

postimperial and prenatal realities" (p. 266), played out differently in the varied parts of the empire. Understanding the lasting impact of the empire's unravelling on the different parts of the region, as Bozarslan also suggests, is key to comprehending the painful century that followed. *World War I and the End of the Ottomans* is a welcome sign of maturation for a field that has developed slowly. It is an important volume that deserves a place on the shelves of research libraries.

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AARON M. FAUST:

The Ba' thification of Iraq: Saddam Hussein's Totalitarianism.

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This book is the latest among a growing number of studies published on the history of Ba' thist Iraq, which analyse documents from within the former Iraqi ruling apparatus captured in the wake of the invasion of 2003 and subsequently transferred to the USA. The author uses party documents known as the Ba' th Arab Socialist Party Regional Command Collection (BRCC) housed in the archives of the Iraq Memory Foundation at Hoover Institution. The collection consists of some 11 million pages. The Regional (i.e. Iraqi) Command was the second highest decision-making body within the formal hierarchy of power in Ba' thist Iraq. For pragmatic reasons, Faust limits his search to a selection of these sources consisting of some 2.8 million pages. He is aware of methodological problems involved in systematically analysing such an enormous quantity of sources, but convinced that they "permit their readers to see *exactly* how Iraq was run on a day-to-day basis, how the bureaucracy functioned, how essential services were maintained, and how the Ba' thist state and its citizens interacted" (p. xviii).

The book is divided into four parts consisting of nine chapters, followed by a conclusion, a postscript discussing the "legacy of Ba' thification", and an appendix of two BRCC documents in English translation. A useful glossary of terms used in the party documents and an index complement the work. Part 1 defines the author's conceptual frame, an updated version of the totalitarianism paradigm first introduced to scholarship on Ba' thist Iraq by Makiya's *Republic of Fear*. Faust treats "Hussein Ba' thist totalitarianism" like a Weberian ideal type, not as a fully implemented reality on the ground, but as a "*strategy of rule*", an "*aspiration to apply an exclusivist, utopian, populist ideology*" (p. 7). Whereas other scholars had identified a decline of Ba' thist ideology during the 1990s visible in the regime's turn to neo-tribalism and religion, the author points to the malleability of Ba' thism and cites documents showing the regime's persistent attempts to achieve a complete "Ba' thification of society" by absorbing all social forces into its ideological pantheon and by continuously mobilizing all Iraqis in support of what the author calls the "Ba' thist trinity" (party, nation, leader). Referring to Linz's classic work, Faust posits the strategy of mobilizing the population into active co-operation with the regime as a crucial difference between Ba' thist Iraq and ordinary authoritarian systems that are content with demobilizing effective opposition against their rule.

Part 2 spells out the author's distinction between original Ba' thism and "Hussein Ba' thism" by looking at the idiom used in the BRCC files and at the regime's efforts

documented therein to enforce the Ba'athification of daily life and political culture. Part 3 shows the implementation of this strategy as shown in the BRCC documents in the realm of state and party institutions, including the regime's efforts to absorb civil society into the system through semi-official mass organizations (women, workers, peasants, etc.) and to enlist social forces such as tribes and religious communities in support of Saddam Hussein's rule. Part 4 illustrates evidence from the BRCC documents concerning the twin governing techniques of repression and co-optation applied by the regime to prevent any effective opposition. In conclusion, Faust presents "Husseini Ba'athist totalitarianism" as both a success and a failure. He argues that the regime achieved political stability through its effective system of control and by manipulating cultural values "endemic in Iraqi society" (p. 186) such as tribal honour codes. He forgets to mention that the regime's alliance with tribal groups was always precarious and openly resented within the Ba'ath party. At the same time, Faust presents the regime as having failed to achieve ideological hegemony in Iraqi society. And indeed, the study mentions occasional evidence from the BRCC files pointing to different forms of opposition to the regime's rule throughout the years, and a range of regime attitudes ranging between repression, co-optation and toleration.

This fascinating book contains a wealth of invaluable information gleaned from extraordinary sources. Still, while adding detail and nuance, the evidence presented in this study does not offer insights that divert significantly from what we knew about Iraq before these sources became accessible. This study offers a modernized version of the totalitarianism thesis as applied to Ba'athist Iraq, by highlighting the regime's continuous efforts to mobilize the population in the spirit of the "Husseini Ba'athist" ideology. But the limited amount of sources analysed, compared to the size of the BRCC collection, and the author's less than source-critical approach to these specific documents from within the former ruling apparatus, weaken his conclusions. Suggestive analogies between Ba'athist Iraq and other dictatorial systems classified as totalitarian paste over the limited empirical evidence, and existing scholarship is overlooked to suit Faust's argument. For example, as shown by Efrati and others, the regime's ambivalent gender policies cannot be interpreted as an ideological transformation from a more gender egalitarian original Ba'athism towards more conservative misogynist Husseini Ba'athism (pp. 35–6), as they were continuously motivated by conflicting pragmatic demands (see Noga Efrati, "Productive or reproductive? The roles of Iraqi women during the Iraq–Iran War", *Middle East Studies* 35/2, 1999, 27–44). Neither did the Ba'athist women organization (GFIW) act as a mere tool for the Ba'athification of Iraqi women (p. 127), but followed its version of a feminist agenda within the system, at times in explicit contrast to Saddam Hussein, pointing to a less homogeneous structure of the Ba'athist system of rule than suggested in Faust's account (see Achim Rohde, *State–Society Relations in Ba'athist Iraq. Facing Dictatorship*, London: Routledge, 2010).

Relating to the disintegration of Iraq after the invasion of 2003, the author presents Saddam Hussein as the crucial keystone on which the Ba'athized Iraqi state and society rested: "[W]hen he fell, the order crumbled, leaving little amid the rubble with which to reconstruct the Iraqi nation" (p. 191). This statement seems to take at face value the leadership cult created around Saddam Hussein. Is it asking too much of an officer at the US Department of State to entertain the idea that external players might actually have played a part in destabilizing the country?

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