ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND SOCIETAL ROLES OF WOMEN IN IRAQ

by

Gina Marie Longo

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of

The College of Arts and Letters

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Florida Atlantic University

Boca Raton, Florida

December 2008

ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND SOCIETAL ROLES OF WOMEN IN IRAQ

by

Gina Marie Longo

This thesis was prepared under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor, Dr. Robert G. Rabil, Department of Political Science, and has been approved by the members of her supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Robert G. Rabil, Ph.D.
Thesis Advisor

Jeffrey Morton, Ph.D.

Mehmet Gurses, Ph.D.

Timothy Lenz, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Political Science

Manjunath Pendakur, Ph.D.
Dean, The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters

Barry T. Rosson, Ph.D.
Dean, Graduate College

Nov. 12, 2008
Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express her sincere thanks and love to her family, husband, and friends for their support and encouragement throughout the writing of this manuscript. The author is grateful to Dr Robert Rabil for providing vital contacts and information that made this study possible. The author wishes to thank Dr. Nadje Al-Ali and Dr. Katrin Michael for providing valuable insights about the plight of Iraqi women. The author is grateful for the support and mentoring of Dr. Pamela Brannon and Dr. Mark Frezzo throughout this lengthy process. The author wishes to express her gratitude to Raid Alsmadi for his time with translating documents. The accommodations made by Delores Clark and George Ezzell also are greatly appreciated.

ABSTRACT

Author: Gina Marie Longo

Title: Analysis of the Political Participation and Societal Roles of Women in Iraq

Institution: Florida Atlantic University

Dissertation Advisor: Dr. Robert G. Rabil

Degree: Master of Art

Year: 2008

The effects that Women's political participation in the Middle East has on political parties and regimes have been investigated by the political science community. However, how women's political participation and changing societal roles affect women's live has not received adequate attention. This is a comparative historical analysis that investigates how women's societal roles and political participation, in Iraq, changed from 1968 to the present. It examines how factors such as social conservatism, party ideology, war, sanctions, religion, and international pressure during different periods in Iraq's modern history influenced changes in Iraqi women's roles and participation over time. These changes in societal roles and political participation are used to analyze the restrictions and expansions in Iraqi women's civil rights.

DEDICATION

This manuscript is dedicated to my niece, Eden Rae Culver, who represents the next generation of amazing women. I also dedicate this work to my sister, Kristin Culver, who never ceases to amaze me.

Contents

Chapter One- Women in Iraq: Past and Present

Introduction

In the Middle East, women have played crucial roles in political movements and nation building. States and political parties have used women's rights and political participation as symbols for their respective causes. Some nations have promoted women's empowerment as an indicator of modernity or progressive ideology. Others have limited women's roles to signify a return to traditional values. Various political groups' agenda, in fact, require women's participation in order to be realized.

In Iraq, from the inception of the Ba'th party, women were an integral part of indoctrination and nation building. The government relied on women to assume diverse roles to sustain the nation in times of economic, political, and legitimacy crisis. In post Saddam Iraq, human rights organizations and NGOs have made women's rights a priority and their enfranchisement has become a barometer for successful democracy. In contrast, conservative religious groups have attempted to repress Iraqi women in order to define a break from imposed Western culture. The political science community has addressed the impact that women's political participation has had in relation to competing political agendas. Human Rights Organizations and NGOs have reported many of the human rights abuses that women suffer at the hand of these competing political and religious authorities.

The political science community has evaluated the impacts of women's political participation on party platforms and nation building in the Middle East. However, little literature exists on how women's political participation and assigned socio-economic roles has affected various aspects of their own lives over the long-term period. For example, in the case of Iraq, literature discusses how women's participation promoted the Ba'th party's political platforms, sustained the economy, and promoted certain social values in greater society, but has not reviewed how these roles affected women themselves. There has been little discussion of how their roles and participation affected their lives in areas such as employment, education, mobility, familial rights, and political and cultural expression over a long period of time.

There are three research questions driving this study. First, how did Iraqi women's roles change from one period of Iraq's history to the next? Second, how did these changes affect women's lives in term of six spheres of private and public life? These six spheres are education, work and mobility, health and sexual control, family, cultural expression, and political expression. These spheres will be discussed at greater length in the methodology section. Third, what is the extent to which women were empowered after the fall of Saddam Hussein?

Methodology

This study is a comparative analysis of how Iraqi women's rights and roles changed from 1968 until 2008, and the affects that these changes had on women's lives. This time period will be divided into four phases: 1968 to 1979; 1980 to 1989; 1990 to 2002, and 2003 to 2008. The four phases of Iraq's history will be analyzed in separate

chapters by identifying independent variables, which will be discussed, and how those variables affected the degrees of freedom in various aspects of women's lives.

Evaluating women's liberties in countries under authoritarian rule is more difficult than those in countries governed by a democratic system. Therefore, dimensions of both the public and private sphere that most women have in common needs to be examined in order to accurately measure the degree of women's freedoms or restrictions in a given country. For the purposes of this study, Janet Z Giele's (1977) six-fold comprehensive guidelines or spheres will be used. They consist of the following:

1. Political Expression- this encompasses the political rights women possess formally and otherwise; the ability to vote in theory and in practice; the rights to own property; expression of dissatisfaction through their own political movements (Giele 1977; Moghadam 1988, 221-22); the degree of laws in place to protect or encourage gender equality; and equal access to formal recourse in civil and criminal matters.
2. Work and Mobility- this sphere encompasses the ability to maneuver in the formal labor force; range of mobility and freedom of movement; the availability of employment benefits and equal pay rates; and society's view on their participation in the workforce (Giele 1977; Moghadam 1988, 221-22).
3. Family- this arena includes the ability to choose marriage partners; the ability to initiate divorce proceedings; the status of single women and widows; and the degree of civil laws and judicial procedures in place to guarantee women an equal share in inheritance, child custody, and marital rights (Giele 1977; Moghadam 1988, 221-22).

4. Education- this sphere entails women's access to education; the level of education a woman can attain; and the similarities or differences in curriculum taught between men and women (Giele 1977; Moghadam 1988, 221-22).
5. Health and Sexual Control- this area is comprised of women's life expectancy; types of mental or physical illness and/or emotional stresses that women are subjected to; access to family planning and birth control; and the degree of control that women have over their own bodies and determining their own health care (Giele 1977; Moghadam 1988, 221-22).
6. Cultural Expression- this area is composed of images of women and their roles that are prevalent in their society; the degree to which these images reflect or determine their reality; and the activity that women can do in the cultural field (Giele 1977; Moghadam 1988, 221-22).

As previously mentioned, certain combinations of variables throughout Iraq's history have positively and negatively influenced changes of women's rights, roles, and participation over time. The predominant factors of this study will include party ideology, religion, war, tribal customs, political agenda, patriarchal structures, religion, socio-economic climate, and foreign influence and/or pressure. The presence of these factors varies throughout each period according to certain events occurring at that time.

A brief review of women's political and civic activities prior to the Ba'th party's regime will be the starting point of this study. However, controversial issues concerning women during previous regimes or the six spheres will not be evaluated. When differentiation of regions or ethnic groups is necessary, Iraq will be divided into three

areas: the North, which has a Kurdish majority; the South, which has a Shi'a majority; and the Center, which has a Sunni majority.

The materials used in this analysis will be based on primary and secondary sources. Documents pertaining to Iraq's government and civilians were acquired from the US Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency, White House Press Releases, Congressional staff research, and the Iraq Research and Documentation Project. United Nations documents, reports, and initiatives were used to evaluate the economic sanctions period. Reports from NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch along with women's rights organizations that pertained specifically to human rights abuses under the Ba'th regime were also utilized. Interviews were conducted with scholars who have lived in Iraq or studied Iraqi women, and they provided documents of their work for the purpose of this study. Scholarly books and journal articles were examined to understand the application of political theory in Iraq.

Newspaper articles and other journalistic pieces were reviewed to provide direction for a longitudinally accurate timeline in the post Saddam era. These articles directed the researcher to particular issues of importance during this time period. For documents in Arabic, the author used an Arabic translator.

It should be noted that there were limitations to the scope of this investigation. There is no literature published by opposition groups in Iraq during the Ba'th party periods because all independent political organizations were illegal. Therefore a significant perspective on the changes of women's rights and roles in Iraq is absent. Moreover, there are periods of Iraq's history where literature pertaining to certain spheres could not be found. For example, in some instances, from 1968 to 1979, there was an

abundance of information on Iraqi women's access to education, but virtually no documentation regarding their access to health care and family planning. Therefore, those particular periods only focus on the spheres to which substantial information was available. Finally, due to the ongoing political and social developments in post Saddam period, it is impossible to definitively encompass all the changes that Iraqi women are presently experiencing.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This thesis is organized into four time periods, beginning with the inception of the Ba'th party, to investigate how the ruling authorities have utilized women's participation, and how this participation affected women's freedom in various aspects of their lives. Each period will evaluate how liberties in each sphere expanded or contracted as women's roles transformed. These transformations correlated to Ba'th party's agenda, which was influenced by external factors such as religion, war, and international pressure. In the Middle East, women's participation has been vital to both opposition movements and nation building. Many political parties and government rely on women to promote, legitimize, and indoctrinate ideology. Therefore, a brief summary of the history and importance of women's political participation in the Middle East will be noted.

Cycles of Empowerment and Suppression

Women have experienced cycles of empowerment and suppression while participating in the Middle East political process. In the early twentieth century, Muslim modernists argued that women's subjugation hindered national progress (Joseph 1996, 6). Policy makers placed family reforms high on their agenda, and denounced arranged marriages, polygamy, and divorce by repudiation (Joseph 1996, 6). Political parties recognized the essential role women played in the indoctrination of future generations and in modernization of the country.

Modernizing regimes in Turkey, Iraq, and Pahlavis's Iran, initiated programs and reforms that enfranchised women. These regimes sought to educate women, bring them into the workforce, and unveil them. The degree of women's integration into political and civic life became a barometer that measured the success of a nation-state's transition to modernity (Joseph 1996, 6).

Prior to the twentieth century, Middle Eastern women were loyal to their traditional kin-based communities. Traditional kin-based communities were structured by patriarchal customs, and they resisted the state's interference in their authority. Post-independent states expanded their influence by altering women's allegiance from the family to the state. This political aim impacted policy relating to women's status (Kandiyoti 1991, 11). For example, in Iraq, the Ba'th party created state-run programs designed to empower women. By educating women through state funded literacy programs and by recruiting women into the labor force, the Ba'th undermined loyalty to kin or ethnic group and shifted allegiance to the party (Kandiyoti 1991, 11; Al-Ali 2007, 146). Women's position in society became a symbolic indicator of the nation (Joseph 1996, 6). A regime with aspirations to modernize educated, unveiled, and incorporated women into public life. Traditional states stressed women's modesty through veiling and emphasized their roles as wife and mother.

However, modernizing regimes could not entirely sever the influence of patriarchal communities, tribal customs, and religious traditions. They were still factors that the state needed to consider when forming policy. States challenged, accommodated, or abdicated to local patriarchal traditions (Kandiyoti 1991, 11). This resulted in local legislation that directly affected women (Kandiyoti 1991, 11), which either empowered

or suppressed them. Women could be used as political tools and as bargaining chips depending on the unique political climates of a nation-state.

For example, in Lebanon, governments formally relinquished women's personal status and family matters to the religious authority of existing communities (Kandiyota 1991, 11). Lebanon's ruling elites used this strategy to maintain a delicate balance of sectarian powers in the country (Kandiyota 1991, 11). In contrast, Yemen introduced the 1974 Family Law. This law addressed personal status, and disputed concessions to Shari'a law and local traditions. Yemen's government recognized women's potential to become vital political and economic actors in national development (Kandiyota 1991, 11); therefore women's emancipation from patriarchal control was crucial. Moreover, in Iraq, the Ba'th party made conflicting modification to the Personal Status law in 1978 that empowered women by reducing family controls in certain aspects, but rolled back gains women made in other areas. These reversals were implemented in an attempt to simultaneously appease a broad base of conservative males and encourage party loyalty amongst women.

Under the Ba'th, Iraq's constitution contained verbiage that promoted gender neutrality. Women and men had equal citizenship rights. Other Middle Eastern countries have similar decrees. However, despite such declarations, men and women still have distinct roles in society that are gender based. Women's positions in society are used to establish and maintain national boundaries (Joseph 1996, 6). Joseph argues:

> "This is evident by the institutions and processes nations subsidize to ensure control over women's reproductions, maternal rights, productivity, and wealth. Laws regulating marriage, naturalization, inheritance, and property are among the formal means nations use to define and defend

> the boundaries of their community. Even women's dress codes, such as the veil, can become embroiled in the struggles over nationhood (Joseph 1996; 6)."

Women's empowerment and mobilization were indicators of a country's transition to modernity. After the dismantling of colonialism, newly independent Middle Eastern states aspired to Arab nationalism, secularism, and modernity. Since modernity was defined by Western standards, non-western traditions such as veiling were perceived as hindrances to the country's success (Joseph 1996, 6). Therefore, traditional communities began to see Western values as a threat. In the Middle East, Islamic fundamentalism became the primary response to Western encroachment. Fundamentalists co-opted women and imposed conservative ideology. Similar to state tactics, these groups used women as symbols to promote tradition. Through these conservative values women became captive to patriarchy (Joseph 1996, 8). Patriarchy allowed males and elders to justify privileges and authority over women through kinship (Joseph 1996, 8). Today, Iraqi women face a renewed threat of patriarchy. Various groups perceived the presence of US and UK troops as a threat after the 2003 invasion. Due to lack of security, fundamentalist militias took over various neighborhoods by force and imposed strict interpretations of Shari'a law. Women are forced to veil and stay in their homes or suffer violent retribution.

Moroccan sociologist, Fatima Mernissi (1988), believes that Islamic fundamentalism is an assertion of identity in the face of rapid social change. The rapid social change is brought about by factors such as the threat to existing authority relationships between genders, response to boundary issues created by forms of neo-colonialism, new technology, consumerism, and economic dependency (Mernissi 1988,

9). Furthermore, Deniz Kantiyoti (1996) posits that aggravated social inequalities, massive migratory movements, and influx of women into the workforce have also contributed to the use of Islamic fundamentalism as a response to these social changes. With such political and social uncertainties, patriarchal, conservative ideologies become more attractive.

Samir Al-Khalil (1989) argued that Arab nationalism itself does not embody secularism completely, especially in the Ba'thist version. Al-Khalil (1989) explained that the separation of Arab national identity from others was made possible through debates about the predominance of Arabs within Islam. Furthermore, he stated that Sunni Islam was seen as an element of national identity (Al-Khalil 1989, 209), which was particularly evident during the exploitation of sectarianism during the Iran/Iraq war. In this examination, religion was always a variable affecting women's rights whether it was within the general population, political parties, or the government. It can be surmised that in the Middle East the following factors contribute to women's rights and roles within the nation: party ideology and agenda, patriarchal structures, religion, political and economic climate, and response to foreign influence and/or pressure.

Each factor mentioned above can influence each situation differently. In some cases a particular variable can affect Middle Eastern women's political participation greatly, but in other instance be negligible. However, many Middle Eastern women recognize this and capitalize on it. Clark and Schwedler (2003) evaluated women's increasing participation in two highly, conservative Islamist parties. In the past, these parties found no place for women within the political power structure. However, dramatic increase of women's participation occurred over a relatively short period of time

(Clark and Schwedler 2003, 293). The parties changed their ideology once they recognized that cooperation and bargaining was needed to advance their political aims within a multi-party political system (Clark and Schwedler 2003). Therefore, more flexible moderates gained support while hardliners lost power. Women were able to gain access and make advancements within the party. Party moderates understood that increased women's participation both generated more votes and appeased outside critics (Clark and Schwedler 2003, 309). In this case, at one time, religious conservatism kept women from participating within these parties. This factor held considerable weight over structural organization since these were Islamist parties. However, in time, promoting the political agenda became more of a significant force. Politically active women recognized the shift and took advantage of the opportunity. Clark and Schwedler observed,

> "While shifts in party ideology and/or strategy at play gains made by Islamist women who have taken advantage of structural openings by shifting divisions within each party. Women had made significant advances when they recognized and seized windows of opportunity for increased participations as when moderates and hardliners are preoccupied with intra-party disputes or other external challenges" (Clark and Schwedler 2003, 293).

The Development of Women's Movements in the Middle East

There is limited literature on women's movements over an extended period of time in the modern Middle East. Only few scholars such as Ellen Fleishman (1999) and Nago Efrati (2004) have researched Middle Eastern women's movement and their development. From 1900 to the 1940's, early Middle Eastern women's movements went through three relatively flexible stages of development in their history (Efrait 2004, 154;

Fleishman 1999, 96). A movement's success or development was not predicated on a strict adherence to these phases. Each stage was very fluid. Fleishman (1999) noted:

> "These stages do not necessarily follow a linear chronology because progressive development of the individual women's movement varied with stages overlapping, coinciding, preceding and following one another at times obscuring the demarcation lines among them and in other cases certain women's movements had yet to experience on or another of these stages" (p. 96).

The first stage was called the Awakening stage, when men and women began to question social practices pertaining to women and their personal status (Efrati 2004, 154). In this stage numerous women's organizations began to appear, and their goals focused mainly on promoting girls education (Efrati 2004, 154). In Iraq, the Iraqi Women's League was established in 1952. This organization established literacy centers that focused on women's education. The second stage was called the Women and Nationalism stage. Women became involved in nationalist movements that linked their political involvement to women's emancipation (Efrati 2004, 154; Fleishman 1999, 96). Again, in the case of Iraq, women became involved in Arab nationalist or communist parties until the Ba'th party gained power and outlawed independent political organizations. The final stage is the Designated State Feminism stage (Efrati 2004, 154; Fleishman 1999, 96). This stage was characterized by "women's co-optation by inclusion or collision with the state-building project resulting in the evolution of feminism (Fleishman 1999, 96). In Iraq, the Ba'th party encouraged women to participate as equals alongside men to build a modern country. Women's education and job training through state funded programs were attempts by the Ba'th party to co-opt women. Iraqi women were seen as indoctrinator of future generations.

Although the state and/or political parties have used women as tools for political gains, women have not remained passive in the process. Women have utilized political openings to push their own political agenda by addressing women's emancipation, empowerment, and gender equality. In the same manner that political groups recognized the benefit of women's participation to their cause, women recognized that state initiatives and party policies benefited their own agenda. Many Middle Eastern women have become more educated, more independent, and more politically active as a result of these state programs. However, gains women have made does not negate many women continue to be relegated to the margins by authoritarian regimes, patriarchal customs, and religious conservatism.

Under the yoke of authoritarian regimes, democratic civil society was not encouraged. Women's issues could not be independently represented. Women's organizations outside the ruling party were considered direct political challenges to the existing order. This was the case during the Pahlavis's Iran, Turkey's single party regime, and Nassir's Egypt, who, in 1956, granted women's suffrage then immediately outlawed all feminist organizations (Kantiyoti 1991, 12). In Iraq, all independent organizations were outlawed, and women's organizations came under the umbrella of the state-funded General Federation of Iraqi Women.

Gender gains in citizenship and political rights have mainly been attributed to the achievements of international women's rights and human rights movement (Joseph 1996, 4). Since many authoritarian regimes in the Middle East outlawed independent organizations, domestically women were not allowed to politically mobilize in the same manner they do under democratic governments. However, women along with minorities

and the poor have been able to utilize political openings and gain more rights when public institutions began to lose social, political, and economic grounds (Joseph 1996, 4).

Approaches to Empowering Iraqi Women

In Post Saddam Iraq, the international community has attempted to promote women's position in Iraq. Equal civil rights and political representation for Iraqi women are among the primary concerns for NGO's and women's organizations both inside and outside of the country. These groups have discussed debates at length which approach would encourage both a robust civil society and female empowerment. Brown and Romano (2006) argued that despite women's history of activism, the Ba'th party, not grassroot organizations, promoted more gender equality (Brown and Romano 2006). Therefore, women lacked political autonomy in the past would now serve them in the present:

> "Without the capacity and the know-how to organize and create a support system, women saw a huge deterioration in their rights and thus in their quality of life as well...Iraq was a model of de jure women's rights but *not* (emphasis added) women's empowerment" (Brown and Romano, 2006, 54).

Brown and Romano (2006) assert that a top down approach would best promote gender equality in present day Iraq, because women's lack of organization, empowerment, and a threatened male population have stifled a grassroots approach. The Iraqi government should encourage societal actors who support a progressive women's agenda. This encouragement would allow the acceptance of women's equality to trickle down into greater society and become part of the Iraqi social fabric (Brown and Romano

2006, 52). Restrictions on women's movements throughout the country have prevented bottom up approaches from being effective.

Dr. Nadje Al Ali (2007) disagrees with the top-down approach in Iraq. She interviewed hundreds of women who have lived in Iraq throughout its modern history. She posits that a bottom-up approach is better suited for gains in Iraqi women's rights and representation. Al Ali states,

> "(Iraqi) Women have been part of political movements across a wide political spectrum. They have played an important role within the expanding economy and labor market. They have contributed to a rich and diverse culture, including literature, the arts and music. They have held together families and society; and they have been at the heart of the everyday attempts by ordinary people to resist political repression, occupation, and extremist Islamist encroachment in nonviolent ways" (Al-Ali 2007, 268).

She suggests a grassroots approach fro women to make gains in Iraq for gender equality (Al Ali 2007, 267-68). Women's activism has been present throughout Iraq's modern history. Utilizing grassroots organizations relies on "the small yet hopefully growing body of social histories which places greater emphasis on personal narratives and the voices of ordinary citizens" (Al-Ali 2007, 268).

Women's political participation has been active in the Middle East. As the Middle East is entering a new era, especially in and around Iraq, further examination of women's political participation in the region is crucial. Women exercise great authority over policy-making and politics in the region.

Chapter Three: 1968 to 1979

The following chapter will evaluate how the Ba'th party utilized women's participation, from 1968 to 1979, to solidify its authority and indoctrinate future generations. This chapter will examine laws that the regime implemented to foster women's participation, and resulted in an expansion of women's rights in the spheres of family, work and mobility, health and sexual control, and education. This section will observe how factors such as social conservatism and tribal customs influenced the government to construct laws that limited women's freedoms in the spheres of political and cultural expression in order to appease a broad base of traditional male constituents. A brief review of women's political activities prior to the Ba'th party inception will be discussed as a point of departure.

Background: Iraqi women prior to 1968

In the early 1940's, urban, upper class women volunteered their time to charitable organizations such as the Red Crescent Society and Houses of the People Society (Efrati 2004). In addition to humanitarian work, Iraqi women were becoming political activists. Throughout the 1940's and 1950's, urban women joined political parties that adopted secular ideologies such as Communism and Arab Nationalism. Women became increasingly involved in demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, and other underground political activities (Al-Ali 2007, 79). Women during this period were working to alleviate political repression and further women's rights.

In 1952, Dr. Naziaha al-Dulaymi founded the League for Defense of Women's Rights, which was later called the Iraqi Women's League. She inspired women to join the League and work together toward gender equality. The League promoted women's right by implementing educational programs, social services, and lobbying. The Iraqi Women's League had members from all social, economic, ethnic, and religious strata. During the 1960's prior to the Ba'th regime, membership reached over 42,000 members, and 7502 registered women and 605 volunteer teachers worked in the 78 literacy centers around the country (Baban 2006). The Iraqi Women's League's greatest contribution was the drafting of the 1959 Personal Status Law.

Prior to 1959, personal status law was based on traditional interpretations of Shari'a law. No civil law governing such matters existed. Although the League was not a part of the legislative process, a special committee of female lawyers was formed by the League to prepare drafts that were submitted to the government (Baban 2006). The primary framework of the submitted proposal along with government-introduced amendments was used to create the 1959 Personal Status Law. It contained the most progressive reform to date in family, child custody, and inheritance matters (Efrati 2005). The Personal Status law was based on moderate construal of Shari'a law. It ensured that all women, from all religious backgrounds, were guaranteed the same rights under law. This was especially important since Shia and Sunni interpretations of Shari'a differed. A woman's civil rights were no longer in the hands of the Ulama. In matters of marriage the law severely restricted forced marriage and polygamy. Both men and women had to seek divorce through an official judicial channel. Divorce by repudiation was invalid if the husband's mental capacities were compromised due to anger or intoxication (Efrati

2005, 581). The law granted mothers custody of their children to age seven. The court could extend custody beyond seven if the child's welfare necessitated.

Urban Iraqi women living during this time, generally felt unrestricted in their political and social activities (Al-Ali 2007, 83). Urban women and girls had access to education and social outlets that allowed interaction with men. Moreover, Sunni/Shia sectarianism did not significantly dominate Iraqi politics or social lives (Al-Ali 2007, 107). Iraqi people were striving to modernize. Westernized dress and culture came into vogue, and became equated with modernity. Educated men who embraced progress perceived the abaya as a symbol of tradition and backwardness (Al-Ali 2007, 97). By the 1960's, prior to the first Ba'th coup in 1963, Baghdadi women wore miniskirts, and were not veiling. However, traditional gender roles and tribal customs remained prevalent in rural areas. Therefore, rural women, hindered by economic hardship and patriarchy, were restricted in all spheres, especially education, work and mobility, and cultural expression.

The first Ba'th coup was in 1963. Throughout 1963, the Ba'th party used violence and political repression against the opposition to maintain power. However, the Ba'th temporarily lost power due to differences among top officials and disorganization. The Ba'th reemerged in 1968. As the ruling regime, the Ba'th was confronted by economic and social problems that hindered the party's goal of creating a strong, unified Iraq. Ba'thi officials believed that these problems stemmed from the previous regime's policies. The Ba'th party was determined to eliminate what it called "harmful pre-revolutionary values and practices" (Library of Congress) among the people, and replace them with Ba'thi ideology. The regime used the state educational system, youth organizations, and social programs to indoctrinate the masses. These programs promoted

Arab nationalist principles such as patriotism, national loyalty, participation, and civic responsibility. It was during this inception period that women began to formulate opinions about the Ba'th. The party perceived political activists as a threat, especially women active in the Communist party. These women experienced political violence and hostility at the hands of the regime. Women with no previous political affinity found the state sponsored programs empowering. These women referred to the first decade of the Ba'th rule as the 'golden age' of economic boom, women-oriented state policies, and a liberal social climate (Al-Ali 2007, 113).

Women's Participation in the Ba'thification Process

Women were an integral part of the Ba'thification process. During the initial ruling years, the emancipation of women was central in the attempt to transform society (Joseph 1991; Rassam 1992; al-Sharqi 1982; Al-Ali 2007). In theory, women were the vehicles to indoctrinate the future generations with the Ba'th ideology. Saddam Hussein articulated this point during an address in 1971; "An enlightened mother, who is educated and liberated, can give the country a generation of conscious and committed fighters" (Hussein 1979, 16). Women's emancipation was also intended to replace women's loyalty to extended families and tribal society with party allegiance (Human Rights Watch 2003). The Iraqi Provisional Constitution, drafted in 1970, contained the legal underpinning for women's equality. Article nineteen declared all Iraqi citizens equal before the law regardless of *sex* (emphasis added), blood, language, social origin, or religion (Human Rights Watch 2003). These reforms, laws, and programs created a unique combination of contradictions that would expand women's rights in some areas, but severely restrict them in others.

Education

State sponsored educational programs were the first tactics used by the Ba'th to indoctrinate women and foster party fidelity. Since all independent organizations were outlawed, the Ba'th founded the General Federation of Iraqi Women (GFIW). The GWIF's purpose was for the Ba'th party to appear to be supportive of gender equality by addressing women's issues and implementing related programs. The GWIF was the organization that the Ba'th used to launch the program for women's literacy. It organized and operated more than 250 rural and urban community centers (Human Rights Watch 2003) that offered women job training, literacy classes, and social programs. Moreover, it acted as a channel for communicating state propaganda. In the 1970's literacy education became compulsory for all Iraqis between the ages of 15 and 45 (Human Rights Watch 2003). These programs were countrywide. The state paid particular attention to women's education in rural communities. Rural community centers were intended to reach women who were otherwise limited to their homes. This ensured that Ba'th party full access to society. The GWIF centers in rural communities taught women reading, writing, and sewing (Rassam 1992, 85). Special accommodations were made to guarantee women's participation. State officials were aware that men with traditional values might forbid their women from attending classes. Therefore, penalties were imposed on women who failed to attend, or any individual who hindered their participation (Joseph 1991, 181). Ultimately, the female literacy program was successful. In 1977, 62.4% of Iraqi women were illiterate, but the following year that percentage was down to only 25.2% (UNICEF 1998).

Work and Mobility

In 1972, Iraq experienced economic difficulties during the nationalization process of the oil industry. However, this was followed by a period of great economic expansion. Oil revenues went from six hundred million dollars in 1972 to twenty six and a half billion dollars by 1980 (Abdullah 2003, 169; Al-Ali 2007). The Ba'th party invested these revenues in Iraq's infrastructure. Unlike Saudi Arabia and other neighboring countries, the Iraqi state did not rely on foreign workers. The state mobilized its own citizens for skilled labor. The regime encouraged women to enter the labor market. The state recognized that women's participation in the work force was vital in the development and modernization the country. Therefore, government programs and benefits were offered to entice women to work.

Among the first reforms exclusive to women were free childcare, generous maternity benefits, and transportation to and from work. Iraq's Maternal Law of 1971 provided women working in the public sector with generous maternity entitlements. Under this law, women received six months paid maternity leave and could elect to take an additional six months leave with half pay (American Bar Association 2006). On-site nurseries and flexible scheduling were also available to accommodate women with families. Furthermore, women were able to work under safe conditions. They were ensured protection from harassment in the workplace (Human Rights Watch 2003).

State run industries and trade unions worked in concert with the GFIW to provide a full range of occupational training for all women including peasants (Joseph 1991, 1982). These training programs in conjunction with educational assistance encouraged women from all backgrounds to find their niche in the labor market. Individuals who

opted for higher education were also promised gainful employment. In 1974, all university graduates were guaranteed employment by government decree (Al-Ali 2005, 744).

By 1980, women were employed as government employees, professors, doctors, and lawyers. Women's labor reforms, benefits, and training programs created a highly diverse labor market that broke traditional gender roles. Women were employed as construction workers, truck drivers, street cleaners, and gas stations attendants (Rassam 1992, 182). Employment for women in the public sector soared. During the years of Saddam Hussein's reign, the percentage of women in civil service reached approximately 40 percent (Ciezadlo 2003).

Family

Despite the reforms that emancipated women in the spheres of education, work and mobility, the Ba'th party implemented changes that constricted women in the spheres of family, political and cultural expression. The most notable examples are found in the codified law. While women ere being educated to read, write, and work to assist in the modernization and Ba'athification of Iraqi society, certain laws were enacted that rolled back important gains essential to gender equality.

In 1969, several penal codes passed put women at an increased risk to be victims of violent crimes. For example, if a woman was sexually assaulted, Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, Article 398 allowed the offender to escape retribution if he lawfully married the victim (American Bar Association 2006, 59-60). Any sentence that had been passed prior to marriage was quashed and legal proceedings ceased. Additionally, crimes of passion and honor crimes received lower sentences than battery or murder in other

circumstances. Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, Article 409 guaranteed that those committing crimes of passion or honor would not receive detention exceeding three years (American Bar Association 2006, 42). The offenders only needed to attest, not prove, that they caught the victim in the middle of an act of adultery. The new Penal Code of 1969 also did not protect women from domestic abuse. The law stated that there would be no crime committed if a woman was punished or disciplined by her husband (American Bar Association 2006). The 1969 Penal Codes did not leave much recourse for women who were victimized, and contradicted the regime's pro-feminist rhetoric.

Certain changes to the Personal Status Law of 1958 were made after the Ba'th Party's ascension to power that reversed some progressive reforms for women. Throughout the 1970's women's rights activists especially within the GWIF, south a more secularized law, and clarification to vague verbiage on marital issues. They pushed for the legal marrying age to be raised. To their disappointment, the government lowered the minimum age of marriage from sixteen to fifteen (Efrati 2005, 580).

However, where reforms in civil law were reversed, women's rights activists continued to petition for more liberal personal status laws. Secular women used Quaranic verses to argue against issues of polygamy and forced marriage (Efrati 2005). Although not to the extent to which activists desired the amendment to the Personal Status Law addressed some of these issues. For example, forced marriages were nullified if they were not consummated. In such cases when the marriage was consummated, divorce was permitted. Women, however, were much more restricted in this area. Women had few options in what the courts constituted as grounds for divorce (Efrati 2005). The law restricted polygamy by increasing fines and prison sentences for individuals who did not

obtain a judge's approval. However, polygamy was never outlawed as many women wanted. During November 1980, polygamy laws were relaxed under Saddam Hussein. An amendment was added which allowed a man to marry more than one woman without the court's permission, if she was a widow (Efrati 2005, 582).

Women made some gains in the areas of child custody. Maternal custody was prolonged, but only until the age of ten. The court could allow an extension until the age of fifteen if it benefited the child's welfare (Efrati 2005, 584), but there was no guarantee. These gains were modest in contrast to the restrictions that the civil and criminal laws now imposed.

These stark contradictions between women's emancipation and restriction existed because the Ba'th Party was attempting to strike a balance. While the regime sought to enfranchise women to further it own political agenda, the Ba'th Party had to be careful not to totally alienate a large male population and the conservative religious establishment that benefited from prevailing power structures within the family or tribal norms (Al-Ali 2007, 140). The revolution did not want to appear too radical. Saddam Hussein responded to these contradictions in 1976. He said,

> "...but when the revolution tackles some legal matters related to women without taking a balance of attitudes to the question of equality and its historical perspectives, it will certainly lose a large segment of the people" (Hussein 1981, 36-38; Al Ali 2007, 131).

Political Expression and Cultural Expression

Women, like all Iraqi citizens, experienced extraordinary political repression under the Ba'th Party. This political repression coupled with violence escalated substantially once Saddam Hussein became president. However, some regime oppression

was designed to target women in particular. Again, this subjugation intensified under Saddam's dictatorship.

During the early years of the regime, the Ba'th party sought to establish state-sponsored organizations for all aspects of society from youth groups to women's organizations in an attempt to indoctrinate all the people (Al-Ali 2007, 120). No independent grassroots organizations were allowed to operate. Any group that acted outside the Ba'th supported associations were severely punished. This led to the dissolution of many communist-led mass organizations including the Iraqis Women's League. At the party's inceptions, all Iraqis were encouraged to become party members. Once the regime consolidated its power, the people were pressured to join. Declining party membership was viewed as an act of political defiance (Al-Ali 2007). During the late 1970's this pressure substantially increased for women since certain professions were available only to those who swore party loyalty. Women in predominately female fields, such as teachers and headmistresses, were particular pressured since schools were one of the main vehicles for indoctrinating future generations (Al-Ali 2005, 745).

Once Saddam became president in 1979, the political tyranny increased, especially for women. Women became more restricted in their cultural expression. Despite party rhetoric about women's freedom of expression, women were harassed for perceived indecency. Saddam Hussein's uncle and mayor of Baghdad, Kairallah Tulfah, encouraged vigilantes to pain women's legs black if they showed too much skin (Rath 2003). Urban women began to wear more conservative attire. Moreover, while Saddam legally accorded women many rights under the Constitution's Article eight, he could arbitrarily nullify those rights at any time (Brown and Romano 2006, 53).

During this period, particularly in the Kurdish North, women still engaged in political activism. The Kurdish people have a long history of political struggle as they fought for autonomy and ethnic rights. Saddam Hussein had initially offered the Kurdish people autonomy when he became president. His offer was the most comprehensive agreement ever put forth by an Iraqi government to date (Al-Ali 2007, 124). However, negotiations broke down when the regime refused to relinquish Kirkuk. Once armed conflicts between Kurdish and Iraqi forces began, many individuals in the North fled their homes. Those who remained suffered arbitrary arrests and violent persecution at the hands of Iraqi security personnel. Despite tribal custom prevalent in Kurdish society, women were politically active alongside men. Many women assumed responsibilities that crossed traditional gender boundaries. These activities included providing logistical support, passing covert messages, working as couriers, distributing leaflets, and providing political leadership (Al-Ali 2007, 125).

Women became tools by the Ba'th against the opposition. Saddam's government used systematic rape and sexual assault against women to extrapolate information from dissident and pressure expatriate opposition (Brown and Romano 2006, 53). Women's increased participation in society coupled with a large traditional population made this means of fact finding useful to the regime. The government sent videotapes that showed female family members being raped to the Iraqi oppositionists (Department of State 2003). This tactic both intimidated and blackmailed Iraqi men into cooperating with the regime. During the course of the Ba'th rule, the regime became more efficient as it institutionalized their methods. Moreover, under Saddam, the regime tortured, murdered, and arrested women whether they were dissidents or merely related to one. Imprisoned

women were subjected to brutal beatings, systematic rape, electrical shocks, and branding (US Department of State 2003a).

Section Summary

During the first period from 1968 to 1979, Iraqi women found their rights expand in some spheres and restrict in others. When the Ba'th party took control in 1968, women were seen as tools that could be used to indoctrinate future generations and modernize the country. The regime believed that it was vital to educate women and bring them into the workforce. Therefore, social programs and state benefits were implemented. Women obtained more liberties in the areas of education, and work and mobility. These programs were designed by the state to ensure women's party loyalty and dependency.

Although the government attempted to remove power from the religious establishment and tribal structures, it did not wish to alienate this large group entirely. Various penal codes and civil laws that protected women against gender violence or patriarch were reversed to appease traditional males. Therefore, despite the gains made in education, work, and mobility, many Iraqi women found more restrictions in the political, cultural, and family sphere. Moreover, since all independent organizations were outlawed, the Ba'th used violence to hold onto its control. Repression of political dissidents dramatically increased under Saddam's presidency. Despite official lip service to women's rights, women were brutalized by the regime to coerce the opposition. Saddam's dictatorship revolved around a cult of personality and paranoia that eventually led to the incarceration, torture, and death of three hundred thousand men and women by the end of his reign (U S Department of State 2003a).

Women who were politically active prior to the Ba'th party experienced harassment, physical coercion, arrest, and blacklisting. Women who remained in more traditional gender roles viewed the Ba'th party as progressive and empowering. Some rural women in more traditional gender roles believed that this period was marked by economic and social development. They referred to this period as a golden age for Iraqi women. Overall, however, Iraqi women in this period experience great contradictions in their lives as they found liberty in some spheres and violent restrictions within others.

Chapter Four: 1980 to 1989

This chapter examines how women's roles, status, and political rights changed in relation to Iran/Iraq War. The Iran/Iraq War radically influenced the ideology of the Ba'th Party. From 1980 until 1989, the regime's priorities shifted from domestic modernization and party indoctrination to military strategy and security. The Ba'th Party relied on certain groups of women to be a vital part of the country's survival. This chapter will investigate factors such as war and economic crisis that led to women's expansions in the spheres of work and mobility, education, and political expression, and how these same factors restricted women's rights in areas of family, health and sexual control, and cultural expression. Factors such as sectarianism, religion, and ethnicity influenced changes in these arenas differently for depending on the woman's background. The experiences of Shiite and Kurdish women differ greatly from Sunni women. Therefore, this section will outline the differentiation in freedoms according to Sunnis, Shiite, and Kurdish women.

Sunni Women in Central Iraq

In 1979, after the fall of the Shah, Arab countries feared that the Islamic Revolution would spill over into their countries. Saddam Hussein was particularly concerned since Iraq shared a border with Iran and had a sizable Shiite population living under his secular government. Saddam initiated a military attack on Iran, which was intended to be both quick and successful. Iraq's attack on Iran was supposed to neutralize a revolutionary threat and prevent Iraqi Shiites from uprising. However,

Saddam underestimated Iran's strength. The Iran/Iraq war lasted eight years, and had grave consequences for both countries. Iraqi males were expected to take up arms and assist in the war effort. The regime expected women fill the gaps in every area of society that were left behind by the mass exodus of male soldiers who went to battle.

Work, Mobility, and Political Expression

As men headed to the warfront, women were left to fill the economic vacuum that resulted due to the massive vacancies in the labor force. Women began working in every sector of the economy. Iraqi women filled over 30% of the vacancies left by men once the war was in full swing (Rajaee 1993, 48). Not only did women play a crucial role as producers in the private sector, but also they actively took part in running the government machine. A majority of government ministries were run predominately by women. In an interview, Katrin Michael, a Kurdish human rights activist and Anfal survivor recounted women working in the government at this time:

"Women were running the country…Women were working in the ministries under Saddam because all the men were on the war front...Some ministries were almost exclusively women…. The Health Care Ministry had 66% of women on staff. Education (Ministry) was the same, about 65% and so on" (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.)

In addition to running the bureaucracy, Iraqi women were also holding government offices. Although Saddam Hussein's regime was not a democracy, women were granted the right to vote in 1980. In 1980, many Iraqi women ran for office in the parliamentary elections, and won 16 seats in the 250 members Council (Al-Ali 2005, 754). Women gained more seats in the 1985 Ba'this parliamentary elections. They held a total of 33 seats, which constituted 13% of the Council (Al-Ali 2005, 754).

The government wanted to safeguard females in the workplace to prevent any further losses to Iraq's economy as military conflict escalated. In order to encourage women to participate in the work force, laws were passed against discrimination and sexual harassment. Article Two of the Unified Labor Code of 1987 guaranteed the "right to work for each capable citizen with equal opportunities...without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, language, or religion" (American Bar Association 2006, 154). Moreover, under this law, each citizen would have equal opportunity for technical or vocation training in each sector (American Bar Association 2006, 154-57). Vocational training along with increased job vacancies resulted in an influx of women in traditionally male-dominated positions. This trend continued even after the war was over. For example, according to a United Nations report, women's employment in the industrial sector went from 13% in 1987 to 21% in 1993 (Pina 2006, 5).

In addition to working at full capacity, women were still expected to reproduce more children to compensate for the losses on the battlefield. Therefore, labor laws were enforced that protected unborn children from harm. Article 82 of the Unified Labor Code of 1987 prohibited women from doing extra work that may be harmful to their pregnancy (American Bar Association 2006, 155).

Although women gained employment that provided income, the regime had asked the population to endure fiscal austerity. There were government requests for gold and jewelry donations. These items usually are traditional sources of economic security for women in times of crisis (Al-Ali 2007, 148). The state reduced imports, curbed development programs, and borrowed heavily from surrounding nations (Al-Ali 2007, 148). Ultimately, Iraqi women were expected to do more tasks with fewer resources.

Health, Sexual Control, and Family

Iran had a much larger population than Iraq, and did not hesitate to use any able-bodied man or child soldier against its enemy. Saddam Hussein sought to increase the Iraqi population and replace soldiers lost in battle to counter Iran's efforts. Therefore, women were also expected to have large families. To promote this new expectation, the Iraqi media began to promote marriage and conception. The 'mass wedding' trend emerged. The government rented large catering halls, and couples were married en mass (Al-Ali 2007, 148). All contraception was made illegal. During the first years of the war, the government used pressure along with incentive to encourage Iraqi women to reproduce. Reviewing Saddam Hussein's tendency to use violence and punishment to enforce policy in other areas, the author attempted to find any examples of punishment for women who avoided becoming pregnant. In a telephone interview, author and researcher at the Center for Gender Studies in London, Dr. Nadje Al-Ali, clarified:

> "I don't think it would have been possible to penalize everyone. It wasn't so much that there was punishment as much as there was pressure. There were also rewards for having many children in terms of financial rewards. There were generous maternity benefits, subsidized baby food and baby clothes. So it was not that there was a system of actual punishment. There was pressure, and there were incentives." (Nadje Al-Ali, pers. comm.)

The outlawing of contraceptives and the incentives for conceptions began during the early years of the conflict. By the end of the war, the regime was desperate to rectify the demographic disparity with Iran. Hence, on April 13 1988, the regime instituted the "The National Fertility Campaign" (Iraq Research and Documentation Project 2002). The directive requested that every able woman bear at least five children (Al-Ali 2007

155), in order to stimulate a growth in population. The regime affirmed that the edict would be distributed among the population, and that a required census would be conducted to record successful population growth (Iraq Research and Documentation Project 2002). The government tracked progress throughout the National Fertility Campaign. Regional surveys and censuses were administered by the regime. Copious forms were sent to various districts to record statistics of births and children's well being. On each form a slogan of encouragement from the regime stated "Each New Birth Obliterates A Hostile Intention Carved in Spiteful Persian Minds" (Iraq Research and Documentation Project 2002).

Despite the increased pressure placed upon women during this period, women were expected to manage their household, raise their children, and contribute to the war effort. The number of female-headed households increased. Some women were left permanently on their own as many lost their husbands or fathers in the war. Polygamy laws were relaxed during this time. In 1980, an amendment was added that allowed a man to marry more than one wife without the court's permission, if the woman was a widow (Efrati 2005, 581). Amnesty International reported that half a million Iraqi soldiers died in the Iran-Iraq war and thousands of men had been executed or had "disappeared" (Amnesty International 2005, 4). Men who returned home with severe disabilities had to be cared for by their families – a task that generally fell on the women of the family (Amnesty International 2005, 4).

Cultural Expression

In the pervious period, the Ba'th party promoted gender equality and party loyalty among women, so they could indoctrinate future generations. Once the Iran/Iraq war

erupted, the government called on women to fulfill the roles as productive citizens and mothers. The state began to shift away from its previous rhetoric of gender equality. Soldiers' morale quickly diminished, as promises of swift victory turned into a long, violent war. The state had to move away from images of men and women together working towards progress to depictions of men protecting their land and women's honor against the enemy (Al-Ali 2007, 153). The Ba'th's new gender bias war propaganda reversed men's perceptions of women being equal and capable. The regime now reinforced images of male heroism and superiority, women's frailty, ideals of virility and practices of male bonding (Rohde 2006; Al-Ali 2007, 154). The regime portrayed women as the symbols of the nation. While women demonstrated their resourcefulness and strength at home, they were portrayed as weak and dependent on men for protection. This new image of women reinforced patriarchal family structures and increased gender conservatism.

Shiite Women in the South

Shiite women encountered severe repression during this period. They experienced restrictions in every arena due to the persecution they faced from the Ba'th Party. However, Shiite women's liberties in the sphere of Political Expression was dramatically altered during this time. This subsection will address these developments in greater detail.

The Shiite population was already experiencing difficulties with the Ba'th Party prior to the Iran/Iraq war. Secular Arab countries nervously watched Iran as the Islamic Revolution replaced the Shah's government. Saddam Hussein feared uprisings among the large Shiite population that lived in Iraq along Iran's border. In attempts to control the

situation, deportations of Shiites began. During the late 1970's, approximately 250,000 Iraqis of 'Persian descent' had their property confiscated and were deported (Abdullah 2003; Tripp 2000). After the war with Iran began, the deportations dramatically increased. During the first year of the war an estimated 40,000 Shi'I were exiled from Iraq, and over the entire period, approximately 400,000 Iraqi Shiites were forced to flee to Iran (Abdullah 2003; Tripp 2000). This period of deportation was called Zamn al-Tashrat (Time of Deportations). This affected all Iraqi women, not just those among the Shiite population. Many Sunni Arab women also left the country because they were married to men of 'Persian descent (Pachachi 1994). They chose to leave Iraq rather than stay behind alone. The Ba'th party's exploitation of sectarianism restricted women's freedom to choose marriage partners. In 1982, a law was passed offering financial incentives for Arab men to divorce their Iranian wives (Abdullah 2003). This law was designed to ensure that Iraqi bloodlines were kept pure. Iraqi women were forbidden to marry 'non-Iraqi' men (Pachachi 1994).

Political Expression

Shiite women's political experiences differed from their Sunni counterparts. Due to the emphasis on sectarianism during this period, Shiite women were more politically active in opposition parties against the Ba'th. Despite severe penalties for these organization's sympathizers and activists, Shiite women played an important role in these movements. Like the previous period, the Ba'th party continued to assault female relatives and members to coerce males within the opposition movement living abroad or in the country.

Since all independent political organizations were banned under the secular regime, Islamist underground organizations were seen as particularly threatening. They represented the Islamic Revolution that the secular government feared. In the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution, the al-Dawa party organized numerous anti-government rallies and carried out assassination attempts of high-ranking Ba'thi officials (Al-Ali 2007, 160). As a result, on March 31, 1980, Saddam Hussein issued Revolutionary Command Council decree No. 461 stating, "as evidence from investigations and trails prove unequivocally that the Da'wa Party is a treasonous party connected to foreigners; has betrayed the land of the nation and the objectives and interests of the Arab Nation" (Iraq Research and Documentation Project 2002). Membership to the al-Dawa party was deemed punishable by death. Severe crackdowns followed as hundreds of arrests were made (Al-Ali 2007, 160).

Due to the religious values of the al-Dawa party, veiling took on a political connotation. In a secular society, the hijab became a sign of resistance and a challenge to the regime (Al-Ali 2007, 160). Both men and women played leadership roles within the organization. One woman, Bint al-Huda was an integral part of the spiritual leadership in the al-Dawa party along with her brother, Ayatollah al-Sadr (Farouk-Sluglet and Sluglet 2001, 200; Pachachi 1994). Bint al-Huda had many female students who were also devoted to party activism. Increasing pressure from the government led to al-Sadr's house arrest. Bint al-Huda continued to politically defy the government in spite of the potential ramifications she faced. In Najaf, Bint al-Huda made a speech calling for demonstrations against her brother's house arrest and the government crackdown on his supporters (Amnesty International 2005, 3). The regime took advantage of an

assassination attempt made on Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz at Mustansariya University to accuse, arrest, and execute Bint al-Huda and her brother (Pachachi 1994 Farouk-Sluglet and Sluglet 2001, 200; Al Ali 2007, 161). Although the body of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was returned to his family, the whereabouts of Bint al-Huda were never disclosed (Amnesty International 2005).

All activists within the party and their spouses were subject to brutal torture or execution (Al-Ali 2007). In her book, *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories*, Dr. Nadje Al-Ali interviewed the only student of Bint al-Huda who survived the regime's crackdown on the al-Dawa Party. The Shiite woman, identified as Sumayya R, was active in the organization along with her husband. Her husband was killed by the regime when Sumaya was one month pregnant with her second child. A few days after his death, she was arrested and tortured. She reported:

> "I had to have my shoulder blades replaced. They beat me, and hung me by the hair. They hit me with a cable that had iron inside...I am the only one of her (Bint al-Huda) students who survived. I managed to get out of prison. Imagine, they used a woman's naked body as an ashtray and would put out their cigarettes on her body in front of religious prisoners" (Al-Ali 2007, 162).

Female activists in ethnic or religious opposition movements experienced gender-specific abuses, including rape and other forms of sexual violence (Amnesty International 2005). These violations were in addition to cruel torture, such as beating on the soles of the feet (falaqa), extended prison terms, and execution (Amnesty International 2005, 3). Throughout this period, the regime began to use women as instruments to pressure and extract information from suspected dissidents and opposition. For some women, the only link to the opposition was a blood relation to a male member. Regime tactics

involved sending dissidents videotapes of their female relatives being raped by members of the secret police (Brown and Romano 2006). These atrocities against women were so successful that the government began to systematically perfect their methods. It had been reported that some Iraqi authorities carried a personnel card identifying their official activity as the "violation of women's honor" (US Department of State 2003a). However, Dr. Robert Rabil, former Project Manager of the Iraq Research and Documentation Project, said that the claim was never officially substantiated and no documentation exists to prove these claims (Robert Rabil, pers. comm).

Along with the rest of the Shiite population, Shiite women were perceived as a threat to the nation. Therefore, unlike their Arab, Sunni counterparts, they were not encouraged to take on the roles of "producer" and "reproducer" to perpetuate Iraq's future. Shiite women were also more politically active. Due to the religious nuance of the opposition party, these women were more likely to be targeted as members since veiling distinguished their appearance. Female activists were subjected to arrest, torture, gender specific violations such as rape and sexual abuse, and execution. Saddam Hussein quickly realized the leverage that such abuse of women had, and formally implemented it into his intelligence strategy. Shiite women had fewer civil rights than most Arab Sunni women in the country. They had less access to due process since they were subject to extra-judicial arrest and punishment. Finally, citizenship and property rights were revoked because of alleged or actual Persian lineage, and thousands of women along with their families were forced into exile. Iraqi, Shiite women found every sphere of their lives severely repressed. The expansion of their political rights and civic roles that their Sunni counterparts received were not available to them.

Kurdish Women in the North

Like Shiite women, Kurdish women were viewed as a threat by the Iraqi government. Kurdish women were not expected to fulfill the same roles that Sunni women in the center were expected to fill. The regime viewed the Kurds as a danger to Iraq's stability as the Kurdish people struggled for autonomy. The restrictions that Kurdish women faced in the six spheres were similar to those that Shiite women encounter. Culture in the Kurdish regions of Iraq differs greatly from the rest of the country. Tribal customs are prevalent. This factor has affected Kurdish women in the sphere of Cultural Expression. This subsection will address how the persecution of the Kurdish people by the Ba'th party dramatically limited women in the sphere of Political expression coupled with the influences tribal customs in Kurdish society affected women's rights in the sphere of Cultural Expression.

Political Expression and Cultural Expression

The Kurdish national movement had been an ongoing concern of the Ba'th regime since 1968. Under Hasan al-Bakr, the Ba'th regime attempted to gain control of the situation by appointing three Kurdish ministers to the government. Two ministers were associated with the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), and the other was from the rival faction, which eventually became the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in 1975. Simultaneously, the regime tried to play the two Kurdish factions off against each other (Al-Ali 2007). The KDP responded with a series of military operations by Kurdish freedom fighters called Peshmerga, which resulted in Ba'th retaliation. To end the conflict, in 1970, the KDP and the Ba'th Party signed an agreement that recognized Kurdish rights, Kurdish national identity, and language, along with agrarian reforms and

Kurdish political participation. Most importantly, the Ba'th regime agreed that heavily populated Kurdish areas, determined by a census, would be granted autonomy. The autonomy issue became the focus of a conflict between the Kurds and the Ba'th. Despite the majority Kurdish population in Kirkuk, the Ba'th would not give up this oil rich area. Moreover, at the time, the Kurdish Peshmerga was militarily supported by Iran (Tripp 2000, 212). These circumstances led to the atrocities committed against the Kurdish people during the Iran/Iraq War period.

The Kurdish culture differs from the rest of the Iraqi population. Kurdish society is based on tribal customs, which tend to be conservative especially regarding views on gender roles. Iraqi Kurds desired autonomy and ethnic determination from the government. At various times, this struggle resulted in military conflict between the regime and the Kurds. The Kurds rebellion was supported by Iran, which exacerbated the tensions with the Ba'th regime. Consequently, Kurdish women experiences during the Iran/Iraq war period were radically different from the plights of other women in the country. In the previous section, Shi'a women were largely discriminated against because of religious affiliation, which the Ba'th party associated with revolution. Conversely, Kurdish women were discriminated against because of ethnicity, which the regime equated with political strife.

Despite a conservative culture, women were involved in the Kurdish struggle. Early in the struggle, they participated in roles such as cooking for the Peshmerga, providing logistical support, passing convert communications, distributing literature, and participating in party leadership (Al-Ali 2007). Among the Kurdish population, societal positions tended to be extremely gender specific. Definitive gender roles and

conservatism were ingrained in both men and women. In a telephone interview with Dr. Katrin Michael, a Kurdish Rights activist and Anfal survivor, explained this in greater detail. In her childhood, Dr. Michael noted that her mother tended to focus on gender roles more than her father. When Dr. Michael was offered a scholarship for a PHD program abroad, her mother didn't approve:

> "...My mother did not allow me to leave. She said, 'no, you are not leaving to go to study.' She said to my father, 'let her get married and let her go with her husband if she wants to study. We are not going to send her alone to Europe.' But my father told her not to interfere in my future" (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.).

Dr. Michael's father was educated under the British system and was open-minded (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.). Her mother conceded to the authority of her husband by allowing Dr Michael to study abroad. I asked her if her father's viewpoints on gender equality were prevalent among many Kurdish men, and she told me no (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.). Although gender conservative roles existed in Kurdish society, women were extremely politically and militarily active. Many women became Peshmerga. As soldiers, they were trained to use weapons, carry out military operations, and work along side the men in their unit. Moreover, they participated in military discussion with their ranking officers, offered their political opinions, and debated the opposition's tactics (Michael, forthcoming, 7-10). Kurdish women were vital to the national struggle and defense against Saddam's regime.

As the Iran/Iraq War decade progressed, Saddam Hussein committed grievous human rights violations against the Kurds. What Saddam professed to be a counter insurgency measure was actually genocide. Genocide is:

> "Any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group...[by] killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measure intended to prevent births within the groups; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group" (108th Cong., 1st sess. 2003).

The Iraqi government made its first attempt to eradicate the Kurdish population by implementing an Arabization program in Kurdish regions. These policies forcibly relocated Kurdish families from their homes and encouraged Iraqi Arab families and Egyptians to take their place (Al-Ali 2007, 163). Also, the Iraqi government offered Iraqi Arab men considerable financial incentive to marry Kurdish women (Cobbett 1986, 132). This is intended to 'breed' out the Kurdish population, which is a common strategy among regimes that commit genocide.

Starting in 1987, Saddam began a methodical eradication of the Kurdish people in the infamous Anfal Campaign. From March 29, 1987 until April 23, 1989, Ali Hassan al-Majid, cousin of Saddam Hussein and secretary general of the Northern Bureau of Iraq's Ba'th Arab Socialist Party, was granted special powers that were equivalent, in Northern Iraq, to Saddam himself (Human Rights Watch 1993). Using this authority, he presided over the Kurdish genocide. He integrated resources of the entire military, security, and civilian apparatus of the Iraqi state to "solve the Kurdish problem and slaughter the saboteurs" (Human Rights Watch 1993).

The Anfal campaigns were executed in stages, and were characterized by gross violations of human rights. These campaigns took its toll particularly on women,

children, and the elderly. According to a 1993 Human Rights Watch report, the following crimes were committed against the Kurdish people during the genocide:

- The widespread use of chemical weapons, including mustard gas and the nerve agent GB, or Sarin against the Kurdish towns and villages, killing many thousands of people, mainly women and children;
- Mass executions and disappearance of many tens of thousands of non-combatants, including large numbers of women and children.
- The wholesale destruction of some 2,000 villages along with schools, mosques, wells, and infrastructure.
- Large scale looting of civilian property and farm animals by army troops
- Arbitrary jailing and warehousing for months of tens of thousands of women, children and elderly people, for months, in conditions of extreme deprivation, without judicial order. Many hundreds of them were allowed to die of malnutrition and disease;
- Forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of villagers upon the demolition of their homes, their release from jail or return from exile. Many were forced into refugee camps in neighboring countries. Many died within a year of their forced displacement;

In 1987, in the village of Zewa, Dr. Katrin Michael was among the first to experience the chemical warfare. She was with other Peshmerga when the first attack happened around nightfall (Michael, forthcoming, 7-22). Everyone in the vicinity of the chemical attack was affected. Symptoms included burning skin, itchy eyes, blindness, blisters, darkening of the skin, respiratory complications, bleeding, and death (Michael, forthcoming, 7-22; 108th Cong., 1st sess. 2003). Dr. Michael experienced temporary blindness and other complications as her unit and their families made their way up the mountainside, out of the contaminated area (Michael, forthcoming, 7-41). In her forthcoming publication, she discussed the impact of the attack on the village and the deeply engrained views on traditional gender roles. About the attack, she stated:

> "I woke up on the fifth day to find my eyes fully open, and I was able to see again...with instructions from Dr. Abu Tathamun, we started an intensive campaign to wash all our

> clothing in the bathroom. The female comrades took on this task despite the fact that some were unable to see and had to wash the clothes and wipe their constantly tearing eyes at the same time" (Michael, forthcoming, 19).

When the doctor ordered everyone to bath, in order to limit the severity of infection and tissue damage, many individuals were still encumbered by strict gender norms and cultural reservations (Michael, forthcoming, 7-41). Despite blindness, potential permanent damage, or death, bathing arrangements had to be made. Male comrades were concerned. She remembered:

> "Gender segregated comrades, saturated with their cultural inhibitions, could (not feel comfortable) appear(ing) naked in front of women without embarrassing both genders...Others felt revolted by the idea of the necessary naked bathing since they had been raised to believe that a man should not go naked in front of anyone but his wife. The weight of inherited traditions, religion and social decorum sat heavily on some, even in this dire circumstance" (Michael, forthcoming, 23)

In a conversation with the author about these reservations, she added, "Actually in our tradition, women should not be naked in front of men and vice versa. In that moment, we were all blind. There were only a couple people who could see. Even with this blindness they didn't want to shower" (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.). These chemical attacks resulted in still born births and birth defects. Men were afraid to marry survivors of certain villages fearing deformed children (Al-Ali 2007).

In addition to the chemical warfare against the people, large numbers of women and children were among those killed in mass executions. Many women, children, and elderly people were deported to camps and forced to live under conditions of extreme deprivation (Al-Ali 2007, 166). Women and children were separated from their husbands

and father and imprisoned in various camps without any knowledge as to what happened to their male relatives. Those women who didn't return home or forced into exile simply disappeared. Many women and children were rounded up and executed at point-blank range in the face or in the back of the head then buried en masse in large pits (108th Cong., 1st sess. 2003). A recently discovered mass grave near the village of Hadhra, south of Mosul, uncovered by a team of forensic scientists, contained the remains of 300 Kurdish women and children (Amnesty International 2005). It is uncertain how many more such mass graves are yet to be discovered.

Another dimension of the Anfal campaign was the forced deportation of the Kurdish people. Those who survived the chemical attacks or imprisonment were driven out of Iraq at gunpoint. Once in exile, many lived in refuge camps. There they experienced hunger, illness, and lack of sanitation. Katrin Michael was among them.

> "We were forced...Shells were running after us as we were running to the border. We crossed the border with children and animals to Turkey, running for our lives...it was fall, so it started to get cold... They took us to the refugee camp on the border...I stayed in the camp for 11 months...It was a very bad situation. There were 17000 people there. Every day people were dying...Children and old people were dying. (Although) there wasn't a choice on where we would go, we left. Why should we stay there and die?" (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.)

Kurdish women also experienced specific assaults used against Shiite women in the South. Sexual exploitation and rape were part of the government's suppression of the Kurds. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, documents were uncovered showing correspondence between the Kirkuk Intelligence Directorate and the General Intelligence Directorate regarding the identification of 18 women and girls, aged between 14 and 29,

who had been detained in the Anfal campaign and sent to nightclubs in Egypt (Amnesty International 2005). Moreover, rape was another weapon used against Kurdish women during the Anfal campaign. Due to the regional, conservative customs, the regime understood that the rape of Kurdish women would be both demoralizing to the individual and a source of family 'shame' (Al-Ali 2007, 167). Some women who survived the regime's sexual assaults became the victims of honor killings by family members and fellow Kurds (Mojab 2000, 93).

Kurdish women play many roles within their society. They were expected to maintain their gender roles while actively participating in the opposition movement. As the government used gender specific violations against Kurdish women, Kurdish tribal custom regarding women and family honor resulted in crimes committed against women by their own people. For example, some Kurdish women became victims of honor killing if they were sexually assaulted at the hands of the regime. Due to the violence by the Ba'th, Kurdish women experienced severe repression in every sphere of their life. They had no political rights under the Ba'th. Genocide, deportation, and mass persecution limited access to education, work and mobility, health and sexual control, and family formation. Ultimately, the most crucial liberty, the right to life, was denied them. It was estimated that approximately 100,000 Kurds lost their lives during this time (108th Cong., 1st sess. 2003). Large percentages lost were women. However, after the Anfal campaign, Kurdish women took the initiative to begin healing and rebuilding their rights. The Women's Union of Kurdistan was established to help women deal with their trauma and also promoted women's rights (Mojab 2003, 24; Al-Ali 2007, 168).

Section Summary

During this period, Iraqi women experienced changes in every aspect of their lives. As the men went to the front, many Sunni women were pressured to enter the workforce to sustain the economy and run the government bureaucracy. Simultaneously, they were expected to have many children to replace the losses on the battlefield. Women were no longer in control of their choice in marriage partners since laws forbade certain groups from marrying. Women were not in control of their bodies since the government outlawed contraceptive. The Ba'th party used propaganda that depicted images of women as helpless and in need of protection to motivate soldiers on the battlefield. Women's honor was portrayed as a national symbol to be defended. This began to reinforce conservative gender norms and patriarchal values that would resurface in later periods.

Kurdish and Shiite women's political participation in opposition movements increased during this period. Women played political, spiritual, and military roles within these parties despite conservative religious values or ethnic tribal customs. Ultimately, these women experienced grave human rights violations. Citizenship rights and property rights were stripped away from these women as they were forced into exile. Civil rights such as due process of law was denied them as they were arbitrarily arrested, tortured, and executed without trial. Even the most basic right to life was denied them.

In this period, it can be concluded that all women in this period had experienced regime manipulation and oppression that resulted in less rights and freedoms with increased responsibilities from their political authorities. Any expansion of roles or rights within a particular sphere was implemented to benefit the regime. Every one of the

six spheres that measure women's freedom was restricted. Any aspects within a particular area that were relaxed were conditional.

Chapter Five: 1990 to 2002

The following chapter will evaluate how the Ba'th party changed its platform from Arab Nationalism to tribalism and Islamization, during the period 1990 to 2002, and its effect on women's roles. This chapter will examine how factors such as tribalism, war, and economic sanctions influenced these changes within the Ba'th party, and how they altered women's freedoms within the six spheres. The dramatic restrictions primarily affected women in south and central Iraq. This chapter will analyze the conditions that created an anomaly in Iraqi Kurdistan, which allowed for great expansion in the area of political expression. To conclude, a brief overview of women's movements in the Iraqi diaspora and their impacts on Iraqi women will be discussed. As a point of departure, this chapter will begin with circumstances that contributed to the shift in the Ba'th party's ideology.

Ba'th Party Platform: Secularism to Tribalism

The Ba'th party changed its platform during the period 1990 to 2002. Only two years of peace followed the Iran/Iraq War before Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. The United Nations imposed comprehensive economic sanctions on Iraq after Saddam Hussein refused to withdraw his troops. Security Council Resolution 661 mandated a complete ban on trade to and from Iraq, exempting only 'supplies intended strictly for medical purpose, and in humanitarian circumstances (Para. 3c) such as foodstuffs, which included items such as baby's milk (Arkin et al. 1991, 5). A blockade banned air travel and blocked seaports. International banking ceased to operate, and all Iraqi assets abroad

were frozen (Graham-Brown 1999, 57). Any personal or private business transfers were outlawed. The intense bombing by coalition forces destroyed most of the country's infrastructure, including electrical grids, factories, storage facilities, and buildings (Abdullah 2003, 195).

As a result, the regime was plagued by a financial and legitimacy crisis. In an attempt to safeguard its authority, the Ba'th party shifted its rhetoric from Arab Nationalism to tribalism and increased religiosity, in order to appeal to the conservative male population and religious establishment. The regime used women as bargaining chips to gain their support. The government accepted tribal practices and customs, such as honor killings, in exchange for loyalty (Al Ali 2007). The compromise led to increased social conservatism and sectarianism throughout Iraq, which dramatically altered gender roles for all women. Moreover, war and sanctions brought severe economic hardship for women and their families

After Kuwait's liberation, President George H.W. Bush encouraged the Iraqi people to revolt against the regime (Al Ali 2007, 182). Rebellions broke out in the Shiite populated areas in the south and the Kurdish populations in the north. Rebels looted government facilities and killed Ba'th Party Officials. In the documentary, *Iraqi Women: Voices from Exile,* a Shiite woman described the vigilante activities:

> "It started in Basra and moved from Karbala and Nadjaf. Many Iraqi officials and their henchmen were taken to the mosques for tribunals, and then executed. Some who were lynched didn't even make it to the mosques. They were killed outright, on the streets" (Pachachi 1994).

At the Intifada's peak, all of Iraq except Baghdad and its surrounding areas were in the rebel's control (Al Ali 2007, 182).

Saddam Hussein used the Republican Guards to brutally suppress the rebellion. The Iraqi army marched through Karbala and neighboring regions, rounded up all the young men and executed them (Pachachi 1994). Saddam further decimated the region by draining the marshes where insurgents were rumored to be hiding (Abdullah 2003, 195-196). Greenpeace estimated that twenty thousand to thirty thousand Iraqi civilians died when the government put down the rebellion (Arkin et al. 1991). Many Shiite and Kurdish women felt betrayed by the international community and the United States for not supporting Iraqis' attempts to remove Saddam from power (Katrin Michael pers. comm). In an interview with author, Katrin Michaels, a Kurdish political activist and Anfal survivor, expressed her disappointment:

> "I had an interview with C-Span in 2003, and they asked me about the Gulf War. I said the biggest mistake Americans made was to leave Saddam in power. The people had risen up, and they were very close to toppling the regime. They (the coalition) could have removed him and taken Saddam from power! The regime was very, very weak. Instead, they (the coalition) pulled out! Saddam stayed and killed all those people" (Katrin Michael pers. comm.).

The regime experienced financial difficulty due to two wars and economic sanctions. Even more critical, it was having a legitimacy crisis as a result of the Intifada. Despite his success at quashing the rebellion, Saddam needed to gain a broad base of support if he was going to maintain his authority. The regime recognized the potential to regain its popularity by acquiring the support of the tribal leaders and religious establishment. The Ba'th shifted its party rhetoric from Arab Nationalism to increased

tribalism and Islamization. Saddam, himself, also refashioned his values and policies to reflect this change. He declared himself a direct descendent of the Prophet Mohammad, and modified his family tree in several mosques to show the connection (Soler 2003). Anyone who questioned his lineage was put to death. His official titles included, "Servant of God, The Believer, and The Leader of All Muslims" (Soler 2003). He launched the National Faith Campaign (al-Hamla al-Wataniyya al-Imaniyya). This campaign was marked by public displays of religious devotion and the construction of mosques throughout the country. Patrimonial ties and patronage systems were reestablished to ensure loyalty of clan leaders (Abdul-Jaber and Dawod 2003; Tripp 2000; Al Ali 2007). Regime favoritism among Sunnis, especially those from Takrit, further alienated the Shiite population. The sectarian tensions escalated and later were exacerbated after Saddam's fall in 2003.

In addition, the regime used women as bargaining chips in exchange for tribal loyalty. Tribal customs, such as honor killings and traditional gender roles became acceptable. This resulted in more social conservatism and a return to patriarchy. Moreover, war and sanctions financially crippled the state, and comprehensive benefits, vocational training, and educational programs were no longer offered. The breakdown of the welfare state had a disproportionate effect on women, who had been its main beneficiaries (Al Ali 2007, 186). The regime's ideological shift toward tribalism had a dramatic effect on women in southern and central Iraq. These circumstances along with the Gulf War and economic sanctions several limited women of these two regions in all six spheres.

Work and Mobility

From 1968 to 1980, the Ba'th party encouraged men and women to work together as partners towards building a modern nation. During the Iran/Iraqi war, the government relied on women to fill the vacancies in the work force, run the government bureaucracy, and reproduce to replace the dwindling population. The regime quickly implemented training programs, employment benefits, and subsidies as incentives for women to work while raising a large family. Once the regime co-opted tribalism, women were expected to resume the traditional gender role of obedient housewife and mother. Her place was in the home, away from both work and the opposite. Umm bait muhtaram (the respectable housewife) replaced the educated, working woman as the ideal Iraqi woman (Al Ali 2007, 189). The ideological shift within gender roles did not only occur solely in terms of femininity. Definitions of what constituted masculinity also changed. Previously, the model Iraqi man was educated and modern. In this period, the man's main priority was to be the sole provider, so his wife would not have to abandon her role as wife and mother by working outside the home (Husein 2005, 107; Al-Ali 2007, 188-89).

The government slowly withdrew its funding from state programs for nurseries, kindergartens, and free public transportation that working women utilized. Daycare and transportation costs were now coming out of the family's income. Public service workers, who were mainly women, saw a dramatic decrease in salaries after the Iran/Iraq War (Al Ali 2007). Concurrently lowering salaries were coupled with rising inflation. Changing views on gender roles began to limit women in the private sector since few professions were seen as suitable for women. Teaching and nursing was soon regarded as women's work. However, after the Iran/Iraq and Gulf Wars, soldiers returned home

and wanted to resume work. Therefore, women found themselves competing for these jobs as well. These conditions compelled women to leave the formal workforce all together. Prior to 1991, twenty three percent of Iraqi women worked outside the home, which was the highest percentage in the region; however, by 1997, the rate fell to only ten percent (UNIFEM).

In the late 1990's, laws were passed, which were written that specifically kept women out of the labor force. In 1998, the government dismissed all females working as secretaries in governmental agencies (Iraq Foundation 2000). In 2000, new laws required all state ministries put restrictions on women working outside the home (Iraq Foundation 2000). Professional women in both southern and central Iraq were forced back into traditional gender roles that required them to stay at home.

After economic sanctions were imposed, Iraq had major food shortages. Families could not feed their families despite monthly food rations. This posed a serious problem for women, particularly those who were heads of household, since they faced inflation, meager salaries, and high unemployment. In order to compensate for limited opportunities in the formal sector, women became major participants in the informal sector. Informal sector jobs included sewing clothes, baking, cleaning houses, and babysitting. These small home-based businesses that generated profit needed to have special permits to operate. The government granted these licenses only to women who could prove they were destitute (Cainkar 1993, 30). The destitute were considered to be widows, divorcees, or deserted. For other women, 'reading' coffee cups, concocting potions, casting love spells, and selling on the black market supplemented their income (Nadje Al Ali, pers. comm.; Cainkar 1993).

Supply shortages and the regime's increasing conservatism began to peak in the late 1990's, and women found it more difficult to work in the informal sector. Flour, gas, cylinders, and other resources need to operate small home based business became unaffordable (Cainkar 1993). Also, the regime brutally cracked down on illegal activities such as prostitution.

In the sphere of work and mobility, Iraqi women became severely limited. The regime's changing values pushed women out for the formal sector with the intention of confining them to their homes. However, women did not remain passive. Faced with the challenges of increased social conservatism, limited employment opportunity, and shortages, women were determined to feed and clothe their families. The informal sector provided women avenues to generate income. However, women were further restricted in this sphere as the humanitarian crisis escalated and brutal regime crackdowns on morality ensued. Women became unable to maneuver the informal sector. Never in Iraq's modern history did women experience such challenges and suppression in the area of work and mobility. Women no longer had the freedom or the resources to be self-sufficient.

Education

Women's education also began to suffer in the 1990's. Notwithstanding the regime's turn toward conservatism and religiosity, the government did not appear to make any decrees barring girls' education. The Gulf War and economic sanctions were the primary factors that contributed to the sharp reduction in this sphere. Once the embargo was in place, families could not afford to send all their children to school. Boys and young men, as future providers, were sent to school while young girls stayed at home

(Human Rights Watch 2003) to assist with care taking, food gathering, and other domestic tasks.

Girls still attending school faced inadequately supplied facilities that hindered the learning experience. United Nations Children's Fund estimated that more than fifty percent of the schools in southern and central Iraq were unfit for both teaching and learning (UNICEF 2004, 2). The Gulf War left schools destroyed or in severe disrepair. The economic sanctions caused shortages of basic school supplies, classroom equipment, and textbooks. In the previous period, by 1987, seventy-five percent of Iraqi women were literate due to the regime's national literacy campaign. However after the Gulf War, ill-equipped schools and decreasing enrollment among girls resulted in widespread illiteracy among women. Less than twenty-five percent of Iraqi women were able to read by 2000 (Human Rights Watch 2003). A bizarre phenomenon occurred where mothers and grandmothers were more educated than the younger generation. UNICEF reported that over half of the women aged fourteen to forty-nine did not have any education (UNICEF 2003, 56). For many women, marriage seemed like the only option for a better life.

Iraqi women were among the most educated in the region during previous Ba'th periods. During this period, women no longer had opportunities in the educational sphere. When evaluating women's freedom in the area of education, the difference between men and women's curriculum is evaluated (Geile 1977; Moghadam 1998). In this case, the regime did not change the public school curriculum for either sex. However, the economic sanctions severely limited children's ability to learn since schools were poorly equipped. Moreover, many families could not afford to send their

girls to school, so boys became the primary recipients of education. These factors either restricted women's access to education or eliminated it entirely.

Family

Iraqi women had further constraints in the family sphere. During the Iran/Iraq War decade, women were limited in their choice of martial partners. Women were forbidden to marry outside of their ethnicity or religious denomination due to sectarianism in society and the government. After the Gulf War, further limitations in this sphere were the direct results of tribalism and poverty. Women no longer weighted their marriage prospects based on love and education, which was how Iraqis defined a 'good' husband (Husein 2005, 186-9; Ali Ali 2007, 196). The regime's new tribal values forced more women back into their homes by limiting employment opportunities. Economic sanctions placed financial burdens as women faced dwindling resources. Therefore, the ideal husband was one who could provide for his wife (Husein 2005, 186-9; Al Ali 2007, 196). Arranged marriages took place during the 1990's. Many families married their daughters to older expatriates (Al Ali 2007, 197). This guaranteed that the girl was provided for and the core family had one less mouth to feed.

The government relaxed polygamy laws during the 1980's. However, polygamy previously occurred in rural areas or among uneducated people (Al-Ali 2000, 79). Throughout the 1990's, polygamy became more prevalent in urban areas. The regime's shift toward social conservatism and family's financial burdens encouraged polygamy. The large populations of widows created by the Iran/Iraq War did not solely cause this phenomenon. Women found themselves abandoned as married men went abroad to escape tough conditions. Many men tried to find work outside Iraq to support their

families, yet others just left their wives and children after failing to meet the new social expectation as sole provider (Al Ali 2007, 200). Polygamy became an attractive option for so many abandoned and destitute women.

As society reverted back to traditional gender roles, women were expected to be solely responsible for the home. They were responsible for managing, purchasing, or producing the goods and services necessary for the family's survival (Al-Khayyat 1990; Cainkar 1993). The home and all its responsibilities were considered women's territory.

Iraqi women improvised to assure their family survival. The household became the base of economic and human survival during this period. After the sanctions began, the government implemented a nationwide food rationing and distribution system. Each family was supplied with food coupons that entitled each individual, food staples such as flour, rice, sugar, and baby formula at highly subsidized prices. Nonetheless, the embargo and war caused the governments stocks to diminish. Therefore, food allotment per person was cut by almost half (Canikar 1993, 21). In January 1993, the government cut that reduced allotment by another twenty five percent (Cainkar 1993, 21). Women reported that rations lasted only ten to fifteen days (UNICEF 2000). For the rest of the month, an additional eight hundred dinars was required to purchase food at normal dietary levels for a family of six (Dreze and Gazdar 1992). Food sold on the private market became unaffordable as inflation skyrocketed. Inflation was at one hundred and forty percent (Canikar 1993). A Baghdadi family's monthly income ranged from four hundred dollars to one thousand four hundred dollars (Canikar 1993), which made the private market a last resort option. The primary concern of every Iraqi woman was how and what to feed her family under these impossible conditions. This required much

planning, innovation, and sacrifice since the sanctions and the war prevented women from stocking and storing food.

On a daily basis, women had to inventory rationed food and family assets. It was the duty of the woman to decide what to sell and what to keep when a purchase needed to be made. According to the International Study Team (IST), women sold their gold, portions of their marriage dowry, and independent financial security before selling any other household items to purchase provisions (Cainkar 1993, 23). For families who ran out of items to sell, women fed their family grasses and plants (Dreze and Gazdar 1992). Perhaps, the most difficult task pertaining to food that an Iraqi woman had to make was prioritizing who in the family was going to be fed first. Children were first priority. Adult women including pregnant women sacrificed and chose to eat last (Cainkar 1993, 24). Despite women's food intake restriction or foregoing food all together, conflicts still arose between family members. Continued hunger began to erode patience and composure. Quarrels and fights about food in some families were reported (Dreze and Gazdar 1992). The woman's role of feeding her family took place in the context of no electricity, no transportation, no clean water, little or no cooking fuel, no communication from the outside work, no health car, and a crumbling infrastructure.

Retrieving water was also women's responsibility as it was a household necessity. The importance of finding water was perhaps more important than finding food. Water was needed for drinking, cooking, cleaning, and washing. The first chore of the day consisted of women and children carrying buckets and containers to the nearest water source (Cainkar 1993, 24; UNICEF 2003, 22-24). The rest of the day's work could not be done without water. After the Gulf War, public works and sanitation did not operate.

Water sources were contaminated. Rivers and streams were flooded by untreated sewage. All water collected had to be boiled. Boiling water became progressively more difficult since it required cooking fuel that was either scarce or very expensive. When the government had fuel to provide, women spent their entire day standing in long lines to purchase it. Women then had to allocate the use of fuel between sterilizing water, cooking bathing, washing, cleaning, and heating the home (UNICEF 2003, 22-24). Consumption of contaminated water frequently caused illness, especially among children.

Women still had to wash and clean under these strenuous water shortages. With the infrastructure destroyed during the Gulf War, sewage continuously backed up into the house. Families who had no relatives to go to lived within one room of their home (UNICEF 2003, 22-24). Since there was no solution to the public works disaster, eventually women did not waste water trying to clean up the sewage since it constantly returned. Women laundered their clothes in rivers and streams if they did not collect enough water on a particular day (UNICEF 2003, 22-24). These rivers, which flowed with untreated sewage, also were the source of drinking water.

In addition to these tasks, women were also responsible for childcare. Many children did not attend school, and required constant supervisions. Additionally, many children were traumatized by their dire circumstances. Children experienced severe emotional disturbance that were triggered by nightly bombings during the Gulf War. These emotional disturbances included loss of appetite, bedwetting, listlessness, weight loss, sleeplessness, phobias, panic-reaction, behavioral regression to early childhood, and involuntary urination (UNICEF 2003; Cainkar 1993). Women reported that their children constantly clung to them (Pachachi 1994). Hunger exacerbated these conditions.

Women soothed and comforted their children since many women were raising their children alone. In October 2003, UNICEF reported that in Basra sixty percent of all households were headed by women (UNICEF 2003).

The sphere of family and marriage was severely repressed during this time. Women did not merely lack choices in this sphere, but were burdened with awesome responsibilities. Changing gender values made women solely responsible for the home, thus their family's survival. Challenges that women faced in this arena had to be met with little or no financial assistance and resources. Iraqi women's ability to maximize their potential under such repressive conditions played a vital role in the nation's survival. Although hundreds of thousands perished during this period, those who were saved owed their lives largely to the work of women (Cainkar 1993).

Health and Sexual Control

In some Middle Eastern countries, women are restricted from accessing health care due to patriarchal values that prohibit women from seeking medical attention without the consent or accompaniment of a male relative. Despite women's restrictions in these countries, health care does exist. In Iraq, several factors contributed to women's restriction in the area of health and sexual control. First and foremost, the entire health care system simply shut down during the Gulf War. The bombing campaign destroyed most hospitals and medical facilities. Second, once sanctions were imposed, health care facilities lacked supplies and staff needed to sustain adequate medical care. Although medication was not included in the sanctions, they were barred de facto from entry (Dreze and Gazdar 1991). Since only the Security Council could authorize any shipment of goods into Iraq, medication, along with other supplies, were held up from their

destination due to lengthy bureaucratic process. Third, the regime policies regarding reproduction from the Iran/Iraq War decade carried over into the new period. Contraceptives were still illegal. Finally, women experienced psychological stress that undermined their health.

During the Iran/Iraq War period, the regime barred contraceptives and encouraged women to have large families to replace lost life on the battlefield. Birth control was still legally unavailable during the sanctions period. However, women's attitude toward reproduction had changed significantly due to new circumstances. Many women fear congenital diseases due to environmental pollution; a decline in moral climate; and poor financial conditions (Al Ali 2007). Since the regime outlawed family planning, some women risked their lives to have illegal abortions (Al Ali 2007, 198). Many of these procedures were performed in unsanitary conditions. Women were at risk of infection.

Pregnant women faced complications that prevented carrying babies to term. The Gulf War bombings released thousands of tons of toxic chemicals into the air, water, and soil with the destruction of oil installations, pipelines, and refineries (Ammash 2000, 172). These environmental pollutants contributed to birth defects. In addition, the use of Depleted Uranium (DU), a potent radioactive carcinogen, by coalition forces also caused genetic defects, stillbirths, and miscarriages (Al Ali 2007). Moreover, DU caused a steep rise in cancer rates among Iraqi women (El-Awady 2003). Depleted Uranium spreads through the body and is deposited on organs such as liver, kidneys, spleen, and brain through means of inhalation, ingestion, or open wounds (El-Awady 2003). Women married to Iraqi soldiers were particularly vulnerable to problems in reproductive health.

Incidences of miscarriage in pregnancies were 3.2 times higher if a woman's husband was a soldier in 1991 (El-Awady 2003).

The health care system completely shut down during the Gulf War. Some women attempted to reach the hospital to give birth only to find that the hospital was closed. In such cases, both mother and child died because medical staff was not on hand. In the documentary *Iraqi Women: Voices from Exile*, one woman said:

> "I went to the government hospital to give birth. When I arrived, I saw the bodies of about 50 women outside the hospital. They had come to have their babies and hemorrhaged because there was no one to help them. No doctors. No nurses. No supplies. They died right there on the street" (Pachachi 1994).

Despite the reopening of hospitals after the Gulf war, most facilities were inadequately equipped to provide previous levels of services. Lack of transportation and money restricted women to home remedies. Most Iraqi women delivered their children at home. In rural areas more than 70% of deliveries took place at home compared to 47% before the war (UNICEF 2003). An increase in home deliveries jeopardized the health of new mothers. An increase in post-partum infections was reported among women as a result of such birthing conditions (Cainkar 1993). Women who had access to a hospital were not guaranteed a full term pregnancy or successful childbirth. Poor living conditions and pre-natal nutrition contributed to large numbers of miscarriages. Doctors in Mosul reported that 429 reported miscarriages occurred during the war, which was double the normal rate (Cainkar 1993).

With more destitute women during this period, the rate of child mortality rose. Infant deaths were at their highest during the 1990's (Al Ali 2007). The limitations women experienced in the sphere of health and sexual control did not just restrict their freedom. Ultimately, it cut women's life expectancy. US Census Bureau concluded that the life expectancy for an Iraqi woman born in 1991 was fifty-seven years old, which was down from sixty-eight years old prior to the Gulf War (Burns 1992).

Cultural Expression

Saddam Hussein embraced tribal values to gain support and legitimacy after the Intifada weakened the regime. Previously implemented state policies and programs that promoted gender equality were rolled back. The regime instituted patriarchy in exchange for loyalty. Social conservatism came from the top down, but increased religiosity came more from the bottom up. Sanctions and economic hardship fostered an atmosphere of distrust among the population (Al Ali 2007). People became more involved in the affairs of others since limited employment opportunities left individuals with significant time on their hands (Al Ali 2007). Women represented family honor in this period. Women's activities and behavior had the potential to generate gossip, thus family shame. Families were increasingly concerned about their women's virtue. Therefore, within both the government and greater society, Iraqi women became the bearers of the honor of the whole country (Al Ali 2007, 201).

A change in women's dress code was the most obvious indication of Islamization. Women were pressured to wear the abaya and long, loose fitting clothing (Al Ali 2007, 203). It symbolized purity. Also, veiling discouraged gossip, especially pertaining to talk of family honor (Al Ali and Hussein 2003, 46). Despite the term Islamization, it

must be stressed that veiling and social conservatism was also prevalent among Iraqi Christians. All women were subjected to escalating social pressures and religious observation. The hijab was the most visible sign of religious adherence and good moral conduct (Al Ali 2007, 204). Christian and Muslim women alike had to conform to new social expectations.

Along with religiosity came superstition. The urban population rekindled beliefs in spirit possessions and exorcism. These beliefs previously existed among rural people who had little education. Women capitalized on this phenomenon in the informal market. They provided goods and services such as love spells, potions, and tealeaf reading (Nadje Al Ali, pers. comm.). By marketing their services in witchcraft, they generated income to feed their families.

Women became limited in their cultural expression. The regime and society as a whole embraces social conservatism and traditional gender roles. Women were expected to exude modesty and decency. They had to fill the roles of honorable wife and mother. Veiling and remaining at home reinforced the notion that decent women were not to be seen. Tribalism strengthened patriarchal values, which put women at a disadvantage. Women were no longer viewed as equals, and could not express themselves as such. These restrictions in the cultural sphere carried over into the last remaining arena of political expression, since women were unable to object to atrocities that the regime committed against them.

Political Expression

All political rights that women gained in the previous period were lost during this time. New laws passed limited women's access to formal recourse in civil and criminal

matters. Moreover, mandates that limited women's employment also impacted their participation in the government. Women were forced to leave their posts within the bureaucracy, thus became absent from the political process. All six spheres that measure women's freedom were now severely impacted.

The government passed several laws that were presented as safeguards for women's honor, but actually promoted violence against women. Saddam Hussein appeased conservative patriarchal constituencies with anti-woman legislation, such as the 1990 presidential decree that granted immunity to men who had committed honor crimes (Al Ali 2007, 202). Revolutionary Command Council Decree No: 111, dated February 28, 1990 relaxed the penalties incurred for those who committed honor killings. The revolution command stated "no person shall be liable for penal prosecution if he kills or commits the premeditated killing of his mother, daughter, sister, female cousin or niece to wash out dishonor" (IRDP document 1035687). Moreover, it further stated that the killing could extend to men who perpetrated indecent acts with the aforementioned women (IRDP document 1035687). Those who committed honor crimes needed little evidence to prove that such acts of adultery existed. Since the 'guilty party' was already dead, there was no one to protest the validity of such claims. This law was abrogated only two months after it was enacted (Al-Ali 2007, 2002; Nadje Al-Ali, pers. comm.). It was one of the few times during this period that women's protests to such gender violence were heeded. The author spoke to social anthropologist and expert on Iraqi women, Dr. Nadje Al Àli, about this moratorium:

> "It was withdrawn. Actually, the General Federation of Iraq women managed to revert this law. After two or three months, it was withdrawn.

> Very few people know about this. Certainly in some regions more than others, such as in the north, there were more honor killings than in the south due to the more tribal areas. In the rural areas, of course, more than urban areas...ultimately, however, the decree was withdrawn" (Nadje Al Ali pers. comm.).

Women without employment sometimes turned to prostitution to generate income for their family. The regime did not initially prosecute prostitutes, since the main clientele consisted of nouveau rich sanction profiteers (Al Ali 2007, 200) who were in Saddam's inner circle. However, Iraqi prostitutes began to cross the border to find more clientele. Many went to Jordan. The Jordanian government complained to the regime about the growing problem.

Saddam attempted to curb prostitution. He passed laws and launched campaigns that he said would protect women's honor. The first decree restricted women's freedom of movement. Women under forty five could not travel abroad without a male relative to escort them (Human Rights Watch 2003; Al Ali 2005). This law, however, did not stop prostitution, so more violent actions were taken by the regime. Women were targeted by the Fedayeen Saddam campaign, which consisted of a group of young men linked to Uday Hussein. They hunted down and beheaded prostitutes and pimps (Amnesty International Report 2001). Amnesty International reported that more than three hundred prostitute and pimps were beheaded beginning in October 2000 (Amnesty International Report 2001). No trials were conducted to prove the validity of any claims linking a woman to prostitution. Many women were beheaded in the streets in front of neighbors, family, and children, and their heads displayed at their front door for several days (International Federation for Human Rights 2002, 22). The government professed that

this campaign was to eradicate prostitution, which it now vehemently condemned. However, there were underlying motives beyond women's honor and the condemnation of prostitution. It was reported that many targeted women were not actually prostitutes. They were the wives of political opposition (International Federation for Human Rights 2002, 22). The hunt for prostitutes instilled fear within the general population of women. Women became increasingly concerned about their reputation. A woman was not seen out on the street without purpose. Many women feared that neighbors might suspect that prostitution, if they were seen out (Nadje Al Ali pers. comm.). Saddam's campaign did not stop prostitution. Although it created a big scare among the Iraqi population, "it did not stop all prostitutes" (Nadje Al Ali pers. comm.). Women did not have access to legal representation or recourse against erroneous accusations made about their character. Judgment was dealt without due process. Punishments were cruel and unusual.

Shiite women were particularly vulnerable to human rights violations by the government. There was violent backlash against the Shiite community after the Intifada. Many Shiites were arrested, tortured, and executed without due process of law. The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) surveyed approximately two thousand individuals in Southern Iraq. The survey focused on life in Iraq and views on women's rights. Forty-seven percent of those interviewed reported one or more of the following abuses among themselves and/or household members since 1991: torture, killings, disappearance, forced conscription, beatings, gunshot wounds, kidnapping, being held hostage and ear amputation (Amowitz et al. 2004). Ninety-five percent of these offenses were inflicted by the regime itself or a Ba'th party affiliated group; moreover fifty-three percent of the abuses occurred between 1991 and 1993, following the Shi'a

uprising (Amowitz et al. 2004). Saddam's security forces or secret police carried out the arrests during the night. Physicians for Human Rights interviewed a woman who was arrested and tortured in 1991. She reported that the local police and Ba'th party members came to her home in Najaf at four o'clock in the morning. She and her husband were arrested, and the couple's young children were left home unattended. She was beaten and tortured while in custody. Since she was pregnant at the time of her arrest, the beating she received caused her to miscarry (Amowitz et al. 2004). In these instances, it appeared that the only crime that these women were guilty of was that they were all Shiites. In this case, this woman and her husband were not involved in any opposition group. They did not violate any laws. The regime's suspicions and subsequent actions were mainly based on ethnicity or religious affiliation.

Women became increasingly under-represented within the government. The General Federation of Iraqi Women (GWIF), the state supported women's organization, no longer had the same influence on gender based policy making. They became more restricted in their activities and their functions. Despite their efforts that resulted in the reversal of the decree on honor killings, the GWIF was ultimately sidelined and marginalized (Nadje Al Ali pers. comm.). Women were also absent from the highest ranks of the Ba'thist regime. In 1998, a report published by the United Nations Children's Fund indicated that the proportion of women in the Iraqi National Assembly had declined from 13.2% in 1984 to 10.8% in 1990 (Pina 2006, 7). Women were unable to contest the government. Any form of such political expression was view as a threat to the regime, and was dealt with swiftly.

For Iraqi women in the south and central part of the country, the sphere of political expression was the most restricted during this time than previous periods of this study. Women's political rights such as freedom of movement; freedom to organize; participation in political process; right to contestation; protection against physical harm; political representation; freedom of speech; and access to an impartial judiciary process and law had completely broke down.

Women in Iraqi Kurdistan

While women throughout Iraq experience serious limitations in all six spheres, women in Iraqi Kurdistan had unprecedented expansions in some of these arenas. They began to create a robust civil society through social organizations and political participation. After the Intifada, the Kurdish people and the international community feared that Saddam Hussein would strike against the North with chemical weapons. In 1991, the United Nations instituted a no-fly zone in the north to prevent such attacks. This created what was known as the Safe Haven. The creation of the Safe Haven "enabled Kurdish women, who already had a long history of activism within political parties, to increase their involvement through participation in women's union, women's organizations, and groups not linked to political parties" (Al Ali and Pratt 2008, 75).

During the first years of sanctions, poverty and hunger impacted the entire country, including Iraqi Kurdistan. Moreover, the north suffered a double embargo: one imposed by the United Nations and the other by the Iraqi government on the region (Al Ali 2007, 205). However, in 1997, the Oil for Food Program based on Security Council Resolution 986 was introduced to relieve the humanitarian crisis. It allowed Iraq to export restricted amounts of oil and use the money to buy basic goods. The money was kept in a

closely monitored UN bank account. In 1996, the Iraqi government finally agreed to the conditions for Oil for Food Program that the Security Council had established. Goods started to flow into the country in March 1997 (Garfield 2000, 39). The Oil for Food Program impacted the economic conditions in the north more positively than the rest of the country. The north had nine percent of the land area of Iraq but nearly fifty percent of the productive arable land, thus the north received higher levels of assistance per person (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations 2000). Furthermore, in northern Iraq, the Oil for Food Program included a cash component that the rest of the country did not receive (Al Ali 2007, 206). The semi-autonomous region used UN agencies for distribution of food and medicine. These agencies were far more efficient than those organized by the Iraqi government. Also, the northern border was much more permeable to embargoed commodities than the rest of the country (Al Ali 2007, 206). Finally, the north had an abundance of humanitarian agencies operating in its territory. In 1999, there were than thirty-four NGOs in the north, while the rest of the country only had eleven (Al Ali 2007, 206). These factors culminated into a flourishing economy, which created jobs. Kurdish women gained more opportunities in the employment sphere as a result.

Kurdish women had more freedoms in both the spheres of cultural and political expression. They became more visible in civil society through activism. Kurdish women wanted to raise awareness about gender equality. Women's organizations and shelters that attended to Kurdish women's issue proliferated. The Independent Women's Organization (IWO) set up a shelter in Sulamaniyya, and addressed violence against women, honor killings, and women's self immolations (Al Ali 2007, 207).

The expansions Kurdish women experienced in these spheres do not imply that there were not challenges to these political openings. Kurdish society has man tribal customs that dictate gender roles. Men tend to socially conservative. For example, Kurdish women sought more representation and participation in the government. In the previous period, women peshmergas had fought along side their male counterparts. Despite traditionalist gender roles, women debated military strategies and fought in military skirmishes for their people's survival. In the Iran/Iraq war period, both men and women fought for Kurdish rights. In this period, with semi-autonomy, Kurdish women were now arguing for gender rights. It created division among more conservative men. Women's initiatives and political participation were now regard suspiciously and were even opposed by some Kurdish political actors (Al Ali 200, 2077). Kurdish women activists campaigning against widespread honor killings in the north were harassed. A newly established women's shelter for victims of domestic violence had to close down due to political opposition (Al Ali 2007). Women were threatened and harassed by male political leaders until the shelter was forced to close in 2000 (Al Ali 2007).

The political leadership of both Kurdish factions used women as bargaining chips, in the same fashion as Saddam Hussein, to co-opt patriarchal tribal leaders. Political party leaders stated that women's oppression, including honor killings, were part of their Kurdish tribal and Islamic culture (Mojab 2004; 122). This rhetoric hindered gender equality in the north. Women found themselves politically sidelined. This was evident during the 1992 elections. Women and men were forced to line up separately to cast their votes, although Kurdish men and women used to socialize freely in rural areas (Al Ali 2007). Ultimately, only five of the one hundred and five elected members of parliament

were women (Mojab 2004; 119). Although these challenges existed, Kurdish women continued to work toward more political and cultural expression. Women's organizations are designed to education the population and address gender biases in order to promote continued growth in these spheres.

Kurdish women did not have the same development in the sphere as in the aforementioned areas. There were not sufficient laws that protected women in the area of marital rights. Moreover, tribal customs fostered patriarchy in the home, which led to marginalization and violence against women. For example, domestic violence against women increased since the establishment of the 'safe haven' in 1991 and the creation of an autonomous government, the Regional Government of Kurdistan, in 1992 (Al Ali 2007). Honor killings and self-immolation, suicide by burning, proliferated during this time. Kurdish Women Against Honor Killings (KWAHK) reported that between 1991 and 1998 hundreds of women had died in honor killings in Iraqi Kurdistan. The report listed more than one hundred individual cases of women killed by their husbands, brothers, cousins, and other family members in northern Iraq for reasons such as adultery, refusing to marry against one's will, or leaving home to marry a man that the family did not approve of (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.). The staggering violence against women in the Kurdish North culminated into what Sharazad Mojab called 'gendercide' (Mojab 2003; Mojab 2004, 110).

The establishment of the Safe Haven created opportunities for Kurdish women to expand their freedoms in the realm of employment, political and cultural expression. There was more access to food and supplies. The region was free from Saddam's oppression. Such circumstances were absent from the rest of the country. Therefore,

women in south and central Iraq experience major repression, while Kurdish woman were freer than the rest of the country.

Diasporic Women's Movements

The GWIF was the only legal woman's organization in Iraq. Originally, it was state sponsored to be the feminine branch of the Ba'th Party (Nadje Al Ali pers. comm) During the 1970's and 1980's, the GWIF became bolder in its initiatives for gender equality. They challenged the male leadership, citing that the party was not being revolutionary enough (Nadje Al Ali pers. comm). GWIF members petitioned the government for more secular, gender egalitarian laws. Initially, Ba'thi officials engaged in some discussions, but countered that such actions took time and change needed to take place slowly (Nadje Al Ali pers. comm). However, talks regarding more gender equality broke down completely with the regime's shift to tribalism. The GWIF was permanently marginalized.

Iraqi women living in diaspora took a much larger role in activism. Since the 1940's significant numbers of Iraqis and Kurds left Iraq for various reasons such as political repression, persecution, war, economic betterment, and educational opportunity. Some left voluntarily and others by force. They relocated to neighboring countries in the Middle East, as well as Europe, North American, and Australia. The Iraqi diaspora is comprised of all ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. Although there are no statistics available, it was estimated that 70-80,000 Iraqi refugees left Iraq in the early 1990s (Al-Rasheed 1994, 204). Iraqi Kurds also fled Iraq and became a part of the diaspora. The Iraqi diaspora has provided "great sources of hope, political mobilizations, humanitarian and financial assistance as well as creative synergies" (Al Ali 2007, 14).

Diasporic Iraqi women became involved in political mobilization. They wanted to raise consciousness about the plight of Iraqi women, suffering from the political oppression of Saddam's regime and from comprehensive sanctions. Membership ranged from political parties to independent women's organizations. Women's groups affiliated with political parties such as the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), the Iraqi Worker's Communist Party, The Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), the Dawa Party, The Iraqi National Congress (INC) and the Iraqi Democratic Party existed side by side with independent groups such as the Iraqi Women's Rights Organization, the Iraqi Women's League, and Iraqi Women for Peace and Democracy (Al Ali 2007, 273). These organizations had various functions. Some provided social services and economic support to Iraqi refugees. Other groups lobbied against UN sanctions and wanted to raise awareness about Iraqi women's issues.

During early periods, these groups operated autonomously. However, diasporic female activists eventually came in contact with non-Iraqi women's movements that promoted peace and removal of economic sanctions that had similar visions for Iraq. These organizations began to bridge the gaps in their activism. For example, Iraqi and British women activist started Act Together: Women's Action for Iraq in 2000. Act Together wanted address both the atrocities of the regime and the UN sanctions on Iraqi (Act Together: Women's Action for Iraq). Act Together raised awareness of the general public about increasing gender inequalities in Iraq that resulted from political repression, the embargo, and the Gulf War.

Activism unique to specific ethnic groups and religious communities proliferated as well. These groups primarily addressed social or political issues that were germane to

their ethnic or religious identity. For example, the Kurdish Community Center, in San Deigo, was originally founded to be a human rights organization that raised awareness of Saddam's harsh treatment of the Iraqi Kurds. With many Kurdish exiles relocating to the region, the center offered wider services such as counseling, English and citizenship classes, computer training, health and hygiene awareness, translation services, legal advice, job placement, and immigration services (Al Ali 2007, 40). Another example is Iraqi Shiite women, in places such as Dearborn, Michigan who were active in political and religious centers such as the Karbala Islamic Education Center (Al Ali 2007). The female leaders facilitated women's groups to discuss community activism, political awareness, and Quranic teachings.

Although these organizations worked towards helping Iraqis and freeing Iraq from the Ba'th regime, they differed on approaches to solving these problems. Kurdish organizations looked to the US government for support and assistance in removing Saddam Hussein (Katrin Michael, pers. comm.). People such as Katrin Michael, activist with the Kurdish Human Rights Organizations, addressed Congress and lobbied for military intervention (Katrin Michael, pers. comm). As the impending US invasion approached, Kurdish organizations supported the United States' war initiative. In an interview with the author, Dr. Michael expounded:

> "I was extremely supportive of removing Saddam. Many times during interviews, I was asked why I supported US intervention. Since opposition movements in Iraq were so weak and divided, they couldn't remove the regime themselves. We were in great need of help from the outside to accomplish this." (Katrin Michael pers. comm.).

However, Shiite organizations were much more cautious. After the United States failed to protect them during the Intifada, Shiites still felt betrayed and disappointed. They were wary of US assistance and intervention in this regard.

Women's organizations, either independently or collectively, mobilized to raise awareness about the terrors inflicted by Saddam's regime and the hardships brought on by the economic sanctions. They sought to provide financial and humanitarian assistance to women leaving Iraq. Moreover, they worked towards eradicating gender inequality that persisted both within the country and throughout the Iraqi international community.

Diasporic Iraqi women faced challenges to their activism. Disputes arose from conservative males in the political arena. For example, in early 1990's, a wide spectrum of Iraqi opposition parties met in Beirut. Six women attended the political forum, and were asked by the men to cover their head (Pachachi 1994). Some of the men wanted women to cover their heads for religious reasons, while other men insisted that women covered as a political statement (Pachachi 1994). The women refused. They wanted to participate as partners, not as symbols.

Women's movements within the Iraqi diaspora raised public awareness and politically mobilized on behalf of women within Iraq who could not speak for themselves. In the following period, after the fall of Saddam Hussein, they would take on greater dimensions of activism.

Section Summary

Throughout this period, more economic hardship, political repression, and restrictions were placed upon Iraqi woman than any of the other previous periods of this study. Economic embargoes, poverty, and destroyed infrastructure along with high

unemployment rate deprived women of resources needed to sustain their families. Once the state shifted to conservative gender ideologies and strengthened patriarchal tribal leaders, free services and employment opportunities were withdrawn. Women were forced back into the home. Women experienced limitations on education, marriage partners, and movement. Moreover, the reinstitution of honor killings and the witch hunt for prostitutes forced women to hide within their homes and under their veils. The crumbling health care system led to high numbers of infant death and child disease as women were forced to give birth in unsanitary conditions.

However, despite these dramatic hardships imposed on women, they were still expected to successfully operate their perceived domain, which was the household. Iraqi women were extremely resourceful in trying to survive by engaging in the expanding informal sector; rationing and procuring basic necessities; and providing education for their children. Iraqi women's ingenuity was the reason that many more people did not lose their lives. Kurdish women had a different set of challenges. Although the creation of the safe haven allowed women in the north to organize and flourish, they still faced social conservatism of traditional males. In the diaspora, Iraq women banded together to promote awareness to the international community about the conditions Iraqis were living under. They played a vital role in political mobilization and humanitarian efforts on behalf of those in Iraq whose main goal was daily survival.

As for the regime, economic sanctions did not produce the same effects for Saddam Hussein as it did for his people. Rather than weakening the Ba'th party, the sanctions strengthened the government's hold on power. It directed the scarcest resources available towards its most loyal supporters (Abdullah 2003; 198). The

embargo on foodstuffs did nothing to the dictator's waistline. In 1996, the United Nations received a requisition form from the regime, requesting a liposuction machine (Soler 2003). The request was denied.

Chapter Six: 2003 to Present

The final chapter examines how women's roles, status, and political rights changed in relation to the United States and the post Saddam era. From March of 2003 to the present, Iraqi women's rights and political participation has been the subject of debate among the United States, the Iraqi religious establishment, the international community, and Iraqi women themselves. Women's rights have been used as symbols in the current period to promote the United States', Islamist parties', and moderate parties' political platforms. The United States assured Iraqi women that they would have more equality. The United States also promised Iraqi women an active role in the country's reconstruction. However, it is debatable whether or not these promises were superficial. This chapter will investigate how the factors such as sectarianism, foreign occupation, religion, post-war reconstruction, and fledgling democracy have affected women's lives in the six spheres. In this period, there has been an expansion of women's liberties in some areas, and simultaneous repression in other areas. This section will analyze how the conditions of Post Saddam Iraq have created this contradiction in the lives of Iraqi women. A brief overview of the conditions that created the current political conditions will be the point of departure.

Iraqi Women's Rights as Symbols

After September 11, 2001, the Bush Administration focused it attention on Iraq as a part of the War on Terror. President George W. bush mentioned the possibility of military action against Iraq during his January 2002 State of the Union Address. He accused the Iraqi government of possessing weapons of mass destruction and supporting terrorists (BBC News 2002). The Iraq War began on March 20, 2003, and Baghdad fell to U.S.-led forces on April 9, 2003. Saddam Hussein was removed from power.

The War in Iraq was portrayed as liberation for the Iraqi people. The Bush administration assured Iraqi citizens of peace and freedom. Security Council Resolution 1483 was written to enfranchise all Iraqi citizens by establishing a "rule of law that affords equal rights and justice to all Iraqi citizens without regard to ethnicity, religion, or gender" (United Nations Security Council 2003). Women were promised that they would be equal, integral partners in the reconstruction of Iraq and in the new government. The Bush Administration spoke about women's enfranchisement and its relationship to successful democracy. The United States government vowed to support women's empowerment through training and financial funding to assist them in their new political roles. In 2003, the U S Department of State released the following statement:

> "President Bush has repeatedly stated that supporting and promoting respect for women's rights is a U.S. foreign policy imperative. Ensuring women's rights benefits individuals and families, strengthens democracy and civil society, bolsters prosperity, enhances stability and encourages tolerance. The U.S. is committed to helping the Iraqi people transition to a sovereign, representative form of government that respects human rights, rejects terrorism and maintains Iraq's territorial integrity without threatening its neighbors. We recognize that the women of Iraq have a critical role to play in the revival of their country and we

> strongly support their efforts. They bring skills and knowledge that will be vital to restoring Iraq to its rightful place in the region and in the world. The U.S. will engage with Iraqi women to secure and advance the gains that they have achieved so far" (US Department of State 2003b).

Despite these statements, subsequent actions by the United States has demonstrated these promises to be little more than rhetoric. Complex issues that pre-existed during Saddam's rule surfaced and were exacerbated by the occupying forces' presences and errors made by the Coalition Provisonal Authority (CPA). These problems discussed below caused the United States to relegate women rights to a low priority. For example, sectarianism, which was previously fostered by Saddam Hussein, reemerged after the end of major combat was declared (Al Ali and Pratt 2008). The Bush administration and the media began referring to various political groups within Iraq based on religion or ethnicity rather than political ideology. Therefore, political parties formed based on religious and ethnic affliations rather than political platforms. The CPA appointed seats to the IGC based on these distinctions, which reinforced this trend. Additionally, the Debaathification process encouraged sectarian-based politics. The Debaathification process removed upper management from the state, and "rather than reconstructing the state, coalition policies have helped to construct a system of patron-client relations that link communally based parties to Iraqi citizens" (Al Ali and Pratt 2008). Each member used their position to provide scarce goods and services to their respective community in exchange for support.

Another issue was public safety. After long years of deprivation from economic sanctions, Iraqis began to loot hospitals, museums, and other local facilities. Crime and gang activity proliferated. Murder, theft, and rape became commonplace. Soldiers did

not protect these buildings or attempt to maintain order, in violation of the Geneva Convention. Since experienced individuals were removed from the police and armed forces during the Debaathification process, the security situation deteriorated due to untrained personnel like of competency. Many Iraqis turned to the religious authority, especially local imams at the mosques for protection (Al Ali 2005; 748).

The religious establishment became increasingly influential with the Iraqi people. Women became symbols of group identity once again, as coalition forces were now perceived as occupiers. They posited that the United States and the international community's attempt to enfranchise women was a part of a Western ploy to destroy traditional culture and values. By the religious establishments assertion of control over its members, religious leaders could gain control over state institutions and greater society (Susskin 2008, 13). By the summer of 2003, Islamists patrolled the streets in many areas, beating women who were not modestly dressed. Throughout the country, pamphlets and graffiti warned women not to be seen unveiled, driving, wearing make-up, shaking hands or socializing with men (Susskin 2008, 7). Badr Brigade, the US-backed SCIRI Party, and the Mahdi Army were among those groups who organized Islamist "punishment committees" to enforce these rules (Zunes 2006).

Cultural Expression

Iraqi women already experienced violent repression in the cultural sphere during the previous decade when the Ba'th party embraced tribalism. The regime used women as bargaining chips to gain the support of tribal leaders and the conservative religious establishment. Society returned to traditional gender roles, and women were expected to be both honorable wife and mother. Increased social conservatism forced women to

remain in their home and to involuntarily veil. They became the bearers of family honor. Women who took any active role outside the home were ostracized. Moreover, such women were likely to become victims of violent crimes. Either the regime prosecuted them as prostitutes and political dissidents, or family members committed honor crimes against them.

In the post Saddam period, women were assured of more freedom in the cultural sphere. President Bush made Iraqi women's liberation an integral part of the War on Terror rhetoric. Iraqi women were encouraged to take an active role in Iraq's reconstruction. Women's rights were being used as a litmus test for a successful democracy. Various commentary and speeches made by the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Bush Administration pertained exclusively to women's equal participation in society. For example, in 2004, Paul Wolfowitz wrote,

> "In the end, it will be up to Iraqis to fashion a democracy that suits their circumstances. One of the critical tests of an Iraqi democracy will be whether it empowers women to enjoy the benefits of freedom and prosperity without sacrificing their religious faith. This is an issue that concerns everyone, not only women. A government that does not respect the rights of half its citizens cannot be trusted to safeguard the rights of any" (Wolfowitz 2004).

The Bush Administration implemented programs designed to support women's reemergence into Iraqi society. Programs included job training for occupations such as security officers, prison guards, and law enforcement, and workshops on women's public leadership and coalition-building skills. In 2004, Secretary of State Colin Powel announced a ten million dollar Iraqi Women's Democracy Initiative (IWDI), which was

designed to "train Iraqi women in the skills and practices of democratic public life" (Margesson and Kronenfeld 2006, 9). All initiatives pushed women to step outside of traditional gender roles, which Iraqi society had grown accustomed to over the previous decade. Iraqi women embraced these opportunities, and believed they would be given a safe environment to venture back into the cultural and political sphere.

However, women's freedom in the cultural sphere was greatly undermined despite the financial assistance and the CPA-supported women's programs. As sectarianism increased and security decreased, the country became unstable. The CPA undermined women's rights by allowing Iraqi women to become a bargaining chip in political negotiations with powerful religious groups (Hunt and Posa 2004). For example, women's empowerment was not a concern of military personnel in post-combat operations. Lt. Col. Carl E Mundy III said:

> "We didn't give special considerations to engaging the women...My concern was not stepping where I shouldn't step, or dragging a woman in there that would anger the local men...Maybe once security has been established to a certain degree and most people are back to work, then you can start working around the edges of fair representation of both sexes" (Hunt and Posa 2004: 40).

Consideration for women's equality was sacrificed to appease the local population in a difficult situation. The notion that women were second to their male counterparts reinforced traditional gender roles of female subservience. Failure to implement measure to enfranchise women from the beginning made women's liberation more complicated later. Many then perceived such initiatives as a Western plot to destroy Iraqi culture and values.

In the aftermath of Saddam's fall, the military became engrossed in combating the Iraqi insurgency. Lack of security and the military's preoccupation allowed Islamist militias to enter into Iraqi neighborhoods. These groups imposed strict patriarchal interpretations of Shari'a law and terrorized women. The Bush Administration and the media reported the violence carried out by Sunni based groups that were part of the insurgency. However, Shiite Islamists affiliated with US-backed political parties were also responsible similar violent acts (Susskind 2008, 8). The United States armed and supported these Shiite militias against the Sunni insurgency despite the well-publicized fact that these Shiite groups were responsible for the systematic torture of women who did not confirm to rigid social codes. Former Marine officer Thomas X. Hammes called the alliance between the United States and the militias "a marriage of convenience," stating that it was policy to equip individuals who were the most effective fighters (Beehner 2005). Therefore, although the United States applauded women's political and cultural liberation, ultimately Iraqi women experienced more restrictions in the cultural expression. Women became symbols against both the previous regime and Western culture. Conservative religious leaders called for a restoration and return to previous values and traditions associated with pre-US invasion. This was accompanied by cultural perception that women were associated with motherhood, peace, and fragility (Pankhurst 2004, 19). Islamist political parties and militas used women's dress codes and social roles to symbolize this break with Westernization.

Similar to the previous period, forced veiling and modesty became the foremost indicator of cultural repression. Iraqi women are forced to veil and wear long cloaks while in public. Many women encountered harassment from men if they fail to wear

proper attire. Female college students in particular received many threats. In Basra, women reported that groups of men stop them at the university gates and shouted at them for not covering their head (Al Ali 2005, 753). This phenomenon is not exclusive to Muslim women. Christian women were also assaulted when uncovered. Dr. Katrin Michael told the author that her nieces, who are Christian, were contemplating leaving school because of the harassment they received for not wearing the hijab (Katrin Michael, pers comm.).

Consequences for violating dress codes exceed harassment, particularly in more conservative Shiite areas. Iraqi women and hospitals reported that Islamist vigilantes were throwing acid in women's faces as punishment for not covering (Brown and Romano 2006, 17). The perpetrators of these violent crimes usually are not arrested or prosecuted. While religious officials have condemned these attacks, they have excused efforts to encourage veiling. When asked about his position on the attacks, Sheik Hussan Abbas, a radical Shiite leader in Baghdad, stated: "Our country is a Muslim country and women should respect this by wearing veils and long cloaks. I'm against the use of acid but something should be done to force them into wearing the clothes" (Brown and Romano 2006, 7). Although these crimes are committed against the general population, women who work with NGO have been targeted in particular. Their involvement with the struggle for women rights makes them a threat to Islamist causes. These crimes are intended to invoke fear into the female population, so women will not challenge gender roles status quo.

Cultural repression among Iraqi women has manifested through gender specific crimes. For example, in Iraqi Kurdistan, female genital mutilation (FMG) has been

reported in the post Saddam period. It is unclear why FMG has not been reported in other areas of Iraq. According to Amnesty International, FMG appeared to be widespread in rural areas (Amnesty International 2005). Between September and November of 2004, WADI, an NGO, interviewed 1,544 women and girls throughout forty villages, and 907 reported that they had undergone the procedure (Amnesty International 2005). Although many in rural areas consider FMG a requirement of Shari'a law, social pressures have also played a role. FMG is believed to be a measure to safeguard women's purity and honor. It is believed that women will become promiscuous if they remain uncircumcised (American Bar Association 2006, 69). Many associate circumcised women with cleanliness and devotion to family (American Bar Association 2006, 69). FMG limits women's ability to sexually express themselves. Moreover, it reinforces the cultural notion that women cannot be trusted with decisions regarding their body and sexuality. The surge in female genital mutilation is a relatively new phenomenon in Iraq. There is no previous history of this practice prior to this period.

Honor crimes have also proliferated in the post Saddam period. Legal ramifications of honor crimes will be discussed further in the chapter. However, the existence of these crimes is based on the notion that women continue to be the bearers of the family honor. Honor crimes seek to punish and control women's ability to exercise cultural autonomy and their equality. Transgression may include marrying against her family's wishes, loss of virginity, divorce against her family's wishes, or sexually inappropriate behavior. Sexually inappropriate behavior does not necessarily mean the woman was a willing participant in a sexual act. Victims of sexual violence are often at risk. Women who are raped or sexually assaulted are considered to have shamed their

families (Susskind 2008). Honor crimes may also take the form of mutilation, such as cutting off the nose (American Bar Association 2006, 68).

Continued cultural repression has had a dramatic effect on women, especially in Iraqi Kurdistan. Female suicide by self-immolation, or lightening oneself on fire, has been reported by the media and NGOs to have risen in the post Saddam period. According to Dr. Nadje Al-Ali, self-immolation is a traditional form of suicide in Kurdish society, and has increased significantly since 1991 (Nadje Al-Ali, pers comm). There is a sharp connection between cultural repression and female suicide in Iraq. Forced marriages, fear of honor killings, and domestic violence were among the most common reasons survivors gave for their suicide attempt (American Bar Association 2006, 69; Amnesty International 2005).

Iraqi women continued to be used as symbols by competing authorities in the post invasion period. Women's rights have symbolized success in Iraq for the United States and the CPA. After weapons of mass destruction were not found, women's liberation became one of the justifications that the United States used for invading Iraq.

Islamist militias and conservative political parties restrict women's cultural expression to symbolize a break from occupying forces and Westernization. These groups severely restrict women's dress code and social roles to demonstrate a return to traditional Islamic values. Restricting women's rights symbolizes a response to Western culture, which is considered morally bankrupt. In this period, Iraqi women are attempting to assert themselves in the cultural sphere. However, the volatile security situation has made this increasingly difficult. Women's liberties in the cultural sphere has not improved.

Education

The Iraqi education system was compromised during the previous period due to war and economic sanctions. Schools were understaffed. Inadequate teaching supplies made it difficult to facilitate learning. Primarily, girls had more disadvantage than boys in the educational sphere because families with financial constraints often chose to send boys to school if they could not afford for all the children to attend. Boys were perceived as future providers, thus the recipients of educational opportunity. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, many Iraqi women hoped that all children would receive an adequate education.

The United States pledged to make education, especially for girls, a priority. In February 2004, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfwitz spoke about the United States commitment to Iraqi women's education. He said, "education for women is one of the highest priorities, and the United States has committed more than $86.8 million to special emphasis on ensuring that girls are registered and attending school" (Wolfowitz 2004). The United States rebuilt schools and financed learning institutions. More than 3,130 schools throughout Iraq were renovated (US Department of State 2005a). The United States' girls' education initiatives generated positive outcomes during the first year after the major combat ended. During the 2003-2004 school year, 44% (1,920,401) of primary and 40% (620,834) of secondary students were girls (US Department of State 2005a).

However, once the security situation deteriorated, the opportunities for girl's education declined. Abductions and sexual assault of women and girls became commonplace in Iraqi cities. These attacks occurred in public and during daytime hours.

This had a disproportionate effect on women's and girls' school attendance (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 9). The fear that these attacks generated stopped women and girls from leaving the house. Women withheld their children from school. Save the Children UK evaluated three schools in the Baghdad area in May 2003. Their findings concluded that attendance in schools they surveyed were less then 50 percent, and lack of security topped the reason for girls' poor attendance (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 9). Female University students were harassed by men at the gates for either being inappropriately dressed or unescorted by a male relative.

The legal status of single mothers also negatively impacted girls' education. Divorced or abandoned women did not have the right to register her children for school (Women for Women International 2008, 25). Since many women lost their husbands due to various circumstances during Iraq's history, a substantial part of an entire generation will not be able to obtain an education until this legality is remedied. These factors have placed women at a grave disadvantage in the educational sphere. Women for Women International conducted survey, which questioned 1513 women throughout Iraq about their lives after the U.S. invasion. Regarding education 76.2% of the respondents state that the girls in their families were not allowed to attend schools, and 56.7% said that girls' ability to attend school had gotten worse after the war (Women for Women International 2008, 25).

Women's freedom in the education sphere remains in flux. Although the United States actively supports girl's education, lack of security has seriously impeded many from attending school. Moreover, antiquated legalities prevent women from registering their children. In order for women's opportunity in this sphere to expand, a safer

environment that is conducive to learning must be secured, and more equitable laws regarding single women's status needs to be in place. Poverty and insecurity were among the primary reasons that girls did not attend school (Women for Women International 2008, 24). There were no data found that girls being taught by a different curriculum than boys. Additionally there were no findings of educators who believed that females should not have the same learning opportunities as males. Overall, women have more opportunity in the educational sphere than in the last period. However more progress needs to be made in order for women to receive all the benefits of the newly revitalized school system.

Health and Sexual Control

There are three dimensions of the sphere of health and sexual control that will be examined in this subsection. These dimensions are women's accessibility to medical care, control of one's own body, and one's levels of autonomy regarding decision making for medical treatment. In the previous decade, women had no access to health care because of economic sanctions and war. The bombing campaigns destroyed the country's infrastructure, and most hospitals were demolished. Economic sanctions prevented necessary medical equipment and supplies from entering the country. Birth control has been unavailable since the Iran/Iraq War.

After the U.S. invasion, NGOs and the United States attempted to revitalize the health care system. However, Iraqi women have not been able to adequately benefit from it. Due to pervading social conservatism, many women are unable to seek medical attention without the consent of a male family member. The Journal of American Medical (Amowitz et al. 2004), interviewed 2000 families in Southern Iraq. Eight two

percent of female respondents reported that they always had to obtain permission from a husband or male relative to access health care (Amowitz et al. 2004, 1475). This is the result of patriarchal values fostered under Saddam Hussein during the last decade, which has carried over into the current era. The inability to seek medical attention limits women's ability to make decisions regarding their own health care. Many competent women's physical and mental well-being are in the hands of another individual.

Lack of security is another barrier to women in the realm of health care. Deteriorating security conditions have discouraged women from leaving their homes and seeking medical services (American Bar Association 2006, 42). Furthermore, many women employed by the health care industry have resigned due to the numerous threats that they receive from Islamist militias (American Bar Association 2006). Women seeking medical attention then must choose between foregoing treatment all together or accepting treatment from a male doctor who may lack appropriate expertise or sensitivity (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 10). These job vacancies in women's services compromises the health care system.

Many victims of sexually violent crimes are denied any medical treatment. Human Rights Watch reported several occurrences where females who went to hospitals in Baghdad were refused treatments for sexual violence (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 10). Women who south treatment were told that treatment for venereal diseases or sexually related injury was outside the facility's scope of knowledge (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 10). Many of gender specific abuses went unreported, since women are the bearers of family honor. Fear of social stigmas and honor crimes prevented women from seeking medical treatment and filing police reports.

Reproductive health also remains compromised in the current period. Childbirth at home is still prevalent. Women who have home deliveries have severe health risks due to lack of medical supplies and trained staff to handle complications. Moreover, family planning in Iraq is still seriously impeded. Contraceptives have been outlawed since the Iran/Iraq war. Currently, birth control is still largely unavailable. One doctor reported that contraception in Iraq was not available at all until early 2005 (American Bar Association 2006, 45). Many men and women lack basic knowledge regarding women reproductive health and do not trust their health care providers (American Bar Association 2006, 45). This as also limited the success of family planning.

Throughout Iraq's modern history, war and economic sanctions have contributed to mental illness among women. Women's mental health continues to the decline with the U.S. invasion and the subsequent lack of security,. Unsafe living environment, losing family members, and poverty all contribute to extra stress on the women in the family. Psychological disorders include depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and attention deficit disorder (ADD) (Al-Azzawi 2008). In a study conducted by Souad N Al-Azzawi, a third of the one hundred and fifty women surveyed developed some degree of psychological or stress related illness (Al-Azzawi 2008). Counseling services do not appear to be widely offered in Iraq at this time.

In the previous period, women's restrictions in the health and sexual control sphere were due primarily to lack of infrastructure and medical supplies. The entire health care system was inoperable. Currently, Iraqi women are still restricted in the arena of health care, but for different reasons. Lack of security prevents women from leaving their home and seeking needed medical treatment. Fears of violent crimes and rape have

prevented women from resuming work, which leaves many vacancies in women's health services. Cultural norms do not allow for women to access health care without the consent of a male relative. Social stigmatization has hindered women from seeking certain treatments for sexual assaults. Family planning and contraceptives are largely unavailable, which has limited women's choices regarding child bearing. Both mother and baby are then jeopardized because most women give birth at home with little medical supplies and assistance. Psychological illnesses have proliferated among women from the stress of war, poverty, and lawlessness. Iraqi women's difficulty accessing health care, and restrictions placed on their decision making regarding medical treatments are primary indicators of repression in this sphere.

Family

Since the fall of Saddam Hussein, Iraqi women have debated about their rights within the family sphere. The home had been considered the women's domain during the previous period. The Ba'th Party emphasized women's roles as honorable wife and mother during the last decade when the regime embraced tribal values. However, economic sanctions and war rendered the debate of women's rights in relation to divorce, child custody, and inheritance unimportant since women were focused on survival. Women's choices of marital partners were limited. Families made decisions regarding marriage based on their financial situation. Women were married to the individual that financially benefited the family most.

After the U.S. invasion, women's roles in the family sphere have been debated among Iraqi women. When Iraqi women have debated about the degree of freedom that a woman should, it has varied according to religious affiliation and ethnicity. Moreover,

politicians and the religious establishment also have their opinions regarding women's rights in this area. This section will exam the existing circumstances Iraqi women have in the family sphere, and the difference in opinion between groups.

The Personal Status Law has been the basis of women's rights in the family sphere since 1959. It has accorded women with more equality in civil matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody. Amendments changes were made to the Personal Status Law during the 1970s. These modifications reflected the Ba'th Party's intention to enfranchise women by providing more freedoms in some areas, and pacify conservative constituents by restricting women's rights in other arenas. Despite Saddam's tendency to arbitrarily suspend citizen's rights, the Personal Status Law remained, for the most part, in tact during the entire Ba'th rule. Contrary to belief, the 1959 Personal Status law is not secularly based. Much of the framework is rooted in a liberal interpretation of Shari'a law (Susskin 2008). The law combined both Shiite and Sunni elucidation of Quranic law to create a code that applied to all citizens regardless of sect (Susskin 2008, 4). This was designed to ease sectarian tension, especially regarding inter-denominational marriage matters.

After the fall of Saddam Hussein, Islamists and conservative political parties attempted to abolish the Personal Status Law. In the summer of 2003, L. Paul Bremer, assembled the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). The Washington Post stated that the IGC was a governing body that would generally support US interests and policies in Iraq (Chandrasekaran 2003). All members of the IGC were hand picked by L. Paul Bremer. Among those appointed were Islamists who openly stated their intentions to restrict women's rights (Susskin 2008). In December 2003, the IGC voted to replace the 1959

Personal Status Law with laws based on strict patriarchal interpretations of Shari'a law. They were unsuccessful. L. Paul Bremer, who retained the final veto over the Council's decisions, rejected the legislation after an international protest among women.

After the defeat, Islamists focused on drafting Iraq's new constitution in 2005. Despite the existence of the Personal Status Law, various articles within the constitution compromise women's rights in the family sphere. For example, Article 39 states that "Iraqis are free in their adherence to their personal status according to their own religion, sect, belief, and choice" (Susskin 2008,). This allows for the issues of marriage, divorce, and other family matters to be decided by the religious courts of one's denomination. Religious courts often use interpretations of Shari'a law that discriminate against women. Article 39 allows separate and unequal laws to be applied on the basis of sex (Susskin 2008, 6). Another example, Article 41 states that "Iraqis are free in their commitment to their personal status according to their religions, sects, beliefs, or choices, and this shall be regulated by law" (Women Living Under Muslim Law and Act Together 2006). This article is designed to limit mixed marriages and encourage sectarianism. Law dictated by one's religious affiliation prevents individuals from marrying outside one's ethnic group or sect because rights and status may conflict.

Currently, Iraqi women have severe restrictions in the family arena. Cultural norms, ignorance of the law, and gender discrimination are the causes of these restrictions. Women are particularly affected in areas of marriage, divorce, and inheritance.

Current legislation had limited women's ability to choose marriage partners. Legal age for marriage is set at eighteen with court approved exceptions, which can be

lowered to age fifteen. Article 39 and 41 allow religious courts to dictate the definition of legal age. Under Islamic law, "a woman is entitled to marry the man who she sees suitable as long as she reaches the legal capacity age, which is nine years old for females" (American Bar Association 2006, 107). There have been some reports of girls being married at age nine in the Post Saddam period (American Bar Association 2006, 107).

Forced marriage is a concern for Iraqi women in the current period. Iraq's Penal Code allows a man accused of rape, abduction, or sexual assault can receive a reduced sentence or reprieve if he marries his victim (Human Rights Watch 2003b). Women, as the bearer of family honor, are unable to object since refusal to marry the perpetrator could result in her becoming a victim of honor crime. Honor crimes are also initiated in circumstances where women chose to marry a partner her family disapproves of or refuses to marry a partner of the family's choosing. Honor killing has also been reported in cases where women have attempted to safeguard their honor. For example, Mut'a (pleasure marriages) have become more common in the recent years (American Bar Association 2006, 107). Financial difficulties among young people have made Mut'a more prevalent since it allows for no permanent legal or fiscal connections between consenting adults while simultaneously safeguards one's reputation within the confines of temporary marriage. However in 2006, two women in Missan were reportedly murdered when their families discovered that they had participated in a Mut'a marriage (American Bar Association 2006, 108).

Iraqi women have limited recourse in divorce matters. Various legal and social limitations are placed upon women who seek divorce. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein, reports have indicated that more men are initiating divorce (American Bar Association

2006). The Institute for War and Peace reported that in June of 2005 Iraqi divorce courts granted men divorces without the presence or knowledge of their wives (American Bar Association 2006, 108). This practice is contrary to the guidelines under the Personal Status Law. Moreover, many women are unaware of the full extent of their rights under the Personal Status Law. Family pressure and cultural customs, which fosters fear of social stigmatization, prevent many women from filing for divorce.

Iraqi law does not include physical violence as grounds for divorce (Brown and Romano 2006, 20). In the Post Saddam period, sectarian conflict has contributed to more deadly domestic violence because of the proliferation of weapons kept in the household (Susskin 2008, 23). Women's rights activists who study armed conflicts state "domestic violence often increases as societal tensions grow and becomes more common and more lethal when men carry weapons" (Amnesty International 2006). Moreover, in many parts of Iraqi society, particularly among Shiites, domestic violence is condoned. The Journal of American Medical Association conducted a survey of 1991 households in Southern Iraq. Half of the women and men (54% and 50% respectively) reported that they agreed that a man has a right to beat his wife if she disobeys (Amowitz et al. 2004, 1471).

Regarding inheritance, various factors have kept women from demanding and receiving their rightful share of inheritance in courts and from their families. These factors include family pressures, lack of faith in the judicial system, and exorbitant court costs (American Bar Association 2006). Many women were not aware of their inheritance rights that are granted them under the Personal Status Law. Furthermore, family pressures shame women into forfeiting their share to male relatives (American Bar Association 2006). In many circumstances, Iraqi women found no legal recourse, since

more lawyers are fearful of providing legal representation to women. Since October 2005, thirty-eight lawyers have been murdered and hundreds attacked for defending women's cases involving inheritance and divorce (Peace Women Project 2006). These lawyers are accused of practicing law that is "against Islam" because many of these cases challenge Iraqi traditions or patriarchal interpretations of Shari'a (Peace Women Project 2006).

The Debate: Shari'a Law Versus Secular Law

A sharp difference of opinion exists among Iraqi women regarding their rights in the family sphere. All agree that women should have a certain degree of rights that are safeguard them against human rights abuse. However, the division occurs between whether these rights should be based on Shari'a law or secular guidelines. This differentiation between religious and secular principle dictates how liberal these freedoms in the family sphere are.

Women's rights organizations inside Iraq assert that religion should not determine the nature or extent of women's liberties. This has opinion has been prevalent among urban women. Iraq has been a predominantly secular country until recently. When the IGC attempted to repeal the Personal Status Law, Kurdish and Baghdadi women protested in the streets against Resolution 126 (Brown and Romano 2006, 20). They perceived the decree as a serious threat to women's status and future advancement. Certain scholars posit that the definitive factor that defines women's stance on the secular/shari'a law debate is religious affiliation. However, Dr. Nadje Al-Ali disagrees, and stated that it is more of a class issue. In a telephone interview, she said:

> "The majority of (Iraqis) are secular middle class educated people. They are the ones who oppose (Shari'a law), but they are escaping (Iraq). So much of it is a class issue, people and most of the country has experienced the brain drain since much of the educated middle class has left...Low income rural families are much more patriarchal than high income urban families whether you are Christian or Muslim living in the countryside or in a village. (They) are equally patriarchal as oppose to a middle class urban family would be less so. Same with the Kurds, you have the same with Kurds as well" (Nadje Al-Ali, pers. comm).

Lack of education and awareness among women is another factor in this debate. Many women are not clear on the mechanics of Shari'a laws. Many Iraqi women associate Shari'a law with Muslim identity as oppose to understanding the implications that it may have on their personal lives. Prior to the constitutions ratification, Dr. Nadje Al-Ali interviewed women regarding the role of Islam in the constitution. Many women supported Islamic underpinnings, but were unaware of its impacts. Dr Al-Ali said,

> "I asked a lot of women...what do you think about role of Islam in terms of the constitution? Many women told me, 'Yes...we want Islamic law (because) we are Muslims.' So I asked them 'what would you think if I told you your husband would be allowed to say I divorce you three times and he could.' They said, 'of course we wouldn't want that.' Again I asked, 'what if you needed a male guardian to travel from Baghdad to another city?' They said, 'of course, we wouldn't want that.' I went through these possibilities of certain interpretations of Islamic law, and they didn't want any of that. They felt that for them...it was a matter of principle. They said, 'yes, we are Muslims, and we want Islamic law. We were not allowed to have it under Saddam Hussein,' but they actually did not want all the implications"(Nadje Al-Ali, pers. comm).

However, there are many women who support women's rights based on Shari'a law, and fully understand the ramifications of its implementation. These women are mostly educated and politically active orthodox Shiite women. One advocate of Shari'a law is Dr. Jenan Ubaedy, who won a seat on the national assembly. Like other pro-Shari'a supporters, she says that a balance of education and legal protection must be achieved for both women and men without compromising religious laws. She readily agreed that a husband could beat his wife if she does not obey him, but he cannot leave bruises on her body (Carroll 2005). These are part of the man's right under Shari'a law. However, Dr. Ubaedy stresses that married women need to be educated enough to understand what is expected of women as wives to avoid beaten by their husband, and know that if she is beaten without cause or has marks on her body, that she has legal recourse (Carroll 2005). Protection against wanton abuse is the woman's right. Like women who petition for secular law, pro-Shari'a women also demonstrate and lobby for religious mandate. For example, on January 25, 2004, when Kurdish and Baghdadi women protested against Resolution 137, which intended to repeal the Personal Status law, five hundred Shiite women in Najaf held a counter-demonstration to support the reversion to Shari'a law (Brown and Romano 2006, 9).

In summation, Iraqi women continue to experience repression in the family sphere. The Personal Status law still remains in tact, but women do not receive the benefits. Cultural expectations, patriarchal family structures, and ignorance of the law prevent women from evoking their legal rights. Moreover, several articles within the Iraqi Constitution allow for religious courts to dictate women's rights. The conservatism

of these religious courts often defer to patriarchal interpretations of Shari'a law, which is biased against women. Iraqi women continue to debate over whether the basis of women's rights in the family sphere should derive from secular or Shari'a law. However, Iraqi women are no closer to equality in this sphere now than they were under the Ba'th regime.

Work and Mobility

The United States encouraged Iraqi women to enter the workforce by providing occupational training programs and financial aid for women' business owners. In the reconstruction period, women were enthusiastic about participating in the rebuilding of Iraq's economy and providing for their families. Since April 2003, USAID reported that nearly sixty percent of its small business development grants in Iraq have been awarded to women (Margesson and Kronenfel 2006). However, women continue to have limited freedom in this arena. Various factors have contributed to these restrictions. The deterioration in security and Islamist political parties in power has curtailed women's reentry back into the workforce. Extremist religious groups attempt to assert power over women's rights in this sphere by using violence, harassment, and rape to limit women's mobility. Qualified, professional women who could assist in Iraq's economic development are sequestered to their homes.

Lack of security is the first factor that hinders women's mobility and employment. With the proliferation of criminal gangs and Islamist militas, one of their first priorities is to limit women's movements and visibility. Under the guise of Islam teachings, women are assaulted if they attempt any activity outside of patriarchal concepts of gender roles. In much of the country, women cannot go into public with a

male escort (Women for Women International 2008). In Baghdad, posters are placed throughout the city warning women not to drive. There is often a violent backlash for women who defy these militias by driving. Some women, who have been caught driving, have been found murdered with their veils tied around their neck (Anning 2007). This is a fear tactic that is intended to be a warning to others.

Women's lack of mobility is problematic for those who seek employment outside the home. Women cannot leave their home to go to their place of business without fear. Being sequestered to their home impinges on women's ability to maneuver in the informal economic sector as well. During periods when women are forced from the formal sector, the informal sector becomes the primary source of income. However, women often base their business out in public where they can provide their goods and services to a larger clientele. The deterioration of security does not allow for Iraqi women to be out in public without fear of harm. Therefore, women are forced to try to operate their business within their home. Procuring supplies, solicitation of services, and exchanging goods are compromised with lack of mobility.

Professional women have become the targets of violence by militia groups. Abduction, rape, and murder are punishments for women who attempt to hold professional jobs. Many criminal gangs merely cite the reason for violence against professional women as "violators of Islamic teachings" (Damon 2007), since these women step outside traditional gender roles and promote women's equality. Other women are targeted for the type of work they do. Employment for multinational forces and foreign embassies are often the only positions available. Individuals who work on

military bases as translators or facilitators are often seen as collaborators and receive death threats (American Bar Association 2006, 164).

Another factor that limits women's employment is the Iraqi government itself. Although, Article 22 and Article 16 of the Iraqi constitution which states that the government will take all measures to ensure all Iraqis have equal rights and opportunity to work (American Bar Association 2006, 29), there is a disparity between written law and enforcement of the law. Iraqi women are subjected to various forms of discriminations that are intended to push them out of the work force.

For example, women face gender discrimination within government agencies. In 2005, Khdeir Abbas, the Secretary General of the Iraqi Ministers' Council mandated that all women employees wear headscarves or face termination (Susskin 2008, 12). Since conservative religious parties operate many ministries, the facilitators have segregated the office staff by gender (Beaumont 2006). These measure are designed to keep women out of the public eye. Women's inability to move and interact freely in the workplace hinders their ability to carry out their duties.

The Iraqi government has also taken measures to restrict women's employment in positions that are typically viewed as men's work. In 2004, the United States began to recruit Iraqi women for the police force. Women officers were vital for rape cases, sexual assault cases, and transporting female prisoners. US trainers reported that they were so inundate with applications that they were turning people away. However, once the training program was relinquished to the Iraqi government, recruitment rates dropped to zero (Susman 2007). Another tactic the government utilized to bar women from the police force was to institute measures that affected women's safety. In November 2007,

the Iraqi government ordered all policewomen to turn in their firearms or face having their paycheck withheld (Susman 2007). Policewomen became unable to protect themselves against criminals and insurgents without a firearm. As a result, policewomen were forced to either resign or work an administrative position. Those who decided to work in administration had no prospects for advancement. Iraqi law prevents policewomen from advancing to commanding officers (Susman 2007).

The Iraqi government also uses financial incentive to discourage women from working. The government began offering small benefit packages to women public sector employees whose husbands died (Susskin 2008). Superficially, this encourages widows to leave the workforce and care for their families by promising meager financial assistance. However, an ulterior motive exists. Hanna Edwar, Iraqi women's right campaigner, explained that the order reinforces "the interpretation of Shari'a that commands a woman to stay at home after the death of her husband and not be in touch with the outside world" (Susskin 2008, 12).

Iraqi women are limited in the work and mobility sphere. Both, the government and the lack of security hinder women from gaining and sustaining employment. In the 2008, Women for Women International surveyed over 1,500 women throughout Iraq. Forty five percent of women described their access to employment as poor, and twenty six percent said they have no employment opportunities at all (Women for Women International 2008, 22-23). Women are denied the opportunity to become financially independent. They must rely on others to feed and clothe themselves and their children. Over seventy percent stated that their families are unable to earn an income that provides life's daily necessities (Women for Women International 2008, 22). Similar to the

previous period, women are again forced into prostitution to generate income. In a CNN report by Arwa Damon, women reported that they sold their bodies for as little as eight dollars a day to feed their children (Damon 2007). Women's rights in work and mobility continue to decrease despite reports of security stabilization. In 2004, women's employment ranged from sixteen to twenty three percent (Women for Women International 2008, 23). In February 2006, women's participation in the workforce was at thirteen percent, which is considered low by regional standards (Women for Women International 2008, 23).

Political Expression

Iraqi women's political participation has been a central debate among the United States, the Iraqi government, and Iraqi women. Since women are used symbols for competing causes, both the United States and conservative religious groups attempt to assert its authority over women's rights in this arena. The United States rhetoric uses women's rights as part of the validation for the Iraq War, and as a barometer for a successful democracy in Iraq. Conservative religious groups seek to curtail women's political participation to confine women to traditional gender roles in order to define the line between 'us' and 'them.' Tribalism pigeonholes women into traditional roles, which makes political participation unacceptable. Iraqi women's political activism is encouraged on the one hand with financial initiatives, quotas, voting rights, and training programs, but then women face violent repercussion for their participation from extremist groups on the other. This contradiction of terms is also evident in women's legal recourse as well. Codified law generally guarantees women equal legal recourse and due process, yet conflicting decrees and court decisions do not safeguard women's legal

rights. This results in continued variations of women's freedom in the sphere of political expression.

However, Iraqi women have not remained passive in this arena. Women within Iraq and in the diaspora have created robust organizations that promote women's political rights and address pertinent Iraqi women's issues. Despite death threats and government impediments, women's organizations throughout Iraq have continued to proliferate.

This section will evaluate both the expansions and restrictions in women's rights in the political sphere. Initiatives taken to promote women's equality and participation and the counter measures that hinder them will be analyzed. This section will explore some of the contradictions women face when seeking legal recourse. Finally, Iraqi women's organization along with their goals and challenges will be surveyed. This section will demonstrate that Iraqi women are still largely struggling for more liberties in the political sphere.

The United States has claimed to support Iraqi women's political participation. It has launched programs and initiatives intended to train women for their new, active roles in government. These training programs included public debating, petition writing, and lobbying techniques. Grants were given to assist fledgling women's organizations in Iraq. Quotas for women's seats in government were placed to ensure women's participation.

President George W. Bush mentioned the importance Iraqi women's political participation in numerous speeches. Government organization USAID listed one of its accomplishments on its website as "helped increased female provincial council participation by twenty five percent" (USAID 2006). The US Department of State

website has made periodic updates touting the efforts of both the Iraqi government and United States to enfranchise women. In 2005, one update stated:

> "Since Iraq's liberation, the United States has actively supported the needs and interests of Iraqi women, seeking to provide them with the necessary tools to permit their full participation in their country's political, social, and economic future. With support from Congress, the Administration has worked closely with the representatives of the Interim and Transitional governments of Iraq, as well as local Iraqi civic partners, to establish programs designed to promote the equal participation of women and protection of women's rights." (US Department of State 2005b)

In reality, however, women's political participation is a much lower priority for the United States. Many Iraqi women activists assert that the United States initiatives to empower Iraqi women are merely tokenistic. For example, the funding that .is exclusively for women's programs received far less than other programs. Programs such as the Women's Democracy Initiative was designated only ten million dollars (Margesson and Kronenfeld 2006). Various other programs implemented by the United States receive substantially more to operate on. Furthermore, Congress has not used legislative earmarks extensively for Iraqi women's programs (Margesson and Kronenfeld 2006). Many proposed bill that pertain to Iraqi women remain in committee. Bills such as the Iraqi Women and Children's Liberation Act of 2004 (H.R. 4671 and S. 2519), which would have authorized unspecified monetary assistance to Iraqi women in the areas of health care, education, economic empower, political participation, civil society, and personal security, were never passed (Margesson and Kronenfeld 2006). These programs represent a nominal amount of overall US funding in Iraq.

Inadequate quotas and appointments of women to government are other indicators that women's political participation is in the periphery. L. Paul Bremer opposed a high quota for compensatory seats for women in government women (Al Ali and Pratt 2007, 2). Moreover, he only appointed only three women to the IGC (Al Ali and Pratt 2007, 2). Iraqi women activists continued to petition for a higher quota, but ultimately compromised at twenty five percent. Appointed or elected women were not provided adequate protection to carry out their function on the council. Two female members of Iraq's former Governing Council faced assassination attempts. One was killed and the other was severely wounded (V-Day 2005).

Tribalism and conservatism

Tribalism and religious extremism is another hindrance to Iraqi women's freedom in the arena of political expression. Both outlooks hold a patriarchal view about women's roles in government and their level of political participation. Tribal customs usually derive from within the family. In the Kurdish north, tribal customs are based around the male members of the family and greater society. Social pressures and stigmas are placed upon women activists who want to elevate women's status because such participation is perceived to be outside traditional gender roles. Religious extremism comes from the top down. Conservative religious parties, religious leaders, or Islamist militias attempt to impose their values on the people. Women who protest against doctrine that violates their human rights or marginalizes them are seen as a threat. Gender violence and assault against high profile female activists are attempts to maintain the status quo. This represses women's political expression

Kurdish men and Shiite men are extremely conservative in their opinions on women's political participation. Although many individuals in both groups believe that women should be accorded human rights, they are less likely to support women's political activism. In 2004, the Journal of the American Medical Associated polled Shiite families on women's rights. The majority of respondents supported legal protection for women and their participation in community health and development decisions, but did not hold women's political participation as important (Amowitz et al. 2004, 1471).

Similarly, Kurdish tribal values also do not favor women's political participation. Mihabad Qaradakhi, former equality affairs advisor to Iraqi Kurdistan's Prime Minister, Nechirvan Barzani, stated, " Women being involved in politics in Kurdistan is considered shameful for her family because the patriarchal mentality is dominant" (Omar 2008). Previously, Kurdish women have fought along side Kurdish men when Kurdish rights were in jeopardy. This was considered acceptable since the Kurdish struggle against the Ba'th did not challenge tribal customs. However, the issue of women's political participation directly interferes with patriarchal tribal norms.

In late 2007, thirty female members of the PUK submitted a proposal to the Kurdistan parliament demanding political parties to apportion twenty five percent of their leadership seats to women. As of February 2008, the assembly has not responded (Omar 2008). Therefore, Kurdish women cannot achieve substantial high levels positions on her merit. She needs the assistance of an influential male relative is needed to attain power. Najeeba Mahmood, head of women's affairs stated, "Unfortunately, the Kurdish parties have a tribal mindset. A woman only becomes a leader if she comes from a

prominent tribe or political family" (Omar 2008). This leaves many potentially promising women out of the political arena entirely.

The hostility Kurdish women encounter for their political activism also derives from within the family unit. Kurdish women who participate in non-government organizations and women's rights campaigns also meet opposition from with the community. For example, Kurdish women's organization leader was attacked by her own brothers when she demonstrated against the implementation of Shari'a law (V-Day 2005).

Religious conservatism impedes women's rights to political expression. High profile women are particular targets of Islamist militas since they actively work towards women's equality. Yanar Mohammed, founder of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq, receives death threats daily (Susskin 2008). Her organization provides a safe haven for women who could be potential victims of gender violence. Murder, abduction, rape, and harassments are among some of the tactics used to coerce these women activists back into their homes. The lack of security has prevented many women from running for elections in January 2005 (Al Ali 2005, 755).

There is religious conservatism and gender bias within the Iraqi government itself. Politicians and officials continue to sidetrack women's issues. Numerous officials are members of conservative religious parties that have no interest in women's empowerment. Numerous politicians promote women's rights while campaigning, but fail to follow through once elected (Naji 2006). Additionally, funding for the Women's Affairs Ministry has continued to dwindle. In 2006, this ministry was allocated only two thousand dollar per month to operate, as oppose to other ministries who have budgets

exceeding millions of dollars (Naji 2006). This meager budget prevents ministry from enacting any real reform in women's status. The ministry is under equipped and under staffed.

Women's activism

Despite these challenges, Iraqi women continue to work towards more gender equality and enfranchisement. Some scholars have suggested that since independent grassroots organizations were outlawed by Saddam Hussein that Iraqi women were not empowered enough to organize on their own (Brown and Romano 2006, 9). It was suggested that they would need assistance from the government to create a robust civil society (Brown and Romano 2006, 9). However, Iraqi women have organized grassroots political activism in spite of the challenges of religious extremism, tribalism, and social conservatism.

Since April 2003, women's organizations have rapidly developed throughout Iraq. Their goals and activities have changed significantly over time. In the first days after the fall of Saddam, organizations' activities provided social services such as income generation, legal advice, free health care, and psychological counseling (Al-Ali 2005, 755). Humanitarian projects addressed the most pressing needs at that time. Political representation was important to women during this time. However years of hardship and suffering coupled with the fall of regime necessitated that these humanitarian and social services be provided first. Women's political activism for women began to develop more fully during the formation of the interim government. Many women were eager to participate in the reconstruction of their country. However, as conservative religious parties gain political clout, women mobilized to ensure that they would not be

marginalized. The protest against Resolution 126 and petitions for quotas for women's political representation were among the first reason that educated middle class Iraqi women organized (Al Ali 2005, 755).

When the IGC attempted replace the Personal Status Law with Resolution 126, various women's groups around Iraq coordinated their efforts and demonstrated. Activists from over eighty women's organizations launched marches and street protests demand the repeal of the decree and call for more modern personal status legislation (Baban 2006). The protests crossed ethnic boundaries. In Kirkuk, thousands of Kurdish women also demonstrated in the streets (Efrati 2005, 577). In addition to effective organizing, women showed their lobbying and petitioning capabilities. A delegation of women handed a letter of protest directly to Adnan Pachachi, rotating President of the IGC, and a petition was sent to L. Paul Bremer (Efrati 2005, 577). Women with more political clout, such as Dr. Raja Habib, were able to appeal to more moderate Islamic leaders. These tactics were effective enough to overturn the resolution. After the resolution was repealed, a CPA staffer told Dr. Habib that she had "chosen the wrong time to pick a fight with the council's Islamists" (Hunt and Posa 2004).

The other issue was the quota for women's political representation. Women were gravely concerned about being denied access to the political system. Without quotas, women would be unable to gain any substantial position of power that would allow them to implement necessary change. Political activist Safia al-Souhail stated, "We have to have quotas. This is the only way to force (the government) to have a number of skillful women. After the people have become more educated to this, they won't need (quotas)" (Ciezadlo 2003). Safia al-Souhail along with many other political activists repeatedly

petitioned L. Paul Bremer with their demands. Women's conferences were held throughout Iraq. The general consensus among both religious and secular women was that women should hold at least thirty percent of all elected offices (Al Ali and Pratt 2008, 76).

Other Iraqi women, especially those in the diaspora, became involved in international women's organizations that address gender violence and other forms of gender discrimination. For example, International Kurdish women's organizations addressed issues as the prevention of self-immolation and education on the harmful effects of female genital mutilation. Other organizations such as MADRE protect women against honor killings. MADRE has established an underground railroad of safe houses throughout Iraq for women in jeopardy of honor crimes to go to until MADRE can assist them leave the country and seek political amnesty (Susskin 2008).

Iraqi women perceive diasporic women's activism in both a positive and negative way. Dr. Nadje Al Ali explained this phenomenon:

> "Many (diaspora women) were seen as patronizing. There are some diaspora women who have gained respect and credibility by not coming forward and saying 'yes, I know how to do it and you have no experience.' They were humble and shared their expertise in whatever area without imposing. This is kind of a mixture between personality and understanding. It was not that women inside Iraq didn't want help, but they don't want to be told what to do. They don't want to be made out to be stupid and inadequate" (Nadje Al Ali, pers. comm.)

Diaspora women can provoke resentment among local activists. This is particularly so in cases where diaspora organizations supported by the United States attempted to influence

emerging women's organizations within Iraq (Al Ali 2005, 742). Iraqi women felt that these diaspora women are trying to impose their own values upon them.

Women's Legal Rights

Access to legal recourse and due process is the final dimension of this sphere. In the last period, Iraqi women had less access to formal recourse in both civil and criminal matters due to regime's shift towards tribalism. Laws that protected and promoted gender equality were reversed, and other decrees the encouraged gender bias were implemented. Iraqi women had virtually no access to due process.

In the current period, very little has changed for Iraqi women in this area. Women still face gender bias in the eyes of the law, despite the regime change. The United States guaranteed women more legal rights as part of Iraqi democracy. However, under US occupation, public beatings, abductions, rapes, and assassinations have been indicators of the rapid erosion of women's legal rights (Susskin 2008). Iraqi criminal law has explicitly addressed the severity of these crimes. Rape, sexual assault, and abductions are felonies under Iraqi law, punishable by long prison terms (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 16). However, poorly conducted criminal investigations and biased legal proceedings prevent Iraqi women from receiving adequate justice.

Criminal investigations of gender violent crimes consistently have been down played. Human Rights Watch reported that Iraqi police officers stated that investigations of murder, carjacking, and theft took precedence over sexual violence (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 13). The criminal justice system does not partake in an active role in the persecutions of perpetrators of these crimes. Often, these offenses are left to the family to resolve. The legal system reinforces this notion. Penal Codes allow for lighter

sentences if the accused and the family can come arrange an agreement. Many families primary concern is maintaining honor rather than seeking justice. The dishonor of sexual crime, in the family's perception, can often be remedied through marriage. Perpetrators of rape, sodomy, and attempted sexual violence can receive reduced sentences if they marry their victim, and those accused of abduction can escape punishment entirely (Human Rights Watch 2003b, 13). These laws discourage victims from pursing their cases.

Female detainees have reported inadequate treatment at the hands of US forces. Iraqi women are subjected to cruel and unusual punishment while incarcerated. The Abu Ghraib scandal focused mainly on the torture of male prisoners. However, in December 2003, a letter, written by a woman detainee, was smuggled out of the prison that stated that US soldiers at the prison were raping women and many were pregnant as a result (Susskin 2008, 21). This letter surfaced five months before the Abu Ghraib scandal was brought to the media's attention. Female prisoners were both physically and psychologically abused alongside their male counterparts. Women detainees reported that in addition to sexual abuse, they have been forced to remove their headscarves, dragged by the hair, made to eat from dirty toilets, and urinated on (Susskin 2008, 21). The raping of women prisoner is not an isolated phenomenon. It is common knowledge among the Iraqi population that sexual assault among female inmates is ubiquitous. It is now a widely held assumption that any woman who is arrested is raped, which could be considered grounds for honor crime (Susskin 2008). Incarcerated Iraqi women are in jeopardy of a two-fold threat. The first is threat of sexual abuse and degradation while in prison. The second is the increased threat of honor killing upon their release. The

restriction of legal recourse and inhuman treatment of female prisoners contributes to the overall impingements of Iraqi women's rights in the sphere of political expression.

Section Summary

Iraqi women have been promised a new life under democracy, where they would be treated as equal partners in the reconstruction of Iraq. The United States has promoted gender equality and women's rights as a part of the War on Terror platform. Tokenistic programs and initiatives have been implemented in an attempts enfranchise women. Iraqi women have been eager to take an active role in political and cultural spheres. Women's organizations inside and outside of Iraq have proliferated. These organizations have provided social services, training, and protection in order to promote women's rights and participation.

However, despite the regime change, Iraqi women are still considerably repressed in all six spheres. In the cultural arena, women are still the bearers of family honor, and are used as symbols against Westernization. This has been exacerbated by the implementation of patriarchal interpretations of Shari'a law that is enforced by Islamist militias that roam the streets. Gender violence such as honor killings and female genital mutilation has increased in Post Saddam Iraq. The lack of security has also hindered women in the spheres of work and mobility and education. Women are afraid to leave their homes in fear of abduction, rape, and assault. In the Women to Women survey, over seventy percent of the women polled said they did not know if they had the right to move freely (Women for Women International 2008, 27).

Religiously based political parties have also attempted to curtail women's freedom especially in the family sphere. The Personal Status law has come under fire

during this period. Conservative politicians have tried to abolish the code, and replace it with Shari'a law. The United States repealed these attempts, but only after large demonstrations were carried out by women in protest. The Iraqi government has promoted initiatives that attempt to undermine women's rights in family sphere and in the sphere of work and mobility. Gender segregations in certain public sector offices, gender discrimination in promotions and pay, and financial incentives that encourage widows' retirement are a few examples of the government trying to force women out of the formal sector.

Finally, women still face adversity in the sphere of political expression. Tribalism and religious conservatism put women at a disadvantage in this area. Women's political participation is viewed as outside traditional gender roles. Although quotas have been implemented in order to guarantee women's representation, government budgets for women's programs and ministries are at an all time low. Politically active women both within the government and women's organizations have become targets of violence, since they are seen as altering the status quo. Iraqi women continue to organize, but have not been able to reach their full potential due to the lack of security within the country. The severe restrictions that women face in this sphere leave many Iraqi women ignorant of the own political rights. Fifty two percent of Iraqi women did not know if they had the right to political participation (Women for Women International 2008, 27). Women still have difficulties receiving legal recourse in civil matters and due process in criminal proceedings. The criminal justice system promotes the family as the mode of resolution in sexual assault cases. Often the outcomes that the family chooses are designed to protect the family honor, not seek justice for the victim. Therefore, victims are hesitant

to pursue any action. There is an obvious disparity between men and women's legal rights and political participation in Iraq. Over seventy two percent of Iraqi women stated that they felt that their rights were different because they were women (Women for Women International 2008, 27).

Ultimately, women have not received any substantial expansion of rights in any of the six spheres since the United States invasions. In many areas, restrictions appear exacerbated. In other arenas, the level of freedom remained the same, but the factors surrounding the restrictions have changed. In the prior period, restrictions were due to variables such as the regime, its ideology, and economic sanctions. In the current era, these have shifted to lack of security, religious conservatism, and the United States invasion. Although women are technically accorded many rights such as the right to organize, they are still greatly hindered by these factors. Despite all the promises and rhetoric about Iraqi women's equality, women have experienced at best, minimal expansion in some spheres, and at worst, more severe restrictions in others.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

Research Findings

In the Middle East, women's roles in the political process have had two results. Either women become active, autonomous participants through empowerment, thus pursuing their own political goals such as gender equality; or they become co-opted by ultra conservative groups, and are victims of patriarchal values. Despite the obstacles women face in Middle Eastern societies, women continue to shape their own destiny. They remain key participants in the Middle Eastern political process.

In the case of Iraq, women have been important actors in the political process since the inception of the Ba'th party. In the first period, women were viewed as indoctrinators of Ba'th ideology future generations and integral partners in the modernization of the nation. They symbolized a progressive nation. State sponsored programs to further women's education and employment assisted in enfranchising Iraqi women. However, women's roles continued to change through subsequent periods in accordance with the regime's political goals. During the Iran/Iraq War period, women were expected to fulfill the roles of producers in the economic sector when the men went to the battlefront and reproducer in order to replenish the population that dwindled due to causalities of war.

Extenuating factors also affected women's roles in Iraq throughout each period. For example, sectarianism, social conservatism, economic sanctions, and war influenced

women's functions within society as the regime reacted to these variables. When the regime experienced a legitimacy crisis after the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein sought the support of tribal males to bolster his authority. The regime shifted towards increased religiosity and social conservatism in exchange for tribal loyalty. Women were expected to conform to a role of subservience disguised as honorable wife and mother.

Women continue to experience role change in the post Saddam period. Iraqi women are used as symbols for competing authorities within the country. Conservative religious political parties and Islamist groups want to curtail women's rights and participation in society to distinguish their break from the previous secular regime and the United States. The United States used women's empowerment as a justification of the Iraqi invasion and a symbol of a successful democracy. Therefore, women receive conflicting messages about their roles in society, and experience a violence and oppression when they attempt to define their own position in the current period.

The role changes throughout each period have had a profound effect on the six spheres. During periods when women were expected to be active participants in Iraqi society, there were expansions in education, work and mobility, and cultural and political expression. However, restrictions in other arenas could accompany these simultaneous openings. After the inception of the Ba'th party, the regime modified the Personal Status Law to curtail women's rights in the family sphere. Inheritance entitlements, legal marital age, and divorce proceedings were changed to women's disadvantage. Moreover, contraception was outlawed during the Iran/Iraq War when the regime wanted women to procreate to replace the population. This negatively impacted women's choices in the health and sexual control arena.

Factors such as ethnicity and religious affiliation also affected women's freedoms in each of the six spheres. Since the Shiite and Kurdish populations were seen as a threat to the regime, the women of these groups had no roles to fulfill that could benefit the Ba'th Party. Therefore, many opportunities that were accorded other women were not available to Shiite and Kurdish women. The subjugation of the Kurdish and Shiite people also adversely affected the six spheres for women of these respective groups. These restrictions primarily manifested themselves in the areas of cultural and political expression. Kurdish and Shiite women experienced grave human rights violations under the Ba'th solely due to these two factors of religious affiliation and ethnicity. In the sphere of political expression, legal rights and recourse were denied them. The Ba'th party murdered, imprisoned, raped, tortured, and deported these women. In the area of cultural expression, exacerbated sectarian tensions and ethnic conflicts fostered by the regime created an air of hostility between these groups and the rest of Iraqi society. These women's roles in society were restricted, and they were alienated from other groups.

The answering the question regarding the degree of women's empowerment in the post Saddam period is more complex. Throughout, Ba'thi rule, independent political organizations were illegal, and women were granted certain privileges that served the regime's political agenda. After the fall of Baghdad, it was suggested that these mitigating factors demonstrated that women needed the government's assistance to make gains in civil rights. It was proposed that the Ba'th regime stifled women's empowerment, and Iraqi women would be unable to rally on a grassroots level for their rights and participation (Brown and Romano 2006). However, Iraqi women have a rich

history of active involvement in society. Prior to the Ba'th party, women were already politically active. In the current period, Iraqi women have not remained passive or helpless. They pooled their strengths and maximized their limited resources especially in the face of political adversities such as the failed implementation of Resolution 126 and the demands for quotas. They have organized, coordinated, lobbied, and petition effectively to enact women's rights reform. Women are capable and competent of determining their own destinies by using a grassroots approach.

However, many variables outside women's control encumber their ability to more fully develop and expand their empowerment. The deterioration of security makes mobility and political activism for women dangerous. Many female activists have been threatened and physically harmed for their vocal position on gender equality. Conservative religious parties within the Iraqi government attempt to thwart women's enfranchisement through a series of discrimination and inadequate protection of women's rights under the law. The justice system is corrupt, and women have extremely limited legal recourse in both civil and criminal matters. The government continues to limit funding towards women's initiative and extremist groups have assassinated female government officials. The United States has done little to reverse these alarming trends that hinders women's empowerment. The United States has, at times, sacrificed women's rights, in exchange for short-term appeasement of various political groups in power. These factors stifle Iraqi women's empowerment.

It is evident that Iraqi women have the capability to further their own empowerment and civil rights, and with the fall of the Ba'th regime, they have more freedom to politically organize in order to further these goals. However, increasing

religiosity, social conservatism, and lack of security greatly suppresses women's empowerment. Therefore, the gains in women's empowerments are modest. Yet, post-Saddam Iraq is still developing socially, economically, and politically. Reconstruction is not completed. Further studies of women's rights and roles in Iraq should be evaluated in the post reconstruction period in order to accurately determine the gains and losses in women's empowerment.

Bibliography

Abdul-Jabar, Faleh and Hosam Dawod. 2003. *Tribes and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East.* London: Saqi Books

Abdullah, Thabit. 2003. *A Short History of Iraq*. London: Pearson-Longman

Act Together: Women's Action for Iraq. Home Page. Act Together: Women's Action for Iraq Main Office, London. http://www.acttogether.org/

Al-Ali, Nadje Sadig. 2008. Interview by Gina Marie Longo. Telephone correspondence. February 15. Delray Beach, Florida.

--------. 2007. *Iraqi Women Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present.* London: Zed Books

--------. 2005. Reconstructing Gender: Iraqi Women between Dictatorship, War, Sanctions, and Occupation. *Third World Quarterly* 26 no. 4-5: 739-58

--------.2000. Sanctions and Women in Iraq. Keynote address at the conference meeting of the Campaign Against Sanctions in Iraq, Cambridge

Al-Ali, Nadje Sadig and Yasmin Hussein. 2003. "Between Dreams and Sacntions: Teenage Lives in Iraq". In *Teenagers in the Middle East*, ed. Akbar Mahdi. Westport: Greenwood

Al-Ali, Nadje Sadig and Nicola Pratt. 2008. Women's Organizing and the Conflict in Iraq Since 2003. *Feminist Review* 88: 74-85

---------. 2006. Women in Iraq: Beyond the Rhetoric. *Middle East Report* 239: 1-8

Al-Azzawi, Souad. 2008. Deterioration of Iraqi Women's Rights and Living Conditions Under Occupation. *Global Research*, January 13. http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=7785

Al-Khalil, Samir.1989. *Republic of Fear: The Politics of Modern Iraq*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Al-Khayyat, S. 1990. *Honour and Shame: Women in Modern Iraq*. London: Saqi Books

Al-Rasheed, Madawi. 1994. The Myth of Return: Iraqi Arab and Assyrian Refugees in London. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 7 no.2/3: 199-219

Al-Sharqi, Amal. 1982. "The Emanicpation of Iraqi Women". In *Iraq: The Contemporary State,* ed. Tim Niblock. London: Croom Helm

American Bar Association. 2006. *The Status of Women in Iraq: Update to the Assessment of Iraq's De Jure and De Facto Compliance with International Legal Standards. Excerpts from Iraq Legal Development Project.* Washington: American Bar Association. http://www.abanet.org/rol/publications/iraq_status_of_women_update_2006.pdf. (Access date March 2007)

Ammash, H.S. 2000. "Toxic Polution, the Gulf War, and Sanctions". In *Iraq Under Siege: The Deadly Impact of Sanctions and War*, ed. Anthony Arnove. London: Pluto Press

Amnesty International. 2005. Iraq: Decades of Suffering. Now Women Deserve Better.

Amnesty International Website. http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/001/2005. (accessed January 2, 2008)

--------.2001. Iraq: Systematic Torture of Political Prisoners. Amnesty International Website. http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/008/2001/en (accessed February 21, 2008)

Amowitz, Lynn, Glen Kim, Chen Reis, Jana Asher, and Vincent Iacopino. 2004. Human Rights Abuses and Concerns about Women's Health and Human Rights in Southern Iraq. *The Journal of the American Medical Association* 291 no. 12: 1471-79

Anning, Caroline. 2007. Iraqi Women Wrap Up Training Workshop on Gender Awareness. *The Daily Star Lebanon*, September 21. http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=2&article_id=85438

Arkin, William, Damian Durrant and Marianne Chernie. 1991. On Impact: Modern Warfare and the Environment, A Case Study of the Gulf War. Greenpeace International Report. http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports/on-impact-modern-warfare-and. (accessed March 15, 2008)

Baban, Mubejel. 2006. Drafting the Constitution and Family Laws in 1959. Paper presented at the Iraq: Women's Right Under Attack Conference by Women Living Under Muslim Law and Act Together, London.

Baumont, Peter. 2006. Hidden Victims of a Brutal Conflict: Iraq's Women. *The*

Guardian Observer Online, October 8. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/oct/08/iraq.peterbeaumont

BBC News. 2002. Full Text: State of the Union Address. *BBC News*, January 30. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1790537.stm

Beehner, Lionel. 2005. Backgrounder: Iraq: Militia Groups. *Council on Foreign Relations*, June 9. http://www.cfr.org/publication/8175/

Brown, Lucy and David Romano. 2006. Women in Post-Saddam Iraq: One Step Forward or Two Steps Back? *NWSA Journal* 18 no. 3: 51-71

Burns, Robert. 1992. War's Aftermath Killed 70,000 Iraqi Civilians, Analysts Say. Chicago Sun-Times, January 9, International section, Daily edition.

Cainkar, Louise. 1993. The Gulf War, Sanctions, and the Lives of Iraqi Women. *Arab Studies Quarterly* 15 no. 2: 15-54

Carroll, Jill. 2005. Iraqi Women Eye Islamic Law: the Majority of United Iraqi Alliance Supports Shari'a. *Christian Science Monitor*, February 25. http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0225/p07s02-woiq.html

Chandrasekaran, Rajiv. 2003. Plan Gives Iraqi Council Larger Governing Role; Occupation Authority to Shape Membership. *Washington Post*, July 11, A Section, Final edition

Ciezadlo, Annia. 2003. Iraqi Women Raise Voices—For Quotas. *Christian Science Monitor,* December 17. http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/1217/p01s02-woiq.html. (accessed March 10, 2008)

Cobbett, D. 1986. "Women in Iraq". In *Saddam's Iraq: Revolution or Reaction?*, ed.

Committee Against Repression and for Democratic Rights in Iraq. London: Zed Books

Damon, Arwa. 2008. Violations of 'Islamic Teachings' Take Deadly Toll on Women. *CNN Online*, February 8. http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/meast/02/08/iraq.women/index.html (accessed July 13, 2008)

---------. 2007. Iraqi Women: Prostituting Ourselves to Feed Our Children. *CNN Online*, August 16. http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/08/15/iraq.prostitution/index.html

Dreze, Jean and Haris Gazdar.1992. Hunger and Poverty in Iraq 1991. *World Development* 20 no. 7: 921-45

Efrati, Noga. 2005. Negotiating Rights in Iraq: Women and the Personal Status Law. The Middle East Journal 59 no. 4: 577-96

----------. 2004. The Other 'Awakening' in Iraq: the Women's Movement in the First Half of the Twentieth Century. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 31 no. 2: 152-73

Farouk-Sluglett, Marion and Peter Sluglett. 2001. *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship*. 4th ed. New York: I.B. Tauris

El-Awady.2003. Iraqis and the Occupation: the Status of Women in Iraq. *IslamOnline.com*, June 16. http://www.islamonline.net/english/In_Depth/Iraq_Aftermath/2003/06/article_08.shtml

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2000. Assessment of the Food and Nutrition Situation: Iraq. Technical Corporate Programme. http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/iraqnutrition.pdf (accessed March 23, 2008)

Fleischmann, Ellen. 1999. "The Other 'Awakening': the Emergence of Women's Movements in the Modern Middle East, 1900-1940". In *A Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East*, ed. Margaret L Meriweather and Judith E Tucker. Boulder: Westview Press

Garfield, Richard. 2000. Changes in Health and Well-Being in Iraq during the 1990s: What do we know and how do we know it? Keynote address at the conference meeting of the Campaign Against Sanctions in Iraq, Cambridge

Giele, Janet Z. 1977. "Introduction: Comparative Perspectives on Women". In *Women, Roles and Status in Eight Countries,* ed. Janet Z Giele and Ann C Smock. New Jersey: John Wiley Publishing

Graham-Brown, Sarah. 1999. *Sanctioning Saddam: The Politics of Intervention in Iraq.* New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers

Human Rights Watch. 2003a. Background on Women's Status in Iraq Prior to the Fall of the Saddam Hussein Government. Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper. http://www.hrw.org/backgrounder/wrd/iraq-women.htm. (accessed December 16, 2007)

----------. 2003b. Climate of Fear: Sexual Violence and Abductions of Women and Girls in Baghdad. *Human Rights Watch: Iraq* 15 no. 8: 1-17

----------.1993. Genocide in Iraq: the Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds. A Middle East

Watch Report. http://hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/ANFAL.htm. (accessed January 26, 2008)

Hunt, Swanee and Christina Posa. 2004. Iraq's Excluded Women. *Foreign Policy* 143: 40-45

Husein, Y. 2005. International Sanctions, Gender, and the State: The Impact of the United Nations Sanctions on Iraqi Women. PhD diss., University of Exeter

Hussein, Saddam. 1981. *The Revolution and Woman in Iraq*. Trans. Khalid Kishtandy. Baghdad: Translation and Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Hussein, Saddam. 1979. *Social and Foreign Affairs in Iraq*. London: Croom Helm

International Federation for Human Rights. 2002. Iraq: An Intolerable, Forgotten, and Unpunished Repression. International Federation for Human Rights Report. http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/iq315a.pdf (accessed March 3, 2008)

Iraq Foundation. 2000. *Saddam Bans Iraqi Women from Work. 2000 News Archives.* Washington D.C.: Iraq Foundation http://www.iraqfoundation.org/news/2000/fjun/15_womenbanned.html (accessed March 2, 2008)

Iraq Research and Documentation Project. 2002. Trans. Robert Rabil. Cambridge: Harvard University

Joseph, Saud. 1996. Gender and Citizenship in the Middle Eastern States. *Middle East Report* 198: 4-10

----------. 1991. "Elite Strategies for State Building: Women, Family, Religion and the State in Iraq and Lebanon". In *Women, Islam, and the State*, ed. Deniz Kandiyoti. Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Kandiyoti, Deniz. 1991. Women, Islam and the State. *Middle East Report* 173: 9-14

Library of Congress. Library of Congress Country Studies: Iraq. Library of Congress. http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+iq0077). (Accessed March 10, 2007)

Margesson, Rhoda and Daniel Kronenfeld. 2006. U.S. Assistance to Women in Afghanistan and Iraq: Challenges and Issues for Congress. *CRS Report for Congress no. RL33227*: 1-12

Mernissi, Fatima. 1988. Islam and the State. *Middle East Report* 153: 8-11

Michael, Katrin. 2008. Interview by Gina Marie Longo. Telephone correspondence. January 22. Delray Beach, Florida.

--------. Forthcoming. "Chapter Five: Chemical Weapons". In *From Violence to Nonviolence: An Iraqi Woman's Quest*, ed. Eden Naby. Washington: Pending Publication

Moghadam, Valentine. 1988. Women, Work, and Ideology in the Islamic Republic. *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20, no.2: 221-43

Mojab, Shahrzad. 2004. "No 'Safe Haven': Voiolence against Women in Iraqi Kurdistan". In Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones, ed. Wenona Giles and Jennifer Hyndman. Berkley: University of California Press

----------. 2003. Kurdish Women in the Zone of Genocide and Gendercide. *Al-Raida* 21 no. 103: 24

----------. 2000. Vengeance and Violence: Kurdish Women Recount the War. *Canadian Women's Studies* 19 no. 4: 89-95

Naji, Zaineb. 2006. Women's Ministry Lacks Support. *Women's International League for*

Peace and Freedom, United Nations Office. Peace Women Project Website. http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Iraq/July06/Wom_ministry_lacks_support.html

Omar, Barham. 2008. Iraq-Kurdistan: Male-Dominated Political World. *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, February 1. http://www.iwpr.net/?p=icr&s=f&o=34217&apc_state=henh

Pachachi, Maysoon. 1994. *Iraqi Women: Voices from Exile.* VHS. London: Women Who Make Movies

Pankhurt, Donna. 2004. "The 'Sex War' and Other Wars: Towards a Feminist Approach to Peace Building". In *Development, Women, and War: A Feminist Perspective*, ed. Haleh Afshar and Deborah Eade. Oxford: Oxfam

Peace Women Project. 2006. Lawyers Killed for Defending Cases "Against Islam". *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, United Nations Office*. Peace Women Project Website. http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Iraq/Aug06/Lawyers_killed.html

Pina, Aaron D. 2006. Women in Iraq: Background and Issues for US Policy. *CRS Report for Congress* no. RL32376: 1-20

Rabil, Robert. 2008. Emailed Correspondence with Gina Longo. October 8. Boca Raton, Fl

Rajaee, Farhang. 1993. *The Iran/Iraq War: The Politics of Aggression.* Gainesville: University of Florida Press

Rassam, Amal. 1992. "Political Ideology and Women in Iraq: Legislation and Cultural

Constraints". In *Women and Development in the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. J. Jabbra and N. Jabbra. Leiden: E.J. Brill

Rassam, Amal. 1982. "Revolution within the Revolution? Women and the State in Iraq". In *Iraq: The Contemporary State,* ed. Tim Niblock. London: Croom Helm

Rath, Amy. 2003. Iraq: Women's Liberation and the Struggle against Imperialist Subjugation. *Women and Revolution Workers Vanguard* no. 802 (April 25), http://www.spartacist.org/english/wv/archives/oldsite/2003/iraq-wom.htm (accessed December 23, 2007).

Rohde, A. 2006. "Opportunities for Masculinity and Love: Cultural Production in Iraq during the 1980's". In *Islamic Masculinities*, ed. Lahoucine Ouzgane. London: Zed Books

Soler, Joel. 2003. *Uncle Saddam.* DVD. Santa Monica: Xenon Pictures, Inc

Susman, Tina. 2007. Iraqi Policewomen are told to surrender their weapons. *LA Times*, December 11. http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-policewomen11dec11,1,7307870.story?ctrack=3&cset=true

Susskin, Yifat. 2008. Promising Democracy, Impossing Theocracy: Gender-Based Violence and the US War on Iraq. *Madre Position Report.* New York: Madre Organization

Tripp, Charles. 2000. *A History of Iraq.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

UNICEF.2004. *Iraq: Revised Country Programme Document. Excerpts from Executive Board First Regular Session.* http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2004-PL22Rev1_Iraq.pdf (accessed March 1, 2008)

----------.2003. *The Situation of Children in Iraq. An Assessment Based on the United Nations Convention on Rights of Children.* New York: UNICEF. http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/files/Sitan2003revised.pdf (accessed March 10, 2008)

---------.2000. *Joint Government of Iraq-UNICEF Programme Review. Report 1990-2000.* New York: UNICEF. http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/IRQ_2000_010.pdf. (accessed March 15, 2008)

----------. 1998. *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Iraq.* Part 1, *Iraqi National Context. Excerpts from Situation Analysis of Children and Women In Iraq-1997.* London: Campaign Against Sanctions in Iraq. http://www.casi.org.uk/info/unicef/irqpart1.pdf (accessed October 5, 2008)

UNIFEM. 2007. Iraq: Country Profiles, Reports and Fact Sheets on Iraq. http://www.utoronto.ca/wwdl/bibliography_war/UNIFEM%20-%20Iraq%20-%20women%20war%20and%20peace.htm (accessed March 25, 2008)

United Nations Security Council. 2003. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483. http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/iraq-blue-res-052103en.pdf . (accessed July 26, 2008)

U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. Committee on International Relations. *Human Rights Violations Under Saddam Hussein: Victims Speak Out.* 108th Cong., 1st sess., November 20, 2003

U S Department of State. Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's

Issues. 2005a. *U.S. Commitment to Women in Iraq.* http://www.state.gov/g/wi/rls/48464.htm

-------- Office of International Women's Issues. 2005b. *U.S. Support for Women in Iraq.* http://www.state.gov/g/wi/rls/51046.htm

--------. Office of International Women's Issues. 2003a. *Iraqi Women Under Saddam's Regime: A Population Silenced.* http://www.state.gov/g/wi/rls/18877.htm.

--------. Office of International Women's Issues. 2003b. *U.S. Policy on Iraqi Women's Political, Economic, and Social Participation.* http://www.state.gov/g/wi/rls/22492.htm

--------. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. 2002. *Country Report on Human Rights Practices-2001.* http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/nea/8257.htm.

USAID. 2006.Support to Iraq Women. USAID Website. http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/accomplishments/women.html

V-Day. 2005. V-Day Spotlight 2005: Women of Iraq: Under Siege. V-Day Website. http://www.vday.org/contents/vcampaigns/spotlight/iraq

Wolfowitz, Paul. 2004. Women in the New Iraq. U S Department of Defense Office of the Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) Website. http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=90

Women for Women International. 2008. 2008 Iraq Report: Amplifying the Voices of Women in Iraq. *Stronger Women, Stronger Nations Report Series*. Washington D.C.: Women for Women International

Women Living Under Muslim Law and Act Together. 2006. Introduction at the Iraq:

Women's Right Under Attack Conference by Women Living Under Muslim Law and Act Together, London

Zunes, Stephen. 2006. The U.S. Roles in Iraq's Sectarian Violence. *Foreign Policy in Focus*, March 6. http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/3139. (accessed June 15, 2008)