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## **THE GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES OF PROVINCES IN IRAQ**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

*The names of places are old topics of interest because most of the names are taken from people's stories, such stories may survive even after the original people have already disappeared or their nature is changed. Names have been given to important place, such as, passage paths, dangerous places, places for boundary symbols, rivers, provinces, districts, sub-districts, blocks, cultivated lands, mountains, valleys and holy places.*

*A large part of the names of different places in the world are the go further back in history than the written documentation on these places. Special cases are those with places where the constructive culture has not been conserved and the written documentation is relatively recent. Place names can offer a way to reach further back to the past, to act as ruins of culture. Names are the part of the immaterial cultural heritage of the community in which they are used. Place names, their history and the stories related to the people who used to live there provide the places with a spiritual foundation, as well as an indigenous local identity.*

*This study investigates the names of provinces in Iraq, where place names, the related cultural heritage, and place-name awareness and knowledge have been changed. The investigated place names represent a view on language that could be labeled as 'geospatial information'. It is showed that there is a history behind all the names given to distinct places.*

**Keywords:** *Iraq, Geospatial Information, Geographical names, Stories*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A geographical name is the proper name which includes a specific word or a combination of words and expression. They are used consistently in language to refer to a particular place, feature or area having a recognizable identity on the surface of the Earth. So Iraq defines a geographical place as a name, which is applied to a feature on Earth.

Name of Iraq corresponds largely to the ancient land of Mesopotamia. It is perhaps the oldest consistently settled region on the planet. The remnants of human settlement can be found dating back to 50,000 BC (Virga, Vincent, *et al.*, 2007) and over the centuries; Iraq has been home to many ancient civilizations including the Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian, and Assyrian empires. Each has left its mark on the region and on history (Moberley, 1923). For example, Haldane (1920) stated that Al-Iraq is an Arabic name, which has been used before the 6th century. There are many opinions, which give explanation about the origins of the name Iraq. One of them is a claim which suggests that the name originated from the ancient Sumerian city of URUK (Nissen, 1986).

This crescent was ruled by many empires, including the Assyrians in the north and the flat delta of ancient Babylonians in the south. Inhabitants (The founders) of the first Mesopotamian civilization, the Sumerians established many independently ruled and massively walled city-states (Haldane, 1920). However, the next important phase in Iraqi history is related to the Ottoman Turks, who ruled from 1514 to 1918. Between the Abbasid period and the arrival of the Turks, Iraq was overrun by the Mongols, whom the Iraqis blame for the destruction of irrigation canals and Iraq's great culture. Under the Turks, Iraq came under the pressure of two strong conflicting neighbors, Turkey and Persia (Salter, 1955).

Patrick Lang, W. Jr., *et al.* (2006) found that in religion Southern Iraq was Shiite like Persia, but Sunni in the north and west. This conflict in religion and political orientation remains today. The great Shia shrines of Karbala and Najaf are in Iraq near Baghdad. Turks brought their Turkish culture to Iraq and Turkish remained the language of the elites. During Turkish rule, however, several tribal groups known as the Kurds had become powerful and they established control over many northern mountainous regions and some of the western desert areas.

Additionally, as Virga, Vincent, *et al.* (2007) point out, the language with the longest recorded period of use in Iraq is Aramaic, which has a written tradition dating back for 3200 years or more and survives today in its descendants, the Neo-Aramaic languages. In addition,

the early texts are mainly recorded languages of Iraq, which were Sumerian and Akkadian (including ancient Assyrian-Babylonian). The latest positively identified Akkadian text comes from the first century BCE. Nowadays, Iraqi people speaks Arabic, Kurdish, Turkmen, Neo-Aramaic, and other smaller minority languages as Mandaic, Shabaki, Armenian, Feyli, Lurish or Persian.

After World War I, Iraq was founded by the League of Nations from three Ottoman provinces; Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul before being placed under British mandate in preparation for independence (Alhadeff, 2014).

This case study of Iraq investigates the province names, where the place was archaeologically examined and renamed by their precious traditions and other vestiges of culture in the form of the intangible cultural heritage. The main aim of this study is to discover the story behind the names and then how to set them up on the geographical maps.

## **2. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION:**

This study involved the systematic collection of three types of data:

First, the local history society obtained a copy of all the geographical names listed for the Iraq area in the National Names Archive held at the Research Institute for Geographical and Historical Sciences. The archive corpus contains geographical names covering the whole country and extending back to the early nineteenth century. These data, gathered by scholars, researchers, teachers and students, was recorded by interviewing local people. Today, the names archive contains a total of approximately a million place-name entries, mostly Arabic names, but many in Kurdish or Turkish, and their translation to English. They include information on pronunciation and the location and description of the place and even etymological information that was told by local people concerning the name or the place.

Secondly, copies of early maps and the documentation pertaining to their contents were obtained from the Ministry's Archive. Maps contain an abundance of place names, including names at a very local level. Most of the maps are from the late eighteenth century. These maps were particularly valuable for seeing how names have been retained or modified over time.

Thirdly, the Local History Society obtained copies of old tales, anecdotes and other stories collected in Iraq during the 1930s from the Folklore Archives of the Iraq Literature Society. In all, there are many stories, many of which concern place names. The most elderly of the

local people was interviewed. Other stories include tales of the legendary, human-bodied. In Iraq version, they are used by many different armies which are mentioned above from the beginning at foundation of Iraq. They came to track down the enemy, but they remained, and made a story, so the place still called by this story.

### 3. THE ORIGIN OF PLACE NAMES OF IRAQI PROVINCES:

As shown in Figure 1, Iraq consists of 18 provinces. Local people in Iraq were very interested in finding out more about the names of places. At the same time, any new information that came to light on the names and any further stories were recorded, and the present-day map locations of already archived place names were verified with local people.

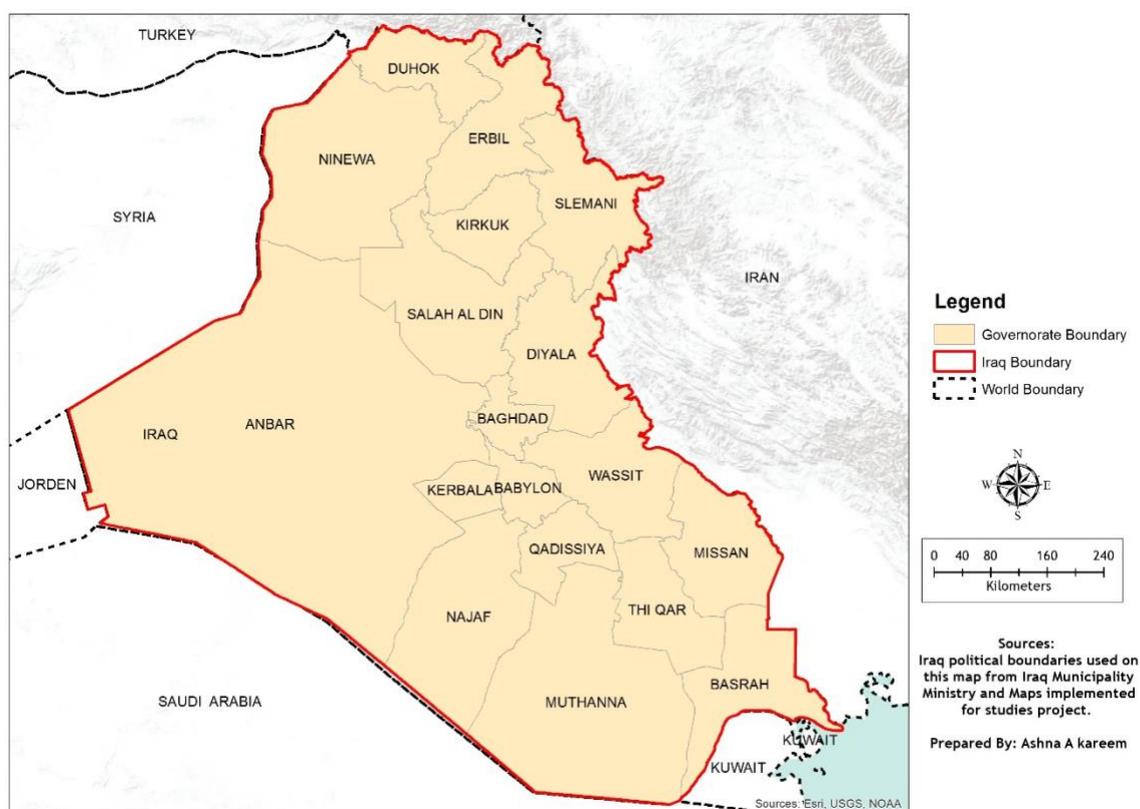


Figure 1: Iraq Administrative map

In general, it is necessary to understand firstly the underlying identity characteristics of the people, who are members of those societies formed by Sunni Arab, Shia, Sunni Kurd, Turkoman and Yazidi (Figure 2). They feel that they are part of a community that shares a set of similar characteristics, values and experiences. Additionally, Figure 2 illustrates that several areas in Iraq have been divided between Sunnis and Shia sub-religions. The two most significant differences are historical and political conflicts. In terms of both Shia and Sunni view Islamic history differently.

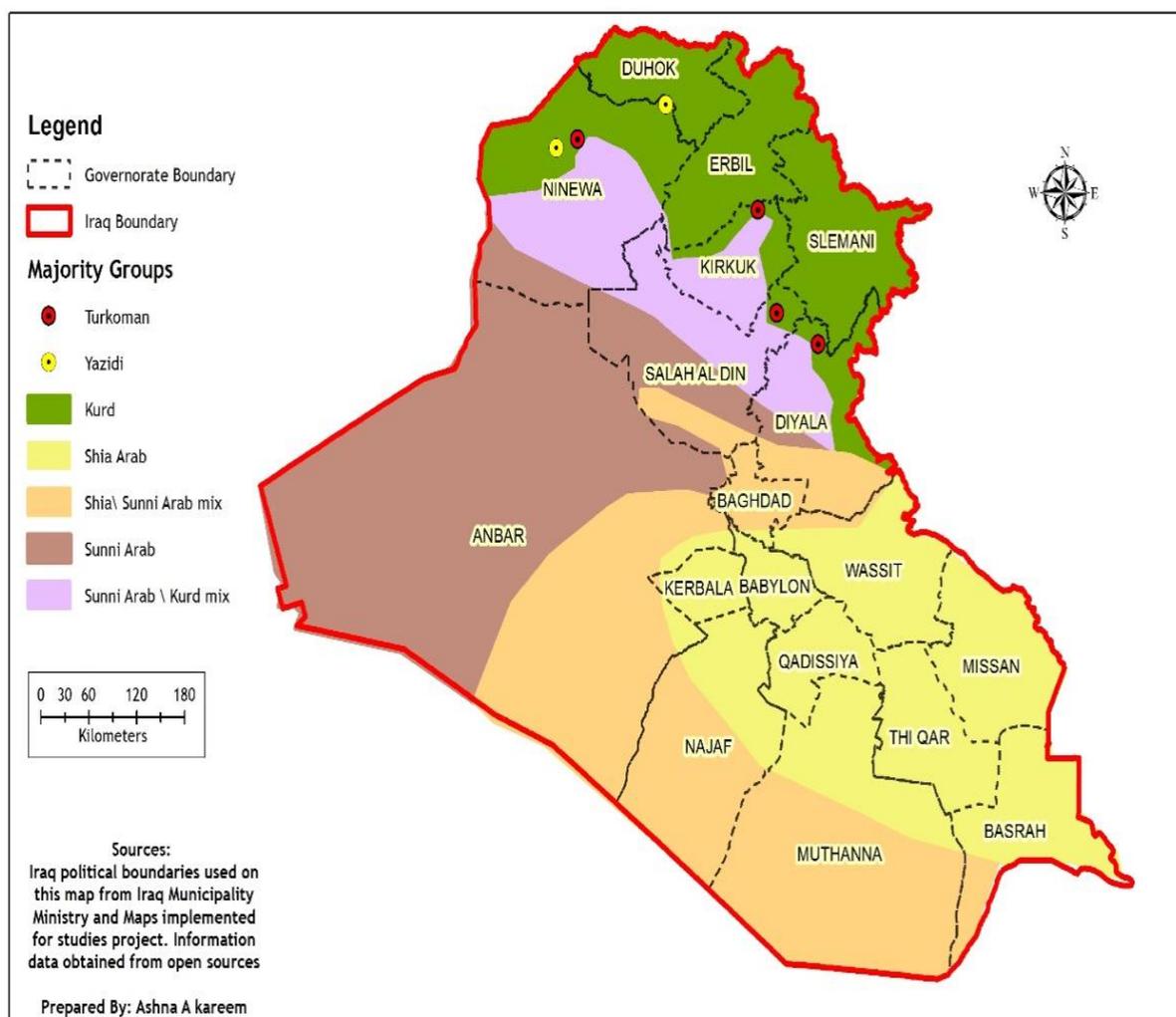


Figure 2: Distribution of Ethnoreligious Groups and Major Tribes

In addition to the languages, the impact of the Arabic Language on the identity of Arabs is quite profound; however there are many different languages in Iraq. Indeed, despite the hundreds of different spoken dialects of Arabic, it forms the foundation of Arab identity: Classical Arabic, the Arabic of the Quran, is the most highly revered version of the language.

This section focuses on the origin of names of the 18 provinces in Iraq. Then, each of them will be discussed separately. As it is mentioned previously, the information about the names are taken from several geographical and historical references. The references achieved the information from the local people and their stories. Following, the 18 provinces have been discussed briefly:

## 1. BAGHDAD:

Baghdad is the capital of the Republic of Iraq. The ancient name of Baghdad has many nouns like the round city, AlZawraa and Dar Alsalaam. Tigris enters the center of the city and divides it into two parts, Karkh (western part) and Rusafa (eastern part). Baghdad encountered a lot of foreign attacks and internal changes over the past centuries, such as the Mongols, the Ottomans and the Elsafoyuen. Etymologist Abo Jafar al-Mansur built his new capital on the location of the village known as Baghdad since the days of Hammurabi and named it City of Peace or the Paradise, but the people called it mostly the city of Al-Mansour (Marozzi, 2014).

Also, A Bjaddada is another name for Baghdad. It was named on a board dating back to the eighteenth century BCE, the time of King Hammurabi. At another board dating back to the twelfth century BC the name Bjaddado appeared. It was reported in a historical document amounting back to 728 BC during the reign of the Assyrian king Tglat Flasar the third (727-745 BC) (Platt, *et al.*, 2017).

Baghdad, in the language of the people of ancient Babylon, is composed of two parts, the first part is Bagh that means meanole orchard or garden, while the second part "Dad" means the beloved, and then the meaning of Baghdad becomes a garden lover or the gift of God (Al-Suwaidi, 1962). Also, Marozzi (2014) stated that in Sumerian Baghdad means "the Castle of the Falcon".

## 2. ERBIL

Erbil is located in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. Erbil had many names due to the Hurrians. They were the first to establish Erbil and expand their rule to the rest of Northern Mesopotamia. The name Erbil was mentioned in Sumerian holy writings as Urbilum, Urbelum or Urbillum, and it may be Sumerian originally. In Babylonian texts nearly 3000 BC, Erbil is considered as a cradle of ancient civilization, where life has firstly started; Neanderthals lived in the Shanidar cave which was located in Erbil (Rusty, 2012). Also, it is thought to originate from Sumerian UR means city and BELA means high. The early "ar" element also appears in several Hurrian place names. Later, Akkadians/Assyrians rendered the name to mean four gods (arba'ū ilū). The city was a centre for the worship of the goddess Ishtar. In classical times the city was known by its Aramaic name, Arbela. In Old Persian the city was called Arbairā. Since that time, the city has been under the rule of many regional powers, including the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Arabs, and Ottomans. As such, the names of the places also changed. For example, Arbil/Hewlêr in Latin Kurdish is written as Erbil or

Irbil, in Arabic is written as اربيل/Arbīl, while in Kurdish the city is called Hawler, meaning the temple of the Sun. In Syriac-Aramaic the city is written as ܐܪܒܝܠ /Arbaelo and in Turkish it is also called Erbil (Kurdistan Region, 2015).

### 3. DUHOK

Duhok is located between two mountain ranges, Bekhair to the north and north-east and Zaiwa to the south-east. The mountains converge upon the city and lie in the north-west of Iraq and the western part of the Kurdistan region. As such Duhok is famous with historical sites in which sculptures can be seen on the rocks. From the ancient times to the present, the name of Duhok is thought to be comprised of two words in Kurdish language which are “DU” and “HOK”. The DU means two and HOK means lamp in English. Then the name of Duhok can be translated as “The Two Lamps” (Duhok City, n.d). On the other hand, some people believe that the name of Duhok is taken from the name of the two sides of balance. Furthermore, some others say that the name of Duhok means “the two eggs”. The word “Du” indicates two and “Hok” mean egg, which represents the two mountains of Duhok (Khalid, 2012).

### 4. KIRKUK

Kirkuk is located in the north of Iraq. Originally the province was founded by Hurrian-related Zagros-Taurus dwellers, who were known as Gutian people by lowland-dwellers of Southern Mesopotamia. Under its ancient name Arraphkha, Kirkuk was the capital of the Kingdom of Gutium, which is mentioned in cuneiform. The small Hurrian Kingdom of the Arraphka, of which modern Kirkuk was the capital, was situated along the southeastern edge of the area under Aryan Mittanian domination. All Kings of Assyria were vassals of the Kingdom of Mittani (Galletti, 2005).

The word Kirkuk is mentioned to be taken from an ancient Iranian people's word 'Korkura' which is believed to refer either to Kirkuk or to the site of Baba Gurgur. It was known as “Karkha” from Greek region, which means 'Citadel of the House of Seleucid'. Also, Kirkuk was known during the Parthian and Sassanid periods as “Garmakan” which in Kurdish means the 'Land of Warmth' or the 'Hot Land' (Nuri, n.d.).

Nuri (n.d.) has written that when Muslim Arabs occupied the area, up to the medieval era, Arab writers simply used the name Kirkheni (citadel) to refer to the city. Some Arabs used the names Bajermi or Jermakan (both Semitic variations of Aryan

'Garmakan'). Nowadays, Kirkuk has two names: the official name is Tameem, and the old name of city is Kirkuk. The word Tameem is an Arabic name given by the Iraqi Government after the country managed to control the city and its oil resources from occupier countries. The word Tameem in Arabic means belonging or nationalization (Ministry of Extra Regional Affairs, 2007). Earlier research by Khalid (2012) found that the word Kirkuk is claimed to be taken from the Assyrian words "The Castle of Saluki". It is also stated that the word Kirkuk is taken from Sumerian words meaning the "Flamed Fire".

## 5. NINEWA

The governorate of Ninewa is located in northwestern Iraq. Ninewa is also referred to "Nineveh or Mosul". The name "Mosul" comes from the Arabic root "to come", as people from all directions came to Mosul as a trading destination (Ninewa Governorate Profile, 2012). Also, Kurds say that the name of "Nineveh" came from Kurdish words "Nayaynava" which means "we do not return"; the name refers a saying according to which those who passed the great river of Tigris were never supposed to return (Nadir, 2017). Some stories states that the original name of ancient Nineveh comes from a Semitic word for habitation. As suggested by Khalid (2012), the word Ninewa is taken from two Assyrian words which mean "the God of Fish or Whale".

## 6. AL-ANBAR

Al-Anbar or "Anbar" is located in western Iraq. Anbar is derived from the ancient Arabic word "Nabar", which means "the high land." This word signifies a source for dry storage (Anbar- ncciraq.org, n.d.). Earlier research (Major Cities, n.d.) demonstrated that Anbar is an Arabic word that means storing. Manathira called it Anbar, because it was the repository for military equipment or because it was the repository for wheat, barley and hay. It was one of the most significant cities during Sassanian occupation of Iraq, as it was an important military center for the protection of the capital Madain from the Roman attacks. Anbar has another name, used during the Ottoman era: "Lwa Al-Dulaim". The word "Lwa" meaning army and "Al-Dulaim" being the old name of an Ottoman tribe in the seventeenth century. Some stories say Anbar came from "granaries" in Arabic, further proposing the word Anbar (أنبار) to be the plural of Nbr (نبر) which meaning "grains" (Patrick Lang, W. Jr., *et al*, 2006).

## 7. BABYLON

The Governorate of Babylon had been known as the Capital of the Babylonians during the rule of Hammurabi, when Babylonians controlled Mesopotamia. The first family of the Babylonians, ruled by Hammurabi, ruled most of the provinces of Mesopotamia (Babil Governorate Profile – NCCI, n.d.). The word Babylon means "the Gate of God", which boasted the Hanging Gardens of Babylon - one of the seven wonders in the world. It had eight gates, the most luxurious of which was the huge "Ishtar gate" in which stood the Temple of Marduk within the fences on a square built for a religious great festival. It was located outside the city and had several names given by the ancients including Babylonia, which means Babylon land between the two rivers and Mesopotamia. Babylon was also related to Babylon archeological city, which is situated near the governorate center, among its satellite districts: Hilla, Mahaweel, Maseeb and Hashemiyya (Virga, Vincent, *et al.*, 2007).

## 8. BASRAH

Basra is written البصرة in Arabic and *al-Basrah* in Latin. The Arabic name means "the over-watching" or "the seeing everything", and was given to this area/city because of its role as a military base against the Sassanid Empire. Nevertheless, other sources state that the name originates from the Persian word *Bas-rāh* or *Bassorāh*, meaning "where many ways come together" (Darton, *et al.*, 2008). Basrah is important for the Iraqi people and Islam's history, First, Iraqi people say that Basra is surrounded by the largest plantation of date palm in the world. The canals that cross Basrah have led to it being known as the "Venice of the East". About 70 km to the north of Basrah is Qurna, at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. According to legend, it is called the Garden of Eden. Secondly, Basra takes its name from the great military camp, which was founded by the second Caliph Omar Bin al-Khatab in 637 AD near to the present town of Zubair, to control southern parts of Iraq and its sea approaches. From this military camp grew the first famous city of Basra. According to other researches Basra was called Basorah in the collection of Oriental folk tales known as the Arabian Nights. It is associated with the name of Sinbad the sailor from "The Thousand and One Nights": according to the talet he departed from here to his seven fabulous voyages. An island close to the river bank bears his name (Pike, 2016). Nowadays, Basra has several names, such as *Um Al-Iraq* – "Mother of Iraq", *Khizanat Al-Arab* – "Treasury of Arabs", *AlBasra Al-Uthma* – "The Great Basra", *Al-Basra Al-Zahira* –

"Prosperous Basra", *Thaghr Al-Iraq* – Al-Basim "The smiling mouth of Iraq", *AlFayha* – "The extensive", *Qubat Al-Ilm* – "Dome of Science" (Investment Map for Iraq - PSDC, 2013).

## 9. KERBALA

The name Karbala originates from the Akkadian word "qārballātu", which refers to a sharp headgear, and changed into Kārbāla in Aramaic. There is an Arabic origin deriving from Kur Bābel that is the environs of Bābel, or the word karbalā', which meant a foot imprint on soft ground. Some historians investigated that Kerbala came from near Allah or near God, but the Babylonians said that the word has been formed from Kur Babil and that it means a collection of Babylonian villages (Governorate of Holy Kerbala, n.d).

There is another opinion from Assyrian history that Karbala consists of two words "Karb" and "lyla", meaning the "Sacred precinct of God" (Sewell, 2017). This province is called "Place of Prayer" or "divine work" by Persian people. Arabs believe that the word Karbala is derived from "كربلة" meaning "weakness of steps". The most prominent feature of the Holy City of Kerbala is the shrine of Imam Hussein and the shrine of his brother, Imam Abbas. Within the Governorate there is also the Akhaidhir stronghold, southward the city, the palace of Sham'oun at Ain Tamr, and Al-tar historical caves, so they believed that "Karbala" as "Karb wa l-bala" means "distress" and "hardship" or "trials" (Schimmel, 1986).

## 10. MISSAN

Missan is located on the river Tigris. Before 1976 it had been known as Imarah Governorate. Ages ago, people believed that the origin of the name of 'Maysan' refers to the Kingdom of Mayshan, and changed to Maysan over time. Missan also has another, "Korat Dijlah", which was a common name amongst people who lived there. The name comes from a group of villages alongside the river Tigris. Furthermore, Maysan in Aramaic language means swamps water or stagnant water, but Maysan can also be linked to cemetery and Uzayr prophet, who is sacred to both Jews and Muslims (Maysan governorate, n.d).

## 11. SALAH AL-DIN

The governorate of Salah al-Din is located in northern central Iraq. This name is taken from the name Saladin (written Salah ad-Din in modern Arabic Latin transcription). As such, the Governorate has been named after Saladin Al-Ayoubi. The city was named after him because he is a Muslim leader who overcomes the Crusaders at

Hattin. A famous bearer of this name was Sultan Salah al-Din Yusuf Ibn Ayyub, known in the western world as Saladin (Basic information about Salah\_ad\_Din, n.d). Salahdin consists of two words, the first being *Salah*, which means “righteousness” and the second being *Din*, meaning "religion or faith". Put together, the two words mean "righteousness of religion". This province is famous as a birthplace of the great soldier Salah al-Din (Behind the name, n.d).

## 12. QADISSIYA

Qadissiya, alternatively spelled as Qadisiyah or Kadissiya, is located in the plains of southern-central Iraq. The word Qadissiya means “holy war”. The governorate of Qadissiya was one of the centers of the ancient Sumerian civilizations, which is why it has been named in relation to the prominent battle of Qadissiya in the 7th century. In this battle, the forces of the early Muslim Caliphate decisively defeated a Persian Sassanid army, and occupied the entire area. (Qadissiya Governorate Profile, 2015).

## 13. MUTHANNA

Muthanna governorate is located in the southern part of Iraq, at the ends of the sandy plain. The first period of stable style of life and the early beginnings of régimes, writing, and laws establishing the social life in this area, originate back to fifth millennium B.C. Agriculture played a major role in the Sumerian settlement and the foundation of civilization in these places, the arts and artisan of which are there up to current days. The area, including its huge desert, is categorized by agriculture, many palaces and temples. The historical site of Muthanna was once the location of the ancient Sumerian city of Uruk, one of the world’s oldest cities (Muthanna Governorate Profile, n.d). Waqidi, Al-Kufi, A. I., *et al* (1990) states that the name Muthanna came from Al-Muthana Ibn Haritha Al-Shaybani, who was a Muslim leader. Al-Muthana was an extremely motivational leader, an amazing analytical thinker and strategist, striving to satisfy only Allah. Due to all of the aforementioned characteristics this province of southern Iraq was named after him. The meaning of the name Muthanna is an “old Arabic name”.

## 14. NAJAF

The governorate of Najaf located in south-western Iraq. Najaf is an Arabic name, which is derived from (Al-Manjuf). Its plural is Najaaf, meaning place, where water cannot overflow due to the highland preventing floods in the area. The word Najaf also refers to a hill. Najaf had various names, some of which came into tradition amongst the Ahlulbait. Some of the names, such as, Baanqiya, Al-Judi, Ar-Rabwah,

Zahrul Kufah, Al-Gharbi, Al-Lisaan, and At-Tur, were circulated by them. The most commonly used names were, however, Najaf, Al-Ghar'yi, and Mashhad. Some historicism reported that Najaf was a great mountain, on which the son of Noah said “I will betake myself for refuge to a mountain that shall protect me from the water” but the mountain broke into pieces and became sand by the Will of Allah. The name of that sea was *Niy*, became *Niy jaf* later, and then changed to Najaf, because of smoother pronunciation (History of Holy Najaf, 2017).

### 15. THI QAR

Dhi Qar is located at the heart of the southern part of Iraq. Thi-Qar is alternatively spelled as *Dhi-Qaris*. It is the cradle of the ancient Sumerian civilization, where the wetlands of Thi-Qar are located. The Muntafiq ethnic union shaped the modern history of the governorate, which was known as Muntafiq province until 1976 (Thi-Qar Governorate Profile, 2015). Some Iraqi people have said that the place is called “Thi Qar” because all the inhabitants who lived there covered their houses using bitumen. Others have said that the reason behind the province’s name is the Battle of Dhi Qar, which occurred between Arabs and Persians before Islam. At that time, this province was called (عيون ذي قار), meaning “Spring ThiQar”, as this province was rich in its natural resources, such as fresh water, lands and marshes. Historical evidence shows that this name exists from ancient ages, due to it being the land where the Sumerians and Acadians settled. Dhi Qar is namely also called the heartland of the ancient Iraqi civilization of Sumer, and includes the ruins of Ur, Eridu, Lagash, Larsa, Girsu, Umma, and Bad-tibira. The southern area of the governorate is covered by the Mesopotamian Marsh (Rīshah, (n.d.)).

### 16. DIYALA

The governorate of Diyala is located in eastern-central Iraq. Diyala translated from Arabic (ديالى) might refer to Diyala Governorate (Arabic: محافظة ديالى Muḥāfazah Diyālā). From the word of mouth it is said to mean a genus of sea snails coming from the river Diyala. The name Diyala has developed from the Assyrian word “Diala”. It was the river in the territory of Assyria Day (Dream Book, n.d.). Further, the name Diyala has been mentioned in Sumerian history as “Dialas”, meaning river. According to most of the historical researches conducted, Diala means river because the man-made Hamrin Lake in Iraq, formed by a dam on the River name. The construction of dams on the tributary rivers of the lake in Iraqi Kurdistan and neighboring Iran has caused significantly lowering water levels. The Diyala River and many other smaller

rivers intersect Diyala such as Sirwan River and Tanjero River, which are streams of the Tigris (Diyala Governorate Profile, 2015).

#### 17. SULAYMANIYAH

Governorate Assessment Report (2006) states that Sulaymaniyah was founded by a Kurdish prince known as Ibrahim Pasha Baban, who named it after his father 'Sulayman Pasha'. Sulaymaniyah was known as Zamwa prior to the foundation of the modern city in 1784, in the region of Mohmud Pasha Baban – the capital of the Kurdish Baban principality (1649–185). In earlier times Sulaymaniyah was a territory called "Qelaçiwalan". At the time of the Babani's rule, there were major conflicts between the Safavid dynasty and the Ottoman Empire. Qelaçiwalan became a battleground for the two rivals (Sulaymaniyah Ministry of Interior, 2013).

#### 18. WASSIT

Wassit province is in eastern Iraq, close to the Iranian border. This province is located between Kufa, Basra and Khorasan; it is due to its location that it has been given the name of Wasit. The name comes from the Arabic word "واسط" meaning *middle* in English". Some historians indicate that the Wasit province was built in the Islamic period. Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, after the Caliph Abdul Malik bin Marwan asked permission to build it, and it was the reason why the pilgrims took the city center for him and his soldiers. He ordered the transfer of militarization to an area near Kskr called Wasit, because it was located in the center of Iraq, on the Tigris River, from the east coast and the south and west, which was surrounded by water on three sides (University of Karbala,n.d). Recent research (University of Karbala,n.d) refers to Wasit Reeds, which is the name of the place chosen by a novel reproducing the safest bin easy Wasti, the place Set amid the marshes covered by reeds. The place was inhabited and was appointed Caliph Uthman happy ibn al-Aas ruler of Kufa and Wasit reeds, Basra and continued on to the appointed Muawiyah top Abdul bin Abdullah the jurisdiction of these areas. Then assumed Hajjaj bin Joseph Althagafi in succession Abdul Malik bin Marwan, and proceeded to build the city of Wasit. He also mentioned that the land was land of cane.

#### 4. CONCLUSION:

This paper examined the origins of names of the Iraqi provinces. During the study, several geographical and historical approaches have been used. Therefore, the story behind each of the names has been discussed briefly. The original names and their

translation into English have been presented. It is shown that the names of these places have developed and been adopted due to different reasons. Some of the names relate to the nature of the land; for example Baghdad came from the love of garden. Others are associated to the person who built the city; for instance the province of Sulaymaniyah was named after the father of the king ruling the place. One of the names of the provinces, Qadisiyah, goes back to an event that happened there; the famous war or battle called Al Qadisiyah. The purpose of this study was to introduce the origins behind the names of different places in Iraq. However, the information gathered on an area is returned to be accessed by those whose back-grounds and lives it concerns. The names have changed with the society having gone through major social changes in recent decades; for example, Sumerian holy writings mentioned Urbilum whereas now people who live in the area named Erbil. Some places have now begun to explore their rural roots. For example, Dohuk came from two lumps. To this end, the research came up with many findings from the studies conducted in Iraq. Beside the languages and ethnics were having impact on naming the places in Iraq, also people who lived there had a big role in this regard. Moreover, many local history publications, surveys and books about how the place named in history have been produced. The collection and research undertaken in earlier decades have naturally proven invaluable in this.

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