

المرحلة الثانية

النص 1

الجزء 1

## **Geography of Iraq**

Iraq, the country of the twin rivers (the Tigris and the Euphrates), the cradle of civilization and the country of the tales of 1001 nights, is situated in the South-West of Asia, to the North-East of the Arabian Peninsula, and from the Eastern half of the Fertile Crescent.

Iraq covers an area about 200,000 miles about half as big again as the British Isles. The population is about seven millions according to census of 1957.

Iraq is bounded on the North by Turkey, on the East by Iran, on the South by Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf, on the South-West by Saudi Arabia and Jordan and on North-West by Syria. There exist between Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia a “neutral zone” to facilitate the migration of pastoral nomads who cover great distances each year in search of pasture for their animals.

As far as the meaning of the territorial nomenclature is concerned, the word Iraq is uncertain. According to the Arab geographers, Iraq means low-lying ground or coastland. According to Al-Masudi, it was called Iraq because it comprises the estuarine land of both the Tigris and the Euphrates. According to Al-Kalil, Iraq literally means “the sea-shore” and Iraq was so called because it

lies on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates and extends as far the sea.

Al-Masudi “Muruj al- Dhahab” vol.3 p.140, Yakut “Mu’jam al-Buldan” vol.2 pp.82-89, and Al-Karmali gave the meaning of Iraq as the low land or land liable to inundation.

Le Strange translated the word Iraq as the “cliff” or “shore”. None of the geographers gave Iraq to mean “cliff”. He might have mistranslated the word “lower” as cliff (Le Strange, The Land of the Eastern caliphate, p.24).