

IRAQ AND THE CENTRALITY OF POLICING TO STATE FORMATION

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Although saying so makes me feel like the protagonist at the end of a poorly written teen romantic comedy, I have to admit this all started as a joke. Like so many of my (mis)adventures during graduate school, this project found its genesis during a long, rambling conversation in Chris Uggen's office. Needing a dissertation topic, we were spit-balling ideas in between complaining about various roster issues on the Twins (I assume). While much of my past work focused on the development of police forces historically, we agreed years of archival work was just not for me. Instead, wouldn't it be a lot more interesting to view the process as it happens?

Of course, the only problem being every place you look, there's already a well-established police force. At some point, Uggen said something to the effect of "well, they're building a new force in Iraq. Why don't you just head there?" after which we both shared a hearty laugh and then more-or-less forgot about it. But as luck would have it, Gabrielle Ferrales joined our department shortly after that and had some connections to folks working in Iraq. After a few years of phone calls, e-mails, and begging people for money, I eventually found myself standing on a concrete training course in the middle of the desert, listening to instructors barking orders in a mix of Kurdish and Arabic, and on more the one occasion, thinking I had gotten myself into something way over my head.

But in the end, it all worked out, as is evidenced by the fact you're holding this work in your hands. And while all projects are the result of the work of many, this one especially required a village of collaborators. Though they all have my heartfelt thanks and gratitude, a few need special mention for being amazing people who helped me accomplish something I still often have a hard time believing actually happened.

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**To Mom and Dad**

**“I am who I am because someone loved me”**

## **DISSERTATION ABSTRACT**

In the past twenty to thirty years, social scientists and philosophers have begun to move away from traditional conceptions of power and the state, focusing increasingly on the ways knowledge creation and discourse combine to enmesh everyone in webs of power that produce consent and legitimacy. Yet at the same time, all functioning states continue to employ armed forces to both maintain social order and fulfill an increasingly coercive function should that order be threatened. While many scholars have turned their attention toward mass incarceration and punishment, few have focused their studies on the front-end of the criminal justice system where countless important decisions are made. As such, this dissertation begins to fill this gap in the literature by examining the decisions and priorities of the police who are ultimately responsible for whether one ends up within the labyrinth of criminal justice in the first place.

The aim of this dissertation is two-fold: I argue both that despite recent trends of globalization and deterritorialization, the state remains an important locus of power in the twenty-first century. Furthermore, the police, as both symbolic and cultural agents of the state, are integral to the formation and maintenance of state power, as well as the imperial expansion of dominant states. Utilizing a case study of the reconstruction of the Iraqi police force, this dissertation begins to address this policing gap in the literature by examining a handful of basic questions regarding the functions of police training in a post-conflict society; namely, how does an emerging police force define itself and those it polices? Who chooses to join an emerging police force, and why? How does the presence of an international hegemon affect the training and implementation process? And

ultimately, why does the training of Iraqi police take on a heavily militaristic and highly symbolic nature?

To answer these questions, I employ a wide variety of data collected in the spring of 2011 during an extensive field study of an Iraqi police training facility. Utilizing a combination of ethnography, intensive interviews, survey questionnaires, and textual discourse analysis, I examine training processes, attitudes of students and trainers, the public performance of police, and attempts by the police to establish legitimacy for themselves and the nascent democratic state of Iraq. This study is unique in that it is one of, if not the, first studies of police reconstruction to be based on data collected during the reconstruction process itself. Furthermore, it is one of few sources regarding the Iraqi police and state to privilege the voices of Iraqi themselves. Results indicate that within a context of budgetary shortfalls, an unstable central government, and rising crime rates, the Iraqi police have opted for a highly militarized symbolic form of policing as an attempt to project a legitimacy neither they nor the larger state have yet earned. This study reveals policing to be a central factor in the establishment of state legitimacy and capacity, as well as playing an important role in imperial expansion.

I address the significance of these findings for research and practice and how policing is both reflective and constitutive of the many problems and possibilities inherent in the state (and empire) building project. This study demonstrates that while conceptions of decentralized power are indeed fruitful, there continues to be a force of people empowered with the ability to use lethal force should one stray too far outside the dictates of the state, and that social scientists and philosophers ignore this fact at their peril.



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The police are famously known as the only people in democratic society with a legitimate monopoly on the domestic use of force, and as such occupy a central role in the construction and maintenance of social order. In a broader conception, the police are the front lines of the state, as it is in confrontations and negotiations with the police, not the court system or the legislature, where constitutional rights are actually maintained or rejected (Williams 2007). Thus, a thorough account of the police tells us not only a great deal about how a society is organized, managed, and policed in both the narrow and broad definitions of that term, but also about how a state wields and reproduces its power.

Existing scholarship has examined the historical development of police forces (Williams 2007; Bayley 1976; Silver 1967) and established the importance of police reform to ensuring the stability of an emerging democracy (Bayley and Perito 2010; Baker 2006; Neild 2001; Jackson and Lyon 2001). Yet few, if any, existing works examine the development of police forces as they occur, especially within the context of a nation simultaneously redeveloping its forms of political and economic governance. As such, the extant literature on the subject leaves unanswered a host of questions regarding how emerging police make personnel and strategy decisions, who and what influences their goals and missions, and how interplay between the development of the police and the development of the state is affected by immediate material concerns and outside ideological influences.

I argue the relative lack of attention to police is a major oversight, as the constitution of a police force, especially in a newly reemerging state, is an important

window for understanding both that particular state and the modern state in general. The state's assertion of sovereign power over matters of law and order has been an integral marker of modernity (Simon 2007; Garland 2001; Tilly 1990), and the police "show in concrete terms for whom and in what matter governmental power will be used" (Bayley and Perito 2010: 152). In the American context, the criminal justice system has been employed for "little bursts of state-making" (Gottschalk 2006), as the American state has used the criminalization of large swaths of behavior to expand its power to control normative order. While sociologists have begun looking at this expansion of the carceral state, most works have been confined to studies of the prison (e.g. Herivel and Wright 2003; Wacquant 2002; Western and Beckett 1999) or the effect on individuals post-incarceration (e.g. Manza and Uggen 2006).

As such, examining the recreation of a police force in a newly reemerging state can grant important and unique insight into how that state is being designed to function. The modern capitalist state functions not only for the provision of general peaceable operating conditions (Clark and Dear 1984), but can also have a powerfully originaive role in creating social norms and relations of production (Zeitlin 1980). Although for the sake of legitimacy the modern state must allow some level of conflict and opposition, only certain conflicts are deemed legitimate forms of dissent (Przeworski 1985), with much of this definitional work performed by the criminal justice system, and the police in particular. This project uses the recreation of the Iraqi Police Force to advance scholarship, as well as grant insight into the state-building process and the goals and intentions of the occupying force leading that rebuilding process.

Additionally, this project will inform larger discussion of how a democratic state wields its power in the context of 21<sup>st</sup> century global capitalism. It will grant insight both into the state-building process in Iraq, as well as shed light on the goals and intentions of the occupying force leading the rebuilding process. By studying the way “order” is defined and implemented, this project will not only speak to the narrow questions of post-conflict and democratic policing, but the larger question of how the modern state defines itself.

### **The Present Study**

The purpose to this study is examine the role police play in state formation and their centrality to state power. The project answers five over-arching research questions:

1. How does an emerging police force define the ‘deviant’?
2. How does an emerging force define itself?
3. Who does an emerging police force recruit to its ranks?
4. How does the presence of an international hegemon affect the mission of an emerging police force?
5. Why does police training in Iraq center on heavily militaristic and symbolic activities?

Emphasis is placed on both the formal and informal aspects of these process, highlighting the official ways police seek to broadcast their effectiveness and legitimacy to the public, as well as unspoken assumptions regarding the role and duties of police (i.e. Prokos and Padavic 2002; Goldstein 1990). The construction of a police force is rarely an organic

development, and especially in the case of Iraq, the police are very much an intentional creation designed to fulfill multiple functions.

The goal of this study is to explicate those roles and functions, and more importantly, what those demonstrate regarding the latent functions of policing generally, and their role in the formation and maintenance of state power more specifically. The task is formidable, and the work is by nature fairly messy. As such, I draw on a multi-method analysis and employ interdisciplinary literatures related to state power and policing. I aim to fill gaps in the literature by showing both the limitations of extant literature on police reconstruction, but also by demonstrating the centrality of policing to understanding the formation of states and their role in imperial projects, especially understanding how those states attempt to gain and maintain legitimacy through coercion and selective uses of force. As mentioned above, while existing literature provides meaningful guidelines regarding best practices for police reconstruction (i.e. Bayley and Perito 2008; Goldsmith and Dinnen 2007) as well as excellent work regarding the development and formation of states (i.e. Owen 2004; Tilly 1985), I argue they both suffer from not understanding the central role of police to these processes. Using a combination of intensive interviews and ethnographic discourse analysis (Gowan 2010), this dissertation demonstrates the value added to the literature with a proper understanding of the role and function of policing.

In summary, this innovative study uses the many failures and setbacks of the reconstruction of the Iraqi police, as well as the larger reconstruction of the Iraqi state, to argue for the centrality of policing to state formation. Indeed, I argue these failures stem from US and coalition officials failing to recognize this central role police play in both

concretizing and legitimizing a state's exercise of power. A proper understanding of the police's role in this process is necessary not only at the theoretical level, but as this project will demonstrate, it is perhaps even more necessary at the practical level.

### *Implications*

Beyond the sociological and theoretical implications of this work, that stakes are obviously quite high for the Iraqi state and the Iraqi people. The success or failure of the reconstruction project is literally a life or death situation for many, and its implications for the region are similarly grandiose (Owen 2006). Federalism requires not only stability, but consensus between multiple ethnic, religious, and cultural groups (Nuruzaman 2010). Central to this federalist project are the twin needs of the state for legitimacy and effectiveness (Call 2011), and it is the aim of this project to demonstrate how central police are to both of these needs. For as Tilly argues, democracy emerges “contingently from political struggle in the medium run rather than being a product of either age-old character traits or of short-term constitutional innovations” (2004: 9).

On a broader level, this work examines Iraq as it slowly builds a new working order and develops a status quo of social, economic, and political relations. As Gottschalk (2006) notes, crime control has regularly been used by states to claim ever expanding levels of involvement in and control over the territory within their borders. Moreover, a number of works argue for the centrality of policing, criminal justice, and penalty in general in shaping a vision of a society and establishing power relations and normative order (Garland 1990; Goldstein 1990; Gramsci 1971). However, as this work demonstrates, while the myriad functions police are meant to fill in this process can be

filled by a number of actors and agents (and indeed, currently are filled by many non-police actors in Iraq), only the police are able to bring these various roles together in the legitimated, rationalized manner required by the modern capitalist state.

There are similarly numerous sociological implications for this study. In many ways, much of this study is examining very traditional questions of policing which are simply drawn into much sharper relief in contemporary Iraq. For instance, policing (and punishment in general) can be seen as a clash between Durkheimian expressions of punishment and collective disapproval and the push toward Weberian administrative, rationalistic management (Garland 1990). Yet this classic tension is far more evident in the Iraqi case, as police find themselves between a past in which policing was purely the expression of (albeit one person's) conception of the social and political order, and a present in which a Weberian-style rational organization and administration is being forcibly imported from a literally foreign culture.

Yet this study offers far more than illuminating examples of classic policing questions. This study also demonstrates the centrality of police to the state-formation project and the construction and maintenance of state and imperial power. It confirms and expands upon Goldstein's (1990) contention that the strength of a democracy and the quality of life enjoyed by that state's citizens is in very large part due to the ability of police to effectively and legitimately discharge their duties. This project further makes a valuable contribution to the growing study of the punitive "right hand" (Bourdieu 1994) of the state, and how this right hand shapes everything from the exercise and forms of power to the disciplining of individuals within the capitalist state.

Practically, this study makes several contributions to the field of police studies, especially those focusing on the post-conflict reconstruction of police forces. Again, this project both confirms yet complicates much of the existing literature in the field (Ellison 2007; Goldsmith and Dinen 2007; Bayley 2006; Neiled 2001; Stanley 1999). This project confirms the need for proper vetting of new police personnel and avoiding the mistake of quantity over quality, along with the need for thorough and applicable training. However, this project demonstrates the necessity of tailoring training programs to fit the material conditions police experience, both on and off the job. A key conclusion is that training programs both need to train police for the actual challenges they will face while discharging their duties, but also to provide them enough for practical living expenses. This dissertation also highlights the myriad problems with placing the reconstruction of a police force under military auspices, instead arguing that only those with a proper understanding of the nature and roles of policing, along with experience in institution-building, are capable of creating a rationalized and legitimated force.

### **Review of Chapters**

This dissertation is ultimately an argument for the centrality of policing in the expression and maintenance of state power. The goal of chapter two is to explicate a coherent sociological understanding of the historical and contemporary functions of policing, and to combine these insights with a neo-Marxian understanding of the state. It provides a roadmap for understanding policing as simultaneously involving criminal justice, the maintenance of hierarchical social order, and the formation, protection, and reproduction of the state. I critique traditional notions of police as a response to crime,



instead demonstrating their historical class functions and contemporary role in the dialectic of consent and coercion. I further critique emerging notions of deterritorialized power, instead arguing that the state remains an important locus of power in the contemporary world.

Following this review of the literature, I give a brief overview of the city of Sulaimaniyah, the Kurdish Regional Government, and other important local political and social considerations. This includes a specific discussion of the Sulaimaniyah Police Lead Training Academy (where the bulk of this research was conducted), regarding both the day-to-day operation of the academy, as well as its place in the larger project of police training and reconstruction. I then present my five guiding research questions, followed by a discussion of my ethnographic methodology and interview procedures, as well as how my data was collected, transcribed, and coded.

Chapter four employs what Collinson et al. (2003) refer to as a “livelihoods” approach, examining the micro-level processes in play during police training and instruction, while seeking to place these observations within the framework of macro-level social, economic, and political factors to understand how the day-to-day lives of police trainers and recruits reflect and shape the larger political economy. The chapter begins with a synthesis of Tilly’s (1985) work on state-making as organized crime and Gramsci’s (1971) work on hegemony and coercion. Following a brief history of Iraqi policing, I examine the daily routines of life at the training academy, focusing on both the formal and informal lessons of the process. I look at how these practices and the rhetoric employed are designed for public consumption and the role they play in gaining (or failing to gain) legitimacy among the wider Iraqi public. Finally, I conclude with noting

some of the fundamental problems of the training process, as well as offering critiques of the methods used for garnering legitimacy.

Chapter five shift away from my ethnographic data and relies mainly on interview data to supply a picture of how Iraqi police trainers and recruits themselves view the job, the larger role of police, and the invasion and coalition forces. The chapter begins with illustrating what Iraqi police would like (and not like) to see in new recruits, and their views on crime control, human rights, and diversity among police. This is followed by a discussion of who actually does join the police, highlighting the vast differences between the desired qualities sought and the actual recruits admitted to the academy. I examine the context and motivations of policing in Iraq, paying particular attention to views on corruption and how it should be handled. The chapter then segues into a look at how police feel they can best project their legitimacy to the public and the mechanisms they have chosen for doing so.

This dissertation then concludes with a summary of the empirical findings and explanations for them, with particular attention paid to the macro-level implications of this work. Following this, I highlight contributions this study makes to our sociological understanding of the state and state power, empire and client states, and the more narrow fields of policing and police reconstruction studies. Implications for both research and practical policy matters are provided in this section, and I conclude with a discussion of study limitations and directions for future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **EXTANT LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Introduction**

While existing scholarship has examined the historical development of police (Williams 2007; Bayley 1976; Silver 1967) or the reconstruction of police forces within nations with established political systems and bureaucracies (Stanley 1999), there is a paucity of work, scholarly or otherwise, examining the development and implementation of a new police force in a nation that is simultaneously developing and implementing dramatically new forms of political, economic, and bureaucratic governance, despite the important place police reform holds in establishing democratic governance (Bayley and Periot 2010; Baker 2006; Neild 2001; Jackson and Lyon 2001).

This chapter will explore the meaning of police and policing in modern capitalist society. While I will speak some about specific developments in Iraq, this is an emerging field of study with little established literature. Most existing works focus on police within established states, much of it focusing on the United States, or political developments in the Euro-American tradition. While these works obviously inhabit a very different context than Iraq, they are still quite useful in establishing important understandings of police ideology and practices, as well as how states operate within a neo-liberal capitalist framework. To that end, I begin with a discussion of the history of Euro-American policing from which the new Iraqi force draws most of its influences, follow that with a short discussion of the history and recent formations of Iraqi policing, and finally end by

placing these discussions within the context of an eclectic theoretical orientation, relying heavily on neo-Marxian understandings of how the modern state operates and reproduces its legitimacy.

### **The History of Euro-American Policing**

#### *Punishment and Social Control in the West*

While broad concepts like punishment and social control obviously change greatly throughout history, the past 30-40 years have seen a dramatic about face in the American criminal justice system, as it has shifted from one premised on rehabilitation of offenders to a “carceral society” warehousing millions (Wacquant 2002, Garland 2001; Goldberg 2000). This trend of higher imprisonment rates has held fairly steady, despite growing acknowledgement it has little to no effect on crime (Tonry 1995). Rather, it is argued that this punitive turn is the result of political maneuvering and economic changes in American late modernity (Garland 2001; Western and Beckett 1999).

Simon (2007) argues that much of this is due to the fact that since the early 1960s crime has become the model problem through which other problems are defined and acted upon. This “governing through crime” means that not only is crime a dominant strategic issue for multiple actors and institutions (as well as a fail-safe electoral strategy), but that the metaphor of crime prevention can be extended to a number of non-criminal problems as a clear moral narrative. Given the righteous anger provoked by the category criminal, the crime metaphor serves as a powerful archetype for drawing stark moral divisions in a number of contentious cultural battles.

Gottschalk (2006) extends this concept historically as well as broadening the view of what caused this shift. She argues that unlike other great shifts in the governing philosophy of the United States, such as the New Deal or the Great Society plans, the carceral state was never presented as a set of policies up for public debate, but rather was a “largely invisible feature of American political development” (19) that came about in unplanned spurts and starts. Although she identifies the carceral state as a top-down elite-led process, she notes that while the public hasn’t necessarily always supported tough-on-crime measures, rhetoric of supporting victims by punishing criminals has found favor with not only conservatives but also women’s groups seeking the recognition and punishment of domestic abuse, GLBT groups supporting the advent of hate crime laws, and other progressive social movements.

As such, state officials have used crime and punishment in little bursts of state-building. The criminal justice system grew not only to hold off disorder, but to define what disorder is, as well as push for the right of the state to contain disorder. Social movements, both conservative and progressive, have little-by-little bolstered and fortified the legitimacy of the state to take over the maintenance and enforcement of law and order. Thus, while social movements in reaction to perceived crimes have always pursued their given folk devil with great zeal, it was not until this shift in governing philosophy that the state had the capacity to fully respond to their punitive demands.

This carceral turn has been greatly studied within sociology, yet many of works exploring the causes and consequences of it have been confined to either studies of the prison (e.g. Herivel and Wright 2003; Wacquant 2002, Western and Beckett 1999) or of the effects on individuals post-incarceration (e.g. Manza and Uggen 2006). While this

work is illuminating, it ignores the greatly important role of the front end of the criminal justice system, namely the police. To that end, I will now explore the history and contemporary composition of the American police force to critically examine the role they have played in the construction and maintenance of the carceral state.

### *Pre-capitalist Policing*

In the pre-capitalist era of Europe, the feudal mode of production called for extractive and extensive relations (Spitzer 1993); that is, the ruling class relied on having a large, undifferentiated mass of workers to exploit. Mercenary systems were thus fine for creating order, as only a minimum order needed to be established (Spitzer 1983). Once this minimum order was met, feudal rulers cared little about the lives or habits of their subjects. The nature of feudal work meant that if subjects were overworked, they were easily replaced by any of the many others on the estate. Insufficient technology and organization amongst feudal lords led to systems of control such as the frankpledge in Europe and the pao-chia in China (Spitzer 1993), systems which punished the collectivity for the crimes of the individual.

As capitalist rationalization took hold of Europe, interest in human capital increased. Workers were no longer seen as finished products ready to be exploited, but rather resources themselves, capable of being cultivated (Spitzer 1993). It must be remembered that the current conception of law emerged with the capitalist class (Quinney 1977) and crime control itself should be viewed as just one of many “social infrastructures” that were developed and rationalized in the emerging capitalist state. With this new mode of production, exploitation moved from being extractive and

extensive to developmental and intensive. Because workers now required training and investment, capitalists became greatly interested in monitoring and controlling their investments, and the importance of screening institutions came to the fore (Spitzer 1983). As the capitalist state progressed from maintaining a minimum order to proactively promoting capitalist growth, the shaping and disciplining of its subjects became a central concern (Foucault 1995; Spitzer 1983).

### *Early English Policing*

While Continental Europe had public police well established by the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, because of popular resistance, the English Parliament considered and rejected instituting an official police force a half-dozen times throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993). As a result, nearly all forms of social control in England before the 19<sup>th</sup> century were private (Spitzer and Scull 1982). During this period, prosecutions were entirely funded by the plaintiff, and private protection societies rose to fill the void (Little and Sheffield 1983). Although they were not built strictly along class lines, private protection societies were entirely concerned about enforcing and upholding emerging property rights. In this manner, they can be seen as the elite version of cooperatives that were also emerging at the time as a buffer to provide the services that were not yet a function of the newly-forming capitalist states.

The use of social and economic superiors or their directly-employed mercenaries as police meant they could not claim the cover of ensuring the public good and often had the effect of exacerbating rather than mollifying class violence (Silver 1967). While the landed elites preferred the decentralized control of these scattered forms of policing, the

emergent bourgeoisie and the expanding capitalist system required the maintenance of a more rationalized and ordered peace. While it was in no individual capitalist's interest to establish order themselves, a collectivized public police force both defrayed the costs of order as well as legitimated the class system as an impersonal rule of law and depersonalized the maintenance of order (Spitzer and Scull 1982; Silver 1967).

As capitalism grew and spread, states gained greater fiscal power, allowing them to intervene into social affairs at an unprecedented level in Euro-American history (Spitzer and Scull 1982). Chief amongst these new interventions was the assertion of the state's sovereign power to enforce law and maintain order (Garland 2001). As the rulers of these newly-forming states sought to increase their territorial power and control, they came to have a direct interest in the promotion of capital accumulation, as well as providing external and internal security (Tilly 1985). Sometimes this new rule of law had the most naked of class characters, such as when the work rules of Victorian-era railways were directly subsumed into criminal law codes (Simon 2007). However, more often these new public police were tasked with controlling and repressing the "dangerous classes;" those new industrial proletariat who had immigrated to the cities of England to find work in the rapidly industrializing economy. So afraid of this newly developing class were the city's bourgeoisie that the London police were given a specific mission to protect society against "the 'dangerous classes' and political agitation" (Silver 1967: 7). This London Metropolitan Police Force was actually modeled on the Thames River Police, a mostly public police force financed through public taxes and funds from the West India Merchant Company, founded to protect the flow of commerce (Spitzer and Scull 1982).



### *Early American Policing*

Police in the early United States were directly modeled on this English form of constabularies, with a few important differences. While U.S. police forces also shared their origins in fears of urban unrest, unlike in England, these forces were drawn from local ethnicities (Mawby, 1999), something which created a far different institutional environment. Furthermore, these local police forces would have no form of federal coordination (and then only weakly) for another 200-plus years after their founding.

Like their English counterparts, colonial American police were paid by a series of differing fees based on the services provided, having the practical effect of turning their attention away from crime in general and concentrating on their better-paying functions (Williams 2007). Northern police forces shared even greater similarities with their English predecessors, as their central task was to control the burgeoning immigrant populations and dangerous classes (CSJA 1983). In the American South, the earliest form of anything we would recognize as policing were slave patrols (CSJA 1983), though as the South industrialized and was forcibly pushed away from the slave system, many of these slave patrols became instituted as official police forces (Williams 2007).

As the newly-established cities of America began to industrialize and classes began to form and solidify, traditional methods of social control broke down and were replaced by police. It was not that these new cities were hotbeds of crime and vice, but that they signaled a breakdown in the established order. To that end, most of the arrests of these young police forces were not for breaking the law, but for controlling the dangerous

classes by arresting them for vagrancy, loitering, and other such crimes of public order (Williams 2007).

During the Progressive Era, reformers turned their sights on the police and effected dramatic changes in the make up of local police departments. The police came to be seen as part of a larger “social engineering” program that sought to create and maintain harmony in society while accepting given class divisions. Progressive reformers instituted such now common policing ideals as centralization, professionalism, the use of technology, and preventative policing (CSJA 1983). However, the biggest mark of Progressive reformers was the institutionalization of the ideology that a massive police presence is both necessary and desirable and that a wide net of repressive crime control is simply the price to pay for modernity (Novak 1996; Spitzer and Scull 1982).

### *The Police Subculture*

It has long been argued that the police force is a “totalizing institution” (Niederhoffer 1967) that rebuilds recruits while drastically reducing their contact with the rest of society. In the police world it is not the individual officer who is either moral or a bad apple, but rather the “premises and designs of the system in which they find themselves” (Skolnick 1975). The whole system of recruiting and training is designed to remove the individual officer’s attributes and replace them with that of the department itself, passing the ideological and operational facets of the authoritarian organization to the recruits themselves, developing a rigid form of groupthink (Hodgson 2001).

The occupational subculture is stronger than even direct supervision by superiors, as order in the police world tends to break down most rapidly when officers are most

supervised, such as in large public demonstrations (Jefferson 1990). Even officer race and sex have less to do with their acceptance within the police subculture; rather it is their acceptance of the norms and worldview of the police culture that determine how welcome they are (Skogan and Frydl 2004), especially their ability and willingness to employ violence (Hodgson 2001). Hence, police reforms that focus on recruiting better personnel are bound to fail, as it is not the personnel but the occupational subculture that cause the excesses and problems of the police world (Goldstein 1977).

Niederhoffer (1967) argues that the police subculture has an endemic and deep-running current of cynicism about its stated goals and effectiveness. As recruits leave training, they are told to forget everything they have learned and to pay scant attention to the formal guidelines and rules. Soon, differences between official training and actual practice engenders a deep skepticism about the nature and efficacy of police work, and socialization into the occupational subculture only reaffirms this cynical view.

Hand in hand with this deep cynicism about the nature of police work and crime control goes the stark “us against them” mentality of the police world. Westley sums up the police attitude as one of “silence, secrecy, and solidarity” (1970: 111), perfectly illustrating the way police closely guard one another and their trade from the public. The special combination of danger and authority inherent in police work produces a worldview in which police are slow to trust anyone who is not a police officer (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993) and see a hostile and enemy public that is “anti-police” which binds them together in isolation and secrecy (Westley 1970).

In addition to not trusting the public, the police demand an instantaneous and complete respect from them as well. Many police believe in the citizen “attitude test” as a

prerequisite to escape arrest or the use of force (Stark 1972; Skogan and Frydl 2004), with a disrespectful attitude being of more consideration than actual threat posed for many police actions. Niederhoffer referred to this as a “principle of equilibrium,” an organizational imperative that “requires the negation of any and all criticism” (1967: 13).

### *Police Violence and Paramilitary Units*

While the use of violence is fairly rare for the individual officer – most have never fired their gun while on duty (Jacobs and Carmichael 2001) – it is collectively common (Williams 2007). American police as a whole use force in about one out of every six arrests, and collectively nearly one percent of the nation experiences police brutality every year, although both numbers are likely underreported by a fairly wide margin (Williams 2007; Skogan and Frydl 2004). Young, male police officers are far more likely to use deadly force, but it is unclear whether this is because of attitudinal or training problems, or from the higher-crime precincts to which they are typically assigned (Carmichael and Jacobs 2001).

What does help us understand excessive use of police force is the need for respect, as many officers reject legal, moral, or administrative limits on the use of force and view it as a legitimate means of gaining or maintaining respect (Westley 1970). In fact, Carmichael and Jacobs (2001) argue that excessive force and brutality should be *expected* from the police unless it is purposively and stringently controlled. And of course, while everyone is seen as an “outsider” by police, certain groups (e.g. ethnic/racial minorities, counter-cultural youth, etc.) are seen as more outside than others and therefore more ripe for the use of excessive force (Stark 1972).

Police occupy an ill-defined area between upholding and creating the law. Because of the high degree of discretion afforded officers (Goldstein 1990), the power to decide which laws to enforce has been handed to the lowest rungs of the police world (Williams 2007; Westley 1970). Research has demonstrated that even under careful scrutiny, many officers willfully disregard all questions of constitutionality and limits on their powers to create their own operating order (Chambliss 1994). The police regularly choose not to enforce the law against certain persons in order to turn them into informants (Skolnick 1975) or to turn a blind eye toward vigilantism (Marx 1981). This illegality is often accepted by superiors as a different means to the same ends (Williams 2007) and is unofficially sanctioned by many city governments provisions protecting officers from having to pay penalties incurred in civil lawsuits (Skogan and Frydl 2004).

After the Cold War, with no outlet for military aggression abroad, the ideals and goals of military dominance were focused inward (Kraska and Paulsen 1997). Using “counter-insurgency” techniques developed during the Vietnam war, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) units began to appear in the late 1960s, mostly as a response to the major civil unrest of the time (CSJA 1983; Parenti 2000). More properly termed Police Paramilitary Units (PPUs), these units utilize “the application of (quasi-) military training, equipment, philosophy, and organization” (Jefferson 1990: 16) to policing and public order. While ostensibly existing to police major public order disturbances, many PPU have shifted into proactive warrant serving and searches, indicating they are becoming a routinized feature of policing (Kraska and Kappeler 1997).

Paramilitary units have the effect of not just facilitating, but propagating the increased use of violence by the police (Hodgson 2001). These units lead to much harsher

strategies of repression (Della Porta 1995) and exist less to prevent violence than to send a message to those who would seek to disrupt the current social order (CSJA 1983). This violence further creates a mythology in which PPU's are seen as the "real" police (in contrast to standard beat patrol) and maintain high levels of secrecy about their work, both in order to protect their elite status, as well as to instill a fear of themselves in the general public (Kraska and Paulsen 1997). Even more insidiously, the elite status of PPU's causes their hyper-militaristic ideology and tactics to filter down to the rest of the police force (Kraska and Paulsen 1997), despite the fact that such a hyper-violent model is dysfunctional for keeping order with the vast majority of the public (Hodgson 2001). While they are usually justified as a specialized, self-contained unit rationalizing the use of force within a department, there is great danger of "mission creep" into the wider force (Kraska and Cubellis 1997), buttressed by the traditional reluctance of most officers to intervene in situations that aren't "real" police situations (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003).

These military models are not only not equipped to meet the many varied demands of today's police department, but their status as the "real" police is a major impediment to changing the police role (Hodgson 2001). Trying to police society with a military model is bound to fail, as a military requires strict discipline and adherence to official orders, while all of police training and strategizing is based on a high level of discretion for those lowest in rank (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993). Furthermore, research confirms that police trained in human relations and non-violent conflict resolution perform markedly better than those in militarized units (Hodgson 2001; Goldstein 1990).

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of PPU's is the effect they have in eroding the wall of separation between the military and the police, as their connection to the armed

forces is not only an integral part of their training, but of their working culture and is often the basis of their appeal to new recruits (Kraska and Paulsen 1997). In these units we begin to see a merging of the criminal justice system with the Military Industrial Complex (Kraska and Kappeler 1997). Much as it is in military training, the training for these powerful units focuses solely on tactics, rarely if ever discussing pertinent legal issues or alternative peace-keeping tactics (Jefferson 1990).

### *The Police and (Progressive) Social Movements*

The policing of major public demonstrations have provided a forum both for dissent and repression. McPhail et. al (1998) argue that police have moved away from an “escalated force” style of crowd management wherein it was believed that massive displays of force were proper to prevent any threat of disturbance, toward a “negotiated management” style in which police work with demonstrators to ensure their right to protest as well public safety. However, Vitale (2007) argues against this rosy picture of progress, noting police have come to reject both tactics. Rather, most have embraced one of two models: the “command and control” model developed by the NYPD as part of its order maintenance program, and the “Miami model,” so named because of the reaction of Miami police to the protests against the Free Trade of the Americas Act in 2003. The command and control model emphasizes micro-managing all aspects of the process and being ready to meet even the smallest disruptions with displays of force, while the Miami model is an overtly coercive, violent, and extensive system of crowd control. Vitale argues that both of these models are consistent with the “new penology” (Feeley and Simon 1992) in that they both attempt to prevent and control potential unrest with a blend

of negotiation and targeted violence, so as to “deny the full right to assemble without the appearance of police brutality on the nightly news” (Vitale 2007: 406).

Both of these models have been greatly informed by the demonstrations against the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle during November of 1999. Seattle has become the “police Pearl Harbor,” a watershed moment police and city officials hosting major events focus on making sure they do not repeat (Noakes and Gillham 2007; Gillham and Marx 2000). Seattle serves as the archetypical example of a “police riot” (Wozniak 2004), an event wherein the police are “the major or only perpetrators of disorder, violence, and destruction” (Stark 1972: 16). Police riots are not a situation in which an under-trained or under-staffed department bungles the handling of a major event, but rather must have at least some intent on behalf of police to harm or illegally disrupt demonstrators and their planned events. Stark cautions that such riots are not a “dark sin of which police are ashamed or about which they feel guilty” (55), but rather that it is only the scale of police riots that sets them apart from the brutality of everyday policing. These riots also reveal the fundamental contradiction highlighted above between discretion and the military model of policing, as the precipitating cause for most police riots comes from officers trained in discretion and individualized decision-making who are asked to hold rank and follow orders in a high-pressure, antagonistic setting. Police riots, then, can be seen as one of the most naked forms of political coercion that arise when the consent-based models of public order policing fail.

### *Alternative International Forms of Policing*



As it is in so many other ways, the United States is unique in its forms of policing. As discussed above, the American tradition of policing grew out of the English model. Today, however, they share much less in common. Policing in England is specifically done with an eye toward maintaining legitimacy above maintaining a disciplined public order (Waddington and King 2007), a trend which holds true for many other European states as well (Wahlström 2007). The Canadian police force is an especially interesting comparison, as it was developed during the same era from the same English model in a similar nation. However, because of its later independence, Canadian forces have an even stronger English imprint than their American counterparts, with a two-tiered system of local and federal police, both of which are largely un-armed (Mawby 1999).

Possibly the most interesting counterpoint to the hierarchical and militarized police model of policing is the Japanese *koban* (Aldous and Leishman 1997). Japan has had a fairly sophisticated policing apparatus since the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, and although it was forcibly Westernized after World War II, it has retained many of its traditional elements. The Japanese police feature a much more communal and deliberative style of decision making, and officers serve not only as police, but as a form of wide-ranging social worker, there to assist with everything from directions to crime control to helping local residents move.

### *The Development and Implementation of Police Forces*

While most studies on the historical development of policing focus on formal social control in the European and American context, they are useful for having established hypotheses on those factors that most impact the development of police

forces. Bayley (1975) argues intuitive factors, such as crime rates, industrialization, and population growth have little to no effect on the establishment or the character of a police force. Rather, it is a transformation in the organization of political power, prolonged violent resistance to government, development of new law and order tasks, and the erosion of former bases of community authority that create and shape police forces.

As such, police forces created in times of political turmoil, especially conflicts that directly challenge the “legitimacy and capacity of the state at the moment of its creation” (Bayley 1975: 361) are most likely to become shaped to political ends of state elites, typically strongly centralized to facilitate easier control, an hypothesis confirmed in studies of attempts at creating democratic police forces in the wake of civil wars (Stanley 1999). This is an especially pertinent point, as the solution to this problem has most often been more training, despite the fact that training itself has been shown to be necessary yet woefully inadequate for ensuring democratic policing (Bayley 2006).

During the 1990s, international coalitions attempted to refine or recreate police forces in post-conflict settings in over a dozen different nations, from the Balkans to Southern Africa to Latin America (Bayley 2006), and the United States alone has led 6 major nation-building projects over the past decade, Iraq being the fifth such project in a majority Muslim nation (Dobbins 2004). While the results of these attempts are mixed at best (Ellison 2007; Goldsmith and Dinen 2007) and vividly demonstrate that international verification and police assistance cannot overcome domestic interests that do not include democratic policing (Stanley 1999), there do exist several lessons learned from these experiences to guide future attempts.

Chief among these lessons is the importance of training and recruitment. Not only should recruits have high academic standards as well as thorough and applicable training, it is a widely-held consensus that the new force have few, if any, officers from the previous regime (Bayley 2006; Neiled 2001). Additionally, the emphasis in recruiting and training must be on quality over quantity; rushing to put out as many officers as quickly as possible invariably leads to corruption, brutality, and a force unlikely to be able to maintain any sort of democratic law or order (Stanley 1999). Finally, as police make the important and necessary shift from “national security” to “serving and protecting,” Bayley (2006) identifies 4 pivotal reforms for democratic forces: they must be accountable to law rather than a particular government; they must protect human rights, especially minority political rights; they must be accountable to persons outside of the force who are specifically charged with and empowered to regulate police activity; and finally, they must give top operational priority to the needs of private citizens.

However, other scholars have argued that Bayley’s proscriptions are missing important elements (e.g. Goldsmith and Dinnen 2007; Baker 2006). Goldsmith and Dinnen (2007) argue Bayley’s suggested guidelines and reforms are “unduly simplistic” (1097) and pay little attention to local understandings of policing and political authority, instead offering a “one size fits all” approach that ignores variations in previous forms of government, current levels of political violence, and other important factors. They see this as a problem endemic to international post-conflict policing scenarios as a whole, with many of the projects failing due to a narrow focus on technological capability (what Marx and Corbett (1991) label the “technofalcy” of the police world – the emphasis on

technological capability/capacity over community relations) at the expense of an understanding of the local environment and political context.

In place of Bayley's (2006) general guidelines, Goldsmith and Dinnen (2007) propose a different 4 stage process. First, they argue any attempt to create a new force must be preceded by a serious study of the setting, both through the consultation of local populations, as well as the utilization of local expertise. Second, those establishing such forces should approach their work with a proper degree of reflexivity and humility about their task and objectives, especially in light of how their actions may be perceived and responded to locally. Third, organizations undertaking post-conflict police reform must be flexible and adaptive, deferring to local knowledge to develop appropriate measures. Finally, the actors involved must acknowledge the inherently political nature of policing and attempt a kind of institutional reform that is not simply limited to short-term technological and organizational improvement, but which is grounded in a broader set of democratic political relations.

Additionally, Ellison (2007) argues we must shift our emphasis in post-conflict reform from "police" to "policing," and recognize the holistic nature of the changes that need to be made in any such situation. In fact, because of the changing landscape of security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Baker (2006) argues there is an "urgent need" to look beyond state actors for policing solutions. The case of the Local Council structure in post-conflict Uganda and District Policing Partnerships in Northern Ireland provide interesting examples of how existing non-state actors can be incorporated into a successful reconstruction of previously corrupt security forces.

As Baker (2004) notes, policing has always been difficult in developing states with limited resources, with most policing outside of major metropolitan areas “inevitably...left to customary justice processes of variable integrity” (1). In Uganda, these customary processes were successfully incorporated into a larger policing scheme. In every village, all adults automatically become members of their village council and directly elect a nine person committee to form the Local Council (LC). The LCs are essentially a non-state local government , responsible for administering the affairs of the village. In attempting to reform the Ugandan police force, LCs were tasked with a wide range of duties from basic law enforcement, collection of criminal evidence and data, and even some basic court functions in an attempt to mobilize “communal self-interest” (8) in crime control and prevention. The incorporation of LCs has been so successful that even in highly diverse areas experiencing ethnic tensions, 98 percent of residents report feeling safe from crime. A further benefit of such democratic inclusion is it helps the fledgling force avoid the typical post-conflict patterns of centralization and militarization that threaten the very legitimacy states are trying to establish with their new security forces.

The police reform project which began in 1999 in Northern Ireland also offers a prime example of the success to be had in a broader conception of public security, moving past a narrow emphasis on the police to larger notions of policing. Based on the recommendations of the Independent Commission on Policing, Northern Ireland instituted a series of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs), specifically designed to move beyond a state monopoly on social control to instead “police with the community” (Ellison 2007: 247). The DPPs importantly focus on policing, not narrowly just the police themselves, and consist of both police and community representatives, with members

selected to reflect the social makeup of the region – politically, ethnically, and religiously. DPPs exist not only to flatten the “pyramidal administrative structure [of the police] and devolve [it] downward and outward” (249), they are also empowered with real oversight capability of the police, up to and including tasking the Chief constable with justifying operational decisions. As such, while there have been some setbacks (notably in the area of human rights training), the reforms have been broadly successful in terms of crime control and increasingly positive public attitudes toward the police.

### *What does the Police Force Actually Do?*

Despite their official mission as a crime-fighting organization, police do not have much of an effect on crime. Once the number of officers reaches a certain threshold (long since met in all major American cities), the amount of police has little effect on the crime rate (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993). The police arrest and complete only about a fifth of all crimes, and the vast majority of times they are called out are for order-maintenance, not criminal, issues (Skogan and Frydl 2004). Westley (1970) argues crime control is but an incidental function of police, and that when it does take place, it is not utilized for the good of the community, but rather for the ends of the police themselves.

Much of what police do falls into a “means/ends syndrome” (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993) in which they relentlessly catalogue numbers, seeking institutional efficiency with no attention to whether or not problems are being solved. Given the ever-widening acceptance of the idea that crime is inevitable and unsolvable, police increasingly ignore underlying social processes, instead seeing crime control as a technical problem (CSJA 1983) moving toward an “economic” reasoning (Garland 2001) in which success is

measured in variables that can be controlled (i.e. number of people served, response time, etc.) instead of any meaningful social outcome (Feeley and Simon 1992).

This means/ends syndrome develops out of police being required to uphold the oft contradictory goals of law enforcement and maintenance of order (Skolnick 1975).

Upholding the law means enforcing a multitude of unpopular mandates that are destined to provoke resistance; as such, the police have to choose between which laws to enforce and which to ignore for the sake of public order. The idea of impartial law enforcement is impossible, as police constantly must make choices about which laws to enforce and how to enforce them (Jefferson 1990).

Policing thus instead focuses on two achievable and (from their vantage point) desirable goals: the maintenance of the status quo and the containment and management of crime. Recent developments in crime control such as Order Maintenance Policing (OMP, more popularly known as “broken windows” policing) reflect a neo-conservative emphasis on the maintenance of status quo above the law, positing it as the prime impetus of policing (Wilson 2000). Though of course, the definition of “order” as understood by those advocating OMP is a highly specific form of bourgeois order that neither seeks nor desires the input of the working class or peoples of color (Skolnick 1975; Harcourt 2001).

This new focus is aptly summed up by what Feeley and Simon (1992) refer to as the “new penology,” an ideal-typical construction that proposes three major shifts in the way crime is viewed and policed: the language of clinical concern for the offender is replaced by the language of probability and risk of crime, the formation of a new set of objectives for the criminal justice system, and the deployment of new, aggregate techniques in crime fighting. As such, old problems like recidivism rates are no longer a

concern, for the goal is simply management of crime, not reform of criminals. Arrest and imprisonment are then better understood as “social management instruments” (469) than as serving any of the stated goals of the criminal justice system.

The police have a powerful role in this process, structuring and amplifying the response to crime – structuring in the way they allocate resources toward fighting certain crimes and amplifying their response to these crimes with intensified surveillance and increased arrests (Hall et. al 1978). As Quinney (1977) argues, imprisonment and arrests are used almost exclusively for a select group of crimes. Excluded from this group are the crimes of the wealthy (e.g. political and white collar crime), meaning imprisonment and arrest become institutions and actions designed for the control of the working class.

### *Policing in Iraq*

Under the rule of Saddam Hussein, Iraq had become an increasingly isolated state in the years preceding the American-led invasion. The existence of Iraq as a pariah state pushed it to assume a central role in the lives of Iraqi citizens, with over half the pre-war population employed by the state and the rest dependent upon it for basic supplies under the United Nation’s food-for-oil program (Owen 2004). Hussein used this dependence to his advantage, continually cycling staff in top positions to maintain loyalty, as well as using inter-tribal factions to his advantage. The result was a corrupt, repressive, and ill disciplined police force (Bender 2006). Today’s re-imagined Iraqi police force still suffers from this perception of repressive corruption with 75% of Iraqi opinion poll respondents indicating they still do not trust the police (Moss 2006).



Currently there are roughly 230,000 Iraqi police officers, about 160,000 of which have been trained by U.S. advisors; however, coalition forces have investigatory insight into only 20-30% of all forces (Jones 2007). Additionally, thousands of Iraqis have joined the force with no training at all, and the existence of “ghost payrolls,” in which corrupt offices register non-existent persons as officers to receive their stipends, makes it difficult to determine the exact number of officers in Iraq (Broadwell 2005).

The Iraqi police operate under the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), a “dysfunctional” ministry in name only, described by the Independent Commission on Security Forces in Iraq as a “serious obstacle” to any meaningful police reform (Jones 2007: 10). However, corruption spreads far beyond the MOI, as the internal affairs unit charged with overseeing police operations is “operating as a ring of extortionists, kidnapers, and killers” (Moss 2006), with several warrants issued after prominent execution-style murders carried out by the police not pursued, among other such glaring examples of police corruption (Moore 2006; Allbritton 2006). The National Police force, the bridge between the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police Service, has been implicated in torture scandals and death-squad activities and is so widely mistrusted by the Army, Police, and the public alike that the independent commission has declared it to be not viable and recommended disbanding it immediately (Jones 2007).

Importantly for this work, the training process of Iraqi police officers directly contradicts many of both Bayley’s (2006) and Goldsmith and Dinnen’s (2007) pivotal factors for democratic policing. There are three police academies to train officers and 6 regional centers to train new recruits, with recruits theoretically undergoing a 10 week course at one of the regional centers followed by a 9 month training course at the

academy (Jones 2007). However, the actual experience of new recruits rarely matches this ideal. Instead, they are hurried through the motions and are often political loyalists to a certain faction simply looking for weapons and money (Allbritton 2006). While roughly 70,000 police have completed the 10 week course, over 38,000 former Hussein-appointed officers were required to complete only a three-week course (Moss 2006). In addition to an unfortunately strong emphasis on quantity over quality in the recruitment and training of officers, most high-level Iraqi police leaders are former military personnel with no formal training or experience in civilian policing. Much of the blame for this lies with American trainers who have not only marginalized civilian police advisors and greatly hampered the training process, but have also appointed military trainers who are too young to be perceived as respectable by most Iraqi recruits (Jones 2007).

While the State Department had advocated sending thousands of police trainers in an effort similar to previous interventions in Bosnia, Haiti, and other UN operations, then-President Bush initially rejected the idea of sending any more than a token amount of police advisors to aid the fledgling Iraqi police force (Dobbins 2009; Moss 2006) – providing no more than 700 advisors for a force with well over 100,000 officers (Moore 2006). 2006, however, became the “Year of the Police” in Iraq, as a massive push was made to stabilize the young force (Paley 2006). Yet despite the renewed efforts, things are still going poorly and those training the force are seriously underfunded and understaffed (Ackerman 2007; Dobbins 2004). The problems facing any such major reconstruction project are exacerbated by the “apparent neglect in planning for post-invasion stability” on the part of the Bush administration (Hoffman 2006).

A large part of the problem has to do with *who* is doing the training. The reconstruction of the Iraqi police has been brought under the Department of Defense, an unprecedented historical first, as previously such missions were exclusively the domain of Departments of State and Justice (Jones 2007; Dobbins 2004). Major General Joseph Peterson, currently in charge of the U.S. effort to rebuild the force, openly admits he has no experience in either institution-building or policing (Moss 2006). As such, Iraq is left with what the Independent Commission on Security Forces in Iraq labeled a force better trained in counter-insurgency tactics than in civilian policing (Jones 2007), a direction predicted by the literature (e.g. Kraska and Paulsen 1997; Jefferson 1990).

Also troubling the development of the Iraqi police force is the presence of sectarian divides and the use of the police force as a source of free training and equipment for young militants (Bender 2006). This is in part fostered by an initial U.S. policy of basing diversity representation policies along sectarian lines, further fomenting sectarian divisions within the force (Owen 2004). This sectarian division amongst officers is being played out in the streets of Iraq, as the only places in which the police can be said to be improving are ethnically homogenous regions, yet even these forces are vulnerable to infiltration and out-manned on the streets (Jones 2007).

It must be noted that American forces are attempting to integrate existing, non-state actors into a policing function in Iraq, albeit in a very different manner than either Uganda or Northern Ireland. Referred to alternately as Concerned Local Citizens (CLCs), Sons of Iraq, or Awakening Councils, these groups are often comprised of former insurgents who have soured on the aims or tactics employed by Al-Qaeda in Iraq. While the Defense Department has “ludicrously” (Green and Ward 2009) compared CLCs to

neighborhood watch groups and plans to integrate them into existing security forces (Mays 2007), detractors see CLCs not as a honest attempt to integrate the public into policing matters, but rather as another example of sacrificing long-term goals in exchange for politically popular short-term gains (Simon 2008; Green and Ward 2009).

Initially, the goal behind the creation of the roughly 90,000 CLCs throughout Iraq was to deputize, fund, and work closely with the community to enhance security and soften tribal divisions (Simon 2008). However, the policy of paying \$360 per month to members of CLCs in exchange for their on-going cooperation has led to much of the conflicts the U.S. was seeking to avoid, as tribal chieftains compete to get as big a share as they can of the \$150 million budgeted for CLCs. Additionally, while this money is meant to be spent on ensuring the safety and security of the community through infrastructure improvement and community organizing, interviews with CLC members indicate that weapons are being directly provided in some cases or allowed to be purchased as a result of the little-to-no oversight attached to the disbursement of these funds (Simon 2008, AFP 2007).

### *Iraqi Policing in the Post-Bush Era*

Of course, as in any war zone, the situation in Iraq is constantly evolving. To date, violence in Iraq has been on a steady decline since the “surge” of troops in the last two years of President Bush’s presidency, with monthly civilian deaths tolls falling from over 3,500 a month at the beginning of 2007 to an unprecedented low of 490 for the month of June 2008 (Dodge 2008). While President Obama campaigned on a promise to bring home all but a small advisory force of troops within 16 months of taking office (Obama

2008), this plan was based on early reports estimating the Iraqi police and Army would be ready to assume security responsibilities within the nation by early 2009, a prediction which has not panned out (Nagl and Burton 2009). Regardless, the Obama administration had placed numerous caveats on the 16-month withdrawal plan in the first place, leaving questions as to whether this was ever truly their plan of action (Dodge 2008).

With these relatively low levels of violence, the Iraqi police force has had some successes. The new commander, Major General Hussein al-Wadi, has instituted new screening and vetting processes, replaced nearly all top commanders, placed special emphasis on recruiting minority Sunnis and Kurds to the force, and has begun a massive re-training of all police. As such, the percentage of Iraqis believing the force is sectarian has decreased from 64% in 2007 to 52% in 2008, and the percentage who believe the police to be corrupt dropped from 63% to 50% (Biddle, O'Hanlon, and Pollack 2008). However, this important progress is tainted by the fact that many of these new recruits are former members of the Sons of Iraq, a group of mostly Sunni insurgents essentially being paid by American forces to put their fighting experience to use for the fledgling state, a questionable policy at best (Green and Ward 2009; Biddle, O'Hanlon, and Pollack 2008).

Further complicating this process is that what progress has been made is uneven, territorial, and fragile at best. Unemployment remains between 30-40% and there has been little improvement in the areas of education, utilities services, or medical care (Biddle, O'Hanlon, and Pollack 2008), not to mention the fact that American forces are attempting to establish an American-style constitutional democracy in a nation that has “no modern experience with federalism, and considerable skepticism toward it” (Dobbins 2009: 147). Specifically in the area of policing, all recent gains may be wiped out as the

United State's risky strategy of funding or co-opting "quasi-military organizations" could simply end up strengthening one side of a civil war that is far from decided (Dodge 2008), while the Iraqi government's current unwillingness to integrate former insurgents into its security forces may end up driving many now-peaceful Iraqis back to insurgency (Nagl and Burton 2009).

### *Who Does Policing Benefit?*

I conclude this section by looking at who benefits from the functions, aims, and strategies of police as described above. This is not to fall into conspiratorial theories about who controls the police and for what ends, but rather to argue that the police have come to function as a powerful source for upholding the capitalist order and preventing broad-based social change.

Beckett and Sasson (2000) argue that political representatives of the capitalist class responded to the uprisings of the 1960s by attempting to secure hegemony around a government that reduces welfare and focuses on security. The result is a "security state" in which reduced social spending is paired with vastly increased spending on punishment. Chambliss (1994) echoes this argument, noting that while the public is repeatedly more concerned about other topics, politicians continue to push crime as the biggest social problem, with the goal of shifting spending away from welfare toward the repressive apparatus, as the criminal justice system becomes the "principle social expense of the capitalist state" (Quinney 1977: 108). As such, Beckett and Sasson (2000) theorize that ideology and coercion may not be on opposite ends of a spectrum, but rather that

ideological persuasion is often used to increase coercive power. The effect of this is a turn back toward a style of vengeful, retributive justice that had fallen out of favor over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Garland 2001).

But the question arises of what this greatly expanded repressive apparatus is being used to achieve. Punishment is inherently a political question (Wright 1973), and the definition of what behavior is illegal is obviously going to be strongly influenced by those who hold the most power (Quinney 1977). Legal rules and their enforcement not only uphold and legitimate the current social context (Hall et. al 1978), but can also have a powerfully originative role as well, producing classifications for a multiplicity of actions and actively shaping how we understand the relation of the individual to society (Garland, 1990). Here it is useful to be reminded of the Durkheimian view, in which law is seen as a reflection of the existing social relations and serves to reproduce the existing forms of social solidarity and preserve society as it is.

As Neiderhoffer points out, law enforcement policies and priorities are set at the highest levels and “usually represent the interests of the power centers in the community” (1967: 12). These interests typically come to be defined as the interests of all, making all who break the law or even oppose these interests seen as wanting to undermine the state and the social order. This not only facilitates the use of harsh penal measures, but allows the crises of the capitalist state to be pinned on civil subversives and those who break the law (Hall et. all 1978).

Hall et. al (1978) argue that in a class society the poor are always in some way “on the wrong side of the law” (190), whether or not they actually violate the law. However, they caution that there is an “uneven relationship” between the law and the

economy, recognizing that the state does have its own interests and independent power. This is especially the case with poor, young Black men, who as a large part of the unemployed industrial reserve army have little choice but crime (Quinney 1977) and are easily vilified and serve as cultural scapegoats, often ending up warehoused in the rapidly expanding prison system (Goldberg 2000).

This calls to mind Wright's (1996) distinction between economic and non-economic exploitation. In an exploitative form of economic oppression, the material welfare of one group of people is causally related to the material deprivation of another--the relationship of the capitalist class to the working class. Without workers in factories, mills, stores, and the like, there would be no wealth produced and capitalists could not appropriate the fruits of the labor of workers. Conversely, in non-exploitative economic oppression, there is no exchange of wealth from the oppressed to the oppressor. As such, while the welfare of the dominant class still involves the exclusion of this oppressed class from certain resources, the crucial difference is that in the case of exploitative oppression, the exploiter *needs* the exploited, while in non-exploitative relations, the oppressors would be "happy if the oppressed simply disappeared"(153). As such, while the development of the new penology and this punitive turn also have cultural, racial, and political roots (Simon 2007; Garland 2001; Feeley and Simon 1992), it can be seen in part as the marriage of these two forms of oppression: warehousing those who are not useful to capitalists and possibly rendering them profitable again through prison labor or by being housed in private corrections facilities.

Of course, for both the sake of legitimacy and the smooth functioning of the state, police must make at least some attempt to serve popular needs, and have made great



strides in promoting some important social changes, notably in the area of domestic abuse assistance (Buzawa and Buzawa 2002). Yet given the unequal enforcement of criminal law combined with the already uneven nature of criminal law itself, it is difficult to argue against the notion that throughout American history police have existed “primarily to enforce the [existing] class, racial, sexual, and cultural” hierarchies (CSJA 1983: 11).

## **Understanding State Power**

### *The State in Late Capitalism*

While it is true many scholars of postmodernist and deconstructivist theories have eschewed the study of state power (Levine 2002), I argue the state is still an incredibly important center of power, for the state “intervenes in virtually all aspects of everyday life” (Clark and Dear 1984: 1). As Evans (1997) notes, the idea of “statelessness” has gained ideological hegemony without any solid empirical evidence to support such an assertion. In fact, Evans further claims transnational capitalism actually requires *stronger* states to ensure a host of “rights” from copyright protection to basic property law. Of course, such laws do not require *all* states to be strong (in the strict sense of the term, e.g. Hironaka 2005), but the fact remains that even dominant international Non-Governmental Organizations such as the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund act in accordance with, and often depend upon, the ideological and military support of those powerful states (Harvey 2003; Aronowitz 2002).

This is not to argue that global neo-liberalism is not an important trend (for a discussion of neo-liberalism’s impact on the state cf. Lee and McBride 2007), nor that the

state is the source of all power, but rather to swim against the tide of current theorizing and claim a space for the continued importance of state power. From the state-initiated clearing of the estates and other violent acts of “primitive accumulation” that formed the basis of the now globally dominant Euro-American capitalist system (Marx 1977) to current wars of imperialism, the state continues to be the most important locus of power (Milliband 1983). While post-structuralist thinkers such as Deleuze and Guattari (1983) argue the “deterritorialization” of society in late capitalism has led states to be displaced by a network of trans-national corporations, Aronowitz and Bratsis (2002) counter that territoriality is not a property of the “state” in abstract, but rather the capitalist state specifically. As such, in our global capitalist system, “there is no ‘space’ outside of the nation-state in which power can reside” (xx). It is not that territoriality is a fixed and immutable system of power, but rather in the absence of “alternative spatial and institutional organizations of power,” (xxi) we can not reject the central role of the state.

Recognizing that capitalism is “equally a political system” (Clark and Dear 1984: 28), what follows is an attempt to synthesize existing accounts of the state and state power in order to provide what Clark and Dear term an “integrated account of the state” (1984: 9). Such an integrated account should provide for a clear theoretical view of the state, an account of the operation(s) of the state, and permit analysis of the state’s intervention at various social levels. Of course, any analysis should recognize the state as a continually altered site of contestation, moving in different directions and taking differing forms depending on the political conditions and varying modes of production.

I utilize an eclectic mix of theoretical traditions to understand the nature of the modern state. While the bulk of my orientation is derived from what can loosely termed

the Neo-Marxist cannon, two important critical theorists outside of this tradition must be acknowledged. Max Weber (1978) set much of the groundwork for discussions of state power, but most important for this argument are Weber's definitions of power and domination, which will be what is meant when those terms are deployed throughout the rest of this work. Power for Weber (1978) is defined as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be able to carry out his own will despite resistance" (53), while domination is "the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons" (54).

The other theorist who cannot be ignored on contemporary questions of power is Michel Foucault. Though Foucault (1994) argues that power cannot be understood as an entity but rather only exists as exercised by some on others, and thus cannot be said to be "held" by any person or thing, he does acknowledge the importance of the state and his work on the discipline of the individual in capitalism is indispensable. As such, while I reject Foucault's notion of the incapability of certain actors or institutions to accrue unequal shares of power, I readily accept and implement his views of how power is wielded and dispersed through the social totality.

### *A Neo-Marxian View of the State*

Of all the categories in Marx' various schemata, the State was among the least developed. As such, scholars attempting to construct a Marxian conception of the state have had to cobble together scattered bits of insight from the margins and minutiae of Marx' work. It is then no surprise there have been a multiplicity of theories claiming the mantle of a true Marxian interpretation of the state and state power. In this section, I will

attempt to briefly outline several major currents of Marxian conceptions of the state, while underlining those portions of each I wish to borrow from for my analysis.

Although there is his well-known assertion that the executive branch of the modern state is but a committee for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie (Marx 1978), this should properly be viewed as a polemic, with Marx taking a more nuanced stance on the nature of the state in capitalist society (e.g. *The Eighteenth Brumaire*). Yet it is true that Marx and many of his followers do fall into what Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975) termed an “instrumentalist” view of the state; that is, the state as consciously manipulated by the dominant economic class. Lenin builds upon this argument, asserting the state exists specifically for the suppression of class struggle and the domination on behalf of the ruling capitalist elite (Wright 1993).

This strand of theorizing the state as ruled by bureaucratic elites was most famously updated by C. Wright Mills in his study of the “power elite,” those who “insofar as the national events are decided...are those who decide them” (2000: 18). His work has been updated most notably by William Domhoff (1995, 1996), who again empirically demonstrates that the “upper-class network is nation-wide in its scope and surprisingly dense” (1996: 22). Domhoff argues other theorists, notably those in the state-autonomy school, do not look deeply enough at the powerful role of dominant class interests. He demonstrates the inter-connections of this elite class by showing how over 90% of the top 800 executives come from the same social network (1996) and how they use ostensibly non-partisan think tanks to create a political party of the upper class and ensure the compliance of the government (1995).

While it is difficult to argue with Domhoff's data on the inter-connectivity of the top levels of government and business, there exists simply too much tension and infighting among varying factions of the ruling class, as well as political representation of oppressed classes, to write off the state as wholly owned and operated by the bourgeoisie. As such, another Marxist school of thought directly challenges the idea of strict instrumentalist theories. This loose collection of theorists can be described by the label "relative state autonomy," the idea that while the state does serve capital "in the last instance," it is not as simple as the bourgeoisie consciously using the state toward its own ends.

Rather, relative autonomists see the state as independent of (though highly influenced by) capitalists, with its own set of prerogatives and sources of power. This autonomy is relative (Zeitlin 1980), as the range of "rational" ideas to be pursued by the state is inherently bound by what is considered rational in capitalist production. Yet it must be emphasized state managers are not directly controlled by the bourgeoisie (Miliband 1983). It is better to think of the interests of economic elites as "a necessary but not sufficient condition for the realization of interests of any other group" (Przeworski 1985: 145).

To bolster their claim, relative state autonomy theorists note that the bourgeoisie is not all powerful and often the state acts against its immediate interests. They, too, draw their lineage to Marx' original works, noting Marx himself distinguished between the state apparatus and state power, as well as between the dominant economic class and the class that governs politically (Codato and Perissinotto 2002). Citing Marx' analysis of Louis Napoleon's coup d'etat, they further argue that while the state apparatus is of a

class nature, the differing levels of decision making and diverse centers of power within the state and the regularity of intra-apparatus conflict dispel simplistic notions of direct capitalist rule (Clark and Dear 1985; Cordato and Perissinotto 2002). Weber (1978) similarly argues that “status groups” separate from both economic groups and state managers also exert an independent force on the state.

The existence of multiple state forms, all considered capitalist, points to some sort of autonomous role of state elites (Tilly 1990), while certain time periods and historical events further strengthen claims of relative autonomy. Block (1987) argues during periods of war or severe depression capitalists lose much of their veto power over state officials and states often can greatly expand during such moments, though he admits after times of crisis states come under increasing pressures to abandon progressive interventions and retain only those which stabilize accumulation. This school of thought argues not simply that the state is relatively autonomous, but that the autonomy of the state is crucial for the maintenance of capitalist hegemony. Miliband (1983) points to the powerful role of ideological institutions remaining autonomous from the state. Because of their autonomy and assumed neutrality, they gain popular legitimacy and independent power, albeit a power that serves to support and reinforce capitalist hegemony.

A separate but related strain of Marxian/critical theory sees the state as an adjudicator of interests, between both varying fractions of capital, and between capitalists and workers. Bordieu argues the state is the “culmination of a process of concentration of different species of capital” (1994: 4). The dynastic state of feudal Europe established the process of private appropriation of public capitals, but because of infighting in royal families and the instability of such chains of command, a division of labor of dominance

was established, and the centralized capital(s) of the state came to be entrusted to a “relatively autonomous” administrative field (Bourdieu 2005). As a result, the state became the place where the various capitals of society (i.e. capitals of force, symbolic, economic, etc.) come together in a unified body of the bureaucracy (as opposed to the body of the king), endowing the state with a “meta-capital” of granting power. This “meta-capital” allows the state to promote the dominant interest to the level of the universal, thus condemning all alternative visions to the politicized realm of the particular.

Block (1987) views the state as an incredibly important safety mechanism for bourgeois property relations. Meaningful participation of the working class in capitalist democracy successfully reduces political activities to material interests; without which “parties become movements” (163) and blocked reforms give way to more serious political action. He argues the modern capitalist state should be thought of as the expression of the compromise between the working class and the bourgeoisie; workers are not dupes or forced against their will, but are active agents in supporting a capitalist compromise that denies them political power, but promises increasing standards of living as long as capital prospers. This is similar to Gramsci’s (1971) notions of hegemony in late capitalism, where there is not a clear-cut ruling class, but rather an “historical bloc.” Within this bloc there will always be strata of the dominated classes who grant consent to the state because of their free participation in the liberal capitalist political process, and thus form a part of the state managerial apparatus, albeit in a subordinate role.

Common to nearly all Marxian analyses of the state is the increasing importance of the state in securing the reproduction of capitalist accumulation (e.g. Gold, Lo, and

Wright, 1975). From Marx' (1976) dissection of the "primitive accumulation" to Mills' (2000) claim that the private industrial growth of America would have been impossible without public underwriting, critical theorists of all stripes have accepted the centrality of state intervention in successful capitalist economies. As such, I borrow Clark and Dear's (1984) definition of the state in late capitalism. In this view, the state functions for the provision of general conditions not securable by individual capitalists, the repression of threats to the prevailing social order, and to offer enough integration of subordinate classes to continue accepting their subordination (Clark and Dear 1984: 42). Beyond this maintenance of the status quo, the state can actually have a powerfully originaive role in creating new relations of production as well (Zeitlin 1980).

The challenge for the state lies in affecting this reproduction in a way generally accepted as legitimate, leading to what O'Connor (1973) terms the "fiscal crisis" of the state -- the tendency of state expenditures to grow faster than state revenue. State expenditures are loosely grouped into two camps; "social capital" expenditures that indirectly produce surplus (roads, bridges, corporate subsidies, etc.) and "social expenses" that do not produce surplus but are required for social legitimation, such as police, sanitation systems, public transportation, etc. While the crisis of rising state costs is not inevitable, it is probable given the legitimation of accumulation requires greater and greater social expenditures but accumulation itself is not socialized.

The dialectic between expenditures, accumulation, and reproduction greatly informs an understanding of the reconstruction of Iraq, shedding light on the needs and motivations of both the nascent Iraqi democracy and the occupying US forces. Internally, the Iraqi state is able in some ways to mollify the contradiction between capital



accumulation and state legitimation through its massive oil reserves; rather than having to rely on foreign aid or assistance programs, Iraq is able to rely on oil revenues to soften economic shocks. Indeed, despite rampant corruption and uneven distribution of oil profits, Iraq is able to maintain a tax-free state (Hawramy 2011). Yet this understanding of the dialectic relationship between accumulation and legitimacy also goes a far way in explaining the United States' imperial approach to the Iraqi state (discussed more fully below). With the economic (and arguably military) hegemony of the United States on the wane, multiple voices within American media and academe have explicitly called for a revival of imperialism (Arrighi 2007; Gaddis 2004; Harvey 2003) to impose neo-liberal "openness" on recalcitrant states to provide new markets and capital expansion.

The final current running through various strands of Marxian analysis I wish to highlight is what Milliband (quoted in Levine 2002) termed a "bias of the system" (171), meaning the dominance of capital is currently so strong that even state interruption and regulation will not completely disrupt its flow. Individual capitalists may pressure the state in a variety of oft contradictory ways, and though this may be aimed toward singular capitalist ends, it has the effect of creating a state bureaucracy and cultural hegemony of capitalist rationality that rejects all anti-capitalist ideas and behaviors as unthinkable (Block 1987). As such, state managers and personnel need not be from the ruling class or even aware of its aims, as the routinization of class interest within the state creates an environment where only opposition to capitalism is seen as illegitimate "political" intrusion into the supposedly neutral state agencies (Zeitlin 1980).

Possibly the most important factor affecting this bias of the system is the hazy notion of "business confidence." State managers, regardless of their personal or political

ideology, require at least a certain minimum level of economic activity (Block 1987), both for funds necessary to continue social expenditures as well as popular support, the latter being almost impossible to maintain in the face of a tanking economy. As such, there need not be a “ruling class consciousness” guiding state action, but rather a fear of business flight, as happened in the backlash against leftist governments such as Allende’s Chile (Block 1987). Even the Bonapartist state, politically independent of all classes, had to, like all ruling classes in a class society, become a protector of the socially and economically dominant class (Miliband 1983).

### *The Left and Right Hands of the State*

In probing how the state wields its power in late capitalism, I rely heavily on Gramscian (1971) notions of hegemony and the dialectical role of coercion and consent. As mentioned, the capitalist state has the contradictory role of promoting capitalist accumulation and reproduction and yet ensuring this is done in a way that secures popular legitimacy. Gramsci identifies two methods through which reproduction is achieved and state hegemony is legitimized. The first is through “spontaneous consent” of the masses, due to the prestige of the dominant groups, material concessions delivered through the state, and a putatively free and open political process. The second holds that state hegemony is often achieved through the “apparatus of state power,” those institutions charged with legally enforcing discipline on groups who do not readily consent.

Attempts at spontaneous consent have been an important method of balancing accumulation and legitimacy, especially through increasing social expenditures and the building of the “welfare state.” A summary of the vast literature on the welfare state is

impossible here, but suffice it to say even the ostensibly progressive measures of welfare and food support have been demonstrated to have a class-regulation function (Piven and Cloward 1972), as well as immense gender and racial divisions inherent in their implementation (Orloff 1996). However, as Aronowitz (2002) argues, there has been a move away from the welfare state and a “discernable decline in the legitimating functions of the state in favor its repressive functions” (277).

Wolfe (summarized in Gold, Lo, and Wright 1975) argues that in much the way surplus labor is taken from workers and used as a power over them, in capitalist states political power is extracted from the proletariat and imposed back upon them for the purpose of reproducing the social relations of capitalism. What the reproduction of capitalist social relations requires above all else is a broad degree of social consensus, or failing that, at least social stability (Clark and Dear 1984). Polanyi (1957) argues that as capitalism evolved and came to replace traditional mores and value systems (e.g. the Church), “major” wars decreased in frequency as this new world system required peaceful conditions to continue. As trade was divorced from pirates and armed caravans and came to rest on an international monetary system, reliance on order and predictability necessarily required a system free from the erratic interruptions of violent conflict.

Of course, to ensure peaceful relations and smooth reproduction of the existing order, the force employed to those ends must be perceived as legitimate by broad swaths of society. Weber (1978) argued the political community monopolizes the legitimate application of violence, and the state’s coercive apparatus is eventually transformed into “an institution for the protection of rights” (908). Bordieu et. al (1993) similarly argue the state, as repository of symbolic capital, has the “meta-capital” to guarantee all acts of

authority. In this context, “legitimate” violence refers neither to the feelings of victims or perpetrators nor to the moral stature of the codes being enforced, but “merely to the correspondence between the uses of force and the rules which specify when it can and should be used” (Przeworski 1985: 141).

This need for a legitimate use of violence to uphold the social order is one of the prime reasons for the separation of the police and the army. Tilly (1990) argues the separation came about because the new urban, public spaces of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (as opposed to the largely rural, private spaces of previous centuries) allowed for the development of a modern police force, freeing the army to concentrate on wars of imperialism. This, however, is more context than cause. Foucault (1995) argues corporal punishment of previous eras was “being rejected by the very people to whom it was addressed” (63), necessitating newer, more rationalized and legitimate forms of social control in their stead, such as the modern, professionalized police (amongst many others).

Here Gramsci’s conception of war of maneuver yields great conceptual weight. In a military war (a war of position, for Gramsci), it is enough to prove one can win; a demonstration of superior number and armaments often leads to surrender long before one party has been completely defeated. However, in the political war of maneuver, the struggle continues on the terrain of politics and ideology. As the army of the feudal era was strongly identified in the popular mind as a vehicle of naked class control, the new capitalist regimes needed a more overtly neutral and legitimate means of deploying force and ensuring social order.

In capitalist democracies, however, force is rarely the first option. Rather, ruling elites strive for a broad-ranging societal “consent” to the existing social relations. Yet, as

Marx (1978) points out, consciousness and consent are necessarily social productions. The existence of the political as such “suggests an indeterminate relationship between social reproduction and consent” (Aronowitz 2002: 278); consent must be actively constructed and reproduced. However, it should be remembered that consent is not simply the individual acquiescence to the prevailing order, but is also institutional; as unions work for higher wages within the legal paradigm to improve their lives in the capitalist system, they are consenting to the reproduction of capitalist relations.

Yet it is important to remember that people are not dupes simply fooled into believing a false narrative of the world, but that hegemony must be born of material bases (Przeworski 1985). If the state is not to govern solely by coercion, it must incorporate at least some of the interests of the dominated classes (Zeitlin 1980), and indeed this inclusion and moderation of grievances of the dominated is key to the survival of democratic capitalism (Lipset 1960). Polanyi (1957) argues capitalism would likely never have been accepted had not the economic advantages of the free market outweighed the social destruction brought about by such a drastic change to lives of the European people.

Gramsci called the superstructures of civil society (religion, ideology, etc.) the “trench systems of modern warfare” (1971: 235), perfectly illustrating the notion of consent prior to coercion. For as long as it is the realm of politics and debate that decide issues, coercion is neither desirable nor necessary. Foucault actually argues that the perfection of power should “tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary” (1995: 201). And when things are going well for the ruling class, this is the way force tends to operate (Przeworski 1985). During “normal” times, coercion appears as voluntary conformity,

and no institution is seen as performing a coercive function, not even the explicitly repressive (e.g. the police).

Yet as appealing as the notion of consent may be to the ruling class, it must always be backed by a strong coercive force, ensuring the reproduction of the existing social order. This is why the breakdown of consent is not sufficient for the breakdown of capitalism (Przeworski 1985), as coercion can still hold society together until such time as either consent can be regained, or an alternative political form established.

In *Capital*, Marx (1977) spoke in great detail about how workers needed to be disciplined into the capitalist system with great “extra-economic” force to see capitalism as natural, necessary, and inevitable. Although he argues such force will taper off as society becomes capitalistic throughout, as indeed it clearly has, coercion nevertheless remains necessary for capitalism to function. As Bordieu et. al (1994) argue, to maintain order the state must exert force externally (via the army) and internally (via policing). This theme of violence as endemic to the capitalist state is summed up in Gramsci’s formula of the state as “hegemony protected by the armor of coercion” (1971: 263).

Though Mills (2000) is correct in noting that the means of oppression, exploitation and violence have been progressively enlarged and centralized, so to is Foucault (1995) correct in arguing that punishment has become one of our most hidden processes. Such is the dialectic of consent and coercion – consent under capitalism must always be backed by ready and powerful coercion, yet at the same time, this coercion needs to be seen as legitimate and restrained, or better yet, not even seen.

But simply because coercion prefers to operate out of sight, it must not be assumed it is not there. On the contrary, in class society, it always present. As Lenin

(quoted in Wright 1993: 195) noted, the state itself is an organ of class rule, a “special organization of force” to be used in the suppression of one class by another. This is especially true in crisis situations (Przeworski 1985). Zeitlin (1980) provides the example of post-World War II Germany and the immediate post-slavery American South as two prime instances of state power being intentionally and broadly deployed to restore the hegemony of a temporarily weakened dominant class.

### *The Subject in Capitalism*

Central to this process of hegemony and the consent/coercion dialectic is Foucault’s (1994) work on the subject and power. Although their works were not written in conversation with each other, Gramsci and Foucault have very similar views of the discipline capitalism instills/necessitates in its subjects. Synthesizing the views of these two theorists creates a dynamic picture of the powers working on the individual subject in capitalism. Foucault argues that the modern state should be theorized as an institution in which individuality is shaped into a very specific set of patterns, a new form of what he terms “pastoral power” (1994: 336). This form of power is not one that acts directly on people, but rather upon their actions.

This shaping pastoral power is exemplified in Foucault’s (1995) discussion of the modern prison and the disciplinary society. In the past century, prisons have ceased to be specifically workhouses, but have continued their focus on the redemption of the prisoner and the (re)shaping of the individual. This process is part of what Foucault calls a “discipline of the body” (1995: 138), in which the body comes to be seen as a vessel with the capacity for growth, development, education, etc. In this new regime of disciplinary

power, it is no longer power that is grandiosely displayed (as in feudalism), but rather individual subjects who are now ruthlessly examined by an increasingly hidden power. As such, discipline shifts from a mode of punishment to a positive shaping of the person. This discipline is not to be associated with a particular institution or apparatus, but rather seen as a type of power. However, such a power is more often wielded by certain groups, for example, the police, who extend disciplinary power over all of society.

Gramsci, too, speaks of the disciplining of the subject in capitalist society, yet argues for the centrality of the state in the process. Gramsci (1971) sees the state as both educative and formative, seeking to adapt civilization to the “necessities of continuous development of the economic apparatus of production” (242), seeking even to evolve new physical forms of humanity. He further argues that the state must be seen “as an ‘educator,’ in as much as it tends precisely to create a new type or level of civilization” (247). And in so much as the state creates and maintains a certain type of individual, the law is its instrument for that purpose.

But it is important to note that both Gramsci and Foucault would see this disciplining process as affecting the elite every bit as much as the subjugated. As Mills (2000) points out in his discussion of the “higher immorality,” the ignoble work of higher executives is not a symptom of various individuals, but rather a systematic conditioning inherent in the highest ranks of power. In this way, society in late capitalism can be seen to be having a disciplining effect on all of its subjects.

*Capitalist Imperialism and Client States*



Fundamental to understanding the recreation of the Iraqi police, and especially the involvement (at great cost) of the United States, is an understanding of the operation of empire and client states in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although empire can take myriad forms, this project draws from Harvey's (2003) conception of "capitalist imperialism," a view which highlights contemporary imperial aggression as a mixture of "the politics of state and empire" on the one hand and "the molecular processes of capital accumulation in state and time" (26) on the other. Much like the view of the state as relatively autonomous, a conception of capitalist imperialism views the imperial project not as directly dictated by the desires of capital (indeed, the designs of state and territory remain incredibly important), but as a process which operates within the constraints of capitalism and serves to broaden trade and capital accumulation.

However, as Go (2011) reminds us, "empire" is better thought of as a series of "imperial functions," those sets of "relations and forms involving multiple tactics, policies, practices, and modalities of power" (12). One of the most prominent tactics is the establishment of client states; states which are technically and formally their own political entities, but in practice are oriented toward serving the economic, political, and/or military needs of an imperial sponsor. The major difference is that while nation-states invoke citizenship and political participation, empires involve subjects and dependence. A client state, for the purposes of this study, is in that category of pseudo-independent nations whose populace is viewed and treated largely as imperial subjects, not citizens of a sovereign nation.

I argue that much of what is observed in this study only begins to make sense when placed in the context of an imperial project. While much of this is particular to this

time in history and this particular region of the world (discussed in detail below), the historical antecedents of the current imperial project have much to offer in contextualizing why the United States has moved toward this particular form of imperial expansion. Go (2011) argues the American move toward imperialism is spurred by the simultaneous conflagration of hegemonic decline, the rise of nation-states with the potential to challenge the US economically or militarily (most notably, China, Russia, and Japan), and increasing pushback from the periphery.

The British empire of the nineteenth century faced a similar three-pronged challenge to its global hegemony, causing it to dramatically intensify its imperial ambitions. However, during this period, it was much more relevant for the British empire to seize new territories and rule them directly, whereas in the present context, such direct imperial control is unappealing for a wide variety of reasons, ranging from international law to resource management to domestic political will. As such, the United States has instead favored “informal empire” (Go 2011), leaving states nominally independent but nonetheless subject to US power and influence.

This informal empire has its roots in the cold war, as the US fought not only against the spread of communism, but for expanding its trade markets and financial hegemony. “Globalization” came to be the term used to express these neo-liberal economic and imperial designs of the US, so much so that it really should be properly termed “Americanization” (Bacevich 2002). Again, much of this work has been conducted through the formation of client states. The US has intervened in dozens of nations to stabilize the political situation and install friendly governments; these are not

ends in and of themselves, but rather the basic prerequisites of establishing a compliant client state (Herman and Brodhead 1984).

As such, I argue the new Iraqi state is best understood as part of this imperial project, and that police reconstruction plays a central role in this process. As the United States struggles to solve its crises of hegemony through imperial expansion, it attempts to do so through a means that can be sold to a skeptical world community and domestic electorate as both legitimate and in their general best interests (Gaddis 2004; Bacevich 2002; Herman and Brodhead 1984). This desire for legitimacy means not only an insistence on informal empire and the creation of client states, but a focus on projecting the capacity and legitimacy of these nominally-independent client states both at home and abroad. Thus the symbolic development of the Iraqi state can be understood as an attempt to project the legitimacy necessary for the smooth functioning of the informal empire.

### *Conclusion*

I argue that far from being eclipsed by trans-national or inter-personal networks, the capitalist state remains a major, if not the most important, site of power in late capitalism. While not directly controlled by bourgeois lackeys or existing solely to promote the aims of capitalist development, the state nonetheless exists within a capitalist framework and plays an important role in legitimizing, rationalizing, extending, and protecting the reproduction of capitalist accumulation and social relations. I apply a Gramscian notion of the dialectical relationship between governing by consent and by coercion. Whereas the consent of the governed is undoubtedly the preferred and most often deployed method of governance, it must at all times be backed by a powerful

coercive apparatus, albeit one often operating in a discreet and uneven manner. Finally, I argue that it is incorrect to view the police as existing solely to control/reduce crime or to even see that as the driving force behind their creation. Rather, a better understanding is achieved through viewing the police as the coercive aspect of capitalist hegemony. The actions, tactics, and ideology of the police only begin to make sense when one understands them as a force deployed by the state to ensure the status quo and control the surplus population.

However, the extant work on the relationship between policing and the state suffers from either being narrowly focused on the minutiae of policing or broadly expounding on the nature of state functions. In the chapters that follow, I will address this lacuna in the literature by elucidating how the recreation of the Iraqi police demonstrates the interaction between the development of policing and the legitimation of the capitalist state, as well as what this case demonstrates regarding the importance of policing as a symbolic cultural element in state formation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

##### *The City of Sulaimaniyah*

Data for this project was collected in Sulaimaniyah, a city widely regarded as the intellectual and cultural capital of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), the semi-autonomous region of Northern Iraq. Nestled high in the Azmar mountains and surrounded on 3 sides by steep and craggy mountain cliffs, Suly (as most locals refer to the city) was long the seat of anti-Saddam resistance and gained a reputation as the best strategic and political safe haven for rebels. Today Suly is the seat of the Sulaimaniyah governate, one of the three principalities of the KRG. Suly is one of the most urbanized cities in Iraq, and though it is physically small, most estimates put its population well above the one million mark (UN 2012). Although the majority of the population are Kurds with generational ties to the region, there is a sizeable minority of displaced persons from the more active conflict zones in “the South,” as locals generically refer to the rest of the nation, as well as a growing Chinese immigrant population (Davies 2011).

Like the rest of the nation, unemployment is a major problem in Suly and throughout the KRG. While concrete numbers on the subject are hard to come by, most estimates put the national unemployment rate between thirty and forty per cent (Biddle, O'Hanlon, and Pollack 2008), and most non-government employment is patchwork and insufficient. Although Suly is more stable and economically prosperous than the nation as a whole, it is unlikely the unemployment rate is dramatically different there than at the

national level. There has also been little post-invasion improvement in areas as disparate as education, utilities services, or medical care.

While the KRG is largely shielded from the civil war gripping the rest of the nation, there are historical tensions between the two main political parties of the region: the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), historically ruled by the family of Iraqi president Jalal Talabani, and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), historically ruled by the KRG president Mahmoud Barzani. While the unease between these parties is far outside the scope of this work, it will suffice to say the two have long had a contentious relationship, and the relative power vacuum left by the deposing of Saddam Hussein has increased inter-party tensions as the two jockey for control of the region.

Yet despite the financial and political instability of the region, Suly is a lively and modern city. It is home to the University of Sulaimaniyah, the largest and oldest university in the region (UOS 2012), multiple museums, an international airport, a large media presence, and a vibrant arts scene. Oil revenues have allowed some largess in social and infrastructural spending, and Suly is certainly far more developed than the smaller towns (and especially rural areas) in the region. Smooth, freshly-paved four-lane avenues crisscross the city, and slick, shiny facades adorn large businesses and government buildings. Yet emblematic of a nation torn between future aspirations and a contentious present, most non-arterial roads are marked by large potholes and crumbling concrete and even the most expensive, modernized neighborhoods never experience a full day of continuous electricity.

Of course, there are some methodological and theoretical shortcomings of Suly and the KRG as a research site. Most notably, Kurdistan is a comparatively ethnically

homogenous region where the creation of a police force has gone more smoothly than elsewhere (Jones 2007, Moaddel, Tessler, and Inglehart 2008). As such, Kurdistan presents almost a best-case scenario in which levels of violence have been consistently low since the beginning of the invasion and a high-degree of ethnic homogeneity has kept sectarian fighting and militia involvement to a minimum.

Kurds are an ethnic group distinct from the Arab peoples that largely populate the rest of the nation, yet they have similarly high levels of national pride and generally identify as Iraqis above all else (Moaddel, Tessler, and Inglehart 2008). Kurdistan is also experiencing far less violence than the Southern portions of Iraq, providing at best a partial glimpse into the nation as a whole and making generalizations difficult. However, these limitations are more than overcome by the practical advantages of Suly as a research site. As Iraq is still a contentious war zone, Kurdistan is the safest portion of the nation, experiencing little of the violence endemic to the South (Green and Ward 2009), making it arguably the safest entree point for examining larger, national processes.

I argue these factors making the KRG a best-case scenario for police reformation are actually a strength of the study. Given the much higher levels of political and social instability and violence throughout the rest of Iraq, I can say with a high degree of certainty that the institutional and training problems I observed in Suly are only exacerbated by the conditions elsewhere. Combined with the fact that training practices, procedures, and policies are meant to be uniform throughout the nation, this study is able to speak to larger processes than simply those observed in Suly.

### *The Lead Training Academy*

The bulk of the data for this project was collected at the Sulaimaniyah Police Lead Training Academy, located a few kilometers outside of Suly. The academy was formed to put new police recruits from all fields (traffic, forestry, investigation, passport regulation, etc.) through basic training, operating in conjunction with the Sulaimaniyah College of Police, which is responsible for training senior officers. Both the academy and the college are located inside of a sprawling compound which also houses multiple court houses, a Joint Coordination Center (JCC – a dual crime-control project of the American and Iraqi governments), athletic fields, Army training centers, a specialized border-patrol training center, and multiple prisons of various security levels..

After passing through security and an ID check at the entrance to the compound, it's about a four-kilometer drive to the academy itself, where like many buildings in the region, you're first greeted by an armed guard next to a spike-covered rolling bar at the entrance. After stating your business, the bar is rolled away and you proceed to a small over-hang next to the tiny, one-room building which acts as both a meeting room/office and gate security. After another ID check, a large drop-bar is raised and you continue on the main road running through the academy grounds.

Immediately beyond the gate is a large, rectangular concrete yard, approximately 400-500 square yards where the vast majority of training takes place. There are eight parallel lines running around the edge of the court to aid in keeping formation during marching drills, as well as nine large painted circles in the middle of the court to practice lining up properly. At the front of the court there is a small shaded observation area topped with the flags of the United States, the KRG, and Iraq. Following the road past the



training court, you pass a number of long, thin, one-story buildings housing offices and classrooms. Beyond these are the barracks where students and staff stay while at the academy, the mess hall, the barbershop, the recreation center, and other various buildings. Finally, behind these are three separate shooting ranges of various lengths, an obstacle-filled training course, and a circular dirt track for marching practice.

Founded in 2003 by coalition forces, the academy is one of six regional training centers in Iraq and has, as of 2011, trained over 35,000 police, accounting for roughly 1/5<sup>th</sup> of all Iraqi police. While the academy originally took in recruits from throughout the nation, over the past few years it has become more exclusively Kurdish as other regions of the nation become stable enough to host their own training facilities. Similarly, American/Coalition presence at the academy (as well as throughout the region generally) has tapered off. Whereas originally all training was conducted by American advisors (largely through the private contractor DynCorp), there is currently only a bare-bones staff of foreign advisors who provide behind-the-scenes coordination.

However, the coalition presence is still keenly felt in a variety of ways. Many offices have an American flag proudly displayed alongside the Kurdish and Iraqi flags, English-language paraphernalia and training guides cover classroom and office walls; even many buildings are named after Americans. On a more substantial level, all of the training content, practices, and policies were established by American advisors. Furthermore, most of the staff were trained either by coalition forces at the Suly academy or in one of several European-based extensive training courses for Iraqi police trainers.

## **Data Collection**

The data for this project was collected over a five-month period in the Spring of 2011. Permission for this project was obtained from the Kurdistan Regional Government Minister of the Interior, director of the Police Lead Training Academy, and approved by the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects Code Number: 1003P79633). Aliases were used for all individuals for all data collection and analyses, including transcription, coding, writing, presentations, and publications. Consistent with Human Subjects protocol and social scientific data standards, procedures were put in place to protect against linking interviews and ethnographic notes to any particular individual. All interviews were assigned unique code numbers and were accessible only through a password-protected laptop. All data was encrypted and stored on this password-protected laptop for the duration of the study.

Because of the potentially sensitive nature on the information collected, as well as unlikely, yet potential, reprisals to research participants, consent was obtained verbally before each interview. This allowed me to both avoid a potentially problematic paper trail as well as allowing respondents to feel secure in their ability to answer honestly (Vlssenroot 2005; Christensen 1993). Although a few officials expressed an interest in reviewing my notes and transcripts, all such requests were refused on the grounds of privacy and protection of all research participants. The only people other than myself to read either the interview transcripts or my field notes were officials from the Department of Homeland Security, who perused all of my materials above my repeated objections as a condition of reentering the United States.

## **Data Description**

This project is a holistic, multi-method examination of an Iraqi police training academy, seeking to understand how broad ideologies of the state are represented in the “untheoretical, practical ways of life” (Arce and Long 1992: 244) of the police, trainers, and recruits. To this end, I employ a mix of ethnography, interviews, surveys, participant observation, and discourse analysis to answer the following research questions:

1. How does an emerging police force define the ‘deviant’?
2. How does an emerging force define itself?
3. Who does an emerging police force recruit to its ranks?
4. How does the presence of an international hegemon affect the mission of an emerging police force?
5. Why does police training in Iraq center on heavily militaristic and symbolic activities?

### *Interview Settings and Procedures*

The interviews were semi-structured, centered on respondents’ views of abstract, hypothetical situations and ideals. This reduces the likelihood of the respondent offering sensitive or incriminating information concerning actions they have taken, and when combined with the guarantee of full confidentiality, increases the likelihood questions will be answered honestly (Wood 2006; Vlassenroot 2005; Dowler 2001; Christensen 1993). In total, I was able to conduct forty-eight interviews (thirty-seven with staff, eleven with students), for a total run time of just under thirty hours, giving an average of thirty-seven minutes per interview.

All of the interviews (as well as the ethnographic observations) were conducted with the assistance of a translator. While I am conversational in Arabic, for a variety of historical and political reasons, most people greatly preferred speaking Kurdish. However, this particular dialect of Kurdish (Sorani) is only spoken in this region of the nation and there are very few, if any, English-to-Sorani texts or programs, thus requiring the use of translators. To ensure accuracy in translation, randomly-selected audio recordings and written materials were double-checked by a second translator. Furthermore, four interviews were conducted with a different translator when my regular translator was unable to accompany me, and the responses to these interviews do not differ significantly from the rest of the pool.

Interviews were conducted either in the respondent's office, an empty classroom, or on nice days, on a grassy field behind the student barracks. Respondents were chosen to represent the various departments of the academy and various levels of rank. While 3 respondents did not want to be recorded for fear of who may hear the recordings, most were not only happy to be recorded but offered the use of their names as well. Most respondents were quite enthusiastic about the possibility to be interviewed (with several even demanding to be interviewed after I had spoken to friends or office mates of theirs), and were excited to get the chance to share their story with an outsider.

There were, however, two groups that were extremely difficult to interview. Gaining access to students for one-on-one interviews was incredibly slow moving and only happened upon my repeated insistence. This will be discussed in much greater detail below, but both trainers and students themselves did not see any value to be gained from speaking with new recruits, on the grounds they did not yet know anything meaningful to

tell me. Students comprised all three of the interview refusals, but even those who sat down for an interview often claimed a lack of knowledge and required multiple prods to get answers beyond simple, one-word responses. The other group I was unable to gain access to were female recruits (there were no female staff at the academy). Because of the social and cultural context of the research site, gaining interview access to female recruits would have greatly stretched the little social capital I had. Although it remains a fruitful area for research, because there were only nine female recruits to go through the academy during this period, the decision was made to exclude them for the time being. Finally, all interviews were transcribed and open-coded, allowing themes to emerge organically.

#### *Ethnographic Settings and Procedures*

My fieldwork consists primarily of what is termed “ethnographic discourse analysis” (Gowan 2010; Bhatia, Flowerdew and Jones 2008). This approach looks at discourse not only in texts, but as being embedded in various forms of everyday practice. Such an approach gives theoretical weight to the habitus of the individual, rejecting the split between discourse and practice and viewing the both of them as integral to producing the material world. This allows the researcher to place what they observe within the bounds established by the discourses of those rich in economic and social capital and analyze how the words and actions of those studied serve to reproduce or challenge those discursive boundaries. Similarly, I employ what Collinson et al. (2003) refer to as a “livelihoods” approach – empirical studies which examine the evolution of micro-level strategies in communities and organizations, yet seek at all times to place

these observations within the framework of macro-level social, economic, and political factors to understand the day-to-day lives of people within the larger political economy.

The ethnographic data for this project came in two forms – data collected observing training courses at the academy, and from observing the response of state and private security forces to major anti-corruption demonstrations taking place in the central market of Suly. I collected over sixty hours of direct observation of training at the academy, during which time I witnessed the majority of training for two cohorts, one quite small (sixteen students) and the other a course of roughly 110 students, as well as three rapid-training courses of six to eight students. Because of the demonstrations, training at the academy was suspended for a significant portion of my time in the field. As such, I was not able to observe a single cohort of police recruits all the way from beginning to completion. However, as I was able to observe the majority of these two courses, I have a good understanding of how the courses operate in general, as well as a solid basis for comparison between the two.

Typically, I would attend academy courses four days a week (Monday through Thursday) for the entirety of the “theoretical” training each day, usually between two and three hours (recruits also undergo a physical training each morning, consisting of repeating the same calisthenics each day). While training would occasionally take place in one of the many classrooms on the academy campus, the vast majority was conducted on the large concrete courtyard immediately next to the entrance of the academy. Students would stand or sit in a three-quarter square, with the instructor leading the lesson at the open end of the square.

During lessons, my translator and I would stand a little behind and off to the side of the instructor, allowing for observation of both instructor and students. The academy staff was incredibly welcoming and open in allowing my observation, even going so far as to encourage me to interrupt the lesson should I have any questions (though to minimize the disruptiveness of my presence, this was never done). Because I was openly and explicitly there as a researcher, there was no need for deception or discretion in my note taking, allowing me to take detailed notes during my observations. While this leaves open the possibility of a researcher effect on the proceedings, covert observation of such training is simply not feasible. I also took every step possible to emphasize to both staff and students that I was there only to observe and learn from them, not to evaluate or to report back to any of their superiors.

The other major research site for the collection of ethnographic data were major anti-corruption demonstrations which occurred daily for a period of nearly three months during my time in Suly. The demonstrations were loosely part of the Middle East spring of 2011 (although most sources use the term “Arab Spring” to refer to the political upheaval of the region during this period, the movements and demonstrations were comprised of people of many ethnicities, so I will use the more inclusive “Middle East spring” to reflect that diversity). Although the demonstrations were initially sparked by the murder of a teenage boy by political security forces (Asaad 2011), they soon grew to broad calls for political reform, more just distribution of the oil wealth of the KRG, and an end to the de-facto two-party rule of the region (Gundi 2011).

Although a small contingent of demonstrators stayed in the central square of the market (rechristened *Azadi* (freedom) Square, a la *Tahrir* Square in Cairo) most all day,

the demonstrations typically started to fill out shortly after the noon prayers. I usually arrived when the demonstrations were reaching peak attendance between two and three in the afternoon, when most people were getting off of work and courses in the university were winding down for the day. On most days, there were a series of speakers on a make-shift platform demonstrators had set up in center of the square. The demonstrations would usually then start to thin out as the sun set, and security was often increased heavily with nightfall to prevent people from camping in the square.

Though the demonstrations were usually quite orderly and peaceful, as I will discuss much more in-depth below, they were marred by occasional violence throughout their tenure and were eventually ended through quite severe violent repression from police and political security forces (Kurd Net-c 2011; Kurd Net-d 2011). These conditions, combined with an apolitical translator who insisted on avoiding the market during demonstrations at all costs, means this data is neither as thoroughly documented nor as systematic as the data collected at the academy. However, I believe these data are still quite valuable, as they provide a great insight into how police (and other security forces) in the region respond to social unrest.

### *Survey Procedures and Secondary Source Data Collection*

Surveys were collected from the second, larger full course I observed at the academy. They are a mix of likert-scale and open-ended opinion questions centering on respondents views concerning Western-style democratic government, as well the various roles of a police officer. The survey were translated into Kurdish and given to students at the academy during a break between classes. Of the 110 students at the academy, 87



participated in the survey for a response rate of 79 percent. Of the non-participants, only two directly declined to take part; the rest were either not present at the academy that day or were amongst a small group that had fallen ill. The open-ended questions were adapted from what had proven to be the most fruitful lines of inquiry from my survey instrument. The likert-scale questions were adapted from Moaddel et al.'s (2008) Iraqi values survey, and provide a starting baseline for understanding how a vital subset of the Iraqi populace views the nascent state and the new form of governance.

Finally, I draw on a large number of English-language documents I was able to attain during my time in the field. These include course syllabi, the Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, a police and human rights training manual used by the Human Rights Law Institute (a local American NGO), and a large number of news articles, mostly from Kurd Net, one of the few news sources that did not have a direct tie to a local political party and is regarded throughout the region as the most reliable English-language news source. While most of the articles focus on the demonstrations, several address other policing issues or important local political developments.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ROLE OF POLICE IN THE IRAQI STATE

#### **Introduction**

##### *On The Centrality of Police To State-Building*

This chapter (and really, this entire study) builds upon the work of previous scholars highlighting the centrality of crime control to the formation of the modern state. I further argue that the police especially are an integral piece of not only state formation, but the resulting legitimacy (or lack thereof) that state enjoys. At a base level, it is clear that good policing is highly correlated with civilized society. Goldstein (1990) argues that “the strength of a democracy and the quality of life of its citizens are determined in large measure by the ability of police to discharge their duties” (1). However, this integral aspect of state-building and legitimacy has been woefully understudied in the existing literature. I use the case of the reconstruction of the Iraqi police force as an example of both how central police are to the state-building process, and how a police force lacking in capacity and legitimacy can significantly threaten the possibility of establishing a constitutional, democratic state.

It’s certainly not a novel insight to suggest that crime is an “important arena in which state authority may be constructed and consolidated” (Meehan 2011: 377). Philosophers of state punishment have long noted a connection between punishment and state power; writing in the early 1930s, Gramsci noted that to the extent “every state tends to create and maintain a certain type of civilization and citizen...and to eliminate

certain customs and attitudes and to disseminate others, then the law will be its instrument for this purpose” (1971: 246).

David Garland (1990) has catalogued in great detail how modern penality is best thought of as a “cultural performance,” less about the immediate issues of crime control than about expressing “a definite sense of how social relationships are (and should be) constituted in that particular society” (276). Most importantly, Garland sees penality as helping to create society, noting that within “every penal relation and every exercise of penal power there is a conception of social authority, of the (criminal) person, and of the nature of community or social order that punishment protects and tries to recreate” (265). Thus penality (and the actors who carry it out) have created a sense of not only their own inevitability, but also of the necessary, and necessary rightness, of the status quo. Furthermore, Gramsci argues that crises such as the one Iraq is currently experiencing “create a terrain more favorable to the dissemination of certain modes of thought, and certain ways of posing and resolving questions involving the entire subsequent development of national life” (1971: 184). Thus, the Iraqi case provides an amazing opportunity to study the *creation* of the status quo; to examine how the structures and practices of hegemony are put into place in real time. The current operations of the police (and the rest of the criminal justice system) not only construct an ideology, but the very questions sought to be answered regarding crime, deviance, and the state.

Garland also explicates how it is the tension between Durkheimian desires to punish deviants and uphold collective morals and Weberian administrative, rationalistic management that helps to shape much of modern penality. This is one of many classic questions of policing drawn in especially sharp relief in contemporary Iraq. As will be

seen below, in many ways the police training process in Iraq is devoted to the militarization of the police and the building up of the repressive apparatus. Yet at the same time, there's clearly an attempt to force Western-style rationalization on the organization (and, arguably, the state writ large). Complicating this tension further is that recruits and trainers alike buy into either of these ideals to varying degrees, but for most, it's in a shallow manner, if at all.

This study is also greatly informed by the work of Charles Tilly on the origin of the state, especially as it relates to war-making and organized crime, both of which not too coincidentally dominate daily life in contemporary Iraq. In Tilly's (1985) famous taxonomy, states have four requirements: war making (eliminating outside rivals), state making (eliminating internal rivalries), protection (eliminating enemies of clients), and extraction (taxes, revenue generation). While the European actors Tilly studied were not intentionally trying to create state, the taxonomy still generally holds for those who are consciously crafting states. However, as will become evident throughout this work, the Iraqi state is currently incapable of accomplishing the first three requirements, and arguably does not need to accomplish the fourth due to high rates of oil revenue (indeed, Iraq currently has no form of income, sales, or many other standard taxes). Below I build the argument that police are central to this process, and the failures of the police reconstruction effort both reflect and contribute to the current failures of the Iraqi state.

Many of the current problems with Iraqi police stem from how the US and coalition forces have instituted the training program. As Sahin (2007) notes, state-building requires "convergence of priorities of the international community and local stakeholders, and familiarity with local practices and stakeholders" (254). However, as

detailed in the preceding chapter, this process has involved very little consultation with local stakeholders or knowledge of local practices; rather, it has been a very top-down process that seems to have willfully ignored both previous scholarship on best practices and local traditions and knowledge. Beyond the technical problems this approach brings, it also begs the question of for whom this police force (and arguably, state) is being reconstructed. Garland argues that “it’s not criminal conduct that determines policy, but how elites view ‘the crime problem’” (1990: 11). As will be seen throughout this work, very few of the practices and ideologies of training make sense as a response to the realities of crime in Iraq; however, they begin to make sense when viewed through the lens of establishing a subordinate client state.

For this new police force is being guided by Iraqi elites in consultation with American elites. As such, the Iraqi police need to project legitimacy not only to the Iraqi people, but to the American public as well, to secure political support for the massive expenditures required in empire as well as for the legitimacy of the imperial project itself. This process operates in a manner similar to imperial insistence on the development of constitutions in client states; imperial powers push for constitutions in their clients to both establish the stability needed for bourgeois economic interests as well as to project the legitimacy of the new state (Harvey 2003; Herman and Brodhead 1984). This helps explain why coalition forces were so insistent on the creation of an Iraqi constitution long before the Iraqi state could be said to be functional in any meaningful form of that word. It further explains why the police take on such a militarized symbolic form; the symbolic performance of legitimacy is necessary for audiences both domestic and foreign, while the militarized capacity for repression is necessary for the smooth functioning of empire.

Questions of client statism and the motivations of the occupying forces are important not only for the uncomfortable questions they raise about the entire project, but importantly for this case, they also bear directly on the legitimacy of the police and the willingness of the Iraqi public to give their consent to both the police, and by extension, the state. Gramsci (1971) argues that it is impossible to govern without the consent of the governed (though obviously this consent can be limited or moderated in various ways), and this principle “extends to all actions demanding sacrifice” (245), such as submitting to the authority of the police. Yet even in the KRG, where attitudes toward America and the coalition are far more positive than in the rest of the nation, there is still considerable skepticism toward the police and the state.

Tilly, on the other hand, argues that legitimacy is much less about the consent of the governed than it is about the “probability that other authorities will act to confirm the decisions of a given authority” (1981: 171). Yet, as will be seen below, in this regard, too, the Iraqi police and state have a significant way to go. As it stands, not only does much of the public ascribe very little legitimacy to the Iraqi police, other state and prominent non-state actors share that attitude. Most political parties have their own private security forces they rely on instead of the police, and even other state security agencies, such as the feared Asayish, do not appear to grant much legitimacy to police.

The uniting thread of this project is that police occupy a very specific role that carries great weight, both symbolically and practically. The functions of the police role can be filled by multiple actors and agents, but unless they are filled by a responsive and responsible legitimized force, both the police and the nation as a whole are subject to great instability. As discussed in the previous chapter, numerous examples both

historically and contemporaneously have demonstrated how the military and private forces are wholly unsuited to fulfilling policing functions in a constitutional democracy.

Currently in Iraq, most policing functions are fulfilled by private interests (either party-affiliated or rouge militias) which most decidedly do not have the larger goals of the state in mind. In the KRG specifically, many crime control and social order functions are actually filled by the *Asayish*. The *Asayish* were formed shortly after the KRG was granted it's semi-autonomy following the Gulf War. Originally, they were controlled by the Kurdish Ministry of the Interior, but after protracted fighting between the two dominant political parties over control of the *Asayish*, each party formed their own. In 2004, the *Asayish* were made independent of all ministries; they now have their own budgets and report directly to the heads of their affiliated party. Analogous almost to a private, party-controlled sheriff's force, the *Asayish* keep offices in nearly every city in the KRG and operate their own jails as well (Amin 2011).

This is but one of many examples of how the Iraqi state cannot currently run the protection racket required in modern state-making. Right now the Iraqi state cannot eliminate external rivals, and cannot even eliminate internal rivals. So although the US/coalition forces are largely taking care of external threats for the time being, it has repeatedly shown little interest in dealing with internal rivals. Coupled with a weak police force that cannot control crime in any meaningful way, it's hard to picture the state gaining legitimacy in the near future.

Furthermore, police play an important role in the public-order trust networks (Tilly 2004) upon which democracy hinges. These public-order trust networks allow the public to enter into stabilizing, long-term endeavors, such as investing money, entering

specialized education, and the like. Tilly argues that for a state to be legitimate in the long-term, these actions need to move away from being done in evasion of government to being at least partially reliant upon government agents and the presumption they will keep their word. Without legitimacy in such procedures, there are “no motivations for sub-state groups to shift allegiance and salience of identity to the national level” (Allen 2010: 423), obviously a chief concern for those attempting to build a federated democracy out of a diverse society of social groups that do not necessarily see themselves as citizens of the Iraqi state, many of which are still actively warring against one another.

Additionally, police are the most visible sign of government for many people, especially in case like Iraq where in the past police were directly responsible for carrying out government control in the most material of ways. As such, the Iraqi populace is uniquely conditioned to think of police as the face of government even more so than most. Therefore, how legitimate the police are and how they are received serves as an excellent proxy for measuring attitudes toward the state in general, and it can be meaningfully argued that the legitimacy of the police and how they are viewed causes (in part) people to view the state as legitimate or illegitimate.

As such, I argue it is because so many different actors and agents *can* fill the policing roles that shows the central importance of police to the modern state, because none of these other actors/agents can fulfill all of the police functions themselves, and most certainly do not share the same legitimated relation with the state. Because of the immediacy of crime and especially the recent experience of Iraqis with the exploding crime rate, this set of policing functions is particularly important for state legitimacy (image a developed society with the police function filled by a multitude of distinct,



unconnected private interests). Because the police can and do touch on so many aspects of civil society and the lives of citizens, they become an integral way of consolidating state power. And as Iraq shows, without police filling those explicit roles of crime intervention and latent goals of state consolidation and legitimacy-building, it's nearly impossible to accomplish them otherwise.

In the chapter that follows, I begin with a brief explanation of the research setting and a synopsis of the history of Iraqi policing. This is followed with an examination of the daily routines at the training academy and the myriad ways trainers attempt to prepare students for their lives as police. The next section examines the content of lectures and training exercises, focusing on both formal content of lectures and informal norms and folkways imparted through the hidden curriculum. Finally, this chapter is concluded with observations on how students receive the lessons of the academy and a discussion of how these lessons were put into action at the major demonstrations taking place at the time.

#### *Sulaimaniyah, the Lead Police Training Academy, and Local Conditions*

Although it is obviously not possible to give any sort of thorough summation of Iraqi sociopolitical history in this space, to understand the context in which the police force is being reconstructed, one needs to understand two pervasive aspects of contemporary Iraqi life: an anomic feeling of lawlessness and a profound distrust of the government. Because of its existence as a pariah state under Saddam Hussein, Iraq “was like a cage for so long,” according to Ali, a young professor at the local university. This was especially true in the KRG which, even before gaining semi-autonomy in 1991, was

cut out of most state activities. As my friend Harman, put it, “for 20 years, there are no laws and people can do whatever they want. That is why it is anarchy here.”

Although the methods and tactics they used would be endorsed by very few, the police under Saddam were able to maintain an incredibly low level of index one crimes. As will be discussed in the following chapter, even many of those who openly despise the former dictator begrudgingly give him credit for impressive crime control. As such, in most places in Iraq, people became accustomed to a virtually crime-free environment. Yet with the inattention to police and crime control for such a long period post-invasion, the crime rate sky-rocketed and many Iraqis began to experience crime for the first time in their lives. So in addition to the general chaos and fear associated with living in an occupied nation, Iraqis also had to deal with the sudden onset of high crime rates and the realization that little was being done to change that.

The perception of lawlessness is further fueled by rampant corruption, both locally and nationally. Although it is one of the largest energy producing regions in the world, power is a luxury in Iraq, even for those with the money to afford their own generators. Most days government power runs for two to three hours in the afternoon, with the rest of the time left to be filled by a personal or neighborhood generator if one is lucky enough to afford such things. Several days in a row, even weeks at a time, without power are not uncommon at all. Anyone you speak to is quick to blame this on government corruption, a perception exacerbated by the twin sights of kilometers long lines for rationed gas at the pump next to similarly extensive lines of oil trucks heading for the Iranian border, where oil is sold (illegally) for higher prices.

Corruption is barely a hidden secret in most places; most everyone I met, including multiple politicians and public officials, complained to me about the rampant corruption, which mostly takes the form of bribes to officials or nepotistic rewards for family members and political allies. Unfortunately, the police are no more immune from these sorts of corruption than are any other institutions. There were a great deal of stories about corruption at the academy, ranging from experiences with ghost payrolls, to students who because of their family connections did not have to go through training regimen before becoming police, to nepotism and corruption being offered as the answer for why some people were able to climb the organizational ladder within the police force without the necessary credentials or experience.

Some of these stories were especially telling about the role of corruption in current-day Iraq. One senior trainer at the academy relayed a story to me about the several months he spent in prison under Saddam, a time during which he was repeatedly and brutally tortured. He noted with bitter anger that the man who tortured him was not only never punished, but is still a high-level prison official making a salary in the six figures and responsible for the guidelines on the proper treatment of prisoners. During my time in Suly, the phenomenon of well-connected individuals skipping police training and yet receiving high initial ranks had gotten so out of control the MOI had to issue a decree stating all police of all ranks must have had at least one course at the academy.

Such lawlessness and corruption bear heavily on the Iraqi people, who have a severe distrust of the central government (Moaddel et. al 2008). This is, of course, not surprising given that 40-plus years of dictatorial rule gave way to a decade-plus civil war and a government that is perceived as being far too in bed with hostile foreign powers.

This is true even more so for the younger generations. As a local legal expert explained, the older generations are less agitated “because they don’t know any better. They say ‘at least the Baath party is not taking our sons away and killing them,’ but the younger generations are getting angry.” This prediction turned out to be quite prescient, as a few weeks later, Suly was gripped by massive anti-corruption demonstrations, which were heavily orchestrated and attended by college students and unemployed young adults.

This is relevant not only as the context in which Iraqi police operate, but also because police themselves are well aware of this public perception. Indeed, on the first day of classes, the Major General in charge of the academy gave a welcome speech to students in which he demanded them to change the culture of public mistrust of police. Furthermore, police themselves are not immune to such anger and dissatisfaction with corruption and lawlessness. As discussed in much more detail below, Iraqi police are predominantly drawn from unemployed young people with little to no education, the same population fueling the demonstrations and much of the political unrest. In addition to many police sharing these notions of political corruption and anomie, they are also more than aware much of the public sees them as representatives of these corrupt institutions and all of the problematic working conditions that come along with this view.

### *A Very Brief History of Iraqi Policing*

Unfortunately, there is essentially no existing work on the history and development of Iraqi policing. However, I was given an extensive oral history of Iraqi policing by Brigadier General Dr. Salar, the Dean of the College of Policing. While Dr. Salar is not a historian, he has decades of experience at multiple levels of policing

throughout the nation, and has a special interest in the history of the organization. As such, while his is not an accredited academic account, it is by far the most comprehensive history I've come across, and is generally corroborated by the few sources that touch on the subject (Zulal 2011; Ackerman 2007; Owen 2004). I include this history as important context for the operating environment this new force developed from.

Dr. Salar divides this history of Iraqi policing into five eras. The first running from 1921 (when the first force was established) to 1958, when the Hashemite monarchy was overthrown by the Iraqi Army. This second period runs from the 1958 coup to 1968 when the Baath overthrew the sitting government, paving the way for the eventual rise of Saddam Hussein. The third period covers the unchallenged period of Baath rule until the 1991 American-led invasion, followed by the granting of semi-autonomy to the KRG and the imposition of harsh military and economic sanctions against Iraq. The fourth period of Iraqi policing covers the interim years between the American invasions (1991-2003). The final period covers the time from the invasion until the present.

Little has been recorded about the first two periods of this history. As Iraq was a British mandate until 1932, the first police forces were both modeled upon the British system and also quite weak. Even though Iraq became officially independent in 1932, the British not only forced the Hashemite monarchy upon Iraq, but also intervened militarily for decades afterward to protect their economic interests. The British also supported the rural, traditional leaders of the nation over the growing urban populations which strongly supported nationalist movements. Although there is not space to fully explain the colonial situation of the era, suffice it to say the British had significant interests in preventing the Iraqi police and other armed forces from having any real sort of power.

As such, police did not really develop into a meaningful force until the Baathist coup of 1968, ushering in what Dr. Salar refers to as the “golden era” of Iraqi policing. Golden not because this was a great time for Iraq, but because the new, strongly-centralized government gave a great deal of power and latitude to police. Police were well provided for in terms of personnel and resources, and were given the ability to determine their own policies, procedures, priorities, etc. and “no party would interfere with the working of the police.” Although obviously the Baath party intervened in policing (as they intervened into nearly all areas of political and social life), this statement was meant as a contrast to the current situation in which rival political parties often attempt to infiltrate or gain the allegiance of a particular set of police to work toward their own ends.

It was also during this “golden period” that the Baghdad College of Police was founded. The college was, for a period, one of the most important in the region, with police coming from a wide range of nearby states to learn and train. Despite its implicit association with Saddam Hussein and the Baath party, it is clearly still a revered institution, as several police I met spoke of graduating from the college as a mark of high honor and something that set them apart from the rest of the police who have not received nearly as rigorous a training. Dr. Salar goes on to argue that after the 1991 invasion and Kurdish uprising, police from the region could still graduate from the Baghdad College, but they were only “so-called police,” so-called because they had no independent power. More importantly, the many new political parties which arose in the KRG after it was granted semi-autonomy would often use the police to political ends, or involve them in clearly political disputes. Atop this, because of the harsh sanctions and the sudden lack of

a powerful central figure to assist them, the police began to experience significant problems, especially with bribery.

Finally, after the second American-led invasion of 2003, “everything changed.” Saddam was toppled, and for a significant period there was no government, and most government ministries were destroyed both literally and figuratively. What few police were left at this point were eventually disbanded under the direction of American forces, and police were heavily implicated in committing crimes themselves, ranging from looting to kidnapping to outright murder (Ackerman 2007; Allbritton 2006; Bender 2006). This period also spread the problem of a multitude of competing political parties looking to use the police toward their end throughout the entire nation.

Of course it is impossible to talk of the current era in Iraqi policing without discussing the central role American and coalition forces have played in this period. For various reasons (ethnic homogeneity, semi-autonomy, support for the invasion and America, etc.), the American presence in the KRG has been significantly reduced in the past several years. This near absence was clearly a matter of pride for many in the policing world, especially higher ups, who often bragged about American advisors feeling free to be unarmed when touring their grounds, and continually assured me how much safer things are for Americans in the KRG, as opposed to the rest of the nation. Beyond issues of safety, many also went out of their way to demonstrate their love for Americans and support for “Operation Iraqi Freedom,” the correct name for the war effort that I was quickly reminded of whenever I made the mistake of referring to it as an invasion.

## **Daily Routines and the Process of Creating Iraqi Police**

### *Life at the Lead Training Academy*

Despite their nearly complete physical absence (there are two American trainers still working with this academy, but in all my time there, I only ever saw one of them there, and even then only on a few brief occasions), the presence of American trainers is felt throughout the academy and the training process. In addition to the Academy itself being founded by Americans, many buildings had plaques (in English) bearing unmistakably American names (e.g. The Rodger Hopkins Administration Building), and the main court was marked by three flags in succession, representing the joint efforts of the Government of Iraq, the KRG, and America. Most of the equipment used, as far as I could identify, was also produced in America. During a demonstration on handcuffing, one trainer took the time to stop the lesson and show me his high quality American handcuffs, explaining to me the superiority of American-made policing equipment.

Many high-ranking officials proudly displayed bald eagle sculptures, American flags, and other bric-a-brac clearly received from American advisors, and nearly all of the trainers had a number of commendations and certificates on their office walls, all in English bearing the American flag. One Lieutenant proudly summed up the shift from a coalition academy to a Kurdish academy by noting how the commendations on his wall go from having three flags (American, Iraqi, and KRG) on the earliest ones he received, to only having the Iraqi and KRG flags, to finally recently receiving some marked only with the flag of the KRG. However, it must be noted this pride is one of a people working toward their independence, not any desire to reject the aid or affiliation of American forces. Nearly all personell I met went out of their way to express their admiration for



America, and many referred to the American trainers as their fathers to demonstrate their deep respect.

This abiding respect for Americans, combined with a general acceptance at the academy of America having superior police, helps to explain the reception I personally received from trainers at the academy. Regardless of how many times I explained my research plan or my lowly position as a graduate student, most viewed me as wielding far, far more power than I have. I was asked multiple times in-between and after lessons if I had any notes for the trainers or their students, and on a few occasions trainers came to me after they had delivered a lecture to ask if the lecture was correct. In a similar vein, personnel from all over the academy often requested that I bring their concerns and problems to the Ministers of their government, or failing that, to please advance them to Paul Bremer or Barak Obama.

But the clear influence of American forces goes far beyond the many physical signs present at the academy. Even though it is no longer American forces leading the training, they were responsible for training all the current trainers. Additionally, American syllabi are still employed for the courses, and questions as to why a certain act was performed in a certain way were often met with the answer “because the Americans do it that way.” The influence was also notable in a clearly-imported paranoid worldview (discussed in depth below) in the training process that sees recruits as fundamentally untrustworthy. For example, on the shooting range, if a recruit has a problem with their gun, they are to raise their hand and a trainer will come to them and help them figure it out. If they turn around without being told to do so while holding their firearm, the trainers make it quite clear they will be shot. As one trainer explained to me, although

they have no reason to suspect any of their recruits are insurgents, this policy is a hold-over from when Americans were leading the training and were afraid recruits may just be using the training process to get close enough to launch an attack.

Perhaps not too surprising given the history of the region, while the loyalty of the students and staff to the United States seemed to be quite solid, it is their level of loyalty to the Iraqi state that is unclear. Although many students and trainers identify strongly as Iraqis (something explored in-depth in the following chapter), there were signs they may not identify nearly as readily with the Iraqi *state*. For instance, despite the fact that the larger compound in which the academy was located is a joint project of the US and Iraq, the initials of the PUK were visible everywhere, often spray-painted on the sides of buildings or on small home-made signs. Within the academy itself, pictures of Jalal Talabani, the president of Iraq, far outnumbered pictures of Massoud Barzani, the president of the KRG. And although this might look like a positive sign of national unity or evidence of their loyalty to the larger Iraqi state, it's more likely this results from Talabani also being the leader of the locally-popular PUK, much more so than his particular political position. In some quieter moments, several students and staff alike expressed frustration to me that the only way to secure a position in policing was to ally oneself with either of the two main political parties, regardless of how one feels about them, again casting doubt as to where the loyalties of these and future police will lie.

Yet the most overt sign of American influence I was expecting to see was notably absent, as the academy scrapes by on a shoestring budget. Although the academy represents one of the most expensive projects undertaken in the region (ITAO 2009), many at the academy were quick to point out that when the Americans left, the money

largely left with them. More than a few suggested somewhat bitterly they don't receive American support because they've been more successful in maintaining the peace, compared to their Southern counterparts.

The budgetary issues discussed below are concerning for a number of issues. Most obviously, a training process so dramatically under-budgeted is quite unlikely to produce competent police in even the best of circumstances. However, beyond the institutional capacity of the police themselves, these budgetary issues signal a potentially devastating problem for the Iraqi state. As Tilly (1985) reminds us, "to the extent that outside states continue to supply military goods and expertise in return for commodities, military alliance, or both, the new states harbor powerful, unconstrained organizations that easily overshadow all other organizations within their territories" (186). Although US money continues to flow into Iraq (Arango 2012), it is clearly not going to the Iraqi police, leaving them to become one of these overshadowed organizations.

There are likely two very problematic outcomes stemming from the police being one of the overshadowed organizations. The first is that it leaves a gap in the security sector likely to be filled by the military, with all the concomitant problems that entails and which have already been thoroughly illustrated above. The second is that this will push the police even more strongly than they are now in the direction of becoming a highly politicized force. With the United States and coalition forces still using vast amount of resources for propping up the Iraqi state, it is unlikely the state will fail or cease to exist. But it is likely that a state with a well-funded military and a rampant with corruption will not develop in a democratic way, but will instead be dominated by those with connections to the military or the powerful oil interests. The police will be even

further politicized through not having material support and thus needing to turn to those who can provide it; namely, the powerful political parties that already allegedly control much of the police hierarchy.

In addition to the myriad of complaints about the level of pay, academy dorms, facilities, and equipment offer healthy support to the claims of underfunding. The buildings housing the higher-ranking officers are all simple one-story constructions of corrugated sheet metal, and while a few offices have thread-bare rugs covering the floor, most are floored with simple tiles in various states of disrepair. The classrooms are similar buildings, but often not in quite as good a state as the offices. Most have either a working fan or air conditioner, but all feature mostly broken wooden desks and warped walls, both usually covered in graffiti presumably etched in by bored students during the times they are left to wait on their instructor for a significant period of time.

The dormitories share a similar aesthetic, with rows of metal bunk beds periodically separated by metal footlockers. Although there are often complaints about the smell that tends to accumulate when a large number of young men share a living space, the students saved their true anger for the rest of the amenities provided for them at the academy. A common complaint was that the food served in the academy cafeteria was making the students sick, and that repeated requests for better food fell on deaf ears. More telling to the budgetary situation, however, is that recruits were typically advised to bring their own drinking water. During one of the in-between class q and a sessions late in my research, a recruit stood in formal stance to deliver an impassioned speech to the instructor about it being the academy's right to assign duties and expectations to the students, but it is the students right to be given adequate drinking water and sanitary

bathrooms. The instructor dutifully replied that he would forward the request, but all in attendance seemed to believe it was unlikely to achieve anything.

The academy's budget constraints were similarly readily evident in the uniforms of both students and trainers. The uniform for trainers (and most police throughout Iraq) is a camouflage of blue, grey, and black, with shoulder straps for bearing insignia demonstrating the wearer's rank, a gun belt, and the requisite military style boots. Students, on the other hand, wore a basic military uniform of a beige button-down shirt with matching cap and pants, and again, ankle-high military boots. However, in practice the uniforms were usually far from uniform. It was clear cold-weather clothing was not standard issue, so during the winter months, trainers would cover their uniforms with hats and jackets of their own, sometimes producing quite an amusing picture depending on that particular trainer's sense of style.

Student uniforms similarly pointed to budgetary shortfalls, and generally gave the impression that these were both widely shared and recycled over several generations of academy students. Uniforms came in a variety of shades in the beige/tan range, most were fraying at the seams, and many were missing buttons, clasps, and in the case of a few particularly unlucky students, the zippers on their fly. Most boots also showed signs of significant wear and tear, with soles in danger of coming completely off at any moment or toes peaking out through holes in them. When I left the largest course a little over halfway through its duration, several students were still wearing their own shoes while waiting on a pair of boots, and it was clear the female recruits were unlikely to ever get a pair of boots in their size. In the early weeks of this particular course, new boots

arrived on a few occasions, and there were strong and vociferous arguments from students as to why they were the most deserving recipient of a new pair.

Perhaps more concerning, however, was how these budget problems extended to training equipment and resources, as important equipment was often either simply not available, or only existed in such small quantities as to become a serious impediment to lessons. For instance, there were roughly 24 practice guns for the academy. So when there were large classes, the class would divide into three groups and each would have eight AKs with which to practice their salutes, firing stance, etc. There were even fewer handcuffs, so there were a number of times when students practiced arresting and cuffing each other by miming guns and handcuffs.

At other times, the academy simply didn't have the equipment. The academy had to borrow two full body armor riot suits from the Asayish forces, leaving students able only to see what the uniform looks like. And even this simple opportunity to view the riot uniform was quite difficult to come by, the trainer complained to me, citing it as yet another example of the lack of funds. Or in a somewhat humorous example, a lesson on how to sweep a building for militants was foiled when it turned out the shed being used for the exercise was locked and no one could find the key. Although some of this can be chalked up to the normal problems encountered in any such endeavor, the lack of equipment significantly cut down on the practice time for each student, and clearly contributed to the general atmosphere of boredom and disinterest among the students.

But possibly the most concerning example of budget constraints negatively effecting the training process happened on the shooting range. Whereas when American advisors were intimately involved in the process, all students had to fire well over 300

bullets from both the AK and the Glock they will use. Yet with the dwindling financial support, students now are only able to fire ten bullets from their pistol and fifteen from the rifle. These numbers, it should be noted, serve as both a minimum and a maximum for the students on the firing range; while they are required to shoot that many bullets to graduate from training, even those experiencing a great amount of difficulty are not allowed to shoot any more, as there simply isn't room in the budget for more bullets. After the first time I witnessed a less-than-stellar performance on the shooting range, I asked the instructor responsible for arms training why they even bother with such a small amount of practice, and he nonchalantly agreed that the students are not prepared at all by this training, but noted he wants them to be familiar with the sound and feel of shooting a gun. Put bluntly, this is simply inadequate training for students who will soon be issued guns and sent to their posts with an understanding they may well need to use them soon.

This example also points to another major problem I encountered in observing the training process; namely, that the qualifications of students (both for entry to and graduation from the academy) often failed to meet not only accepted international practice, but the official guidelines of the police themselves. According to lecture given during a classroom day (one of the few days students did not have to receive their lessons sitting outside in the court), there are a long list of qualifications for being considered for entrance to policing. All interested must be Iraqi, over the age of 19, in good physical health, at least one meter and seventy-five centimeters tall, possess a spotless criminal history, and have at least an intermediate school certificate (the equivalent of our middle school/junior high). Those wanting to be commanding officers must go through another 3 years at the College of Police (six months if they already have a college degree).

However, students did not always meet these qualifications completely. Trainers were quick to complain that the students did not match their definition of physically able. The idea that students would never be able to catch criminals because they are so out of shape was a common refrain during training. After one group of students ran their punishment laps too slowly, the trainer exploded at them, saying “criminals will just be able to walk away from you” and deriding them all as unfit for service. One student who used his bad back as an explanation of why he was having trouble was asked “how can you catch a thief or any kind of criminal with a bad back?” and the entire class was informed it was a shame how much they were complaining about being hurt and tired.

Far more concerning than physical shortcomings is the failure of many students, and even some trainers, to meet the already lenient education requirements. As will be discussed in the next chapter, police and military require by far the least education of any government ministry, and therefore attract many people who never finished school. Although this is concerning in and of itself, many at the academy were quick to pin current problems in policing to the low levels of education of most police. In addition to not meeting formal education requirements, several students were also clearly illiterate, as they had to have their survey read to them by a classmate. This is especially concerning as at least a few of these illiterate students were to be sent to the passport office upon graduation, a position obviously highly dependent on literacy. Illiteracy is not confined to recruits, though, as more than one student complained the manager of their home office was illiterate despite their high rank.

Training staff were clearly aware of the shortcomings of students and most had a fairly low opinion of their intelligence and ability. It was very difficult for me to gain



access to students as interview respondents not out of any concern for security or secrecy, but because in the words of several trainers, the students “don’t know anything interesting to tell you” either because they’re not intelligent enough or because they know so little about policing. I ran into similar problems in gaining permission to distribute my survey, as the trainer in charge of teaching insisted the students would not know enough to respond in any way that would be useful for me. Both interview access and the right to distribute my survey were granted after I assured them all of the questions were just about the students opinion, and thus, they could answer regardless of their knowledge level. Although access was indeed granted, it was clear most trainers thought I was foolishly wasting my time by doing so.

### *The Training Process*

On paper, the training process is a short but intense period of preparation for recruits. Courses are to run several hours a day for forty-five days, during which time recruits are taught all of the important basics of policing – tactics, protocol, physical training, etc. These forty-five days are typically spread out over nine weeks (students are allowed to go home most Fridays and Saturdays), and each day is to follow a standard schedule; students rise at 6 a.m. and have breakfast, convene at 7:00 for physical calisthenics, then a short break before 9:00 uniform inspection, philosophical and practical training until noon, an hour for lunch, and a return to training activities at 1:00 lasting until the academy (like most government ministries) closes at 3:00. Each week of the course is designed to center on a different lesson; for example, the fourth week of a general course is to focus on basic traffic policing, “behavior information” (how to treat

suspects, how to properly salute, etc.), and human rights. The lived reality of training, however, rarely matches these ideals, whether in terms of time, duration, or content.

This is the first of many examples of how what is *not* said and done at the academy is more telling than the actual instruction that transpires. As will be discussed throughout this study, it is not simply that Iraqi police training omits a few key lessons or tactics, but that it ignores the fundamentals of policing and institution-building, despite their wide-spread availability and the United States' own history of police reconstruction (Ellison 2007; Goldsmith and Dinen 2007; Bayley 2006; Dobbins 2004). In addition, the incredibly short time frame in which recruits are to be molded into police officers simply does not leave adequate time to impart desperately needed lessons.

While I will address issues related to the content of training below, it is important to note the significant inconsistencies in time and duration. Though all of the courses I observed went the full forty-five days of training, I was told this is not always the case. Yet even when it is, most involved see this as a woefully limited amount of time (though not the students, several of whom argued the training should only be 6 weeks at the most). One trainer of weapons and tactics complained that the current schedule is criminally short, insisting students need at least a year of just physical training, with extensive tactical training afterward. This opinion was shared by the Assistant Director of the emergency police in Suly, who complained that the truncated training period leaves recruits so ill-equipped for police work they have to be retrained upon starting the job. The assumption that this is insufficient time was also clear in the repeated pleadings of trainers for students to also practice their lessons at home and while on break at the academy, due to the lack of practice time in the training process.

Yet it is not simply calendar duration in which the training process does not meet stated ideals, but also in terms of the time spent each day on training. The day is usually broken up into several forty-five to fifty minute blocks dedicated to specific lessons, with a ten to fifteen minute break between each lesson. In practice, lessons actually did begin around 9 and would usually last until 11:30 or noon, amounting to roughly two and a half to three hours of lessons a day, leaving little time for individual attention to student's progress. A problem compounded by the fact that one trainer is usually responsible for delivering a lesson to somewhere between 30 and 50 students, and sometimes as many as 100. While the academy theoretically resumes operations after lunch, in practice everyone either uses the hours after lunch to nap or simply leave for the day.

Here it's important to note that while such things may make the trainers and students look lazy or irresponsible, that's not the entire story. What this working schedule, and especially the nap break, really demonstrate are but one of the many problems of trying to forcibly import a Weberian bureaucratic rationality that was neither requested nor desired by most of the populace. This isn't necessarily Iraqis rejecting Western working styles/hours, but instead not abandoning their own. As is common in desert locales, the traditional Iraqi working day starts very early in the morning, with a long break in the middle of the day when the weather is most unbearable, and then a resumption of work after the heat has broken. Yet in a recurring theme, the American advisors who established the academy and its working order were either ignorant of the traditional Iraqi working schedule, or chose to ignore it and assume it would not be a problem to dramatically change long-held practices.

Yet of course not all such discrepancies can be explained by cultural differences. Although I had copies of the syllabi supposedly being employed, the day's lessons rarely if ever matched the syllabus. In fact, the entire process often had a random feel about it, as if trainers were teaching whatever they felt would be good to teach that day. More than once I asked about this discrepancy, and the response was that this was something that's not on the syllabus but they felt it's important to know. In another common instance, asking what the lesson would be the next day or what the theme of the next week would be was often met with either several different answers from different trainers, or with a hesitant admission of not knowing what it would be.

Some of the randomness undoubtedly stemmed from the budget issues discussed above. In one course, the visit to the shooting range was postponed multiple times because the academy was waiting on a shipment of bullets. Or when the lessons were centering on how to sweep a vehicle, trainers were usually only able to muster up the two trucks necessary for one group of students to practice, leaving the other groups to scramble for something to do that day. At other times, the lack of equipment simply led to classes being cancelled for the day. Yet possibly the most telling moment on the randomness of the training schedule was somewhat early in my visit when I was trying to get a feel for the normal operating hours of the academy. When I asked a group of students with no instructor present what time classes finished for the day, most did not know, and several got into a debate about the exact time.

In addition to the full training course, there were also a number of "rapid courses" given during my time at the academy. In contrast to the full training, these courses last only a week, (occasionally two if need be, but never longer than that) and only take place

during emergency situations when more police are needed, such as during the demonstrations. In theory, after the emergency situation is resolved, those who graduated from the rapid course will join the next full course being delivered. Yet in practice, the rapid course graduates I spoke with either sat in for a few lessons with a full course, or simply never received any more training.

But more concerning than the obviously inadequate training time are the problematic assumptions the rapid courses are built upon. The instructor of the rapid courses insisted that during the course, students actually received several weeks worth of training per day (they spent the same amount of time in training per day as did those in the full course), but did grant that they only focus on the “most significant points.” However, in this case, “most significant points” is defined as office regulations, saluting, proper greetings, marching, and weaponry. Setting aside the question of whether one can learn these adequately in one week, it also points to a very problematic understanding of what the key components of policing are, an issue I’ll discuss much more fully below.

### *The General Training Atmosphere*

Much to my surprise, the general atmosphere at the academy is jovial and much looser than I had expected. Both students and trainers regularly make jokes and horse around with the equipment and each other. For instance, there is a saying in Iraq about tasks that are not particularly complicated that translates to “it’s not building a plane.” Because the academy sits only a few kilometers away from the local airport, when students were having trouble with some of the simpler tasks, trainers were fond of pointing to one of the many planes going by overhead and saying some variation of “oh

look, it's that plane you're trying to build." Another favorite line of jokes for trainers centered on ogling women, such as when a recruit was told to look forward while marching, not glance around trying to see a beautiful lady.

Another factor contributing to this loose atmosphere is that the Academy, similar to many Iraqi businesses and ministries, appears to employ far more people than they have work for. A common sight throughout the academy is officers standing around conversing over a cup of chai, whether in an office or huddled around of the many small open fire pits set up for that purpose. It was also a regular occurrence to have other trainers wander by to observe the course for a few minutes, maybe chat with the instructor leading the lesson, and/or to congregate in the shade to chat and drink chai.

The trainers also spent a fair amount of down time goofing around, especially on the firing range. After the students finish their required shooting, the trainers would usually set up challenges for each other, such as trying to hit a small water bottle perched on top of the targets. Those who missed the target, or failed to follow all the proper steps of protocol, would often be "punished" by their peers and would perform mocking versions of the punishments doled out to students. This was also the time trainers would have an excuse to get out the big guns, and like people everywhere, simply have a fun time blowing up random detritus.

The loose atmosphere is not limited to horseplay and making jokes, but is also a part of the lessons. In addition to the fact that such levity was a welcome break from the usually monotonous training activities, students were highly encouraged to ask any and all questions they might have, whether during the lesson or during the informal question and answer sessions that typically occupied the breaks between lessons. As one Lt.

explained to me, the loose atmosphere comes from the fact that trainers treat students “as our children” and aim to be “very soft with them” to make sure they learn the material.

Of course, it was not all fun and games and certain lessons were treated much more seriously than others. Similarly, a few trainers did actually enforce the military discipline that was often discussed but rarely applied, making students stand at attention to address them, punishing those who spoke out of turn, and otherwise operating in a manner most people would probably expect of someone training police. However, such trainers were definitely the exception to the rule, and were in fact occasionally cited by other trainers as evidence of how gentle and understanding they themselves are and how much the students should appreciate that approach.

Looseness was not confined only to the staff at the academy; students were afforded a fairly large degree of latitude in approximating military discipline. Students would regularly talk out of turn, often several at once. Even when ordered to be quiet or to stop talking, the silence would usually only last a few minutes before students were chatting amongst themselves again during the lesson or asking repeated questions of the instructor. Many students were also not afraid to challenge instructors. One incident that occurred on only the third day of lessons for the large group of students is a great example; when told he was being punished for not forming a proper line, one student spent the better part of ten minutes arguing that he was indeed in the correct position and therefore should not be punished. Although in my experience students never won such arguments, it’s a good example of the disconnect between the professed ideals of military discipline and the actual working order of the academy.

Students contributed to the jovial atmosphere by laughing at, and often mocking, the mistakes of their fellow students. Although they were warned a few scattered times to respect their colleagues and not laugh at them, students (and many trainers) did little to hide their amusement at the constant mistakes of some. They would also have fun with the training activities; during practice arresting suspects, for example, many students would handle their handcuffed suspects quite roughly, and the “suspects” would return the favor by trying to escape and embarrass their would-be captor. The larger course I observed even had a bona fide class clown who would refer to all the instructors as “Korra” (“Your majesty”) and was always ready to report the failing of his classmates, while always including that he himself had performed the task efficiently and admirably.

And to be perfectly frank, there were plenty of mistakes to laugh at. It was clear throughout many training activities that students were not trying their hardest to master the material, if they were trying at all. Saluting and making proper military-style turns were one area in which this was especially obvious. Some students always made sure to perform all movements properly, while others performed some approximation of the correct style, and some simply didn’t bother with them at all. For the most part, instructors made no effort to correct those who were doing it wrong or not doing it at all, nor to reward those who were strictly following orders.

### *Military Mission Creep in the Training Process*

A major criticism of giving the police reconstruction project to the Department of Defense was that the military would be unlikely to make a democratic police force, but would instead create an auxiliary force of “little soldiers,” a process already documented



by others (Jones 2007; Hoffman 2006). From my first moment at the academy, this militarized influence was readily evident, from the way police dress, to how they talk about their jobs, even to how they view the work they will do out on the streets.

Giving control of the reconstruction process to the Department of Defense is not only historically unprecedented, but also clearly the main catalyst for many of the problems observed in this study. Many of the skills required in a police reconstruction project are not “police skills” per se, and as such, the typical requirement that those leading reconstruction projects have policing experience (but not necessarily experience in institution-building or bureaucratic management) may actually often hamper the process (Wisler 2007). In this case, those leading the reconstruction had neither institution-building *nor* policing experience, making them uniquely unqualified to undertake such a process. As such, it should not be particularly surprising that what they have implemented bears much more resemblance to a military operation than a democratic police force.

The police in Iraq serve under the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), a government unit that is somewhat of a cross between our Departments of Justice and Defense. The MOI oversees police, border security, and a few hybrid police/military forces responsible for national security and counter-insurgency work. Outside of a few specialized units, nearly everyone employed by the ministry wears the same uniform; high-ranking officials wear a camouflage of blue, black, and grey, while lower-ranking persons such as the “simple police” at the academy wear an all khaki uniform. The only police with identifying information on their uniforms (beyond the shoulder insignia denoting rank all

police have) are traffic police. This is especially problematic, as readily evident identifying information has been found to help curtail police abuse (Marx 1998).

The military influence was also readily evident in the marching and saluting described above, as well in how heavily armed the police are. As mentioned, all police, with few exceptions, have both an AK-47 automatic rifle and a Glock sidearm. Adding to the militarized feel is the way most staff at the academy are armed at all times despite the fact this is frankly unnecessary, as one has to pass through a minimum of two heavily-guarded checkpoints in the wider compound before they can even access the academy. Even many officers in the Logistics department, who spend all their time in an office and are mainly responsible for issuing uniforms and ordering supplies, are regularly armed, even though it again seems highly unlikely there would ever be a need for this.

The militarized influence is felt far beyond uniforms and armaments, as military matters dominated the discourse at the academy. Instructors regularly deployed military disciplines, and were constantly exhorting the students to perform actions with “military discipline” and in the “proper military style.” The idea that this was military training was often used to explain certain processes or justify certain actions to students, such as when one student was having difficulty performing the somersaults he was given as punishment and was berated by a trainer saying “This is the military! You must do everything – training, punishment. If you can’t do it, you shouldn’t be here!” There was also a great deal of talk about defending the nation from outside forces (indeed, during a lesson on the duties of Iraqi police, national security was the first stated duty), something that is far more the purview of the military than the police.

Similarly, constant references to war and terrorism contributed greatly to the militaristic nature of training. For instance, when learning how to diagnose and fix and jam in one's rifle, the instructor noted several times that this must be learned thoroughly so it can be quickly done, because in war you don't have much time. The discrepancy between what students are taught about using lethal violence and their experience on the shooting range is another great example. When I asked the instructor in charge of the range why students aim at the head and chest when they're taught in lessons to only shoot beneath the waist, he responded that this is "training for war," and as such, doesn't follow the normal rules. In both practice drills and theoretical lessons, the terms "suspect," "criminal," and "terrorist" were all used interchangeably, and most discussions on how to identify criminals and criminal behaviors were dominated by concerns of terrorism. And while because of the current condition in Iraq it's inevitable there would be some overlap between policing and anti-insurgency programs, terrorism is not the purview of police and certainly should not dominate so much training time and material.

The ties between the police and the *peshmerga* further highlighted the militaristic nature of Iraqi police training. The *peshmerga* would occasionally use the academy's court for training practices, and appear to be taught the same style of marching and saluting as are the police. *Ex-peshmerga* are also regularly exempted from institutional rules on account of their service and experience. During one Q and A session, a student complained about the academic requirements for the academy, noting that the commanding officer back at his station is a Lieutenant Colonel, but is illiterate. The instructor didn't know how this was possible, but speculated that the Lt. Col. Probably got his post due to time spent as *peshmerga*.

The military influence was also readily evident in much of the training. In addition to the militaristic exercises described above, some lessons were so explicitly militaristic as to make me occasionally doubt I was watching police training. For instance, one lesson centered on how to move about unseen in hostile territory. Students were taught to use mud to camouflage their faces, to stick twigs in their packs to blend in with the foliage, to crawl on the ground while carrying their rifle beneath them so as not to be detected, even how to hide from an oncoming enemy tank. Between the tactics taught and the constant reference to enemy combatants, the entire lesson had the unmistakable feel of basic training for armed forces.

This militaristic model employed in the training process has a number of fundamental flaws that have already lead to multiple problems and will likely lead to even more significant problems in the future. The military model of policing tends to completely ignore all social, political, and economic dimensions of crime control (De Daniell 2011; Kraska and Paulsen 1997), and the move away from militaristic models has proven to be a “crucial” reform in past success (Allen 2010). Furthermore, as Goldstein (1990: 71) notes, “it is ironic there is so inverse a relationship between the diverse array of tasks the police are expected to perform and the extremely limited methods formally available to them,” and such an inverse is only heightened with a militarized force.

While it is often acknowledged that policing is a fundamentally impossible task (Goldstein 1990), this is even more so the case in contemporary Iraq. For what the police are essentially being asked to accomplish (establish a stable, orderly society) is a task the United States armed forces have been unable to accomplish with far-superior training, weaponry, and financial resources. Even beyond the well-documented and central

importance of divorcing police and military functions, the case of contemporary Iraq demonstrates quite forcefully why the police are ill-suited for such military operations on both a practical and theoretical level.

Whereas the practical inability of police to accomplish these tasks should be fairly self-evident, a Gramscian (1971) understanding of political warfare demonstrates the fallacy of asking police to fulfill military roles in the first place. In a traditional military war (a war of maneuver), to achieve victory it is enough that one side of the conflict simply prove they *would* win were the war fought to its conclusion. However, “political struggle is enormously more complex” (229), as it is in political struggle (a war of position) that one must win the “hearts and minds” of those they seek to govern. For the Iraqi state to ever gain legitimacy, let alone become a properly-functioning democracy, the police simply must be involved in a war of position, not maneuver. As noted above, the use of police in wars of maneuver leads to a multitude of problems; most notably, a loss of legitimacy for the police (and to a great extent, the state), as the naked class-control character of policing becomes too readily evident. There is little reason to believe things will be any different in this case. Much to the contrary, employing police in a war of maneuver necessarily implies they will be molded into a politically-repressive force concerned with questions of pacification and dominance instead of a dispassionate force of rationalized and democratic state bureaucrats.

Here it also important to place this police reconstruction effort in the context of previous such US-led efforts. As Kuzmarov (2009) notes, “police training...[has] been a central component of American nation-building strategies since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century” (220). However, Kuzmarov goes on to demonstrate that this police development has

traditionally not been used to target criminal behavior, but instead to develop elaborate intelligence networks oriented toward internal defense and counter-subversion in order to create the internal security, order, and other conditions deemed necessary for the implementation of neoliberal capitalist development programs. More problematically, because the police forces receiving US aid were typically little more than enforcers for undemocratic (yet rabidly anti-communist) regimes, the resources provided by the US served mostly to update the repressive apparatus of these regimes. As such, in training “order and security came to trump civil liberties” (204).

Although discussed more in-depth below, this militaristic training program only begins to make sense when viewed in light of US attempts to develop client states, as the processes have been incredibly similar. There have been extensive writings on the necessary and ideal components of democratic police reform, and the reconstruction effort in Iraq features few if any of these. However, if one were to create a quick taxonomy of the features desired for creating an obedient client state, a heavily-armed police force predominantly occupied with repelling external enemies and forcefully suppressing internal dissention would be high on the list. Unfortunately, Iraqi police are much closer to fitting that description than they are to a democratic police force.

### **Mechanisms for Creating Legitimacy**

#### *Marching, Saluting, and Presentation of Self*

Unfortunately, discussions of duties, rights, and legal issues were the exception to the norm. The vast majority of training time was dedicated to presentational matters, most of which have little application to policing a constitutional democracy. Here again,

the story is really about what I did *not* observe, as nearly all other aspects of policing were left completely ignored. Much as Goldstein (1990) argued observation of the daily routines of police grant the “most accurate indication of the choices made from among competing objectives” (96), I argue the observation of training similarly gives us great insight into the practical and ideological choices as to what has been deemed most necessary for police to know. This is especially salient as past research (e.g. Wisler 2007) has shown that ignoring the important support functions police perform significantly negatively affects reconstruction efforts and the forces they produce.

The prime example of this dedication to presentational matters over substantive would be the inordinate amount of time spent on formation marching. The marching style is, not surprisingly, a stiff, very militaristic affair. To march in the proper style, one starts with their left foot (always start with the left foot or hand for any official movement), raising their knee up to level with their waist (as one trainer was quick to remind students, no one has ever died from lifting their leg too high), and swing the opposite arm straight up, moving it only at the shoulder. Coming to a stop, one always ends with the right foot, bringing it down sharply to create a satisfying thud.

Everything done while marching has a highly choreographed routine. Left turns (the only turns employed in marching) must happen with strictest military discipline; the same goes for doing an about face. Even transitioning from parade rest stance to being ready to march has a rigidly proscribed set of rules. And in the quest for military precision with these moves, they were practiced repeatedly to the point of tedium (indeed one day all three hours were spent on opening and closing ranks in formation, which literally consists of taking two steps forward or backward). Usually in practice,

each move was broken down into its component parts and students would slowly progress from one to the next with an instructor shouting “Yek! Do! Sear!” (“One! Two! Three!”) to guide them. At each point in the motion the students would be made to pause as trainers walked around correcting their form, or sending them off for punishment for being out of order. It would not be long on such days before it was quite easy to register the mix of boredom and frustration on the student’s faces. One of the courses I observed spent over three full weeks of the training period working solely on marching, and all of them spent at least two. Though it must unfortunately be noted that by the end of this process, many students still had some clear difficulties with marching in formation.

Closely following marching in terms of time and focus on the subject was saluting, presenting arms, and other self-presentational matters. Students learned proper behavioral protocol for nearly every conceivable situation. Weapons etiquette covered everything from how to properly carry a rifle while marching, how to perform dress presentation of arms, how to properly bend over and pick up the weapon while on the rifle range, and how the gun figures into a multitude of salutes. In terms of salutations, students learned how to properly greet superiors of all ranks (with proper foot and hand placement), how much of a salute to perform for various individuals (a full salute is reserved only for those “in the military field”), when superiors are required to salute you, and even extensively detailed explanations on whom to greet first when encountering several superiors at once – first is whomever is the highest rank; if two or more people share the highest rank, then you are to salute the one with the higher degree first (if they both have advanced degrees, you are to salute the one with the degree most closely related to the legal field). There were even multiple lessons on the proper way for



students to fold their hands while at rest, and of course, how to them properly move them into place when coming to attention.

The generic salute used for greeting superiors or entering an office or classroom involves the recruit stopping on their left foot and bringing their right knee high into the air before slamming their foot down while simultaneously raising the back of their hand to their forehead in a salute. When doing so, unless the person is of a very high rank, they are to stop at the door and hold their salute until invited in. They are also not allowed to lower their salute until whomever they're visiting has, a point brought home by a swift punishment for any student who ever dare lower their salute before their teacher had.

Rifles also had their own protocol for handling. When being presented for inspection or while standing at attention, the butt of the gun is to be held at the waist with the barrel no more than a hand's width away from the face. At rest, the rifle butt is rested on the ground and students are to hold the barrel of the gun immediately below the sight. Setting down the rifle is an even bigger production, as students must take a carefully choreographed step backward, bend at the knees, and set the rifle down behind them such that the sight is even with their toes. All of these are to be done without ever looking at the rifle itself. Even sitting during lessons follows a proscribed pattern of, at the instructor's command, jumping into the air and landing in a cross-legged sitting position while shouting "One! Two!" for jumping and landing, respectively.

The quest for "military precision" in presentational matters meant they were taught and practiced ad nauseum. Most of this took the form of painstaking step-by-step instruction and repetition. Typically this took the form of breaking the motion down into two to four steps, with instructors barking a number for each movement. In each new

position, the students would then freeze as trainers walked up and down the rows, correcting mistakes and fixing students' posture. Such practice was most often done in small groups of four to eight, while the rest of the students were to watch their fellow classmates and learn from their practice. However, as will be discussed below, more often students used the time they were not in the small group receiving instruction to watch the students being punished or to chat with their friends.

This is not surprising given the immense amount of time devoted to halting, repetitious practice of basic movements. Although sometimes the tedious nature of the repetition was obviously being utilized for punishment (such as when a group of students were forced to repeat a movement until the one amongst them who was incorrect figured it out), it was clear these things were drilled so often because of their central importance to the curriculum. As one trainer pointed out to the students "we did not know this from birth, we learned it from listening to our trainers" and implored them to ask him to repeat a lesson if they don't understand, offering to "repeat it 1,000 times" if necessary.

Though one can argue the relative merits of spending multiple days learning to form straight lines, the time given for repeated practice of some movements was fairly perplexing. There were multiple lesson periods devoted to proper firing range protocol, a skill the students would use only once, and for a very short amount of time. This was a point also felt keenly by some students and staff; one trainer complained to me that training focuses far too much on saluting and marching. While acknowledging it is something they need to know, he argued it squeezes out more practical lessons about driving or fighting, and in any event, could really be taught in a day or two in his estimation. A student who training to become a traffic officer echoed these concerns,

saying he felt nothing in the course was applicable to him and that they taught him “nothing on how to investigate accidents, nothing on how to talk to or deal with people.”

This sense of constant repetition also came from many lessons receiving multiple days of training time. Often movements would be broken down into their constituent parts, and then each new lesson would slowly add a bit to the motion, until after several hours (and often, days) of practice, the students would have the whole movement down. For instance, picking up an AK, getting into firing stance, setting the rifle down, and walking away took up multiple days of training. First the students repeatedly practiced walking up to the rifle and bending over to pick it up as the instructors counted off the steps involved. After this skill was satisfactorily mastered, shouldering and aiming the gun was added, with many, many stops for correction. Then, after several hours of practice, setting the rifle down was added in, etc. This process was repeated for nearly all things learned, but especially for salutations, marching, and self-presentational protocols.

While this ad nauseum repetition of marching, saluting, and presenting arms make little sense from the perspective of attempting to establish a legitimate democratic police force, an emphasis on the symbolic *does* make sense when considering the context in which Iraqi police (and the state) are operating. As discussed, the Iraqi police are currently in a fairly impossible position, and cannot fill the important state-making and protection roles so important to Tilly’s (1985) taxonomy. One could argue that until a working peace is established and significant changes are made to multiple institutions throughout the nation, the police will never be able to fulfill their important coercive functions. As such, the coalition and the Iraqi state are instead gambling on creating the *appearance* of legitimacy (albeit, possibly at the expense of actual legitimacy, discussed

below). For if one has no hope of creating a legitimate police force under the given circumstances, does it not make sense to essentially fake it? That is, given such a short window in which to impart the most important lessons of policing, it is clear the decision has been made (consciously or not) to focus on how police appear, rather than on how they actually perform their job. Thus, while police may not be a professional and regimented force, the training process is designed to make them look that way.

It is also clear that this symbolic militarism of heavily-armed, fatigue-clad police is one that strives to generate fear; in both potential criminals and the wider society more generally. In and of itself this is not particularly surprising; police the world over tend to rely on some level on projecting a feared image, and it makes sense as something a force of questionable strength and legitimacy might turn to in order to enhance their image. However, generating fear in the public is a “delicate business...it forces police to be as concerned about their image as they are about their capacity” (Goldstein 1990: 48), a claim that clearly applies to contemporary Iraqi police. The problem is the illusion of capacity and the fear it inspires is fairly easily shattered, making this an incredibly precarious approach to take. Once again, it becomes clear the training process is designed on a gamble of projecting legitimacy in the hopes of eventually achieving it.

### *Making Arrests*

Of the handful of subjects that dominated instruction time at the academy, the sweeping a car or house for militants and subsequent handcuffing of the “militants” found in the exercise is both the most complex process students were expected to learn and really the closest thing to actual police work. Yet it is telling that even these, the only

quasi-policing training exercises, are much more akin to counter-terrorist military actions than they are to the actions of a legitimated democratic police force.

That the Iraqi police trained by the Department of Defense would more resemble soldiers than police is not entirely surprising. It's clear the United States has often used police training as a means of attempting to establish political hegemony in client states, seeing police as, in the words of Kennedy's National Security Advisor Robert Komer, "in many cases a far more effective and immediately useful counter-subversive instrument than the military" (quoted in Kuzmarov 2009). Although such political maneuvering has always been an implicit component of US-led police reconstruction efforts, in the Iraqi case, it appears less a latent function than the primary goal of the force.

Pulling over and sweeping a vehicle requires a platoon of nine police, each with a specific duty, so much as with marching and saluting, this scenario was practiced repeatedly. Two trucks are required for this; one a smaller, light weight truck of the sort that are common on the streets of Suly, the other a large police truck (a Ford F-350 in this particular instance). Two students are volunteered to be the "terrorists" who will be pulled over, two other students take the role of driver and commander in the cab of the police truck, and seven more students pile in back. The students in the back of the truck all carry AK-47s, while the two inside the truck have pistols strapped to their thighs.

The student riding in the passenger seat takes the role of commander and shouts orders at the suspects and the other police. After ordering the suspects to stop, the seven students in the back of the truck quickly pile out and man the perimeter, each responsible for surveying a certain portion of the action. The two students in the cab stand behind their opened doors with their pistols drawn. At this point, the commander orders the

suspect driving the car to turn off his car, put his keys on the roof, open the door, and to begin backing slowly toward the police truck. When the suspect is far enough away from his own vehicle, he is ordered to stop, lift his collar up and un-tuck his shirt, and slowly spin around, so it can be confirmed he's not carrying any weapons. After this process, he is instructed to again start backing toward the police truck (suspects are made to walk backwards so they cannot identify the police arresting them and possibly take revenge later), wherein the driver approaches and handcuffs them.

The handcuffing process is quite involved. In sweeping a car, it is the driver who is responsible for handcuffing suspects. After the suspect has performed all of the commands shouted at them, they are told to put their hands together at the wrist behind their back. The driver of the truck then slowly approaches the suspect with his gun drawn, only holstering it once he has grabbed the thumbs of the suspect. Once the suspect is cuffed, the driver gives them a thorough pat down that starts with putting their right leg between the suspects' legs and leaning them back, so they are less able to resist. The driver then puts their right hand over the suspects face, pushing up on their nose with the area of the hand between the thumb and forefinger, pushing their head to the side and allowing them to run their other hand down the length of the suspects' body to feel for weapons and contraband. The process is then repeated for the other side of the suspects' body, and the whole process is repeated again for any additional suspects being arrested.

Instructors noted this type of arrest is somewhat of a best case scenario for police, so there were also demonstrations and practice of alternate handcuffing methods. If a suspect is being uncooperative and will not surrender to arrest, the trainers advocated using three police to form a triangle around the suspect. The two in front should keep the

suspect off guard by asking them a lot of questions and keeping their focus so that the third may sneak up behind the suspect and make the arrest. Or if the suspect appears to be dangerous, they can be made to lie on the ground while being handcuffed. The lead instructor also noted that while police have two types of handcuffs (metal and plastic zip-tie style) and both have their various uses, if a suspect is not being cooperative, it's better to use the metal cuffs for their much more intimidating sound and feel.

Sweeping a house is an even more involved process. Anyone can sweep a car, according to one trainer, but it takes great skill to check a building. The idea here is to take the house by surprise with a quick strike of military precision in a process the students are told should take no more than five to ten minutes. Again the process involves a group of nine police, two inside the cab, the rest riding in the back of the truck, except in this scenario, the truck stops far away from the house in order to preserve the element of surprise (indeed students are told they are not allowed to carry any device that may make noise during such a sweep). After the engine is cut, the officers pile out and form a single-file line in which each person's rifle is held the opposite way of the person in front of them (save the front and back of the line whose guns points directly forwards and backwards, respectively), in order to maintain security in every direction.

As the police arrive at the house, the commander of the group is to silently order people to their various positions. Again, much like the car scenario, every person involved in this operation has a very specific duty to perform. Four of the group take up position at each external corner of the building to set a perimeter. Of the five to go inside, the commander is in charge of visually sweeping each room, with one officer responsible for watching the commander's back. Another officer is assigned to specifically watching

the windows, both for possible escape attempts and for outside interference, while the two remaining officers are there to make arrests, help establish perimeters, and basically perform all other functions not already covered. Although the component parts of this process (e.g. forming a line, how to quietly get out of the truck and establish a perimeter, etc.) were practiced quite a bit, students never had a chance to practice the whole process, as the storage shed used for this exercise was either being used by the *peshmerga* who occasionally share the practice court of the academy, or in one instance, the door was locked and no one could find a key. As such, even though multiple trainers spoke at length about how difficult and dangerous sweeping a house is, each time set aside to practice the entire process ended up being a theoretical demonstration of what they should do, usually done with a room drawn on the ground and a discussion of where people should go and what they should do in various possible situations.

It should be noted that these two fields are not entirely inappropriate for police training. In a nation currently in the midst of an extended civil war attempting to transition to a constitutional democracy, lines between military and police jurisdictions necessarily blur to some extent. However, there are compelling reasons, both practically and theoretically (discussed below), as to why such jurisdictional blurring should not only not be promoted in this manner, but should be assiduously avoided, or the very least, should be working to move away from such overlap.

But here it is most important to return to questions of client state building. As Garland (1990) reminds us “the institutions of state power play a key role in organizing ruling-class power, in subduing political opposition, and in promoting social policies” (52), and policing is obviously key amongst state institutions in securing power. It is



similarly important to remember the Iraqi state currently does not have a particularly strong or legitimate government, and multiple groups with significant weapons caches and popular support are vying to control the state. Yet whether the current government is able to remain in power or if the state is captured by one or more of the many opposition groups, whoever is controlling the Iraqi state will inherit a police force that is trained to march, shoot, and capture terrorists/subversives. Thus, even in the best case scenario of those in power remaining true to the ideals of constitutional democracy, their police force will be ill-suited to protect the rights and interest of their citizens. Should a group less inclined toward constitutional democracy capture the state, they will find themselves with a police force fairly well adapted to top-down expressions of power.

Similar to matters of self-presentation, weapons training (specifically, firearms training) took up a great deal of time, focused more on proper protocol than on practical police uses. Probably the most practical firearms training students received was in disassembling and cleaning their weapons. As mentioned, all Iraqi police are issued both an AK-47 rifle and a Glock 9mm handgun. Several days of training were dedicated to dismantling these weapons and learning their parts, how to fix jams, how to clean them, and how to reassemble them. Here instructors often employed a participatory, Socratic style of instruction (as opposed to their usual lectures), stopping often to quiz students on various components, and regularly having students lead the process and explain the parts of the weapon and the steps involved in dismantling it to their classmates.

There was also a great deal of attention paid to proper holding of the guns, especially the AK, which is also involved in a number of salutes and marches. In line with the repetitive practice discussed above, gun-related movements were given a great

deal of practice time. Everything from how to properly remove the pistol from its holster, how to shoulder your rifle, even what to do with your gun while transitioning from at ease to at attention all received hours of practice time. Instructors were especially insistent on students learning to hold their weapons securely. During most practice times, various trainers would walk up and down the lines of students randomly trying to snatch their guns away and heavily punishing those whose weapons they were able to take. Sometimes trainers would get clever about doing this, such as when one slyly sidled up to a student and asked to look at his gun really quick for a moment. When the student relented and handed his weapon over, he was immediately berated by the trainer for surrendering his weapon to someone with no authority to take it.

Properly holding the weapon is so important because, as one trainer put it, “the pistol is both your best friend and worst enemy.” As such, firearms were subject to four laws of gun safety police are to follow at all times, even when using the unloaded practice weapons. These regulations, students were told, are so important they should “memorize them like your name.” The first law is to always assume a gun is loaded, for “you can make a mistake and correct it in other things, but you cannot fix a mistake in firing.” The second is to never point the weapon at a person, building, car, etc., unless you are intending to shoot at it. When first introducing these rules, the trainer noted that “we have many bad memories of tragedies happening to people” from being careless with guns, and invited others to recount stories of lax gun safety leading to tragedy, prompting one student to stand and relate the story of a cousin who accidentally shot and killed his sister while cleaning his rifle. The third law of gun safety is to never put your finger in the trigger house until ready to fire, and the fourth is to make sure the area around the

target is clear before firing. These rules were invoked quite regularly, and a reminder or quiz about them often preceded activities involving the practice guns.

Yet most of the time devoted to weapons training concerned the firing range. As mentioned above, there were several days of lessons devoted to learning proper protocol for the range -- every step done on command, raise your hand if your gun jams, how to stand properly, etc. And while the students actually spend very little time on the range itself, what unfolded there is indicative of the entire training process. There are actually three firing ranges at the academy, but students in these courses only use the smallest one (the other two, I learned, are for higher caliber weapons and only used by the military and special forces). The range is a simple grass field, surrounded on three sides by a hill of about ten feet high. There is a small concrete pad with a simple corrugated metal roof for trainers to observe the students from, and firing lines of ten meters and sixteen meters for the pistol and the rifle, respectively. At the other end of the range are the targets, plywood squares fastened to four-by-four posts. Before each round of students, a trainer goes through and staples fresh paper targets onto the plywood squares, a silhouette of a torso with a black circle in the chest area for the more nuanced shooting of the pistol and simply an outline for AK practice.

The firing range experience most emblematic of the entire training process occurred when the first class I observed had their day on the range. Like most training exercises, the students cycled through eight to ten at a time, and after they had fired all their shots, one of the trainers would go through the targets and examine how close students were with their shots, giving a checkmark to those who pass and a big X on those targets that fail to meet the given standards. After all sixteen students had cycled

through the pistol portion, only one had managed to hit the black circle in the center of the target. “No one was a success,” the trainer in charge disappointedly exclaimed as he was removing the pistol targets to be replaced by the AK targets. This group of students did better during the AK portion (possibly because of the lower threshold of only needing to hit the target, not anywhere specifically on the target), with only one student failing.

This is why this incident is a great example of the problems plaguing the training process – all students failed the pistol test, and one failed the AK test, with the rest passing but very few of them doing well. Yet there were neither the resources nor the time for correction or more instruction. Instead, immediately after finishing on the range, the students were marched back to an office building where they each signed their name to an official document verifying they had met the requirement of shooting the requisite bullets from the pistol and rifle. Only hours later, this same group of students, none of whom were able to hit a target from ten meters away with their pistol, graduated from the academy, issued weapons, and sent to join the security forces policing the major demonstrations in the city center.

### *Punishments and Military Discipline*

As discussed below, much of the training process followed a military model, with corporeal punishments for mistakes being possibly the most overt example. Many times these punishments existed only as a threat, with trainers emphasizing the importance of a point by telling students they would be punished for not learning it properly. The ultimate punishment was being forced to recomplete the entire training process, but I was never

able to find any evidence of this actually happening. Instead, there were myriad physical punishments used to instill discipline and correct student mistakes.

These punishments were definitely not doled out sparingly, especially when a new concept or skill was being learned. Usually punishment came individually, but it was not uncommon for an entire platoon to be punished for their collective mistakes or for a particularly egregious mistake by one of them. Punishments were handed out for such common mistakes as not lifting one's leg high enough while marching, to forming lines incorrectly, to using the wrong salute or saluting in the wrong order. But punishments were also handed out for the smallest of violations of standard academy protocol, such as asking an unrelated question during lecture, sitting improperly during break, or most amusingly, being punished for not completing your first punishment properly.

The punishments were incredibly varied, and given the instructors grins and sarcastic shouts of encouragement, obviously became an occasion for trainers to have some fun during long, hot, repetitive days. During some of the especially repetitive drills, instructors would sometimes have to wait for the students who were finishing up their punishments to have enough bodies to move on to the next exercise. The most common punishment was being forced to run with your AK held high above your head, either to the end of the court and back, or for more egregious cases, laps around the entire court. The ultimate mark of shame was to screw up so poorly as to be condemned to running laps for the entirety of the day, not even getting to sit during break time.

Some forms of punishment were clearly designed to be painful and demonstrate the seriousness of the punishment, such as the students order to remove their uniform and undershirt and either crawl or roll on the ground bare-chested. Some especially egregious

offenses were even met by students being forced to crawl twenty or so meters bare-chested without using the arms or hands, leaving their chest and back pretty scraped up from the asphalt course. Other serious punishments included being forced to march in a deep squat and being forced to hold a position similar to the yoga plank position until the student collapsed from the strain.

But as mentioned, punishment also had a clearly playful side. Many times students were sentenced to somersaults as punishment; other times students were instructed to complete a humorous series of calisthenics, such as one student who had to somersault, jump up and do a jumping jack, squat march for a few meters, and then repeat that process to the end of the courtyard and back. There was also a lot of playful hitting from the trainers; students who pulled the trigger on their AK could count on having their gun taken from them and being playfully bopped on the head with the rifle butt. A great example of the playful nature of the hitting was when a high-ranking Lieutenant stopped by to watch the students practice marching. Noticing one student continually marching out of order, the Lt. stopped the march and chastised the student while hitting him with his briefcase. Noticing this, a trainer at the back of the group jokingly offered to run grab a wooden baton instead to make the point more effectively.

### *Training Lectures, Rules, and Protocol for Police*

“What are police? Police are an armed force for protecting people’s rights and the human rights articles, preventing crime, enforcing laws, investigating crime, and keeping the general safety of the people, under the direction of the Ministry. This is just a reminder, because you know your duty.” So begins the lecture on “police behavior,” one

of the very few to explicitly discuss the nature and roles of Iraqi police in the philosophical sense. The lecture focuses on the morals of police, who are “dedicated to service of the community and people in an honest way, far away from personal interest.” More to the point, there are eight morals the students are told should guide all police actions. First, they should treat people with great respect. Second, police should not participate in corruption or abuse their authority. Third, police are not above the law, they must follow the same laws as everyone else. Here the instructor paused to tell the story of the Minister of Energy who ordered his guards to fire on demonstrators outside of his office and is now being brought up on charges for it. Fourth, police must be “honest, active, courageous, and brave.” Fifth, they should not differentiate between people, but instead treat everyone they encounter equally. Sixth they are to keep officers matters and affairs secret, to protect their colleagues and the rights of the accused. Seventh, police are not to participate in demonstrations or go on strike. Finally, police are never to use their rank or position for personal gain.

Although most training, in terms of both time and content, was focused on the self-presentation matters discussed above, there was some training time devoted to questions of protocol and standard procedures. Yet again, these lessons are quite emblematic of the training process as a whole. For instance, in discussing how to treat suspects and criminals, there was a lot of information on how to physically subdue and transport them, but no information on the suspect’s rights or any of the larger implication of arrest and detention.

The students are told that although in boxing or karate two people of disparate weights would never have to face on in a fight, police must be ready to subdue people of

all sizes and shapes. It is emphasized that police must be forceful and completely in control in all interactions. When practicing arresting and handcuffing suspects, the trainer explains students are not to “walk them like your sweetheart,” but to instead to tightly grasp their wrists and either walk them backwards or walk them forward bent over at the waist (again, so they can not memorize your face). During practice, many students were reprimanded for being too polite with the suspects, for “there is no need to plead with him” as they should be doing what you tell them. A student who accidentally uttered “please” while giving commands during an arrest is promptly reprimanded and punished.

This is a prime example of what will be discussed much more in-depth in the following chapter; namely, an emphasis on the physical characteristics desired of police over all other applicable qualities (e.g. interpersonal communication skills, conflict management, etc.). Similar to American police training, in which “technical subjects are emphasized over basic principles of law, democracy, and human relations” (Goldstein 1990), this focus on the physical requirements and aspects of the job sends a clear message of what is considered “real” policing (Kraska and Kappeler 1997) and serves to marginalize the myriad other activities police will be called on to perform.

There were also some lessons on the rules for and duties of police, but these were similarly presented in a context-free and largely perfunctory manner. For example, during one lecture (read directly from a training manual), the students were told the duties of police as defined by the Ministry of the Interior. These duties are (in order): working for national security, working for the law above all else, and knowing your role (e.g. traffic police should know all applicable traffic laws, etc.). Or in another lecture, students are told the three rules of policing are to always be ready for an emergency, to hasten to the



scene of a crime, and to react quickly to any situation that presents itself. While both of these are fine guidelines for behavior, they were both simply listed during a lecture, with no further discussion or even examples to elucidate what these vague guidelines mean for actual day-to-day police work.

All other discussions of practical policing matters were similarly sparse. These lessons usually only took a day or two of training time, and were often just read directly from a training manual. For instance, of that which I would define as practical policing matters, fingerprinting easily got the most devoted time. Yet this lecture (lasting about fifteen minutes) consisted only of a short history on why branding criminals gave way to photographing them which gave way to fingerprinting as a mean of identification. This is followed by an explanation of how to fingerprint someone (with no demonstration), and that is the extent of the students' training on fingerprinting. This same lecture also featured a discussion of types of evidence, both material and abstract, that was similarly brief and inconsequential. The instructor asked the students what kinds of evidence there are and together they compiled a long list of the various types of evidence. This was followed by a short discussion of where one can find DNA evidence and to be careful while collecting it. Finally, there was a brief explanation of the growing impact of internet crimes, but it was clear this subject is left for a more specialized course.

In these training lectures and discussions of standard operating procedure, we once again see a classic dilemma of the policing world drawn into especially sharp relief. After American training, police generally find little of what they were taught seems to apply to the situations they confront, and that they are often without guidance in deciding what to do in any given situation. In fact, scholars have argued that many training

programs “not only fail to supply the [proper] orientation, they actually deceive the recruit by providing an inaccurate picture of what he can expect on the job” (Goldstein 1990: 279). Yet one could argue in the American context there are certain informal guidelines for young officers fresh out of training; a strong subculture to provide an identity and world view, departmental behavior norms, a rich and detailed (albeit largely inaccurate) mythology of who police are and what they are to do, etc. However, when establishing a new force with still-emerging subculture and a corrupt and repressive history providing little guidance for contemporary actions, such deception of recruits becomes significantly more disruptive and counter-productive. By ignoring the material reality these recruits will face in favor of largely empty rhetoric, Iraqi recruits end up especially unprepared for their future work. And while this is obviously a problem in and of itself, combined with the currently highly-unstable situation and rampant corruption, this lack of preparation becomes especially disconcerting.

### **Failing to Rationalize, Failing to Gain Legitimacy**

#### *Leaving the Academy Unprepared For The Job*

Simply put, the training process as it exists leaves recruits woefully unprepared for policing a constitutional democracy, a fact which is not lost upon students and trainers. Training staff across the board regularly expressed frustration and exasperation with the development of students. In addition to being regularly threatened with repeating the course, students were also likely to hear at least once or twice that they would simply be expelled from the academy (although I wasn't able to find evidence of either of these ever happening).

Regardless of the threats employed (or their veracity), it is clear the training process is not establishing personnel who are likely to be successful police, setting the stage for multiple significant problems moving forward. As discussed above, if the police fail in their mission, there's really no other set of actors or agencies appropriate or able to fulfill the myriad of important functions of policing in a constitutional democracy. Furthermore, many of these failures stem from the Iraqi police being asked to not only fulfill a policing function, but to also buttress the military needs of the nation. By making policing, which in ideal circumstances is already considered a nigh-impossible task (Goldstein 1990; Skolnik and Fyfe 1993), an even more impossible task, it is perhaps not surprising the training process eschews much of the actual duties of police and instead focuses almost exclusively on a symbolic presentation of competence.

The lack of student progress was most evident in the frustrated outbursts of trainers, which were a fairly regular occurrence. Sometimes this took a more humorous bent, such as the trainer who offered to speak in Arabic instead, asking if it was the students' inability to understand Kurdish that was preventing them from receiving the lesson properly. Or on the gun range when a student was having difficulty lining up his shot and an instructor chided him by saying "tomorrow, when you face the enemy, you'll have to ask him to stop and line up for you." Possibly the most humorous incident was when a student was having trouble keeping the correct pace in marching, so a trainer pulled him aside and moved his legs for him, while shouting "Chap! Ras!" (Left! Right!) on each movement in an attempt to "teach him which leg is right and which is left."

Yet as humorous as this sometimes was, the frustration amongst trainers was plainly evident and was usually expressed in a much more direct fashion. During an

exercise on shouldering the rifle correctly that was being repeated for the third hour that day because students were having so much difficulty, one student in particular was repeatedly singled out for his inability to follow commands. The third or fourth time he was singled out, the trainer giving the lesson struck him sharply on the thigh with a baton (hard enough that the student was still wincing several hours later), saying “I swear to Allah I’ll break you leg! You’ve been getting this lesson since early morning!” A different student who was having extensive trouble breaking down and putting back together his Glock was pulled from the lesson while the trainer wearily shouted “all of Kurdistan cannot teach you this!” Even after a lesson in which the students performed competently, the instructor was quick to point out they should not be proud of themselves for doing well, as this was the third time they’ve received that lesson.

Students, however, were quick to point out many times they were being criticized for not knowing information they were never taught. These situations typically centered on a particular move, such as how to expand their standard formation for morning inspections or how to make a proper about-face. Trainers varied in their response to such student complaints; in one incident, they were told their previous trainer should apologize to them for not teaching them properly, while in another a trainer angrily told the students they should not have been so lazy and should have asked their teacher for more information, even going so far as to scold “may Allah blind you all” for their laziness.

Obviously the blame for this lack of knowledge lies somewhere in the middle of these competing claims. While students were correct in noting the insufficient instruction they received on a number of topics, few among them were particularly ideal students. During the few days in the training process that took place in the classroom and focused

on the “theoretical” aspects of policing, no students took notes of any kind. This despite the extensive amount of information written on the chalk board students were explicitly told they would be responsible for remembering.

Furthermore, there tended to be an emphasis similar to American police training on “cover your ass” (Moskos 2008) methods in place of correction or meaningful feedback, especially the further on in the course students got. For instance, during marching exercises it was not uncommon at all for the students having trouble keeping up to be told to find a place in the middle of the group so their mistakes were not so obvious. Similarly, saluting and shouldering arms motions involve a great deal of noise making (slamming the heel down at the right time, hitting the butt of the rifle loudly, shouting the proper salutation, etc.), so those who experienced difficulty with this were eventually told to avoid making any noise to hide their being so imprecise with the movements.

Beyond this, both students and trainers found much lacking in the process and the curriculum, with the biggest problem cited being a lack of time to teach all of the necessary information, forcing tough decisions about how to spend the limited training period. One of the most common complaints in this vein was the amount of time spent out on the training court instead of the classroom. A senior trainer explained that he feels most of the mistakes made are mental, and that these mental mistakes come from the students being forced to receive instruction while sitting on a concrete slab in the hot sun for several hours after they’ve already been through physical training. He further criticized the notion that during these lessons the students have to sit in proper military fashion, feeling it leads them to being so focused on sitting properly (and avoiding punishment) that they can’t pay attention. He said he has complained multiple times to

his superiors to no avail, and “this is why the students are always waiting for 12 o’clock” instead of listening to their instructors.

The lack of time was especially evident in the many instructor exhortations for students to practice these new skills at home. When learning how to properly present and shoulder arms, the students were told to practice at home over the weekend with their family’s rifle, or failing that, a broom handle. Sometimes these calls for outside study were a means for covering information there simply wasn’t time for, such as when students were told they should familiarize themselves with computers and the internet because technological crimes are likely to be the way of the future. It was a regular feature of lessons for instructors to note that each point they were discussing really needed it’s own lesson, but this quick explanation would have to suffice for now.

Beyond simple issues of time, clearly the importation of foreign training materials contributed to the difficulties in producing fully capable students. A Lieutenant explained that while he feels the American curriculum in and of itself is great, they’ve had to modify it repeatedly to be appropriate for local conditions and suitable to the culture. He further explained that because of these cultural/situational discrepancies, the information “doesn’t get transferred outside of the academy.” According to him, much of what students practice there is never actually employed by police.

This is yet another glaring example of the problems and difficulties in importing a literally foreign set of institutional directives which have little precedent in the nation and with which police have little to no experience. It also raises questions of how much this force was designed to be an organically Iraqi force tailored to the specific needs of the new federalism. Much as Erickson (1966) argues the failures of the American criminal

justice system are so fundamental as to draw the question of whether its stated aims were ever actually its functional purpose, the significant failures of US/coalition forces to adapt the training process and materials to local needs and conditions (among the many other failures regarding this incredibly central aspect of state building) forces us to consider the notion that the United States never had a fully realized democracy in mind. Rather, the many problems and inconsistencies witnessed in this study make far more sense viewed not as failures in the state-reconstruction process, but instead successes (i.e. Reinman 2007; Kuzmarov 2009) in creating a weak and dependent client state.

*General Inability or Refusal to Perform the Task At Hand*

As mentioned, policing features the lowest educational requirements and pay of any government position, and as will be discussed below, is often a job of last resort for recruits. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this leads to most students (and many trainers) treating the job as one would treat any low-paying, menial job; that is, disinterestedly putting in the minimal amount of effort required to remain employed. This is another clear indication of how the Iraqi police are failing to meet their goal of legitimacy. Not only are they failing to produce a disciplined force of well-informed and well-trained police, they are failing to instill a sense of the legitimacy of the force within much of the force itself. However, again it is important to remember this is not simply a problem of apathy or disinterest of the students, but of the training itself; indeed, it would be hard to imagine such a training process producing police sufficiently competent to operate in the best of possible circumstances, let alone an environment as challenging as contemporary Iraq.

While the aforementioned disinterested attitude manifested itself in a variety of ways, it was perhaps most evident in how students would often pay minimal attention to lessons and repeatedly make the same mistakes, even after watching their classmates get punished for the exact same behavior. Sometimes students were simply obviously not even trying to appear as if they were putting effort into their training. For instance, gun range practice took a very long time between loading the guns, having them inspected, firing the shots, having the guns inspected again, and critiquing the shots fired, leaving the bulk of students with nothing to do but lounge in the grass near the range. Ostensibly to give them something to do, students were ordered to complete a nearby, generic multi-purpose obstacle course of the kind typically associated with basic training in the armed forces – a wall to climb over, a balance beam, a rope to swing across an open pit, a rope bridge, etc. Although a few students dutifully completed the course, the majority didn't even attempt to appear as if they were trying. Instead, most simply walked around for a bit and maybe tried completing some of the easier obstacles before wandering back to sit in the field and chat with their friends.

Even seemingly very simple tasks caused a great deal of trouble for many students. Despite the great deal of time spent on marching and saluting, student movements were often very tentative and still featured many mistakes, even toward the end of the course. In one emblematic example, the director of the academy came out to the court to inspect the students at the end of the first week of learning basic salutes. Even though they were relatively simple motions, and the students had worked on nothing else that week, he was so dismayed at the lack of progress that he told them they all get zeroes for their knowledge on salutes and threatened them with repeating the course.



As discussed above, these mistakes were certainly not from a lack of practice time. What struck me the most about the repetitious practice is how little good it seemed to be doing; after three or four consecutive days of practicing parade-style left turns, for instance, most students showed no improvement, whether measured in terms of how crisp and coordinated the actions were, or in terms of how many punishments were doled out by training staff. When I first arrived in the field, I began to observe a course that was already underway, and my first day at the academy came near the end of the first week of learning basic marching patterns. Despite the fact this was the third consecutive day these students had been practicing the same simple set of motions, there were a large amount of mistakes. But even more surprising to me at the time was how easily I, as someone with only a rudimentary understanding of the language and no particular knowledge regarding marching in formation, could easily see the mistakes being made and could perform the tasks easily. At the time I thought this to be something very odd, but soon I realized it was standard operating order at the academy.

It was also quite evident that students were not particularly paying attention by how often they would make the exact mistakes their classmates had just been punished for moments earlier. Often when punishing a student, trainers would say “please learn from their mistakes” or “use your brain and learn from watching the others.” Yet such warnings clearly went unheeded. An incident from pistol training illustrates this well. Students had just been taught how to properly hold the pistol in their off hand and strongly cock it with their dominant hand. After a lengthy explanation and demonstration of how this was done, students were lined up nine at a time, with the trainer walking down the line watching each one attempt to hold and cock their gun in the proper fashion.

Despite it being a fairly simple process, multiple students in each group made the same mistake they had just seen their colleagues punished for. In several cases the trainer even stopped the exercise and explained and demonstrated the proper technique again before continuing on down the line, yet even this failed to improve most students' performance.

Not surprisingly, this lack of effort was a constant source of consternation among trainers. Sometimes this took the form of quiet exasperation, as trainers would shake their heads and share a smile over some mistakes. But just as often this lack of paying attention would provoke a strong reaction from trainers. During a training on proper greetings, one group of students was having considerable trouble and were consistently performing the motions incorrectly. Finally, after a few hours the instructor berated them, saying "You are here from 6 to 12, just like the other groups. You've gotten the same lessons and lectures. And this is a repetition of a previous lesson! It means you are absent minded!" A common invective from the trainers was to ask a student if they had been gassed, a reference to the weaponized gasses used against the Kurds by the Baath party that would lead to a lack of muscle control and an inability to concentrate, and in some cases, long-term memory loss. One student who had a particular penchant for being absent-minded and not paying attention earned the nickname "Abu Chaka," which translates literally to "Father of Mistakes."

While this lack of interest in the job (which will be discussed much more in-depth below), the minimal effort put in, and the indifferent nature with which most lessons are received are all very understandable given the circumstances, it raises some rather disturbing implications for how these police will perform outside of the academy. And while this is the case for what is taught at the academy, this paints an especially

dispiriting picture for the many skills required of police they do not learn at the academy. Put simply, if these students are uninterested in learning the relatively simple tasks asked of them at the academy, it does not bode well for the much more difficult tasks required of active duty police in a constitutional democracy.

To be fair to the students, in addition to pay scale and living conditions which would likely prompt most people not to put their everything into the training, it was not uncommon for them to receive different, sometimes contradictory, instructions from different trainers (or sometimes simply not taught something they were later expected to know). For instance, protocol on when and whether police are allowed to shoot someone. Students were told multiple times they were never allowed to shoot to kill, occasionally this would be amended to say it was ok to do so if your life is in danger. They were also told they are only allowed to shoot at people below the waist (to minimize the risk of death), but the targets on the shooting range are an outline of a torso with a target centered over the heart. Still other times they were told there is warfare on the streets and there are no rules in war, or when they're sweeping a house, they shouldn't wait to shoot anyone they happen upon, because "terrorists will take the time of a pause to attack."

Another major area of confusion centered on the treatment of suspects. At some points in time, students were told to be "hard" with suspects, to dominate them physically, to command them forcefully and be ready to back up those commands with physical force. Yet at other times students were told to be "soft" with suspects, to respect their rights and the fact they may not be criminals, and to treat them as they themselves would like to be treated. Even as someone who took copious notes during the training process, I would be hard pressed to put together a coherent summation of how students

are trained to deal with suspects. Other discrepancies in lessons were more subtle (such as which person is the point person for forming lines – usually the left-most person, but a few instructors insisted it should be the right-most), yet different enough as to make it genuinely difficult to know what the correct action is supposed to be.

Beyond the content of the lessons, there many times seemed to be a sort of general confusion about the particulars of the academy and the training process. This was especially true for smaller matters of protocol, but extended to areas that one would normally assume to be ready knowledge. On more than one instance, several trainers got into an argument with one another over whether students are required to sit or stand during the short breaks in between lessons. During the few times when lessons were taking place in classrooms, there were a number of times students had to wait for an extended period between lessons because the next instructor didn't know where the class was taking place and had to simply walk around the academy until they found a classroom full of students.

As this demonstrates, the training process itself makes for both a difficult and uninviting atmosphere in which to learn. And while this is a purely speculative point, it does stand to reason that inculcating an attitude of apathy and indifference in a large number of academy students does not bode well for future performance in actual police work. If students are either unwilling or unable to perform the relatively simplistic tasks asked of them at the academy, on what basis can we expect them to be able to handle the much more complex, chaotic, and demanding tasks required of police in a constitutional democracy? Especially when, as discussed above, what little training does get through to students is largely irrelevant to the realities of police work.

This attitude of indifference bordering on hostility toward the work of the academy and the requirements of being police more generally raises significant concerns beyond the ability of Iraqi police to render services effectively. Iraq as a nation is still a very weak federation; although Iraqis of all walks of life are likely to view themselves as Iraqis above all else (Moaddell , et. al 2008), it is far from clear this means they identify with the Iraqi *state*. In fact, much evidence suggests the contrary. The Kurdish people famously voted 99% in favor of succession in a largely symbolic vote in 2005 (Nuruzzaman 2010), and a wide variety of separatist movements are active in the South.

These general attitudes toward the Iraqi state in combination with the attitudes and conditions observed at the training academy create a situation in which there is little incentive for Iraqi police to remain on the force in the face of most any other opportunity for employment. It furthermore means police themselves don't necessarily see the state as particularly legitimate, or if they do, clearly don't see policing as a meaningful task in service of the state. This will likely lead to (and in some ways already has, cf. Moss 2006; Paley 2006) high rates of personnel turnover or desertion and a force highly vulnerable to attacks challenging either its legitimacy or capacity. This is especially concerning given that when police forces falter in legitimacy or capacity, it tends to be a strongly autocratic military force that fills the void left by the police, which is obviously poorly suited to the development of a state as a constitutional democracy (Sahin 2007).

### *The Rights of the Accused*

Between the militaristic environment and the time spent on marching, saluting, and other self-presentational matters, there was little discussion regarding how police are

to treat suspects. The staff at the academy clearly recognized the perceptual problem police currently have; during a welcome speech to the new students, the director of the academy told them it is their duty to change the culture of public mistrust of the police. And this did filter its way somewhat into the lessons, as trainers often spoke of the need to respect suspects. For example, Lt. Hawa told the students “you have no right to make accusations. You do not know for sure if there are criminals or not, we have only a lead.” Other trainers gave similar instructions, telling students “the duty of police is a holy duty” and as such they should “treat people as respectfully and peacefully as you can.”

This demand to respect suspects often came in the form of calls to act nonviolently, or at least be slow to the use of force. Students were told to keep their finger out of the trigger house when approaching a suspect, because they may not actually be a criminal and you don’t want to accidentally shoot an innocent person. Similarly, a trainer warned students they should know clearly under what terms they are approaching someone, for usually “you are going there to arrest, not kill.” During a lesson on the basic duties of police, students are told it is a “main duty not to be violent with people. We should be soft and treat them well.” There were also many mentions of the human rights articles and how respecting these articles means respecting the rights of all people and acting with restraint. However, rarely were the human rights articles ever discussed in any more depth than simply saying students should respect human rights.

This ad hoc approach to educating students on the rights of the accused is not only yet another example of the shallowness of instruction, but also a particularly concerning example of students leaving the academy at best unprepared for the job and at worst, actively misinformed about the behaviors expected of them and the working order of

Iraqi police. As the discussion of the policing of demonstrations below demonstrates, as well as the regular accusations of police brutality and misconduct can attest to, the restraint and non-violence preached at the academy is not the norm amongst police in the region (Smart 2011) or throughout the nation in general (Ackerman 2007; Moore 2006).

There is no small irony in the fact that were police to practice this restrained non-violence, it would greatly aid in their becoming a part of the public trust networks (Tilly 2004) required for modern democracies. Instead, there is a situation similar to that of American training academies, in which important issues regarding the rights of the public are disseminated in vague platitudes free of meaningful direction, which are commonly contradicted either directly in the speech of trainers, or indirectly through cavalier attitudes, working norms, etc. (cf. the work of Prokos and Padavic (2002) on how this process works regarding gender equality in American police training).

### *Anti-Corruption Demonstrations and the Security Response*

My time in Suly coincided with the wave of social unrest sweeping through the region that eventually became known as the “Arab Spring” or the “Middle East Spring.” Iraq was no exception to the spreading discontent, and cities all across the nation experienced intermittent demonstrations and anti-government activity. However, no city matched Suly in terms of size, intensity, or duration. Until the eventual brutal government crackdown that ended them for the time being, the demonstrations drew thousands of people daily for a period of three months.

The local impetus for the movement started on Thursday, the 18<sup>th</sup> of February when a small but vocal group of demonstrators marched on the local offices of the KDP

demanding increased social services and an end to the rampant political corruption of the region. As is often the case, the exact series of events that transpired varies depending on the source, but what is agreed upon is that KDP security forces opened fire (either in an attempt to disperse the crowd or with lethal intent, depending on whom you ask) with the end result being dozens wounded and between two and nine people dead, including a fifteen year-old boy who it was tragically later revealed was actually not involved in the demonstrations, but on his way to the Asia Cell store to have his phone fixed.

After news of this incident spread, a major demonstration was organized for Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup>, as local residents demanded an apology and criminal sanctions for whomever was responsible for the order to fire, as well as a renewed call for an end to corruption. After these demonstrations were again met with gunfire, the movement grew dramatically. Coincidentally, anti-corruption activists in the South had already been organizing a national “Day of Rage” similar to those in Egypt and Syria for the Friday of the following week (February 26<sup>th</sup>), hoping to spark the same type of mass movements gripping those and other nations.

Although occasionally featuring marches, the demonstrations largely took place in the center square of the market, a place both physically and symbolically in the middle of the city. Following the example of Egypt and elsewhere, the center square was quickly rechristened Azadi (“Freedom”) square by demonstrators. The demonstrators themselves were unarmed and peaceful throughout the period of unrest, and represented a wide swath of local society. Indicating their support for the reforms called for by demonstrators, students at the local university initially held their own solidarity demonstrations, and then later announced a boycott of afternoon classes so that students could attend the daily



speeches. The speeches typically started after the mid-day prayers and would often last until sundown. As an indication of the historical importance of these demonstrations, multiple prominent artists and scholars who had been living abroad for years came back to support the cause and were often featured speakers.

Although the demonstrations were largely fueled by the initial violence they encountered, for great stretches of time there was little violence or unrest. However, these peaceful periods were tempered with a massive security presence and a few stretches of intensely repressive violence, particularly at the very beginning and then during the intense crackdown that finally ended the demonstrations. From the beginning, protestors were met by an enormous security presence, consisting of local and national police, Asayish, military, peshmerga, and private security forces of the two major local political parties. All of the roads leading to Azadi square and much of the surrounding area were blocked off by police and military vehicles for the duration of the demonstrations. In the first week of demonstrations, the KRG government declared the first curfew since the time of Saddam (Asaad 2011).

This serves as a prime example of the context in which Iraqi police are operating. Not only do the police not yet have a monopoly on the legitimate use of force in domestic affairs, situations like this vividly demonstrate exactly how far from that ideal they are. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the multitude of roles police play in such a situation, ranging from communication to conflict resolution to crowd control, are roles that only police are and should be fully capable of fulfilling in a legitimate constitutional democracy. All the other actors and agencies listed above have neither the institutional capacity nor mandate to act in accordance with established law and precedent. The fact

that such an event like this is clearly not considered the sole province of police shows how little capacity and legitimacy they currently possess. Until the police have the public legitimacy and institutional capacity to handle such large public order events, it is quite likely the well-documented civil, political, and human rights abuses of security forces during this demonstration will continue to be the norm.

The first few weeks of the demonstrations featured regular clashes with security forces and left hundreds injured and at least ten dead. Security forces regularly opened fire on demonstrators during this period, and the area of Azadi square behind the speaker's platform became a sort of triage center, as injured demonstrators were rushed there to be treated free from interference by security forces. The levels of violence used are especially notable not only as violations of international human rights law, but also because such tactics are not legal according to Iraqi law, either. At the academy, the demonstrations came up during a question and answer session, with most of the questions centering on whether the response from security forces was proper. According to the trainers, not only should police have acted with more restraint, it was illegal for security forces to be using slingshots and marbles on the demonstrators, and that shooting at them with guns is completely forbidden. The students were urged to show much more restraint should they be in that position, even if they are yelled at or pelted with rocks.

The early days of the demonstrations were also marked by a great deal of confusion and questionable events, such as a loud explosion that took place near the speaker's platform the first week. Security forces claimed it was a faulty generator that had exploded, while demonstrators claimed to have seen concussion grenades deployed by police. However, the incredibly thin presence of international and non-state controlled

media makes it difficult to know what exactly happened in such situations. The fear that the situation could quickly turn far more violent led to most all international staff of NGOs being evacuated from the region, many of whom did not return until months later after the demonstrations were finally quelled.

After the initial flurry, things calmed down considerably for an extended period. For the most part, the demonstrations were free from violence and tension as security forces and demonstrators reached a tenuous peace agreement and political leaders convened conferences attempting to address concerns of social services and corruption (Kurd Net-a 2011). Even though expressions of violence were very rare during this middle period, the presence of security forces was readily evident, as they nearly always ringed Azadi square and snipers were usually visible on the taller buildings in the market.

Eventually, for a variety of reasons still being debated, the KRG decided to end the demonstrations. It began with a proclamation criminalizing all unlicensed demonstrations (Hardi 2011), and was quickly followed by a massive increase in security forces. Local television reports put the number of security forces at 10,000, and while there is no way to verify this number, there were so many security personnel on the streets that they ran out of proper equipment, forcing many to be armed with lengths of PVC pipe for batons and slingshots with marbles (as opposed to the rubber-bullet firing guns many security forces had). It's also important to note none of the security forces had any identifying information on them, and many had their faces covered with balaclavas, making the inappropriate levels of force I witnessed almost inevitable. Additionally, the checkpoints surrounding Suly were refusing to allow anyone who did not live in the city to enter, and several military camps were established just outside the city limits.

An incident I observed at the academy serves as a good illustration of both the numbers of security forces deployed, as well as the cavalier attitude many of them seemed to have toward the demonstrators. As I arrived at the academy one morning in late April, most of the training staff were being loaded onto a large, tour bus type vehicle and seemed to be having quite a good time – smiling, laughing, waving farewell to each other, etc. Thinking they were heading somewhere fun, I asked the first Lt. I came across what the occasion was, and he replied with a laugh “Oh, we’re going to the bazaar to crack some heads and then we’ll be back.”

While this is but one of many such examples of training rhetoric not being reflected in reality, it is perhaps the most glaring. It has long been documented that police training in America features a hidden curriculum that teaches recruits to ignore and even reject the high-minded principles of rights and liberties espoused in the official curriculum (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993; Goldstein 1990). This is a powerful example of how that same process is operating in Iraqi police training. As will be discussed in the next chapter, most police identify restraint and non-violent approaches to crime control and order maintenance as the key to gaining legitimacy with the public. However, occasions such as the violent repression of the demonstrations and the cavalier attitude of many of their superiors toward this violence sends a clear message to recruits that this adherence to non-violence is, for the most part, empty rhetoric. Thus, it appears Iraqi police training is well on its way to joining its American counterpart in producing a strong sense of cynical anomie on the force, essentially teaching academy students to reject official institutional doctrines regarding appropriate use of force and the rights of the accused.

Heavy-handed tactics such as those used at the demonstrations, not only danger the legitimacy of official police doctrines, but also threaten the legitimacy of police with the public. Even though the public may not be aware that the actions of police and other security forces were illegal under both international and Iraqi law, it is clear much of the public felt the actions to be completely inappropriate and guided by political, not legal, concerns (Zulal 2011). This is especially important for the prospects of legitimacy for the force, as Gramsci reminds us “lapses in the administration of justice make an especially disastrous effect on the public: the hegemonic apparatus is more sensitive in this area, to which arbitrary actions on the part of the police” are especially notable (1971: 246).

Ending the demonstrations initially took the form of banning sleeping in Azadi square (dozens of demonstrators had been camping there to keep a continual presence), which turned into a ban on being there after sundown. Every night at dusk, scores of military trucks loaded with roughly a dozen security personnel each would come streaming into the market and anyone unlucky or unwise enough to have not vacated the area could expect arrest, beatings, or both. This gradually became a ban on any form of gathering at the square after security forces were able to finally clear the square of demonstrators completely. After this point, it actually looked like the security forces themselves were demonstrating, as the thousands of demonstrators in the square were replaced by hundreds of heavily armed security personnel physically occupying all available space in the square. By this point, any group of men teenaged or older that wandered too close to the square could expect a forceful reaction from the security forces; dozens of men claiming they were only in the market to shop were beaten and

arrested. By this point in time the various leaders of the demonstrations had either fled the region or were staying in a constantly rotating set of houses out of fear for their lives.

While such a heavily militarized crackdown is saddening, it is unfortunately not very surprising given the conditions in which the Iraqi police have been developing. Although the historical separation of the police and military took place largely to avoid such outcomes, the reconstruction of the Iraqi force has very much ignored those lessons of the past. As Kraska and Paulsen (1997) have demonstrated, the increasing militarization of the American police has led to a more violent and repressive force. As such, when the Department of Defense institutes a highly-militarized training program in Iraq, it's almost inevitable the police will act in such a manner. Indeed, it seems unlikely a force designed in such a manner is capable of any other response.

One of the most notable aspects of the government response to the demonstrations is the deal brokered between Massoud Barzani, the president of the KRG, and the Government of Iraq (GOI). In order to quell the dissent, Barzani is accused of trading political favors for more military and police to bolster numbers (Kurd Net-e 2011). This is important not only as a demonstration of the massive security response to the demonstrations, but also because of the rocky history between the Kurds and the rest of Iraq. This was the first time GOI troops and police were ever invited into the KRG, and was seen as incredibly insulting to most Kurds who view the non-interference of the GOI as one of the most tangible benefits of the occupation. This and other such moves to so violently put down the demonstrations drew widespread criticism both within Iraq and from international media and human rights organizations (Smart 2011).

### *Gender and the Training Process*

Similar to the American police training process (Wozniak 2005; Prokos and Padavic 2002), gendered understandings of who is fit for police work and the denigration of women were a regular feature of the courses I observed. Often this came in the form of gender-coded language imploring students to be “hard” instead of “soft” and exhortations to strength and the use of force. In discussing pat downs of suspects, a trainer explained “police are fully authorized to check him and they should not be soft with the suspect, they should be hard.” This necessity to be “hard” with suspects was reinforced in every aspect of the student’s comportment; students were punished for not stomping their foot hard enough while saluting or for not shouting orders with sufficient “anger.” Some forms of saluting required the students to hit the butt of their rifle, and they were told anyone who could hit it hard enough to break the gun would be rewarded. Trainers often cited their own ability to break the rifle to imply students were not trying hard enough.

There was also a great emphasis placed on physical dominance of suspects. In addition to the many exhortations to develop their strength and fitness, it was constantly emphasized to students they must be able to be physically in charge of any situation they encounter. Police, students were told, need “to be strong, from smallest to largest” so that they “will not be abused or laid down by anyone.” When being taught various methods of empty-handed combat, the students were told that while they will have guns, it’s important they learn to “use their strength to control a suspect, not their gun.”

Sometimes the gendered message of who police are and how they should act was sent through models of how *not* to act. This most often came in the form of adopting a mocking, effeminate posture while performing the tasks being taught, played up to to

elicit laughter. During a lesson on forming lines for marching, the instructor admonishes the students saying, “don’t do this action like ladies!” while adopting a swishing gait and mockingly marching back and forth in a crude homophobic caricature. Another trainer later in the same lesson told the students to be forceful in their movements and again mockingly demonstrated the wrong way to do so with limp wrists and lilted movements.

Occasionally this sexism was simply overt statements about the abilities of women, or at best thinly-veiled androcentric comments about police work behavior. One common example of the androcentrism of trainers came in the many examples explained by reference to ogling or sexually pursuing women. In being taught how to check oneself against the rest of the people in line with them in formation, students were told to do so surreptitiously, “like when you look at a beautiful girl with only your eyes instead of turning your head.” Or sometimes the sexist assumptions of police were simply explicit, such as the reply of a director of a local police station when I asked if any women worked in the station’s specialized crimes against women office, who laughed and said “women are not able to do the work” because policing is a field “specialized for men.”

Yet the role of gender at the academy is more complicated than simple sexist exclusion or derisive language. Although there is not nearly enough space here for a detailed account of gender relations in modern Iraq, suffice it to say it is a much more egalitarian nation than the stereotype of Middle East gender relations would have it (Femia 1985). As a political strategy, Saddam often pushed for an expanded role for women in the public sphere (largely to temper Islamacist influence), and women achieved prominent positions in many fields. Although the situation has deteriorated as the rule of Saddam has been replaced by the anarchy of competing powers, many of



whom espouse a strict patriarchal world view, there are still a great deal of women in positions of power, even within the hegemonically masculine world of policing.

Despite the oft sexist nature of the training process, this fact was not lost on instructors. During a lesson on greetings, the students were directly told they have to greet women just as they would greet men, and “if a woman outranks you, she can punish you for not greeting her correctly.” Although to my knowledge there were no women working at the academy, in the local police offices I visited there were plenty of women working alongside men. Yet this somewhat rosy picture is tempered by the fact that women are restricted almost exclusively to office work (as opposed to patrol service), if not in law, at least in practice.

And women did, indeed, train at the academy, but were often physically separated from the male students. When there were female students at the academy, they went through most of the same lessons as male students, but were in a group of their own, a hundred or so feet from everyone else at the far end of the court. Yet even when the separation was not literal, it was made clear they were a different class of police through the differential treatment they received. For instance, female students were punished, but never to the same extent as the men. I never once witnessed a female student being yelled at, and when they were punished, it was only with running short distances, never any of the physically demanding and humiliating punishments male students received. During break times while male students had to sit on the ground in the sun in military style, the female students were often excused to go sit inside one of the air conditioned offices while waiting for the next lesson to begin.

The clearly different expectations for female students also served as an obvious reminder they were not considered full members of the course on par with their male compatriots. While male students were punished harshly for failing to perform adequately during class, female students were often allowed to opt out of lessons as they saw fit. When I asked a trainer why the women weren't required to do all of the same things as men, he told me that female students are allowed to sit out certain lessons because they may be too embarrassed to do them, or that they simply don't need to know how to do it because they're only going to be working in the office anyway. However, this is an unsatisfying explanation both because it does nothing to explain why embarrassment is only a problem for women as well as the fact that a fair number of the men were destined for office work as well.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### HOW IRAQI POLICE VIEW THEMSELVES AND THEIR JOB

#### **Introduction**

Of all that is missing in discussions of the Iraqi state and the reconstruction of its police, perhaps the most glaring omission is that of Iraqis themselves. Although there has been a significant amount of scholarly and journalistic accounts of the invasion and reconstruction, very few include the voices and perspectives of Iraqis. The small body of literature concerning the police reconstruction process especially suffers from this lacuna, with some analysts going so far as to call it “impossible” to include actual observations of and discussions with Iraqi police trainers and recruits (Bayley and Perito 2010).

This chapter demonstrates it is not only feasible to seek the perspectives of Iraqi police, but scientifically enriching to do so. This chapter is centered on how students and trainers view themselves, their duties and obligations as police, and the public they are charged with protecting and serving. The chapter begins with police identifying those qualities they feel police must display, as well as their views on crime control and human and civil rights. This is followed by a discussion of how reality largely fails to live up to these ideals of policing, as well as tackling the difficult question of how the police see themselves in relation to the federal Iraqi state. Following this, respondents are allowed the space to discuss the most significant problems they feel police face, their views on corruption, and what they would personally like to see change in the training process. Finally, the chapter closes with police explaining what they see to be their most important duties, and the rhetoric and tactics they employ to garner the legitimacy of the public.

## **Police Perspectives on the Police**

### *Coming Together, Working Together*

Despite the general assumption of Iraq as a sectarian collection of clashing ethnicities, consistent with Moadell et. al's (2008) work, the vast majority of trainers and students I spoke with accepted, and often embraced, racial and ethnic diversity on the force. Most responses centered on the mundane normality of diversity, seeing it as an obvious necessity in a diverse nation. Hawa is a good representation of this attitude. When asked if police should strive for racial, ethnic, and/or religious diversity, he replied "It's to be normal. There are many Assyrians that are police and there are many Christian people who are police. It's not a condition that 'he's not a Muslim so he has no right to be police.'" Other answers were even more to the point, such as Firas who called diversity "a normal situation, nothing will effect police duties," or Biwar who simply said "it is normal to have many different people to cooperate and work together here."

Many pointed to the diversity they had experienced, either in their home offices or at the academy. Ramyar used the diversity around him to show how uneventful it is, noting "there is not any obstacle in front of that [diversity]. Here we have got many Arab, many Azydian, many Christian officers." Perhaps Nwenar put this perspective best in saying "it will be easy for police to have different religions and ethnicities. My officer here is Azydian and I have a friend in the financial department who is Shi'i. There is no difference, and if they have a different religion or ethnicity, it will not affect our duty. The most important thing here is to work together and make our country develop."

This last reason, duty and cooperation above concerns of race or religion, was the most commonly cited explanation for why diversity is neither a problem nor a concern for police. For example, Mohammed notes "there is no need to worry about it [diversity].

The most important and significant point is for them to devote their life and their duties to fulfill them correctly and regularly in their office.” Or as Ali explains, laws apply to all people, so they can be enforced by anyone; “it’s not important at all to care about the religion of a person, the sect of a person. To say he is Christian, he is Jewish, he is Muslim, he is Shi’i or he is Sunni. A good example again, I have to refer to the checkpoint. When I am police at the checkpoint, when a Christian or a Muslim or any person is coming, I’m not asking for their ethnicity, I am just saying ‘give me your identity.’ What is important here is to be loyal, to be loyal to your work.”

Surprisingly, a significant number of interview respondents openly wished for *more* diversity amongst police. Faizel notes that even with potential drawbacks, diversity is good for the force, saying “it’s good to have in the police field many religions and ethnicities. Here, I myself have worked with Azydians and Americans. But it depends on that person. If he is too insistent on his religion or he wants to exploits things for his desires and his ethnicity, maybe at that time it will be a problem for us. But if he is educated and a good man, then it is no problem if he is an Arab, a Kurd, an American...” Others went even further in their desire for diversity. Nazdar notes he would work with all sorts of people, and “would like to stay with them in order to understand from them what are their beliefs, what is their thinking, what is in their mind. So I understand their mind gradually and later on, if I understand all of his ideas and beliefs, I can practice and teach those ones who are Jews, Christians, and I can teach them by their beliefs and ideas.” Berham, one of the longest-tenured trainers, went so far as to argue there are so many problems with a lack of diversity that it’s a necessity simply to be able to do their work properly. According to him, “unless we are going to mix with other religions and

ethnicities, we will not get more information and become better. . . . Just by looking at those coming from another religion, you will learn so many things. So maybe by living with him or her, you are going to get more information. Even with different ethnicities. We can exchange our ideas and our notions, and maybe it will be better for us.”

Only a small handful of police at the academy viewed diversity as problematic in any way, and even then, only one based his resistance to diversity on the racial animus so many attribute to the nation. A few framed it as a way to increase solidarity and cooperation, such as Sirwan who argued diversity itself is not a problem, “but I would prefer that more police would be Muslim, in order to train together and stay together.” Others felt there is a need for police to reflect local populations; Kamaran feels “as a Kurd, maybe most of us or all of us being Kurd would be better than if many Arabs came here. But in disputed areas like Kirkuk or some areas there are many religions and ethnicities working together, so it won’t be a problem for them.” Lawk echoes this sentiment, saying “in some areas, the majority of people, even 100% of the people there are Muslim. If you bring a Christian police to them, it’s something they may stand against.”

While it is indeed heartening to hear so many police speak favorably of racial, ethnic, and religious diversity on the force, more so than any other question, this one seems likely to be an instance of respondents saying what they assume I want to hear rather than their actual perspectives on diversity. It is important to remember that the Kurds voted 99% in favor of succession (Nuruzzman 2010) and that the 2005 national election failed to achieve broad support, largely due to polarized sectarian politics (Khalizad 2010). More to this point, it was not uncommon to hear recruits and trainers

alike disparage Arabs in various ways, whether it be considering them a more violent and less scrupulous people, or in confirming that coalition forces were right to view Arab recruits with suspicion. Rather than being a positive sign of inclusion, there is ample evidence to suggest this may, similar to the stated views on human rights and the rights of demonstrators, be another example of symbolic rhetoric aimed at public legitimacy failing to be translated into actual practice.

### *Who Shouldn't Join the Police*

I was very interested in what, if anything, disqualifies one from joining the police. But beyond official guidelines, I wanted to build a typography of whom trainers and students thought would be well suited for police work, contrasted with those they would not want to join. By focusing on those qualities they think a potential officer should *not* have, I was better able to move beyond generic platitudes of the type of person a police officer should be, and get more into details of the qualities they think are essential. Taken together, the answers paint a problematic picture comparable to that of the training schedule, as trainers and recruits alike put a premium on the physical ability to dominate suspects and on the moral fiber of potential police, while remaining conspicuously silent on the many other qualities necessary for competent, democratic police work.

By far the most common response regarding what makes one unfit for police service centered around the moral standing of the individual. Sirwan offers a representative response in arguing one is not qualified if they are “without good morals. They are not fit to be police. The police should have good morals, because police are working in so many different offices and so many people will go to those offices. So

people should have good morals and treat people well.” What constitutes good morals differed among respondents, but most based their judgment on reputation or criminal history. Hardi gives a few examples of those morally unfit for policing, such as “those who are always fighting, maybe they will have a bad reputation among people. And those who are having bad friends. And those who are always standing in front of the cinemas or something like that. Those who are always falling in love in a silly way.” Dukon goes so far as to argue “the most important point is they should not have a bad reputation.”

Hawler simply states “criminals and thieves should not join the police,” while Zara extends this argument a bit further, focusing on things that may indicate past criminality. He believes anyone with a tattoo on their face should not be allowed to join the police because “maybe they have done that in the prison or the jail, so those kind of people, it will not be possible to police. Maybe those have been imprisoned before, so they might have a bad reputation.” The other moral failing most often cited was sympathizing with extremists or a lack of patriotism, such as Jalal who feels police should turn down “those who do not agree with our country and those who do not agree with our parties and our government.”

Closely following moral defects in terms of number of times mentioned, physical imperfections, even seemingly minor ones, were also a major source of concern regarding potential recruits. Hawa explains police “should not be handicapped. If he’s the best boxer in the world, but he only has one finger, he should not be accepted to be police. He has no right to become police.” Other various physical problems held up as disqualifying conditions include being blind, being deaf, missing any limbs, or not being big enough to physically control another person. Many answers also centered on mental illness or



disabilities as a major disqualifier for police; Mahmoud explains “if he or she has a short cut in their body, or with mental disease [they are] not allowed to be police. He or she should be perfect...if he is too old, maybe he will not be allowed to be police here.”

### *Who Should Join the Police?*

While often the answer given as to who *should* join the police was simply the inverse of those disqualifying conditions, the specific attributes desired do paint a fuller picture of what recruits and trainers feel are the most important attributes for Iraqi police. Indeed, it turns out when asked the question in the positive sense the answers took on a very different tenor than when asked in the negative. Although high moral standing was still a common answer, when discussing the qualities police should have, the answers centered much more on the importance of being well-educated and physically strong.

In terms of education, two things were made abundantly clear – that students and trainers alike believe police should have high levels of education, but that regrettably this was far from the case in practice. Some answers focused on the rather mundane aspects of education (e.g. police should be literate, open-minded, etc.), but most respondents spoke in very loft terms about the education police should have. For example, Ali makes the case police “must be very clever, must be prepared for everything. He’s completely different from normal people, because, for example, when he’s in the checkpoint he’s going to meet people who are mad, people who are clever, who are lazy, rich people, poor people...therefore he has to have a good behavior with all of these sorts of people.” Anwar agrees, saying police “should have a good education, because – and I will not hide with you – here in our system there are so many wrongs in it, in establishing police,

because they are going to establish someone who is uneducated, so maybe that person will not treat people perfectly, like the educated person.” Jalal explains that police should have “a good level of education and literacy. That’s not the case 100%” Berham went even further, lamenting the fact that “here, those who are not having a good literacy or education are becoming police. And vice-versa in other countries. There, those who have a good qualification can become police. For example, if you look at traffic police, he’s going to ask you for your license in such a way that you are going to want to kick him or hit him because he has no [education].”

Closely following this desire for higher education requirements, respondents also expressed a strong preference for physically gifted candidates. A typical comment, this from Kamaran although numerous other used nearly the exact same phrase, holds that any potential police recruit “in terms of his or her body, they should be perfect, and not mentally ill or sick.” Hiwa extends this demand for perfection, arguing “that person who wants to be police should be complete and perfect in every aspect of his life, even his body.” Beyond generic calls for physical perfection, many respondents had much more specific bodily demands from recruits. Harman insists for every recruit “the width of their breast should be eighty centimeters.” Hardi believes that in order for police to “complete all the lessons and all the training that is taught here” they should “be young, not old, not older than [having been born in] 1980.” Majid shared this ideal of youth, but went even further, arguing new police should be selected from those “who have not gotten married so far. Those are better than the others, those who are single, without babies and families, so they will pay attention while they are training.”

Although the moral fiber of the recruits did not factor nearly as much into the responses regarding who should join the police, there were still plenty who indicated a concern with the moral standing of recruits. This attention to morals came in a variety of concerns; Bedad expressed it as “those who are looking at or watching people equally, not differentiating among the people.” Others took a more quantifiable approach to morals, such as Kemman, who holds that recruits “should not be arrested before for any type of crime, especially killing, stealing, or moral crimes.” Others still looked at morals in terms of the wide-spread corruption affecting the nation, making sure to point out, as Rizgar did, that police “should not use their rank for their own interest.”

These qualities viewed as most desirous for police recruits speak volumes to the message police personnel are receiving regarding their role and the functions they are asked to fulfill. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these ideals are quite similar to those favored in American police, where personnel are recruited and trained around a myth of police as solely dedicated to crime-fighting, while steadfastly ignoring the other aspects of the job that make up the bulk of police work. As Goldstein (1990) argues, police should be properly viewed as “an agency of municipal government housing a variety of functions” (33), and any sort of meaningful democratic reform will be impossible until the multiple objectives of police are openly recognized and accepted. Such problems are exacerbated by the militarized model of police training employed in Iraq, as the military model notoriously neglects the social, political, and economic dimensions of both crime-fighting and police work in general (De Daniell 2011; Kraska and Kappeler 1997).

These desired recruit qualities further speak to the powerfully originaive role police play (and will continue to play) in the shaping of this young democratic state. As

Garland (1990) argues, it is not criminal conduct that determines penal policy, but instead how “the crime problem” is perceived by those in power, and these decisions about responses to the crime problem “express a definite sense of how social relations are (and should be) constituted in that particular society” (273). As such, while one could envision a wide range of functions and duties for police in a young democracy, or even more simply a wider range of criminal activities for the police to concern themselves with, the police are instead being molded into a “carnival mirror” (Reiman 2007) view of crime, in which the behaviors of the poor and working class come under intense scrutiny of the police, while the criminality of the wealthy and powerful (such as the rampant corruption discussed below) are met with only token attention, if even that.

#### *Who Does Join the Police*

While interview respondents gave a very clear picture of whom they would *like* to join the force, it was again very clear that few recruits (or trainers) met these exacting standards. Once again, many respondents complained of two things lowering the overall qualification levels of the police; the first being persons who have joined the police for the wrong reasons, but the second, and much more common complaint, was those without sufficient education. As Soran summed it up “there is no difference between the one who has a bachelor degree, even if you have no degree you can work here.”

When Chamal was asked about the biggest problems facing police, he immediately answered that it is the low level of education. When pressed on this and asked if he felt most police were not of a sufficient education level, he replied “yes, unfortunately. Alas.” Later in the interview he was asked if students ever fail the training

process, and he noted with some resignation “no one has failed here, but most of them will not understand or be learned.” Anwar similarly lamented the lack of education amongst Iraqi police, explaining “I will not hide with you, here in our system there are some many wrongs in establishing police, because they are going to establish someone who is uneducated.” When asked about whether he felt there was a need for more police in the region, Nwenar felt there to be a quality and not quantity problem, arguing that increasing the numbers of police “may not be logical in some situations. Make them educated, make them learn every rule of every human rights article... For example, to send ten police to arrest one criminal or one person, if they are not fully educated and not aware of the human rights articles, they are going to curse them or all of them are going to shoot him or do something like that.”

Many also identified people who do not truly want to be police as another major problem. When asked why a student might fail, Lawk argued it is only those who don't want to be police who fail, noting “they are unwillingly coming, that's why they fail.” Answering the same question, Birhat simply responded “maybe he was sent by someone else in authority.” Nazdar argued it was not being forced into policing that accounts for the low levels of qualifications, but instead “the laziness of our individuals, as Kurds” that causes young men to seek out policing as a relatively easy paycheck.

While it is obvious much of the problem with the attracting qualified recruits stems from the practical limitations imposed by the budgetary issues discussed above, it nonetheless remains a significant problem. The case of police reconstruction in Bosnia/Herzegovina (B/H) provides a powerful example of the perils of attempting to build a democratic force with unqualified personnel. In B/H, the international coalition

provided exponentially more advisors and training personnel (numbered in the thousands, compared to a few hundred in Iraq) for a nation much smaller than Iraq, both geographically and population-wise. Additionally, there was a rigorous three-stage screening process for recruits, something barely even attempted with Iraqi police. And yet, after a decade of reconstruction work, the police in B/H required a top-to-bottom democratic overhaul (Wisler 2007). Similarly, the reconstructed police force in Timor-Leste eventually disintegrated due to “inefficiencies in implementing externally-driven democratization programs” (Sahin 2007).

This again speaks to the inability of American/coalition forces to heed the widely-available lessons of past reconstruction efforts, as well as forcing the question of whether this is truly a project of democratic state-building or an attempt to build a dependent client state. As discussed, the paramount finding of previous reconstruction efforts is the absolute need of qualified, well-trained personnel, as without them the entire project is almost sure to fail. Yet in Iraq there have been at best only token efforts toward recruiting high-quality applicants. And whereas a well-functioning democracy requires a capable and disciplined police force, a client state requires only that a force be able to quell domestic unrest. These extremely low personnel standards, combined with the highly militarized training process, certainly point to a force far more qualified for the latter.

### *Perspectives on Crime Control and Reform*

Although what happens to criminal suspects after they are arrested is by definition out of the hands of police, their views on punishment and reform are still quite important, both because of their status as a powerful interest group within the criminal justice

system, and because one can assume the view of police on what should happen to someone after they are arrested likely influence their behavior with and toward suspects. As such, it serves as a good proxy for understanding views and attitudes toward criminal suspects and by centering the analysis on the actions they feel others should take (rather than actions they themselves have or may in the future take), it increases the likelihood of an honest response rather than a self-aggrandizing response.

A handful of respondents favored a retributive approach, like Shar who favors harsh punishments because “it should appear to others as ‘Why did he do that crime? For the sake of what?’” Others saw punishment as a form of reformation, like Rajan, who argued “punishment is preferred because it will be a lesson to the criminal.” Several argued that the two are inextricably linked, like Karzan who explained “in our prisons, we have reform for [criminals], and they are going to reform the prisoners.” Hawa agrees, noting “jail is a kind of reform for them...when you are going to jail or imprison someone, it’s not punishment, it’s a kind of reform.”

Roughly the same number of respondents took an opposing view, strongly preferring reform and rehabilitative projects to simple punishment. Several pointed to a sort of vicious cycle that can develop from punitive response, like Dilsad who hypothesized “reform will be more useful than punishment, because if you are going to punish a criminal then maybe he hates more and more and later on he increases hatred toward our society and later on when you release him and his sentenced is finished, he will do whatever he has done before.” Several others spoke to possible mitigating factors that push them to favor rehabilitation programs, such as Mohammed who argued “many

people who commit crimes are mentally ill. So maybe he doesn't have a target in committing a crime, but his psychological illness causes him to commit the crime.”

But the majority of respondents favored an approach that mixes both the rehabilitative and retributive aspects of the criminal justice system, or that would use punishment only after reform efforts have failed. Mahmoud argues both are necessary, saying people should be punished “just to know the punishment. After punishment, he or she should be reformed. Reform is more significant than punishment.” Several others argued the temporal opposite, like Koren who envisions a system in which reform efforts are the first step, but “if he ihe listens to you but he will not practice what you tell him, later on you can punish him so he does not repeat his bad works or crime.”

Many who argued for both reform and retribution called for increased vocational training in prisons. Birhat argues that people should be punished with imprisonment, but “the government should provide prisoners with, for example, teaching them some jobs like mechanics or something else and make him educated. Give the person an opportunity so when he is released back in society by virtue of what he has learned in prison.” This viewpoint was best summed up by Faizel, who noted “reform is the most important” because people still have things to offer society, saying one should not “sentence him forever, because if he has been mended or has been reformed. If he has been sentenced forever, maybe you can get no benefit from him.”

### *Is There Anyone Who Does Not Deserve the Protection of Police?*

In another somewhat surprising finding, very few respondents felt there were any people who were not deserving of police protection, regardless of race, religion, or place



of origin. In fact, most were quick to disagree with the idea there might be anyone so undeserving, with answers ranging from impersonal and institutional (the law applies equally to everyone) to impassioned and historical (we fought for rights for all). Sirwan offers a typical response in simply responding “According to law, no, never. There are no rules for that and nothing about police should not protect this person or that person.”

Many spoke of the shared humanity of all as the reason police protection extends to everyone. Jalal argues “police should protect and keep everyone’s rights, even the criminal. Even those who are doing something appalling, police should keep his or her rights. According to the law, police should treat the criminals as he treats the police.” Soran agrees “there are no people police should not protect. Because even some people have illegal demands, or his demand is not proper and will not be good, but despite of that police will protect him and recognize his right as a person. Imagine that person is a human being, so in terms of that.” Many even argued for compassion towards those who may break the law, such as Birhat who reminds others “a thief is a person like me, a criminal is a person like me. There are many reasons for doing his crime or wrongdoing.”

However, others were willing to look past this shared humanity in extreme cases. According to Gazin, “in some cases, there is no need for police to take pity on a criminal. For instance, the crime of killing. I had seen a situation in 1996 when I went to a house, the member of that house were slaughtered and killed. After being killed, they were abused by the criminals...at that time, there is no need to take pity on that kind of criminal. There is no need to take him a lawyer to defend him.” Several others argued that terrorists have by default forfeited their rights and thus no longer remain part of the body politic police have sworn to defend. Kumar expresses this view, noting “terrorists

and extremists, they do not have that right, there is no need to...they do not need to be considered by the police to be protected and guided. Because they are always against the human rights articles, so there is no need to defend those kind of people.

### *Balancing Law, Order, and Human Rights*

Of all the questions in this study, this is perhaps the most classic policing question, thrown into especially sharp relief in this particular case – how do police balance between a need for order and security against the need to fully protect the democratic rights of those policed? Or in the larger theoretical terms of this work, how do police balance the desire for effectiveness (crime control, order maintenance) with the need for legitimacy (through respecting and protecting the rights of citizens)? This becomes especially salient for a force seeking to distance itself from a predecessor that performed remarkably well on the order end of the spectrum, a task significantly easier to perform when there are no expectations of balancing such order against democratic rights. Although their desire to distance themselves from the police of Saddam will be discussed more below, it is clear that finding this balance is seen as an important component of achieving that distance. Specifically, through emphasizing a non-violent, service-oriented version of policing (at least discursively) that sees police as calming intermediaries there simply to help.

Most of the police-as-servants narratives posit the police as somewhat of a middle-management of the Iraqi state; a force which must respect the demands of their superiors for order, but also the demands of the public for human rights and civil liberties. Azad expressed a common sentiment regarding the demonstrations in saying “police should serve the demonstrators. Police should take their needs and later on

escalate it above themselves. Police should inform the related fields of that.” Benewa agrees that “police at [demonstrations] will play a great role. Police are going to collect all the demands together... Later on, they will escalate them to those above them.” Others expressed regret about what was happening at the demonstrations, such as Hawler who noted “people’s rights should be respected by police and I do not agree with that the police did to the demonstrators.”

Others argued things were not quite that simple. Jalal spoke at length about the need for police to listen to demands of demonstrators and protect their rights, but also that large public demonstrations have the ability to turn dangerous and disrupt the activities of the market. He argues that among the demonstrators “maybe ten of them will take benefit from this demonstration, but at the same time, 1,000 people will not take a great benefit from it or even it will be a loss for 1,000 people.” Kemman agrees, saying demonstrators “are going to demand for their rights, but at the same time, they have violated many other people’s rights. For example, the demonstrations are there [Sara square] and most of the shops around there have been closed after one o’clock, so they are damaging the shops. The demonstrators are going to damage or bother the bazaar and the shoppers.”

What everyone agreed on, however, was the necessity of remaining non-violent, or at least using limited violence, to show their respect for the rights of citizens, and to earn their respect in return. Dukon notes “everywhere there are two sides... police should not be the third side. I do not agree with the using of tear gas and batons. Police should listen to their rights and [citizen’s] demands.” Mahmoud agrees, expressing a common sentiment that “police should take their demands in a democracy in a clam way. There is no need to be violent against them.”

While the vast majority of respondents mentioned something about restraining the use of violence, several went further to make it clear this was to earn legitimacy from the public. For instance, Rajan argued that police should protect everyone's rights with "great respect and honor" simply because they are "a member of our society." But this position was best described by Hejar, who spoke at length of the proper way to make an arrest in a respectful manner, noting "if you are going to behave and treat the criminal or suspect like that, at that time, people will understand what is the police. We are going to prove that we are a civil and developed country."

What was possibly most interesting about people's perspectives on this order/rights balance is in asking what they were taught about it, as even students going through the same course had wildly different answers to report on what their instructors had told them on the subject. Majid reports "I have been taught every lesson – how do you treat people, how do you respond to people's demands. At that time, people will also be good to the police." Similarly, Hawler reports being taught "so many lessons about it... The trainers told me we should treat demonstrators like our family. We've been taught we're not allowed to shoot at them at all in any way." Contrast this with the account of his classmate, Sirwan who said "I was taught nothing about it." Kekan and Firas, also in the same cohort of students, similarly reported they had been taught nothing at all about making such a balance between rights and order.

This difficult question of balancing the need for order against the rights and liberties of the populace is perhaps where the short-sighted nature of symbolic, militarized training becomes most obvious. The students who said they were taught a great deal on the subject were more than likely giving the answers they suspected I

wanted to hear, as throughout all of my time observing instruction these subjects were never the direct topic of any lesson, and when they were discussed, it was only in the most superficial of manners.

While superficiality on a subject of such central importance is concerning enough, creating a proper balance between rights and order is not simply a question of proper policing, but fundamental to the very idea of the democratic state. Yet again, recruits are not given any sort of meaningful preparation to weigh such important decisions, but are instead left to infer answers from the working order of the post to which they are assigned, an approach unlikely to result in positive policing practices (e.g. Skolnick and Fyfe 1993). As the students and staff themselves clearly understand, an approach favoring restrained, limited use of violence centered upon listening to the demands of the public and respecting their rights is crucial to establishing popular legitimacy, especially given the context of the repression of their predecessors. However, as the actions of police and other security personnel at the demonstrations, combined with wide-spread allegations of misconduct and police brutality (Abdulla 2011; Smart 2011; Zulal 2011), there is once again a chasm between the enlightened discourse of the ideals Iraqi police are to aspire to and the much more problematic reality they actually encounter.

### **Who Are The Iraqi Police?**

#### *I Really Need a Job*

Given the weak educational system and astronomically high rates of unemployment, it is perhaps unsurprising that by far the most commonly stated reason for joining the police is a simple need for a job. Most of those I interviewed had experienced

joblessness themselves, which is what pushed them to policing in the first place. In discussing the subject, Anwar, a trainer at the academy, noted it was “the ratio of unemployment in the civilian ministries. In the Ministry of the Interior, there is more opportunity for them to be employed. Many graduated students are coming here and I’ve asked them why and they say it’s because of the joblessness and unemployment.” For those who had not been unemployed themselves, they were cognizant of the high level of unemployment and joined to avoid experiencing joblessness themselves.

That policing is a last resort or stop-gap measure for most students and trainers is plainly evident in how openly many of them speak of wishing for a different career or only turning to policing when all other options had been exhausted. As government work is by far the most stable and easiest to access form of employment, most people’s stories centered around their inability to get into a different, better ministry. Kemman notes “most people nowadays are going to graduate from the university, but maybe they do not have any opportunity in the other ministries to be employed. So because of the lack of police, they decide to become police.” Koren agrees, saying “I have many friends who have graduated from university and then came to be established here because it will be easier to be established here rather than the civilian ministries.”

This view of policing as simply a means for making money was especially evident in response to many questions that weren’t directly about motivations for joining. This is exemplified by what Majid had to say about who should and shouldn’t join the force. The only people with no need to join the police, according to Majid, are “rich people, because they don’t need this salary. Now that I am police, I have a salary which

helps me rent my house and provide for my living expenses. There's no reason for rich people to get up and work at 6 in the morning like me."

It's not just the difficulty of finding a different job that persuaded many to join police, but the perception that finding any other line of work would be practically impossible because of rampant corruption and lack of available work. Kumar complains that "the only way for many to be employed is to become police because there are no guarantees in the companies for those who are not related to someone." Haydar took this even further, noting that while "the police field is not such an interesting job," many join because "they are obliged to do so" for financial reasons. Similarly, more than one interview respondent clearly felt their only other option for employment would be in the illicit economy, usually as part of the smuggling trade, which is flourishing in the region due to the difficult terrain and practical absence of government outside of major urban areas. Nwenar discusses his decision to become a police officer to escape unemployment: "there was a high ratio of unemployment. So...I have chosen this field. It is unlike smuggling or something else, because they are always doing things against the law and against the rules of our country."

Furthermore, many police, both students and trainers, were more than clear that they not only did not want to be police, but that they are actively searching for other opportunities. One student, Sirwan complained of all they were asked to do (strongly implying had he known he would not have signed up), saying "I would like to be more free in this age and doing more things by myself, not being regulated by the police field. The style of hair and other things...I can't do those here." A trainer Peywanspoke of being a construction worker before joining the police because he found construction too

difficult. But again, police work is seen as a way station rather than a profession; “I couldn’t continue on in that difficult job, so I gave it up, but not forever. I am now here to be police, but sometimes will do that other job.” Others simply made no effort to hide their contempt for the work, such as Berham who said “it’s not my interest to be police. It’s just for the sake of making a living...I do not consider myself police.”

Although the number is too small to draw any generalized conclusions, interviews with current academy students were especially revealing of how they regarded the job simply as the best option at the moment. Specifically, students were asked if they would recommend joining the police to others. Of those who said they would, most said something similar to Rubaad who paused to think about it and replied “yes, it’s ok. It’s not too bad.” But others wished they could impart what they have learned about policing to prevent others from making the same mistake. On whether he would encourage the people he knows to become police, Sirwan emphatically answered “No. Never. Never, never. I would never like anyone else to be police. I would like them to prolong their study and through getting a good certificate, maybe he or she can provide for their life in a good or excellent way.”

Beyond simply being one of the few jobs available, people had chosen policing because of its relative safety (compared to military work or the danger-filled heavy-equipment construction that’s also occasionally available) and because of the low educational requirements (lower than any other government ministry). A common response goes like Benewa who notes “I had no time to complete my studies, so I had given up on school and went to be a worker for some time. Later on I saw a Major who asked me if I’d like to be employed here and I said ok, it’s better than being a worker.”



Others were quick to point to the low education requirement when explaining why one would be compelled to join the police, such as Soran saying “there is no difference between the one who has the bachelor degree and the one who does not; even if you have no degree you can work here.” Chamal underscored this point by relating a story of how in years past, policing was a common bit of advice to the unemployed; “those who were jobless, people said to them ‘go be a police,’ and they would be received.”

It is self-evident a force comprised largely of people who are only interested in a paycheck is unlikely to be very successful at fulfilling its constitutional mandate. When such a group of people is brought together in an attempt to create a legitimated police force, however, it is even more problematic. This simple desire for employment also explains much of what was observed in the training exercises; after all, if policing is seen as simply a low-paying job to tide them over until they can find something better, one should be surprised to see recruits exerting any sort of effort in the training process. This also does not bode well for the future of anti-corruption efforts. As is discussed elsewhere, not only are most police simply there for the paycheck, they also feel the paycheck to be criminally low, something they can’t live on. Such a combination is almost guaranteed to promote corruption on the force (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993).

Although it was clearly the most common reason given (indeed, there was no interview in which it was not mentioned), money was not the sole motivating factor in the decision to join police. Several of those interviewed noted that for their experience and education level, policing is actually a pretty nice job. Because of the general stability of the region it’s not nearly as dangerous as it is in the South, and it’s far less dangerous than the military, which is often their only other practical choice for employment. This

attitude is best summed up by Shar, a young student at the academy. When asked if he would encourage others he knew to become police themselves, he noted “there isn’t really much danger in the police field” and that he would “explain to them there’s no difficulties, it’s not too heavy...it’s good to be police.”

There was also a small contingent of people who chose to be police from an actual desire to join the field, rather than monetary or educational concerns. For some, it was a childhood dream. Ali spoke of it as being a lifelong obsession stemming from “watching movies about police and detective stories.” Another common story among those who actually enjoyed policing was being exposed to it from a class or particular instructor they had. In discussing how he came to the field, Hiwa said he’d previously been *peshmerga*, but went back to school to find a new career. “So I took a course and became police because it was my favorite subject.” Still others seemed to be simply resigned to their fate, as was Dilsad who originally signed on simply for a job but now has “become accustomed to the job...and am fond of police work.”

However, by far the most common non-monetary reason for joining the police stemmed from some sort of desire to protect the homeland and their people. Two things are notable about this more noble desire to become police – it was nearly always accompanied by (and often subordinate to) a need for employment, and was usually expressed as either a desire to serve the nation, or as a desire to protect the nation from outside interference. When answering why someone would want to join the police, Rubaad noted “there are two points. The first and the preferred one is to serve our country and protect our country and people. The second is for providing for his life through salary.” Several respondents called policing a “holy profession” and Harman best

represents this end of the spectrum in saying “I’m always ready to sacrifice myself according to our people and country and our soil.”

Yet many who spoke about a desire to serve or defend the homeland went further, pinning their desire to become police to a larger notion of keeping the nation, and more specifically, the KRG, free from outside interference or attack. While this no doubt stems from many factors, it is likely fueled in large part by the historical relation of the Kurds to the rest of Iraq and the neighboring states. Three neighboring states (Iran, Syria, and Turkey) have sizable Kurdish populations in a position of extreme antipathy with their respective central governments, and largely due to a weak and often contentious relationship between the KRG and the GOI, both Iran and Turkey have successfully built military posts within the geographical boundaries of the KRG from which both have been repeatedly accused of bombing campaigns targeting Kurdish farmers and herders.

This desire to keep the nation free from outside interference usually took the form of discussing either generic “enemies” or more specifically, the aforementioned neighboring nations. Hawa is a good example of this line of argument, both in how he puts pay first in his list of concerns and in his concern for enemies. When asked why one would want to become police, he answered “two things – we want to be paid, because of the cost of living. The other is to serve and protect our country from enemies.” When answering the same question, Ramyar said “personally, I became police for the sake of serving and protecting our people’s rights so no one and none of our neighbors can interfere with our people’s affairs or violate them.”

While this line of reasoning for joining the police certainly comes across as more noble than simply joining for a paycheck, it is similarly problematic, as it is specifically

and intentionally *not* the job of police to defend the nation, especially from outside forces. As discussed above, the separation of police and military forces was a watershed moment in the historical development of democratic policing, and it could be argued this is even more so the case in a nation struggling to develop a democratic government seen as legitimate by its people. That this has become the attitude of students and trainers is not surprising given the militaristic nature and content of training, and the fact that the US-instituted curriculum and US-educated trainers reinforce rather than contradict this notion again places the larger project of police reconstruction more in line with attempting to stabilize a client state rather than build an independent, constitutional democracy (Kuzmarov 2009).

#### *The Self-Identification of Kurdish Iraqi Police*

The question of how these police identify themselves is interesting not only because they occupy such a unique position in regards to the state, but also because developing a national identity with which citizens identify is a fundamental necessity of the state reconstruction project in Iraq. While recent survey research (Moadell et al, 2008) shows Iraqis throughout the nation have a high level of national identification and show positive support for national unity, it is quite possible these are temporary feelings, spurred by the ouster of Saddam Hussein and the massive reconstruction project. Going forward, the state needs to secure a legitimacy in which citizens identify themselves as one political body under one state (Nuruzzman 2010). How this process is playing out amongst those actors directly employed to be representatives of the nascent state offers an illuminating glimpse into how effectively the state is establishing legitimacy.

Not surprisingly, many more respondents identified as Kurds than as Iraqis. However, corroborating Moadell et. al's (2008) work, surprisingly the majority identified as a combination of the two. This majority varied between those who saw themselves as Iraqis first (then subsequently Kurds), as Kurds first, as a separate political body within the nation, or as a separate ethnic group. Only three respondents identified themselves as solely Iraqi, and even amongst this group, it was clearly not out of some great love for the Iraqi state. A good representation of these three is Majid who sees "no difference between Kurd and Iraq or Arab, so I am going to say I am Iraqi. I do love the Kurdish people, and do not much like the Arab ones, but at the same time, I do not hate them." Roughly a third of the respondents identified as Kurdish only, and several, like Majid explained their preference with reference to their mistrust or dislike of Arabs. Soran identifies as "a Kurd. Of course I'm a Kurd. I hate to be called an Iraqi." Others made it clear they found this to be a somewhat ridiculous question, either through how quickly they asserted their Kurdish identity, through answering in their limited English to emphasize the point, or like Mahmoud simply laughed at the absurdity of the question. Even those who had no harsh words for the rest of the nation wanted to make it clear they saw the Kurds as separate, such as Azad who argued "we are Kurds in an Iraqi framework. We have got good information from Iraq, but we are Kurds."

Yet as mentioned, the majority of respondents identified as some combination of Kurdish and Iraqi. The myriad answers, and the struggles many had putting them into words, indicates what a complex position the Kurdish people are in, especially for those so closely connected with the Iraqi state. Ramyar highlights the tension in understanding their identity in saying "first of all, I've got Iraqi nationality and Iraqi ID, but we are

Kurds and we are living in the Kurdistan region. We have our government, our Kurdish government. But we are living in the federal Iraq, the flag outside will be the eye witness of it. We are Iraqi, but we are Kurds living in Kurdistan.” Anwar expresses frustration at the bifurcated nature of an identity that isn’t widely acknowledged on the world stage, explaining “our region has not been recognized internationally, so because of our ID and our citizenship and nationality are Iraqi, we can say we’re Iraqi. But we are Kurds! We are residents of Iraq.” Nwenar makes a sort of peace between the two, noting “inside, mainly we are going to describe or identify ourselves as a Kurd. But when you are going outside Iraq to another country, you maybe have to use both.”

Many chose to include both, but distinguish between their ethnic heritage and their political citizenship. A typical answer went like Bedad who identifies “as an Iraqi, but Kurdish ethnicity.” Of those making this distinction, some were more inclined to emphasize the Kurdish side, like Kamaran who identifies “first as a Kurd, and then as an Iraqi,” while others like Shar saw themselves as “both. First as an Iraqi. We cannot deny our nation and must acknowledge both.” Finally, Sefin noted the dual identity comes from a wishful thinking for the future, in that “we would like to be Kurds and would like our independence, so we always say Kurd or an Iraqi-Kurd of Kurdish Iraq.”

This complicated question of the self-identity of Iraqi police is especially salient for a nation attempting to gain legitimacy. As these varied responses make clear, it is not only the job that Iraqi police personnel have little identification with, but the state itself. In many ways, it mirrors one of the most fundamental initial mistakes of the coalition in which they assumed police and other government personnel would remain at their posts

following the overthrow of Saddam's government. Clearly there is an assumption of loyalty and commitment to the state that simply is not supported by the data.

This tenuous loyalty of police is important not only for the myriad ways one could envision this affecting their performance, but also for the insights granted into the attempt to build a legitimate state. The police are not simply a random assemblage of citizens, but rather state actors representing a state institution central to the legitimacy-building process. Yet even in this group, there is only a weak connection to the Iraqi state, and few grant much legitimacy to the central government. If the state cannot make inroads in establishing legitimacy with those who are paid to be its representatives and enforce its dictates, it seems highly unlikely it will be able to sway the greater public to its side.

## **Contexts and Motivations**

### *Problems Facing the Police*

Given the unstable nature of the state and precarious position of police officer, what police view as the biggest problem facing Iraqi police gives a perspective largely ignored in both popular and academic accounts of democratic police reconstruction. Tellingly, the subject that dominated the answers to this question was financial; specifically, most respondents were highly concerned with the low level of pay and inadequate equipment and support. As with many subjects, respondents here drew comparisons between themselves and police in the South, but this time, they were on the short end of the stick, believing themselves to receive much less in compensation than their Southern counterparts. Dukon expressed a common sentiment in saying the biggest problem he faces is "the cost of life, in terms of salary. There's a big difference between

the police here and the police in Southern Iraq.” Hardi agrees, noting “the most prominent problem is the salary. The salary here is different from the South. Those in the South get more than here.” Although no respondent actually expressed how much they believe police in the South to be earning, they were very forthcoming with their own finances. Kemman explains “new police here earn 500,000 dinars (US\$ 428.95) per month. They have to give 200,000 (US\$ 171.58) for the rent, and that’s a problem...”

These twin perceptions of both their own feeble pay and that police in the South get far more than they do fall in line with a general perception I observed amongst Kurds that the central government does not care for or provide enough for them, especially relative to the heavily Arab population of the rest of the nation. This perception, along with the anger and resentment it breeds, is an especially troubling sign for the future of Iraq, as material imbalances in a nation “post the most dangerous threat to the existence of a federation” (Nuruzzman 2010). While my data do not speak to the feelings of the wider society, it is clear that within the police academy there was a strong perception that these police have been neglected in comparison to their Southern counterparts, again pointing to the fact that state has in many ways failed to achieve a sufficient level of legitimacy even amongst its direct representatives.

Others highlighted the difficult nature of policing as evidence their pay and compensation are too low. Harman a high-ranking commander at the Academy, requested my assistance in righting this problem, imploring me “if you are going to meet our Minister or anyone else who are in a higher position, tell them that the police position is too hard and that police are always devoting their lives to protect our country and defend people’s rights....if you see them, tell them to increase our salary. Because our salary is



not even enough to rent a house and to bring up our children.... We are going to give our blood to protect our country and our hearts to protect and serve our country and make it safe everywhere. If you are going to die, let our children have good accommodations and a good life.” Kumar agreed, saying “there are no guarantees in our offices here. For example, if someone is going to become handicapped or lose or miss their three fingers or any part of his or her body, maybe the government will not provide you with enough and will not give you your salary until you are going to finish 15 to 20 years of service.”

In a similar vein, many felt that the low pay and lack of general financial support made their jobs much more difficult than they would otherwise be. Soran argues “the government ignores the police. The government should fully support police and should fully provide for police in order to not have police thinking of another job...the government causes the police’s duty to be slow and passive, not active” because they do not have enough equipment. (T-110) agrees, noting “there are no necessary things. Police will not be provided with enough things. Yet at the same time, they will be asked to be regulated persons and to follow their regulations.”

Finally, several trainers and students explicitly responded that they would work harder and perform their duties more fully if they were paid more. Majid, a student near graduation at the academy, sums it up saying “the salary will be a problem for police. If they are going to increase our salary, maybe I’ll be more ready to serve and assist and defend your rights. If you run out of money, maybe you do not like to do anything and you hate everything and you are always fed up with everything. If the salary will be more, later on there is no need for you to do anything else or pay attention to another job

or anything else. At that time you are going to sacrifice yourself and devote your life for protecting people.”

Beyond the many obvious problems of a force comprised largely of people working down to their pay grade, the lack of funding (and more importantly, the attitudes such a lack generates) can have serious repercussions on the state writ large. As Call (2011) reminds us, the two main needs of any state are “legitimacy and effectiveness” (306). As has been demonstrated throughout this work, the Iraqi state does not yet have much of anything resembling legitimacy. However, one could argue that is to be expected, as legitimacy should take a long time to build in even the best of circumstances. However, effectiveness of state institutions is something the state can much more directly control, and while similarly not happening over night, is something that can be achieved in a reasonable time frame with the proper commitment of funding and resources. Yet as it stands, with budgetary shortcomings and personnel largely unwilling to put in much effort for their meager pay, the police will not only have a difficult time achieving legitimacy, but will be hard-pressed to achieve even basic effectiveness, whether measured in terms of crime control or public order maintenance.

The second-most cited problem facing police is a public that is perceived as distrusting and potentially dangerous. Sirwan fears public mistrust, saying the biggest problem police face is “the misunderstanding between police and the people. If police are going to consider that the people are their brother and their sisters, maybe they will not commit a crime or anything bad toward them.” However, most put the burden for erasing this gap on the public, such as Hawler who argues “among the people, some of them consider police or any armed person their enemy, and that’s a problem for police.” Shar

agrees, noting “police want to impose a rule of law on everybody, but some people will reject it and not accept the rules.” Lawk sees this mistrust as stemming from a lack of communication between what the police are attempting to do and what the public perceives them to be doing. He explains “while looking at people, there are some people among them...[pauses]...while police are going toward democracy and applying the rules of democracy, there are some people that may not recognize this and do not take this as something important. Therefore, the person, like the police, must respect the police and in return the police will respect the person. The most important thing is to define what is democracy for people, they have to understand.”

A number of respondents spoke about this disconnect from, and fear of, the public in the context of the demonstrations. Polan relayed the fear that police feel at the demonstrations, given the volatile situation and the anonymity of large crowds, saying “two police were killed among the demonstrations, so no one knows who did it. There is great pressure on the police right now in this emergency situation.” Gazin echoed this fear and mistrust, arguing “in some cases, the demonstrators do not have good information in demonstrating themselves and demanding their rights. It’s unlike the other countries in that here, police will be wounded and will be injured, but in the rest of the countries of the world, police will be safe and demonstrators will be wounded and jailed.” Yet not all those interviewed expressed hostility toward the demonstrators. In addition to several who expressed their support for the demonstrators, albeit strictly off the record for fear of reprisal, Ali openly sympathized with the demonstrations and tried to put them in context, noting “the demonstrators, thanks to Allah, they know, they realize that the police are not their enemies nowadays, because they know each other, the police and the

demonstrators. Many of them are relatives and they know each other. And they know the demonstrators are not against the police, they are not against the government, they are against corruption, which nowadays is bad. People can solve this problem by having dialogue with each other.”

Here it is interesting to note how similar the view of the Iraqi police toward the public is to that of the American and coalition forces. While recent survey research indicates the police are correct in viewing the public as hostile toward them or at least suspect of them (Moss 2006), it is the attitudes of how to remedy this problem that are so striking. Much like the invading forces made a major miscalculation by assuming Iraqis would view them favorably and would immediately grant legitimacy to their operations and the new Iraqi government, police appear to be operating with the assumption that the public should grant them legitimacy, rather than having to *earn* legitimacy from the public. Blaming a lack of public support on the “misunderstandings” or “bad information” of the citizenry implies the problem is with a public that cannot understand the legitimacy of the police, rather than acknowledging a reality in which rocketing crime rates and wide-spread corruption give the public very good reason for their reticence in accepting the police.

Finally, consistent with desires to defend the homeland, several respondents identified terroristic acts as the biggest problem currently facing Iraqi police. Koren notes that “terrorist actions are a great problem for the police, especially in the South” and Dilsad agrees, arguing the greatest challenge for police is “keeping our nation’s security and protecting our nation.” Again, as discussed above, while for the sake of expediency some anti-terror work may need to be performed by police, the fact that a small

percentage of respondents identified terrorism as their main concern speaks to the inappropriate goals fostered by the highly-militarized training process.

### *Experiencing Corruption*

One constant that has followed Iraqi policing for generations is a pervasive corruption throughout the ranks, a situation that is only beginning to improve. This has serious ramifications for the legitimacy of the police, as the Iraqi public still views the police as highly corrupt (Moss 2006). As such, multiple interview respondents spoke of their personal experiences with corruption, and often, their frustration with it. While corruption obviously takes many forms in a bureaucracy as large as the Iraqi police, the most common complaints were about political pressure from one of the two major parties and the existence of “ghost payrolls” in which police in name only collect a salary without doing any work (sometimes these police don’t even exist and have simply been invented by station managers to buttress their salary).

Many respondents expressed deep frustration with the interference of major political parties in policing, who often treat police positions as rewards for loyalty and deploy the public force as their own private security. Sirwan, a young recruit, spoke of his distrust of the main parties and his fear that by not supporting them he’ll be punished. He notes “this part of Suly belongs to the PUK. But I will not go to that office. I only became police to get a job.” He goes on to discuss how he is one of several police who sympathize with the demonstrators, but also that he understands this is a taboo topic for a vulnerable young officer. Sirwan explains “it has been nearly two months now the demonstrators have not been answered by the government. As police, I agree with their

rights and I am them. If I say that I'm referring to the Change list [a proposed slate of reforms adopted by the demonstrators which originated from the Goran opposition party], later on they are going to take my pay and maybe dismiss me. I do not dare to say this."

However, the majority of complaints about corruption centered on the nepotistic and politicized nature of many policing and personnel decisions. Birhat explains the process; "managers of some police stations will allow one or three of them to go home and work at home for themselves, and at the time of collecting salaries, they should come in and collect their salaries and that is it." Berham much more angrily railed against such nepotism, charging "for example, my bosses. They are always going to do a lot of corruption. They are always going to do a lot of corruption, and we look at them and what they do, so let me do it like they do it." When pressed about what forms this corruption takes, he singled out nepotistic practices, pointing to "those who are in authority....some of them have nearly 100 guards, only for the sake of salary. That person is going to taker their salary for themselves."

Yet this isn't just a problem of finances, for as Rizgar points out, it significantly weakens police operations as well. He argues "there are many police that are so-called police, they are only going to take their salaries, that's it. But practically, when the government needs police, there aren't enough." He also identifies a serious impediment for fighting such corruption, as much of this happens "because maybe they are a relative or friends with the manager. Or maybe he is friends with the person above his manager, so if the manager writes anything bad about him, the manager will be a loser at that time. If that person will not come here daily and will not work very well and will not be regular to his office time, the manager himself will let him do so. If he writes anything on him,

maybe it will not be beneficial to him. So he is going to hold his tongue so he will not be thrown away by the wind.”

In their defense, it must be pointed out that such nepotism and corruption is by no means limited to the Iraqi police force, but rather is a pervasive problem in nearly all facets of contemporary Iraqi life (Hawramy 2012). In my own time in Iraq, I quickly discovered that having well-connected friends was not only far superior to following the official channels for accomplishing almost any task, but often the only way to accomplish a given goal. While not relevant to this particular study, I could fill volumes with my own personal experiences of corruption in nearly every aspect of daily life. However, while this context makes corruption within the police understandable, it remains inexcusable and a serious impediment to the development of democracy. Goldstein (1990) reminds us corruption has an especially corrosive effect on police, impairing the agency’s credibility in enforcing the law and rendering the formal control structure ineffective. While corruption is always problematic in policing, here it is a particular concern because of the transition to democracy and the key role police play in that transition.

Most notably, corruption is absolutely fatal to notions of legitimacy, which is especially damaging in a case wherein the state is attempting to unite disparate groups of people with considerable skepticism toward both the state and the shared identity they would need to embrace for the reconstruction process to be successful. As Allen (2010) reminds us, without legitimacy in this process, “there are no motivations for sub-state groups to shift allegiance and salience of identity to the national level” (423), a process which can already be observed in the fact that most Iraqis turn to private militias when confronted with crime, rather than the police (Allbritton 2006). Corruption is especially

problematic in the criminal justice system, as lapses of credibility in this area create an especially disastrous impression on the public of the ability of the state to act in a legitimate, democratic manner (Tilly 2004; Gramsci 1971). It also pushes the public to place their faith in the abilities of non-state actors (such as militias), most of whom are decidedly not working toward the goal of a stable, democratic state.

This corruption also serves as another glaring example of the mistakes of the invading force and their inability or refusal to contemplate and prepare for otherwise obvious areas of potential concern. The need to be prepared for, and ready to combat, corruption is a corner stone of the literature on police reconstruction, yet American and coalition forces had seemingly no plan in place to combat this obvious threat. Even to this day, they have regulatory oversight into less than half of all Iraqi police, and indeed are not even aware of approximately how many police are currently serving (Jones 2007; Broadwell 2005). Combined with other short-sighted actions running contrary to the lessons learned from previous reconstruction efforts, such as a quantity over quality approach to recruits which almost inevitably leads to brutality and corruption (Stanley 1999), the question becomes not how such corruption came about, but how exactly those leading the reconstruction were to believe this system would not lead to widespread corruption under even the best of circumstances.

### *Balancing Solidarity with Fighting Corruption*

In the extensively studied subculture of American policing, perhaps the most notable aspect of it is the incredibly solidarity of police. This solidarity acts as a double-edged sword; on the one hand, it is a positive (and some would argue necessary)



component of an occupation in which an officer and their cohorts may find themselves in a life-threatening situation and need to know they can rely on each other. Yet on the other hand, it very often acts as an impediment to reform and is used to cover up corruption and other illegalities, as police are notoriously suspicious of external oversight or investigation (Williams 2007; Skolnick and Fyfe 1993; Goldstein 1990).

This double-edged sword is drawn in even sharper relief in contemporary Iraq, as such solidarity will obviously be an integral component of bringing together a diverse and occasionally contentious working group, but could very well stand in the way of reform and encourage the already rampant corruption to continue unfettered. Because of this, I asked respondents their views on whether it was more important for the new force to work toward such intense solidarity, or if they should be more concerned with preventing the corruption that can and does result from such tight-knit groups.

Opinion was largely split on the issue, as a large number of respondents gave very eloquent responses regarding the need to end corruption beginning with themselves, while a group slightly smaller in number favored a more personal approach to possible corruption, emphasizing the potential negative effects of publicly prosecuting corruption. Yet regardless of their position on what is to be done, all of the respondents were keenly aware that corruption remains a widespread phenomenon. This viewpoint was best expressed by Berham, who pondered a few possible ways to stem corruption, but noted they were unlikely to happen, and in terms of stopping corruption, it's likely "we can't. For example, my bosses. They are always going to do a lot of corruption, and we look at them and what they do, so let me do it like they do it. It is the corruption. It has been left from them for us. They have done much corruption, so the smaller ones will do it, too."

Of those who felt it was more important to fight corruption, they were motivated by a desire to break from the corruption of the past and act as model citizens to set an example for the rest of the nation. Dukon summed up this perspective, admitting “if you want or don’t want, Iraq will be on the list of countries in the world that has great corruption. If you want to prohibit or prevent people from corruption, we have to start with ourselves.” This sentiment was echoed by Sirwan, who asked “because we are regulated and legal forces, if there is corruption in us, how can we reform people?” Others similarly acknowledged the need to change the culture around corruption, such as Faizel who argues “if their work will damage my office, it is not taboo [to report them]. In some places that is taboo, if you are going to backbite your friends by your manager. But the Iman will tell you it’s not taboo to report your friends.” Some instead pointed to the historic nature of being a constitutional democracy for the first time and the importance of protecting those newfound rights. Zara takes a strong stance against corruption because “corruption will be danger for the whole police. Corruption is a bad point in police, because policing is holy.” Ramyar argues that not actively working to stop corruption is just as bad as being corrupt oneself, noting “if a police is going to commit a crime and be corrupted and his fellow or his colleague is not going to report him or her...maybe he considers him the one who is not criminal and has not reported him, is like him, the one who is corrupt. At that time, maybe his fellow is just as disloyal to the blood martyrs and the Kurdish people. So he has to report.”

Finally, several respondents expressed their anti-corruption zeal by insisting they would not accept it from anyone, even a close friend or family member. And while giving one’s kin or close friends special consideration is largely a universal phenomenon, in a

culture as strongly clan- and community-based as Iraqi society is, it is a far more meaningful act to contradict a blood relative or clan member than it would be in America or most Western societies. Kamaran expressed this rationalized attitude toward corruption in saying “when you become police, it’s not related to your cousins or your relatives or your friends, it is related to the law. So if one of your friends is going to do something bad or corrupt, that person should be reported by his colleagues.” Similarly, Hawa implores others that they “have to report your colleague if he is corrupt or if he’s going to break the law, even if he’s the brother of your father.”

However, many respondents were quite willing to favor stability and friendship over ferreting out corruption. The most common refrain was that with one’s friends, it is better to discuss things directly with them in hopes of curtailing their bad behavior, rather than taking it to one’s superiors and risking official reprimand and the loss of the friendship. Yet some simply didn’t see much of a need to fight corruption, because of a perception that any attempts would be useless. Firas, a young student, speaks from being on the protected side of corruption, saying “here in this office...I myself am a relative of the manager of this Academy. If I do anything wrong or bad, maybe everyone wants to report me, but it’s useless because of my relationship with the manager.”

Yet most respondents who fit in this category were not quite so blunt in their assessments, instead favoring a more personal approach until or unless something becomes a major problem. Bedad summarizes this perspective in saying “reporting fellow friends in some cases is not good. In those cases I would inform him by myself. It would be better for me to try to prohibit him from doing it again. You can try three or four times until he stops. If he continues, later on you can report him.” Many agreed with giving

their friends and relatives several chances before taking any official action to stop corrupt behavior, but like Nazdar, most noted this only applied to close friends and relatives, “because of our tradition [police are] ready to report someone else who is not a relative, who is not kin of him, who is not his fellow friends.” Hawler agrees with this logic, explaining “once a person I know here reported another person for wrongdoing and now they never speak and aren’t friends.” Finally, some like Polan took a laissez faire attitude toward rooting out corruption, feeling that “every police should consider it according to his conscience.”

How Iraqi police respond to the hypothetical corruption of their peers tells us a great deal about the viability of anti-corruption efforts going forward. Again, practical limitations are obviously part of the problem; in a nation in which corruption is widespread and nepotism is accepted practice, it is unfair to expect the reconstruction effort to have completely prevented corruption from entering the police ranks. However, the approach taken in this case closely mirrors the extremely problematic approach to corruption in American policing; namely, strong, yet vague, pronouncements against corruption coupled with a working order that turns a blind eye to infractions (Moskos 2008; Skolnick and Fyfe 1993; Goldstein 1990). Throughout the training process, staff at the academy regularly spoke about the evils of corruption. Yet not only were students never told how to fight corruption or even what to do if they became aware of it, the rampant corruption on the police force was regularly acknowledged as explanations for promotions and personnel decisions that otherwise made no outward sense or as regular subject matter for jokes and teasing each other. This approach is strikingly reminiscent of how gender is treated in American police training (Prokos and Padavic 2002), in which a

message of gender equality is officially broadcast to students, yet a view of woman as subordinate and unfit for the job is the clear subtext of much of what is discussed.

### *One Thing To Change About the Training Process*

For a variety of cultural and institutional reasons, respondents were likely reluctant to be openly or directly critical of policing in general and especially of the training process led or instituted by their superiors. Early inquiries regarding what students and trainers dislike about or find fault with in the training process were met with assurances everything is great, or at least as good as it could be. To combat these generic non-responses, the question was modified to having respondents identify one thing they would change about the training process if they had to, allowing the question to become a hypothetical as well as push them to reveal something.

Answers indicate most involved had the same criticisms of the process I highlighted above; namely, the great majority of respondents identified either the content of training or the amount of time dedicated to it as the one thing they would change. This is especially important, as one of the most central lessons from previous reconstruction efforts is the absolute necessity of thorough and applicable training (Bayley and Perito 2010; Goldsmith and Dinnen 2007; Neild 2001); however, the training of Iraqi police is neither thorough nor very applicable to the task they will be asked to perform as police in a democratic society. Interviews responses demonstrate this lack of thoroughness and applicability is keenly felt by most students and trainers.

Those who identified the content of training as something to change pointed to the shallow nature of lessons described above as not offering enough preparation for

becoming qualified police. Kajaw identifies his one thing to change as giving “the students more books and information, not just ‘left, right, left, right.’” Zara argued against “the repetition. For example, today they teach one lesson, and then tomorrow we repeat it, and then the day after that we repeat it again.”

Most respondents in this category cited a need to expand the curriculum into other areas, especially the more esoteric facets of policing, like communicating effectively with the public or understanding human and civil rights. Ali identifies his one change would be “to broaden the horizon of [the students’] understanding.” Faizel gives a representative summation of this line of thought, expressing a desire for the academy to “pay a greater regard to the teaching department, rather than all the others...Also, the lessons and the human rights articles – we should make police literate about how they will treat people peacefully and calmly.” Dukon agreed, noting “I’m always saying that the duration of the teaching department should be more than the duration of the training department. But here it is not like that.” Finally, several agreed with Berham, who expressed frustration with the fact that all police sent to the academy go through the same basic course regardless of their previous level of experience. He notes “of police sent here, some have been police for twenty years. But trainers will teach him saluting, at ease, at attention. He clearly already knows all of this. What he needs is to be sent to a classroom and taught about the law and how to deal with people, etc.”

For those who identified the duration of training as the one thing they would change, all agreed the duration was too short, but solutions ranged from a few more weeks to several years of training. As Anwar put it, “the duration of the course is not enough for [students] to be prepared well.” Haydar goes further, arguing the lack of time

is the reason lessons are superficial, because “the duration is too little, it’s not enough for them. The students won’t get good or enough information. They only get a glimpse at things, not a deep understanding.” Berham bluntly argues “lessons are too short to impart real lessons.” Finally, Lawk cited the bureaucracy as the problem, arguing “if we had freedom in choosing time for [students], how long they will stay and learn from us, we would love that. But if they say we have a group of police and students together and we have to teach them in one month, to finish the whole curriculum in that period of time, we wish for much more time.”

### **Building Legitimacy With the Public**

#### *Whom Do Police Serve?*

One of the most important pieces of democratic police reconstruction is ensuring police are accountable to the state and the constitution, rather than to a political party or individual (Goldstein 1990). While the Iraqi police under Saddam were clearly used as a personal political force, the current force aspires (at least officially) to be neutral, democratic law enforcement. While there are multiple external factors that can induce or preclude corruption, an important piece is how police view themselves and their job; thus, the question of whom police see themselves as serving tells us a great deal about the messages they are receiving from the institution and the attitudes they bring to the job.

In contrast to the reasons given for joining the police, answers of whom the police serve focused on the service aspect of the job, most of which emphasized the importance of serving the Iraqi people. Hiwa explained that police “have a slogan that says ‘police serve the people.’ There are many ministries in our government, and the police are under

the Ministry of the Interior. The duty of them is to protect human rights and to protect the people and to guard the people for the sake of security and everybody's life here. Every ministry's duty is different; for example, the ministry of health is another way to serve people, but we are here to protect people." A significant portion of respondents viewed this service mission as a step toward establishing equality in the fractured nation. Bedad feels "police should serve people of all ethnicities and should equally treat all of them." Lawk agrees, arguing police exist "to keep equality among the people while he is defending them. Do not make any differentiation saying "this is a Christian, that one is Kurdish, this is a Muslim" and things like that. They have to protect the whole region."

The second-most common answer to whom the police view themselves as serving centered upon the state and the constitution. Some, such as Jalal, see serving the state a synonymous with serving the Iraqi people, saying "police should serve and protect the country, and the country's people should protect the police. When I say the country, I mean all things. I am living in Iraq, so police should serve every person in Iraq, even if they are another religion or from another nation." However, most who spoke of serving the state because of the higher ideals it represents. Soran believes police should serve "the government or the state, because the government is going to practice by its constitution, so we serve the government to practice the constitutional articles." Similarly, Harman delivered an impassioned response regarding how the police "should always sacrifice their hearts and their bodies to protect the state...police are going to provide themselves to take care of people's rights all day and all night. Police should abide by the rules of the constitution. These orders are written in the constitution. Because the constitution is a good balance between the security forces and the people.



Police should serve all three kinds you mentioned, they complete each other; the constitution, the state, and the people complete each other.”

### *Which Crimes Are Most Important to Focus On?*

Similar to their American counterparts, Iraqi police I spoke with had a very narrow view of those crimes most deserving of police attention. They display what Reiman (2007) terms a “carnival mirror” approach to crime, in which certain categories of crime (mainly violent, property, and drug-related crimes) are privileged to the exclusion of large swaths of other criminal activities (especially those committed by or benefitting the wealthy and other high-status groups). In an echo of the narrow focus on only a few aspects of the job in the training process itself, there were a small handful of criminal activities identified as the most important. Indeed, there was only one respondent who mentioned anything other than the five crimes discussed below.

Homicide was far and away the crime most frequently cited as the most important for police attention. Nwenar sums up the feelings of many in saying “all crimes are important. But the most important one to police is the crime of killing...It is unlike the crime of stealing or the crime of anything else, because you are going to end someone’s life.” Many respondents were very matter-of-fact about the obviousness of murder being the most significant crime, such as Sirwan who noted “killing is always first and always in front of other crimes” or Jalal who simply replied “doubtlessly the killing” is the most important crime for police attention. Hawa went further, explaining that murder is of prime importance because it’s one of the few crimes that can only be solved with the involvement of police, noting that “the crime of killing is the most important one, and

then stealing. There are many social crimes, maybe they are smaller and do not need to be investigated. Maybe they will socially be solved themselves.” Following Hawa’s response, theft was easily the second-most common answer in terms of which crimes police should focus their attention on (most respondents listed murder first, followed closely by theft). Nearly every respondent who mentioned more than one crime when asked which are the most important to focus on replied with something similar to Faizel who argues “killing is the most important...the second one is stealing, stealing will be common here in our society.”

Surprisingly, terrorism was only mentioned as an important concern by a handful of respondents. Benewa summarized the argument for terrorism as the most important crime for police, arguing it’s “more significant than the others. Because in terrorist actions, so many people are killed and the terrorist himself is killed. So it is more important for police to investigate that crime. If someone is going to kill someone else, maybe he is arrested by police and later on her can be investigated...police can speak with him. But when a terrorist blasts himself, no one can find a piece of his body.”

Finally, the other crimes identified as most important for police attention were sexual violence against women and drug-related crimes. Haydar recounted a long tale of a young man who had been using some form of pharmaceutical to incapacitate and sexually assault women, noting with some relief that he was arrested and sentenced to thirty years in prison, because “women’s issues are very important.” A few respondents felt drug use was the most urgent matter for police, such as Berham who spoke of his own past drug and alcohol abuse and expressed a desire to “open a small base or building for those who are using drugs...I could recover the young.”

What is most telling about the perceived priorities of both trainers and students is that it closely mimics the focus of US police on Category One crimes to the exclusion of nearly all others. As mentioned above, corruption is endemic to much of the nation, and police are both very aware of this, and many are very upset by it. Yet in discussing what they think are the most important crimes to focus on, only a single respondent mentioned corruption as something police should to direct their time and resources toward. And even in this case, it was limited only to the academy itself, as Awdil explained “it differs. Because of the nature of my work here, one of the biggest crimes in to see a person who does not do there job here, because I am in accounting...police here are not getting acquainted with all aspects of being police. We only have knowledge concerning the specific job we have.”

Beyond ignoring one particularly salient type of crime, these selective priorities are important because the priorities police are given will effect not only how they act, but establishes the very types of questions that can be asked about crime in the first place. As Garland reminds us, penalty is an important cultural signifier which broadcasts a specific vision of society, for it “does more than just police the boundaries in which social relations take place; it also helps define the nature and quality of those relations” (1990: 271). The various decisions shaping the priorities of police further make these definitions of social relations seem inevitable and necessary rather than contested and constructed. This view of which crimes are most important, coupled with the views discussed in the following section on what types of people are most likely to commit crimes, points to Iraq developing a bifurcated system of justice similar to the American criminal justice system in which the criminality of the wealthy is overlooked in favor of rigorous

surveillance of the activities of the poor and working class. In addition to the inherent problems of an unequal justice system, this likely means large swaths of the Iraqi public will experience the simultaneous over-policing and under-protection (Kushnick 1999) that is a regular feature of life in Western inner-city neighborhoods, which almost inevitably results in large-scale distrust of the police, something which would obviously hamper efforts aimed at building legitimacy with an already wary public.

### *Who is Most Likely To Be A Criminal?*

Given the narrow view of what crimes should dominate police attention, it's perhaps unsurprising respondents held a similarly narrow view of those factors that might push one to commit a crime or might be used to identify likely criminals. Once again, the general viewpoint very much reflects that of American police, who generally focus on low-income persons of color, the type of people who make a "good collar" (Chambliss 1994) because of the relative ease with which they can be moved through the criminal justice system. For Iraqi police, the most commonly identified factors in recognizing a potential criminal focused on that person's physical appearance and income level.

By far the most common refrain from respondents was that, as Rizgar put it, "most of them are poor. Although I don't work in the investigation department, I know those who are arrested are mostly poor." Bedad agrees, saying "those who are jobless. That is the biggest or main reason" for committing crimes. There was definitely an implication in most of these statements that such poverty is just one example of the failings of that person, in addition to making them more likely to commit crimes. Others expressed this point more explicitly, such as Mohammed who granted that "yes, of

course, everywhere there are people who love to commit crimes...For example, those who have not succeeded in life. Maybe he or she has failed in some field and later on they have psychological problems or something like that and may love to commit crimes.” Firas pushed the point even further, claiming the main causes of crime are “joblessness and unemployment. Those kind of people are always fighting, because those kind of people prefer jail or prison to walking around freely.”

Most respondents also agreed that criminals could be identified by their physical appearance, especially their face. Firas noted that although he had not been taught anything about how to detect who may be a criminal, by his experience he “know[s] and can identify a criminal by their face and knowing that a criminal among the people will be confused and will turn back and forth many times.” Kamaran agreed, claiming a criminal’s “face and complexion will change” while Majid believes that for “anyone who commits a crime, their face will be confused, so it is easy to recognize a criminal.” Benewa gets more specific, saying “I have taught my students how to recognize a criminal. For example, I myself do not know how is criminal, but when I go to that person, if he is afraid of me or blinking. Look at his eyes, you can tell by his eyes.” Though perhaps this sentiment was best summed up by Lawk who said “we got the knowledge that when you look at the face or the character of that person, we understand that he is about to make a crime. It is not a normal face.”

Finally, the other category of people respondents identified as prone to criminality were orphaned children. For instance, Dukon explains people who are likely to commit a crime are “those who have become accustomed to that crime. For example, the orphans...from the early age or childhood, [they] will be accustomed to crime. For

example, for the sake of getting bread, he or she will steal something else. Gradually, he will be a criminal for the sake of getting his target or his purpose, he will commit many types of crimes.” Others went further, noting that the children most likely to grow up to be involved in criminal activity are those children, orphan or not, forced to work in the bazaar or on the street from an early age (a practice which is illegal in the new Iraqi constitution, yet remains widespread in practice).

Harman acknowledges this is a major problem, pointing out “parents will be advised by police that they should not send their children to sell things in the bazaar or polish the shoes or sell the cigarettes, because at that early age he’s going to mix with the bazaar and learn bad concepts or go to the cinema and see horror films maybe. When those children grow up they are maybe going to become a criminal...some criminals are going to use or deceive children and sell their drugs through them in order not to be arrested when they’re checked by police, because at that time, the child will be arrested, not [them].” Mahmoud agrees, arguing that children sent to work at an early age will be “listening to the old ages. Maybe if the old people are talking about crime or committing crimes, maybe later on that child will listen to them carefully, and later on he will not be punctual in going home, and later on maybe he will love to commit a crime.”

### *Separating From The Past*

Obviously a major component of any police reconstruction project is a concerted effort to differentiate the new democratic force from its corrupt and repressive history, and recent survey research (Jones 2007) suggests this is still a major obstacle for the Iraqi police. This is a much bigger problem in the South, where a much higher percentage of

the force consists of officers that served under the previous regime (a significant problem in its own right cf. Stanley 1999), although the perception of police in the KRG is nowhere near where they themselves would like it to be. Surprisingly, many respondents were willing to begrudgingly admit Saddam's police did perform some aspects of the job well, all clearly pride themselves on being a more professional and much more democratic force than that which preceded them. Specifically, through respecting the rights of citizens and building a force of volunteers, they hope to replace the image of Iraqi police as violent thugs to be feared with one of a gentle, respectful force.

Given the brutal legacy of Saddam, and especially his violent campaigns against the Kurds, I was surprised by the nuance many respondents took when discussing past policing. While even those who found some positives in Saddam's police almost always made sure to condemn them as well, many noted that not all of the police were corrupt, and that many were forced into their servitude. Hiwa is a good example of this attitude, noting "at that time, when someone had his or her home robbed by someone, the police came to you and were going to search and investigate the stealing. So in that case they would help you. But generally, they are going to threaten you, and hit you by their hand and by their baton. Generally, they were a suppressive organization." Soran similarly claimed "if you are going to say all of them are bad and incorrect, I don't think so. Because at that time if there was no police, maybe people would like to commit crimes and steal things. Of course they had done *something* good." Kajaw offered another representative qualified bit of praise, noting "at that time, they attacked the criminals and arrested the criminals and would defend the people in some ways."

Others offered that the force was at least mostly professionalized, such as Sefin who argued “maybe they did something well. At that time, there was no nepotism or giving someone higher rank or making them a higher rank. It’s unlike that here.” Kamaran offered even more tepid praise of the previous force, saying “the best thing they did toward us was to speak honestly or open with us at the checkpoint when they asked for our ID. They were good to us, but that’s it. Nothing else.” Finally, several respondents pointed to the fact that some of those police are still serving as a sign they weren’t all corrupt, such as Ramyar who argues there were a fair number of police who were “good and excellent to people, especially Kurdish police. They are still working in our government right now, those police, because they were good and excellent at that time and there is no...uh...they do not have any corruption or disloyalty to our nation.”

This begrudging respect of the previous force’s ability to make the trains run on time, so to speak, may offer another clue as to why the training process takes on such a highly symbolic militaristic nature. While obviously due in large part to the influence of the Department of Defense discussed above, it could likely be the case that the militaristic model is intended to signify certain ideas about the professionalism and capabilities of the new police. For although it is only anecdotal evidence, many members of the Iraqi public I spoke with about policing shared this same mix of hatred toward the police under Saddam and yet some level of respect for the ability they had to control crime. With the current force largely incapable of crime control, it makes sense that it would borrow certain elements from the previous regime (a highly militarized presentation oriented around displays of strength and discipline, e.g. marching and presenting arms) while adopting a rhetoric of human rights and democracy that distances



itself from the distasteful and unpopular elements of that previous force. As such, the current Iraqi police can be seen as attempting to borrow the image of the success of its predecessor while simultaneously rejecting (at least rhetorically) its unsavory aspects.

Yet despite this begrudging respect and nuanced understanding from these respondents, the vast majority saw nothing at all good or even acceptable about the police under Saddam. Many responded similarly to Firas, who simply said police at that time were “totally corrupted and totally bad. They didn’t do anything useful for Kurds.” This theme of both completely dismissing the previous force as well as pointing toward their unequal treatment was common in many responses; Kemman notes that “as a Kurd, when I went to any office, they always made me late and entered the Arab ones before the Kurdish ones. My grandfather and three uncles were martyred by that regime.” Similarly Hardi argued that these previous police “whatever they wanted to do, they did for the interest of the Baath party.”

But most were content to simply disparage the police under Saddam. Even those like Majid who were willing to concede the possibility of those police having done something well were still ready to condemn. He calls those police “totally corrupt. Maybe they have done something good or something positive, but they have also done hard and bad things.” Awdil agrees, saying “they were not police during that period, they were criminals.” But this perspective was best summed up by Ali who let me know that “they haven’t done anything good at all. They deserve [us] to talk about their badness forever. It is not enough to talk about their badness for 2 minutes.”

Respondents were much more loquacious in explaining what differentiated them from the previous force. As mentioned, the most common difference cited could be

categorized as respect; respect for the public, respect for the law, and respect for the Human Rights articles. This newfound respect even extends to the rest of the force, as Nazdar argues “in the time of Saddam, the Lieutenants, for example...would curse those under him. And morally they would wound or injure them always by speech. But now there is nothing like that and it is not acceptable. Here we respect each other.”

But most of the respect narrative focused on the public they are policing. Mohammed notes “the first difference is that now if police are going to arrest a suspect, they are going to practice all human rights articles, not to violate the criminal’s rights. They consider him a person and a human being.” Similarly, Jalal argued that police under Saddam “attacked innocent people and criminal people equally together. They were going to burn wet and dry together. They didn’t work with the human rights articles.” Dilsad believes this lack of respect caused a rift between the police and the public, something only now being overcome because “they were practicing Saddam Hussein’s principals and laws, they were not practicing human rights. Now we are practicing human rights articles and protecting people from every danger and police now are mixing with the people and visiting with each other.” Respondents also emphasized an importance difference between themselves and their predecessors is that they serve all of society under the direction of law, not a portion of it under the direction of one person. Sefin explains “they didn’t respect everybody’s individual rights. Police were extremists rather than police.” Karzan similarly notes “at the time of the Baath regime, they were extremists, and their purpose was not to keep our country’s or our people’s rights...but now police should serve everybody.”

Another major point respondents identified in respecting the citizenry was through listening. Bedad feels listening is the biggest difference, saying “police at that time were doing violence against people and would not listen to you...But right now police are going to listen to people or have a discussion with the people.” Peywan also saw this as the defining difference, arguing “at that time, there was no use for speaking with police. Police would not speak with you in a calm way...But now police are not like that, there is more freedom of speech now.” Harman spoke of his own experiences with Saddam’s police, explaining “Saddam Hussein was going to punish you without listening to you and without investigation...But right now, us police, we are going to protect the rights of criminals and listen to the criminal carefully...You have to be just when you’re investigating that criminal, and not add more points to his or her speech.”

These ideas of what separates the current force from the previous regime are notable not only for the picture they present of how Iraqi police are attempting to project an image of legitimacy to the public, but also for how they highlight the shallowness of the training process and the vast discrepancy that often exists between official training and actual practice on the ground. For while respondents regularly spoke of their respect for the rights of the accused and their high esteem for the Human Rights Articles, few could identify how these concepts should actually inform practice. Rather, the terms bore the unmistakable mark of public relations buzzwords; they were mostly meaningless phrases that all involved clearly knew were important but few actually knew what they meant. Similarly, the description of a disciplined force slow to use violence is rhetorically a great development, but as the evidence collected at the demonstrations shows, is far from the lived reality of Iraqi policing. If anything, these largely-empty buzzwords and

official ideologies so far afield from the actual experiences of police are likely to engender the professional anomie Goldstein (1990) writes of in regard to American policing that teaches young recruits such pronouncements are generally meaningless and that they should ignore the rhetoric and policies of management in favor of the working order established by their peers.

Finally, in an interesting echo to the work of Johnson (1996) on the development of state police to weaken the solidarity between police and their local public, several respondents complained of how Saddam would intentionally move police far away from their communities and families for the same purpose. Ramyar explains the process, noting Saddam took “police from here to the South and from the South to here in the North, in order not to have any kind of pity among them on the people.” Dukon identifies the local ties of police currently as the most important difference between the two forces, arguing police respect the public more now because “police are coming from that community or that society. Police now are the son of that community.”

It was very clear that for most respondents, a major part of demonstrating the respect they give and feel they deserve comes from being non-violent, or at least far slower to violence than the previous force. Rubaad remembers “at the time of Saddam Hussein, police were going to answer people with bullets. But the police discuss with people.” It was also clear this aversion to violence was not only good policing practice, but as a way to separate themselves from their predecessors. As Nazdar explained, “I’m always going to teach my students they should treat people peacefully and in a very calm way. Police should try to make more beautiful those bad clothes that had been left by Saddam Hussein’s regime.” For many, the point was so obvious it did not require

elaboration. Mohammed simply replied that the biggest difference between the two is “there is no hitting people anymore,” while Polan similarly noted “at that time, police were going to kill more people, but so far here, tight now, there is no more killing like that.” Chamal summed it up as simply “the respect for lives is most significant for police.”

Similarly, many respondents pointed to the fear Saddam’s police evoked in people, arguing the new force, with its emphasis on respect and human rights, has changed that fear to gratitude. As Ramyar explains “at that time, if I was police, then everyone would be afraid of me and everyone would run and hide themselves from the police. But now, everybody from the child and the young to the old and the ugly and the beautiful are going to give the police a flower, and it is a sign of peace, you know, and a sign of good and excellent police here.” Many focused on the importance of a change in outward appearance as well, such as Harman who recited a laundry list of changes police have gone through, but highlighting that “we have changed out clothes, even, because they have worn a kind of bad clothes and everyone was afraid of them, even their clothing. And now...we have changed out clothes into these nice ones.”

There was also an anecdote that was shared regularly by interview respondents and by trainers on the court that demonstrated the fear of the old regime and the strides they have made since. According to the story, police under Saddam were so feared they were often used as a sort of boogey man to scare children into complying with their parents wishes. Ali compares it to other nations to show how ludicrous those police were, saying “in Europe and America, people say, when they leave home, they advise their children that when we’re not present, your second parents are the police. During the

Baath regime...parents told their children, when they wanted the children to sleep and they did not sleep, they would say ‘we’re going to call the police on you.’”

The final major difference respondents identified between the two forces is the change from a force of obligation and conscription to a force composed of individuals who (ostensibly) *want* to be police. Majid notes “under Saddam Hussein’s regime, there was nothing good about being police. Here it is your option to be police, but at that time, maybe they were obliged to be police. And I pray that situation will never come back.” In addition to compulsory service, others noted the restrictions on who could become (or be forced to become) police as incredibly problematic. Kamaran recalls “if you were not a member of the Baath regime, or if you did not side with the Baath regime, then they wouldn’t accept you to be police.” Faizel further clarifies these restrictions, pointing out “at that time, they were establishing only Sunni people. Not Shi’i, not Kurd, not Turkomen...But now everyone can become police.”

Several respondents also pointed out that under Saddam, things were not very good for the police themselves. In addition to conscription, they were forced to carry out the whims and dictates of Saddam regardless of their own feelings. Hardi explains when “police will be ordered [by someone] above themselves, for example, to kill someone, it is up to police to kill them or not. It is his own right to think of the problem and if the order has come to kill that person and that person is innocent, the police cannot kill that person. But at the time of Saddam Hussein, the police were going to kill that person even if he or she was innocent. So police now have a right of freedom.” Biwar similarly notes “police in the time of Saddam Hussein were always suppressed by Saddam himself. And he obliged police to do everything. But now police are free to do everything and are not

obliged...it's more optional and democratic.” Perhaps most importantly, Kajaw explains that police at that time “that person would be police forever. Police at that time couldn't resign, it was obligatory. But now I know that if my salary is not good enough... I can resign and no one will be an obstacle for me.”

While this move from a force of obligation to one of volunteers should be viewed as a positive development, given the lived reality of recruits and trainers and their largely monetary reasons for joining the police, one is forced to consider how accurately notions of this shift reflect reality. With a force in which most members openly admit they joined solely for the paycheck and are actively looking for other employment, it seems more the case that forced conscription has been replaced with a sort of laissez-faire conscription in which recruits are forced to join out of economic necessity. While the methods of conscription employed may have changed, the result is still the same – a police force comprised largely of people who do not want to be police and are actively seeking to leave. Given the incredibly difficult work of policing in a democracy, a task which approaches impossible in even the best of circumstances, it seems highly unlikely a force comprised of a significant percentage of unwilling personnel will be able to handle the necessary work of establishing either capacity or legitimacy.

### **Views on the Coalition**

#### *On The Disbanding of the Iraqi National Police*

As mentioned, one of the more controversial actions taken in the reconstruction of the Iraqi police was the Baathist purge and disbanding of the previous Iraqi National Police (INP). Combined with a very slow movement toward repopulating the force with

newly trained police, as well as a general inattention to post-invasion security, this created myriad unexpected problems. Given the special place of the Kurds in Iraq and their suffering under the Hussein regime, this section explores how Kurdish Iraqi police view the disbanding of the previous force, specifically looking at how they balance their feelings toward their predecessors with the many problems the disbanding led to. Not too surprisingly, most interview respondents strongly supported the disbanding and de-Baathification, although a vocal minority expressed major reservations about the action.

Respondents who support the disbanding typically identified one of two reasons for their support: either the oppressive nature of the Hussein regime or the opportunity this provides to modernize and democratize the police. On the former point, many of the students and trainers clearly thought it was an odd question to ask, given the history of Hussein. According to Jalal, “of course [the disbanding] was an excellent thing. Saddam Hussein didn’t develop our country and didn’t do many good things, although he could have. He destroyed our country and destroyed himself.” Many others were even more direct, like Nazdar who felt is “surely and certainly was a good thing. Curse be upon them.”

Others more directly focused on the problems with the previous force. Hardi referenced the conscription discussed above, saying “it was good, because most of them were obliged to be police.” Kemman argued in favor because of “the differences in the police of Saddam Hussein – if I have committed a crime as a Kurd, maybe they are going to make it double or they will count me as the most criminal one compared to Arabs. That is the first. The second, they would establish and employ 100 Arabs and then establish three Kurds.” Harman argues they needed to be disbanded because “they were not being



taught with good information and they were not aware of every aspect of criminals. And they did nothing.”

Many others focused instead on the positive environment the disbanding of the INP will create going forward. For example, Nwenar argues that “if they didn’t do that, maybe the police would not become this modern and not join this century.” Similarly, Awdil felt it to be “beneficial, because of the knowledge I have know.” But this perspective is best represented by the comments of Ali, who supports both the disbanding and the presence of coalition trainers because they are “a step toward democracy. Because that police from that different place has an opinion, and that police here from a local place has another opinion which is different, so they can mix the two different opinions and have dialogue and forward the country.”

However, roughly a quarter of the interview respondents held serious reservations about the disbanding of the INP and especially its aftermath. Some, like Soran thought it was too broad, arguing “it’s not true that everyone in the police was a bad person or criminal, you know? Maybe there were many people who are good or excellent in the police. It takes too much time, arranging the army again.” He goes on to note that maybe if they police had not been disbanded “those groups who now have been made, would not have been made.” When pressed on what groups he was referring to, he answered “of armed persons who are fighting against Americans and who do not agree with the American presence. If the police had not been disbanded, maybe that kind of group has not been made.”

Most other dissenters expressed similar feelings about the disbanding contributing to terrorism and anti-invasion forces. Azad speculates “in the South provinces especially,

I do not agree. Because if the police had not been abolished or disbanded, they would control the situation. There are many good people in the police, so they have good experience at that time to control our security.” Kumar agrees, claiming “at that time, the Iraqi government was in need of those army and police forces. Most of the leaders of police under Saddam Hussein are becoming leaders of groups of terrorists and are going to do bad things like that. There is no need to hasten to abolishing until the government is going on its way.” He further argues it should have waited until conditions were stable; then at that point, they should “pick out those in the police and military field who are bad and are adhering to the Baath regime, or are criminal, and hand them over to the court.”

Finally, several of those who objected to the disbanding of the INP pointed to some of the major miscalculations of the invading force discussed previously. Faizel calls it a “great wrong...because when they did that, all weapons...every kind of weapons, has been stolen by terrorists and extremists” and agrees with Kumar that instead of a wholesale disbanding, there should have been investigations and prosecutions of corrupt officers after the government had stabilized. Finally, in perhaps an understatement regarding the mistakes in invasion planning, Lawk felt there were both good and bad points, but that “the problem was that, in terms of culture, they [the coalition] didn’t have knowledge of people in this area, so it caused problems for them.”

### *On Working With American Trainers*

This criticism, that those in charge of training did not fully understand the culture, nor did they tailor their materials appropriately for the region, has been made by Western sources. But again, conspicuously missing from these discussions are the voices of Iraqi

police themselves. As such, much can be gleaned from the first-hand accounts of those who have experienced American-led training programs on how well they feel the curriculum appropriately prepared them for the job. Amongst respondents, opinions were fairly evenly divided as to how well the training has helped them. While some respondents felt the training to be perfect and complete, others felt they were given a dumbed-down version or that the trainers didn't fully understand the situation in Iraq.

Many interview respondents spoke in glowing terms about their experiences with American trainers; Awdil is a great example of this perspective, exclaiming "I was fifteen years police and I didn't have that knowledge I got in two months time" from American trainers. Others were not only grateful for the training and knowledge, but also viewed American police as vastly superior, and as such, obviously with much to teach. For instance, Zara argues "American police are much more advanced and developed than they are here, so those American teachers come here and will come here in the future and teach us new lessons and that will be beneficial for us." Similarly, several respondents wished the trainers would come back more frequently, such as Harman who "would like the American forces to stay here longer in order to learn more from them."

However, many others were not so enamored with the American trainers, for a variety of reasons. For instance, Hawa felt as though the trainers were holding something back from him and his cohorts, asking "do the Americans aim to take those developments in American policing here or not, in the near future? We have been taught, for example, thirty percent...in that duration, maybe the American police developed more and more. Do they want to take that development here or not?"

Others felt that the curriculum had not been adapted to Iraqi society appropriately. Karzan feels the American trainers generally understood the culture, but taught “the same curriculum that the police in America are taught. They are the same. But according to every society and every country, it should have other things added.” When asked if they had attempted to adapt the materials, he replied “they have just only added some primary things, which is not great.” Faizel relays a similar story of working closely with American trainers. He also feels that for the most part they’ve done well, but with the exception “that our society will be different from their society; our traditions, our habits, our religion even sometimes will be different from their society. According to our tradition, maybe police here will be better than some American police treat his people...Maybe an American police will treat better an American person, but maybe it is somehow difficult for them to treat our people, because it is different.”

This inability to tailor the curriculum for Iraq demonstrates how policing is both reflective and constitutive of the problems in the Iraqi invasion. As has been demonstrated throughout this study, the training of Iraqi police mirrors that of American police in myriad ways; while this is to expected in some part, it also reflects a dangerous disregard for local conditions and culture. One of the biggest lessons of past reconstruction efforts is that there cannot be a one size fits all approach (Bayley and Perito 2010; Goldsmith and Dinnen 2007), yet there is little indication the training process was tailored to the realities of modern day Iraq.

Instead of following the lessons of past successes, those in charge of implementing the reconstruction of the Iraqi police force have instead opted for a highly militarized training process ill-suited to democratic policing (Kraska and Kappeler 1997).

As Garland reminds us, punishment does not just echo cultural mores and values, but “the law and its sanctioning practices play an independently constructive role in the creation of a cultural order” (1990: 266), and implicit in every exercise of penal power is a conception of the social order punishment is trying to protect and re-create. As currently constituted, the Iraqi police are a force much more adept at counter-terrorism and the repression of internal movements, rather than the protection of constitution rights and freedoms. This helps explain in great part why the Iraqi police still want for legitimacy, but also why a state which depends on them to be the face of the legal order similarly suffers a public perception of partiality and illegitimacy.

#### *On the On-Going Presence of American Forces in Iraq*

Much of the on-going debate in the United States surrounding the continued presence of coalition troops in Iraq centers on the ability of Iraqi security forces to keep stability in the nation. Yet conspicuously missing from this debate are the views of those security forces themselves on their level of preparedness and attitudes toward the American and coalition forces. What’s revealed here is that, not too surprisingly, the majority of Kurdish respondents favored the on-going presence of coalition troops. Most cited the help they’ve already received from American forces, as well as potential threats of hostile Arabs in the South and two hostile bordering nations (Iran and Turkey). However, there was a sizable contingent that is not fully sold on the presence of American troops, arguing they’ve overstayed both their welcome and their usefulness.

When asked about the continued presence of American troops and advisors, the most common reaction was something like what Haydar said. He feels “the staying of

them will be excellent for us. It would be good for them to stay with us longer. They are teachers and we are students of them.” The idea of education as what makes American presence valuable was a common theme; Rajan agreed, noting “Americans gave me my pistol. I couldn’t shoot before the Americans taught me how to. However long they can stay here, we can take a benefit from them.”

The other major theme of those who endorse the continued occupation was that of safety, especially from hostile neighbors. Hawler argues it’s necessary given that “Iraqi interior forces are not at a level to defend our country, so we need them to stay longer.” Because of a feeling the security forces in general are not ready to stand on their own, many responded with something similar to Anwar, who speculated “maybe Iran is going to interfere with our country, so it is better [Americans] are here. They are making our country safer.” Similarly, many pointed to the various disputed regions in the nation (most notably the city of Kirkuk, the only oil-rich region in the KRG, which has been a significant source of conflict between the KRG and the GOI and between Kurds and Arabs generally) as necessitating an outside presence. Faizel used both in arguing for a continued American presence, saying it “will be excellent for us, especially in the disputed areas between the Arabs and the Kurds...If they leave us, maybe our neighbor countries will interfere with Iraq. Maybe Iran or Syria or Turkey will take the country in another direction, so we need them to stay here.”

Although these Kurdish respondents were generally quite positive about the presence of American forces, many were fully cognizant that this situation was neither as beneficial nor received as well in other parts of the nation. Many responded with something similar to Mahmoud, who reports “according to the Kurds, yes, Americans

make us safer. But Arabs say that Americans have been a trouble for them.” Hawler expressed a similar sentiment in explaining “for the KRG there is no problem, but for the South maybe there is a problem.” It was not uncommon for such answers to also include some of the historical animosity between Kurds and Arabs in Iraq, such as Karzan who wants American forces to stay because “the Arab forces so far have not understood the democracy and they have not understood accepting each other.”

Of those who want to see the coalition forces leave, it is largely because they feel the Iraqi forces are ready to take over and that the American troops and advisors no longer have anything to offer them. Hawa actually considers himself amongst those who support the on-going occupation, but welcomes Americans “as long as they have things to teach us. When they don’t, that is when they must leave.” Others, however, feel that point has already been reached. As Lawk puts it “it’s better for them to leave. Because according to the news I’ve heard, the Iraqi police have the ability to keep the safety of the country.” Some, like Koren held the same opinion, but looked at it less about what they have learned and more about developing an independent nation. While he accepts American forces can “help and aid our police, teach us new lessons...many useful things,” he goes on to argue that the time has come for Iraqis to take over. He compares it to parenting, noting “if you are going to bring up a child, later on you want them to stand on their own feet. If the US stays, police here may never learn to function on their own, instead always waiting for Americans to help.”

Finally, in a fairly surprising finding for the region, several respondents expressed uncertainty about the motivations of the American occupiers, suggesting they want them to leave because they’re not really there to help Iraq. Kumar diplomatically explains “if

they are going to stay here for defending and protecting Iraqi and public interest, maybe it will be good, the on-going and the staying. If they are staying for the sake of saving or protecting the interests of American forces, maybe staying would be bad.” Others, like Benewa were more blunt in their appraisal, arguing any benefit Americans offer has long since been used up and that it’s time for “American forces to go to their country and leave our country. Because we have our country and they have their country.”



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **Introduction**

This dissertation examined how the Iraqi police force is being reconstructed, the training methods and ideologies employed, and the reception of these by trainers and recruits. I asked five research questions that assessed: (a) how an emerging police force defines the “deviant;” (b) how an emerging police force defines itself; (c) who an emerging police force recruits to its ranks (and who chooses to join); (d) how the presence of an international hegemon affects the mission of an emerging police force; and (e) why the training process centers on heavily militaristic, symbolic activities. Ultimately, I suggest the major failures of the training process (and the invasion in general) stem from an inability or refusal to heed the historical lessons of police construction. I argue that within a context of budgetary shortfalls, an unstable central government, and facing crime rates the likes of which most citizens have never seen, the Iraqi police have opted for a highly militarized symbolic form of policing as an attempt to project a legitimacy neither they nor the larger state have yet earned. Finally, this project contributes to establishing the centrality of policing to the structure of state power, vis-à-vis the symbolic and cultural legitimation of said state.

Providing a backdrop to this argument, I began with a review of the development of police forces and social control efforts in the context of Western history. Rather than being a story about control forces rising to meet the various criminal challenges of the day, the development of police has from the first instance been oriented toward

controlling the “dangerous classes,” the poor and working-class who act as a potentially destabilizing force for the preferred working order of the capitalist state. As such, police have become integral to the development of the Western state, central to capturing an ever-widening sphere of behaviors defined as criminal and thus subject to state control (Gottschalk 2006; Garland 1990; Gramsci 1971). This historical analysis was followed by a brief overview of the current police force in Iraq, which currently suffers from major perceptual problems of being corrupt and brutal (Albritton 2006), operates under a corrupt and nepotistic government ministry, and is being guided by a Department of Defense-led team that has been charged with being more interested in creating an auxiliary military than a democratic police force (Jones 2007).

This overview of the development of social control and police forces is placed within the framework of theories on how the state wields its power in an advanced capitalist system. I reject both postmodernist theories that eschew the centrality of the state (i.e. Levine 2002; Deleuze and Guattari 1983) and simple instrumentalist Marxian views that see the state as a wholly controlled by bourgeois interests. Instead, this study favors a view of the state as a relatively autonomous (Zeitlin 1980) adjudicator of various power blocs, albeit one that highly prizes a capitalistic worldview which routinizes class rule and subordinates all alternative viewpoints (Black 1987). My analysis relies heavily on a Gramscian (1971) understandings of hegemony and the dialectical role of coercion and consent. Combined with a Foucaultian understanding of the disciplining of the subject in modern capitalism, it is argued the police play a powerfully originary role in shaping the social order and even the individual themselves. This conception of consent shaped by discipline backed by the coercive power of the state allows us to understand

how a force such as Iraq's can emphasize idealistic goals of human rights and democratic liberties while simultaneously training a highly militarized and repressive force.

To view how this process operates, I performed an intensive ethnographic observation of an Iraqi police training academy, as well as conducting dozens of intensive interviews with staff and students at the academy. Although this particular academy was located in the KRG, an ethnically-distinct and semi-autonomous political region, I argue that given the historical political position of the Kurds in regards to the central government of Iraq, combined with their overwhelmingly high rates of approval for the invasion and coalition forces, this presents a best-case scenario for the reconstruction of Iraqi police. This study is also the first to privilege the voices of Iraqis themselves in an examination of the Iraqi police, providing an important viewpoint which is currently woefully absent from larger discussion on the issue. The interviews and ethnography combine to show large differences between the formal and informal lessons imparted by the academy, a discrepancy this chapter aims to explain.

To conclude this dissertation, I summarize and offer explanations for the main findings of the study. Following this, I concentrate on the macro-level theoretical implications of these findings. Specifically, how they inform our understandings of the operation of state power in the context of late capitalism, how they demonstrate the centrality of policing to not only state reconstruction projects but also the operation of state power in general, and finally, how this project can help us understand the imperialistic motivations guiding the police reconstruction project. Practically, this study also informs future reconstruction and police reform projects. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the limitations of this study and directions for future research.

## **Summary of Findings and Explanations**

### *Empirical Findings*

For better or worse, much of the training of Iraqi police is clearly directly imported from the training methods and ideologies of police in the United States. As such, Iraqi police training exhibits the “technofallacy” (Marx and Corbett 1991) of its American counterparts, wherein a focus on technological and organizational improvement and streamlining is privileged over the more esoteric components of the police world, such as legal education or interpersonal communication skills. However, the training of Iraqi police takes place in a context far removed from that of American police; in a nation still in the midst of a protracted civil war, with a central government viewed as corrupt and inefficient and still wanting for legitimacy, and with exploding violent crime rates, there are significant limitations constraining the training and development of Iraqi police. However, the limitations are not only of the practical and material variety, for Iraqi police are similarly constrained by the theoretical and ideological limitations imposed by both the context in which they operate and the narrowly-focused training they receive.

The training process itself is marked by the somewhat contradictory themes of heavy militarization and loose joviality. Although there were constant references to students needing to perform their duties with military precision, there was also a great deal of joking and laughter, with trainers playfully mocking students having a hard time of it and students more than ready to laugh at the failures of their comrades. While some of this looseness undoubtedly came from how the students viewed the job, it also clearly helped to build an *esprit de corps* among the recruits, a significant first step in building the intensive solidarity networks found amongst police (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993).

Yet despite this looseness, emphasis on the militaristic aspects of the training was impossible to ignore, both in discourse and in performance. Students and trainers alike dress in military-style uniforms and regularly carry AK-47s. In addition to being admonished to apply “military discipline” to their movements, students were told they are “training for war” and the terms “suspect,” “criminal,” and “terrorist” were all used interchangeably to describe those persons police would be concerned with. However, it is in the training exercises themselves where this militarization was most evident. The vast majority of students’ time was spent learning how to march in formation, how to properly salute and hold their rifle, and even the few lessons that could charitably be described as policing exercises were clearly centered on anti-terror work.

Beyond the militarization of the training process, the most fascinating aspect of lessons was their heavy focus on the symbolic. The vast majority of training lessons and exercises were dedicated to presentational matters, most of which have little application to policing. Proper formation marching alone received several *weeks* worth of the very limited training time, and was followed closely by saluting and presenting arms in terms of time dedicated to lessons. Each movement for proper protocol was broken down to its most basic components, and students spent hours on end making sure their gun was picked up in the proper manner, or that the correct foot came down when saluting a superior. Such an intense focus on the outward appearance of police at the expense of substantive lessons regarding actual police work only begins to make sense when viewed as an attempt to project a legitimacy the police do not yet enjoy.

This mind-numbing repetition time undoubtedly contributed to the overall loose atmosphere at the academy, either through students and trainers alike being visibly bored

and trying to inject some levity into the proceedings or through the many opportunities these lessons supplied for the making of mistakes, which were both punished and mocked. It also clearly contributed to an environment in which the majority of students (and even many trainers) displayed a level of indifference toward the training process so high as to border on outright hostility toward what they were being asked to do. Combined with the fact that most police have joined the force as a last resort due to their inability to find work elsewhere, most lessons were received by students either unable or unwilling (or both) to learn them adequately.

Students would regularly fail to perform seemingly simple tasks, continuing to make mistake after mistake despite, in some cases, several consecutive days of practice time. Because of the inordinate amount of time spent on repetition and correction, it is clearly not a lack of practice time leading to the students' troubles. Simply put, many students were clearly rarely paying attention, making the same mistakes they had just witnessed a classmate being berated and punished for moments earlier. This is not to lay all the blame at the feet of the students, however. In addition to pay scale and living conditions that could hardly be expected to motivate one to their fullest effort, the training program often seemed to be randomly assembled, and it was not uncommon for lessons to contradict one another.

Taken together, the training process as it exists is simply inadequate to produce individuals well prepared for policing a constitutional democracy. Even in the most ideal of situations, democratic policing is often considered a nigh-impossible task (Goldstein 1990; Skolnik and Fyfe 1993), yet it should go without saying these police will be operating in a situation far from ideal. In fact, it is likely that the very impossibility of

what the Iraqi police are being asked to do is what is driving this heavily symbolic training. Coupled with this emphasis on the symbolic, there was also a strong “cover your ass” (Moskos 2008) mentality in the training process; for instance, trainers urging the students having an especially difficult time with marching or saluting to hide themselves in the middle of the pack to make their mistakes less obvious. This again shows the stark supremacy of the symbolic; because of the lack of time (or interest) for correction, the student is advised at all cost to keep up the *appearance* of competence.

Not surprisingly, then, this form of training has produced students with only a shallow at best understanding of the rights and liberties of the citizenry, and nearly as often, a lack of understanding of their own rights and responsibilities as police. Human rights, especially, were held in a high place of rhetorical esteem; it was rare for more than an hour to pass without some mention of how these students were to operate under the guidelines of the human rights articles, and regular mention was made of the fact that before police did not respect the public, but now they will distinguish themselves from their predecessors by respecting and protecting every right of citizens. Yet these pronouncements were never followed by any sort of explanation as to what exactly the human rights articles covered, or what it would actually mean in practice to respect the rights of the citizenry. When pressed on this issue, students and trainers alike could always speak to the importance of human and democratic rights, but few could pinpoint what exactly those rights were or what they meant.

Furthermore, the training process itself would often contradict these lofty rhetorical goals. Firearms training is perhaps the best example of this. Students were repeatedly told in lecture that they were only allowed to shoot to kill if their life was in

immediate danger (though sometimes they were told they were never allowed to shoot to kill), and there were regular pronouncements during lessons about the need to be restrained in the use of physical force and to be “soft” with suspects. Yet on the firing range, all students practiced by shooting the head of a silhouetted torso on the target, and told that they were preparing for a war, and that in war there are no rules. At still other times, instructors told them to never hesitate to fire, because terrorists won’t hesitate. This bifurcated attitude toward to use of force was perhaps the most glaring example of what was often a wide gulf between formal training ideals and informal, practical norms.

A similar wide gulf exists between what Iraqi police desire in new recruits and who actually ends up joining. That this gulf exists should not be particularly surprising; given that most recruits join simply out of a need for employment and few, if any, fail out of the training process, it should be expected the police will not draw the highest caliber of recruits. However, the stated qualities desired in new police are very telling for how they reflect an emphasis on a very narrow, symbolic definition of policing. While many did express a desire for applicants who are well-educated and of a high moral standing, most focused their preferences on the physical attributes of the potential officer. The most commonly occurring answer to what an ideal candidate should possess was undoubtedly that they be big and strong enough to “dominate” any person they may come across.

While both students and trainers could paint a very vivid picture of the qualities they want in new police, all would just as quickly admit that picture was far from representing the reality of who actually becomes police. Most pointed to the low education requirements as the culprit; in Iraq, police are only required to have an intermediate certificate (the equivalent of American middle school), yet there are many



students admitted to the academy who don't even meet this low threshold. While there are many factors as to why the applicant pool for police meets neither ideals nor more practical standards (e.g. Goldsmith and Dinnen 2007), undoubtedly the largest factor was why most were drawn to the field in the first place.

When asked about why they joined the police, the most common answer by a large margin was the simple need for employment. Because of the shaky economy, government employment is by far the best chance at stable work for a majority of Iraqis, and of the government ministries, the Ministry of the Interior has by far the lowest standards for employment. Beyond the already low education standard, one really only needs to be over 18 and physically capable of performing the duties asked to qualify for policing. As such, the vast majority of police I spoke to told me of joining because they needed a job and this was the only one available. The fact that the job was seen as a last resort or a temporary stop-gap was evident in how many students at the academy openly and often spoke of wanting a different career or asking how to apply for a transfer to a different government ministry. Although a sizeable minority also expressed a desire for protecting their people and their homeland as a motivation for joining the force, even amongst this group the vast majority also cited the high unemployment rate or their own poverty as a major motivation for joining. Among the many obvious problems of a force comprised largely of people just in it for a meager paycheck, several students openly admitted they would put more effort in if they were paid more.

The question of what types of crime and what types of people are most suited for police attention directly mirrors the training process itself in that the answers to these questions demonstrate a very narrow and problematic view of policing. The Iraqi police

display what Reiman (2007) terms a “carnival mirror” approach to crime, in which the harmful actions of the poor and working class are elevated to matters of utmost concern, while the harmful actions of the elite are minimized or ignored. Homicide and theft were identified as far and away the most important crimes for police to focus on, whether directly in response to interview questions, or as the clear subtext to most training lectures. Similarly, questions of whom the police should be most concerned with usually identified the poor, the unemployed, or the physically handicapped as most likely to commit crimes. Although such an approach is common to police the world over (Williams 2007), it is an especially glaring dichotomy in a nation with as rampant political and economic corruption as Iraq is experiencing. In fact, responses to direct questions about corruption were very telling for the prospects of anti-corruption work moving forward, as most respondents felt it was something they should deal with personally rather than reporting the corrupt actions of their fellow police.

This is again important not simply because corruption is a major problem itself, but also because eliminating the corruption of the previous regimes was regularly identified by police as one of the lynchpins in separating from the past. In addition to removing this corruption, trainers and students alike pointed to respecting the rights of citizens and being slow to violence as the main mechanisms for distinguishing themselves from the brutal force that preceded them. However, here again we see the wide berth between formal ideologies and informal operating norms. For although police regularly spoke of respect for the public and a limitation on violence, their behavior at the demonstrations in town and general reports of their corruption and brutality (Dobbins 2009) send quite a different message. Similarly, many police spoke with pride of

replacing a system of conscription with one in which police are a volunteer force.

However, given the economic realities which led most of them to become police, I argue they've less moved to a free and voluntary recruitment process than they have replaced conscription of the gun with economic conscription.

Finally, beyond how they view their duties and their interactions with the public, how the Kurdish police view their political identity is a fascinating insight into the on-going project to foster a national identity of Iraqi amongst the disparate ethnic and religious subsets of Iraqi society. Confirming yet complicating the work of Moaddel et. al (2008), a surprising amount of Kurdish police identified themselves as some mix of Kurdish and Iraqi. While it was clear this was an incredibly complex question to answer for many respondents, it was also clear that to the extent they identify with the Iraqi state, it is more because they recognize the current political reality than it is them seeing themselves as true and full members of the Iraqi political body. This question of identity is important not only for the ways one could imagine this would affect their performance as police, but because they are not simply a random sampling of the Iraqi population, but rather a group of persons who have chosen to align themselves with the state (albeit rather tenuously in many cases) to become state actors representing a state institution central to building the legitimacy of the state. Yet even within this group of state actors, there is only a weak connection to the state, and many of them grant little legitimacy to the central government.

#### *The Centrality of Police To the State-Building Process*

Beyond examining the specific case of Iraqi police reconstruction, this dissertation has argued for the centrality of policing to the state-building project in

general, and especially to the legitimacy that state enjoys (or fails to achieve). Intuitively, it is clear that good policing is highly correlated with civil society; more specifically, Goldstein (1990) argues that “the strength of a democracy and the quality of life of its citizens are determined in large measure by the ability of police to discharge their duties” (1). The case of the reconstruction of the Iraqi police forcefully demonstrates the centrality of police to the state-building process, and shows how failing to construct a police force with the proper legitimacy and capacity can significantly negatively affect the possibilities of establishing a successful and legitimate constitutional democracy.

There is a long line of literature demonstrating the centrality of the criminal justice system to the creation, expansion, and maintenance of state power, and the state’s assertion of sovereign power over matters of law and order has been an integral marker of modernity (Menchen 2011; Simon 2007; Garland 2001; Foucault 1995). Gramsci (1971) and Foucault (1995) both speak of the power of the criminal justice system to shape the very citizens themselves to be more malleable to the exercise of state power; the former arguing this process comes about through the hegemonic control of education, media, and law, and the latter contending it happens through rigorous knowledge regimes. David Garland (1990) similarly argues that penalty has helped to create society, noting within “every penal relation and every exercise of penal power there is a conception of social authority, of the (criminal) person, and of the nature of community or social order that punishment protects and tries to recreate” (265).

Tilly (1985) argues state-making itself resembles organized crime, in that states have four requirements: war making (eliminating outside rivals), state making (eliminating internal rivalries), protection (eliminating enemies of clients), and extraction

(taxes, revenue generation). And while the European actors Tilly studied were not intentionally trying to create state, the taxonomy still generally holds for those who are consciously crafting states. Similarly, Gottschalk argues that in the American context, the criminal justice system has been employed for “little bursts of state-making” (2006), as the state has used the criminalization of large swaths of behavior to expand its power to control normative order.

However, I argue that what these accounts are missing is an understanding of the centrality of police to this process of state-formation through crime control. To begin with, police are both the most visible and material experience of government for many people. As “street-level bureaucrats” (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993) granted the power of wide discretion, they act as gate keepers to the criminal justice system, largely determining who comes into contact with the rest of the system. Furthermore, while civil rights and liberties on paper are important, it is in interactions with representatives of the state such as police that our rights are truly maintained or denied (Williams 2007). After all, the police “show in concrete terms for whom and in what manner governmental power will be used” (Bayley and Perito 2010: 152). In a nation like Iraq being reconstructed in the shadow of a totalitarian regime, it is especially the case that police are the most visible sign of the state for many people, as in the recent past police were directly used to carry out government control and repression in the most material of ways (Bender 2006). Given their place as such obvious and visible representatives of the state, I argue that the level of legitimacy the public grants to the police directly impacts their view of how legitimate or illegitimate the state itself is.

Yet beyond their status as gatekeepers and highly-visible representatives of the state, I argue the police are central to the state-building process because while the myriad functions they performed can be filled by a variety of actors and agents, only a public, rationalized police force can fulfill all those roles in a legitimate way. I use legitimate in this sense not to refer to the feelings of those involved or the moral stature of the codes being enforced, but “merely to the correspondence between the uses of force and the rules which specify when it can and should be used” (Przeworski 1985: 141). For instance, as was discussed above, the history of social control in Western Europe and the United States provides an excellent example of why police are necessary for securing a legitimate state. As Foucault (1995) argues, the corporal punishments associated with using the military for domestic social control were eventually rejected by the very audiences to whom they were directed. Similarly, the use of elite-funded private forces for social control made their class nature far too evident and often had the effect of exacerbating rather than mollifying class violence (Spitzer and Scull 1982; Silver 1967).

Tilly’s (1990) work on the state as protection racket is especially relevant. Currently in Iraq there are simply too many non-state actors who can run the protection racket, whether it be Islamicist militias such as the notorious Majidi army or the private militias of the political parties. As such, many Iraqi citizens do not turn to the state when they’ve been victimized by crime, but instead turn to one of the many private, non-state actors that are currently generally much more effective. Without a monopoly on crime control and the legitimate use of force, there are few, if any, motivations for “sub-state groups to shift allegiance and salience of identity to the national level” (Allen 2010: 423).

I argue it is *because* so many disparate groups *could* fill the weighty symbolic and practical functions of police that demonstrates their centrality. Because it is clear that none of these other actors capable of filling these functions have the goal of a legitimated democratic state guiding their actions (indeed, many of them directly seek to destabilize the Iraqi state). Given the immediacy of crime and its experience, especially in a nation experiencing high levels of interpersonal crime for the first time in most citizens' lives, the crime control and order maintenance functions of policing become especially important for state legitimacy. It is difficult to imagine even an already stable and well-developed state maintaining its legitimacy for long if its policing functions were filled by a multitude of distinct, unconnected, and often hostile private interests. Rather, because police can and do affect so many aspects of civil society and the lives of the citizenry, they almost by definition become an integral force in consolidating state power. As contemporary Iraq vividly demonstrates, without a rationalized police force filling the manifest goals of crime control and public order maintenance along with the latent goals of state consolidation and legitimacy-building, it becomes almost an impossible task to construct a legitimate state.

The police are also clearly central to garnering the consent of a nation's citizens to be governed, an obvious cornerstone of building legitimacy. As Gramsci (1971) reminds us, it is impossible to govern without the consent of the governed, although this consent can be limited or moderated in various ways. Tilly (1985), on the other hand, argues legitimacy is much less about the consent of the governed than it is about the probability that other authorities will act to confirm the decisions of that particular authority. Here again it's hard to imagine any state or private actor beside the police being able to draw

the support of the many other authorities necessary to function in a legitimate manner. For the current police in Iraq, the public view of them as weak and corrupt not only affects their legitimacy in the eyes of the public, but also clearly in the eyes of other important authorities. For instance, every major political party in Iraq has its own security force, which they rely on for order and protection far more so than the police. If even actors such as political parties, which would arguably have a vested interest in the development of a legitimate state, do not confer legitimacy to the police, it seems unlikely the larger public would.

### *Failing To Heed The Lessons Of History*

I argue many of the problems experienced in reconstructing the police force, and indeed many of the problems experienced in the invasion in general, stem from the inability or unwillingness of those leading the reconstruction to understand the proper role and nature of a police force within a constitutional democracy. Yet before explicating the important examples of these failures, I must acknowledge the myriad limitations, both practical/material and theoretical/ideological faced in the reconstruction process. Obviously, any attempt to reconstruct a state after such a long period of dictatorial rule is a difficult process fraught with many dangers. In Iraq, the police had long been used as a political apparatus rather than a police force (Bender 2006), and most of the populace has “no modern experience with federalism, and considerable skepticism toward it” (Dobbins 2009: 147). Yet despite these difficult limitations, there exist a number of practical and plausibly-implemented lessons regarding police reconstruction that could have been followed which would very likely have lead to a



much better situation. Indeed, many of the most glaring mistakes in this reconstruction effort sprang from ignoring widely-understood lessons gleaned from both the development of police forces historically and more recent instances of police reconstruction efforts.

Many of the problems in the police reconstruction effort stem from the fact that instead of the usual joint coordination of the Departments of State and Justice, the reconstruction of the Iraqi police was placed under the auspices of the Department of Defense, an unprecedented historical first (Jones 2007; Dobbins 2004). Furthermore, Major General Joseph Peterson, who is currently in charge of the U.S. effort to rebuild the force, openly admits he has no experience in either institution-building or policing (Moss 2006). This shift was coupled with an “apparent neglect in planning for post-invasion stability” on the part of the Bush administration (Hoffman 2006), that involved largely ignoring the police for the first several months post-invasion.

This neglect led to a crime rate the likes of which most Iraqi citizens had never seen, and has proved a serious roadblock to efforts at gaining state legitimacy (Dobbins 2009). Initially, the US sent only a few hundred advisors to work with a police force numbered well over 100,000 (Moore 2006), which by necessity meant training was neither intensive nor in-depth, and there was a strong emphasis on force generation that led to a quantity-over-quality problem that, as this study shows, still plagues Iraqi policing. As has been highlighted throughout this work, those in charge of reconstructing the Iraqi police force ignored myriad well-established lessons, from the proper training time and content, to proper vetting of applicants, to such mundane concerns as proper levels of funding and equipment (Bayley and Perito 2010; Goldsmith and Dinnen 2007;

Ackerman 2007; Dobbins 2004; Bayley 2006). Furthermore, as Wisler (2007) argues, most of the skills necessary for such reconstruction projects are not “police” skills per se, and relying only on those with police experience may hamper the cause more so than leaving the project to those with experience in institution building. In the case of Iraq, those leading the reconstruction effort had experience in neither.

However, beyond ignoring the technical recommendations of the police reconstruction literature, those responsible for the reconstruction of the Iraqi police force ignored the much more important historical lessons regarding the separation of the police and military forces. As discussed previously, the split between the military and police was a watershed moment for Western democracies, yet as is perhaps unsurprising with the military in charge, the Iraqi police have very much been shaped in a military mold. So much so to the point that the Armed Forces own status report on Iraqi police labeled them a force better trained in counter-insurgency tactics than in civilian policing (Jones 2007).

Yet even beyond the distant historical lessons regarding the inappropriate nature of the military model for policing, there is plenty of contemporary evidence suggesting a militaristic style is detrimental to democratic policing. As Goldstein (1990: 71) reminds us, there is already “so inverse a relationship between the diverse array of tasks the police are expected to perform and the extremely limited methods formally available to them” for getting that job done, a situation which is only exacerbated by a militaristic approach. For the military model of policing neglects the social, political, and economic dimensions of crime and justice (De Danieli 2011), and has had extremely deleterious effects on American policing (i.e. Kraska and Paulsen 1997; Jefferson 1990).

Of course, it was not simply lessons regarding development and reconstruction of police forces that were ignored, but also seemingly any but the most superficial understandings of Iraqi history and culture. This minimizing of Iraqi history and culture takes many forms, ranging from the small and simple (insisting on Western working hours at the academy despite midday heat making it unbearable to work) to rather weighty concerns, such as how the term “democracy” has very negative connotations for most Iraqis given how it was used to justify their previous suffering under British imperialism (Owen 2004). There was, of course, also the major miscalculation that Iraqis in general would welcome the invasion and that the already-existing Iraqi police would remain at their posts, thus allowing the US and coalition forces to ignore crime control (Bayley and Perito 2010), something which obviously did not happen.

Yet despite these lessons, the coalition made perhaps their greatest mistake in assuming new recruits would automatically be loyal to the Iraqi state and would work for its preservation and growth. As has become painfully clear, not only did many policing recruits not have any loyalty to the Iraqi state, but were actually joining to receive weapons and training to fuel their fight against the new government (Bender 2006; Owen 2004). As this study demonstrates, even amongst Kurdish police recruits who have far and away the highest levels of support for the coalition and invasion (Moaddel et. al 2008), they do not necessarily identify with the state, and more than a few of them view the central government with great suspicion.

Finally, coalition authorities made a major mistake by having no plan in place to deal with the almost-inevitable corruption on the force. This is a problem of both how we would generally conceive of corruption on a police force, but also an example of how

little consideration was given to differences in culture and tradition. Corruption is a problem across Iraq (Hawramy 2012), and it would be simply foolish to assume the police would be immune from this. Yet in all training activities, how to recognize and deal with corruption was never discussed, let alone any serious vetting of recruits regarding potential conflicts of interest or other corrupting concerns. Furthermore, although there is not space here to go into the myriad differences between American and Iraqi culture, one of the major differences is the continued and pervasive influence of clan and familial ties in Iraq (Moaddel et. al 2008). To drastically over simplify, the majority of Iraqis, when given an opportunity to fill a rare job opening, will greatly favor those sharing family and clan ties. When such a tradition meets Weberian rationalization, it registers as corruption, as a system of patronage and nepotism develops in place of the open, merit-based hiring and promotion systems demanded by Western ideals. Indeed, accusations of nepotistic corruption are a regular feature of Iraqi political and social life (e.g. Kurd Net-a 2011). That there appears to be no regulations or policies in place to address this speaks volumes to how little thought was put into problems that any moderately-informed observer would easily anticipate.

Finally, it is clear those leading the reconstruction failed to put into place a feasible plan for funding the police after their presence waned. The budget issues faced at the academy are not simple matters of funding not being what academy leaders would like, but instead severe shortages that significantly negatively impacted the ability of the academy to train recruits. This negative impact is felt both materially, in not having enough equipment to complete training exercises or not having enough bullets to get any more than token firearms trainings, as well as in more esoteric ways, such as in not

having enough time for proper instruction and making salaries so low as to be demoralizing.

Yet these funding problems go well beyond hampering the ability to train new police. Such severe budgetary issues can really only lead to two possible outcomes; one being that the already significant levels of corruption on the force will continue to rise. Basic police are paid so little money that they can scarce afford rent and other necessities, which certainly increases the likelihood they may turn to abuses of authority such as ransom kidnappings or extortion, both of which are already problems with the force (Moss 2006). Similarly, police may be forced to lean financially on powerful political parties, pushing them to become *de-facto* privatized forces and all of the significant problems that go along with that. The alternative, even if police are able to stem the tide of corruption, would be that these budgetary shortages keep them in a weakened state, unable to fill their many important functions. This will, in turn, only serve to erode public faith in the effectiveness and legitimacy of the police.

### *The Creation of a Client State?*

Much as Erickson (1966) argued the failures of the American criminal justice system are so fundamental as to make us question whether its stated aims of crime prevention and control were ever actually its purpose, the multiple fundamental mistakes of the coalition in regards to this incredibly important and central aspect of state-building does force one to consider the notion that the US never had a fully realized democracy in mind, and that these are not failures so much as they are success (cf. Reiman 2007) in creating a dependent client state. As has been demonstrated throughout this dissertation,

few of the practices and ideologies of training make sense as a response to the realities of crime and disorder in Iraq, yet begin to make much more sense when viewed through the lens of attempting to establish a subordinate client state.

Police training programs have long been central to modernization and anti-communist nation-building efforts lead by the United States, as police serve “key political and ideological functions in providing the internal security and order deemed necessary for the implementation of liberal-capitalist development plans” (Kuzmarov 2009: 193). During the height of the cold war, US police aid began to shift from promoting organizational efficiency and police professionalization to increasing surveillance targeting criminals and subversives, and trainers and advisors would often turn a blind eye even to egregious human rights abuses as long as economic and political interests were protected (Go 2011; Kuzmarov 2009; Williams 2007). Thus, instead of actually instilling democratic police forces, these training programs were essentially just modernizing the repressive apparatus in these client states, and I argue a similar process is taking place in Iraq.

The United States has had a clear goal of global economic and military dominance for the past several decades, and has established a series of client states worldwide to aid in this project (Go 2011). Most often this is done in the name of neo-liberal “openness;” the idea that foreign states opening their markets to US finance, products, and cultural exports will result in peace and prosperity for that state, as well as extending the reach and influence of the American empire (Bacevich 2002). In Iraq, it is clear the US is seeking to not only establish a stable foothold in the oil-rich Middle East,

but also to create a defensive geopolitical line separating the growing economic and military influence of China and Russia from the Western world (Harvey 2003).

This view especially helps understand why militaristic self-presentational matters are prioritized to the detriment of training and education regarding law or rights during the training process. As Garland (1990) argues, modern penalty should be thought of as a “cultural performance,” less about the immediate issues of crime control than it is about expressing “a definite sense of how social relationships are (and should be) constituted in that particular society” (276). But more importantly, Garland sees penalty as helping to create society, noting that within “every penal relation and every exercise of penal power there is a conception of social authority, of the (criminal) person, and of the nature of community or social order that punishment protects and tries to recreate” (265). Gramsci agrees, arguing “the state is the instrument for conforming civil society to the economic structure” (1971: 208) and that the law plays an essential role in this process. Thus the forces which enact penalty create a sense of not only their own inevitability, but also of the necessary, and necessary rightness, of the status quo.

Unfortunately, the status quo which is currently being constructed is far from democratic. There is little doubt the United States wants to use the new Iraqi state to “transform the Middle East” and establish uninterrupted access to energy sources and a string of friendly proto-democracies (Gaddis 2004; Owen 2004; Bacevich 2002), and despite the Obama administration’s early claims to dramatically change the focus and nature of the ongoing conflict (Obama 2008), the overall philosophy of creating an American-friendly Iraq remains unchanged (Dobbins 2009). Seen in this context, the reconstruction of the Iraqi police force brings to mind Wright’s (1996) distinction

between exploitative and non-exploitative forms of economic oppression. In the former, the material welfare of the dominant group is causally related to the material deprivation of another, in the latter, there is no direct exchange of wealth from the oppressed to the dominant class. As such, the heavily militaristic nature of the Iraqi police training process begins to make sense; an oil-producing client state does not need a police force that ensures democratic rights, but rather one that is able to project a strong enough image to deter major disruptions to the social order.

Similarly, the idealistic yet ultimately empty rhetoric in the training process concerning human and civil rights is explained by Gramsci's conception of the state as "hegemony protected by the armor of coercion" (1971: 263). Clearly the discourse of human rights and the respect of citizens is of utmost importance to Iraqi police; it was a constant refrain in both training exercises and in the answers of interview respondents. Yet the shallow manner in which such subjects were discussed, paired with the observed actions of police and other security forces both at the demonstrations and throughout the nation, shows this rhetoric to be quite hollow. Again, it makes far more sense to understand this human rights rhetoric as an attempt to gain legitimacy; indeed, many interview respondents spoke of how a respect for human rights would separate them from the past and legitimate them in the eyes of the citizenry. Yet clearly what these police were being trained for was not the types of legitimated behaviors that earn consent, but rather the repressive coercive actions necessary for when consent breaks down.

These ideas of client statism and the latent motivations of the United States and coalition forces are important beyond the uncomfortable *realpolitik* analyses they invite. I am far from the first to raise these notions, and the idea that the reconstruction of the



police and the state may be more about the interests of the United States than about the constitutional safeguarding of the rights of Iraqis is not an uncommon thought amongst the people of Iraq (Zulal 2011). This perception has important consequences for the chances of police ever being able to establish legitimacy with the citizens of Iraq. As mentioned, Gramsci (1971) argues that it is impossible to govern without the consent of the governed, and this principle “extends to all actions demanding sacrifice” (245), such as submitting to the authority of the police. Coupled with the fact that police viewed as complicit in foreign coercion and imperialism are very likely to be distrusted by the public (Kuzmarov 2009), it seems the police will continue to have an incredibly hard time establishing legitimacy. Given the central role police play in the establishment of state authority, this paints a particularly dire picture of the Iraqi state’s ability to operate with the consent of the Iraqi people. Even in the KRG, where attitudes toward America and the coalition are far more positive than they are in the rest of the nation (Moaddel et al 2007), there is still considerable skepticism toward the police and the state.

### **Research and Theoretical Implications**

While sociologists have examined how the state’s assertion of sovereign power over matters of law and order has been an integral marker of modernity (Simon 2007; Garland 2001; Tilly 1990), and how the criminal justice system has been employed for “little bursts of state-making” (Gottschalk 2006), most studies have been focused on an American context. Furthermore, those studying the expansion of the carceral state have focused on either prison (e.g. Herivel and Wright 2003; Wacquant 2002; Western and Beckett 1999) or the effect on individuals post-incarceration (e.g. Manza and Uggen

2006). Using a mixture of ethnography and intensive interviews, this study has demonstrated the centrality of police in the process of symbolic and cultural legitimation of the state. This results of this dissertation point to numerous implications for sociological research and theory. Here I briefly highlight and discuss the implications for research on the state and state power, as well as research on police reconstruction efforts.

### *Research on the State*

This project has emphasized two strands of thought regarding the position of the state and how it wields its power in the context of late-period capitalism; the first strand argues that the state continues to be a meaningful and important locus of power even within globalized, transnational capitalism, while the second highlights how the punitive “right hand” (Bourdieu 1992) of the state is just as, if not more, important than the social welfare “left hand” for understanding how state power is organized and deployed.

In the past few decades, many theorists of power have begun to move away from statist conceptions, instead emphasizing postmodernist deconstructivist or post-structuralist notions of the wielding of power (i.e. Levine 2002; Deleuze and Guattari 1983). However, I argue this abandonment of the state as an important locus of power is premature; as Aronowitz (2002) argues, even powerful non-governmental organizations such as the World Trade Organization are still dependent upon, and usually act in accordance with, the ideological and military support of a handful of powerful states.

This dissertation serves as an example of why the state remains such an important locus of study for understanding power relations. The state remains an important and necessary tool for gaining consent of the governed, which in turn is a necessary step for

the creation of legitimate power. As Gramsci (1971) forcefully argues, it is impossible to govern without the (at least qualified) consent of those being governed. The case of contemporary Iraq, and especially the many problems it faces, serves as a powerful example as to what happens when a state fails to secure consent and legitimacy.

As demonstrated throughout this dissertation, many of the problems with police training and the invasion as a whole stem from US and coalition forces failing to recognize the necessity of state legitimation and the centrality of certain important state actors to gaining it. As Tilly (1985) reminds us, the state is perhaps the only institution that can eliminate rivals and run the protection racket in a legitimated way. Currently in Iraq, there are a number of organizations attempting to run the protection racket, fueling a continuing civil war. Without a state powerful enough, and more importantly, viewed as having the legitimate authority to eliminate or subsume these various factions, it seems highly unlikely any form of peaceful working order will be established. Although there are obviously a great deal of factors influencing the instigation and continuation of this intense civil war, the coalition authorities ignoring the important role of the police for so long post-invasion undoubtedly greatly exacerbated the situation. This resulted in many Iraqis conferring consent and legitimacy to a wide variety of non-state actors who proved more effective at controlling interpersonal crime and maintaining order. The continued problems with police training and the implementation of the reconstructed force means Iraqis have little, if any, incentive to shift their identification and loyalty to the central Iraqi state. Without a legitimated state drawing both the material and ideological support of the populace, the tenuous federalism which currently exists is likely to schism and threaten the entire state-building project (Nuruzzman 2010).

Furthermore, this study confirms the work of sociologists who have pointed to the central role punishment and penalty play in organizing and disciplining society. Garland (1990) argues that state institutions “play a key role in organizing ruling-class power” (87), while Gramsci (1971) similarly argues that the state is both educative and formative, adapting citizens to what is necessitated by the dominant economic apparatus, seeking to evolve even new forms of humanity. The reconstruction of the Iraqi police force can be seen as playing a role in this organization of power and disciplining of the populace. With its emphasis on a rhetoric of human rights and civil liberties combined with a militarized training regimen clearly designed for the coercive use of force, the Iraqi force is being trained to police the line between consent and coercion. As their actions at the demonstrations make clear, the Iraqi police are the iron fist within the velvet glove (CSJA 1982), attempting to garner consent and legitimacy with rhetorical nods toward human rights and non-violence, yet being ready to deploy lethal coercion should consent fail.

#### *Research on Police Reconstruction Efforts*

As discussed above, this dissertation has demonstrated the central place of policing to state formation and to state reconstruction projects. Beyond this general argument, there are also a number of insights granted into police reconstruction projects specifically. While much of this dissertation confirms what previous scholars (i.e. Ellison 2007; Goldsmith and Dinen 2007; Bayley 2006; Neiled 2001; Stanley 1999) have written about such efforts, it highlights the absolute necessity of police training amidst reconstruction efforts to both address and provide for the actual material conditions police find themselves in and are likely to face in the near future.

Bayley (1975) argues that rather than intuitive factors like crime rates and population demographics, what truly shapes newly created police forces are transformations in the organization of political power, prolonged violent resistance to government, development of new law and order tasks, and the erosion of former bases of community authority. As such, police forces created in times of political turmoil, especially conflicts that directly challenge the “legitimacy and capacity of the state at the moment of its creation” (Bayley 1975: 361) are most likely to become shaped to political ends of state elites, typically strongly centralized to facilitate easier control. This hypothesis has been confirmed in studies of police reconstruction following civil wars (Stanley 1999), and very much appears to be the case in contemporary Iraq.

To avoid such politicization and abuse of police powers, scholars have built a laundry list of dos and don'ts for reconstruction efforts. Paramount among these concerns is the importance of proper training and recruitment. In terms of recruitment, it is a widely-held consensus that a force feature few, if any, police from the previous regime and that all recruits go through a comprehensive vetting process (Bayley 2006; Neild 2001). Additionally, the emphasis in recruitment must be on quality, not quantity, as a focus on simply adding numbers to the ranks almost invariably results in a brutal and corrupt force unable to maintain democratic law and order (Stanley 1999). Yet the recruitment process in Iraq has been anything but thorough, and the vetting process is practically non-existent. The existence of ghost payrolls alone points to how little insight coalition authorities have into whom is joining the police (Broadwell 2005), and the widely-acknowledged practice of terror groups using the training process to gain skills and weapons points to even graver concerns regarding recruitment standards (Allbritton

2006). Similarly disconcerting is that police who served under Saddam Hussein's regime have only been required to complete a three-week course to re-orient them toward democratic practices (Moss 2006).

While there are obviously practical limitations to the level of qualification demanded from recruits and the length and intensity of the vetting process, the myriad problems experienced by Iraqi police reaffirm the absolute necessity of setting realistic standards, and especially, uniform standards for dismissal. Many of the problems associated with the low standards in Iraq can be traced to the 2006 "Year of the Police" initiative, wherein coalition forces, having recognized their mistake in neglecting the police for so long, placed a major emphasis on "force generation" (Jones 2006). While recognizing the need for police was sound, the emphasis on numbers led directly to the quantity-over-quality problem the Iraqi police are still experiencing.

Another pivotal consensus of the existing literature is for thorough and applicable training processes (Bayley 2006; Goldsmith and Dinnen 2007). Unfortunately, police training in Iraq is currently neither thorough nor applicable to the lived reality these police will experience after they leave the academy. This dissertation highlights the necessity of training programs to address the material realities police face, both personally and professionally. In terms of professionalization, Iraqi police training unfortunately falls prey to the "myth making" (Goldstein 1990) of the police world. Similar to their American counterparts, although they will be asked to fulfill a great many functions, their training focuses only a small aspect of the job, more-or-less ignoring all others. This imbalanced myth-based training process is the result of limitations both practical and theoretical. On the ideological level, the police are being trained as if they

were an auxiliary military force; on the practical level, training is so short in both time and duration as to make it nearly impossible to convey proper information.

The behavior of police at the demonstrations can likely be traced to this fact; although police acted inappropriately, it can't be said they contradicted their training, as they received no training on the subject. The same can be said for the similarly widespread reports of brutality; as shown, students at the academy are rarely given direction on the proper use of force, and the few times they are, they receive often contradictory information. A thorough analysis of the training process makes it clear that the problems Iraqi police are experiencing are almost inevitable, as they have not been trained to handle any of the actual situations they may confront as active duty police.

This also points to the need for future training programs lead by the United States to be placed back into the hands of the Departments of Justice's (operating in conjunction with the Department of State) International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (Jones 2007; Dobbins 2004), the group behind much more successful police reconstruction ventures, such as in Bosnia Herzegovina. The problems associated with placing police reconstruction under the auspices of the Department of Defense are again both practical and ideological. Practically speaking, the military simply has neither the capacity for institution building nor the requisite knowledge of proper policing practices. On the ideological level, the two models are simply incompatible. Good policing requires flexibility and personal discretion, whereas military service requires rigid discipline and top-down command structures, to mention nothing of the very different institutional mandates of the two. Viewed with this understanding, it should not be a surprise that the

coalition's own report on police progress found them to be a force better trained in counter-insurgency tactics than in civilian policing (Jones 2007).

In addition to acknowledging the material realities police will face on duty, this dissertation also makes it clear that reconstruction efforts need to similarly acknowledge the material conditions police face in their own personal lives. Beyond the many budgetary problems at the academy, which often forced students and trainers alike to supply portions of their uniform and some weaponry themselves, there was also clearly little thought to the living conditions of Iraqi police. Beginning police in Iraq make 500,000 Iraqi Dinars (US\$ 428.95) per month. To put that in perspective, rent in even the worst buildings is impossible to find for less than 200,000ID/month, meaning this would be a pretty paltry wage even for safe and easy work, which policing in Iraq is decidedly not. As interviews with both students and trainers makes perfectly clear, this small salary makes policing appealing only to those desperate for employment, which contributes again to the low level of recruits the police are attracting.

Finally, this project serves as a powerful confirmation of Goldsmith and Dinnen's (2007) proposed guidelines for police reconstruction projects. They argue that any attempt to create a new force must be preceded by a serious study of the setting, and must be flexible and adapt to local cultural and social considerations, as well as acknowledging the inherently political nature of policing. Not only did those leading the reconstruction effort in Iraq fail to conduct a serious study of the region, but as this study has demonstrated, have repeatedly made policy decisions that ignore or run counter to local traditions and modes of organization. The many failures of the coalition in this regard stand as a stark reminder of the price paid when such considerations are ignored.



### *Research on Imperialism*

Go (2009) argues that sociology has for too long ignored the study of empire and imperial formations, noting it is only in the past decade or so that scholars have turned any sort of meaningful attention back to the subject. He argues this is problematic not only because it means ignoring an important social process, but because the study of empire and colonialism has the potential to challenge “methodological nationalism” that sees states as isolated and representative agencies, and to instead push us to see how core sociological assumptions may need be rethought in light of their functions in the transnational imperial project. This study builds on that perspective by demonstrating how central policing is to understanding the formation of imperial client states, but also in showing how the imperial project impacts and shapes the understanding of the role and nature of developing police forces.

This project also demonstrates the importance of a historically-situated understanding of the operations of imperial institutions. Since its inception as a nation, US foreign policy has had an undercurrent of paranoid unilateral action that sees a hostile world community which can rarely be trusted and should only be collaborated with when absolutely necessary (Go 2011; Gaddis 2004). Although this trend began to reverse as the United States became a global hegemon, the move back toward unilateralism in the Iraqi invasion signals a move from a governing of consent to one of coercion, similar to what happened when Britain’s grip on global hegemony began to loosen (Go 2011).

However, while its actions have some historical antecedents, the actions of the US only make sense when situated in the contemporary landscape of neo-liberal expansion

and understandings of how the modern state is meant to operate. This operates at both an institutional and ideological level; the hasty establishment of a constitution and various state agencies gives a clear picture of what we envision as the necessary apparatus of a modern state. Yet there are also strong ideological visions of what a neo-liberal, democratic state should look and function like. Chief amongst those are political independence and sovereignty, which require such things as a strong and responsive police force. It must be remembered that this police reconstruction process has been a heavily top-down process, not a response to an outcry for a Western-style police force. Rather, it is clear that the presence of a police force is how Western states understand the manifestation of law.

While in previous eras Britain was able to simply take direct political control of states, the US is operating in a context in which they can not only not assume direct control of sovereign states, but in which any state they seek to add to their imperial control must keep the appearance of political independence. This, again, is why police are so important to the imperial state building process, as well as why they take on the peculiar form observed here. The police need to be able to project legitimacy and effectiveness to allow the US to plausibly claim Iraq is a sovereign, functionally independent state. At the same time, the police need to function at most as a force to keep internal stability, hence why what little practical training they receive centers around the violent suppression of subjects.

### **Study Limitations and Directions for Further Research**

This study advances theory and research on the central role of policing to state formation and how contemporary state power is enacted through policing by providing first-of-its-kind empirical evidence regarding the training of police as part of a state reconstruction effort. Results offer a more complicated and nuanced understanding of the role of police in enacting state power. While future research will benefit from these preliminary theoretical frameworks and empirical findings, there remain limitations to this intensive study. Most notably, Kurdistan is a comparatively homogenous region where the creation of a police force has gone more smoothly than elsewhere (Moaddel, Tessler, and Inglehart 2008; Jones 2007). The predominantly Kurdish population is ethnically distinct from the largely Arab population of the rest of the nation, although they report similarly high levels of national pride and identity (Moaddel, Tessler, and Inglehart 2008). Additionally, Kurdistan continues to experience far less violence than the Southern portions of Iraq (Green and Ward 2009).

Furthermore, while residents of the KRG are Iraqi citizens, they do occupy a semi-autonomous region, with its own prime minister, governmental ministries, and the like. Also, I was only able to observe one of several training centers in Iraq, with again predominantly Kurdish students and staff. However, the police are federally coordinated, and share the same American advisory force, and training programs and exercises are meant to be uniform throughout the nation (Broadwell 2006).

However, the biggest limitation on this research is the vastly higher approval rates amongst Kurds (compared to the rest of Iraq) for the deposing of Saddam Hussein, the “American Liberation” (as it was typically referred to) of Iraq, and American forces in general. However, I argue that many of these limitations only serve to bolster the claims

made throughout this work. With its combination of relatively low levels of violence, ethnic and religious homogeneity, and strong support for US and coalition forces, the KRG represents a best-case scenario for police reconstruction. If such fundamental problems are apparent under these nearly-ideal conditions, it can only be assumed they are exacerbated by the contentious and schismatic conditions in the South.

There are also several limitations to the methodology employed. Due to the emergency situation surrounding the demonstrations, the ethnographic observation was confined to only two courses comprised of around 150 students total. Interviews suffered from the probability that respondents may have been occasionally telling me what they assumed I wanted to hear rather than their honest opinion or assessment of the situation. Ethnographic observation of the training sessions and of police behavior at the demonstrations helped to balance this to a degree. However, I argue that even responses framed as what the respondent believed I wanted to hear provide useful data. Answers based on what the respondent believed the proper answer to give someone outside of the force reveals what the students and staff at the academy feel to be the proper public face of police, which is an important component for understanding how Iraqi police are attempting to broadcast their legitimacy.

These limitations notwithstanding, this study has a number of strengths, particularly in light of prior research on the subject. To my knowledge, this is the first ethnographic study of the training of Iraqi police, and one of, if not the, first first-hand examinations of police reconstruction during an active war. The vast majority of extant literature on the subject is either archival work or conducted from afar and based almost entirely on secondary sources. While I fully acknowledge my place as an outsider both

culturally and ethnically, this is one of the very few studies of its kind to privilege the voices of the police themselves. While survey studies of police forces which have recently undergone the reconstruction process are available (e.g. Stanley 1999), few existing studies feature intensive interviews with either trainers or students during the reconstruction process. More specific to this case, this study provides a space for Iraqi voices in the discussion on Iraq's formation and future. While a fair amount of work has been published on the reconstruction of the Iraqi police (cf. Bayley and Perito 2010), this is the first to my knowledge to include the perspectives and insights of the Iraqi police themselves.

Future research can benefit from the insights granted by the forces in question themselves. While many rightly have concerns about access and safety (Green and Ward 2009), studies of this kind demonstrate that not only is this line of inquiry possible, but also fruitful. Fundamentally, this study explicates both how and why the force is likely to experience significant struggles in the future, and why these struggles are likely to significantly negatively impact the chances of creating a stable and democratic Iraq. Future research should be guided toward understanding how these police understand and interact with the environment they find themselves in post-training, and where the spaces and possibilities for the construction of legitimated democracy can occur in the police.

Another line of research springing from this study would be situating police reconstruction within an historical understanding of normative state conceptions. It is clear that many of the problems experienced by coalition forces in Iraq stems from an uncritical, almost unthinking, set of assumptions about the project and how a state should be organized and operate. Most of these assumptions stem from a Western understanding

of what a state looks like and what its priorities are. Situating these understandings in a historical context of neo-liberal development and American imperialism can greatly inform our understanding of the struggles so common to post-conflict police reconstruction.

Finally, future research on both police reconstruction and empire can benefit from the germ of a gendered understanding of empire present in this study. Although space constraints did not allow for the full development of this idea, there is a clear undercurrent of gendered understandings of not only the police, but the larger state, present in this study. Given that the political rights of women are often used as a marker of modernity or progress when evaluating nations, the complicated role of gender in the reconstruction of the Iraqi police clearly has much to offer. Although women are able to become police in Iraq, it was clear throughout this study that they would not be seen as fully equal police, nor would they likely be warmly received by their future cohorts. Yet this denial of women's authority goes beyond the misogyny found in many police forces, but instead clearly points to a specific form of masculinity as inherently part of the state-building process.

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## APPENDIX

### ALIASES AND STATUS OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

In order of appearance in the manuscript:

Hawa, Trainer  
Firas, Student  
Biwar, Trainer  
Ramyar, Trainer  
Nwenar, Trainer  
Mohammed, Student  
Ali, Trainer  
Faizel, Trainer  
Nazdar, Trainer  
Berham, Trainer  
Sirwan, Student  
Kamaran, Student  
Lawk, Trainer  
Hardi, Trainer  
Dukon, Trainer  
Hawler, Student  
Zara, Trainer  
Jalal, Student  
Mahmoud, Trainer  
Anwar, Trainer  
Hiwa, Trainer  
Harman, Trainer  
Majid, Student  
Bedad, Student  
Kemman, Trainer  
Rizgar, Trainer  
Soran, Trainer  
Chamal, Trainer  
Shar, Student  
Rajan, Trainer  
Karzan, Trainer  
Dilsad, Trainer  
Koren, Trainer  
Birhat, Trainer  
Gazin, Trainer  
Kumar, Trainer  
Azad, Trainer  
Benewa, Trainer  
Hejar, Trainer

Kekan, Student  
Haydar, Trainer  
Peywan, Trainer  
Rubaad, Student  
Sefin, Trainer  
Polan, Trainer  
Kajaw, Trainer  
Awdil, Trainer