that place individuals within fields of power and describes the impact of their location on

their ideology while still preserving their ability to move strategically within and across fields. This will be the cartography that guides the exposition of Iraq's Hashemite era that follows.

Michel Foucault wrote about the deployment of discursive categories to define the world throughout his career, but I find that his discussion became more lucid as time went on and reached its clearest articulation in his multi-volume History of Sexuality.²³ While perhaps it may seem a bit far afield for the politics of the Middle East, the purpose of Foucault's project is "a history of the experience of sexuality, where experience is understood as the correlation between fields of knowledge, types of normativity, and forms of subjectivity in a particular culture."²⁴ These correlate to "three axes": "(1) the formation of sciences that refer to it (2) the systems of power that regulate its practice, (3) the forms within which individuals are able, are obliged, to recognize themselves as subjects of this sexuality."²⁵ To understand this process is to have a coherent model of the placement of individuals in ideological frameworks that define some aspect of their personhood -- whether it be their sexuality or their "Arabness". While we will explore the former briefly, a very similar process will occur in tracing the articulation of pan-Arabism in Iraq from Istanbul to Baghdad.

²³ "There was the problematization of madness and illness arising out of social and medical practices, and defining a certain pattern of 'normalization'; a problematization of life, language, and labor in discursive practices that conformed to certain 'epistemic' rules; and a problematization of crime and criminal behavior emerging from certain punitive practices conforming to the 'disciplinary' model. And now I would like to show how, in classical antiquity, sexual activity and sexual pleasures were problematized through practices of the self, bringing into play the criteria of an 'aesthetics of existence.'" Foucault Vol. 2 12

²⁴ Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2: The Use of Pleasure*. New York: Vintage Books, 1985. 4

²⁵ *ibid*

For Foucault, every system of morality, which is to say a system of ethical imperatives, has two elements: “codes of behavior and forms of subjectivation.” By the former, he means “a set of values and rules of action that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies such as the family (in one of its role), educational institutions, churches, and so forth.”²⁶ The latter is “the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice.”²⁷ Given this, systems of morality can be divided into code-dominant, wherein “the main emphasis is placed on the code, on its systematicity, its richness, its capacity to adjust to every possible case and to embrace every area of behavior”²⁸ and subject-dominant, where “the system of codes and rules of behavior may be rather rudimentary” and “emphasis is on the forms of relations with the self, on the methods and techniques by which he works them out, on the exercises by which he makes of himself an object to be known, and on the practices that enable him to transform his own mode of being.”²⁹

In the modern construction of “sexuality”, power was manifested through the discursive acts through which an individual defined their sexuality to herself and her confessor:

The confession, was, and still remains, the general standard governing the production of the true discourse on sex ... by virtue of the power structure immanent in it, the confessional discourse cannot come from above, as in the *ars erotica*, through the sovereign will of the master, but rather from below, as an obligatory act of speech which, under some imperious

²⁶ ibid 25

²⁷ ibid 27

²⁸ ibid 29

²⁹ ibid 30

compulsion, breaks the bonds of discretion or forgetfulness ... on the other hand, the agency of domination does not reside in the one who speaks (for it is he who is constrained), but in the one who listens and says nothing; not in the one who knows and answers, but in the one who questions and is not supposed to know. And this discourse of truth finally takes effect, not in the one who receives it, but in the one from whom it is wrested.³⁰

This is the mechanism by which truth/power operates -- the individual is inculcated with a set of norms, ideologies, or praxis by a system of authorities and are susceptible to judgment by some external actor. The individual is then subject to a system of knowledge which places them in a normative framework and is made such by their own articulations. Their identity and actions only become knowable through a classificatory schema that composes the "truth" to which they are subject -- and its ability to insinuate itself not only into the production of external incentives, but also into the internal discourse that encounters and weighs those incentives.

The coherence between the ability to offer external incentives and the creation of an internalized set of social practices is what Gramsci means by hegemony. While Bukovansky gives Gramscian models of change short shrift, they are worth revisiting in light of the Foucauldian notion of truth/power just articulated. Truth/power is articulated by Gramscian intellectuals who are "the dominant group's 'deputies' exercising the subaltern function of social hegemony and political government" which are:

1. The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.
2. The apparatus of state coercive power which "legally" enforces discipline on those groups who do not "consent" either actively or passively. This apparatus is, however, constituted for the whole of society in anticipation

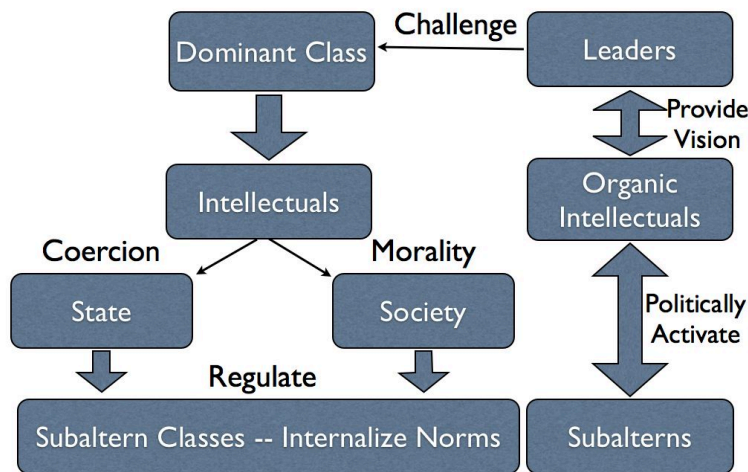
³⁰ Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978. 62-3

of moments of crisis of command and direction when spontaneous consent has failed.³¹

Bukovanski wrongly asserts that this coherent system of power is invulnerable to endogenous change.³² In fact, Gramsci writes:

At a certain point in their historical lives, social classes become detached from their traditional parties. In other words, the traditional parties in that particular organisational form, with the particular men who constitute, represent, and lead them, are no longer recognised by their class (or fraction of a class) as its expression. When such crises occur, the immediate situation becomes delicate and dangerous, because the field is open for violent solutions, for the activities of unknown forces, represented by charismatic ‘men of destiny’ ... the content the crisis of the ruling class’ hegemony, which occurs either because the ruling class has failed in some major political undertaking for which it has requested, or forcibly extracted, the consent of the broad masses (war, for example), or because the huge masses (especially of peasants and petit-bourgeois intellectual) have passed suddenly from a state of political passivity to a certain activity, and put forward demands which taken together, albeit not organically formulated, add up to a revolution.³³

Society in the Gramscian/Foucauldian Model



This unbalanced situation leads to a scramble for power, out of which a new hegemony is constructed. During this time, “the various strata of the population are not all capable of orienting themselves equally swiftly, or of reorganizing with the

³¹ Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers, 1971. 12

³² “If material base, institutions, and ideology all fit snugly to sustain hegemony, then hegemony should be self-sustaining, no strategic dissent from within should be possible, and we should only expect change via exogenous shock.” Bukovansky 49-50

³³ Gramsci 210

same rhythm.”³⁴ Setting aside for a moment the nature of the causative agent in this story, it is now necessary to consider how “strata” of the population might be organized. As a Marxist, Gramsci adopts the geologic metaphor, which is well-suited to his class-based weltanschauung. Thus, the “State” is the expression of the “dominant class”, for whom “conquest of power and achievement of a new productive world are inseparable, and that propaganda for one is propaganda for the other, and that in reality it is solely in this coincidence that the unity of the dominant class -- at once economic and political -- resides.”³⁵ Against this concept is set the “subaltern” class, which is dominated by the system, but finds limited political expression in parties and organizations.³⁶

The organization of these parties is of particular interest here. Gramsci develops a tripartite system in which a party must have “a mass element, composed of ordinary average men, whose participation takes the form of discipline and loyalty, rather than any creative spirit or organisational ability,” “the principle cohesive element, which centralizes nationally and renders effective and powerful a complex of forces which left to themselves would count for little or nothing,” and “an intermediate element, which articulates the first element with the second and maintains contact between them, not only physically but also morally and intellectually.”³⁷ Rendered in Foucauldian terms, there are competing systems of truth/power that construct conflicting praxis and normalized ethical worlds.

³⁴ *ibid*

³⁵ *ibid* 116

³⁶ *ibid* 52

³⁷ *ibid* 152-3

This map of social conflict differs substantially from Bukovansky's in that there are now multiple cultures or "systems" that can exist within the same political space. The hegemonic power is able to consistently impose its will through coercion and morality, but challenges to its hegemony do not rely on some contradiction within the system of morality as espoused. Rather, the revolutionary leader creates an alternative system of morality and discipline that operates on the (or some of the) subaltern class(es) to mobilize them to reconfigure power relationships.

Nonetheless, the fusion of the Foucauldian and Gramscian model remains somewhat awkward because of the tension between Foucault's alternative systems of morality mentioned earlier and Gramsci's single model of human action that he roots in the "first element" of politics -- "there really do exist rulers and ruled, leaders and led. The entire science and art of politics are based on this primordial, and (given certain general conditions) irreducible fact."³⁸ Even though that assertion may be correct, it would still seem, given Foucault's insights, that the concentration and articulation of power might vary widely depending on the moral system at work. For example, a code-dominant system might repose great authority in the "law-giver" who has a steadily expanding scope of authority and retains the ability to modify and interpret a complex body of rules. On the other hand, authority might be quite diffuse in subject-dominant system, where different authorities had separate competences and the individual was subject to multiple and overlapping jurisdictions. Thus, to deal effectively with competing visions of truth/power, one must be able to understand the structures at play and the demands the place on the individual -- they may mimic one another and borrow

³⁸ *ibid* 144

rhetoric and moral concepts (a'la Bukovansky) but they might also inhabit distinct moral worlds where the only overlap is the claim on the loyalties of the individual "subject."

To do so, I will apply Bourdieu's reflexive sociology to the dialectic construction of individuals and systems who form the basis of an international system. Turning away from the Marxism of Gramsci or the Nietzschean philosophy of Foucault, Bourdieu attempts to simultaneously describe social systems and the methods by which they construct the individual and also describe how strategic individuals can shape the social systems in which they find themselves a member. This approach will facilitate the creation of a map without a center -- or, rather, a poly-vocal socio-political map with multiple centers that articulate themselves in complementary, contradictory, and entirely indifferent voices. However, it is first necessary to explore Bourdieu's sociology and understand the interrelated concepts of habitus and field.

The habitus is "a structuring mechanism that operates from within agents, though it is neither strictly individual nor in itself fully determinative of conduct," rather it is a "strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations ... a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks."³⁹ These experiences are given by the field(s) in which the individual operates, allowing them to understand their complex social world and react "to the solicitations of the field in a roughly coherent and systematic manner."⁴⁰ It is not a system of logic rules

³⁹ Wacquant, Loic and Pierre Bourdieu. *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. 18

⁴⁰ *ibid*

and precepts -- it is in “cahoots with the fuzzy and the vague” because reality itself often demands a degree of pragmatic flexibility in the application of received wisdom.⁴¹ Thus, “we should refrain from searching the production of habitus for more logic than they actually contain: ‘the logic of practice is logical up to the point where to be logical would cease being practical.’”⁴²

Habitus is the rationality that enables an individual to function within a field. In contrast to a ubiquitous social hegemony or a single political culture, “a differentiated society is not a seamless totality integrated by systemic functions, a common culture, criss-crossing conflicts, or an overarching authority, but an ensemble of relatively autonomous spheres of “play” that cannot be collapsed under an overall societal logic.”⁴³ Instead, within a given society there exist differentiated fields, each of which “prescribes its particular values and possesses its own regulative principles. These principle delimit a socially structured space in which agents struggle, depending on the position they occupy in that space, either to change or preserve its boundaries.”⁴⁴ The field then has a double function -- it both structures its own power through “a relational configuration endowed with a specific gravity” and acts a “prism” which “refracts external forces according to its internal structure.”⁴⁵

Important to both these concepts is the understanding that neither is ontologically prior to the other -- that is, there is no “structure” that creates individuals and endows

⁴¹ ibid 22

⁴² ibid 22-23

⁴³ ibid 17

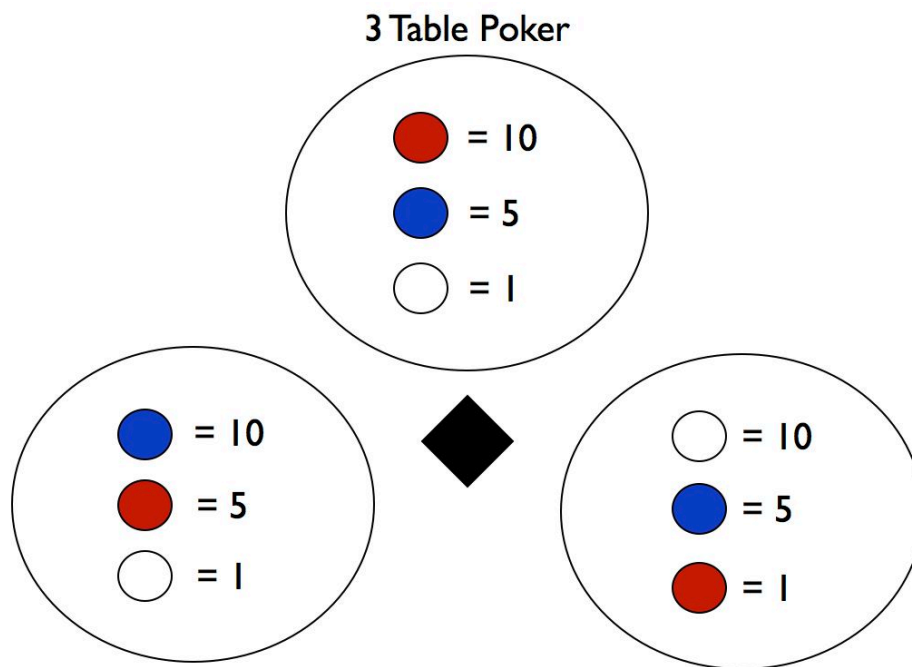
⁴⁴ ibid

⁴⁵ ibid

them with their habitus; nor are there perfectly rational actors that encounter fields free of their internalized experience. Moreover, there is never a singular point in which one says “Aha! This is what this field IS!” Rather, the observer and the actors within it are constantly making judgements about what seems to be and what it portends -- Bourdieu and Wacquant use a sports metaphor that contains a valuable insight. In any team sport, each player is constantly surveying the field and experiencing not just where everyone else is, but where they are moving and to what purpose. Further, this knowledge is rooted in habitus -- a player “in the zone” is able to react instinctively to the field because the habitus has conditioned them to combine technique, pattern, and creative to seize opportunities and exploit mistakes. In sports, the currency within the field is obvious -- better players get more points, more opportunities, more attention, etc.

But let us now turn to a second metaphor and a third essential concept of Bourdieu’s social theory. The differential ability of individuals to influence their field is based on their accumulation and deployment of capital specific to that field, according to its rules and logics. The exact nature of that capital is constructed by the field through the competing and complementary efforts of its members -- in academia, it is technical knowledge, prestigious fellowships, awards, post-docs, named professorships, professional relationships, etc.; in the military, it is combat tours, recognition for valor, physical prowess, high-ranking sponsors, assignments to elite units, etc.; and so on for each of the fields that compose the social reality of a given area. Any single individual has multiple forms of capital at their disposal -- imagine a poker table and the stacks of red, blue, and white chips in front of player. Now imagine that that individual sits at the junction of three separate tables with different exchange rates for the chips -- the player,

looking at three separate hands, must deploy her capital in such a way that she maximizes its potential to further advance her position in the table she deems important OR at the table which seems to offer the best opportunity. Further, the exchange rate itself is the object of negotiation.



In the example depicting in the graphic, the player could move fluidly between the lower-right and upper table, because the stakes are such that a win at one table results in capital that

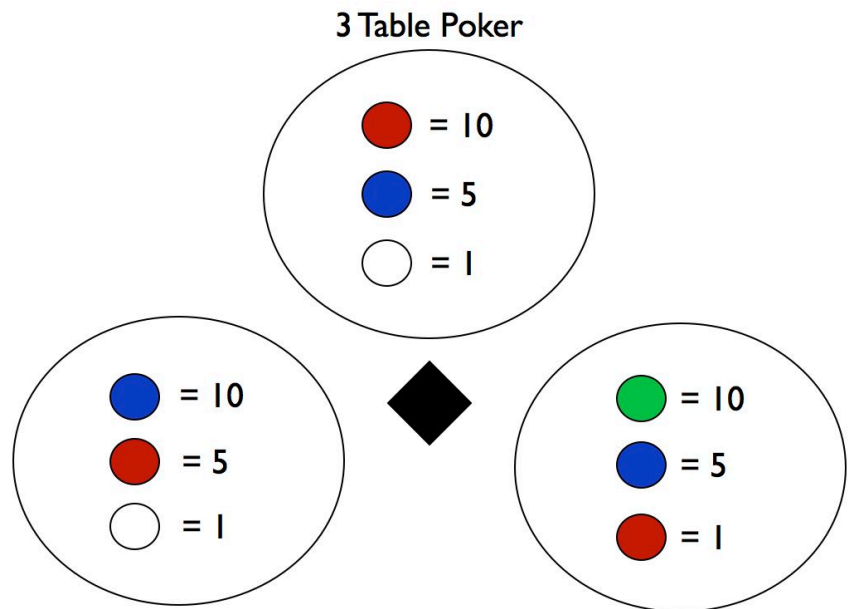
is valued highly at the other -- thus, high probability wagers on good hands will result in a steady improvement across both "fields". (This is true to a lesser extent between the two lower tables.) By contrast, the deployment of capital between the upper and lower-left table is a more even affair, meaning that limited chips must be employed extremely judiciously, since a loss of blue or red chips would be significant in either situation.

The decision of which table is the "most important" is a function of both its objective position within society and of the players interest in "winning" that particular game, which Bourdieu elucidates this idea in a passage worth quoting at length:

Thus we have stakes (enjeux) which are for the most part the product of competition between the players. We have an investment in the game,

illusio (from ludus, the game): players are taken in by the game, they oppose one another, sometimes with ferocity, only to the extent that they concur in their belief (doxa) in the game and its stakes; they grant these a recognition that escapes questioning. Players agree, by the mere fact of playing, and not by way of a “contract” that the game is worth playing, that it is “worth the candle,” and this collusion is the very basis of their competition. We also have trump cards, that is, master cards whose force changes with each game, the hierarchy of the different species of capital (economic, social, cultural, symbolic) varies across the various fields. In other words, there are cards that are valid, efficacious in all fields -- these are the fundamental species of capital -- but their relative value as trump cards is determined by each field and even by the successive states of the same field.⁴⁶

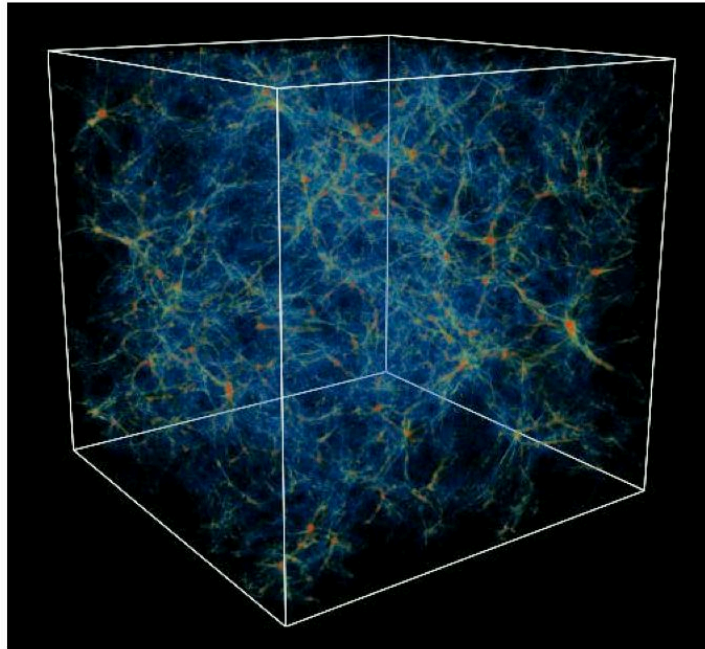
As is obvious in the earlier illustrations, a change in the unique stakes can complete alter a players approach. Now the player, based on both their interests as constructed through habitus, doxa, and objective position and also their available capital will choose



either to pursue the green chips of the lower left, or to disregard it entirely, because the “winnings” are not worthwhile. Again, it is important to emphasize the point that interests never exist prior to the game, but are constructed and reconstructed by the players positionality in overlapping fields.

⁴⁶ Wacquant and Bourdieu 98

Bourdieu's Fields



Actually, a 3-d map of the local universe
www.astro.utu.fi/~cflynn/astroll/chdm_big.jpg Downloaded 17 MAR 10

Unlike the two dimensional maps of power discussed so far -- in which the dominant ideology is imposed from the top down and contested from within by subalterns, or a single political culture contestable through its contradictions or complementarities, or a parallel symbolic realm of competition, or a single axis of realist power politics -- this cartography is n-dimensional. Centers of gravity (literally in the illustration) are depicted in red, and are interwoven with power relationships that link fields and determine relationships in multiple directions. While we are visually limited to processing reality in three dimensions, our universe and our social world obviously has strands and relationships that exist in many more.⁴⁷ In fact, Bourdieu's quantitative approach, which employs geometric data analysis (GDA), places individuals in multi-dimensional space

⁴⁷ In the physical universe there are at least 4 (3 spatial dimensions + time) and perhaps as many as 11 according to string theorists. See *The Elegant Universe* by Brian Greene or *Warped Passages* by Lisa Randall.

based on distinguishing attributes and uses descriptive statistics to discover and depict concentrations of power spatially.⁴⁸

Thus far, I have engaged in a project of theoretical sociology in which a view of the discursive creation of knowledge is enmeshed in functions of power (truth/power) which are then employed by groups or individuals to order society. I then leveraged that understanding to engage Bourdieu's sociology of fields in which individual behavior is dialectically engaged with overlapping fields of power which have unique configurations of currency that facilitate contingently constructed interests. I have thus created the "more human" actors who populate the space of the Middle East; however, it remains to be shown how these fields are political articulated into the international system.

In this regard, Bourdieu's thinking is quite helpful. The state itself may be considered in two ways -- the first is as "ensemble of administrative or bureaucratic fields (often they take the empirical form of commissions bureaus and boards) within which agents and categories of agents, governmental and non-governmental, struggle over this peculiar form of authority consisting of the power to rule via legislation, regulations, and administrative measures."⁴⁹ This is certainly an accurate characterization, and one that has been well-captured in contemporary public policy literature. The second, which is unique to Bourdieu, is the idea that the state can act as a "meta-field" which has a "specific capital, properly statist capital ... which allows the state to wield a power over the different fields and over the various forms of capital that

⁴⁸ See LeRoux, Brigitte and Henry Rouanet. 2004. *Geometric Data Analysis: From Correspondence Analysis to Structured Data Analysis*. AH Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

⁴⁹ Wacquant and Bourdieu 111

circulate within them.”⁵⁰ This is the key linkage between the sociological understanding of fields and the normative competition I seek to describe in the Arab world: “This kind of meta-capital capable of exercising a power over other species of power, and particularly over their rate of exchange (and thereby the balance of power between their respective holders), defines the specific power of the state.”⁵¹ Thus, much like Borges’ map, the state overlays the territory and is able to illustrate the topography of power underneath according to the competitive logic that defines its field.

The control and direction of this exchange function was at crux of the Gramscian social crisis that wracked the Middle East in the post-Ottoman era. The hegemony of the Ottomans failed, allowing multiple fields in the region to enter into open competition over the contours of the international system. Bukovansky’s four questions remain relevant, but must be reformed in the language of Bourdieu: (1) what is the state? (2) over which fields does the state have jurisdiction? (3) how does the state control the internal exchange of capital between fields? (4) how is capital accumulated and deployed internationally? In an n-dimensional world, there is no single ideological language available to resolve these questions, nor does a particular objective distribution of power within fields yield predictions as to the eventual outcome. Rather, it requires the student of Arab politics to engage with multiple fields and the ideologies they produced, to explore their interactions with each other, and to connect actions within the statist field both internally and externally to the habitus, doxa, and *illusio* of the individuals who undertook them. This is the project of the following section.

⁵⁰ Wacquant and Bourdieu 114

⁵¹ *ibid*

The Baghdad Pact

In Iraq there is still -- and I say this with a heart full of sorrow -- no Iraqi people but unimaginable masses of human beings, devoid of any patriotic idea, imbued with religious traditions and absurdities, connected by no common tie, giving ear to evil, prone to anarchy, and perpetually ready to rise against any government whatsoever. Out of these masses we want to fashion a people which we would train, educate, and refine ...

-King Faisal I⁵²

The strictly political struggles whose stake is power over the state, and, at one and the same time, over the rules and procedures that contribute to determining the relations of power within the field of power and controlling their manipulation, must not cause us to forget the subterranean struggles constantly being played out in the apparent anarchy of reproduction strategies, as well as in the collective struggles among corps, interest groups, parties, etc., which... , profoundly and durably affect the relations of power within the field of power and contain the true principle of stances in political struggles for power over the state.

-Pierre Bourdieu⁵³

Faisal rightly understood that he was sitting athwart a state spidered by ideological fissures -- his rule was beset by tribal rebellion, military unrest, and roiling parliamentary politics that figured and reconfigured the various forms of identity that would form Iraqi politics. Eventually, the pressures built through the compromises made to sustain the Hashemite monarchy burst forth, swallowing the entire royal family and their retainers in a single spasm of violence on July 14, 1958. This section explores the tremors that shook the Hashemite regime during its existence, focusing in particular on the decision that sealed its fate -- the signing of the Baghdad Pact in 1955.

The Baghdad Pact was the name given to an Iraqi-led initiative to create align Middle Eastern collective security organizations with Western anti-Soviet treaty

⁵² Batatu, Hanna. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq*. London: Saqi, 1978. 25

⁵³ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989. 388

organizations. This had been an abiding concern of American Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, who tried and failed to convince Egypt to help found the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO). Finding a distinct lack of enthusiasm in Egypt, the West looked further north and continued its encirclement of the USSR with a concept called the Northern Tier, which was “a forward defence line up against Russia’s borders composed of non-Arab states -- Turkey, Iran, Pakistan -- with the possible addition of Iraq as a junior partner.”⁵⁴ The Iraqi Prime Minister, Nuri as-Said, sensed an opportunity and rearticulated the initiative as a Middle Eastern initiative with Iraq at its center. According to the American Ambassador to Iraq, Waldemar J. Gallman, Nuri believed that his initiative was more or less mainstream, and akin to the bilateral security arrangements that already existed between Britain and Jordan or American and Saudi Arabia.⁵⁵ Thus, he began talks with Turkey and notified Egypt of his intentions.

Over initial Egyptian objections, Nuri signed the Baghdad Pact on February 24, 1955. Contra Iraqi expectations, the pact was met with vociferous opposition from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Syria officers threatened a coup if the government joined the organization, and Egypt began region-wide radio broadcasts accusing Nuri of being a tool of the West. Lebanon adopted a neutral pose, leaving only Jordan as the only remaining potential supporter. However, when King Hussein, the Jordanian monarch, hinted that he might consider joining the pact, he was quickly faced with such massive riots that he was forced to dismiss two consecutive governments, impose martial law, and fire the legendary British commander of his Army, John Glubb. Iraq

⁵⁴ Seale, Patrick. *The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Post-War Arab Politics 1945-1958*. Londong: IB Tauris & Co Ltd, 1986. 191

⁵⁵ Gallman, Waldemar. *Iraq Under General Nuri: My Recollections of Nuri al-said, 1954-1958*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964. 29

was isolated in the Arab world, and 3 years later a military coup deposed the regime, withdrew Iraq's membership in the organization, and closed the doors on the Baghdad Pact's offices forever.

Exploring the Baghdad Pact facilitates a useful comparison between the theories described above. It was hugely controversial within Iraq and across the region, and was important enough to elicit analysis by both Walt and Barnett, who provide distinct answers to the question: why did Iraq choose to participate in a regional security arrangement with Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom? Moreover, why did this arrangement lead to a vocal regional debate over Iraq's commitment to the Arab cause? After unpacking the rationales they provide, the section will then utilize the Bourdieuzian approach outlined above to provide alternate explanations. This will necessitate a deeper reading of Iraq's history and an exploration of the evolution of the ideologies or fields that motivated the signing of the agreement. Of course, it is a foregone conclusion that the larger maps employed by the latter theories will give a more detailed answer to the question -- so the final question will be not "is this approach more accurate?" but rather "is it more useful?" Specifically, each rationale will be tested in relation to the subsequent changes that occurred in the Qasim regime.

Lyin', the Tigris, and Bears!

Walt's discussion of the Baghdad Pact is remarkably succinct -- the Pact was an effort by the West to establish a treaty alliance along the USSR's southern border. However, because "Iraq was Egypt's major Arab rival after World War II" the attempt to bring the Arab world into a Western-led collective security arrangement quickly became

a contest between these two regional powers.⁵⁶ If Iraq won, it would assume a position of prominence as the West's chief regional ally through its dominance of the Pact, which "threatened to leave Egypt isolated within the Arab world."⁵⁷ This perception was shared by Iraq's neighbors, and "because Syria and Saudi Arabia feared Iraqi ambitions (and because Western influence was increasingly unpopular), they chose to forgo the Baghdad Pact in favor of an all-Arab alliance with Egypt."⁵⁸ These motives were compounded by "the Saudi's traditional rivalry with the Hashemites in Iraq, a feud with Great Britain ... and a desire to defuse revolutionary sentiment in Saudi Arabia itself."⁵⁹ Syria, on the other hand, based its decision on the "broad appeal" of "pan-Arab policy," "the lingering suspicion that Iraq still harbored revisionist aims," and "the triumph of a leftist coalition opposed to close ties with the West." This more aggressive opposition was supported by the decision of Lebanon and Jordan to remain neutral -- a wise course, since when King Hussein of Jordan indicated support, he "prompted a vicious Egyptian propaganda campaign" that succeeded in sparking significant urban riots that forced Hussein to reconsider.⁶⁰

Compounding this division between Egypt and Iraq was the differential threat they faced from the USSR. While regional dynamics take precedence, the threats posed by the superpowers are, in Walt's view, mediated by geography:

⁵⁶ Walt 54

⁵⁷ Walt 59

⁵⁸ Walt 66

⁵⁹ Walt 60

⁶⁰ *ibid*

“Because states in close proximity tend to experience more frequent conflicts of interest, and because the ability to harm others declines with distance, the superior capabilities of either superpower may seem less threatening simply because the superpowers are further away.

The difference in Egyptian and Iraqi perceptions of the Soviet Union in the 1950s illustrates this tendency nicely. Premier Nuri al-Said of Iraq justified signing the Baghdad Pact by saying, “[Iraq’s] borders are very close to the [Soviet] Caucasus, ... only some 300 or 400 miles [away].” By contrast, Nasser belittled the Soviet threat by pointing out that “the Soviet Union is more than 1000 miles away and we’ve never had any trouble from them.”⁶¹

However, upon reflection, the credulity given to Said’s rationale seems unwarranted. While the border of the Soviet Union might have been only 300 miles from Iraq, traversing that distance would not be a trivial matter for Soviet forces. Setting aside the idea that they would have to traverse two formidable mountain ranges in order to reach Iraq, one can’t help but notice that the intervening distance was occupied by two significant Western clients -- Turkey and Iran. It would seem that, from a military standpoint, Iraq had absolutely nothing to gain from engaging in a formal alliance, since any Soviet advance would very likely be opposed by the US and the UK as they fought to preserve their significant strategic interests in terms of both access to oil and international prestige. One then assumes that, in the event of a Soviet drive to the heart of the Middle East, Iraq would have plenty of time to appeal to the West for assistance. Therefore, the appropriate realist solution for Iraq vis a vis the Soviets would be buck-passing and not band-wagging, especially since there had never been a Russian incursion into Iraq’s territory at any point during its history. The specter of T-54s along

⁶¹ Walt 162-3

the Tigris was absolutely ludicrous given historical, geographic, political, and military reality.

As it happens, this was very similar to the evaluation of the American intelligence community at the time, which wrote:

Iraqi cooperation in the regional defense sphere will continue to be influenced by a number of motives other than that of developing an effective defense arrangement. Although Iraq's signature of a defense agreement with Turkey reflected some appreciation of the Soviet military threat, **it was largely motivated by such collateral factors** as: (a) the desire to replace the old Anglo-Iraqi Treaty with an arrangement more acceptable to nationalist sentiment; (b) the wish to promote Syro-Iraqi union; (c) the recognition that some positive step toward area defense was necessary to obtain further US military aid; (d) the wish to increase Iraq's prestige among the Arab states at Egypt's expense; and (e) the weight of Turkish insistence.⁶²

So if super-power threats don't explain Iraq's orientation, Walt's realist argument is left only with its regional component. However, here too the actions and rationales of the actors becomes quite odd. If there was no credible threat of Soviet invasion of Western clients outside of general global conflict,⁶³ then balancing one another should have been the chief concern of regional actors. This makes the lop-sided outcome of the Baghdad Pact very strange, indeed. While Iraq's neighbors all had perfectly sound realist reasons to be concerned about an expansion of its relative power, they had equally good, if not better, reasons to be concerned about Nasser. As the Arab nationalist leader of the region's largest state, Nasser aggressively advocated a

⁶² (NIE 30-55) (emphasis added)

⁶³ According to contemporary CIA documents, the Soviet Navy was "concentrated on light cruisers, destroyers, and submarines" not on major amphibious operations (33), and the Soviet Army had its best forces focused on Europe (29). While they did retain a substantial airborne capability (estimated at 100,000 soldiers), the logistics of resupplying an opposed airhead through NATO airspace are formidable, to say the least. National Intelligence Estimate 11-4-57, "Main Trends in Soviet Capabilities and Policies 1957-1962." November 12, 1957. www.foia.cia.gov Downloaded April 26, 2010.

revisionist approach to Middle East politics, broadcast propaganda throughout the region, and actively aided the subversion of neighboring regimes. If an Arab politics with Iraq in the lead of a powerful alliance against Egypt would lead to a dangerous imbalance of power, then surely an Egyptian-led politics would have the same effect. The states should have initially moved towards Egypt, but then begun to defect once they were able to demand greater concessions from a flailing Iraq. That they did not do so until 1957, with a royalist alignment between Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iraq, is interesting.

The remaining causal mechanism that would allow Walt to explain the Baghdad Pact and its outcome is ideological -- Nasser was able to threaten neighboring regimes through implicit and explicit ideological appeals, the regimes themselves took ideological positions that heavily skewed the balance of power in the region, and the dangers of ideological affinity with the West were enough to overwhelm other distinctions between "royal" and "revolutionary" regimes. Walt says as much in his discussion of Saudi and Syrian alignment against Iraq -- the desire to "defuse revolutionary conflict" and the "broad appeal" of Nasserism both rely on the transmutation of ideas and rhetoric into some form of power that compels actors in international politics. It is unfortunate that Walt claims that "ideology is an important cause of alliance formation when states face no significant external threats, when threats are equally distributed, or when [Cold War] ideological factors are part of the threat itself," since he also claims that Iraq was responding to a unique geographical threat, that Arab states were balancing against Iraqi hegemony, and that both Western-

supported and Nasserist states refused to sign on.⁶⁴ Ideology was important to the Baghdad Pact negotiations in ways that Walt's realism cannot capture, and so we turn to Barnett for an implementation of his theorization of an additional ideological plane of competition.

The importance of Barnett's contribution is that it elevates ideological considerations to equal standing with traditional realistic metrics while simultaneously acknowledging their relative weights in specific circumstances might differ considerably.⁶⁵ In terms of the Baghdad pact, Barnett's story about Nuri's initial considerations is similar, and yet broader, than Walt's. He claims that Nuri "steadfastly sought a strategic tie to the West because of the conviction that such an alignment and its accompanying assistance were necessary for domestic stability, building a more powerful army, discouraging a potential encroachment by the Soviets to the north, and confronting Israel."⁶⁶ Again, the specter of Soviet invasion is raised, and, tellingly, Barnett cites the same two sources as Walt -- Elie Podeh's impressive The Quest for Hegemony in the Arab World and Patrick Seale's Struggle for Syria. Both are diplomatic histories of the region, with Podeh's concentrating specifically on the Baghdad Pact and Seale's taking a longer view of the strategic importance of Syria to dominance in the Middle East. It is in Seale's text that one discovers the origins of the mileage method in assessing the Soviet threat -- it is the recollection of an Egyptian diplomat who initially discussed the Pact with Nuri in 1954. This doesn't necessarily

⁶⁴ Walt 217

⁶⁵ "Far from suggesting the primacy of identity and the irrelevance of material forces, I recognize that both are important explanatory variables, though with different causal weight at different historical moments." Barnett in Katzenstein 446

⁶⁶ Barnett 109

mean that Nuri was dissembling, although that wouldn't be uncharacteristic. It does, however, mean that the other motivations ought to be weighted more heavily, especially given the unlikelihood of a Soviet invasion of the Middle East that wouldn't trigger a massive Western response.

In this telling, the central arena of conflict was ideological -- Nuri had a vision of a Western-oriented Arab world that would modernize its military, economic, and political life with the assistance of the West and create a unified Arab world out of the disparate elites that populated the political landscape; Nasser's vision was quite different, focusing on a regionally united and internationally neutral orientation that was more concerned with "the idea of the British and French coming back through the rear window (now together with their American friends) after being shown the front door."⁶⁷ Thus, the subsequent conflict between Iraq and Egypt was understood in these symbolic and ideological terms, and Egypt was successful because Nasser "forged a series of alliances with some Arab states that concurred with Nasser's brand of Arabism (Syria) and others that did not (Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia), and the latter states chose to ally themselves with Nasser's vision of regional life rather than risk a decline in regional standing or a domestic backlash."⁶⁸ The most dangerous tools Nasser had at his disposal were his regional standing and radio broadcasts, not his ability to menace other states with his armies and bombers, and thus it was his "normative vision and

⁶⁷ Khalidi, Rashid. *Sowing Chaos: The Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2009. 181

⁶⁸ Barnett, Michael. "Identity and Alliances in the Middle East," in Katzenstein, Peter, ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identities in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. 420

ability to portray Iraq in a particular manner, not his military, that caused this alliance with Egypt and against Iraq.”⁶⁹

Barnett identifies five key findings from his analysis of the Baghdad Pact. The first, and most important is, that “the Arab nation’s definition of threat was directly linked to the Arab identity ... In short, the definition of intent, of who is considered friend and foe, is better determined by the politics of identity than by the logic of anarchy.”⁷⁰ Second, he finds that the Pact itself “represented a challenge not to the balance of power per se but to Arab nationalism and its emerging and contested norms ... Simply put, the conflict was about the norms that were to govern their shared identity.”⁷¹ Third, he notes that the conflict was undertaken through “symbols and images,” specifically those that demonstrate fidelity to the idea of the Arab nation.⁷² Fourth, the “power of these norms” was demonstrated “by the individual and collective response of the Arab states.”⁷³ Finally, the Pact “reestablished the parameters of Arab politics as it inaugurated the radical Arab agenda. That is, its causal consequence is not tied to the balance of power but to a change in the desired regional order.”⁷⁴

The Baghdad Pact is a nearly perfect example of the earlier depiction of Barnett’s theory -- competing states mobilized one another’s populations on the basis of normative considerations. Populations within the states then made demands that

⁶⁹ *ibid*

⁷⁰ *ibid* 421

⁷¹ *ibid*

⁷² *ibid*

⁷³ *ibid* 422

⁷⁴ Barnett 16 This idea is also expressed in the article that appears in Katzenstein, but is less clear than the discussion in his book.

constrained their leaders actions, so the various regimes responded to explicit (Jordan) or implicit (Saudi Arabia) threats to their own stability. The challenge undertaken by Nasser and Nuri, with different degrees of success, was to convince substate actors across the region that their vision for the Arab world was the correct one. This was a function of the two men's orientation toward the West -- while Nasser's over-riding concern was to regain control of the Suez canal and prevent the reintroduction of Western influence, "[f]or Nuri, as an Arab nationalist, there was nothing odd about the notion of cooperation with the West, which he considered a natural, if not inevitable, requisite."⁷⁵ This is an absolutely correct, yet incomplete, interpretation of the events surrounding the Pact.⁷⁶ For although Barnett explicitly states that understanding "the social construction of state identity, however, requires examining not only interstate interactions but also state-society relations,"⁷⁷ he does not provide the theoretical tools to do so -- much as Podeh's and Seale's diplomatic histories concentrate on the actions of state leaders, their envoys, and major actors that produce an archival record, Barnett fails to offer an analysis of the subaltern classes whose choice allegiances were the decisive factor in the subsequent normative conflict.⁷⁸ Thus, the reader is blind to the

⁷⁵ Podeh, Elie. *The Quest for Hegemony in the Arab World: The Struggle over the Baghdad Pact*. New York: E.J. Brill, 1995. 33

⁷⁶ In many ways, this theoretical approach is closely akin to Bukovansky's in that contradictions within the "dominant" ideology (Arab nationalism) are mobilized by competing actors. The winner (Nasser) is then able to orient both his state and the larger region around his new ideological approach until it, too, is challenged. As a thumbnail sketch of Arab politics, this is not too inaccurate. However, as will be shown below, a more elegant solution allows for a multiplicity of ideological discourses and competitions.

⁷⁷ Barnett in Katzenstein 422

⁷⁸ Podeh relies almost exclusively on British and American diplomatic archives, while Seale utilizes more Arabic language archives and conducts numerous interviews with Middle Eastern elites.

domestic considerations that drove Nuri's decision-making and the risk calculus of the regimes who rejected his vision.

Speaking of Subalterns

It is common in political science to create analytical categories that encompass everything that is not the "state,"⁷⁹ and this unfortunate tendency has found its way into contemporary discussions of Middle Eastern politics through an ideal category called "the Arab street." In this section, I contend that this homogenizing discourse does a poor job of mapping the complexity of Arab political configurations. To extend the metaphor, the "Arab street" is much more like the infrastructure of New York City -- with myriad intersecting modes of transport, logics, rules, bypasses, transfers and praxis. One can no more navigate Arab politics with a singular conception of "society" than one could maneuver around the five boroughs with a map that showed only interstates. The purpose in this section is to define the cartography of waterways, air traffic patterns, subways, docks, bridges, and alleys that render sensible the political infrastructure employed by millions in their daily determinations of loyalty, action, protest, and truth.

As I emphasized in the introduction, this exercise is necessarily contingent and speculative. A full Bourdieuzian analysis requires both deep ethnography and extensive quantitative work. This paper is neither. Rather, it suggests the texture such analysis could take in a more advanced form. Ideally, such a project would involve the employment of archival data on a variety of characteristics of members in each of the enumerated fields, which would then be subject to Geometric Data Analysis (a form of Principle Component Analysis) that would facilitate a description of the interconnected

⁷⁹ Acemoglu and Robinson; Migdal; Boix; Putnam.

geographies of the fields, as well as performing a test on the suitability of the categorization described below. Further ethnographic techniques would entail analyzing various forms of speech acts and economic undertakings that allow the fields to speak in their own register and articulate their own aims. This would provide a valuable check on the quantitative analysis and demonstrate their relevance to their putative members. Finally, this analysis would be explicitly transnational, allowing fields of power to operate across the state lines that seem to constrain the approaches described in the previous section. Instead of these two approaches, I will rely on secondary sources from a variety of literatures and my own knowledge of Iraqi society and politics to describe fields of power that seem plausible.

To differentiate between a “field” and some subset of Iraqis with shared interests it is essential to return to Bourdieu’s criteria I discuss above. A field has a unique configuration of currency, doxa, illusio, and habitus. That is to say, a field will define the logics for advancement, the rewards for accumulating currency, and the methods by which one “plays.” Individuals in the fields will find themselves concentrated around centers of gravity, but will also be subject to enticements from competing fields that offer alternate paths and configurations. Sitting atop these fields is state, which sets the exchange rate between currencies and elevates some sets of elites over others -- this function, of course, is continuously contested by its participants and so mustn’t be taken as a fixed and reliable function. Since this is a preliminary version of a larger project, I will demonstrate the utility of this mode of analysis in reference to four of the most obvious fields, while simultaneously acknowledging that there may be other fields that will emerge in subsequent research. Moreover, while this paper will discuss the fields

and their internal logics, it will be much more cursory than a full Bourdieuzian analysis would require. With those caveats in mind, let us turn to the four most significant fields in Iraq during the 1950s: the military, the tribes, the Shi'a, and the state.

Field(s) of Dreams

The Nomod War Machine

In his classic treatise on Arabic history, Ibn Khaldun identified a three stage cycle of moral and social reconstitution -- first, marauding tribesmen would conquer the cities; second, they would rule the cities and become sedentary; third, they would fall into moral decline and be ripe for replacement by a new set of tribesmen.⁸⁰ In this model, the forces of the state were little more than the residual elements of tribal power, spiritually and qualitatively inferior to their rural counterparts. The power of the society resided in its rural element, and rural standards of conduct minted the societies symbolic currency and articulated the symbolically worthwhile methods of obtaining wealth and power. As Deleuze and Guattari discuss, the basis of authority within the nomod war machine is rhizomatic, meaning that authority is diffuse in the sense that it is continuously contested from within the tribe, rather than set through hierarchically ordered bureaucratic procedures.⁸¹

The late Ottoman era reconfigured this relationship by, quite literally, remapping it. The Tanzimat reforms, under the governorship of Midhat Pasha in Baghdad, surveyed and parceled out arable land to the tribal leadership while simultaneously making them responsible for tax collection. This single move, as predicted by Deleuze, organized

⁸⁰ Khaldun, Ibn. Franz Rosenthal, trans. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

⁸¹ Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. Brian Massumi, trans. *a thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

and transformed the rhizomatic tribal structure, with a constantly shifting leadership, undifferentiated military and economic roles, and nomadic culture, into an arboreal relationship of state-landlord-tenant. Unlike tribal leadership, which could be transferred to a more effective leader in the event of widespread dissatisfaction, the landlord derived his power from the state and was safe from a tribal compulsion to alienate his title. Moreover, tribal wealth was now generated from crop cultivation, rather than pastoralism and raiding. These newly-created farmers began looking for a new moral basis for their existence, and began converting en masse to Shi'ism, which, unlike the Sunnism of their nomadic counterparts, identifies authoritative figures descending from the prophet who are to be objects of emulation for the faithful.

In the 1890s, the future nucleus of Iraq's military was being trained in the Ottoman military academies, which were run by a Prussian officer named Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz. Originally founded to enable the Ottoman Army to employ modern battlefield technologies, it also inculcated its students with a belief that modern techniques of organization, conscription, and the imposition of discipline across the culture were prerequisites for the development of "the nation."⁸²

After independence, the Iraqi officer corps began pursuing these policies within Iraq. At each point when the state called upon its officers to suppress challenges to its authority, the Army demanded policies that expanded its political and coercive currencies. Which is to say, the Army demanded, and got, conscription after the tribal revolts in the 1930s and became the power behind the throne until the Second World War. Unfortunately for the Army, when it overstepped its bounds in 1941, deposed the

⁸² Simon, Reeve "The Education of an Iraqi Ottoman Military Officer" in Khalidi, Anderson, Muslih, and Simon eds. The Origins of Arab Nationalism. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.

king, and aligned itself with Nazis, it quickly discovered the domestic consequences of international missteps. The British took Baghdad after a short campaign and restored the monarchy in 1942.

Nonetheless, the Army remained a critical field in Iraqi politics, both in its ability to make political demands and as a site of contestation for political entrepreneurs. As became evident in the Qasim regime (1958-63), the Iraqi Communist Party made considerably inroads into the enlisted ranks and even had adherents amongst a few of the officers. However, many junior officers joined the ranks of the Free Officers movement, a clandestine organization modeled on the Egyptian movement of the same name. Established by two majors in the mid-1950s, it quickly expanded to include a bevy of colonels and a single general -- Abd al-Karim Qasim, who became the ruler of Iraq after the coup in 1958.

Nuri was aware of the importance of keeping the Army loyal, but misunderstood the institution as a unitary actor, rather than a contested field. Thus, he confided in the American ambassador to Iraq, Waldemar Gallman, that he was sure of the Army's loyalty due to his ability to procure military aid from the West. Thus, one purpose of signing the Baghdad Pact was to ensure the flow of arms and thus the loyalty of the officer corps. However, unfortunately for Nuri, he underestimated the rhizomatic nature of his nomad war machine, which turned on its master and destroyed him.

The Quest of the Tribes

Throughout much of Iraq's history, tribal fields possessed a preponderance of economic, military, and cultural capital. The tribe was organized around clans, sub-clans, and households. While leadership at each level was generally the prerogative of

the most powerful sub-element, the specific individual was selected rhizomatically, which is to say, he was chosen by the acclaim of his peers and retained his position through continuous demonstrations of his competence. A weak leader, clan, or house would be brutally replaced if they failed to provide sufficient resources to the tribe as a whole.

These resources were gathered through raiding, taxing travelers, management of lands, and ownership of mercantile enterprises. However, the Tanzimat reforms began fundamentally altering the role of tribal leadership in the late Ottoman era. By making the tribal leadership “owners” of land and then requiring them to return taxes to Baghdad, tribesmen became tenants. Nonetheless, old loyalties persisted, and tribal uprisings were a recurring fact of Iraqi politics until the 1930s, when General Bakr Sidqi ruthlessly crushed a series of rebellions in the northern provinces and the mid-Euphrates.

Thereafter, the primary function of the Arab tribes was mercantile. Tribal organizations owned a great deal of land, and, in keeping with expectations of contemporary political science, tended to be a conservative element focused on the retention of their privilege at the cost of land reform and greater opportunities for agricultural workers. In effect, this meant that the rural poor in Iraq could no longer hope to advance within the structure of the tribe, making their tribal currency relatively worthless, even as tribal leadership remained valuable.

This dynamic was further reinforced by the growing urbanization of the Iraqi population, which flocked to the vast slums of western Baghdad throughout the 20th

century. Within the cities, tribal identity persisted, but was less salient than guild affiliation for most producers.

The exception to this trend was tribal organization amongst the Kurds. While it is important not to essentialize these identities (Gen. Sidqi himself was Kurdish), it is nevertheless true that the state struggled to penetrate the mountains of northern Iraq. Thus, land ownership and military capability remained typical of Kurdish tribal organizations (and, in fact, manifested themselves during fighting in both Mosul and Kirkuk in 1959.)

While Nuri actively sought to incorporate tribal leadership into his electorate, he was again blinded by his elite view of politics. The Iraq Communist Party made significant inroads into the rural population throughout the 40s and 50s, and while the formal military capability had been reduced, it remained the case that Nuri felt compelled to retain a significant state military capacity to hedge against the potential internal threat the tribesmen represented. The ineffectiveness of his payoff strategy toward the tribes is readily evident in the fact that tribal currency was captured by a monopoly on the top, leaving the majority of tribesmen disaffected.

A Crisis of Faith

It is taken for granted nowadays that Iraq is a “Shi’a” state and that its politics is, by necessity, dominated by its Shi’a identity. Moreover, this essence is projected into the past, so that the Shi’a were always the great Shi’a underclass, dominated for centuries by a Sunni elite. This story informs a great deal of thinking about Iraq, and, as it happens, is also completely inaccurate. The rise and fall of the field of Shi’ism, and its relative unimportance in the 1950s is instructive from both a historical standpoint and in

the manner in which it reveals the autonomy of individuals to withdraw and redeploy currencies according to the logic of their habitus.

While it is true that the holiest sites in Shi'ism are in Iraq, including the shrines of the great Imams in Najaf and Samarra and the holy battlefield of Karbala, mass conversion to Shi'ism in Iraq did not occur until the late-19th and early-20th centuries. For most of its history, Najaf was a pilgrimage site, but the great center of Shi'a thought was located at Qom, in Iran. However, as tribesmen became tenants as a result of the Tanzimat reforms, they became the objects of Shi'a missionary activity. Traveling sayyids, who were certified to perform marriages and adjudicate disputes, went from village to village offering their services.⁸³ As they did so, the converted increasing portions of the rural population, until, by 1913, the majority of Iraqis were Shi'a.⁸⁴

This growing population of Shia meant that, due to the requirement that Shi'a follow a living Ayatollah and give alms to him to disburse, centers of Shi'a religious education grew rapidly. Or, put differently, the expanding symbolic currency of Shi'ism was translated into economic currency. This newfound social and economic wherewithal was used by the Shi'a clerical leadership to found educational institutions, expand existing facilities, and begin accreting political currency. Unfortunately for them, they chose to deploy that political currency in support of the tribal rebellions of the 1930s. This was a tragic decision that resulted in a state crackdown on the Shi'a clergy and suppression of Shi'a political activity.

⁸³ The personage of the sayyid became so deeply ingrained in Iraqi culture that the term of address in the Iraqi Army, which means "sir" is sayyidee, lit. "my sayyid."

⁸⁴ Nakash, Yitzhak. *The Shi'is of Iraq*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. 25

As a result of this suppression, the Shi'a religious hierarchy adopted a philosophy of political quietism for the ensuing generation. Political matters were left to politicians, and the Shi'a field developed a doxa that focused it entirely on symbolic and economic currency. While this was a relatively successful strategy for the protection of the clergy, it did nothing to advance the interests of the poor rural and urban Shi'a masses. In keeping with Bourdieuzian expectations, these masses began to withdraw their limited resources from the Shi'a field and look for political alternatives. Thus, by 1957, the Ashura pilgrimages were at an all time low, the endowments were running low, and a new generation of young Shi'a theoreticians emerged to rearticulate political Shi'ism.⁸⁵

However, at the moment of the signing of the Baghdad Pact, political Shi'ism seemed like a spent force and the state was even encroaching on its traditional educational function. Even though it had little impact on the Pact itself, it remains a useful example of currency fleeing a field due to a doxa that failed to appeal to the habitus of a majority of its members.

The Janus State

The Bourdieuzian conception of the state is one of the trickiest to handle both theoretically and empirically. On the one hand, there is an obvious "court politics" that contains its own doxa, ludus, and habitus. Historically speaking one could imagine Chinese mandarins, palace intrigue at the Versailles, or Huey Long's Louisiana. In the contemporary world, the internal dynamics of autocratic regimes are well-studied, and even in America, there exists a class of professional politicians, not to speak of the

⁸⁵ It was in this era that the greatest Iraqi Shi'a theologian of the 20th century, Mohammed Baqir Sadr, emerged and contributed to the founding of Da'wa, an explicitly Shi'a political organization modeled on the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The current Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, is the head of the Da'wa Party.

hundreds of thousands of bureaucrats employed at the local, state, and national levels. This is what Bourdieu means in terms of the state AS a field.

In Iraq, the process of consolidation by the monarchy after being returned to power by the British was an on-going and contested process. Nuri found himself rising steadily through the state field, as he was called upon to serve as Prime Minister repeatedly, would do so, and then would resign when the king prevented him from pursuing his preferred policies. The new prime minister would struggle to manage the complexities of Iraqi politics, so Nuri would be called in and the process would begin anew. By 1955, Nuri had successfully managed to have a rubber-stamp parliament elected through limiting candidacies and rigging the vote, so the field of Iraq state politics was tightly controlled from the top -- Nuri's patrons advanced and his opponents were marginalized, arrested, or worse. Because Nuri's position in the state field was so dominant, he was able to push through the Baghdad Pact with virtually no parliamentary opposition.

But the Bourdieuzian conception of the state contains a second element. The state, in addition to being a field, arbitrates between fields. Thus, while the military may have a particular currency that is the object and means of competition within the military field, it achieves political realization through the state by enabling officers to transform their military currency into, for example, economic opportunities. Alternatively, the flow can be reversed (as it was in Victorian England) through the sale of military of commissions, thus allowing mercantile and aristocratic fields to leverage their economic and cultural currency into military currency.

In Iraq, the state served exactly the same function. As discussed above, the military became an increasingly dominant element in Iraqi politics begin in the 1930s and continuing in the 1950s (until its eventual domination in the early 1970s by the Ba'ath Party). It demanded, and got, the militarization and centralization of tribal militias and the educational apparatus. By contrast, alternative political entities, such as the Iraqi Communist Party, were resoundingly unsuccessful in attempting to translate currency within the party's field into influence in other spheres. Nuri's confidence in his ability to shape Iraqi society through the Baghdad Pact was predicated on his belief that he could effectively manage this process of exchange. By gaining access to Western military aid, he would enhance the centralizing power of the military while ensuring its loyalty. By currying favor with Britain, he anticipated being able to negotiate a better deal with the (British-owned) Iraq Petroleum Company, and had already arranged to have oil proceeds deployed on flood control, irrigation projects, and state universities. Thus, the mercantile and land-owning tribal classes would send their sons to Baghdad University rather than Shi'a schools and would supply the technocrats needed to modernize the Iraqi economy. That is to say, tribal currency would be convertible to state-dominated educational currency and vice versa -- those most able to manage the complexities of modern agriculture or commerce would find themselves in increasingly significant positions of authority within their families and tribes. Thus, the rationale for the Baghdad Pact is deeply connected to both faces of the Bourdieuzian state.

Conclusion

This paper offers a new cartographic method for the analysis of Middle East politics and then draws the briefest sketch of how such a map could guide our

understanding of Iraq's involvement in the Baghdad Pact. The topographical details of the fields I identify will be added in later research -- rather than concentrate specifically on my critique of the dominant theories, my theoretical intervention, or the history of the Baghdad Pact per se, I will use this section to analyze the larger implications of this mode of thinking.

Firstly, it decisively rebuts hegemonic discourse which assert the primacy of states as unitary actors and the utilization of an abstracted realist conception of interest. As my critique of Walt indicates, while it is possible that states might make treaties on the basis of balance of threat, it is also possible that international commitments may be undertaken for domestic political reasons that defy conventional approaches. As a second-image theory, it allows domestic considerations considerable weight in international relations, even in core security issues like alliance politics.

Second, it is a significant improvement over current constructivist models of state and society. While creating space for ideas and mass politics was an important innovation in the international relations literature, the models derived to do so fail to allow the texture of politics to emerge. Masses are treated homogenously and their leaders are presumed to treat them as a single entity. Yet, as the history described above indicates, this is a rather poor proximation of politics in the world. This would not be a problem if the loss of fidelity had no impact on the empirical accuracy of the theory. However, as I demonstrate above, the need to manage the fields of power within society is a central concern of state leaders and the interests of specific factions inform policy decisions that would otherwise seem inexplicable. A Boudieuzian approach allows such

an analysis, and, thus, represents a significant advance within the constructivist literature.

Third, while this paper is focused on a bounded conception of fields that roughly adhere to the geographic boundaries of Iraq, there is no reason this should be the case. In fact, transnational fields are both theoretically possible and empirically extant (in Iraq, for example, the Ba'ath Party stretched from Damascus to Baghdad; the Communist Party had an avowedly international orientation and was embedded in a larger Communist field that existed throughout the region; the Shi'a clergy had ties from Lebanon to Iran). This approach could serve as an important bridge between the transnational literature and second-image theories -- now activists needn't just share information and leverage state actions. The field motivating the state might, itself, be transnational.

Fourth, this approach easily extends to non-state actors and to civil conflict. In addition to its geographic fluidity, it also allows for the formation and activation of multiple identities that might be salient in political violence. It is comfortable with interest-maximizing individuals motivated by strategic leaders, while simultaneously understanding the constraints on both individuals and leaders through an analysis of the habitus which informs their actions.

Ultimately, a Bourdieuzian approach could yield a significant new analytical approach to a variety of political phenomenon. While it is perfectly mainstream in both American sociology and European political science, it is relatively unknown in our own discipline. Nonetheless, it is well-suited to mixed method approaches and co-exists comfortably with rationalist understandings of the world. It is my hope that, along with

presenting a superior analysis of the Baghdad Pact, this paper highlights the potential of the Bourdieuzian analysis for contemporary research.

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