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Abstract

The aim of this study is to make an overall assessment of US policies in Iraq from the Iraqi perspective, taking the year 2003 as the launching point. That year witnessed the beginning of a chain of major events in the country’s history; the first was the decision by the US to wage war on Iraq on the 19th March, 2003, while the second was the collapse of Saddam’s regime on the 9th April, 2003. Concurrently, the country came under US and UK occupation according to UN Resolution 1483.

This thesis seeks to explore the different views expressed by Iraqis regarding US policies towards Iraq subsequent to 2003, and to offer an analytical argument on the matter. Five major issues are examined closely, including: human rights, security, sovereignty, democracy and the economy; we believe problems surrounding these issues in the post-war period have had an adverse effect on the well-being of Iraqi society, thus they provide the central argument of this thesis. The primary source for the study is data collected from the Iraqi elite and the general public. The three areas in which the fieldwork for the study was carried out were Baghdad Fallujah and Unbar. Two main techniques have been applied in order to achieve the objective of this study.

The results of the research suggest that Iraqis are of the view that economic factors are primarily the motive behind the invasion of Iraq given the natural abundance of oil resources in the nation. Iraqis are also of the opinion that, contrary to US claims of protecting human rights and democracy in Iraq, their hidden agenda was the security of the United States and Israel in the region.
Acknowledgements

Thanks be to Allah who made the idea for this research come true. The writing of this thesis, however, would not have been achieved without the support of both my supervisors. I would like to give special thanks to Professor Mark Phythian and Dr Jon Moran for supervising this thesis and providing advice and suggestions whenever needed. Thanks go also to the Iraqi Cultural Attaché in London, for their support during my studies at Leicester University. Also, for those who took part in the interviews and questionnaires. I also extend my thanks to my supervisor in Iraq, Dr Kuhder Abbas Atwan, from Nahrain University, Baghdad, for his guidance and support during the period of data collection.

To my brother, Dr Tarik, and to my eldest brother, who is sadly no longer with us, Abdullrazaq, but who always encouraged me to focus on education – I hope he would be proud of me now. Also, to Dr Najat A. Ahmed, as well as to all of my friends, in particular Amer Hassan Al-Khashali, for whose support I am forever grateful.

For my wife and sons, Lienh, Yousif, Abdullrazaq and Anas; my future flowers.

For all, my best wishes and heartfelt gratitude.
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<td>AM</td>
<td>Amnesty International</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMS</td>
<td>Association of Muslim Scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BO</td>
<td>Badr Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>AQ</td>
<td>Al Qaeda</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Coalition Provisional Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFI</td>
<td>The Development Fund for Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>DS</td>
<td>Death Squads</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Development Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>The Islamic Da’wa Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>IGC</td>
<td>Iraqi Governing Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>IIG</td>
<td>Interim Iraqi Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILA</td>
<td>Iraq Liberation Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEO</td>
<td>Iraqi Elite Opinion</td>
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<td>IPO</td>
<td>Iraqi Public Opinion</td>
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<td>ICHR</td>
<td>The Iraqi Centre for Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>INA</td>
<td>Iraqi National Accord</td>
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<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>Iraqi National Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMIE</td>
<td>International Mission for Iraqi Elections</td>
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<td>NAIT</td>
<td>The National Alliance of Iraqi Tribes</td>
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<td>ISF</td>
<td>Iraqi Security Forces</td>
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<td>JAM</td>
<td>Jaysh al-Mahdi</td>
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<td>OFF</td>
<td>Oil for Food Programme</td>
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<td>OIF</td>
<td>Operation Iraqi Freedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>OIG</td>
<td>The Office of the Inspector General</td>
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<td>ORHA</td>
<td>Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMEP</td>
<td>Grand Middle East Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNAC</td>
<td>Project for the New American Century</td>
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<td>PPO</td>
<td>The Political Prisoners’ Organization</td>
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<td>IDEA</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCC</td>
<td>The Red Cross Committee</td>
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<td>SCIRI</td>
<td>The Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>TAL</td>
<td>Transitional Administration Law</td>
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<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
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Chapter One:

INTRODUCTION

A liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region, by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions. America’s interests in security, and America’s belief in liberty, both lead in the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq.¹

Background to The Research Context

The above quote is taken from a speech made by President George W. Bush in 2005 after the invasion of Iraq. In this speech, he justifies to the Iraqi people, and indeed the whole world, the reasons for the invasion, claiming that the overall purpose of the invasion was to liberate Iraq and bring freedom and peace to the people, because the Iraqi people needed to be set free from over 30 years of dictatorial rule by the oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein.

The background to this pronouncement is to be found in the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre on September 11th 2001. Following this event, President Bush and his top officials had political and security concerns, including the fact that Saddam's regime was a challenge to American and Israeli National Security.²

Thereafter, President Bush’s government sought to highlight the subject of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), claiming that WMDs existed in Iraq and might be utilised by Saddam’s government in the future. The idea of WMDs was exaggerated in the US and UK³ in order to mobilize public opinion. Ironically, before the war in Iraq began the head of the UN Special Commission on WMDs, Hans Blix, stated that there was no


evidence that Iraq had WMDs, not even basic equipment, and that Iraq was not able to manufacture an atomic bomb. Further, Hans Blix stated that the decision of the US and its allies to go to war with Iraq was contrary to the UN Charter, and that it was based upon an illegitimate claim. However the weapons inspector, David Kay, in his testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, argued that even if Iraq did not possess WMDs, it had attempted to manufacture them and that this was a threat to the region. Nevertheless, Kay later resigned when no WMDs were discovered. After failing to confirm the presence of WMDs, George W. Bush sought to propose philanthropic motives to justify US policy towards Iraq - which could be described under the title ‘democracy promotion’ – that Saddam's regime was a dictatorship, and should be toppled from power as soon as possible to safeguard human rights in Iraq. In other words, human rights and democratic rule constituted key principles of President Bush’s political agenda. In his speech on 17th March 2003, Bush said that:

Many Iraqis can hear me tonight in a translated radio broadcast, and I have a message for them. If we must begin a military campaign, it will be directed against the lawless men who rule your country and not against you. As our coalition takes away their power, we will deliver the food and medicine you need. We will tear down the apparatus of terror and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free. In a free Iraq, there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbours, no more poison factories, and no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms. The tyrant will soon be gone. The day of your liberation is near.

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Therefore, this research seeks to uncover the opinions of Iraqis regarding the impact of the American military occupation of their country from 2003 to 2009. This is done by examining issues relating to politics, economics, security, human rights and democracy. The rationale underpinning this research is that while the mainstream western press has been critical of the invasion in terms of its inability to meet the aspirations of Iraqis, Western media outlets have failed to adequately convey the views of Iraqis on developments and their experiences since 2003. Addressing this omission is the foundation of this research.

### 1.1 The Need to Appreciate the Iraqi Perspective

This study aims to reflect the Iraqi perspective on US policy in post-war Iraq because, although several studies have been conducted on the subject of Iraq’s invasion, the Iraqi perspective remains under-researched. This study therefore bridges that gap. It focuses upon the effect of US policy on human rights, security, economy, democracy and sovereignty, from the perspective of Iraqis. Documenting these perspectives is crucial in order to present a balanced view of the situation, as it appears that there has been a marginalisation of the Iraqi view in the worldwide coverage of the invasion and its aftermath by the western press. Furthermore, this researcher's perspective is based on the belief that Iraqis were not passive participants in this war, but were greatly affected because of the impact of the occupation on their social, economic and cultural life. Therefore, empirical research detailing their perception of the whole process is imperative and will represent a valuable addition to the empirical literature already available.

### 1.2 Rationale and Motivation

This study is therefore significant because it sets Iraqi views and experiences against those of US policymakers and of the western media, which arguably has not focused upon Iraqi experiences in detail. A number of studies have focused on US foreign policy in post-invasion Iraq, but these studies have largely ignored the Iraqi perspective or have only concentrated on partial aspects of it. Critically, there is no known study that

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reflects Iraqi opinion on post-war Iraq during the period 2003-2009. This study will reveal the opinions of the elite and of the general public on US foreign policy from 2003 onward.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

The implementation of the democratic process in Iraq via the use of force was extremely controversial. As the literature review will show, much has been written about it from an American or Western perspective. This thesis aims to evaluate the democratization process through the eyes of Iraqis from various sections of the community.

1.4 Research Questions

The main research question is “What are the opinions of Iraqis regarding the impact of American policy in post-invasion Iraq?” This is broken down into five more specific questions.

- How far have human rights been respected?
- How stable is the security situation, and is there a need for regional intervention?
- What has been the impact of the invasion and occupation on the Iraqi economy?
- To what extent has Iraq become democratic?
- To what extent does Iraq possess sovereignty?

1.5 Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis of this study is that the US invaded Iraq on 19th March 2003 under various banners, such as the salvation of Iraq from dictatorship, the promotion of democratic principles, and the protection of human rights in the country. However, so
far the invasion has failed to achieve its aims to protect human rights by ending the dictatorship and removing the potential threat posed by the former regime to international peace and security. The US has created a new regime in Iraq that has made things far worse in all aspects including the political regime, the human rights situation, security, reconstruction and economic development. This conclusion will be asserted by the findings of this research study.

1.6 Methodology

Following this objective and hypothesis, the study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods of research in order to ground the participants’ perspectives in empirical details based on the main research question of the study. The analyses are based on the different viewpoints of multiple segments of the Iraqi people: the intellectual cadres and key officials of the Iraqi state; those actively engaged in Iraqi politics, such as politicians, Iraqi members of parliament, local government members, and leaders of political parties; members of the academia; human rights organizations; civil society members; and the leaders of the Iraqi tribes (see Appendix B). This thesis is also based on a survey of the opinions of the general public, based on questionnaires distributed in three main areas: Baghdad, Fallujah and Anbar (see Appendix C).

As far as studying the Iraqi perspective on US policy in post-invasion Iraq, it aims to highlight the five areas of human rights, the economy, security, the democracy process, and the sovereignty of the Iraqi state. The reason for this, as previously mentioned, is that the issue of presenting the Iraqi standpoint has been marginalized since the war on Iraq in 2003. This has been traced back to two factors that are intertwined and interlinked: first and foremost, the US government itself and US forces wanted to hide significant aspects of their negative acts in Iraq, especially as they might increase the hostility and violence against its forces in Iraq; second, mainstream American media outlets were unable to accurately convey details regarding some issues, such as where US forces in Iraq had committed mistakes, during the occupation.10

The period covered by this study is 2003-2009. To achieve the goal of this study, however, it is recognised that there are four important phases related to US involvement with Iraq, which need to be examined. The first phase started after the US and its allies

waged war on Iraq; this lasted from 19th March 2003 to the formal end of the war on 1st May 2003. At this stage the US forces and other coalition forces imposed control over Iraqi cities.

The second stage was the period of military occupation by the United States and its allies. During this time the Security Council Resolution S/RES/1483 (8 May 2003) recognized both the US and the UK as occupying powers in Iraq. Therefore, Iraq came under the political control of the US on 9th April, 2003, and continued until the resumption of sovereignty on 28th June 2004. This phase could be described as one of the most dangerous stages in terms of the lives of Iraqi citizens. The US administration in Iraq showed tolerance and/or leniency with regard to security and crime, and Iraqis were allowed to steal and destroy Iraqi institutions, although the Ministry of Oil was immune from the above scheme, being protected by US forces.

The third stage covered by this study began on 28th June 2004 and lasted until the election of the Transitional National Assembly on 30th January 2005. The US authorities realised that they needed to change policy due to the chaos that developed throughout 2004. Hence, the US government started thinking of the handover of power from the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to the Iraqis. The first step here was the establishment of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) in accordance with the aims of America. This concurred with international UN Security Council Resolution 1546, 2004, which called for the termination of the occupation of Iraq by the US and its allies. The first interim Iraqi government was headed by Ayad Allawi as Prime

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13 ibid, p. 185-187.


15 ibid, p. 294.

Minster.¹⁷ US policy in Iraq was incapable of advancing unless Iraqis had the ability to lead their country.

The fourth stage is the period of the “Transitional Government”¹⁸, which began with the handover of power via elections in December 2005. This was one of the most important phases in that it led to the formation of the Iraqi political regime. The US took a number of steps to re-establish the political system in Iraq. First, it helped to form the constitution, with the agreement of Iraqi political forces. This was followed by a referendum on the Iraqi constitution. The third step was the election of the first Iraqi government at the end of 2005, which was in place up to the second election at the end of 2009.¹⁹ Finally, the political system was based on a federal system, with power-sharing being implemented taking into consideration the primary loyalties of the people of Iraq rather than the national interests of the country.

In particular, this thesis will explore the Iraqi perspective on the major US aim of bringing democracy to Iraq. Analysing this process of democratisation, this work will look at political, security, economic, democratic and sovereignty aspects, and will provide an analysis of the often-overlooked views of the Iraqi population on these massive changes.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into ten chapters, including this introductory chapter.

Chapter Two addresses US policy in post-war Iraq from a number of different perspectives by way of a literature review. The structure of the first section of the conceptual framework within the literature review is sub-divided into three main themes: the first looks at the meaning of the term ‘democracy’; the second addresses “coercive democratization”²⁰ by invasion in light of the US role in post-invasion Iraq;

¹⁷ Sharif, ‘President George W. Bush’s Policy towards Iraq: Change or Continuity’, p. 171.


¹⁹ Bremer and McConnell, My Year in Iraq: the Struggle to Build a Future of Hope, p. 300-303.

the third concentrates on the democratic transition process from the Iraqi viewpoint in the context of Iraqi society. This theme is also subdivided into two main themes, with the first tackling the basic conditions of democracy and the second addressing the requirements for, and obstacles to, democratic transition in post-invasion Iraq.

The second section highlights the major issues in post-invasion Iraq: human rights, security, economy, the democratization process and sovereignty.

This chapter also discusses concepts such as the promotion of democracy, democracy by force, coercive democratization, democracy by concord as in the Iraqi case, etc. This sets out the ideas and practice of democratisation, in order to examine Iraqi views and experiences regarding the changes.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology in detail, and the justification for selecting multiple methods, based on the requirement to collect the information from primary and secondary sources. This chapter shows that two methods have been utilized; the qualitative technique of interviewing and the quantitative questionnaire survey which was then coded for statistical information regarding the five previously-mentioned issues.

Chapter 4 consists of two main sections. The first section examines the role of the US in the reconfiguration of the political system in Iraq after 2003. The second section highlights the challenges facing the political process in the post-invasion phase, for example political division and the lack of security.

Chapter 5 discusses the viewpoints of Iraqis regarding human rights after 2003. This chapter consists of two main sections. The first section examines the opinions of the Iraqi elite via interview findings, while the second examines the opinions of the general public via questionnaire findings.

Chapter 6 discusses the viewpoints of Iraqis regarding the security situation in Iraq after 2003. This chapter also consists of two main sections. Again, the first section looks at the opinions of the Iraqi elite via interview findings and the second section looks at the opinions of the general public via questionnaire findings.

Chapter 7 discusses the viewpoints of Iraqis regarding the economic situation in Iraq after 2003 and is also divided into two main sections. The first section considers the
opinions of the Iraqi elite using interview findings, whereas the second considers the opinions of the general public using findings from the questionnaire.

Chapter 8 discusses viewpoints of Iraqis regarding democracy in Iraq after 2003. This chapter is also made up of two main sections. The first studies the opinions of the Iraqi elite from the interview findings and the second studies the opinions of the general public from questionnaire findings.

Chapter 9 discusses the viewpoints of Iraqis on sovereignty after 2003. Once again, the chapter consists of two main sections. The first section examines the opinions of the Iraqi elite and the second section examines the opinions of the general public via questionnaire findings.

Chapter 10 presents the key conclusions and also offers some suggestions for areas of further research on post-invasion Iraq.
Chapter Two

DEMOCRATIZATION AND US FOREIGN POLICY IN POST-INVASION IRAQ

Introduction

This literature review outlines the basis for the study of various issues concerning the Iraqi perspective on US foreign policy in post-invasion Iraq. This discusses literature relating to human rights issues, security concerns, economic implications, the democratic process and sovereignty. The aim of this chapter is to develop a framework through which the study assesses the opinions of the Iraqi people on both foreign policy and the role of the US in Iraq.

This literature review focusses on two main important areas. The first area covers the key points of US foreign policy and democracy promotion while the second part provides an insight into the legacy of the US occupation of Iraq, by examining the consequences and aftermath of US foreign policy from 2003 onwards, in terms of the factors of politics, security, economy and society. To date there has been very little research into the Iraqi peoples' views of US foreign policy and therefore this is a vital academic study.

This section will be subdivided into five main subjects in order to elaborate on this vast topic:

- Human rights: How far have human rights been respected?
- Security: How stable is the situation, and is there a need for regional intervention?
- Economy: What impact has the invasion and occupation had on the Iraqi economy?
- To what extent has Iraq become democratic?
- Sovereignty: To what extent does Iraq have sovereignty?
2.1 US Foreign Policy and the Promotion of Democracy in Iraq After 2003

The aim of this section is to outline the framework of the research project. In addition, in the course of this chapter the theory is presented, justifying the central argument of the study. The democratization process is examined in the theoretical framework, which evaluates the political system in post-invasion Iraq. The structure of the literature review is derived from the three main themes: democratization theory, which studies the meaning of the term 'democracy'; coercive democratization, which is related to the role of the US in post-invasion Iraq; and the democratic process in the context of Iraqi society and its residents' views. The democratization process in post-invasion Iraq is further subdivided into two themes: the basic conditions of democracy in Iraq and the requirements for, and obstacles to, democratic transition in post-invasion Iraq.

2.1.1 The Meaning of the Term 'Democracy'

The common conception of democracy is ‘majority rule’ and/or ruling by the people.¹ The origins of the word democracy can be traced to ancient Greek thought and it comprises two Greek root words, ‘demos’ meaning people and 'kratos' meaning rule.² Therefore, Bapir defines democracy as the “rule of people by the people and for the people”.³ The promotion of democracy in the Middle East region has received a significant amount of attention in US foreign policy, particularly after George W. Bush took power in the United States of America in 2001.⁴ This raises the question as to why this policy was particularly noteworthy during the Bush administration. Undoubtedly, the ideology of President Bush and his top officials was based upon the acceptance of US foreign policy as globally dominant.⁵ Nevertheless, the US government realised that its enforcement of democracy in the Middle East might contribute to reducing terrorism


⁵ ibid, p. 993.
in the region. It was believed that a democratic programme in the area could result in a solution to diplomatic problems as democracies have a tendency to avoid using force.\footnote{K. Placek, “The Democratic Peace Theory”, E-International Relations, 18\textsuperscript{th} February 2012, \url{http://www.e-ir.info/2012/02/18/the-democratic-peace-theory/} accessed 12\textsuperscript{th} February 2012.}

\subsection*{2.1.2 Coercive Democratization by Invasion: The Role of the US Post-Invasion}

History shows that invasions by foreign armies can lead to regime change, which eventually brings about democracy,\footnote{D. Beetham, “The Contradictions of Democratization by Force: the case of Iraq”, p. 449.} even where the promotion of democracy was not the primary reason for invasion. For example, India, in 1971 invaded East Pakistan, with an independent democratic state being formed, known as Bangladesh. Similarly, in 1974, when Turkey invaded Cyprus democracy in Greece was subsequently reinstated, and Idi Amin was deposed in 1978-1979, when Tanzania invaded Uganda. However, in such cases, invasion itself didn’t remove the apparatus of government; the land was not permanently occupied and the foreign forces did not create a new system - political forces within the countries restored democracy.\footnote{ibid, p. 449.} According to Beetham, Iraq is a perfect example of “coercive democratization” through invasion by foreign forces, and this has cost the country a lot, with ongoing instability.\footnote{ibid, p. 443-44.} It is now known that neoconservative elements within the American government had planned an invasion of Iraq for some time and became determined to do so following the events of September 11\textsuperscript{th} 2001.\footnote{See also, J. Steele and S. Goldenberg, “What is the Real Death Toll in Iraq?” special report for The Guardian, (19 March 2008), \url{http://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/mar/19/iraq}, accessed March 2013; S. Tawfiq., “The American War on Iraq: US War on Iraq, the Strategic Motivations and Economic Dimensions”, Baghdad, MSc Thesis from Nahrian University (2009), p. 107-8;}

Hence, in the wake of the Cold War, US foreign policy turned towards what was termed the promotion of democracy in the Middle East. US interests would have been served by Iraq being a free and democratic state.\footnote{M. Cox (2004), quoted in D. Beetham, “The contradictions of democratization by force: the case of Iraq”, \textit{Democratization}, 16 (3), (2009) p.444.} Thus, after the Bush government could not

establish that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, it changed its policy towards Iraq, to promote the ostensible “liberation of the Iraqi people”. However, the Bush administration hoped that establishing democracy in Iraq would be an example that other countries in the region would follow. Therefore, for the US, this occupation was a great chance to both democratize Iraq’s political system and to improve America’s position in the Middle East generally and Iraq in particular. Regarding this, James Woolsey, former Director of Central Intelligence, said; “This could be a golden opportunity to begin to change the face of the Arab world... Just as what we did in Germany changed the face of Central and Eastern Europe, here we have got a golden chance”.

Galbraith suggests that, due to the interests of America, such as oil security, their aim was to entirely restructure the Middle East and to begin a democratization process that would spread following Iraq’s example. This would show the powerful influence of America. Regarding the motives of Israel, the argument that “democratic forces do not go against other democratic forces”, could function as a rationale. It was assumed, in both instances, that the wished-for outcomes would, as a consequence, naturally emerge. Beetham’s view is supported by this; that the concept of spreading democratization via invasion is an inherently contradictory’ practice, and that this is the case regardless of the regional condition or situation.

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18 ibid, p 446.
2.1.3 Democracy and Security

The Bush administration can reasonably be blamed in part for the post-war suffering in Iraq. According to Diamond, America invaded Iraq without any pre-planned blueprints for the country's future, or its post-war life, and therefore soon after, there were problems with violence and looting (the cost of which, itself, was estimated to amount to $12 billion) of almost every important institution across the country except for the Ministry of Oil, which was carefully guarded by US forces. Another decision taken soon after the war was the move to disband the existing Iraqi army, based upon the advice of Kurdish political forces that wished to further their own interests. In his book, The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to bring Democracy to Iraq, Diamond, suggests that the US authorities in Iraq made a mistake when they removed the entire Ba’ath party from office. In doing so, they ignored the party’s fundamental role in the composition of the state: whether educators, engineers, high officials, the elite, doctors, or most other positions. This upset the balance of the social, political, and economic landscape and created a socio-political void.


22 ibid, p 58.


2.2 The Democracy Process from the Iraqi Viewpoint

2.2.1 Obstacles and Difficulties Associated with the Democratic Experience in Iraq

Iraq witnessed significant political changes after April 2003, most importantly the collapse of the regime immediately following the US military invasion, whereby the latter assumed political control of the country.\(^{25}\) The political process in the country then became subject to a timetable in accordance with laws and local decrees; the Law of Administration of the Iraqi State during the transitional period as well as UN Security Council Resolution 1546 of 2004, to define the course of the democratic process in the country.\(^{26}\) Abdul Jabbar argues that these efforts culminated in a general election, which despite the obviously wide political boycotts and other associated setbacks, particularly matters related to foreign funding of political parties and political powers that took part in the elections, constituted an important stage in the political development of Iraq.\(^{27}\) That stage of the process ended with the drafting of the regular constitution which defined the main features of the political regime and the political process in the country. In other words, the elections implied that the people of Iraq should accept the outcome as long as they voted for the members of the legislative institution, so that no one would be excused for being so naive as not to understand the rules of democracy. The decision-makers would have to prove that a real and convincing democratic process would be practised in Iraq in the sense that the method for the establishment of the state should guarantee the contribution of all members of the society to the selection process.\(^{28}\)


2.2.2 Conditions for the Democratic Process

The conditions required for democratization, set by the International Agency for Democracy and Election (IDEA),\(^\text{29}\) suggest that there should be a general agreement regarding the concept of citizenship and that the rule of law should prevail in a state. It also emphasises that basic economic, civil and political rights should be made available in equal proportion to all concerned. Furthermore, it asks the following questions: Has the regime been selected through fair and transparent elections? Does the partisan system promote democratic practice? To what extent is the government held accountable? Are the security forces and the army controlled by the civil authority? To what extent do people contribute to public life? To what extent does the government respond to the needs and priorities of the people?

The above standards and other academic research provide indicators as to the definition of the term ‘democracy’ and the conditions that must be met for a country to be described as democratic.\(^\text{30}\) Hussein argues that other conditions are necessary for the establishment of democracy including the rejection of any ideologies associated with the idea of a coup d’état, the promotion of economic stability, or the encouraging of religious reform (separating religion from politics). The latter is the most complicated problem facing the process of democratic transformation in Iraq, where religion interferes with politics, not to mention the fact that a stable society which is safe from foreign external threats constitutes one of the basic requirements for democracy.\(^\text{31}\)

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2.2.3 Obstacles Associated with the Democratic Experience

The democratic process in Iraq has faced numerous difficulties, some of which have been economic, while others have been political or social. Iraqi scholars argue that there were many obstacles to democratic stability in Iraq including trust, stability and identity. In terms of identity, the aftermath of the invasion saw sectarian and tribal identities gain primacy. Majority rule, according to Byman and Pollack, was a major obstacle to democratization due to the majority’s dominance over political power. Expanding upon this, Bapir notes that even with elections and the initiation of democracy in the wake of the conflict, all elements of Iraqi society should have been included in the political activities regardless of their religious loyalties. However, the practice of majority rule failed as it marginalized minorities; mainly Arab Sunnis, so that it could be argued that majority rule in post-war Iraq was equal to a dictatorship. This viewpoint negatively affected the internal political landscape, with conflict breaking out between some political forces that desired power, in addition to there being widespread sectarian violence among the factions; the Arab Sunnis and Shias, posing serious challenges to the political process.

Following the collapse of Saddam’s regime, the country saw widespread violence led by the Arab Sunnis. This has been attributed to the total dominance of the people by the majority, thereby creating political instability. Cordesman has claimed that division resulted from the establishment of democracy in Iraq; particularly among Sunni and


Shi’a Arab components, constraining the new regime and leading to the withdrawal of the US. Daniel points out, however, that there is extensive societal fragmentation in Iraq, and further asserts that establishing democracy in the country would easily have been achievable at the cost of US dominance.

2.3 Major Issues in Post-Occupation Iraq: The Legacy of The US Occupation

This section of the literature review aims to illustrate the fallout from the American occupation and the impact on the Iraqi people, in terms of human rights, security issues, the democratisation process, the economy and sovereignty. It also attempts to put the five above-mentioned issues in order of the research questions, which we aim to answer in Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, regarding Iraqis’ perspectives on US policy in post-invasion Iraq. The questions will be answered by analysing interviews and questionnaires conducted with participants in Iraq in 2012. It is also necessary to combine the theory with empirical evidence or practice in order to meet the goals of the research project and answer the research questions.

2.3.1 Respect for Human Rights

This part of the thesis commences with a review of the literature regarding the violations of human rights in the post-war phase of 2003 and will focus primarily on human rights violations in Iraq. Before discussing human rights violations in Iraq, a brief description of the concept is appropriate. Human rights means that individuals have absolute, unalienable rights. For example the right to choose a partner, to have children, to work, and to enjoy religious freedom. Moreover, with regard to human rights, governmental organizations’ main purpose is to prevent harassment, and violations during peace time as well as during war, and to prevent abuse and the threat of arbitrary use of force. Human rights, in this context, is a concept that emerged after World War II, at a time when the United Nations pledged, as a form of governmental organization, to take responsibility to protect future generations from annihilation. The


main objective was based on the principle that the individuals should have rights and freedoms as prescribed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 24th October, 1945. 41

However, violations prior to 2003 were basically the abuse of any opposition to the ruling regime in Iraq.42 President Bush, in his address to Congress on 29th January 2002, declared that the first priority after regime change in Iraq would be the security of personal freedom and citizens’ rights in the country.43 According to the new Iraqi constitution, US forces, and even elected Iraqi governments, have no right to investigate anyone without a court warrant. In addition, no one should be detained or arrested against the rule of law, nor should they be detained for their political or religious beliefs. A defendant is innocent until proven guilty according to the law, and also has the right to a solicitor. Iraq’s new constitution and the law of administration of the Iraqi state also features numerous rights for the Iraqi people at all levels, i.e. political, social and economic, which include the right to protest and strike peacefully, freedom of conscience and religious practice, and the right to personal privacy.44 However, human rights issues in post-war Iraq have become paramount in a wide range of areas. The increased death toll and cases of kidnapping have caused excessive suffering among vulnerable members of society.45 Therefore, this part of the literature review will briefly examine what has previously been written concerning the violations of human rights in Iraq after 2003.


2.3.1.1. Human Rights and Occupying Forces

A report by the Iraqi Communist Party in 2006 revealed that the most serious violations following the invasion included individual and mass killings, with the rate of killings in Iraq reaching unprecedented levels. However, individuals were imprisoned without an arrest warrant or a court sentence, sometimes for an indefinite period of time and without any record, so that in some cases the persons could be physically eliminated and disappear without trace. Furthermore, there was restriction of media activities in the areas of most unrest, with information being circulated and accessed in secrecy. Individual freedom was also restricted, particularly by extremist groups. This took place while the US neglected security and also was a cause of crime in itself.

One of the most significant aspects of a report by Amnesty International in 2010 was its reference to crimes committed in Iraq, which included the murder of Iraqi civilians, including women, children, and old men, by the US Army. As a result, the chairman of Amnesty International, Malcolm Smart, condemned the US forces for these crimes and for their violation of human rights in Iraq, contrary to international conventions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which calls for the respecting of human rights and fundamental freedoms for individuals. Other reports support the above claims.

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51 Al Jazeera Arabic, “Classified documents about the Iraq War and Confidential Information from the
Iraqi security forces, multinational forces, and foreign private military contractors raped and killed women. Hussein details claims including 57 recorded cases of the rape of Iraqi women by US and British forces, and 27 instances of child rape, including 11 such crimes committed by British troops and three cases by Danish forces for which numerous statistical data are provided between the start of military operations against Iraq in 2003 and the announcement of the suspension of operations. According to him, rape crimes included the rape of women in prisons, the rape of children and the rape of men.\(^52\) The rape crimes can be classified into four types: the rape of women in prisons, the rape of children, the rape of men, and the digging up of graves.\(^53\)

According to a report published by the Red Cross Committee in 2003-2004, mentioned by Al-Azzawi, which was presented to the International Committee for Human Rights, approximately 43,000 Iraqis have been apprehended by US forces in public and secret prisons. The report also indicates that the majority of those, somewhere between 70\% and 90\%, were arrested at random and without legal justification.\(^54\) According to a report by the Association of Muslim Scholars in 2014 on Human Rights, the invasion of Iraq is incompatible with the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as International Conventions; although the United States of America itself is a founding member, it is going against the rules of international humanitarian law.\(^55\)

The Islamic Organization for Human Rights prepared a report in 2004 regarding random arrests which were made in the city of Mosul. According to the contents of the report, US forces continued to carry out random raids; this constitutes an obvious


violation of international conventions, which stipulate a respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Furthermore, the report notes that the arrests by US forces were accompanied by beatings and cruel and inhumane treatment. At the same time, the organization revealed that some arrests were made without any judicial procedure. Finally, the US forces refused to allow the organization to visit prisoners who were in its custody.\footnote{Al-Azzawi, “Iraqi Human Rights Violations at Abu Ghraib Prison”, National Association Anti Zionism website, (6\textsuperscript{th} June 2007), \url{http://mounahada.org/modules.php?namepart=iraq&number=129}, accessed 17\textsuperscript{th} March 2013; see also, “Human Rights Violation in Iraq by US forces”, Al-Jazeera-Arabic net, (3\textsuperscript{rd} October 2004), accessed 15\textsuperscript{th} July 2011 (in Arabic).}

A large and growing body of literature has investigated the field of human rights violations. This part of the literature review represents the Iraqi opinion of US policy in relation to the issue of human rights in Iraq post-invasion. In this regard, an Iraqi opinion poll conducted in 2011, on the violations committed by US forces, by the Hammurabi Centre for Study and Research to investigate public opinion in Iraq, shows that the majority of respondents (95\%) agree that the US occupation, by its actions, has violated the sanctity of the blood of the Iraqi people as well as their divine values, with only 5\% disagreeing with the statement. Thus it is concluded that there is general consensus among the Iraqi people that US forces contributed to the violation of human rights in Iraq, and that the presence of US forces has been a cause of resentment and worry for the Iraqi people.\footnote{Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, “Iraqi Opinion Poll Regarding the Presence of U.S. Forces in Iraq”, (Iraq: Baghdad, Nahraj University, 23\textsuperscript{rd} December, 2011), \url{http://www.hcrsiraq.com}, accessed 22\textsuperscript{nd} January 2012.}

An Amnesty International report (2013) states that Iraq is trapped in a cycle of terrible human rights abuses. The report reveals that violations include attacks against civilians, torture of detainees and unfair trials. These revelations coincide with the passage of 10 years since the US-led invasion toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein. The report titled “A Decade of Violations” looks at the torture and mistreatment of detainees by local security forces and US troops. It also illustrates the failure of the Iraqi authorities to respect human rights and the rule of law in the face of ongoing deadly attacks by armed groups which show contempt for the lives of civilians.\footnote{Amnesty International, “Iraq is Stuck in a Loop of Terrible Human Rights Violations”, \textit{Middle East Newspaper} 1252, 12\textsuperscript{th} March 2013, \url{http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=720541&issueno=12523}, accessed 13\textsuperscript{th}}
However, a report released by the Ministry of Human Rights in Iraq (2012) denies that there were violations against some prisoners, other than insults or restraining. In other words, officials rejected any allegations of rapes made by the Human Rights Commission. By and large, the process of opening the doors of prisons to civil rights organizations has to be initiated in order to verify or disprove the allegations.59

2.3.1.2 Iraqi Governance, Conflict and Human Rights

It could be said that even the minorities in Iraqi society have not been excluded from violence in Iraq since 2003. Minorities in Iraq are also targeted by terrorists and armed militias who surfaced in the wake of the American occupation of Iraq after 2003; therefore, there is no confidence in any of the institutions. In other words, neither previous Iraqi governments nor the current Iraqi government have been able to protect human rights, especially among minorities whose numbers in the past were one and half million, but who now do not exceed half a million; these include the Sabeans, only 10% of whom have remained in Iraq, while the bulk have left the country and claimed asylum in other states.60

Several studies have been carried out on human rights violations. The Director of the Centre for Iraqi Lawyers, Shamseddin, appealed to the Ministry of Human Rights, the Supreme Judicial Council and Amnesty International, to stop the torture and rape of prisoners as well as the non-implementation of judicial decisions to release detainees from prison, both privately and publicly. Both practices are contrary to the US administration's promises to liberate Iraqis from an evil regime which abused human rights.61

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61 Al Basrah.net, “A Message from the Lawyer W. Fawzi Shamseddin to Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-
According to a publication by the Iraqi Centre for Human Rights in 2010, war crimes in the form of crimes against humanity have resulted in the killing of more than one million Iraqi citizens and have forcibly displaced more than four million others abroad as well as 2.5 million expatriates inside Iraq for sectarian reasons, besides abduction, torture, rape and humiliation of dignity.\footnote{Iraq Foundation, “The reality of human rights in Iraq,” (the Iraqi Centre for Human Rights, February 2007), \url{www.iraqfoundation.org/.../HRDN%20Annual%20Re.pdf} accessed 29\textsuperscript{th} July 2011; see also, T. Hafez, “Political Violence in Iraq.” p 116.}

Numerous reports have been published which highlight the human rights record in most Iraqi cities. The Nasiriyah Organization of Women for the Future published a report which noted a series of kidnappings, whose victims include members of the Mandaean community. The organization has recorded several cases of kidnappings by militias and the report concludes that those arrested would not be released until payment of a sum of money had been made. For this reason, the majority of this community were displaced to other countries as refugees. In other words, the government failed to protect the rights of these minorities.\footnote{Human Rights Defenders, “Human rights violation in Iraq”, Gazette News 2, (Iraq, 25 March 2007), \url{www.iraqfoundation.org/.../HRDN_Newslette_2_24A.pdf} accessed 7\textsuperscript{th} June 2011.} On the other hand, government opponents were either terrorists or Ba’athists, who were by definition supporters of the Saddam regime which meant that the government had the right to silence those voices by any means. In order to do so, the government had to use either the sectarian card or sometimes the political card.\footnote{K. Atwan, “A future phenomenon of political violence in Iraq”, \textit{Al Mustaqbal Al Arabi Journal} 330 (2007) 35-63}

A Human Rights Watch report in 2006 states that the Iraqi security forces [ISF] have committed crimes against Iraqi women. After arresting and putting them in prison, elements of the security forces carried out torture, rape and sexual harassment that took place at times in front of their husbands and/or children. This report confirms the failure of the Iraqi courts to investigate similar allegations of the ill-treatment of Iraqi
women.\textsuperscript{65} It also reveals that many prisoners have not been tried despite remaining in custody. Furthermore, the report also accuses government agencies of being involved in human rights violations, together with some irregular forces (militias) which are outside the control of the government. This suggests that the murder and physical torture of Iraqi civilians was planned.\textsuperscript{66}

2.3.1.3. The Role of Iran

Iran has taken part in the abuse of human rights in Iraq in that the Quds Force of Iran's,\textsuperscript{67} Revolutionary Guards has provided the militias with weaponry and funding at the expense of others in the political arena.\textsuperscript{68} Indeed, what is happening is a process of ethnic cleansing of Sunni populations, especially in Baghdad and its suburbs.\textsuperscript{69} Former army soldiers or members of security organisations who had been designated with the task of monitoring the activities of Iranian intelligence forces in the country before April 2003 suffered greatly, with most of them being executed either by Iraqi government forces or by Iranian organisations active in Iraq.\textsuperscript{70}


\textsuperscript{69} Swissinfo, “Death Squads” Between…. Truth and Reality, SWI \url{http://www.swissinfo.ch/ara/detail/content.html?cid=5077466} accessed 17\textsuperscript{th} January 2014 (in Arabic).

2.3.2 Security

2.3.2.1 Security and Occupying Forces

Cordesman argues that mistakes on the part of the overconfident Bush administration were partly to blame for the post-war difficulties in Iraq. Larry Diamond argues that the US sent too few troops (150,000) to the country when those who were responsible for the decisions were warned before the war that “two to three times” this number would be required for post-war restoration, security and peace in Iraq. According to Toby Dodge, the destabilised security situation in Iraq could be attributed to a number of factors including the crises among the Iraqi political forces which reflect negatively on the Iraqi Security Force (ISF), in other words its inability to maintain stability.

In an Iraqi opinion poll regarding the US military presence in Iraq, the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Studies at Nahrain University in Baghdad conducted a survey which asked how people felt about the visibility of US tanks on the streets. The participants were asked to answer the question on a four-point scale regarding whether they felt ashamed, scared, safe or sorry when they encountered a tank on the street.

In response, more than half the participants (59.1 %) said they felt sorry, with a frequency of 976. So, apart from the removal of Saddam’s regime, the legacy of the occupation for most Iraqis has been tragic and sorrowful given all the pain inflicted by the Americans on the Iraqi people, and this will be remembered for generations to come. Feeling ashamed came second, i.e. ashamed of oneself as a nation at seeing the occupiers moving freely in the streets, spreading fear among the people. Approximately one fifth of those surveyed (20.2 %) expressed shame, with a frequency of 334. The

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72 Diamond, Squandered Victory: The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq, p. 281.


feeling of fear came third (16.23%), with a frequency of 268. This group did not feel 
safe on encountering US troops due to their behaviour, or they feared the troops’ 
reactions in response to resistance while patrolling the streets; most killings of civilians 
committed by US troops were due to random shootings in response to sudden attacks. 
The Iraqi people learned to keep away from the US troops on the streets to avoid the 
fate of many innocent people who lost their lives due to such random violence. The 
feeling of safety came at the bottom of the list with only 4.2 % of a sample of 1651 
participants, with a frequency of 73, saying they felt safe. The respondents who said 
they felt safe when they encountered US tanks in the streets tended to be in areas where 
terrorist attacks were most likely to occur. However, the Iraq study group report 
(2006) states that “The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating”.76

2.3.2.2 Iraqi Security

Iraqi scholar Hafez (2007), points out that the failure to achieve stability after the war 
was due to the struggle for power between the political forces,77 in a scene where no 
overall security had been provided by the US. According to Atwan, various problems 
emerged in the post-invasion phase such as organized crime, oil smuggling, rebellion, 
illegal forces and militia groups.78 However, these activities combined contributed to 
sustaining crime in different political, economic and social sectors. Other kinds of 
serious crime which existed in post-war Iraq included kidnapping and rape.79 According 
to Williams, there were two main forms of kidnapping, kidnapping for economic 
reasons and kidnapping for political motives.80 All of the aforementioned contributed in 
one way or another to the deterioration of the security situation in Iraq after 2003. 
Furthermore, there was a new type of crime, extortion, a financial means of sustaining 
violece in different areas of the country, which brought illicit incomes. In addition,
there were other forms of offence, which consisted of bank robbery and the trade of weapons, drug trafficking, people trafficking, together with fuel and antique smuggling.\textsuperscript{81}

Williams argues that ‘organized crime’ was widespread in post-war Iraq and a significant threat to the country’s security. The insurgency at the same time acted with criminal entities to cause sectarian violence with the aim of controlling criminal markets in order to gain illegal profits. These obstacles led to efforts to strengthen security being hampered.\textsuperscript{82} Williams also suggests that organized crime was the main challenge to the US army attempting to preserve stability in the country and discusses the causes that led to the rise in organized crime in post-war Iraq. There were also main actors engaged in crime, overlapping with each other; these were the tribal coalition, and Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM). This study concludes that the issue of security in Iraq should be given careful consideration as it constitutes the basic underpinning of the maintenance of the state’s capabilities. The impact of crime has not been resolved by the US’s military and political efforts, and the economic rebuilding of Iraq is still on the table.\textsuperscript{83} Finally, neighbouring states helped to create instability in post-war Iraq.\textsuperscript{84}

\textbf{2.3.2.3 Iranian Regional Intervention}

Iranian meddling in Iraqi affairs has been strongly linked to the continuation of violence in Iraq.\textsuperscript{85} The US government has revealed that there is compelling evidence of Iran supplying militia groups, including funding, arming, training and otherwise supporting their activities, in particular in the southeast province of Iraq. For instance, US forces have frequently arrested many elements of the Al Quds Forces of Iran, who supplied Iraqi militia groups with ammunition. Up to the end of 2006 US forces had detained

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{81} ibid., p. 32-37.
\textsuperscript{84} Katzman, ‘Iran’s Influence in Iraq’, p. 1-2.
\textsuperscript{85} Katzman, ‘Iran’s Activities and Influence in Iraq’, p. 1. See also Blanchard et al. Iraq: Regional Perspective and US Policy, p1-3.
\end{flushleft}
seven Iranians suspected of being Iranian secret agents. Moreover, in April 2007 the coalition forces declared that they had also uncovered evidence to indicate that Iran was supporting a number of Iraqi militia groups.\textsuperscript{86} Furthermore, there has been infiltration by intelligence services into Iraq from neighbouring countries, particularly Iran, which has had a significant effect on Iraq’s political affairs.\textsuperscript{87} In fact, Iran has become part of the security problem in Iraq as it views the country as a battleground for the US and Arab countries with a view to expanding its regional influence. In fact, the purpose of Iran’s intervention is to limit the role of the US in Iraq; this has resulted in a security dilemma for the latter and increased its losses in Iraq.\textsuperscript{88} According to Jones, the territorial challenges to security in Iraq increased the threat to stability. Iran has played a huge role in the continuing disorder in most Iraqi cities.\textsuperscript{89}

\subsection*{2.3.3 The Economy}

Privatisation of the Iraqi economy was a priority on the agenda of US policymakers. According to the US, the new Iraq was no longer committed to socialist principles based on state control of the economy, which was replaced by the free market and privatisation principles promoted by the US.\textsuperscript{90}

As a first positive step, the US succeeded in reducing the amount of Iraqi debt, which had reached $29 billion dollars as a result of the previous policies. The US envoy, James Baker, negotiated with the creditors, especially the Arab Gulf countries, and as a result the Kuwaiti regime declared its readiness to reduce the debt, and other states were similarly responsive to the suggestions of the US envoy. This policy led to an increase

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{87} Katzman, ‘Iran’s Activities and Influence in Iraq’, p. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{88} Ibid, p. 2-7.
\end{itemize}
in the percentage of Iraqi income from oil resources, which is contributing to the re-
building of Iraq.\textsuperscript{91}

The second step for the US administration was to establish the Coalition Provisional
Authority (CPA). The aim behind this authority was to stabilise security and to fund the re-
building of Iraq and also to set up local and republican bodies which reflect people’s
opinions and act on their behalf. On 16\textsuperscript{th} April 2003, a deal was signed releasing the
first funding worth about $2.475 billion for the re-construction of Iraq, including
important sectors, such as health services. Further funding was allocated to Iraqi relief,
which was released in November 2003 by President Bush himself. Furthermore, a
number of agencies were established under the authority of the CPA: the Development
Fund for Iraq (DFI), the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance
(ORHA), the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), and the US Agency for
International Development (USAID).\textsuperscript{92} The purpose of these agencies was to provide
humanitarian aid for the Iraqi people, to fund the rebuilding of infrastructure for Iraq
and to provide advice on specific issues. In particular, the US administration sought,
from the beginning, to establish a Governing Council of Iraqis (GCI), the aim of which
was to assist in imposing law and order.\textsuperscript{93}

The next step was for the US to begin to set the stage for privatisation by persuading the
new government to sign agreements with donor countries in Paris in 2004 and in
Brussels in 2005. Both agreements committed Iraq to lifting government subsidies, and
introducing economic reforms including privatisation of vital economic sectors in return
for cutting its debts by up to 80\%.\textsuperscript{94}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[91] Aliraqi.org, “Details of Negotiations with the Creditor Nations of Iraq after the Occupation”, \textit{Forums: The Political Arena}, (29\textsuperscript{th} November 2008), \url{http://www.aliraqi.org/forums/showthread.php?t=90249} accessed 20\textsuperscript{th} May 2011.
\end{footnotes}
2.3.3.1 Privatization of Iraqi Oil

The US administration claimed that the main purpose behind the invasion of Iraq was to establish democracy. Nevertheless, the project of democratization ultimately served US interests on various levels - political, economic and military - in post war Iraq. Furthermore, their agenda consisted of schedules pertaining to their internal policy, which aimed to privatize Iraqi oil. This would allow American companies a high share of the Iraqi oil reserves and eliminate the restrictions that were in place during the previous regime.\(^\text{95}\)

The occupation contributed to the emergence of numerous negative developments in Iraq, particularly widespread corruption mainly associated with the political practice that allowed those who occupied key political positions to steal state resources, most importantly oil.\(^\text{96}\)

2.3.3.2 Unemployment

Unemployment formed a major challenge to the democratic transition subsequent to the occupation of Iraq.\(^\text{97}\) It is true to say that prior to April 2003, Iraqi society experienced high levels of unemployment, however the rate of unemployment multiplied many times after the occupation,\(^\text{98}\) particularly in the aftermath of the measures taken by the occupation forces in terms of the dissolution of the army and other security forces in Iraq and the disbanding of the Ba’ath party. No less than a million persons were affected by that move, not to mention the resources that were squandered through corruption, thus blocking opportunities for economic development.\(^\text{99}\) Many workers in


\(^{97}\) Ibid., p. 40-46.


the private sector were also made redundant. The main reason was the disruption of the activities of numerous private sector institutions due to the rocketing prices of services, making local products incapable of competing with the foreign products that flooded the market following the occupation; there was also a shortage of raw materials and almost complete failure to provide adequate sources of power. Consequently, this led to increasing numbers being out of work, with modest estimates putting unemployment at 20% of the total population, with the attendant negative impacts of unemployment on social security and stability in Iraq. Unemployment also provided a suitable environment for terrorism in which most of the militias, as well as foreign countries, were able to take advantage of the unemployed to continue their activities in Iraq. At least one million people were estimated to have made up the Iraqi army, intelligence and security forces. These were made unemployed as part of the democratization process. It is estimated that it rose to a level of 50% during the period between 2003 and 2009, whereas during the years 2009-2012 it fell slightly to 45%. The above obstacles could have been attributed first to the legacy of Saddam’s regime, and second to the impact of the invasion of Iraq and its fallout, which resulted in the collapse of all political, economic and social institutions of the Iraqi state.

Overall, the US economic policies were not successful. The US endeavoured to improve the infrastructure of the most important sectors of the Iraqi economy, such as the restoration of oil production and the electricity sector. Nevertheless, a mere 10% of financial support was allocated to these projects by the CPA. The study also concludes that the economic track during 2006 witnessed a small amount of progress, especially in the Baghdad region and some other provinces. Another factor associated with economic mismanagement is corruption.


101 Hassen and Saleh “Economic and Social Effects of the Corruption in Iraq” p. 7-10 (in Arabic).


103 ibid, p. 1-5.

2.3.3.3 Corruption

According to the Index of Transparency International in 2012, the country ranks 169th out of 176 countries with a score of 8 for corruption on a scale of 0-100, where 0 means highly corrupt and 100 means very straight.\textsuperscript{105} This indicates a serious problem with corruption in post-invasion Iraq.\textsuperscript{106} Furthermore, the widespread corruption which existed under the occupation also had a negative effect on the Iraqi people. In this regard, a field survey conducted by the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Studies investigated the opinions of Iraqi people in a number of provinces, particularly Anbar province which is the second case study, as to whether they think the US occupation of Iraq has promoted corruption. In response to this question, the majority of participants (95.10\%) agreed that it has, while the rest (4.9\%) disagreed. This, in essence, means there is agreement that the US has contributed to an increase in corruption.\textsuperscript{107}

2.3.4. The Quality of Iraqi Democracy

Generally speaking, democracy should mean that the people have the right to choose their representatives in government through a direct and secret vote, and that the process should be periodic in order to achieve a peaceful transfer of power.\textsuperscript{108} In other words, every citizen should have the right to choose those who represent them in the government from among individuals and political parties periodically.\textsuperscript{109} However,


Kadir argues that one of the consequences of America’s war was the division of the country into many ethnic and sectarian groups; at the same time, the aggravation of sectarian and nationalistic elements post-2003 Iraq has become obvious.\textsuperscript{110} This has affected the quality of democracy.

A survey was conducted by the Information Centre for Research and Development investigating public opinion in Iraq regarding the model of political authority the Americans built while in Iraq. The aim of the survey was to determine whether the authority was considered chaotic, corrupt or fair. The responses record a 54.6\% majority answering that it was chaotic; 39.3\% claimed it was corrupt and only 6.1\% said it was fair.\textsuperscript{111}

To examine this further, the following sections provide more detail of the issue of building a quality democracy in Iraq.

\textbf{2.3.4.1.-The Formation of the Iraqi Governing Council in 2003 and after}

Paul Bremer, in his book \textit{My Year in Iraq: the Struggle to Build a Future of Hope} states that the formation of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) on 13\textsuperscript{th} July, 2003 was a positive step toward the transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqis.\textsuperscript{112} Unfortunately, this was built on a sectarian basis rather than favouring Iraqi national interests.\textsuperscript{113} It comprised 25 members whose loyalties were not representative of Iraqis; 13 selected from the Shi’a parties, nine members from the Kurdish and Sunni parties, while the rest were divided between other minorities such as Turkmens and Assyrians. Then, the IGC

\begin{footnotesize}
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\textsuperscript{110} A. Kadir, \textit{“Iraqi Political Instability under the Lens of Consociational Democracy: Lesson from Lebanon”}, MSc Thesis. (Leicester University, September 2012), p. 3-7.


\textsuperscript{112} Bremer with McConnell, \textit{“My Year in Iraq: the Struggle to Build a Future of Hope”}, p. 96-97.

\textsuperscript{113} H. Saeed., \textit{‘Problems Involving the Relationship between the Legislative Authority, and the Executive Authority in Iraq’s Political System”}. Baghdad, MSc Thesis. (University of Baghdad, 2010) (accessed 17\textsuperscript{th} March 2013) p. 145-157 (in Arabic).
\end{footnotesize}
formed an elected Iraqi government in 2005. Following its establishment the Council managed to introduce the idea of consociationalism, a phenomenon uncommon in Iraq, while hastily pushing toward partnership. Both ideas would indicate the limited government portfolios that would regularly be distributed among the people, to enable them to distinguish between their political interests and the national interests and forget about the majorities, and so that moderation should be the main factor in decision-making. Kadir argues that the Iraqi political forces and decision makers opted for a consociational democracy which, according to him, was the best option by which the Iraqi people could establish their political system; furthermore, he argues that majority rule has failed to create a stable political system.

At the end of his administration in November 2003, Paul Bremer indicated his agreement with the then president of the governing council, Jalal Talabani, by announcing “the steps for political practice”. However, neither the IGC nor successive Iraqi governments have fully represented all aspects of Iraqi society.

Hatem warns of the risks and impact of this re-structured government on the new political order, which at the same time reflects negatively on the new developments relating to the scenario of democracy in post-war Iraq. The political forces which have entered the arena in Iraq since the war have adopted different ideologies and different political trends and therefore have reflected negatively on the democratic process in Iraq. Many of the challenges which have led to the failure in the construction of democracy in post-war Iraq are due to disagreement and struggle between political forces regarding who holds power, as well as international and territorial intervention and the role of the US.

The Egyptian researcher, Abdel-Meguid, argues that cultural heritage and the Arab nationalist ideology explain why consensual democracy has been rejected, particularly

in post-war Iraq. The main idea behind this approach was to build Iraq’s political system through the proportional distribution of power in accordance with the majority of Iraqi society who are Shi’a, Sunni Arabs and Kurds, as well as to ensure the rights of other minorities, such as the Assyrians, Turkmens and Christians. However, there has been criticism of this approach; the most important being that it ignores the freedom of the individual and has failed to provide political stability in post-war Iraq.¹¹⁹

Abdul-Meguid also observes that the future of Iraq depends on wide participation in government by all Iraqi citizens, and the integration of society. Furthermore, he says it is necessary to override the system of sectarian quotas, which is an obstacle to the democratic process in post-war Iraq. Abdul-Meguid also points out that George W Bush sought to create a democratic political system in Iraq as a model for the neighbouring Arab countries. Instead, the scenario in post-war Iraq was horrific, with kidnappings, killings, violence, resistance, lack of security, the deterioration of the economy and conflict between the new political forces.¹²⁰

According to Hafez, the final result was a distorted democratic practice, due to the fact that the army and other security organisations were politically utilized to manipulate the security situation in order to exclude anti-occupation forces from taking part in elections. At the same time, the initially democratic practice became an undemocratic practice through the formation of a coalition government by agreement featuring all the winning parties, thus eliminating parliamentary opposition from the scene as all parties were represented in the government.¹²¹

The main political outcome of the occupation has been the formation of free political parties, regardless of the basic political principles of those parties in relation to the overriding national interests of the state of Iraq. This has resulted in democratic chaos and has led to the establishment of undemocratic totalitarian parties in post-occupation


¹²¹ Hafez, “Political Violence in Iraq”, p. 111-122.
Iraq. The formation of such parties constitutes a major obstacle for the progress of democracy as they have caused the largest division of the Iraqi people along ethnic and religious lines in modern history.\footnote{Wimmer, Democracy and Ethno-religious Conflict in Iraq, p. 112.} At the same time, these parties have made a major contribution towards opening Iraq’s borders, as some parties have tended to maintain their historical religious links with neighbouring countries at the expense of their loyalty to the country.\footnote{Hafez, “Political Violence in Iraq”, pp. 113-123 (in Arabic).}

### 2.3.5 Sovereignty

This part of the thesis commences with a review of the literature regarding the removal of sovereignty from Iraq in the post-war phase of 2003. The actual decision to wage war on Iraq in 2003 by the US and its allies was a serious violation of Iraqi sovereignty. As a direct result of this military invasion Iraq came under the political control of the US on 9th April 2003 when in effect the nation state of Iraq lost both the ruling regime and its autonomous right to sovereignty.

Sovereignty, in this context, is the legal concept relating to statehood. It is considered one of the features and characteristics necessary to consider a state to be a member of the international community. The concept of sovereignty is centred around the ability of a state to manage its own domestic policy as it sees fit without any interference from another nation state. A central and fundamental element of the concept of sovereignty, or what is termed ‘territorial sovereignty’, is the absolute supreme authority to practice its functions within its own territory. Another aspect of sovereignty is the capacity to enter into relationships with other nation states and to deal with them on an equal footing.\footnote{W. Abdul Rahim., “the concept of sovereignty in the international law”, WWW.ssnp.info, 2006, 15th May, http://www.ssnp.info/index.php?article=16294 accessed 22nd July 2014.}

According to the law, the running of the state during the transitional period covering the November agreement of 2003, should have been the responsibility of a government within the ruling council which would undertake executive and consultative duties,
before the formation of an interim government scheduled for November 2004. In other words, that government would have had supreme authority to control the state of Iraq pending the formation of an interim government via direct elections followed by the formation of a permanent government and all those governments should have had supreme authority to control the state. However, despite the promises of the formation of a democratic government in Iraq, independence was not forthcoming. According to the terms of the UN Security Council Resolution 1483 of 2003, this responsibility should have continued until the withdrawal of US troops at the end of December 2011 rather than June 2004, the date of the dissolution of the civil administration and the transfer of power to the Iraqis in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1456 of 2004. It, however, stipulated that the US should continue to maintain its security presence and sovereignty within Iraqi borders even after power had been transferred to the Iraqi government.

An Iraqi poll was carried out regarding the views of the Iraqi people, as to whether the US military presence in Iraq post-2003 was an occupation, or a liberation. In total, 13.5% answered that it was a liberation, 77.5% answered it was an occupation which violated the sovereignty of the Iraqi state, and 9% answered that they did not know.

Other questions posed to the respondents invited them to describe the main consequences that emerged from the American presence in Iraq for more than eight years, in terms of the spread of corruption and chaos in the state and society, the promotion of religious, sectarian and ethnic intolerance, the laying of foundations for a democratic state, overseeing the change in Iraqi society from an era of despotism to one


of freedom, as well as increases in rates of poverty and deprivation, unemployment and crime and finally the economic development and improvement in standards of living. The results showed that laying the foundations for a democratic state scored very poorly at just 4.5%.

2.3.5.1 The Elected Iraqi Government of 2005

As for the efficiency of the government in carrying out its responsibilities on the departure of US troops from Iraq, a study was undertaken by the Association of Muslim Scholars, based on a special questionnaire conducted in Amman on 8th May 2011. It included a question regarding whether the participants believed that the current government would be capable of running the state’s affairs following the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. In response, a considerable number of participants, including political analysts, academics, and observers of Iraqi affairs from the media, were of the opinion that the legally-questionable government of Al-Maliki, whose security systems, particularly the army and the police, had been established on a sectarian basis amid rampant corruption since 2003, would not be capable of bringing about real political stability in Iraq following the departure of the occupying troops, which was scheduled for the end of December 2011. This was the opinion expressed by many of those who took part in the questionnaire.130 A poll conducted by the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies to investigate public opinion in Iraq showed time and again the inability of political forces to terminate the occupation and to resume sovereignty.131

For instance, responses to how serious the respondents thought the intention of political forces in Iraq to end the occupation and to impose full national sovereignty was, a huge


proportion of respondents (89.80%) claimed that there was a lack of trust in the political forces to end the occupation, while 10.20 % of the selected sample expressed confidence in their ability to terminate the occupation.132

2.4 Conclusion: The Literature on Democracy in Iraq

Looking at the literature, it is clear that after the 2003 US invasion the lack of basic security provided by occupying forces led to a crumbling of Iraqi society and the emergence of new power blocs which negatively affected democracy. Human rights suffered with violations committed by US forces, Iraqi militia and organised crime forces. The security situation declined up to 2007 in part due to economic reasons. Poor economic performance and mass unemployment led to greater insecurity and violence. Sovereignty was affected by the lack of security and Iraq’s open borders. However, what is missing in these surveys is the voice of the Iraqi people. This thesis aims to relate the voice of Iraqis on all of these issues, not just to see whether they confirm the problems in these areas but how they confirm them. The following chapter discusses the methodology used to answer the research questions.

132 ibid. p.45-49.
Chapter Three

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to show the research design and methods applied in the study. To achieve this, the chapter has been divided into six sections. Section one deals with the process of research design; the objectives of the research are highlighted and how questions were designed to obtain and assess participants’ views is looked at. Section two includes an explanation of why three cities were chosen for this study. Section three discusses the methods of data collection. Section four explains the ethical considerations. Section five describes the limitations of the methodology. Section six examines the process by which the analysis of data is presented and it shows how data are reduced through content analysis and the use of SPSS.

3.1 The Research Design

The research design provides a clearer view on how the research was carried out. As stated by Collis and Hussey the researcher’s personal research design enables them to determine what methodology best suits the study. In this research the design focuses on qualitative and quantitative methods which make it a mixed methods approach.¹ According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie the mixed methods approach implies the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods for enquiry or investigations². The benefit of mixed methods in research is that it enables the researcher to gain a better understanding of the study at hand, as one supplements or complements where the other lacks.³ Dzurec and Abraham, observe that although some methodologies may focus on one particular research tradition, it is better to apply various research approaches that can cover the objectives, scope, and nature of inquiry that appear to be consistent across


³ Ibid. p.14
methods and paradigms. In this way the researcher can gain an in-depth view of the subjects or matters at hand.\textsuperscript{4} Yin states that: “A research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (“and the conclusions to be drawn”)\textsuperscript{5}. The participants in this study are inhabitants of Baghdad, Fallujah and Anbar.

In accordance with Cassell and Symon (2004) the mixed methods approach (interviews and survey) was considered appropriate for attaining the objectives of this research for a number of reasons.\textsuperscript{5} It would provide further information about the five major issues addressed in the research questions. Following up questionnaires with interviews allows information that is not found in the questionnaire to be extracted. In addition, the nature of Iraqi society favours the use of mixed methods as it consists of different ethnic and religious groups with different opinions concerning the various issues addressed in the research questions. Finally, the need to understand the differences in the opinion among the elites and public motivated the use of the mixed methods (see Table 3-1).

\textsuperscript{4} L. C. Dzurec, & I L Abraham, “The nature of inquiry: linking quantitative and qualitative research”, \textit{Advances in Nursing Science}, no. 16 (1993), p. 73-79


### Table 3.1 The Objectives of the Research Project and Techniques Applied

<table>
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<th>Aims</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Local areas</th>
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<tr>
<td>An overall assessment of the democratization process and an original contribution to US policy in Iraq, in terms of its role, from the perspective of various sections of Iraqi society.</td>
<td>Interviews were conducted with political elite and members of the public, who are in charge of different civil and government organizations. Questionnaires were distributed among Iraqi residents selected from the local areas.</td>
<td>Qualitative approach was used to analyse the data obtained from the interviews. Charts and tables were used to classify the opinions of different groups of society and a statistical analysis was performed at the same time.</td>
<td>Baghdad Province First-case. Al-Anbar Province and Fallujah City-Second case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An investigation into positive and negative aspects of US foreign policy toward Iraq after 2003 from an Iraqi perspective.</td>
<td>In-depth interviews through meetings with participants from different factions of society.</td>
<td>To analyse data concerned with the political issues discussed with the participants which posed a major debate of this thesis.</td>
<td>Baghdad Province First-case. Al-Anbar Province and Fallujah City-Second case.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To collect data qualitatively and quantitatively, the researcher adopted the interview and survey methods, which were used to investigate the opinions of the elite from among the intellectuals and decision makers who were previously or are currently in government office, and members of parliament. The survey was designed to investigate the opinions of participants in relation to US policy in Iraq, focusing on pertinent issues such as how US policy has impacted on human rights. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants including MPs, elite members of society and decision makers, political elite, tribal leaders, religious figures and scholars, in order to give a broad overview of the situation in post-invasion Iraq. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants using a question guide and/or list of questions, specifically designed to obtain answers to the research questions. In addition, the questionnaires were distributed to local residents. All of the data was gathered from fieldwork in the research areas of Baghdad, Fallujah and Unbar between 15th February and 25th May 2012. The initial forms contained 22 interview questions and 30 questionnaire questions, designed according to the principles of best practice in research design. In order to assess the contents in terms of reliability and validity, the forms were prepared via a number of stages. The first stage involved an exploratory study of the questions. In the second stage, the forms were distributed to 10 participants, academics from Baghdad, Al-Nahrian, Al-Mustansirya, and Al-Anbar Universities. However, the academic committees from these universities reduced the questions on the final draft of the questionnaire to 19 close-ended questions while the 22 interview questions remained as per the initial design. The survey and interviews indicate a reasonable level of agreement among the experts ranging between 88-96%, with an average value of around 0.71, which is statistically significant. These are used to measure the opinions of the Iraqi people on matters related to US policies in Iraq (see Appendix D) and they provide a comprehensive view of the subject within the framework of the issues that have been the main concern of US policy in Iraq, namely:


9 Yin, Case Study Research: Design and Methods, p. 26.
sovereignty, security, democracy, human rights, and the economy. Credibility refers to the capability of the questions to measure accurately what is to be measured (the opinions of the Iraqi people). Thus the assessment helped to define the main questions which indicate the trend of opinion in relation to all the issues associated with American policy in Iraq between April 2003 and 2009.

The interview and survey forms featured four parts. The first was an introduction of the research project including the title of the study, “Iraqi opinion towards US policy in post-invasion Iraq”. It also included a brief introduction of the purpose of the study, which is to serve the purposes of scientific research. Further, this part contained personal information about the researcher such as name, address, telephone number and email address.

The second part of the form was designed to present background information about the participants involved in the interviews and questionnaires, namely age, gender, position and city. The third part of the form featured the 22 interview questions that corresponded to the five main research subjects mentioned above (see Appendix A-1): the original interview form in English). According to Cassell & Symon the use of open question in conducting interviews with participants helps to obtain answers easily and without any potential discomfort.\(^\text{10}\) The questionnaire featured 19 multiple-choice and/or closed questions, and gave the participants a range of choices (agree, disagree and neutral). The fourth part of the form was designed for any additional comments from the participants, together with their names and signatures (see Appendix A-2).

The second phase of the research project involved conducting the interviews and distributing the questionnaires at the beginning of 2012. However, a number of important preparatory steps were taken before this could occur:

Official permission was sought from the Iraqi Cultural Attaché in London, then from the Ministry of Higher Education in Baghdad in order to obtain assistance from Dr Khuder Atwan from Al-Nahrain University (Baghdad Province) during the fieldwork which was carried out from 5\(^\text{th}\) February until the 25\(^\text{th}\) May 2012 (see Appendix E)

Initially, I visited official and unofficial institutions in Baghdad, Unbar and Fallujah including the Iraqi parliament, institutions of higher education, the National Institute for

\(^\text{10}\) Cassell & Symon, (Eds.), Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research, p. 12-18.
Human Rights; the headquarters of the tribal leaders, offices of political parties including Islamic, national and communist parties, civil society organizations and the Political Prisoners’ Organization. The aim of these visits was to introduce myself as a PhD student and to explain the purpose of the interviews and questionnaires and their centrality to the research project.

An official letter from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research was secured to allow the interviews to be conducted (see Appendix F) then I explained the information consent form to each participant selected for the interview. The distribution of the interview form and questionnaire to the participants selected from the Iraqi elite and lay people followed, in order to give them enough time to read the contents of the forms. The forms were then collected from the participants at the time specified.

Careful consideration was given to the security situation of the country, particularly in the fieldwork cities of Fallujah and Unbar where there was more tension and violence, especially with the American forces. Alternative plans and rescheduling of appointments had to be made in order to conduct the meetings at different times and dates with the participants.

The 22 interview questions and 19 survey questions were classified into five major subjects: Human rights, security, economy, the democracy process and sovereignty, including Iraqi-American responsibility. However, each of these can be divided into two main sections, the first designed to analyse the opinions of the Iraqi elite (see Table 3.2) and the second to analyse the opinions of Iraqi public opinion (see Table 3.3). A set of questions was also proposed for each of the above subjects. As Hartley explains, research design is "the argument for the logical steps which will be taken to link the research question(s) and issues to data collection, analysis and interpretation in a coherent way".11

It is worth noting that the procedures and techniques of the design of the interview and questionnaire questions, the data collection from the fieldwork, the classification, and data analysis, were all planned and implemented in order to answer the main research question of the research project and the following five research sub-questions:

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11 J. Hartley cited in Cassell & Symon, Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research, p.326
• How far have human rights been respected?
• How stable is the security situation, and is there a need for regional intervention?
• What has been the impact of the invasion and occupation on the Iraqi economy?
• To what extent has Iraq become a democratic state?
• To what extent does Iraq have sovereignty?

Table 3.2 The Classification of 22 Interview Questions (Opinions of Iraqi Elite), According to the Five Main Issues and Iraqi-American Responsibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Rights questions</th>
<th>Iraqi Factors</th>
<th>American factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(6) Do you think there has been a change in human rights issues in Iraq since 2003? If so, to what extent have human rights been respected or violated?</td>
<td>(2) Some views indicate that the development of political parties in post-invasion Iraq helped improve the country’s security, and societal stability by enabling different political movements to take part in the political process: what is your opinion regarding this?.</td>
<td>(1) Some believe that Iraq’s stability requires the existence of US forces in Iraq. In your opinion, what would enhance the unity and solidarity of Iraq’s people: the existence of US forces or their withdrawal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) It has been said that after 2005 the elected Iraqi government contributed to improving human rights issues by means of the army and the security forces. To what extent do you believe this is true.</td>
<td>(4) A number of Iraqi people fled to neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Syria and Egypt. Some of them fled for humanitarian aid and others for political reasons. In your viewpoint, what are the real causes for this? Does the political arena in Iraq no longer accept political competition, or has the security situation become out of control?</td>
<td>(3) Some people believe that the US invasion of Iraq led to weakened security control on the Iraqi international borders. Do you think this was due to ineffective US invasion security policies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Do you believe that the US was open in its dealings with the Iraqi and Arabic media during the period of the war on Iraq or it did it release news according to how it wanted the Iraq situation to be perceived?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) What is your perspective regarding whether the US government elevated the status of human rights or sought to violate them by the crimes it committed in Iraq and is the role of the US in terms of human rights issues compatible with the universal declaration of human rights and resolutions of the United Nations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Security questions</th>
<th>Iraqi Factors</th>
<th>American factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(3) Do you agree that there has been a change in security control in Iraq since 2003? If so, to what extent has the security situation become better or worse?</td>
<td>(3) Some people believe that the US invasion of Iraq led to weakened security control on the Iraqi international borders. Do you think this was due to ineffective US invasion security policies?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Economy questions

#### Iraqi Factors

16) Unemployment, poverty and the low standard of living were prevailing indicators in post-invasion Iraq, do you think that was because of the occupation and its policies, or was the problem inherent in the Iraqi government.

#### American factors

14) It is said that oil resources were an economic factor in the decision of the US government to invade Iraq. Although the US forces have started to withdraw from Iraq, can this role [of oil] still be noticed?

15) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the destruction of Iraqi infrastructures was on the agenda of the US government, to achieve their economic goals?

### Democracy Process questions

#### Iraqi Factors

9) The democracy process in Iraq after 2003 brought about a number of advantages; one importantly was the formation of an Iraqi government in 2005, which is compatible with the nature of democracy. What is your evaluation of the performance of the Iraqi government at that time?

12) Most political forces have been able to secure a place in the Iraqi parliament through their acquisition of a majority of votes and without territorial support. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the impact of territorial support on the electoral process?

#### American factors

10) The termination of dictatorship and the introduction of democratic rule in Iraq after 2003 was one of the main objectives of the Bush administration. Do you think democracy has been achieved, in particular ten years after the political change in Iraq? Has the US played a real role in achieving that objective?

11) The US-imposed democracy allowed Iraqi women to participate in the political performance. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

13) Do you think the democratic process introduced by the US despite all the instabilities and complications will continue in the country?

### Sovereignty questions

#### Iraqi Factors

17) What is your viewpoint regarding whether Iraq is an independent state on both internal and external levels?

18) Following the formation of the elected Iraqi government in 2005, the security forces became capable of protecting the country from foreign interference and enforced stability. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

#### American factors

19) Following its war in Iraq the US sought to achieve their goals in the Middle East region in general and Iraq in particular. What is your view on this?

20) The outcome of the Iraqi political experiment indicates that the US presence in Iraq has been successful. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

21) Some people believe that the American presence in Iraq could be described as liberation, others on the contrary, see it as occupation. How do you see it?

22) Does Iraq need the US to remain long term, politically and for security reasons?

Source: *Fieldwork*, 2012.
Table 3.3 The Classification of the 19 Questionnaire Questions (Iraqi Public Opinion), according to the Five Main Issues and Iraqi-American Responsibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Human Rights questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Factors</td>
<td>(3) Did official Iraqi institutions, such as the police force and the army, start to respect human rights after 2003?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American factors</td>
<td>(18) Has the US government elevated the status of women in Iraq?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Security questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Factors</td>
<td>(2) Did the appearance of political parties after 2003 improve security and assure stability?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American factors</td>
<td>(12) Are Iraqi security services protecting the country from internal and external dangers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Did the US withdrawal from Iraq lead to the weakening of security?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Economy questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Factors</td>
<td>(9) Has the general level of poverty been reduced to a large extent since2003, compared with the period before 2003?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American factors</td>
<td>(10) Was oil the main reason for the invasion of Iraq?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democracy Process questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Factors</td>
<td>(6) Did the territorial effects of the neighbouring countries cause the failure of the democratic project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7) Do the political parties in parliament represent Iraqi opinion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American factors</td>
<td>(8) Was the failure of the democratic process to be expected as it is incompatible with Iraqi society?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Has the application of consensual democracy given a negative image of democracy applied by the US?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4) Has the US implementation of the idea of democracy in Iraq proved to be successful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19) Has the US-imposed democracy allowed Iraqi women to participate in the political processes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sovereignty questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iraqi Factors</th>
<th>American factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(11) After 2003, have the Iraqi people became capable of designing and Implementing their internal policies independently?</td>
<td>(13) Has the US occupation of 2003 led to the emergence of a more unified Iraq?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) Has territorial interference been rejected by the elected Iraq government?</td>
<td>(15) Has the presence of US forces in Iraq abolished the sovereignty of the State?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(16) Is US policy failing to reach its objectives in Iraq particularly and the Middle East region generally?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17) Is the US presence in Iraq after 2003 generally seen as occupation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Fieldwork, 2012.*

### 3.2 Research Locality

This section is designed to illustrate the rationale behind the selection of Baghdad as the first-case study and Unbar Province - Fallujah City the second. The selection of the areas in Iraq in which the interviews and questionnaires were to be conducted was clearly very important. Baghdad was selected because it is the capital city. As the largest city in the country, Baghdad’s population consists of a wide range of people from different backgrounds. The three main elements of Baghdad’s population consist of Sunnis, Shias, Kurds and others minorities, such as Christians, Turkmens and Armenians, Thus the selection of Baghdad was based on the existence of multi-ethnic and religious groups. Furthermore, Baghdad is considered the small Iraq which mirrors the opinion and perspective of the majority of Iraqi citizens.

Likewise, it features coalition headquarters in the Green-Zone and the Iraqi parliament. Baghdad is one of the safest cities in Iraq which would be a plus point when travelling to conduct interviews, and the city is also the centre point for many civil society organizations and contains the headquarters of the ruling parties, military leaders, human rights organizations and universities.

The other two areas selected, Unbar and Fallujah, were in western Iraq. The reason for this is that this area opposed the occupation forces from the beginning of the Iraq

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occupation, therefore it was heavily affected by the US and allied forces. This was the only area in Iraq where US forces used “white phosphorus” against innocent civilians.\(^\text{13}\) In addition, Fallujah was the centre of the resistance to occupation and is home to both civilians and former insurgents. The majority of the population is Sunni Arab and it shares a border with Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia. After the occupation Unbar and Fallujah were called the “hot areas” and/or the Sunni triangle.

All the above mentioned reasons caused the researcher to conduct the interviews and distribute the questionnaires in these areas. In addition, it was not possible to conduct interviews and questionnaires in areas other than these as they were extremely dangerous due to religious and sectarian factors. Moreover, Sunnis and Shias were not allowed to access each other’s areas due to sectarian violence and killing based on identity. Furthermore, the researcher was familiar with these areas, which was a positive point in obtaining access to them and in obtaining the data which forms the primary source of the research project.

**Figure 3.1 Local areas in Iraq Where the Participants were Selected for the Study and how the Interviews and Questionnaires were Conducted.**

Source: *Fieldwork, 2012.*

3.3 Methods for Data Collection

The qualitative and quantitative data gathered from the fieldwork are the main means of achieving this study; the semi-structured interview,\textsuperscript{14} was implemented with MPs, the elite and decision makers, political elite, tribal leaders, religious figures, and academicians at universities. In addition, the questionnaires were distributed to local residents. All of the data were gathered from the fieldwork in Baghdad, Fallujah and Unbar between 15\textsuperscript{th} February and 25\textsuperscript{th} May 2012.

The table below shows the interview and questionnaire distribution divided into male and female participants.

Table 3.4 Distribution of Questionnaires and Interviews According to Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>67.7%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A total of 42 interviews were conducted, with 31 male and 11 female participants. Of the 200 questionnaires, 70 were not returned while 130 were returned. Out of the 130 returned questionnaires, 88 were from male participants while 42 were from female participants, as shown in Figure 3.2.

\textsuperscript{14} B. L. Leech, “Asking questions: Techniques for semi-structured interviews”, Political Science 4, Vol 35 (2002), P. 663-667
The information gathered from the interviews and questionnaires were compared with the data obtained from the literature review, to verify the opinions and views regarding the nature of American policies implemented in Iraq since 2003. The following discussion explains the interview method.

### 3.3.1 Interview Method

Conducting interviews enabled the researcher to gain a broader understanding of the study locations and to become familiar with the participants. Moreover, the face to face interview provides a better understanding of the situation and more accurate information can be extracted from it. This type of visual communication is very important and could play a key role in understanding the interviewees’ points of view. Some common forms include structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Since in our case, the participants belong to a wide range of backgrounds from Iraqi society, the researcher chose to use semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews also allow flexibility and can be adapted to the context and the situation at hand. Moreover, open questions allow respondents to give detailed views about a particular issue. During the interview.

The researcher can pose questions whenever necessary depending on the context of the ongoing conversation and write down the answers immediately. Due to the focussed, 

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15 ibid, P. 665-667

16 ibid, p. 663-668

interactive and conversational nature of semi-structured interviews, this kind of data collection tool helps the researcher to extract more information and observe the body language and the verbal tones of the participants. It was also used to examine the responses of Iraqis in terms of positive and negative points.\(^\text{18}\)

### 3.3.1.1 Sample Selection for Interviews

According to Cassell and Symon, defining the sample to be studied is an important step in carrying out research and it should be done on the basis that they are representatives of government, elites, and local people\(^\text{19}\). The participants were chosen carefully on the basis of position, political affiliation, and religious, sectarian and ethnic considerations. In other words the sample could be described as a “multilevel sample”\(^\text{20}\), which represents an overall view of Iraqi opinion on US Policy in Iraq after 2003 (see Appendix B - The summary of Iraqi perspective on US policy in post-invasion, practical work interview). The total number of potential participants was 75, representing various segments of Iraqi society; however, only 42 actually participated in the interviews as 32 were excluded because some of them refused to take part in the interviews for security reasons while others did have not enough time to do so. Twenty-nine participants in the representative sample were from Baghdad as the first case study, five were from Fallujah province as the second case study, six were from Anbar as the third case study and two were Iraqi refugees in Jordan. There were a further six participants who wanted to remain anonymous for security reasons. As mentioned above, Baghdad is the capital and it comprises the two main components of society, Sunnis and Shias as well as other minorities; therefore it features the highest number of participants.

Necessary steps were taken to ensure that the interviews were conducted in a secure and relaxed environment. Examples of such places include offices of a member of parliament, political parties’ offices, headquarters in the Green Zone located in


downtown Baghdad, and army headquarters. To ensure that research ethics are met, at the beginning of each interview, the nature and the purpose of the study were explained in order to meet the requirements of the research project. The participants were also told that taking part in the interview was voluntary and they had the right to stop or cancel the interview at any time. Some accepted this while others rejected it. This entailed the researcher having to write down their responses. To ensure confidentiality, I asked if it was possible to mention their name in the thesis, and a few of them requested to be anonymous which was taken into consideration in the study, (see Appendix B).

The time specified for each individual interview was between 30 and 60 minutes. Each interview was followed by open questions depending on the responses given by the participants. Therefore, as the researcher asked the questions, the responses were noted down on the interview sheet as a reference to be used in the open question session.

When carrying out the interviews, the researcher noticed that some participants were hesitant to talk about political and security issues, and were concerned that their opinions might be heard by other people and used against them negatively. However, the researcher had planned that the interviews be implemented in private and secure places in order to ensure participants’ safety.

After the interviews, all the contents of the interviews were translated from Arabic into English, while the original interview documents were retained in a folder. A few number of participants, , did not have enough time to participate in the interview face to face so they completed the interview form themselves and returned it to the researcher.

Initial data analysis of the interviews which presented different perspectives from among the political elites and/or representative sample of Iraqi society regarding American policy in Iraq suggested the existence of three major groups of opinion. The first perceived the US as an invader, the second as a liberator, while the third group accepted the changes made by the US by recognising US interests in Iraq. The first group featured mainly Arab Sunnis, while the second featured mainly Arab Shi’as.
3.3.2 Survey Method

A questionnaire is an important research tool for gathering statistics, evidence and information on a specific topic from participants. It consists of a series of self-explanatory questions carefully designed and customized according to the research area which participants have to answer. A salient feature of the questionnaire is that all the participants are asked the same set of questions in the same order. This is an advantage because it allows equal importance to be given to all participants and makes the data collection more transparent.\(^\text{21}\) The questionnaire should be planned in such a way that it covers the theory, and the concepts used in the questionnaire must be clear and should facilitate the data analysis. Also the researcher should plan how the questionnaire will be applied. It is also possible in some cases to design the questions in such a way that partially answered questions can also be used to conclude effective information. “There are many ways to distribute questionnaires e.g., face-to-face, telephone interviews, communication via computers, handing it out manually”.\(^\text{22}\) The questionnaire questions for this study were designed in accordance with these principles.

In this study the questionnaire dealt with Iraq’s current status, domestically and internationally, as a consequence of foreign invasion and US occupation. Then, suitable methods were applied to analyse whether the study should be descriptive, statistical or a mixture of both, to obtain the maximum desirable results. In the context of Iraq, we considered the method of handing out the questionnaires to the participants (individuals and groups) to be an appropriate method. The topic of this study is classed as political science and aims to understand the public view of change and continuity in Iraq. The aims and questions crucial to fulfilling the research objectives and research questions were also taken into account. The following section discusses the sample selection of the questionnaire.

3.3.2.1 Sample Selection for Surveys

First, the sample selection was identified to represent Iraqi society as a whole. They consisted of: lecturers and students at universities, staff of primary and secondary schools, and lay people. Participants were selected from Baghdad, Unbar and Fallujah

\(^{21}\) Gray, Doing Research in the Real World, p. 4-10, 244-47.

during the period from the 27th February to 25th May 2012.23 As mentioned above, the total number of forms distributed to potential participants representing Iraqi society was 200, of which 130 were included in the study and 70 were not because, despite having agreed to participate, they were unable to complete and/or return the questionnaire to the researcher either because of the unstable security situation in Iraq at the time or because they did not have time to complete the survey.

Regarding the number of participants in the survey, the first case study in Baghdad consisted of 55 participants as it is the capital, while there were 54 participants in the sample from the second case study in Anbar province and 21 in the sample from Fallujah city. The 130 returned forms were analysed manually to find the total number who agreed, disagreed or gave a neutral response (see Appendix C - The summary of Iraqi perspective on US policy in post-invasion, practical work questionnaire)

All the contents of the questionnaire including participants’ comments were translated from Arabic to English, and the original questionnaire form for each participant kept in a documentary folder.

3.4. Some Ethical Considerations

Some of the specific ethical issues which could have arisen during the implementation of this research are discussed below, and an ethical consideration that has to be taken into account in the collection of data through interviews, is that participants’ identities should not be disclosed in any way. The researcher is fully responsible for protecting the welfare of the participants in all respects and should be fully aware of how they may be affected mentally and emotionally by the interviewing process24. Before starting the interview, the researcher must inform the participants of the purpose of the research and obtain their informed consent. To avoid any deception the researcher was honest with the participants, telling them the purpose of research, how the interview would be conducted, how the data obtained from the interview would be used, and who would

23 ‘As section 3.4.1.1 Interviews sample selection explains, interviewees were selected to be representative of religion, status, politics, sex and region but there were some limitations due to the poor security situation at the time in 2012.’

have access to the collected data. The researcher informed the participants of their basic rights: they are not obliged to answer all questions, they have the right to terminate the interview at any time and they can also withdraw their consent at any time. Necessary steps were also taken to ensure that the identity, privacy and confidentiality of participants was maintained before, during, and after the research.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, there is the issue of security as Iraq is still a dangerous place. Security precautions for the researcher were ensured before approaching the research locations. Further security precautions for those being interviewed were ensured which includes the storage of interview data after the interview.

3.5 Limitations of Methodology

A number of barriers and difficulties occurred while the research was being conducted in 2012. These barriers and the plans to overcome them were as follows.

The unstable security situation in Iraq did not allow free movement to different parts of the country in order to meet the participants. Generally, it was not considered safe to travel freely in Iraq. Due to the war, the policies of the previous regime and the current anarchy in Iraq, people are afraid to speak about their feelings. It was extremely difficult to convince people to participate in the interviews as the inability to express political opinion during the former Iraqi regime has resulted in cultures and behaviours which continue to impact negatively upon people’s minds, even after 2003.

Iraqi people vary a lot in terms of education, economic situation, vision and broadmindedness. The researcher focused mainly on people with appropriate education and communication skills. However, in Iraq the literacy rate is low and there are many people who have not had a proper education, who make up a significant part of Iraqi society. It is important to listen to their voices and include them in the research of the period 2003-2009 regarding the crucial issues being investigated. However, due to poor communication skills, they may not be able to communicate exactly what they want to say. It could also be difficult for the interviewer to understand their point of view, resulting in unclear and imprecise information. To avoid such a situation, the researcher

assisted the participants whenever they found it difficult to understand the questions, by giving them some sample answers.

Some of the politicians did not have time to participate in the interviews due to their responsibilities and the situation in Iraq. However, the researcher tried to approach these people repeatedly and was able to reach some of them.

Most of the previous studies analysed US foreign policy on post-war Iraq from a restricted point of view and did not represent the Iraqi perspective effectively. There is no known study that reflects Iraqi opinion on US foreign policy in post-war Iraq.  

### 3.6 The Process of Data Analysis

The researcher used content analysis techniques to extract the useful information from the interviews. All the interviews carried out in Iraq were translated from Arabic to English. Content analysis is a prominent approach for analyzing interviews and field notes according to Kohlbacher. This allows the researcher to extract views, languages and expressions used by interviewees in discussing topics. In addition, as Coffey and Atkinson explain, the process of content analysis enables the researcher to generate certain concepts, themes, and codes, and it also motivates the researcher to extract information from the interview which is relevant to the research questions. Huberman and Miles describe the process of data analysis as three connected sub-processes: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions and verification.


The content analysis technique for this research consisted of the following steps: First, the contents of the interviews were translated from Arabic to English. To avoid any risk of any information being lost or changed in the translation process, a copy of the original interview in Arabic was given to a professional translator and the translated version was verified with the researcher’s version (see Appendix G). Secondly, a transcript was prepared from the interviews already translated. Thirdly, the transcripts were analyzed by coding, recoding and reduction of data (see Appendix H). Fourthly, the relevant ideas were sorted and organized into themes according to a coding scheme. Fifthly, themes were grouped into categories.

The results obtain from the interview data, documentary analysis, questionnaire findings, and the outcomes of the literature were discussed in order to identify evolving issues in the field of politics and international relations. All of these processes would provide the relevant sources for the subsequent chapters which provide the findings of the interviews and questionnaires.

**Figure 3.3 Data Analysis by SPSS Statistics Program**

![Data Analysis by SPSS Statistics Program](image)

Source: *Fieldwork, 2012.*
The SPSS program was used to present the responses and opinions regarding Iraqi public opinion. It was used to analyze the variance (ANOVA) and was adopted to test the findings and to identify similarities in the opinions as well as to reach a conclusion. The statistical test ANOVA is provided by SPSS. The researcher incorporated the data gathered from various sources by using common issues and topics in the questionnaire which allowed the responses to be combined in common themes. The SPSS program also provides statistical analysis of the sample in terms of age, gender, education and city. According to the statistical standards, the researcher classified the data gained from the participants in the following ways:

**Valid questionnaires**: Those questionnaires which were returned by the participants accurately completed.

**Excluded**: Those questionnaires where the participants promised to participate in the survey but were unable to complete the questionnaires and/or return the questionnaires to the researcher.

**Missing questions**: Those questionnaires which had some missing questions which means that participants left some questions unanswered.

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![Figure 3.4 Questionnaire Responses for the Three Locations.](image-url)

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Figure 3.5 Proportion of Male to Female Participants

Figure 3.5 shows that the number of male participants was much higher than that of females. This could be attributed to the conservative nature of Iraqi society.

Figure 3.6 Age Distribution of Participants

Figure 3.6 shows the distribution of age groups in balanced proportion. It can be seen that more than 60% of participants were aged between 18 and 34 years.
Figure 3.7 Education Levels of Participants.

![Education Levels of Participants](image)

Figure 3.7 shows that the percentage of participants holding a BSc. degree is the highest.

Figure 3.8 Distribution of Participants According to Location.

![Distribution of Participants According to Location](image)

Figure 3.8 shows the geographical location of participants. The majority of the participants are from Baghdad.
3.7 Summary

In this chapter, quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted for the implementation of the research by the use of interviews and surveys respectively. Analysis of the interviews follows in the empirical chapters. The survey was carried out by questionnaires, and statistical techniques were used to analyse the data. This mixed method approach allowed different opinions to be shown regarding the Iraqi viewpoint on US policies in the post-invasion phase. It could be said that the outcomes of this study would be significant and considerable due the application of more than one technique at specific one period which reflected positively on the course of this study.

Thus, the practical methods adopted in this research, particularly the data gathering and the data analysis, were positive aspects of this study. In other words the use of different methods in this research helped to produce different opinions regarding the views of Iraqis on the US presence. Furthermore, the outcomes of this study are reliable and valid due to the use of different techniques. In the following chapter I will explain how the US fashioned the political system in post-invasion Iraq.
Chapter Four

THE USA AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN POST-INVASION IRAQ

They are building a mud house in the middle of a rough sea.

(Iraqi Proverb)

The United States has no intention of determining the precise form of Iraq’s new government. That choice belongs to the Iraqi people. Yet, we will ensure that one brutal dictator is not replaced by another. All Iraqis must have a voice in the new government and all citizens must have their rights protected. Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own: we will remain in Iraq as long as necessary, and not a day more.¹

Introduction

This chapter is designed to provide the context necessary to fully understand the findings presented in the case study chapters that follow. To this end, the chapter has been divided into two sections; the first deals with the role of the US in the establishment of the political system in Iraq after 2003; the second examines the challenges facing the political process in the post-invasion phase.

4.1 US Policy after the 2003 Invasion

4.1.1 Occupation and Chaos

In 2002 the US made the decision to implement regime change in Iraq; a decision that was endorsed by Congress in November of that year. In order to justify this decision, the above

allegations were circulated to prove that the country had become a source of instability to the region, and that it was necessary for the US to take precautionary actions against Iraq.

On April 9th 2003 Iraq came under the political control of the US. Once they had removed the regime, Iraq entered a new era. However, despite the promise of the formation of a democratic government in Iraq, independence was not forthcoming. Afterwards, this raised a number of questions, but none more important than whether the US would work towards readjusting Iraq’s status in the international community and, if so, what form this would take.

One of the major setbacks faced by the US administration in Iraq was due to the disregard it showed towards the chaos that followed the invasion, ignoring its role as an occupying power as prescribed by international agreements. The arguments to justify that attitude were very weak, such as that US troops had received no orders to protect public property in Iraq; that they had inadequate troops or that the troops had not been trained to undertake that role.

During April and May 2003 the situation in Iraq remained critical, despite the change in US leadership in Iraq, which saw General Garner being replaced with a civil government led by Ambassador Paul Bremer. As a result of the sudden collapse of the regime, the political situation in Iraq was chaotic. The plans made by the US for the post-Saddam era had been controversial, yet the chaos that followed indicated that the US had not planned well, as the

2 The objectives of military action were: most importantly, to pre-emptively put an end to the threat from Iraq to international peace in order to eliminate any power of mass destruction Iraq might use against other countries; secondly, to put an end to Iraq’s threat to international peace through its support of terrorist organisations; finally, to transform Iraq into a democratic state by removing Saddam Hussein from power, paving the way for the Iraqi people to choose their own government through open democratic elections. G. W. Bush, “President’s Address to the UN General Assembly”, (12th September 2002), http://www.staff.city.ac.uk/p.willetts/IRAQ/BUSH0902.HTM, accessed 15th December 2012.


8 ibid, p. 9-11.
following points support. In the first place, the chaos that followed the invasion put pressure on the media to report on the ethnic and cultural loyalties of people, which further encouraged sectarian attitudes, distancing the masses from national principles. Secondly, by proposing the establishment of a governing council, the US intended to promote the idea of political representation among the people, whereby some of the representatives in the council would have neither religious nor ethnic links, but would be selected to represent specific groups. For example, Hameed Musa was selected as a representative of the Shiite sector even though ideologically he was a member of the Communist leadership. The same could be said about Adnan Pachachi as a representative of the Sunni sector even though he was a member of the secular leadership. Thirdly, there were indications that apparent sectarian or ethnic killings and bombings had actually been carried out by US troops or that the perpetrators had been protected by the troops.

Thus, the US endeavoured to control existing and future developments in Iraq, but their strategy had to change due to the pressures faced by the military operations from the various resistance groups. All of this raised the cost the US had to pay in terms of human casualties, finance and its international reputation. For this reason, the US was forced to reconsider its administration of Iraq, so that it opted initially to take control with representatives in the governing council, before resorting to the formation of an interim government and finally the regular government. Moreover, following the invasion of Iraq on April 9, 2003, the US contributed to the destabilising of Iraq by encouraging corrupt malpractices, allowing foreign intervention and through lax security measures, as well as exacerbating ethnic and sectarian divisions, and displacing people. All of these factors were associated with the US administration of Iraq.

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11 ibid.


officially up to July 2004 and actually up to December 2005. To elaborate further on this, I will first explain how the US fashioned the Iraqi Governing Council as a political accessory for establishing democratic rule in Iraq.

4.1.2 The US and the Iraqi Governing Council [IGC]

Following escalating casualties and costs of the deployment of US troops to Iraq, Ambassador Bremer opted for consultations with the US administration in Washington, followed by key decision-makers in Iraq, with the aim of forming an Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). To this effect, twenty five members were chosen whose allegiance the US believed to reflect the demographics in Iraq. Thirteen out of twenty five members were believed to be Shia representatives. For example; Hameed Musa was selected as a representative of the Shiite sector even though, ideologically, he was a member of the Communist leadership. The US also appointed people to 12 seats, who included representatives of the other minority groups, such as the Sunni Muslims, Kurds, Turkmens Christians and Assyrians. However, it was made clear that the representatives on the Council would have neither religious nor ethnic links, as this would avoid political divergence. From the US perspective, the establishment of the IGC would provide a link between the US troops and the Iraqi people.


17 H. Saeed, “Problems Involving the Relationship between the Legislative Authority, and the Executive Authority in Iraq’s Political System’. MSc, unpublished (Baghdad, University of Baghdad, 2010), p. 145-157 (in Arabic).


19 ibid.


22 ibid, 7-8.
Following its establishment, the Council managed to introduce the idea of consociationalism, a phenomenon uncommon in Iraq, while hastily pushing toward partnership. Both ideas would indicate the limited government portfolios that would regularly be distributed among the people, to enable them to distinguish between their political interests and the national interests and forget about the majorities, so that moderation should be the main factor in decision-making.

After establishing the Governing Council, the US administration strived for the formation of a government in Iraq based on American principles with limited UN participation. However, during the period between June and November 2003 the US administration felt that public opinion was against the idea of the direct occupation of Iraq. At the end of his administration in November 2003, Paul Bremer indicated his agreement with the then president of the Governing Council, Galal Talabani, by announcing “the steps for political practice” which would give Iraqis their anticipated political independence, allowing them to live under their own preferred political system. Those steps were defined as follows: first, the transitional constitution for the administration of the state of Iraq during the interim stage would be drafted in March 2004. Second, in July 2004 the US administration would transfer power to an elected government to replace the civil governor and the governing council. Third, by the end of January 2005 a National Council would be elected along with a transitional government to be entrusted with drafting a regular constitution for Iraq. Fourth, the National Council should finish drafting the constitution by mid July 2005. Fifth, a referendum would be held in mid-October 2005 for people to vote on the constitution. In case of rejection of the constitution, a new National Council would be elected to rewrite it, and the same steps would be repeated. Sixth, if the constitution was accepted by the people, parliamentary elections would be held by mid-


24 E. Jassim, “The distribution of powers and its impact on the political stability in Iraq”, research presented to the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of Diyala, Iraq, 2010, p 3-7.


28 ibid, p. 14
December 2005, whereby a regular parliament would be elected and a regular government formed by the parliament, with the two jointly taking full control of Iraqi affairs.\textsuperscript{29}

From November 2003 to March 2004 the US put pressure on the political forces in Iraq to draft a law for the administration of the state, provided that the law should not be influenced by the religious groups who remained loyal to Iran.\textsuperscript{30} The US also managed to calm the Kurds regarding their movement toward independence. Finally, the law maintained that the state of Iraq is a parliamentary federal republic.\textsuperscript{31} Thus, in late June 2004, the US announced the termination of the authority of the civil government, in order to restore sovereignty to the Iraqi people.\textsuperscript{32} The government that was formed was headed by the former Prime Minister, Ayad Allawi. This government was established in order to work in accordance with the state administration and its main duty was to prepare for the election of a National Council and a government, using the resources available to them to draft a regular constitution for the country.\textsuperscript{33}

4.1.3 The US and the Two Phases of Administration: Occupational and Transitional

By the end of June 2004, the US had transferred power to an Iraqi government. The members of the new government, as well as the members of the Transitional National Council, were chosen jointly by the US, the UN and certain influential personalities in Iraq.\textsuperscript{34} This took place in early

\textsuperscript{29} ibid, p. 12-15


\textsuperscript{33} Coalition Provisional Authority, “The stage ended: Because of the transfer of power to the Iraqi interim government”, 30\textsuperscript{th} June 2004, http://www.iraqcoalition.org/arabic/., accessed17\textsuperscript{th} February 2012. See also, “C. Powell predicts a quite transition to the authority of sovereignty to the Iraqi government”, 20\textsuperscript{th} June 2004, http://www.iraqcoalition.org/arabic/ accessed 17\textsuperscript{th} February 2012 (in Arabic).

\textsuperscript{34} Katazman, “Iran-Iraq Relations”, p. 1, 4.
June 2004 in response to the US Security Council resolution no. 1546 issued on 4th June 2004, which called for the termination of the occupation.35

Despite the formation of the transitional government, the US maintained the deployment of its troops on Iraqi soil, subject to a request by the government of Iraq to be made every six months with the approval of the US government and the UN Security Council.36 After June 2004, which was considered to be the final stage, the violence escalated and many military operations targeted US troops and accompanying security companies. The US adopted the strategy of increasing the number of US troops deployed, in order to minimise losses; thus, the process of maintaining political domination of Iraq ultimately was subject to pressures from a number of factors.37 Most significantly, Iran exerted influence on some political forces which gained power and wealth,38 and the influence of Kurdish forces who maintained good relationships with the US also grew, with both groups managing to take advantage of intermediate political forces in Iraq (nationalist and secular) who were concerned with the instability in the areas of their powerbase.39 During this period, elections were held in January 2005 (albeit in a difficult environment)40 and were won by the pro-Iran Shiite coalition, with the Kurdish coalition finishing as runner up.41 The main aim of the election was to raise the Iraqi people’s awareness of the composition of their community. The interim parliament would endeavour to draft the regular constitution and it would be the duty of the transitional government to encourage people to participate.42


38 K. Katzman (2009) Iran’s Activities and Influence in Iraq, p. 1-3


42 F. Abdul Al Jabbar, “Iraq four years after the U.S. invasion: Calendar crisis and a way to move forward”, (Carnegie centre for the Middle East, Beirut/Washington, DC December 2009), http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=24398, accessed 22nd February 2012.
Following the formation of the government and the selection of the committee for drafting the constitution, the US pressurised the government to accommodate forces that rigged the elections or failed to fully participate in them. It was agreed that their offences should be ignored and that they should be considered to be representatives of their groups with the aim of avoiding any obstacles involving the Kurds; the obstacle being that the draft should not be opposed by three provinces with a two-thirds majority. This stage was completed in mid-October 2005, followed by the legislative elections in mid-December of the same year. The elections were won by the Shiite coalition forces with the Kurdish coalition as the runner up, followed by the Sunni forces in third place, then the coalition of secular forces (the Iraq list), and another Sunni coalition, the Front for National Dialogue (see Table 4-1). Although it was delayed until May 2006, a government was finally formed in accordance with the regular constitution.

Table 4.1 The Distribution of Compensatory Seats, Winning Entities and Number of Seats in the First Constituent Elections in 2005.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Wining coalitions</th>
<th>The number of seats obtained</th>
<th>The number of compensatory seats</th>
<th>Total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>United Iraqi Alliance (UIA)</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kurdistan Alliance (KA)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Accordance Front (AF)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Iraqi National List (INL)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kurdistan Islamic Union List (KIUL)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Iraqi Front for National Dialogue (IFND)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Reconciliation and Liberation Block</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mithal al-Alusi List</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Iraqi Turkmen Front</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Alrsaleon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Alyzidia Movement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Rafidian List</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The total number of seats</td>
<td></td>
<td>276 seats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


45 Ibid. P 12-13
Despite the establishment of the Iraqi government in 2005, the US authority in Iraq was found to be influential in political, security and economic fields. However, it could be said that some of the Iraqi people were not yet ready to accept that change; that they would fight one another, and allow neighbouring countries to rule them.\textsuperscript{46} This enabled an escalation of the violations of human rights committed by external, regional and internal forces (the US, Iran and Iraqi governments). According to a report published by the Red Cross Committee in 2003-2004, which was presented to the International Committee for Human Rights, approximately 43,000 Iraqis have been apprehended by the US and held in public and secret prisons.\textsuperscript{47} On the other hand, Iranian meddling in Iraqi affairs contributed, in one way or another, to the abuse of human rights subsequent to 2003, which was made obvious by their support for some Shia political parties at the expense of other components of Iraqi society.\textsuperscript{48}

Another indicator that the new Iraqi government was poor at protecting its citizens was their inability to direct the state army and security forces to protect the people from dangerous internal and external forces. This was largely due to its focus on sectarianism and ethnic loyalties rather that nationalism.\textsuperscript{49} These issues were present in the participants’ interviews, which will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

This argument suggests that although the US succeeded in handing over governance to the Iraqi people, which resulted in a multi-party system, their idea of a democratic project reflected negatively on the well-being of Iraqis generally. This was evident from the ongoing agitation and chaos amongst sectarian groups over the results of the election, not to mention throughout wider society, which became increasingly divided. The challenges facing the political system in Iraq are discussed in the subsequent sections.

\textsuperscript{46} A. Al-Barbary, “The future of political system in Iraq after American withdrawal”, \textit{International Politics Journal 149} (2012), \url{http://www.siyassa.org.eg/NewsContent/5/32/2271}, accessed 17\textsuperscript{th} February 2013.


\textsuperscript{48} Katazman “Iran’s Activities and Influence in Iraq”, 2007, p 1-8

\textsuperscript{49} Bapir, “Iraq: a deeply divided polity and challenges to democracy-building”, p.117-125.
4.2 The Challenges Faced by The Post-Invasion Political System

4.2.1 The US and the Multiparty System: The Culture of Democracy, and Political Islam

The US is considered a pioneer in the area of the multiparty system by virtue of its history as a liberal state. For this reason, the US justifies its influence over the world by an obligation to promote freedom. Following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein’s regime in April 2003, the US opted for a multiparty system in Iraq, excluding only the Arab Socialist Baath Party. This highlighted two issues; the first of which was the unclear extent to which the US would allow the multiparty system in Iraq, as Iraq is not socially homogenous. The political parties took advantage of that phenomenon in the elections in 2005, 2009 and 2010, assuming that people would cast their votes based on their sectarian and ethnic connections, rather than as a matter of political agenda. After the elections (2005, 2009 and 2010), political bargaining began between the winning parties to form a coalition government. For instance, the prospective government assumed more than one name, such as “the government of national partnership” and “the government of national unity”, which itself showed disunity. Furthermore, the agenda of the new government differed from the original agenda presented to the voters during the elections. Secondly, the attitude of the US towards the Islamic and ethnic movements could be described as totalitarian, or even racist, in terms of ideology and practice.

4.2.2 The US and the Issue of Opening up Iraq’s Borders

After April 2003, the US made the mistake of opening Iraq’s borders and failing to close them, despite being responsible for the safety and regional security of the country by virtue of being an occupying force. Another mistake made by the US administration in Iraq was the disbanding of the Iraqi army and security forces. This was based on the advice of Kurdish

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54 Network News Informatics, “After Five Years: U.S. Mistakes in Iraq, a Source of Crisis.”, Network
political forces to dismantle the existing Iraqi army. Despite the US efforts to establish a new army and security force and to assist them by providing training and military equipment, these forces were unable to protect the Iraqi border. This problem was exacerbated by two factors: first, the establishment of both the Iraqi army and security forces was based on sectarianism and ethnic divisions rather than nationalism; secondly, the US hesitated to provide the Iraqi army with advanced training or to release some of the knowledge about advanced weaponry due to the potential for uprisings against them.

Another challenge to the political system after 2003 was that the US allowed foreign elements into Iraq, which inflicted irreparable damage that affected the sovereignty of the state. This became obvious when the US allowed Iran to supply funding, which included the arming, training and supporting of militia groups, particularly in the southeast province of Iraq. All of these challenges reflected negatively on the security situation in the country.

4.2.3 The Political Division and Fragile Security

The political disagreement and the poor security arrangements affected Iraq a great deal after 2003 and more so after 2005. These two factors interacted, leaving an imprint on the political regime. In other words, the political differences were motivated by the poor security arrangements and vice versa. Nonetheless, in both cases, the final outcome of the political regime was negative. In the first case, for example, the lax security arrangements incited society to become strongly critical of the political forces controlling the power and wealth in Iraq (the government featured all parties with parliamentary representation). Political forces accused one another of being responsible for the lax security measures, in a manner that made political division obvious to everyone. In the second case, the political divisions generated negative

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sentiment towards Iraqi politicians, which led to a reduction in security and economic stability. Another way that the fragile stability of the political system was associated with the security challenges in Iraq was the increasing levels of violence.\(^1\) This violence took four forms. The first form, social violence, took place on a very limited scale, compared to other forms, and included killing motivated by criminal or tribal reasons. The less common forms of social violence included fracas, family violence and rape.\(^2\) Moreover, poverty and destitution due to austerity and the downturn of the economy in the country motivated public violence against government institutions, whereby individuals may have been prepared to join organised violence whatever the target of that violence. This political instability undermined intellectuals' efforts to engage effectively in revising the political system. These intellectuals despaired of any possible change to the prevailing situation. The second type was internal political violence, which was the most common type of violence in Iraq and took many possible forms including group violence, which could involve either sectarian or ethnic violence and could be found anywhere in Iraq.\(^3\)

Some argue against the existence of this latter kind of violence. However, in an interview with Dr. Harith Al-Dari, the Secretary-General of the Association of Muslim Scholars in Iraq, conducted by saaid-net on April 29th 2006 in Jordan-Aman, he stated that “what is going on in Iraq is an interest-orientated political patrician conflict rather than a religious sectarian conflict”.\(^4\) The third kind of violence was partisan violence, which took many forms, including the rigging of and tampering with election results, in addition to armed resistance.\(^5\) Violence at this time also targeted specific social groups to create new demographic-political realities in the country, specifically in opposition to Sunni Arabs in Mosul, Kirkuk, Babylon, Basra and Saladin (Samarra).\(^6\) There was also disorganised political violence in order to achieve particular aims.\(^7\) The fourth kind was cross-border violence, intelligence-related violence\(^8\) for example,

\(^1\) Cordesman et.al ‘Iraq: Creating a strategic partnership’, p. 129.


\(^3\) ibid, p. 31-34


\(^6\) ibid, p 35-36.


in relation to the involvement of Iranian intelligence in Iraqi affairs. All of these forms of violence prevented any progress in the post-invasion political system. Thus, to reinstate a more favourable political system and peaceful regime, the US encouraged the multiparty system with the intention of increasing the political participation of the sectarian groups and ushering in peace.

4.2.4 The Multiparty System and Political Participation

The dilemma of political participation was another challenge that post-constitution Iraq had to cope with, as the country had become open to an undisciplined and corrupt multi-party system. The main problem here was not the multi-party system per se; rather it was the legitimacy and accountability of the political regime that was seen as greatly questionable by the people. Legitimacy was perceived by the public in terms of the level of other parties’ participation in the process of political decision-making. It was conceived that Iraq practiced a lip service democracy because, in practice, the individual dictatorship and violation of human rights remained, thus the problem was not the ruler but the political culture, which allowed very little room for proper democratic practice in Iraq.

From January 2005 onwards, the course of democratic transformation demonstrated that this foreign policy was not well balanced with the traditional Islamic politics that had previously been practised in Iraq. Two issues suggested that the democratic principle itself was not favourable. First, the election results were not appreciated by all the political powers. Secondly, the political parties were said to have failed to live up to their election agenda (by concord). The same experience was repeated in the elections in December 2005 and March 2010.

72 ibid.
73 ibid.
74 H. Saeed, “Problems involving the relationship between the legislative authority, and the executive authority in Iraq’s political system”, MSc thesis from the Faculty of Political Science, University of Baghdad, 2010, pp 145-157.
The expansion of the base of political participation caused stagnation of the political regime. Thus, the more the electoral base expanded to embrace all parts of the political spectrum, including opponents of the political process, the more the system resorted to concord in terms of political decisions. This caused the state to fall back into a disarray of uncontrolled chaos due to the conflict between the regions and the federal government in terms of political and administrative procedures. In order to resolve this challenge, the matter was mishandled, with every minister being given the freedom to consider the appropriate policies of his ministry. However, matters escalated when ministers could not be called to account for any malpractices, as this would mean offending the interests of the political parties to which they belonged and the possibility of withdrawal from parliament and the government. As observed previously, it could be said that the democratic culture did not suit the Iraqi political structure. It was deemed necessary to review or adapt the democratic culture in relation to the Iraqi political system.

4.2.5 The Democratic Culture and Political Stability in Iraq

A large number of Western political analysts believed that the absence of democracy was the main problem in Iraq before 2003, and this was one of three reasons given by the US at the end of 2002 in favour of invading the country; the other two being alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction and Iraq’s links with, and its support of, terrorist groups. Yet, after the invasion, the US had to cope with plural parties, which could be religious or ethnic, which sought protection from abroad in a manner that rendered moderate and secular parties in Iraq ineffective.

Following the 2005 elections in Iraq, the US either allowed, or otherwise failed to intervene to stop parties from manipulating the results of elections. The coalition government was then established based on such manipulation, and upon religious, sectarian or sometimes racist bases,

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and propaganda campaigns threatened voters to take part in accordance with the legitimate electoral system; finally, there was wide-scale election rigging, which was obvious to all neutral observers in Iraq.\textsuperscript{79}

Generally speaking, most of the same parties were elected during the parliamentary elections in 2005 and 2010, as well as during the Local Council elections in 2009.\textsuperscript{80} However, ethnic and sectarian influence over the elections was at its zenith, with division within the political regime's social structure.\textsuperscript{81} That structure failed to accommodate the rules of democracy, and so the losing parties did not always concede defeat; instead they threatened potential civil war, as was the case with the State of Law Coalition in March 2010 which rejected the election results on the basis that the winners had not been elected by virtue of their political agenda but rather on an ethnic or sectarian basis.\textsuperscript{82} (See Table 4.2).

\textsuperscript{79} One of the discrepancies was that the Sunni Arab areas, which constituted 20-25\% of the population of Iraq, boycotted the country’s 2005 elections. This was due to disagreement with government policy not to promote security in areas including Baghdad, Basra, Babylon, Diali, Mosul, Anbar, Salahuddin and Kirkuk. Nonetheless, those who took part in the elections constituted 19\% of the total parliamentary representation. Then, in the March 2010 elections, the Sunni Arabs took part, gaining almost the same parliamentary representation, of around 19\%. Some might argue that the constituency system was to blame, but that argument could be denied as 13\% of the seats came from one constituency arrangement, not to mention the fact that the mixed areas in Baghdad, Babylon, Kirkuk, and Mosul, were areas in which the Sunni Arabs had no real chance of being elected during the elections prior to 2009. However, even more surprising is that almost a million Sunni Arabs were displaced due to political violence to live in Kurdistan (4.5 million voters in those cities), and yet all the seats, comprising 13\% of the total parliamentary seats, were taken by the Kurdish parties in the elections of March 2010. Atwan, “The political violence in Iraq”, p. 35-55.


\textsuperscript{81} Iraq’s Uncertain Future: Election and Beyond, Middle East Report No 94, 25\textsuperscript{th} February 2010, pp. ii, 13.

\textsuperscript{82} Abdul-Jabbar and Jameel “political parties in Iraq”, Institute for political strategic studies, Iraq studies, http://www.iraqstudies.com/Home_files/iraqreportarabic1.htm, accessed 15\textsuperscript{th} February 2012.
As illustrated above, the Iraqi List party was the winner in the second parliamentary elections, with 91 seats, and the State of Law Coalition came second with 89 seats. Thus, the formation of the government at the expense of the Iraqi list meant that the formation was enforced according to a regional and international agenda, i.e. the Iran-US role was to support the State of Law Coalition in order to achieve their aims in Iraq. However, the main problem in Iraq in terms of democratic practice was that the people had no awareness of the significance of the democratic option for the state. Instead, democracy in Iraq was viewed as a mere endorsement of the prevailing social realities. Nevertheless, Iraq was supposed to pass through a transitional period (5-10 years) in order to promote the practice of democracy among the people, as opposed to the hasty rush which resulted in a culture of political concession that would be difficult to overcome. Political instability was not the only outcome of the poor democratic structure, insomuch as the economy was equally affected.

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Table 4.2 The Final Results of the 2010 Iraqi Parliamentary Elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Winning coalitions</th>
<th>Number of seats obtained</th>
<th>The number of compensatory seats</th>
<th>Total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Iraqi List</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>State of Law Coalition</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The National Iraqi Alliance</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Kurdistan Alliance Block</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Movement for Change</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Iraqi Accord</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Unity of Iraq Coalition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Kurdistan Islamic Union</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Kurdistan Islamic Group</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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84 ibid. p 3-6.

4.2.6 Economy

4.2.6.1 The State of the Economy During Saddam’s Regime:

The policies of the Saddam regime had a negative impact on the economic situation in Iraq before 2003. For example, the unemployment rate was recorded at 30%, according to statistical information which was provided by unofficial sources, while reports issued by the previous Ministry of Planning reveal that the rate of unemployment was 18%. Another prevalent economic indicator during the previous regime was the decline of economic developments, which coincided with the increase in military spending in 1988, estimated at US$ 12.9 billion. The economy was dependent on revenues accrued from oil in particular, as well as agriculture and industries so that the combination of Saddam Hussein’s policies impacted on the standard of living. The wages of most employees were very low even for doctors or university professors, not to mention the widespread poverty. With regard to the levels of corruption, Foote (2004) states that:

An estimate of theft through the Oil-for-Food programme was $4.4 billion. Illicit funds earned through the program help explain why Saddam Hussein was able to embark on an ambitious program of palace building even as many in Iraq struggled to survive. These building programs were no doubt at least partially financed by illicit earnings, but government revenue might also have been used. One government official told us that budget authority for an “irrigation” improvement, for example, might have been used to build a private lake behind one of Saddam Hussein’s homes.

4.2.6.2 The Economy During the US Invasion

According to Al-Jazeera net, the unemployment rate increased from 60-70 % in post-invasion Iraq and this could be traced to the policies of the US occupation. In this regard, Cordesman

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and Diamond both argued that the US administration committed mistakes in the wake of the occupation of Iraq. One of the biggest mistakes was getting rid of the entire Ba’ath party from government, including the army and security forces, which impacted negatively on the economic system. This contributed to an increase in the rate of unemployment and in violence as well as a lack of security. Generally speaking, it could be said that the Iraqi economy became very unstable after 2003; this is clear from the unemployment rate and the increase in the rate of poverty. In addition, the occupation brought new concepts such as privatization, foreign investment and contracts covering a long period of time, which enhanced links with Western economies that then could access Iraqi economic resources.

In his book *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope*, Paul Bremer, made this point with regard to his economic assessment of Iraq, which suggests that the new political regime failed to utilize the various resource sectors to sustain the economy. This would explain the collapse of the economy and the damage sustained by the energy sector in Iraq. Despite the huge wealth in the country (massive oil and gas reserves), the development outcome was still negative and Iraq’s resources became susceptible to theft through a variety of means. As a result, Iraqi citizens had no option but to allocate the bulk of their income to buying commodities and services that had been provided by the state prior to April 2003.

### 4.2.7 Foreign Influence

The post-2005 political regime in Iraq had to cope with the challenges raised by the US in opening its borders to foreign intervention either voluntarily or by force. Other foreign intervention in Iraq came from neighbouring countries; most importantly, from Iran, whose

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97 ibid, p. 68-69.

intervention in Iraq’s affairs could be described as both voluntary and enforced. It could be termed 'voluntary intervention' as most of the Shiite groups were aware of the brutality of the deposed regime in Iraq; preventing them from practising their beliefs or from occupying key positions. This pushed most of the Shia groups to seek support and protection from Iran. In this regard, the Shia groups have failed, so far, to establish a powerful base in Iraq or to become a nexus for Shiites throughout the world. The term 'enforced intervention' is applicable based on Iran having established many power centres in Iraq since April 2003; most importantly the Islamic parties, such as the Islamic Dawa Party (IDP), the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI), and the Badr Organisation (BO).

4.3 Summary

This chapter has reviewed issues related to US policy following the 2003 invasion, which include its occupation and the chaos that followed; the creation of the IGC as a step towards ushering in a transitional government, and finally the challenges faced by the new Iraqi political structure. The foregoing argument in this chapter suggests that despite the claim of handing over the government to the Iraqis, the US still maintained some level of control over the border, political system, parties and the economy. Despite Iraq having witnessed democratic reform, the structure of the regime and the associated institutions were dysfunctional. The new political system emerged in the wake of a period of occupation rather than developing from within. Furthermore, the idea of power-sharing was a key characteristic of the new political system; however, in practice, Iraq was divided along ethnic and sectarian lines. These issues are further analysed in the subsequent chapters, based on data collected from interviews and questionnaires.


101 Katazman, “Iran’s Activities and Influence in Iraq”, p 1-7.

102 ibid, p 3-5.
Chapter Five

HUMAN RIGHTS

Introduction

In this chapter human rights in Iraq are analysed from two aspects: First, the violations of human rights that were caused by Iraqi governments. Second the extent of the US involvement in those violations. These two aspects are analysed from the interview responses of the policy makers and the elite in Iraq and through data gathered from questionnaires completed by members of the Iraqi public. The results of the field research are divided into two sections, one assessing the interview questions and the second assessing the questionnaire findings. The two sections examine internal and external factors responsible for human rights violations in post-invasion Iraq.

5.1 Interview Findings: Iraqi Elite Opinion

5.1.1 Internal Factors (the Role of the Iraqi Governments)

This section analyses the interview data collected from fieldwork in Baghdad, Anbar and Fallujah. The aim is to present Iraqi perceptions of human rights violations in post-2003 Iraq. To this end, Questions 6 and 7 were used for the analysis.

Question 6, examined whether there has been any change in human rights issues in Iraq since 2003, and if so to what extent human rights have been respected or violated. A number of respondents believed that human rights violations worsened after the 2003 US invasion. For instance, Hamid Ali Salman al-Kilabi, selected to represent the National Alliance for Iraqi Tribes in the first case study in Baghdad, argues that:

Human rights violations have been committed by the US troops after 2003, by stripping the Iraqi people of their rights and freedoms. However, after the occupation, many violations were committed by the US forces, including imprisonment in the occupation prisons of Abu Ghraib,1 Bucca, and Al-Matar.

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1 Abu Ghraib is located approximately 20 miles west of Baghdad. Established during Saddam’s regime to hold political prisoners, it was known as a site of torture with poor conditions. Now refurbished, it is used again as a military prison by US forces, with 10,000 male and female prisoners. It was operated
say it was violated by the US forces because they were the influential power in the country.  

Another respondent Ahmed Raja Mohamed, selected to represent the local government for the second case study in Fallujah, says that:

There have been no positive changes in terms of human rights and the violations in the secret prisons and the random detentions provide stark evidence to that. Regarding women, apart from getting 25% under the quota system, their rights to have a decent living are still lagging behind.  

However, participants like Fahmi Awad Al-Hardan, selected to represent the National Alliance for Iraqi Tribes in the second case study in Al-Anbar, believed that: “the human rights violations have extended and Abu Guraib prison, the mass killings and destruction of the infrastructure provide a good examples of this”.  

Another opinion among the participants highlights the fact that violations are continuing even though they differ in style from those of Saddam’s regime. Among them the Director of the National Institute for Human Rights, respondent A4 anonymous, admits that: “There are two kinds of change: positive changes such as the elections, the multiplicity of parties, and freedom of the press; and negative changes such as security disorder, arbitrary arrests without any legal justification, and assassinations”.  

A political advisor in the government of the state of law, Bushra Al-Zuwayni argues that:

There is respect for the rights and public freedoms, but Iraqi society lacks enough awareness. The US has committed those violations and they are currently being investigated by the US courts. A case in point is that of the child, Abeer Qassim Hamza Al-Janabi whose family home was burned down after she had been raped, the worst crime in Iraq. Moreover, Abu Ghraib prison is one of the US scandals in the field of human rights violations. 

under the American coalition authority. Those inside the prison have been classified under different crimes – some accused of terrorism, some economic crimes, while others have been accused of being involved in the insurgency. S. M. Hersh, “Torture at Abu Ghraib: American soldiers brutalized Iraqis. How far up does the responsibility go”? The New Yorker, 10th May, 2014, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/05/10/torture-at-abu-ghraib accessed 12th November 2014


3 Ahmed Raja Mohamed, interview on 17th May 2012, Fallujah.

4 Fahmi Awad Al-Hardan, interview on 14th May 2012, Anbar.

5 Respondent A4, interview on 17th April 2012, Baghdad.

6 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, an interview, 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
These allegations are incompatible with the declarations of US government officials including President George W. Bush who argued that: “The war on Iraq has mainly been for the protection of human rights in that country and the salvation of the Iraqi people from the tyranny and oppression of Saddam Hussein”.\(^7\) In contrast, and more in agreement with the Bush quote, others argue that the situation of human rights and personal freedom in Iraq has improved. In this regard, a member of Baghdad County Council and Director of the Construction and Projects Committee, Ali Al-Attar, maintains that:

The removal of the dictatorship has been the most significant achievement so far, paving the way for public freedoms. For example, there were not 40 political parties before 2003, in addition to which the state intelligence agencies practised intimidation prior to 2003. However, nowadays the freedoms are open, and women have been well positioned by undertaking responsibilities following the liberation as indicated by the 25% quota system.\(^8\)

This viewpoint is supported by a member of the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights and the Minister of State for Women’s Affairs; Azhar Al-Shaykhali argues that:

There have been relative changes in human rights development compared to the period prior to 2003. The media has raised public awareness of human rights as to be incorporated in the school curriculum, and the establishment of the Ministry of Human Rights, and efforts are being made towards establishing the Commissariat of Human Rights. The above achievements highlight great concern with human rights indicating that the human rights issue is better after 2003.\(^9\)

This opinion is also consistent with the views of the Representative of the Islamic Fadila Party in the Iraqi Parliament, Hussein Al-Marae, who argues that:

In the time of the dictatorship there were no human rights, as violations of human rights were widespread in relation to anti-Baathist groups. Thus the elements of human rights were completely absent prior to 2003. However, after 2003 in the aftermath of the new political realities and democratic reform there have been important changes such as the prosecution of the criminal Saddam

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\(^8\) Ali Al-Attar, an interview, 1st March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^9\) Azhar Al-Shaykhali, an interview, 13th March 2012, Baghdad.
Hussein who had the right to defend himself. It is true that the status of women has been elevated by giving them 25% representation in the parliament.\footnote{Hussein Al-Marae, interview on 30\textsuperscript{th} April 2012, Baghdad.}

In an interview with the head of the Foundation for Political Prisoners (respondent A2, who wished to remain anonymous), the opinion was expressed that: “\textit{the issue of human rights has significantly improved, particularly with regard to freedom of speech and freedom of worship and freedom of thought}”.\footnote{Respondent A2, interview on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2012, Baghdad.}

With regards to Question 7, which examined whether the elected government of Iraq after 2005 has contributed to the support of human rights, it was evident from the interviews that participants’ opinions varied. Interestingly, some participants claimed that the new Iraqi government has not been keen on individual rights and freedoms. Moreover, the government has been perceived to be involved in active violations of human rights through its military and security forces. One of the proponents of that view is a member of a County Council, the Representative of the Communist Party in Iraq, Salih Yasir, who states that:

\begin{quote}
Since 2005, government policies have been in favour of the violation of human rights. That is obvious from its handling of the protests in 2010 in a way that has been inconsistent with democratic practice, including individual and public freedoms.\footnote{Salih Yasir, interview on 18\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.}
\end{quote}

If the Communist Party is secular, religious groupings also have their opinion with regard to the role of government institutions in protecting human rights. For instance, one clergyman, respondent A7, selected to represent the Association of Muslim Scholars in Iraq in the first case study in Baghdad, explained to the researcher that:

\begin{quote}
A systematic violation of human rights has taken place in Iraq as the political process has been based on sectarianism. The exclusion and marginalization policies are basic components of the political process and this affects the government performance negatively. Security systems have been established on [a] sectarian basis, not real participation, so that their activities have favoured government policies.\footnote{Respondent A7, interview on 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2012, Baghdad.}
\end{quote}

The civil society organizations in Iraq also expressed their opinion regarding the role of government institutions in protecting human rights in Iraq after 2003. Among them, an
academic staff member at the Centre for Urban Planning (respondent A3, who preferred to remain anonymous), selected to represent the first case study in Baghdad, expresses the view that:

There were training sessions given to the security forces in relation to human rights, yet the problem goes beyond training sessions or incorporating the concept of human rights into the university curriculum. They are concepts that emerge through the promotion of social relationships. However, as far as the elected government is concerned the reports and the situation on the ground have indicated that the government comes first regarding the violation of human rights in Iraq.\footnote{Respondent A3, interview on 19\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.}

Adel Mahmoud Aboud, selected to represent the second case study in Fallujah, added that: “\textit{There are indicators of systematic violations committed by the government, which is shameful}”.\footnote{Adel Mahmoud Aboud, interview on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Fallujah}

The process of data analysis however, disclosed another viewpoint among participants in terms of assessing the role of security institutions in protecting human rights in Iraq after 2003. This provides some security and political background to the problems of the government:

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the government of Iraq has been unable to improve the performance of the security and military systems in terms of human rights. Some of what has been going on is related to individual behaviour rather than a systematic policy.\footnote{Azhar Shawkli and Hana Adwar, interviews on 12\textsuperscript{th}-13\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.}

According to one member of Baghdad County Council and Head of the Committee for Women and Children at the Provincial Council, Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi: “\textit{The protection of human rights is a social culture. The onus is not on the government alone, but rather the individuals as well as civil society organisations are equally responsible}”.\footnote{Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, interview on 4\textsuperscript{th} March, 2012, Baghdad.} The Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at Al-Nahrain University selected to be representative for the case study in Baghdad, on the other hand links the matter to a:

Huge cultural legacy rather than to systematic policies. The government has considered support for human rights in Iraq through establishing the Ministry of
Human Rights, and there have been attempts to establish an independent commission as dictated by the constitution. However, regarding the practices of the military and the police forces, they need a long time to positively react towards the issues of human rights.\textsuperscript{18}

However, there is another point of view, which although it accepts the difficulties of security still criticises the government. One of the proponents of that view is the Head of the Centre for International Studies, University of Baghdad, Nabil Mohamed Salim, who argues that:

The government has not been serious enough as to establish security and military institutions in favour of human rights and public freedoms. What is even worse is that most of those institutions have been driven by some parties in the government which abuse them against the government policies.\textsuperscript{19}

The above view is supported by another participant who states that

Despite the formation of the Iraqi government in 2005, that government has been incapable of protecting human rights because “of the domination militias and the influential political parties within the government that managed to kill and displace the citizens on sectarian basis.”\textsuperscript{20}

In the meantime a member of Baghdad County Council and Representative of the Sadr bloc in the Iraqi Parliament, Sabbar Ali Mohamed Al-Saedi, claims:

The violations that have taken place have not been systematic, but rather have been subject to the theory [of] exceptional circumstances that has forced the government to use a legal principle known as the abuse of rights i.e. the security [forces] have the rights of arrest, imprisonment and torture at the same time. Therefore, there is no positive practice in relation to supporting human rights after 2003.\textsuperscript{21}

Finally, a fourth very direct opinion exists, which was put forward by Respondent A8, a staff member at the University of Baghdad, who argues that:

The military and security forces have done nothing wrong, and all their actions can be described as humanitarian, civilised and refined. That view goes further to rule out any chance of challenging those institutions in terms of violation of

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{18} Amer Hassen Fayad, interview on 23\textsuperscript{rd} Feb 2012, Baghdad.
\footnote{19} Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.
\footnote{20} Hamid Ali Salman al Kilabi, interview on 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2012, Baghdad.
\footnote{21} Sabbar Ali Mohamed Al-Saedi, interview on 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2012, Baghdad.
\end{footnotes}
human rights and public freedoms in Iraq. There is respect for human rights and positive contributions by the government in this field.22

Another proponent of that view is the political adviser to the Prime Minister, Bushra Al-Zuwayni, who explains that:

Yes, the elected government of Iraq after 2005 has greatly contributed to the development of human rights in Iraq. That has become evident through the establishment of the community police, not to mention other institutions such as the Ministry of Human Rights, the Ministry of Women, the Women’s Care Department, and the newly established Human Rights Commission as a supervisory body.23

5.1.1.1 Summary of Interview Findings on Internal Factors

Most of the interviewees stated that the role of internal forces in Iraq has been negative in terms of human rights. Some participants believe the human rights situation in Iraq has deteriorated since 2003. The abuse in prisons, such as Abu Guraib, and random arrests provide a good example of this view. A general view of the interviewees is that the US rather than the Iraqi government is responsible for these violations of human rights. This could be justified by the prevailing security situation in Iraq which was under the control of the US government. An example is the case of Abeer Al-Ganabi, a child whose home was burned down after she was raped by a US soldier. There were a few others who believed that the human rights situation improved after 2003 due to the toppling of Saddam’s dictatorship. In addition, some of the interviewees suggested that human rights have both positive and negative implications. The positive implication includes freedom of expression, freedom of media and the establishing of the Ministry of Human Rights. The negative aspects are haphazard detentions without any legal justifications and assassinations. One significant finding is that the media has contributed in one way or another to the increase in awareness among Iraqis of the concept of human rights. Here, the view of participants is that raising the awareness of the public was a necessity in terms of human rights. For instance, the establishment of institutions concerned with human rights issues has contributed to enhancing the human rights situation in Iraq. They also mentioned that women have been given 25% of seats

22 Respondent A8, interview on 20th March 2012, Baghdad.

23 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
in the government. A small number of interviewees expressed the opinion that Iraq, after 2003, witnessed democratic reforms that were evident in the prosecution of former president, Saddam Hussein, who was given the right to defend himself. Also, they agreed that Iraqi governments have made a positive contribution in support of human rights in the country, which is evident through the establishing of the Ministry for Women, the Women’s Care Department, and the newly established "watchdog", the Human Rights Commission.

However, some interviewees agreed that systematic human rights violations have been perpetrated in Iraq by the security forces and police, which were heightened by a political process in Iraq that was established on sectarian and power-sharing lines rather than being a “national partnership government”. Others suggested that government policy has been in favour of the violations of human rights and that this was evident in the way the security forces handled demonstrators in 2012, which was highly criticized. The participants’ view is that these policies and practices were incompatible with the principles of promoting democracy in Iraq after 2003. They also claimed that despite training sessions having been held on human rights at national and local levels, several reports published by the local media condemned the current as well as previous governments for abusing human rights. However there was another group of participants who claimed that the violations which took place were not systematic as they could be traced to individual behaviour. It was also suggested that there were malpractices in the security forces and the Iraqi authorities which gave room to human rights violations. While some suggested that no human rights transgressions had been committed by security institutions, other participants indicated that Iraqi governments were not serious in establishing security and military institutions to protect human rights and public freedom. A small number of respondents indicated that dominant militias within the government had made a profound impact on the human rights situation through killing and displacing citizens on sectarian basis.

A significant perspective that emerged showed that civil organizations did not do their job well in protecting the rights of the citizens. Thus, questions were raised about their effectiveness in country.
5.1.2 External Factors (the Role of the US)

To present a detailed account of elite perspectives on the human rights situation in post-invasion in Iraq we need to examine the respondents’ views of the role the US played in violating human rights in the country. To this end Questions 5 and 8 were used for the analysis.

There were those who believed that the US has allowed a true media coverage without any restrictions. One of the proponents of that view is Aisha Al-Masari, selected to represent local government in the first case study in Baghdad, who remarked:

The existence of numerous media institutions should indicate a free media. Iraq might be one of the top countries in terms of the number of media institutions. However, most of those institutions belong to partisan media, which is a biased media making the political parties and media as two faces of the same coin. That puts the media miles away from the anticipated aims and objectives including raising awareness and the level of maturation of public opinion as well as truth finding.24

However, a council Member Rufah Yasin Al-Gadi, selected to represent local government for the second case study in Al-Anbar, rejected any allegations about restrictions, saying,

The US has never intervened with media activities so that numerous violations have been disclosed in the political arena in Iraq as well as in prisons and detention centres featuring huge scandals and violations involving the US.25

Another issue raised was that the US had given freedom of coverage even though the US managed to introduce some restrictions that could be described as no more than procedural. For example, Amir Hassan Fayyad is of the view that:

In our contemporary world the US and other countries are no longer capable of restricting media activities, despite all the efforts they are making to put restrictions by introducing laws that favour the US in terms of media coverage. But the question is whether the US has succeeded? The answer is yes, the US has relatively succeeded given its technological knowhow, which is sufficient to give the US the advantage to control media coverage locally and worldwide.26

24 Aisha Al-Masari, interview on 7th March 2012, Baghdad


This view is supported by the former Minister for Women and member of the Iraqi Alliance bloc, Azhar Al-Shaykhali, who expresses the view that:

In today’s world, the mass media are numerous including satellite TV stations and radio stations. The fact that most of those stations belong to political parties has made them a tool for the promotion of partisan agendas. On the other hand, some of the stations are linked to the US i.e. funded by the US such as the “Alhurra” satellite channel. Being funded by the US, this channel has made its coverage of events from a US perspective. The same can be said about the relationship between the US and other satellite channels in Iraq and the Arab world during its war on Iraq.27

However, in the opinion of the Head of the Corporation of Political Prisoners who preferred to be anonymous (respondent A2):

The restrictions have not been a problem but the main problem has been associated with the fact that there have been more negative than positive aspects regarding the freedom given to the media, as it lacks professionalism by presenting a distorted image of the media in Iraq and the rest of the Arab world as compared to the well-advised American media, which has influenced public opinion.28

Another opinion goes on to argue that the US has confined the freedom of the media in a very narrow circle, so that the media cannot discuss issues pertaining to the occupation period and afterwards without US consent. This point was found in the opinion adopted by the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party in Iraq, Shakir Kattab, who stated:

The occupation troops, namely the US, have put the media under control, taking advantage of that by creating a pro-US or at least a neutral media. Moreover, the US has repressed any media opposed to the US presence in Iraq.29

The Head of the Centre for International Studies, University of Baghdad, Nabil Mohamed Salim, agreed with this notion when he said:

Given its technological advancement, the US has managed to undertake a well-organised programme to obscure the news media in Iraq and the Arab world in a way that promotes its interests and plans during its war on Iraq.30

27 Azhar Al-Shaykhali, interview on 13th March 2012, Baghdad.
28 Respondent A2, interview on 14th April 2012, Baghdad.
29 Shakir Kattab, interview on 21st February 2012, Baghdad.
30 Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4th March 2012, Baghdad.
The same view was found in Al-Barzingi’s comments that: “the US has worked towards obstructing media coverage of many of its criminal operations involving the Iraqi people”.\(^{31}\)

Similarly, a member of Baghdad County Council and Representative of the Sadr bloc in the Iraqi parliament, Sabbar Ali Mohamed Al-Saedi, selected as a representative in the first case study in Baghdad, explains that the US has:

> Restricted the movement of the mass media in Iraq and the Arab world. By doing so the US has managed to conceal crimes and violations. Furthermore, journalists have been abused by the US through sustaining death threats, and some of the journalists have lost their lives. Thus it becomes inappropriate to speak about a free media.\(^{32}\)

In the meantime, a member of academic staff at al-Anbar University, Ismail Mohamed Al-Isawi, selected for the second case study in Al-Anbar, argues that “the US has introduced tough restrictions on media coverage for all events. For that reason the US has joint efforts with its political partners to curtail the media”.\(^{33}\)

Question 8 addresses the issue regarding whether the US government elevated the status of human rights or violated them by the crimes it committed in Iraq in terms of the universal declaration of human rights and the resolutions of the United Nations.

Participants, such as the leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Katab, argue that:

> The US government and its troops have been against the progress of human rights in Iraq. That has been evident from the way prisoners have been treated in Abu Ghraib prison, besides the random arrests, and that the US policies have been absolutely inconsistent with the international human rights declaration and the UN resolutions as well. Also, such practice is considered a stark violation of international law.\(^{34}\)

This view is shared by Nabil Mohamed Salim, who points out that: “the main human rights violations have been committed by the US as indicated by the abuses in Abu

\(^{31}\) Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, interview on 4\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{32}\) Sabbar Ali Mohamed Al-Saedi, interview on 1\(^{st}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{33}\) Ismail Mohamed Al-Isawi, interview on 14\(^{th}\) May 2012, Anbar

\(^{34}\) Shakir Kattab, interview on 21\(^{st}\) February 2012, Baghdad.
Guraib prison, the Haditha massacre, and the rape at Al Mahmudiyah”. Also, Amir Hassan Fayad suggested that:

Many indicators of human rights violations in Iraq by the US forces exist featuring the behaviour of the US troops in Abu Ghraib prison and the malpractices of the US [private] security companies which have failed to take the human rights aspect into account.36

Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies, Al Nahrain University Al-Maamouri, on the other hand believes that not only the US but also the UN should be called to account. He comments that:

The UN has concealed the crimes committed by the US in return for economic and political benefits as part of a deal between the UN and the US. In a nutshell, the role of the UN regarding human rights has been and continues to be marginal and insignificant. That becomes evident from the mass killings of the innocent people inside and outside prisons by the US. 37

Dr Amin, academic staff member at Al Nahrain University, suggested that:

The US has violated human rights in its confrontation and repression of the anti-US presence groups in Iraq. In the meantime, it could be maintained that the US has overacted regarding its violation of human rights which has offended the UN Charter as well as the International Declaration of Human Rights. 38

Another group suggested that the overall experience of the US has been consistent with international human rights standards. To this end, a member of Baghdad County Council and Director of the Construction and Projects Committee, Ali Al-Attar, said: “Every occupation is followed by exceptional policies, and usually dominated by individual behaviour, and the human rights violations in Iraq have neither been organised nor have they been pre-planned.” 39

Similarly, the Minister of State for Women’s Affairs and Member of the Iraq Alliance bloc in the Iraq Parliament, Azhar Al-Shailakhi, commented:

35 Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4th March 2012, Baghdad. The same viewpoint has been expressed by Iman Al-Barzingi and Saad Hamid Mahmoud, interviews on 4th and 23rd April 2012, Baghdad.

36 Amir Hassan Fayad, interview on 23rd Feb 2012, Baghdad.


38 Hajeer Adnan Amin, interview, on 17th March 2012, Baghdad.

39 Ali Al-Attar, interview on 1st March 2012, Baghdad.
Distinction should be made between Americans in Iraq. The government side featuring the US troops who committed numerous human rights violation. The other side includes the role of non-governmental organisations i.e. the civil society organisations operating in Iraq. Those organisations have been a great help in the promotion of human rights in Iraq through their condemnation of the crimes committed by the US government.\(^{40}\)

Sharing the same view, an adviser of the Iraqi government, Bushra Al-Zuwayni, said that:

On the one hand the US has been in support of human rights, while on the other hand it has been in violation of those rights. That should imply that the US should neither be treated as an angel nor should it be treated as evil. As an example of the excesses committed by the US, one should refer to some MPs such as Fatah Alsheikh. The US troops have dominate the scene and have the power to veto any decision, while the Iraqi government has been weak without real power. But nonetheless following the signing the security agreement between the US and Iraq, the Iraqi government has played an effective role with regard to the human rights issue at the expensive of the American role that has been diminished following that agreement.\(^{41}\)

There was a third group who suggested that the US has never violated human rights in Iraq. In this regard, Respondent A2 (anonymous) said:

Possibilities of human rights [violations] by the US in Iraq cannot be ruled out, particularly the killings associated with random shelling. Yet, such practices could be justified by the US troops in their efforts to establish a new political regime in Iraq.\(^{42}\)

5.1.2.1 Summary of Interview Findings on External Factors

From analysis of Question 5, we see that a range of views expressed by interviewees show that the US affected the freedom of the media in a positive and negative manner. In terms of the positive aspects, there is increased awareness among Iraqis about the concept of human rights. Some participants believe that the US has never interfered with media activities and that many violations have been disclosed, either regarding prisoners or in the political area. They also claim that the US has imposed some restrictions as it has the technology to do so. Still others were of the opinion that the US

\(^{40}\) Azhar Al-Shailakhi, interview on 13\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{41}\) Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29\(^{th}\) April 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{42}\) Respondent A2, interview on 14\(^{th}\) April 2012, Baghdad.
has succeeded in undertaking a well-organized programme of controlling the media in Iraq and the Arab world in order to implement its goals through its war on Iraq. Some interviewees said that the US has placed strict restrictions on media coverage or at least made the media neutral. They also explained that the US has undertaken joint efforts with its political partners to restrain the media. Some believe that restrictions have not been a problem in other aspects such as the lack of freedom granted to the media. They also expressed concern over the quality of the media. Others argued that the US placed restrictions on media outlets in order to hide their crimes in Iraq, for example, the US authorities in Iraq resorted to threatening to kill individuals, in particular journalists, if they tried to reveal any information which might lead to damaging the reputation of the US in Iraq. Some say abuse is bound to take place.

With regards to the analysis of Question 8, the majority of interviewees agreed that external forces have played a negative role in Iraq in terms of human rights. More importantly, they suggested that the US breached UN resolutions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights due to its various crimes in Iraq. Others indicated that not only the US but also the UN should be condemned for having turned a blind eye to the crimes committed by the US, including genocide. Still others explained that the violations were more decentralised and random. Also, some believed that violations committed in Iraq by US forces were not organised and pre-planned and that they could be traced to exceptional policies and also to individual behaviour. There were those who believed that the US has made a positive contribution to human rights in Iraq, for example, through non-governmental US organizations i.e. civil society organizations operating in Iraq which have condemned crimes committed by the US forces and its allies, whereas others believe that violations have been committed by US troops, such as the arrest of the MP Fatah Al-Sheikh by US forces. Some said that abuse is bound to take place. Some interviewees condemned the behaviour of U.S. troops for their disrespect of international human rights declarations. Others argued that the US intention to spread democracy across Iraq has been accompanied by numerous human rights violations both directly, as in the torture of detainees, and indirectly through turning a blind eye to malpractices of local security forces. This will be discussed later in the findings.
5.2 Questionnaire Findings: Iraqi Public Opinion

The aim of this section is to understand perceptions of the general public as to the extent to which the human rights situation in Iraq is linked to internal or external factors. To this end, I focused on two questions for analysis. Question 3 relates to the role of the Iraqi security forces (ISF) in violating human rights in Iraq; while Question 18 is used to examine the role of the US in elevating the status of women in Iraq.

1= strongly disagree
2= disagree
3= slightly disagree
4= neutral
5= strongly agree
6= agree
7= slightly agree
9= Missing questions

Question 3 (Internal factors - did official Iraqi institutions, such as the police force and the army, start to respect human rights after 2003?)

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<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
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Table 5.1 Perceptions of Iraqi Institutions, such as Police forces and Army, Having Increased Respect for Human Rights After 2003?
The analysis of Question 3 demonstrated that 73.8% of Iraqis disagreed with the notion that the security forces in Iraq respected human rights and public freedoms incorporated in the constitution and the international agreements, while just 12.3% agreed that these forces have handled the matter with due transparency and professionalism. Moreover, 13% were neutral on the question. The smallest percentage (0.8%) did not answer this question. An important finding suggests that distrust of the Iraqi Security Forces extends across the religious, regional and ethnic divide. This will be discussed later in the findings.

**Question 18** (External factor - has the US government elevated the status of women in Iraq?)
Table 5.2 Perceptions of the US Government Having Elevated the Status of Women in Iraq

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Figure 5.2 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether the US Government Elevated the Status of Women in Iraq.

65.0% disagree
15% agree
16.9% neutral
0.8% missing
65.0% disagree
With regards to Question 18 on whether the US government elevated the status of women in Iraq after 2003, the lowest percentage (15%) believe that the US respected human rights especially in terms of increasing women’s rights in the country. While 16.9% of them expressed a neutral viewpoint, the majority (65.4%) expressed a belief that the presence of US forces in the country resulted in disrespect for human rights and public freedoms. The smallest percentage (0.8%) did not answer this question. This questionnaire data shows that as late as 2012 there was agreement across the religious, geographic and ethnic divide – a majority saw the US government as failing to elevate the status of women during the post-invasion period.

5.3 Discussion of Interview and Questionnaire Findings

This part analyses the interview and questionnaire data so as to address the research sub-question raised in Chapter 2, regarding how far human rights have been respected since 2003. The following interview analysis indicates that various factors affected the human rights situation in post-invasion Iraq.

The legacy of Saddam’s regime cast a long shadow on the human rights situation in Iraq after 2003. In other words, human rights violations prior to 2003 were basically political suppression of opposition to the Iraqi regime. The findings of interviews in this study indicate that the violations continue, even though they differ in style from those practised by Saddam’s regime. One participant stated that “A systematic violation of human rights has taken place in Iraq”. On the other hand, there were a few others who believed that the human rights situation had improved after 2003 due to the toppling of Saddam’s dictatorship. For example one participant, Hussein Al-Marae, stated that “the elements of human rights were completely absent prior to 2003”.

43 Amnesty International, “torture is used systematically against political detainees. The scale and severity of torture in Iraq can only result from the acceptance of its use at the highest”, Report of the (Amnesty International, August 2001), p.5.  


45 Respondent A7, interview on 23rd April 2012, Baghdad.

46 Hussein Al-Marae, interview on 30th April 2012, Baghdad.
this researcher’s view that the violations during Saddam’s regime were organized rather than random, and without legal justification or due process of law, as has been happening after 2003. This view is supported by evidence from the fieldwork and from the findings of other researchers detailed in (Chapter Two).

The interviews and questionnaire responses indicate that human rights have both worsened and seen improvements. The positive changes include freedom of expression and freedom of the media. Regarding the media, the interview respondents commented that it has contributed in one way or another to the increase in awareness among Iraqis of the concept of human rights, and that efforts have been made to improve human rights. For example, the establishment of institutions concerned with human rights issues has contributed to enhancing the human rights situation in Iraq. These findings are affirmed by a report of the Iraqi Foundation in 2009, which reveals that the media in Iraq has improved since 2003. For example, there are dozens of newspapers in circulation compared to during the period prior to 2003. Moreover, some views reflected in the interviews suggest that Iraq, since 2003, has instituted a multi-party system in which more than 40 political parties and movements have arisen in the political arena. These findings particularly do not seem to be consistent with the literature, in which some reports confirm that the role of political parties has had a negative effect on human rights and the democratic process.

Iraqi scholar Al-Dulaimi states that the problem is not with the multi-party system but with the way in which internal parties are organised and how they operate. For example, the leadership of many parties is religious, hereditary or personal rather than being elected based on competence and professionalism. As a result, these parties have excluded the idea of peaceful transition of the authorities from their agendas.


48 Ali Al-Attar, interview on 1st March 2012, Baghdad.


above analysis indicates that the emergence of political parties since 2003 has been a positive development, but it seems that the multi-party system posed another internal challenge, which influenced the human rights situation in Iraq, due to the lack of laws governing and organising the activities of these parties.

Another positive aspect reflected in the interviews is that, after the invasion of Iraq, women were better represented in the political sector. For instance, one participant noted that “women were given 25% of the seats in the new Iraqi government”. However, this does not seem to agree with the findings from the questionnaire, as the majority of respondents claimed that the US government had not elevated the status of women in Iraq after 2003 (see Table 5.2). On the contrary, these findings are inconsistent with what international organisations report regarding the human rights abuses of women who faced physical torture while under arrest, and in some cases sexual assault, including sexual harassment and cases of rape. This is also observed by a participant, Bushra Al-Zuwayni, who argues that:

The US has committed these violations, as they are currently being investigated by the US courts. A case in point is that of the child, Abeer Qassim Hamza Al-Janabi, who was burnt out of her house along with her family, after being raped; the worst crime in Iraq.

The responses to the interview questions indicate the respondents’ distrust of the Iraqi security forces, based on religious and ethnic divisions. The questionnaire findings demonstrate that the majority of Iraqis believe that the security forces in Iraq violate human rights and public freedoms prescribed in the constitution and international agreements, while only a few agree that these forces have handled matters with due transparency and professionalism. These findings are in line with those of a report by Amnesty International, which revealed that violations include attacks against civilians, torture of detainees and unfair trials. The report titled “A Decade of Violations” looks at

51 Ali Al-Attar, interview on 1st March 2012, Bagdad


54 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
the torture and mistreatment of detainees by local security forces and US troops. On this point, a large and growing body of literature has investigated the field of human rights violations (see Chapter Two).

Furthermore, the majority of interviewees blame the US for the human rights violations in Iraq, claiming that the policies and practices were incompatible with the claims of the US government about the promotion of human rights in Iraq. Their view is that the US has committed many such crimes. One of these is reported by Al-Azawi, who argues that those who did not agree with the implementation of US policies in Iraq were labelled as dissenters and subjected to abuse. Reportedly, members of the Ba’ath party and other Iraqi resistance members were the main victims of this practice. Similarly, Atwan insists that the Sunni Arabs were the main victims as they constituted a strong opposition to the US presence in the country. Likewise, according to Katzman, another group of Iraqis affected by those violations are former army soldiers or members of security organisations designated the task of monitoring the activities of Iranian intelligence agents in the country before April 2003. Most of these were executed by either government forces in Iraq or by Iranian organisations active in Iraq.

It is reported that there were many secret prisons, managed by the Iraqi authorities, in which the Iraqi security forces and army committed numerous human rights violations against the detainees, including torture and rape. These findings are also affirmed in a report released by Human Rights Watch in 2014, which stated that the ISF had committed crimes in regard to the rights of Iraqi women by arresting them and putting


them in prison; some members of the security forces were even involved in the torture, rape and sexual harassment.  

Contrastingly, a report released by the Ministry of Human Rights in Iraq in 2012 denies that there were any violations against prisoners, other than insults or restraining; in other words, it clams there were no cases of rape. According to the Human Rights Commission, the doors of prisons must be open to civil society organizations in order for them to verify any allegations, however this report seems to be inconsistent with the findings of the current research, as the majority of interviewees stated that the presence of US forces in Iraq had resulted in violations of women’s rights.

The report of the Iraqi Communist Party revealed that the most serious violations were made following the invasion, including individual and mass killings, with the rate of these reaching unprecedented levels. Individuals were imprisoned without an arrest warrant or a court order. Similarly, a report by the Association of Muslim Scholars in 2013 showed that private prisons were not subject to the supervision of the Iraqi judiciary as long as they were linked directly to the Iraqi security forces, and that many violations took place in those prisons, such as ill-treatment, torture, threats to kill

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The interview and questionnaire findings from the current research support this view.

However, some claim that government opponents were either terrorists or Ba’athists, who were, by definition, supporters of the defunct Saddam regime. This arguably means that the government had the right to silence those voices by any means. The conviction held by some interview participants is that the government was irresponsible for turning a blind eye to violations committed by the security forces.

In addition, internal violence escalated with the interference of the US in the political system and agenda of Iraq, which posed a profound threat to human rights in Iraq. This violence can be seen among components of society, in particular Shia and Sunni militias, groups such as the al Mahdi militias and particularly in the formation of Iraqi branches of the terrorist organization called Al-Qaeda. For example, Shia militias targeted both elite and lay people from Sunni communities; the same could be said about Al-Qaeda, which rose as a counter-terrorist force against Shia forces. Ironically, while the US authorities in Iraq were ostensibly responsible for security, to a large extent, they ignored these and even overlooked a marauding group of so-called “Death Squads”, who were a dangerous component of sectarian militias, targeting Sunni people in general and key elites in particular, in Baghdad and its suburbs, as well as

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other mixed areas, beginning in 2006. This shows that the US forces may not have fulfilled their promise of protecting the peoples’ human rights properly as part of their democratic propaganda. For instance, these sectarian forces (militia) were reported to have kidnapped people from their workplaces and homes and killed them. The kidnappings and killings were based on sectarian and ethnic divisions and they targeted specific groups, as one participant stated:

Despite the formation of the Iraqi government in 2005, that government has been incapable of protecting human rights because of the domination militias and the influential political parties within the government that managed to kill and displace the citizens on sectarian basis.

A very small number of respondents believe that those violations were intentional. One participant noted that:

The US has violated human rights in its confrontation and repression of the anti-US groups present in Iraq. The US has overreacted regarding its violation of human rights, which has contravened the UN Charter as well as the International Declaration of Human Rights.

Therefore, US foreign policy in Iraq was arguably not motivated by a desire to protect human rights. These findings are in line with Al-Azzawi’s conclusion that what is happening inside Abu Ghraib prison is an example of the violation of human rights.

Tens of thousands have been killed by US forces because they resisted the occupation; however, all indicators from the beginning of the occupation until the withdrawal of US troops in 2011 suggest that the worst violations of human rights and personal freedoms in the history of the Iraqi people happened when the US forces were operating in the

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73 J. Steele, “US allies are behind the death squads and ethnic cleansing: Iraq's American overlords at last seem to have grasped the danger posed by their friends' militias. But it may be too late”, Guardian 14th April 2006, [http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2006/apr/14/comment.iraq accessed 11th February 2013](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2006/apr/14/comment.iraq accessed 11th February 2013).


76 Hajeer Adnan Amin, interview, on 17th March 2012, Baghdad.


country. Al-Azawy asserts that since 1990, the United States has played a negative role in the mistreatment of Iraqis, particularly Iraqi civilians, including via economic sanctions. For example, the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq affected different levels of the political, economic and social spheres. This constitutes an abuse of human rights and fundamental freedoms. However, since 2003, it has been claimed that the long-term occupation triggered an increased death rate and cases of kidnapping, causing excessive suffering to vulnerable members of society.

The US interactions with illegal organisations in Iraq negatively impacted on human rights and the US Intelligence Agencies in Iraq tackled their rivals, such as Al Qaeda and the Al Mahdi Army militias, with no effective plan. This type of treatment resulted in disorganised violence as the US forces in Iraq did not have effective military plans for dealing with the terrorist organizations so that its presence impacted negatively on the human rights situation. For example, tens of thousands of Iraqis were killed or unjustifiably arrested as a result of the US forces’ operations while searching for terrorists and extremists. From the analysis of interview and questionnaire data, the US appears to have been the main actor regarding human rights violations, through negligence and by its own actions. The US turned a blind eye to violations committed by forces outside of its control, and the US government was responsible, as an occupying power, for the country’s security, while there were also violations committed by its own forces in Iraq. One participant noted “the criminal acts committed by the

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82 Atwan. “The Future of the Phenomenon of Political Violence in Iraq”, p. 36


US troops against the Iraqi people”. This was arguably incompatible with the concept of human rights from earlier in the chapter, which prescribed that it requires respect for the rights and freedoms of people during peacetime and war; a definition in conflict with the US policy towards Iraq.

Others are of the opinion that the violations were not intentional, but rather can be justified by the circumstances associated with the deployment of American troops on the ground. Al-Attar believes that “every occupation is followed by exceptional policies, and usually dominated by individual behaviour, and that the human rights violations in Iraq have neither been organised nor been pre-planned”.

However, the views of those who believe that the violations of human rights in Iraq have not been systematic are not surprising. Due to the political backgrounds of some participants, it may be that their statements reflect the views of their respective political parties.

Research conducted by the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Development in 2011 showed that the majority of respondents (95%) agreed that the US occupation, in terms of its behaviour, has violated the sanctity of the blood of the Iraqi people, as well as their divine values, with only 5% disagreeing with the statement. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a general consensus among the Iraqi people that US forces contributed to the violation of human rights in Iraq, and that the existence of US forces was a cause of resentment and worry for the Iraqi people. These findings are in line with the questionnaire findings of this study, with a high proportion (65.4%) of the respondents disagreeing with the idea that the US government respected human rights in Iraq. Furthermore, the interview findings are consistent with the above results; for example, one participant asserted that:

The US government and its troops have not been in favour of human rights in Iraq. That has been evident from the way prisoners have been treated in Abu

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87 Ali Al-Attar, interview on 1st March 2012, Bagdad.
Ghraib prison, as well as the random arrests, and that the US policies were absolutely inconsistent with the International Human Rights Declaration and UN resolutions. Also, such practices are considered stark violations of international law.  

The US forces and security companies working in Iraq posed a threat to the human rights situation, as they committed many violations against innocent people; for example, in 2005, a 75 year old man was one of 24 Iraqis killed by members of security companies. Another example is that of Nisoor Square on 17th September 2007, where approximately 17 Iraqis were killed and dozens wounded. Most of the victims were innocent people, including women, children and the elderly, and none of them were affiliated with terrorist or militia groups. Participants referred to these and similar events as “malpractices of the US security companies”, and “the criminal acts committed by the US troops against the Iraqi people”, perceiving them as serious violations of Iraqi human rights. These findings are also linked with those reported in Chapter Two. This contradicts the promises of George W. Bush (Wednesday 29th June 2005), of a free and peaceful Iraq.

5.4 Summary

This chapter dealt with the opinions of the Iraqi elite and the general public regarding the human rights situation in Iraq from 2003 onwards. This was impacted upon by several factors, including both internal factors (the role of the Iraqi government, Iraqi security forces, armed paramilitary groups and a climate of violence) and external factors (the role of the USA and private security firms). The literature on the topic expanded on these factors in relation to Iran. Both the Iraqi Government and US forces

89 Shakir Kattab, interview on 21st February 2012.


91 Amir Hassen Fayad, an interview, 23rd February 2012, Baghdad.


were equally responsible for human rights violations in the country, with Iranian intelligence forces involved to a lesser degree.

However, there was an improvement in political freedom of expression for both men and woman. There was also freedom of the media, with numerous satellite channels being established and an increase in the number of daily newspapers. In addition Iraqi people were better informed of their rights and of political affairs in the country. Civil society organizations were established which condemned crimes committed by US forces and their allies. A significant finding of this research is that Iraqi public opinion holds that the presence of US forces in Iraq since 2003 has had a negative impact on the status of Iraqi women. Along with the creation of a multi-party system, there was increased participation of women in politics, as well as the establishment of the Ministry for Women, the Women’s Care Department, and the newly established watchdog, the Human Rights Commission.

While this chapter has shown that there have been both positive and negative impacts of the US occupation, the following chapter will discuss Iraqi perceptions of the security situation in Iraq following the 2003 invasion.
Chapter Six

SECURITY

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of research conducted in Iraq to discover the perceptions of Iraqis concerning the security situation after the 2003 US invasion. The security issue is analysed from two aspects. Firstly, the analysis takes into account internal causes that posed a threat to security in Iraq. Secondly, the analysis considers the role of the US in destabilising the country’s security situation. Specifically, this chapter analyses the opinions of the elite (via data gathered from interviews) and the general Iraqi public (via questionnaire data). The foregoing argument suggests that the state of Iraqi security after the 2003 invasion could be evaluated from the internal and external perspectives, which US foreign policy encouraged.

6.1 Interview Findings: Iraqi Elite Opinion

Security has been the main concern of the Iraqi people since April 2003, leading to the emergence of different attitudes towards the US and its policies in the country among the elite. The security challenges Iraq has faced have been far greater than those that existed in the period before April 2003, and they remain largely unresolved to this day. Thus, the following analysis assesses perspectives on the state of internal and external security in Iraq from the point of view of the elite.

6.1.1 Internal Factors (the Role of Iraqi Governments)

This analysis of the internal factors that are responsible for the decline of security in Iraq is based on Interview Question 2 which addresses the issue of whether the development of political parties in post-invasion Iraq helped improve security or not. Responses to this question show that elite opinions differed in relation to the multi-party
system and its impact on political and security stability in the country. Some of the participants perceived that the political parties are partly to blame for security instability. For instance, in the interview with the Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at Nahrain University, Dr Amir Hassan Fayad, who was selected to represent academic groups in the first case study, Baghdad, said:

The establishment of societal stability and security will be impossible without the accommodation of all political components, particularly the political parties, provided that the activities of those parties are being warranted by the constitution and organized by law. As far as Iraq is concerned, the multi-party system is indispensable and actually provided for by the constitution (article 38). However, in the meantime, the activities of those parties are disorganized as there is no law for political parties up till now. Thus the existence of political parties without a law organizing their activities has its negative impact on the security situation in Iraq.¹

Similarly, a member of the Baghdad province council, who is Head of the Committee for Women and Children for the Province, Dr Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, expressed his view in this way:

The political parties and movements which emerged after 2003 did not help to spread security and stability. This is due to internal and external interventions. The external interventions are represented in the countries surrounding Iraq, whose policies require that Iraq becomes an insecure country. Stability in Iraq can only be achieved by the Iraqi people themselves through enforcement and activation of the law.²

The above view is shared by Nahla Jabbar Khalifa, a member of al-Anbar county council, who was selected to represent people in the second case - al-Anbar Province, who argues that: “Some political parties and movements have been subject to a foreign agenda sponsored by regional countries that have interests in Iraq”.³

However, in contrast, a number of interviewees expressed positive views concerning the role of political parties in Iraq subsequent to 2003, and viewed the multiparty system and the parties in general as having a positive impact. The political advisor of the current Iraqi government, Bushra Al-Zuwayni, who was selected to represent the standpoint of the current Iraq government for the case study in Baghdad, commented:

¹ Amir, Hassan Fayad, interview on 23rd January 2012, Baghdad.
² Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, interview on 4th March 2012, Baghdad.
³ Nahla Jabbar Khalifa, interview on 21st February 2012, Al-Anbar
Yes, the political parties that were established after 2003 appear to be more acceptable, flexible and more open, contrary to the old opposing parties which were outside Iraq. Yes, those parties have a positive impact on the political scene, given the fact that those parties have a strong presence. The Sadr movement is a case in point that has 40 seats in the parliament and is in command of a wide base among the public. On the other hand, Al-Fadeela party got more acceptability as being a moderate, non-sectarian party. In other words, those parties have strong influence on the Iraqi public as well as the government and the state.4

Other participants argued that the phenomenon of the multiparty system in post-2003 Iraq has had both positive and negative impacts on the security situation in Iraq. Hamid Ali Salman Al-Kilabi, who was selected to present the National Alliance of the Iraqi tribes for the case study in Baghdad, criticised the views of some participants who put the blame on the existence of political parties for the deteriorating security situation in Iraq. His argument is as follows:

None of the political parties in Iraq are coherent, nor do they have a united political attitude. Some parties have strong support to the political process, which has a positive impact on the security situation in Iraq. On the other hand, other parties have joined forces with other political groups in their bid for power. In other words the political parties that have emerged after 2003 have contributed to the stability of the country even if it has not been achieved yet.5

With regards to Question 4 which addressed the reason for the increased migration after 2003, participants’ opinions varied and are presented as follows: Democratic Labour Party Leader Shakir Katab, selected to represent Sunni political parties in the case study in Baghdad, argued that the migration was due to security reasons. His opinion was that:

This matter can be attributed to loose, uncontrolled sectarian practice and the policy of retaliation practised by many of the dominating parties, in addition to the intervention of neighbouring countries in Iraqi internal affairs with, its negative impact on citizen’s security causing waves of mass migration.6

This view was supported by the Head of the Centre for International Studies at the University of Baghdad, Dr Nabil Mohamed Salim, who was selected to represent Sunni intellectual elites for the case study in Baghdad. The argument by Dr Salim was as follows:

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4 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
6 Shakir Katab, interview on 21st February 2012, Baghdad.
Political rather than humanitarian reasons have been behind the mass migration after 2003. In other words, a policy of political exclusion and the lax security arrangements have been the main cause behind the increasing waves of migration from Iraq, notably after 2003 when the government has been unable to provide protection to the people.\(^7\)

However, some attached blame to the defunct regime regarding its policies that disfavoured the people of Iraq before and after 2003. For instance, in an interview with an academic staff member at Baghdad University selected for representative for the case study in Baghdad, anonymous Respondent A\(^8\) suggested that:

Yes, great numbers of Iraqi people migrated to the neighbouring countries. Some people migrated due to humanitarian reasons, as they did not feel safe and secure. Others migrated due to political and security reasons such as the domination of religious parties and the associated militias with their negative impact on the realities of the Iraqi people.\(^8\)

However, other participants believe that the motives behind migration in Iraq could be political. This viewpoint was explained by Dr Salih Yasir, selected to represent members of the Communist Party in Iraq. He argued that:

Competition among political parties and the struggle for power have been one of the reasons why Iraqi citizen were forced to leave the country to seek asylum in neighbouring countries. Furthermore, the political forces have failed to settle their differences, and this has had a negative impact on the security situation. In addition, one of the most important reasons for migration is that the political parties and powers apply policies of political exclusion. Mass migration has taken place in the years 2005 and 2006 as they believe that Iraq is no longer safe for them. Most of the migrants are member of either the dissolved army or the Baath Party.\(^9\)

Yet, some are moderate in their views and admit that political reasons remain behind migration, but try at the same time to justify their migration. For example, the Head of the Centre for International and Strategic Studies at Nahrian University Dr Al-Mamouri Ali, selected for the case study in Baghdad stated that:

\(^7\) Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^8\) Respondent A8, interview with researcher on 20\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^9\) Salih Yasir, interview on 18\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad. (Also Arkan Khalaf Al-Tarmouz, Omer Hussein Gazal, Ismail Mohamed Al-Isawi, and Awad Mohamed Awad, case study 2, Fallujah City, and respondent A3, case study 1, Baghdad, who hold the same views. They were interviewed between 14\(^{th}\) and 19\(^{th}\) May, 2012.)
Yes, huge numbers of Iraqis have left the country for neighbouring countries due to either political or humanitarian reasons. Most migrants belong to the Baath Party and they could not stay in Iraq given the crimes they committed toward the Iraqi people.\footnote{Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, interviewed on 23\textsuperscript{rd} Feb 2012, Baghdad. (Also Sabar Alsaidi and Ahmed Kamal Ahmed who supported the viewpoint during an interview with the author between 1st and 11\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.)}

The head of the Association of Iraqi Teachers, who was selected to represent intellectual Shia cadres for the case study in Baghdad, Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, affirms that: “The problem does not lie in the political reasons as the political arena in Iraq has been tolerant to accommodate all political parties”.\footnote{Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, interview on 21\textsuperscript{st} April 2012, Baghdad.} This view has been supported by a representative from the Shia political and Islamic parties in Baghdad, Hassan Salman Al-Marae, who maintains that:

> Iraqi mass migration has not been due to political reasons, as the political arena has been open for all Iraqi people and no party or political movement has been excluded from joining the political process.\footnote{Hassan Salman Al-Marae, interview on 30\textsuperscript{th} April 2012, Baghdad.}

However, the Iraqi political activist Hana Adwar, who was selected to represent the Organisations of the Civil Society in Iraq in the case study in Baghdad, responded: “The problem lies in the laxity of the country’s security”.\footnote{Hana Adwar and, Gamal Hamid Al-Dailami, interview between 12\textsuperscript{th} March and 3\textsuperscript{rd} May 2012, Baghdad.} The same view is shared by Gamal Hamid Al-Dailami, selected to represent intellectual Sunni cadres in the case study in Fallujah City, and the President of the Organisation of Political Prisoners in Iraq, who was selected to represent the case study in Baghdad.\footnote{Respondent A2, interview on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2012, Baghdad. (Also Nahla Jabbar Kalifa case study 2, Anbar Province and Gamal Hamid Al-Dailami, case study 2, Fallujah City, both interviewed by the author between 3\textsuperscript{rd} May and 14\textsuperscript{th} May, Baghdad.)} However, in an interview with Iraqi refugees in Jordan, anonymous respondent A1 explained that:

> The deteriorating security situation in most of the regions has been the main reason behind the migration of Iraqi people to foreign countries. In addition, the sectarian scene has made things even worse. All those factors have been behind the mass migration of the Iraqi people to neighbouring countries, not to mention the policies of the occupation and its major role in the whole process”. He also added: “I fled to Jordan to save my family due to the inhuman militia crimes”.\footnote{Respondent A1, interview on 26th May 2012, Jordan.}
6.1.1.1 Summary of Interview Findings on Internal Factors

Thus, the findings from the interview sources suggest that lack of security and stability in Iraq after 2003 is associated with major internal factors embodied in the dysfunctional multiparty system. Furthermore, parties have continued to be disorganised due to the lack of laws for political parties. Right up to the present day, there is still disagreement among political forces and parties due to power-sharing and sectarianism, and because parties have adopted foreign agendas rather than national issues. Other factors can be classified as regional intervention, for instance, Iran’s support of some Shia political parties. However, another view is that the multiparty system in Iraq contributed to an improvement in the security and stability of the country, as political parties established after 2003 have positively impacted on the political processes since then. For example the Sadr movement has 40 seats in the Iraqi parliament and commands a wide power base on the ground. Nevertheless, a third view is that the multiparty system improved the security situation only slightly. The findings are discussed in detail below.

From the Iraqi elite point of view, we find that there were different reasons behind the phenomenon of Iraqis fleeing to neighbouring countries. Some of them are political, and are related to the existing political situation which is based on power-sharing, political exclusion and communal agendas, rather than accommodating the full Iraqi political spectrum. There are also security reasons, such as the growing violence among Sunni and Shia factions which coincided with the presence of US forces in the country. However, the majority of those who fled to neighbouring countries were former members of the Baath regime or government decision-makers. They had to flee as they were targeted by the new government forces and the armed militias. Also the Iranian intelligences deployed agents to eliminate them.\(^16\) This suggests that internal security factors were very much embedded in the political and sectarian issues. This view is supported elsewhere in official sources. For instance, a UNHCR report from 2007 noted that since April 2003, many Iraqis have fled Iraq due to the lack of security and wide-

spread sectarian conflict among Iraqi society. This resulted in assassinations, kidnappings, and the political displacement and deportation of people,\textsuperscript{17} which reflects some human rights issues as explained in the previous chapter. However, the situation escalated due to economic difficulties as the lack of jobs and the deterioration of services, coupled with the violence and sectarian tension, led to a large number of intellectuals, scientists and specialists leaving the country. In fact, four million Iraqis were internally and externally displaced.\textsuperscript{18} For instance, the UNHCR (2007) reported that approximately 2.8 million were internally displaced. The number of those who fled to neighbouring countries was as follows: Syria – 1 million, Jordan -750,000, Gulf States – 200,000, Iran - 54,000, Turkey - 10,000, Lebanon - 40,000. At the same time, about 6,000 fled to the US, 21,100 to Sweden, 52,900 to Germany, 22,300 to the UK, while Australia has hosted approximately 749 Iraqi refugees.\textsuperscript{19}

**Figure 6.1 Percentages of Iraqi Refugees Abroad**

![Displaced Iraqis around the world*](source)


6.1.2 External Factors (the Role of the US)

Given the fact that the US was in charge of security matters until its withdrawal at the end of 2011, it is clearly necessary to discuss the extent to which the US is believed by Iraqi elites to have contributed to the deterioration of security in Iraq. Questions 1 and 3 were used to analysis this point. During the interviews, opinions of the elite differed in relation to the US presence in the country and its impact on security

Question 3 was particularly used to assess the issue of how the US invasion caused weakness in security in terms of control of Iraq’s international borders. In an interview with the former military officer and Sunni representative for the case study in Fallujha City, Sadi Mohamed Awad, he expressed the view that: “The US intended to allow the influx of armed groups into the country to wreak havoc in Iraq regarding its security resources. The main purpose is that the US has the intention to move the battleground the US to Iraq”.20

In this regard, ex-Army Officer, Baraa Higgi Ismael, who was selected to represent the case study in Fallujah City, adds that: “The aim could go further than that as the US would open the boarders to facilitate the entry of arms and individuals from neighbouring countries into Iraq to become involved in terrorist acts and killing of the people”.21

Anonymous respondent A5, who was selected as a representative of the group of ambassadors in the previous regime shared the view that:

The US has deliberately left the Iraqi borders open to pave the way for neighbouring countries to meddle in Iraq’s affairs by supporting armed militias and by helping the occupation in its policies to wreak havoc in the security and economy of Iraq, not to mention the import of professional gangs and hired terrorist organisations to have a free hand in Iraq. Thus, the US troops should fully be held to account for the mess.22

The above views have been affirmed by Rufah Yasin Al-Gadi, a member of Anbar County Council, who asserted that: “Following the dissolution of the army by [Paul]

20 Sadi Mohamed Awad, interview on 19th May 2012, Fallujah

21 Baraa Higgi Ismael, interview on 18th May 2012, Fallujah.

22 Respondent A5, interview on 14th May 2012, Baghdad.
Bremer, a major security vacuum has been created culminating in the infiltration of militias supported by neighbouring countries through the borders”.  

A member of the Sadr bloc in the local government and representative of Shia political parties supportive of the political process, Al-Saeedi, maintained that:

The occupation forces in Iraq had made so many errors such as dissolving the Ministry of Defence …That decision had a negative impact on the security situation in Iraq featuring the opening of Iraqi borders and the infiltration of conflicting political and ideological agendas. In other words it could be said that the US forces had purposely opened Iraqi borders to serve their own interests within Iraq and abroad.

Question 1 in the interview was used to further address the stability of Iraqi security with reference to the US forces. In this regard, the participants had different views. For example, academician Abid Ali Al-Mamouri explained that:

On the contrary, US troops have failed to achieve security and stability, but instead those forces have created many security problems or even sectarian problems. This has been evident from the bombing of the two Imams in Samarra in 2006, the incident that initiated the sectarian conflict. The judgement is that the US could either be negligent or otherwise could be involved in the incident.

However, some went further to argue that the presence of US forces in Iraq constituted a major challenge to efforts aimed at re-establishing the Iraqi state. For instance, Hamid Ali Salman Al-Kilabi claimed that:

Until 2006, the presence of the US forces in Iraq had been indispensable for maintaining law and order. However, after 2006, the Iraqi elected government began to regain its activity and control in spreading security and this helped in supporting the political process. In other words, the government has played a positive role in fighting the militias. Thus the presence of the US in Iraq is no longer required; rather it has become a burden on the shoulders of the Iraqi people.

For his part Ahmed Kamal supported those viewpoint by maintaining that:

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23 Al-Gadi Rufah Yasin, an interview with researcher on 14th May 2012, Al-Anbar.

24 Sabbar Ali Mohamed Al-Saeedi, interview with researcher on 1st March 2012, Baghdad.


26 Hamid Ali Salman Al-Kilabi, interview on 1st March 2012, Baghdad.
The presence of the US forces constitutes part of the ongoing security problem, and withdrawal of US troops has become the preferred option of the Iraqi people. That is for the simple reason that the presence of the US forces has contributed to killings, the promotion of chaos and instability. The people should be the source of the real security and that security should come from within and not from abroad.\(^\text{27}\)

Bushra Al-Zuwayni, an ex-minister in the Maliki cabinet, selected to represent Shia political parties, agrees with the idea of withdrawal reasoning that:

> I think withdrawal. Why? Because the Iraqi people do not trust the US forces. Therefore, the mistrust between the two sides, at least on the part of most of the Iraqi people, should create security problems for the Americans even though they assisted in toppling the regime. Most of the security violations of the Iraqis are attributed to the Americans, and, consequently, withdrawal is the best option.\(^\text{28}\)

This view has also been endorsed by Hana Adwar, the President of the Organisations of the Civil Society in Iraq and Director of Al-Amal Association, by stating that:

> The US troops have caused great damage to the defence system and security of the state. Thus, the US troops have made no contribution to the reconstruction of the state, but on the contrary they have managed to increase sectarian unrest among the people of Iraq. For that reason, withdrawal is the best option for the Iraqi people.\(^\text{29}\)

Some believe that the security situation in Iraq has nothing to do with the US per se, but rather is caused by a number of factors. The Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at Al-Nahrain University, Dr, Amir Hassan Fayad, is among those who hold this opinion. He argues that:

> The security situation in Iraq has two dimensions: the positive dimension featuring the change that has taken place in Iraq since 2003 and the negative dimension featuring the damage that has taken place following the change with its negative impact on the security situation. In this regard, before 2003 Iraq was labelled as being a place where freedoms are either restricted or non-existent, while after 2003 Iraq is labelled as a place where freedoms are greatly uncontrolled. Between those two states of restricted and uncontrolled freedoms, the security situation is surely unstable with or without the existence of foreign forces. In short, the security situation is not related to the existence or the

\(^{27}\) Ahmed Kamal Ahmed, interview on 11\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{28}\) Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29\(^{th}\) April 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{29}\) Hana Adwar, interview on, 12\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.
withdrawal of US forces as the security is still unstable in spite of the US withdrawal.\textsuperscript{30}

This viewpoint seems to be consistent with the views of Yasir Salih, who was selected to represent the Communist Party, and who argues that:

In practice nothing links the US presence to the security situation in Iraq. For example, despite the nine-year presence of the US in Iraq, the security situation remained fragile as Al-Qaeda has been active in Iraq with the escalating violence and the terrorists having the upper hand. On the other hand, the presence of more than half a million American troops in Iraq failed to reverse the security situation for the better. Then at the beginning of the US withdrawal, the number of troops was reduced to a hundred thousand, and yet the security situation improved slightly. The security situation is related to the will of the Iraqis through the existence of associations based on efficiency and professionalism. Thus, there is no direct relation between the occupation and the instability of the security situation. The US forces entered Iraq not to benefit the Iraqis but to implement a project, and if their interests conflict with the will of the Iraqis, the US forces will impose their agenda.\textsuperscript{31}

A member of Baghdad Province Council, who was selected to represent the perspective of local government for the case study in Baghdad, explained that:

Security is a function of specific elements, and those elements are non-existent in Iraq today. In addition, the security matter has nothing to do with the presence or non-presence of the Americans in Iraq. In other words, the security matter has a direct link with many aspects such as the good state of the economy, low unemployment, and high standard of living. Failure to provide such elements will have a negative impact on the security situation. On another level, security requires the existence of political agreement among the political parties. The third element is the existence of an efficient investigation association that plays a major role in security. Although the US had the investigation association, it was not able to spread security in Iraq.\textsuperscript{32}

However, an ex-army general Mohamed, Sadi Awad, maintains that:

Both the presence and withdrawal of the US troops from Iraq have a negative impact. On the one hand, the presence of the US troops motivates the resistance and other armed groups to target those troops, a matter that places the innocent people of Iraq at risk. But, in the meantime, the withdrawal of the US troops leaves a security vacuum only to be filled by sectarian groups that become involved in random killings in retaliation from one another.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{30} Amir Hassan Fayad, interview on 23\textsuperscript{rd} February 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{31} Salih Yasir, interview on 18\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{32} Ali Al-Attar, interview on 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{33} Sadi Awad Mohamed, interview on 17\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Fallujah.
That viewpoint seems to be consistent with the views of Yasin Kamar Hilal, who commented: “both options are bad. The presence of the occupation and its withdrawal contribute to political instability”.

6.1.2.1 Summary of Interview Findings on External Factors

The interview responses of the elite concerning the influence of the US in the deterioration of security in Iraq showed that there was almost consensus that the presence of US troops in Iraq has had a negative impact. The most prevalent view is that the US had to withdraw from Iraq to avoid interference or be ascribed blame for the growing fracas in the country. In this regard two views exist. The first view is that the security matter in Iraq has nothing to do with the US withdrawal by arguing that violence, instability in matters of security, and chaos were exacerbated while the US was present in Iraq. The second view is that the US had sown the seeds of division among the Iraqi people, and that its departure would actually speed up the healing of divisions among Iraqis. A number of important representatives believe that the US deliberately ignored security to destroy unity in Iraq, while others believed that the lack of security was simply a mistake that allowed violent politics to develop.

6.2 Questionnaire Findings: Iraqi Mass Opinion

The aim of this section is to understand the perceptions of the general public as to the extent to which the security situation in Iraq is linked to actions by Iraqi governments and the US. To this end, the analysis is based on three questions. Questions 2 and 12 relate to the role Iraqis played in destabilising security in the country, which are considered as internal factors. Question 1 relates to whether the US withdrawal from Iraq led to the weakening of Iraq’s security, which is viewed as an external factor. Question 2 addresses whether the appearance of political parties after 2003 improved security and assured stability in Iraq. Question 12 addresses how the Iraqi security forces have been able to protect the country from internal and external dangers, and

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34 Yasin Kamar Hilal, interview on 26th April 2012, Baghdad.
finally, question 1 addresses whether the withdrawal of the US from Iraq led to a weakening of security.

The following response options were given to the questions:

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = slightly disagree
4 = neutral
5 = strongly agree
6 = agree
7 = weakly agree
9 = missing questions.

**Question 2** (Internal Factor – Did the appearance of political parties after 2003 improve security and assure stability?)

**Table 6.1 Perceptions of Whether the Appearance of Political Parties after 2003 Improve Security and Assure Stability**

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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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</table>
A very high proportion (91%) disagreed with the notion that the appearance of political parties after 2003 improved security and assured stability in the country, while just 1.5 agreed, and 6.2 remained neutral. The smallest percentage (0.8%) did not answer this question.

The following comments were made via the opened ended questions at the end of the questionnaires:

After 2003, Iraq was an occupied country and the majority of political parties that gained power ignored the needs of the Iraqi people, and what was going on in Iraq. This was evident from its failure to manage and control the country in a democratic way.

Another believed that: “The political parties contributed in disrupting security and the political atmosphere in Iraq and in fuelling conflicts which led to a deteriorating security situation”.

A very low proportion of respondents (1.5%) expressed their confidence in the role of political parties, while 6.2% were neutral on the question. The finding here is that there is distrust of Iraq political parties, which extends across the religious and ethnic divide. This is discussed later in the summary of both interview and questionnaire findings.
**Question 12** (Internal Factors – Are Iraqi security services protecting the country from internal and external dangers?)

**Table 6.2 Perceptions of Whether Iraqi Security Services Protecting the Country from Internal and External Dangers.**

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<td>14.6</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</table>

**Figure 6.3 Perceptions of Whether Iraqi Security Services Protect the Country from Internal and External Dangers.**
The responses to Question 12 showed that more than half of participants (62.3%) agreed that the Iraqi security forces failed to protect the country; 16.2% were neutral on the question; and 21.5% disagreed that the security forces failed to protect the country. Moreover, the questionnaire data revealed that as late as 2012, there was agreement across religious, geographic and ethnic groups that the security forces had failed in Iraq.

**Question 1** (External Factors – Did the US withdrawal from Iraq lead to the weakening of security?)

**Table 6.3 Perception of Whether the United States’ Withdrawal from Iraq Lead to the Weakening of Security.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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**Figure 6.4 Perceptions of Whether the US Withdrawal from Iraq Lead to the Weakening of Security.**
The response to Question 1, regarding whether American withdrawal from Iraq led to a deterioration of the security situation in Iraq indicated that 68.4% of the participants disagreed with the statement; while 17% of them agreed, and the rest (13.1%) were neutral. The smallest percentage (0.8%) did not answer this question.

The response to Question 1, in terms of the geographical location of the participants regarding whether participants believe that American withdrawal from Iraq led to a deterioration of the security situation or vice versa.

Table 6.4 City variable * Did the United States’ Withdrawal from Iraq Lead to the Weakening of Security?

<table>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>7</td>
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Count

<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
Figure 6.5 Responses to Whether Withdrawal of US Forces Led to Weakening of Security (Baghdad)

- Baghdad: 73% disagree, 18% agree, 9% neutral

Figure 6.6 Response to Whether Withdrawal of US Forces Led to Weakening of Security (Fallujah)

- Fallujah: 62% disagree, 19% neutral, 19% agree

Figure 6.7 Response to Whether Withdrawal of US Forces Led to Weakening of Security (Al-Anbar)

- Al-Anbar: 69% disagree, 16% agree, 15% neutral
The analysis of questionnaire findings also shows that in Baghdad, where the majority of the population are Shia, there were those who considered the change in the country after 2003 to be due to the policies’ of defunct regime. More than half of the participants from Baghdad (73%) disagreed with the statement that ‘US forces’ withdrawal led to the deterioration of the security situation in Iraq’. The same could be said about Fallujah city, as the findings show that the majority (62%) of respondents disagree with the statement.

For the sake of comparison, in Anbar Province, the majority (69%) showed resistance to the US troops’ presence in the country from the first day of the war. The majority of the population of Anbar are Arab Sunnis, while the population of Baghdad consists of three major groups: Sunnis, Shias and Kurds.

Given that the higher percentage of respondents believed that US withdrawal contributes nothing to the security of Iraq, there was a general consensus among Iraqis across ethnic and sectarian lines that they have less confidence in the US troops in Iraq since 2003 onward.

6.3 Discussion of Interview and Questionnaire Findings

This section has analysed what the data from interviews and questionnaires reveal in relation to the second research question concerning the extent to which the situation in Iraq is stable, and whether there is a need for regional intervention. The data analysis showed that several factors exacerbated the security situation in the country post-2003.

The presence of US troops in Iraq and internal factors such as the political parties and Iraqi security forces all contributed to the weakening of Iraq’s security system, according to evidence from the interviews and questionnaires. Moreover, the findings of the study (both interviews and questionnaires) show a massive contrast with the claim by George W Bush before the outbreak of war on Iraq that: “We have no ambition in

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Iraq except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people”.

On this point, Yaroslave, argues that the US presence in the country after 2003 coincided with a lack of law which led to disorder and chaos in most Iraqi regions. Furthermore, the looters wreaked havoc in the Iraqi institutions. Yaroslave also added that looting was permitted by the US authorities under the pretext that it enabled it to undermine the previous regime and also US forces had not yet received orders to prevent the looters. Agreement is indicated by the questionnaire data, across Iraqi public opinion, that the presence of US forces in the country has undermined the security situation, while the findings of the interview questions reveal diverse opinions among the participants. It is nevertheless clear that most Iraqis are of the opinion that US troops in Iraq have been a cause for worry and fear rather than a source of stability and security. This confirms the findings of the Hammurabi survey, (see Chapter Two).

The most prevalent view from the interviews and questionnaires was that the political parties contributed towards instability because of sectarianism, power-sharing and the foreign policy/agenda of the US to create sectarian division which would enable them to control the political system in the country. In other words, the political parties were established upon religious and sectarian affiliations rather than national identity, and also were not regulated by Iraqi law. Moreover, there were concerns that foreign interference worsened the divisions and directed the focus away from national identity, which heightened the security problems. This supports the views of Katzman, who blames the security deterioration in Iraq on Iran. He argues that Iran took advantage of the situation after 2003 by meddling in Iraqi domestic affairs.


39 Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, “Iraqi opinion poll regarding the presence of US forces in the country”, (Iraq: Baghdad, Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic studies, 2011), 19-21 (in Arabic).


Such regional factors are a strong element in the security status of the country. Cordesman and Khazai argue that Iran attempted to influence and use Shia Islamic groups, such as the Islamic Supreme Council (SIC) and the Da'wa Islamic Party, by supplying them with weapons and funding. As mentioned earlier, Iran’s intelligence agencies also targeted other components of the Iraqi society, in particular Sunni Arabs in Baghdad and its suburbs. A study conducted by the Iraqi Centre for Strategic Studies in 2007, titled ‘Reasons for Violence and Security Destabilization’ shows that 44% of participants agreed that the occupation and its consequences were the primary cause of sectarian tension, which provoked violence among the main factions of Iraqi society, while 22% of the participants expressed the view that armed groups, connected to some political parties, were another cause of sectarian violence. A further 12% of participants stated that sectarian extremism in Iraqi society played a major role in fuelling sectarian violence, while 14% asserted that some political and religious leaders, who shaped the political process, are responsible for the violence and this destabilised security.

The Government’s inability to control different sects was also noted by participants; rather than bringing harmony the Government’s policies encouraged antipathy among Shias, Sunnis and Kurds. Another point raised by participants was that domestic political parties were not regulated properly and arose from militias based on sectarian division rather than natural societal evolution. The questionnaire revealed that the vast majority (91%) of participants agreed that the political parties contributed to security

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45 Hafez, “Political Violence in Iraq”, p. 113-122.

46 ibid. p. 115-121.

47 ibid. p. 113-122.
problems; a very low proportion (1.5%) expressed confidence in the role of the political parties. This is an important indicator that distrust in Iraqi political parties extends across the religious and ethnic divide.

Regarding the flight of many Iraqis to neighbouring countries, the interview participants, consistent with Atwan’s explanation, believe that a powerful combination of internal insecurity and political violence led to mass displacement. The main motivations included the policy of political exclusion, differences among the political forces, lax security and sectarian practices, and particularly, the emergence of militias after 2004, which significantly contributed towards the deterioration security situation in the country by targeting people from specific factions. The government was seen by the participants as irresponsible for having turned a blind eye to such internal problems. This created a humanitarian catastrophe as massive numbers of Iraqis left their homes. Otterman et al. observe that, in nearly seven years of US occupation, 2.2 million Iraqis were displaced from their homes and 2.7 million sought refuge in neighbouring countries. Many Baathists left, but so did many other groups. Noticeably, northern Iraq (the Kurdish Regional Government) did not see mass migration from the region; it saw migration into it. More than one and a half million have been killed either by US war crimes or by Sunni and Shia militias, since 2003. Similarly, Al-Qaeda militants

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51 Cordesman and Khazai, “Patterns of Violence in Iraq”, p. 7


53 E. Black, “ten years after Iraq War: What do we have to show for it”, MINPOST- Donate Online, 3rd March 2013, http://www.minnpost.com/eric-black-ink/2013/03/10-years-after-iraq-war-what-do-we-have-show-it, accessed 17th May 2014. Also: P. Williams, “Criminals, Militias, and Insurgents:
escalated the situation through sectarian violence, targeted towards Shia elites and religious figures, while generally, fighting among militias and armed groups (including Al Qaeda) complicated the security situation.\footnote{55} Admittedly, the Iraq study group report (2006) states that “\textit{The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating}”.\footnote{56} On this point, a large and growing body of literature has investigated the worsening security situation in Iraq after 2003 (see Chapter Two).  

Consensus was found between the elite and the general public that the withdrawal of the US from Iraq has not posed any challenges to the security situation; however, their presence in Iraq had originally worsened it. This view suggests that the US sowed the seeds of division among the Iraqi people, and that its departure would speed up the healing of these fissures. Moreover, the elites’ interview responses suggest that the US government turned a blind eye to the permeability of Iraq’s borders and the implications of the influx of foreign armed groups. This paved the way for neighbouring countries, such Iran and Syria, to meddle in Iraqi domestic affairs. The US command allegedly wanted to gather terrorists from neighbouring countries and drive them into Iraq to destabilise the political landscape. Meanwhile, other participants revealed that the dissolution of the Iraqi army and security forces by Paul Bremer was a major mistake that caused a security vacuum and deterioration in the security situation of post-Saddam Iraq. Indeed, these interview findings are in line with Cordesman, who states that one of the reasons behind the destabilisation of Iraq is the inadequacy of the security forces, with a lack of training, experience, weapons and sufficient numbers.\footnote{57} The resulting Iraqi security forces were insufficient in number and training to control and combat the

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
armed groups who invaded from neighbouring countries due to the relaxed border control by the US army.58

A report issued by Baker and Hamilton in 2006 suggests that the US government ought to launch talks with Iran and Syria regarding the influx of militias and terrorists into Iraq and to provide acceptable diplomatic solutions in this regard.59 Diamond argues that the mistakes on the part of the overconfident Bush administration and his neo-conservative advisors were partly to blame for the post-war problems in Iraq. One mistake was that they sent too few troops to Iraq, while those responsible for the decisions were warned before the war that two to three times this number would be required for post-war restoration, security and peace in Iraq.60

The inability of the security forces to protect the people in Iraq post-2003 was attributed by the majority of the participants to a number of internal and regional factors. These findings support the questionnaire findings, wherein most participants affirmed the failure of the security forces to protect the country. The internal factors concern the influx of militias into security forces. Enrolment in these forces was based on sharing a sectarian agenda rather than competence and qualification, not to mention the inadequacy of their training and equipment. The other factors are regional interventions, such as Iran’s role in supporting some Shia political parties’ factions at the expense of other political forces.

A survey study conducted by the Iraqi Centre for Strategic Studies in 2007, titled ‘Reasons for Violence and Security Destabilization’ showed that: 44% of participants agreed that the occupation and its consequences were the primary cause of sectarian tension which led to violence among the main components of Iraqi society.61 Therefore,


61 Hafez “Political Violence in Iraq.”, p. 115-121.
security was destabilised as a result of the American occupation. The results of this study concur with and support the above view that the US occupation of Iraq had had serious consequences for the well-being of Iraqis.

These are really interesting findings – some Iraqis blame the US for everything and think the US is behind all the instability in Iraq. Importantly, many respondents saw the lack of security as part of a US plan rather than US stupidity. This shows a level of 1] political paranoia on the part of some Iraqi elite and linked to this 2] a lack of independent political thinking – that everything is part of a US plan. The others saw the lack of security as a result of mistakes made by the US.

### 6.4 Summary

This chapter dealt with the opinions of the Iraqi elite and the public regarding the security situation in Iraq after the 2003 US invasion. The analysis showed that, from an Iraqi perspective, the security deterioration in Iraq was caused by three main factors: the US role, the role of former Iraqi governments and the role of neighbouring countries. Although the US government contributed by toppling the dictatorial regime and liberating the Iraqi people, it could be argued that US troops were responsible for the subsequent deterioration in security. The data also showed that Iraqi governments have significantly contributed to the deterioration of the security situation in Iraq, as is evident through the inability of security forces to protect the Iraqi people after 2003, which could be attributed to a number of internal and regional factors. This was also found in the questionnaire responses of the public. Furthermore, the data showed that political parties contributed to the instability through sectarianism and power-sharing and that the foreign policy/agenda of the US was to create sectarian division which would enable them to control the political system of the country. A significant finding that emerged from the analysis of the questionnaire and interview data is the participants’ attribution of the blame for the Iraqi security situation to Iran, which was accused of providing support to some Shia armed groups at the expense of others in order to maintain their interests in the country. This finding is consistent with the view

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62 ibid. p. 112-119
of Katzman that the regional powers were behind the worsening security situation in Iraq. Most significantly, Iran has been interfering in Iraqi affairs to enhance its leverage.

Notably, the multiparty system in Iraq is believed by participants to have contributed to the improvement in security and stability, as political parties established after 2003 have positively impacted on political processes. This is evident in the strong presence of parties, for example the Sadr movement has 40 seats in the Iraqi parliament and commands a wide power base. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the multiparty system improved the security situation only slightly.

More important to some participants than the security situation was the economic position of the country, which is considered in the following chapter.
Chapter Seven
ECONOMY

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of research conducted in Iraq, focusing on post-2003 Iraqi perceptions of the economic situation. As with previous chapters, the economy is analysed from two perspectives; first with regards to the internal factor, that is the role of successive Iraqi governments; and secondly, through external factors such as the viewpoints of Iraqis regarding the impact of the US presence in the country after 2003.

7.1 Interview Findings: Iraqi Elite Opinion

7.1.1 Internal Factors (the Role of Iraqi Governments)

This section presents the interview data collected from fieldwork in Baghdad, Al-Anbar province and Fallujah City. The aim is to present Iraqi elite opinion in order to gain a better understanding of Iraqi perceptions of the economic situation in Iraq from 2003 onwards.

Question 16 seeks to address the extent to which unemployment, poverty and low living standards prevailed in Iraq after 2003. The data obtained during the interview revealed a range of opinions on the subject, which are discussed below.

Bushra Al-Zuwayni, a former minister in the Maliki cabinet, selected to represent Shia political parties, argued that:

Aspects of spending are inconsistent with Iraqi economic resources; despite the economic development and the increase per capita as the GDP would suggest, economic progress is needed to match the wealth of the state. As for unemployment, the records available to me put it at 10 – 15%. However, taking the circumstances of Iraq into account that percentage is reasonable.¹

¹ Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
However, the participants have different views on the matter. The President of the Iraqi Teachers Organisation, Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, explained to the researcher his view that:

A deliberately made up economic problem is non-existent and yet the problem is the disproportion between the huge oil resources and the per capita income in Iraq. The problem affects all the society and the government due to the occupation and its policies. However, a member of Baghdad County Council, Hassan Falahi Hussein, emphasized that “a state of inconsistency exists between the levels of poverty and the huge oil resources of Iraq. Yet, the economic transformation has taken place in Iraq after 2003.

In another interview an economist at Al-Nahrain University, Hajeer Adnan Amin, asserted that:

The standard of living is based on the oil-dependent state, so the government and the occupation policies have been the main problem. Yet, regarding the standard of living it has definitely been better than prior to 2003. For example, university graduates have enjoyed huge wage increases contributing to a great improvement in the standard of living of that group.

This viewpoint has also been endorsed by Hana Adwar, the President of the Organisations of the Civil Society in Iraq, who emphasized that:

It is true that it is completely inconsistent. Thus, despite the fact that Iraq is considered one of the richest countries, yet a quarter of its population is living below the poverty line. That reality could be an extension of the legacy of the previous decades. Also, the progress of the Iraqi economy has been greatly affected by the state of insecurity besetting the country, not to mention the government’s failure to adopt a clear cut economic policy, and again the main problem comes from the occupation and its policies.

Some believe that the former and current Iraqi governments have been incompetent in terms of management of Iraqi resources. Among those that offer this opinion is the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party in Iraq, Shakir Katab, who believes that:

The economic condition in Iraq is inconsistent with state resources, and that has been due to the rampant financial and administrative corruption including the

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2 Hassan Falahi Hussein, interview on 1st March 2012, Baghdad.
3 Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, interview on 21st April 2012, Baghdad.
4 Hajeer Adnan Amin, interview on 17th March 2012, Bagdad.
5 Hana Adwar, interview on 12th March 2012, Baghdad.
squandering of public money, and that a national strategy for the progress of Iraq is non-existent.\(^6\)

This view is supported by the Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at Al-Nahrian University, Abid Ali Al-Mamouri. His view was that:

It is shameful that there has been a significant deterioration featuring all indicators of sustainable development from the standard of living to the rising unemployment and poverty levels leading to the emergence of what is known as disguised poverty.\(^7\)

This view is also supported by the head of the Centre for International Studies at the University of Baghdad, Salim Nabil Mohamed. He explained that:

It is certainly inconsistent with the capabilities and resources of Iraq. The problem lies with political, financial and administrative corruption not to mention mismanagement in the fair distribution of resources, and the huge impact and the implications caused by the US occupation and its policies, measures and strategies in Iraq.\(^8\)

Interviewee A5 (anonymous), who was selected as representative of the group of ambassadors from the previous regime, refers to some of the statistics published by the media which suggests that:

Around seven million Iraqis are living below the poverty line, and that unemployment has been widespread among university graduates. Indeed, the unemployment and poverty gap has been widened by the occupation increasing the number of homeless. Eventually, both the government and the occupation should jointly share responsibility as long as they have no special programme to sort out the problem. In fact, the relevant government institutions and the Iraqi parliament have ignored the problem, and instead, focussed on their privileges and self-interests.\(^9\)

This view is confirmed by Fahmi Awad Al-Hardan, selected to represent the views of local government in Anbar, who reiterates the same views, saying: “It is inconsistent, and the problem lies with the government and the legacy of the occupation”.\(^10\)

\(^6\) Shakir Kattab, interview on 21\(^{st}\) February 2012, Baghdad.
\(^7\) Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, interview, Baghdad.
\(^8\) Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.
\(^9\) Respondent A5, interview on 14\(^{th}\) May 2012, Baghdad.
\(^10\) Fahmi Awad Al-Hardan, interview on 14\(^{th}\) May 2012, Baghdad.
However, in an interview with county council member, a representative of the Communist Party in Iraq, Salih Yasir, emphasized that:

A problem exists within the Iraqi economy as the figures are appalling in relation to the aggravating phenomenon of poverty and unemployment in Iraq following the occupation. Around 40% of the youths are jobless which means the labour force, which could be useful in many areas, has been frozen. Despite the huge oil revenues, i.e. nearly US$ 100 billion, there are around eight million Iraqis living below the poverty line. The economy is mainly oil-dependent; according to UN statistics, oil revenue constitutes around 92% of the state budget, with the remaining economic activity comprising a service-economy, weighted more towards services such as transportation and health, which is an inappropriate sign in the long-term.11

Others demonstrate that the problem lies with the fact that the government treats the people according to their partisan orientation which is adding a political dimension to the problem. In this regard, a member of academic staff at the University of Anbar, Ismail Mohamed Al-Isawi, argued that: “The standards of living are inconsistent with the economic capabilities of Iraq, and that the Iraqi government is the main problem. In other words, the reasons are purely political”.12 That opinion has also been consistent with the views of the participant, Sadi Awad Mohamed, who highlighted that:

The problem is basically political as the indicators are inconsistent given that Iraq is one of the richest countries in the Middle East with regard to its huge oil reserves and mineral resources, and yet the reality is that a large sector of the population in Iraq is living below the poverty line, and that what is known as the government of the Green Zone has been the main problem.13

7.1.1.1 Summary of Interview Findings on Internal Factors

Research findings regarding the role of internal factors in Iraq’s economy post-2003 have revealed different opinions. The majority of respondents interviewed claimed that the standard of living was inconsistent with the rich resources of the country. For instance, a number of interviewees suggested that the economic problem is inherent in the government as well as society due to widespread financial and administrative

11 Salih Yasir, interview on 18th March 2012, Bagdad.

12 Ismail Mohamed Al-Isawi, interview with Researcher on 14th May 2012, Anbar.

13 Sadi Awad Mohamed, interview on 19th May 2012, Fallujah.
corruption within state institutions, the lack of long-term national strategic planning, and misappropriation of public funds. Furthermore, the problem could also be traced to political factors linked to the establishment of an elected Iraqi government in 2005, including the nature and configuration of such a government. Others have also attributed the economic deterioration to the Iraqi government and the occupation. This is because the Iraqi government were not able to provide meaningful solutions to the prevailing economic crisis. Besides, the government in its handling of different segments of society paid attention to political rather than national affiliations, which in turn reflects the political dimension to the problem. In keeping with this, one participant, Al-Isawi, argued that: “The standards of living are inconsistent with the economic capabilities of Iraq and this problem is fostered by the Iraqi government”. Despite Iraq’s huge resources being inconsistent with the standards of living, the country has witnessed economic reforms and seen an increase in per capita income as indexed by the GDP. Also, the rate of unemployment has fallen between 10-15%, which is considered reasonable compared to the indicators used prior to 2003. Indeed, the economic situation in the country could be said to be improving rather than deteriorating. Very few respondents suggested that the problem is inherent within the Iraqi economy. They argued that the government failed to improve the economic situation despite huge oil revenues. This explains the rise in the level of unemployment in Iraq after 2003, with approximately eight million Iraqis classified as living below the poverty line. A small number of respondents argued that since 2003, Iraq has seen a decrease in different indices of economic development and this has led to the emergence of a new form of poverty, otherwise known as “disguised poverty”.

7.1.2 External Factors (the Role of the US)

The above section described the range of opinions of Iraqis on general economic questions. In this section, Iraqi perceptions of the US role in shaping the post-war Iraq economy are discussed.

During the interviews opinions differed in relation to the contribution of the US presence to Iraq’s economic situation. In assessing Iraqi opinion on this, it is also

important to explore opinion on another question, the role of oil in the US decision to invade Iraq.

There is a widespread belief amongst interviewees that access to oil was the main aim of the occupation of Iraq. That opinion was expressed by a representative of the old regime, respondent A5 (anonymous), who claims that:

Oil was behind the occupation of Iraq. It is ridiculous to overlook the economic aspect given its role in international conflicts and the planning of international strategies. On the other hand, the Western and American media ignored the religious motives behind the occupation of Iraq.\(^\text{15}\)

One of the proponents of that standpoint is Salim Nabil Mohamed, who argues that:

The oil and major oil companies have always been among the reasons behind US intervention in many countries around the world, including Iraq. Even though the US has withdrawn its troops from Iraq, its oil companies have remained behind to deplete its oil resources whether directly or indirectly.\(^\text{16}\)

Al Marae similarly argues:

Yes, oil is considered one of the main reasons behind the intentions of the US, which is seeking ways of securing its economic interests in Iraq, as those interests have been blocked by the past regime. Day-to-day, Iraq has become an open market for the American interest as has been indicated by the concessions given to the American companies for oil exploration in Iraq. As a matter of fact, Iraqi oil is making a major contribution to the US economy.\(^\text{17}\)

Another viewpoint is that the importance of oil should be considered secondary to the security of the US and Israel. In this regard Al-Mamouri points out that:

Oil should come second to the security of Israel in the list with regard to the aims associated with the US occupation of Iraq. Through oil the US could dominate the world so as to keep control of the rising international powers.\(^\text{18}\)

Al-Barzingi agrees with that line of thought stating:

Oil was not a main factor for the US invasion of Iraq, as the US has been and still is in control of the oil. That has been evident from low oil prices during the

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\(^{15}\) Respondent A5, interview on 14\(^\text{th}\) May 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{16}\) Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4\(^\text{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{17}\) Hussein Suleiman Al-Marae, interview with Researcher, Baghdad.

\(^{18}\) Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, interview on 23\(^\text{rd}\) February 2012, Bagdad.
past regime ranging from US$ 2.00-8.00. Actually, US companies have been non-existent in oil-contracts, so that oil has been an important factor regarding the US campaign in Iraq, but can be described as one of a number of important factors overlapping upon one another.\textsuperscript{19}

That view is also endorsed by Respondent A8, who suggests that:

Oil was not the main factor behind the US occupation of Iraq, but rather a number of important factors overlapped one another including the US intention to restructure its policies in the Middle East and ensure the US hegemony over the region in the long run.\textsuperscript{20}

According to a sample featuring the Iraqi Academics in Amman as represented by Hussein; “oil is considered one of several important overlapping factors that motivated the US occupation of Iraq”.\textsuperscript{21}

A third trend denies any direct link between oil and the occupation of Iraq. In this respect Azhar Al-Shaykhali argues that:

The occupation process has been associated with aims greater than oil. For that reason, the US did not invade Iraq to save the country from the dictatorship, but came to Iraq in pursuit of aims and objectives associated with its interests in the Middle Eastern region in general and Iraq in particular. That has been evident from the measures and pledges that have been made by the US to the government of Iraq to ensure its interests in the long-run, including the security and economic agreement to ensure its presence and the sustainability of interests.\textsuperscript{22}

Yasir agrees with this, saying: “the US has come to Iraq to sort out a number of unresolved equations such as the security of Israel and targeting Iraqi society, so oil has not been the only factor behind the invasion”.\textsuperscript{23} However, Al-Gorashi, has a different view, suggesting that:

The US is not concerned about Iraqi oil, but is rather concerned about Iraqi politics, by dominating Iraq as an initial step to dominating the region. By doing

\textsuperscript{19} Iman Jawad Al-Barzangi, interview on 4\textsuperscript{th} March, 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{20} Respondent A8, interview on 20\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{21} Taha Ali Hussein, interview on 25\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Jordan-Amman.

\textsuperscript{22} Azhar Al-Shaykhali, interview on 7\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{23} Salih Yasir, interview on 18\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.
so the US is motivated by fears of Russian expansion in the region. The oil is not significantly important in the invasion of Iraq by the USA.\textsuperscript{24}

However, participants such as Baraa, explained that: \textit{“The war on Iraq is a war against Islam”}.\textsuperscript{25}

Question 15 was designed to address the issue of whether vandalism of Iraqi infrastructure was on the agenda of the American government to achieve their economic goals.

One opinion perceives the US as being the main reason behind Iraq’s economic problems. The holders of this view believe that the US as the occupier of Iraq should bear the responsibility regardless of whether the destruction of the economy was deliberate or not. Kattab, who is of this opinion believes that the US has deliberately contributed to the destruction of the economy in Iraq. He states that:

\begin{quote}
Yes, the US raised the slogan of “constructive disorder” to achieve that goal. This has been realized through destroying the economic infrastructure in Iraq so as to render the economy less active and make it dependent on foreign aid, particularly from the US.\textsuperscript{26}
\end{quote}

This viewpoint is supported by Al-Mamouri, who says:

\begin{quote}
Yes, by preplanning to destroy Iraq to make it a mere oil-dependent state. That was evident from the fact that even the agricultural sector, which constituted between 15\% and 45\% during the period from 1991 to 2003, shrank to less than 2\% during the occupation period. Thus it could be concluded that the US intentionally worked towards the destruction of the economic infrastructure in Iraq.\textsuperscript{27}
\end{quote}

Another view, presented by Al-Masari, explains that:

\begin{quote}
The US war on Iraq did not target the regime alone, but also targeted the infrastructure to the extent that it made successive governments after 2003 incapable of protecting the economic infrastructure.\textsuperscript{28}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{24} Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, interview on 21\textsuperscript{st} April 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{25} Higgi Ismael Baraa, interview on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Fallujah.

\textsuperscript{26} Shakir Kattab, interview on 21\textsuperscript{st} February 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{27} Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, interview on 23\textsuperscript{rd} February, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{28} Aisha Al-Masari, interview on 7\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.
The same views are held by Salim, who emphasized: “that is absolutely right, otherwise how can random dismantling of state institutions in Iraq by the US be justified”.\(^\text{29}\)

Mohamed, a representative of local government in Fallujah, explained that he had “been an eyewitness to how US troops have allowed the burning of all state institutions in Iraq by launching the expression “Ali Baba”.\(^\text{30}\) Al-Kilabi goes further stating that: “The Ministry of Oil has been the only exception. That has been for the simple reason that the Oil Ministry kept important documents featuring Western oil companies that have concessions for oil exploration in that country”.\(^\text{31}\)

Some believe that the US encouraged corruption and mismanagement in Iraq to secure its presence without wide opposition. In this respect, Respondent A8, points out that

> Following the invasion, the US encouraged operations involving robbery in Iraq to achieve its own interests. To reach that end, the US allowed gangs and mafia networks to contribute to the destruction of the economic infrastructure in Iraq.\(^\text{32}\)

By contrast, there is another point of view that does not perceive the US as being responsible for the economic problems that have developed. In an interview with the President of the Iraqi Teachers’ Organisation, Al-Gorashi, says that: “It is not true that the US has failed to provide protection to the state institutions in Iraq as has been alleged by some, as that would be against the US’s interests and would not serve its objective in Iraq”.\(^\text{33}\)

This view is supported by Hussein, a member of Baghdad Province Council, who argues that

> It would be impossible for the US to have done that as it would contradict its own interests, by destroying the state institutions in Iraq; the US has also greatly contributed towards the destruction of the economic infrastructure. It could be argued that the terrorist activities had partially contributed to destroying the infrastructure, given that some would suspect there to have been secret links

\(^\text{29}\) Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4\(^{\text{th}}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^\text{30}\) Ahmed Raja Mohamed, interview on 17\(^{\text{th}}\) May 2012, Fallujah.

\(^\text{31}\) Hamid Ali Salman Al-Kilabi, interview on 1\(^{\text{st}}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^\text{32}\) Respondent A8, interview with researcher on 20\(^{\text{th}}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^\text{33}\) Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, interview with researcher on 21\(^{\text{st}}\) April 2012, Baghdad.
between the US and the terrorist organisations based on the allegations that these terrorist groups had been created by the USA. 34

Al-Barzingi, goes on to argue that

The neighbouring countries rather than the US have worked to inflict damage on the economic infrastructure in Iraq. For example, Turkish policies featuring the rationing of water with Iraq, and also the stealing of Iraq oil reserves by Kuwait and Iran, not to mention the encouragement of stealing state institutions aiming at paralysing the Iraqi economy”. 35

7.1.2.1 Summary of Interview Findings on External Factors

As can be seen from the above, a number of interviewees stated that the role of external forces in Iraq in relation to the economy has been negative. Some participants believe that oil was the primary motive behind the US occupation of Iraq. There are other views which suggest that religious motives contributed to the occupation. Whereas oil is seen as the primary motive behind the occupation, some respondents argued that oil is not the main factor, but that a number of important factors overlapped with one another including the restructuring of US policies in the Middle East and ensuring US hegemony. This view was supported by some respondents who suggest that the security of Israel alongside restructuring of the Middle East region politically remain the key factors in the US foreign policy agenda in Iraq. It was also suggested that the occupation was inevitable perhaps due to fear of Russian expansion in the region.

The views of respondents regarding the role of external factors in the destruction of Iraqi infrastructure are highlighted above. Again, a majority of respondents agree that external factors have had a negative impact on the economy of Iraq since 2003. Importantly, some of the respondents argue that the involvement of US troops led to widespread vandalism of state resources and infrastructure. Indeed, the US is seen as responsible for all the destruction, which according to some respondents was deliberate. Some respondents argued that the Ministry of Oil was spared from destruction by the US apparently due to its importance to the US. Besides, the US was trying to keep all the documents intact in order to access confidential oil contracts between Iraq and other countries during the regime of Saddam Hussein. Some have also argued that the US

34 Hassan Falahi Hussein, interview on 1st March 2012, Baghdad.

allowed gangs and organised crime networks to engage in the destruction of the economy.

Indeed, the destruction of the economy by US-sponsored terrorist operations is perceived by many as contributing negatively to the destruction of the infrastructure. However, a group of respondents argued that the US have not destroyed the Iraqi economy; instead the neighbouring countries (e.g., Kuwait) are alleged to be responsible for the destruction by urging the looting of state institutions in order to paralyse the Iraqi economy. Taken together, the evidence above suggests that despite diversities in political and religious affiliations, a majority of the Iraqi elite agreed that the presence of the US in the country contributed in one way or another to the destruction of the economy. This is evident from the increasing levels of unemployment and the magnitude of corruption among the lay people and the elite.

### 7.2 Questionnaire Findings: Iraqi Public Opinion

The aim of this section is to understand the perceptions of the public regarding the extent to which the economic situation in Iraq is linked to actions by both the US and the Iraqi governments. Specifically, the section addresses two questions: the first relates to the Iraqi role (9) and focuses on the extent to which poverty has been reduced since 2003, while the second addresses the US role (10) focusing on oil as the primary motive for the invasion of Iraq.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = slightly disagree
4 = neutral
5 = strongly agree
6 = agree
7 = slightly agree
9 = missing questions.
Question 9 (Internal Factor: Has the general level of poverty been reduced to a large extent since 2003, compared with the period before 2003?)

Table 7.1 Perceptions of Whether the General Level of Poverty Has Been Reduced Since 2003.

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Figure 7.1 Perceptions of Whether the General Level of Poverty Has Been Reduced Since 2003.

A total of 36.9% of respondents believe that poverty has not been improved in the period after 2003 while 46.2% believe that it has and claim that the government has been able to curtail it compared to the pre-2003 period. At the same time, 16.9% of
respondents remain neutral. This finding indicates that there was some improvement in perceptions of the economic situation as the poverty level has been reduced in contrast with the period before 2003. This will be discussed in more detail in the findings.

**Question** 10 (External Factors- Was oil the main reason for the invasion of Iraq?)

**Table 7.2 Perceptions of Whether Oil Was the Main Reason for the Invasion of Iraq.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
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<td>6.2</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7.2 Perceptions of Whether Oil Was the Main Reason for the Invasion of Iraq.**

- 81.6% agree
- 11.5% disagree
- 6.2% neutral
- 0.8% missing
A high proportion (81.6%) of the sample agreed with the notion that oil was the main reason for the invasion of Iraq, while, a small proportion (11.6%) disagreed with the statement, believing there were factors other than oil. In addition, 6.2% remained neutral, and a very small percentage (0.8%) of participants did not provide answers. This finding is of importance as it shows that the overwhelming majority of respondents, regardless of their religious, regional and ethnic background, are sure that oil was the main factor in invading Iraq. For example, a few participants provided the following comments in the questionnaires:

The American occupation of Iraq has negatively affected the Iraqi economy, and also promoted corruption, in particular large-scale financial and administrative corruption among institutions of the Iraqi state.

There are justifications behind the American presence in Iraq, the most important are: firstly, Iraq is the richest country in the region mainly in “oil”. Secondly, the geo-strategic location of Iraq in the Middle East is also important for the US in order to impose its control over other Arab countries.

This view will be discussed later in the findings.

7.3 Discussion of Interview and Questionnaire Findings

This section analyses what the results from the interviews and questionnaires revealed, regarding a number of key issues relating to the third research topic; the impact of the invasion and occupation on the Iraqi economy. The majority of participants suggested showed that the levels of poverty in the country do not correspond with the huge oil resources of Iraq. For instance, despite heavy investment in the oil industry, a quarter of the population still live in abject poverty. Evidence from the questionnaires revealed mixed views regarding the level of poverty in Iraq after 2003. While 37% of the participants argued that poverty has not improved since 2003, 46% argued that it has, and that the government has accomplished this, relative to that experienced under Saddam’s regime. This view suggests that the US invasion has been beneficial to the Iraqi economy in terms of poverty alleviation. Previous research has shown that there was widespread unemployment, corruption and poverty before the invasion.36 For

example, the wages of average employees in Iraq before 2003 was below $500.\textsuperscript{37} This in turn, suggests that the US occupation of Iraq has had a positive impact on the economy compared to Saddam’s regime. This view is supported by previous research that showed Saddam’s regime had a negative impact on the economy of Iraq, which was reflected by heavy investment of oil proceeds in defence (i.e., purchase of military equipment etc.).\textsuperscript{38} However, this interpretation has to be treated with caution. This is because some of the participants interviewed were employees of the current government. Hence, whether the responses they gave were genuine or biased in favour of the government remains an issue that needs to be investigated. For instance, previous research has questioned the reliability of responses obtained using self-report measures due to the potential to yield socially desirable responses - the tendency of respondents to answer questions in a manner that might be viewed favourably by others.\textsuperscript{39} Perhaps this would explain the mixed views elicited from the study participants regarding the level of poverty in Iraq after 2003. According to the UNDP report: “Iraq has a poverty level rate of 23\%, which suggests approximately six million Iraqis are plagued with poverty and hunger despite increases in Iraqi oil exports”.\textsuperscript{40} This contradicts the findings above that suggest a reduction in poverty following Saddam’s regime. Similarly, previous research has shown that the Iraqi economy became very unstable\textsuperscript{41} after 2003, which is reflected in the rate of unemployment and the increase in the rate of poverty.\textsuperscript{42} This further suggests that the US invasion has not impacted positively on Iraq’s economy, as


\textsuperscript{39} A. L Edwards, “The relationship between the judged desirability of a trait and the probability that it will be endorsed”. \textit{Journal of Applied Psychology}, 37 (1953), p. 90-93.


\textsuperscript{42} Al Alani, “Synchronization of inflation and unemployment in the Iraqi economy after the occupation, p. 5-6.
some participants claimed. In fact, some participants view the economic problems after 2003 as a product of both internal and external factors.

In addition to poverty, some of the participants argued that the US invasion created corruption in the system, which consequently impacted on the economy of Iraq. Importantly, there is widespread administrative and financial corruption across different sectors. Indeed, as one Iraqi scholar, Abdul-Jabbar, argued, widespread corruption was mainly associated with the security and police which not only hinders reconstruction of the economy and political system, but equally undermines the sovereignty of the government and casts a shadow over the security situation in the country. A report compiled by Transparency International regarding the increase in rates of corruption post-occupation suggests the corruption indicators in Iraq after 2005 have kept it at the bottom of the list of transparency-promoting countries. According to Atwan, in most cases corruption was politically protected at a time when the Iraqi people were yearning for economic development rather than democracy and freedom. Subsequent studies conducted in Iraq confirmed this. For instance, a field survey conducted by the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Studies showed a majority of participants yielded to the view that the US occupation has worked hard to encourage corruption, indicating that corruption formed part of the US agenda in its war against Iraq. These findings suggest that the US invasion has not contributed to eradicating the corruption that characterised Saddam’s regime; rather, the invasion existed to promote corruption, ranging from political and financial, to administrative corruption. According to


46 Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, “Iraqi opinion poll regarding the presence of US forces in the country”, (Iraq: Baghdad, Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, 2011), pp. 40-47 (in Arabic)


Atwan, political corruption, which ranged between 40-45%, is deep-rooted in the political, administrative and market sectors. Financial corruption constitutes 35-40% and is mostly observed among administrative elites, businessmen and brokers. Administrative corruption relates to regulatory matters and deviations in the behaviour of employees, such as falsification of official documents.  

Indeed, the general beliefs of most participants are that the US occupation, together with its policies, was the root cause of all economic problems in Iraq, which is reflected in the disproportionate relationship between the huge oil resources and the per capita income in Iraq. Following the occupation, Iraq has not seen any improvement in its economy. There is also widespread corruption and a rapid increase in unemployment. These findings are consistent with previous literature, which suggests that the rate of unemployment increased, to 60-70% following the US occupation. However, the rate of unemployment during Saddam’s regime was recorded at 30%, according to unofficial statistical information, while the reports issued by the previous Ministry of Planning put the rate of unemployment at 18%. This in turn suggests that the US occupation had a negative impact on the economy of Iraq in terms of a rise in rates of unemployment. Evidence in support of this comes from a study by Cordesman who claims that the US administration made mistakes in the wake of the occupation of Iraq. One of these was getting rid of the entire Ba’ath party from the government, including both the army and security forces, which reflected negatively on the economic system. This contributed to an increase in unemployment as well as violence and insecurity. Ziad further argues that instead of prosperity following the invasion, the


opposite was the case: the country witnessed a sharp decline in its economy. The destruction of various economic and political institutions, together with an increase in economic crimes such as looting and corruption, led to the paralysis of the Iraqi economy.\textsuperscript{54}

Several explanations have been given by participants for the decline in the Iraqi economy. The majority of participants agreed that the main motive of the US campaign in Iraq was to protect Iraq’s oil reserves. In other words, oil underpinned the US invasion and presence in Iraq. Oil experts earlier recognised that Iraq has immense oil resources, hence justifying the US agenda. The most recent review by the US Energy Information Agency reveals that:

\begin{quote}
Iraq contains 115 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, the fifth largest in the world along with roughly 220 billion barrels of probable and possible resources. Iraq’s true resource potential may be far greater than this, however, as the country is relatively unexplored due to years of war and sanctions. Deep oil-bearing formations located mainly in the vast Western Desert region, for instance, could yield large additional oil resources, but have not been explored.\textsuperscript{55}
\end{quote}

Therefore, it is not a surprise that the majority of participants saw oil as the raison d’être behind the US presence in Iraq. These findings are consistent with a widespread belief on the part of both American and Middle Eastern commentators, that one of the main objectives of the invasion of Iraq was the US’s wish to protect its oil interests. For example, Davis points out how the US’s interest in controlling and managing foreign oil resources is linked to maintaining its global position.\textsuperscript{56} The Iraqi scholar, Al-Mazrui argues that Iraq’s oil wealth was the primary goal for the US to occupy Iraq under the

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\textsuperscript{55} US Energy Information Administration, “Iraq has the fifth largest proven crude oil reserves in the world, and it passed Iran as the second largest producer of crude oil in OPEC at the end of 2012”, \url{http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/iraq.html accessed} 15th June 2014. See also, M. Al- Mazrui “Strategic importance of Iraqi oil in perspective of the United States of America”, Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabia Journal 376 (2010), p. 30-337 (in Arabic).

\textsuperscript{56} W. Davis, ‘Providing a Framework to Understanding Why the US Invaded Iraq in 2003’. MA in Political Science from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. (2007), p.3
\end{flushright}
guise of fighting terrorism and exporting democracy to the Iraqi people. Other scholars also argue that the main reason for the invasion of Iraq was oil as it is a vital and significant resource (e.g., Azzawi, Bassiouni). According to Bassiouni, the rationale behind the invasion of Iraq was to gain economic facilities in order to control inflation in the US (see Chapter Two).

Economically, the Arab Gulf region is rich due to its massive oil and natural gas reserves. Perhaps these resources make the region viable, thus drawing international attention, with eternal powers competing to gain access to the region in order to exploit its rich resources. Similarly, the geo-political position of Iraq in the region makes it more attractive for the expansion of US international security policies. This view is consistent with the conclusions of Hussein, who argues that the U.S. administration endeavoured to invade Iraq to implement its plan (i.e., the Grand Middle East project), which aimed to control the resources of this region.

Specifically, the privatisation of the Iraqi economy has been a top priority for US policy. According to Zaidi and Mufied, the US envisioned that the new Iraq was no longer committed to socialist principles based on state control of the economy, which had been replaced by the free market and privatisation principles promoted by the US. This happened at a time when Iraq was still a socialist state in terms of its prevailing laws. This interference in the system resulted in great confusion for most economic activities, bringing them to a halt. In the meantime, the US announced its programme to

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push Iraq towards economic privatisation, as stated by the civil governor, Paul Bremer,\textsuperscript{61} who argued that “the state-owned projects in Iraq would be privatised as an initial step for the privatisation of the oil industry”.\textsuperscript{62} As advocated by the Middle East Economic Survey, this should have meant that the economy of Iraq would be based on private organisations and companies instead of the previous economic structures of the defunct regime, based on balance between the public and private sectors.\textsuperscript{63}

The US initially began to set the stage for privatisation,\textsuperscript{64} by persuading the new government to sign agreements with donor countries in Paris in 2004 and in Brussels in 2005. According to Iraqi economic expert, Al-Hafiz, both agreements committed Iraq to lifting government subsidies and introducing economic reforms including privatisation of vital economic sectors in return for cutting its debts by up to 80\%.\textsuperscript{65} Al Zaidi argues that after 2003, the US administration was mainly concerned with the oil sector, which had been a target for privatisation, aimed at putting the sector out of the control of the Iraqi government.\textsuperscript{66} This happened despite the fact that, according to the provisions of international law, states which are under occupation should not undergo major changes in terms of economic structure, and that any major changes would be unlawful. This was one of the reasons for speeding up political developments in Iraq so that privatisation projects would be authorised by the Iraqis not by the US administration.

The above evidence suggests a widespread perception that oil was the primary motive for the US invasion of Iraq. However, some of the participants suggest there were other reasons behind the US invasion. For instance, some argued that Western and American

\textsuperscript{61} Bremer with McConnell, \textit{My Year in Iraq: the Struggle to Build a Future of Hope}, pp. 50-77.


\textsuperscript{64} Bremer with McConnell, \textit{My Year in Iraq: the Struggle to Build a Future of Hope}, p. 50-77.


media have ignored the religious motives behind the occupation. Other factors have also been identified, such as the restructuring of US policies in the Middle East and ensuring US hegemony. Security was also considered a factor; especially Israeli security. Some argued that ensuring Israeli security was the duty of the American government. This is because of threats posed by the former Ba’ath regime to Israel were increasing, hence the need for the US to step in to curtail such threats. Also, there was concern regarding the expansion of Russia’s influence in the Gulf region.

7.4 Summary

The present study, based on results from interview and questionnaire data, has revealed two factors believed to be responsible for the deteriorating economic situation in Iraq. The first factor relates to the role of successive Iraqi governments, otherwise known as internal factors. The second, external factors, relates to the role of the US. In terms of the first factor, the study found that successive Iraqi governments have contributed in one way or another to the country’s persistent economic problems. This is evident from financial and administrative corruption that has permeated several state institutions, in addition to a lack of long term strategic planning and the embezzlement of public funds. There has also been mismanagement in the distribution of resources across different parts of the country. Critically, the huge resources that the country is endowed with are not reflected in standards of living. Despite all of these factors, the rate of unemployment, which is estimated at 10-15%, is much better than it was prior to 2003. This suggests that the economy is improving rather than deteriorating, although a small number of participants suggest otherwise, claiming that the government has failed to improve the economic situation despite its huge oil revenues. This, according to them, has led to the emergence of a new form of poverty, otherwise known as “disguised poverty”.

In terms of external factors, the study shows that despite improvements in economic life, such as reduction in poverty levels, widespread corruption and unemployment continue to impact negatively on the perception of the economic situation in Iraq. Many attributed the bulk of these problems to the US, accusing it of encouraging corruption and opening access to public funds, leading to embezzlement of public funds. Despite

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other factors that might have contributed to the invasion, many believed that was the strongest single motive for the US invasion of Iraq.
Chapter Eight

THE DEMOCRACY PROCESS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study conducted on Iraqi perceptions of the practice of democracy in Iraq after 2003. The aim of this study is to show the differing views of participants on the internal and external factors affecting Iraqi democracy since 2003. Both types of factors are analysed in terms of Iraqi elite opinion using data gathered from interviews in combination with data from questionnaires on the opinions of the general public of Iraq.

8.1 Interview Findings: Iraqi Elite Opinion

8.1.1 Internal Factors

This section analyses the interview data collected from fieldwork in Baghdad, Al-Anbar, and Fallujah. Question 9 asks to what extent the democracy process has been achieved in Iraq after 2003. The groups interviewed expressed diverse opinions on this issue.

Interviewees accused the government of being illegitimate and corrupt. For example, a former Women’s Affairs Minister and member of the Iraqi Alliance bloc, Al-Shaykhali, emphasizes that:

The democratic process has been a complete failure at the political level. For the democratic process to succeed the following conditions need to be fulfilled: practice and culture, discarding the power-sharing system that has a negative impact on the democratic practice. Also, how is it possible to establish a democratic system while power is concentrated in the hands of the Prime Minister? In other words the Prime Minister is in command of many military and political positions, for example, the Ministries of Defence and Interior at the same time.¹

¹ Azhar Al-Shaykhali, interview on 13th March 2012, Baghdad.
According to Respondent A8, a faculty member at the Department of Politics and International Relations at Baghdad University:

The Iraqi government in the post-2005 period faced numerous challenges and obstacles including the challenges of the political process and the associated internal political crisis. With respect to the national coalition government, despite the formal and constitutional existence of such a government, genuine national power sharing has not existed. On the other hand, the government has failed to deliver and meet its obligations towards the people with regard to healthcare, social security and other services, not to mention its failure to promote justice among the people of Iraq.²

In contrast to the above, a less critical second viewpoint says that the Iraqi government was initially illegitimate but achieved legitimacy through the constitutional referendum and the elections. In defence of that opinion, the head of the civil society organisations in Iraq, Adwar, emphasizes that: “Iraq is in its first steps in the process of democratic transformation, embodied by the elections and the constitution which are still facing challenges in terms of the formation of political structures as well as society in general”.³

The political advisor of the Prime Minister, Al-Zuwayni, argues that: “In order to enhance the democratic structure as to get rid of the huge legacy of the previous regime, a social culture becomes indispensable for the democratic process in Iraq”.⁴

A third line of thought presents a much more positive image of the government in terms of legitimacy, performance and capabilities, with those opposed to that view being described as foreign agents or otherwise having terrorist links.

For example, the Head of the Iraqi Teachers’ Union, Al-Qurashi, explained that: “The democratic process has been successful on the grounds that it has opened the door for all political parties to take part in the political process, in addition to the fact that it has allowed freedom of opinion, expression and religious practices”.⁵

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² Respondent A8, interview on 20th March 2012, Baghdad.

³ Hana Adwar, interview on 12th March 2012, Baghdad.

⁴ Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.

⁵ Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, interview on 21st April 2012, Baghdad.
This view is consistent with the view of the president of the Political Prisoners Association (anonymous respondent A2) that: “*democracy exists in Iraq, and it has been successful*”.\(^6\)

Question 12 asks to what extent the respondents agree or disagree with the impact of territorial support on the electoral process. Some respondents believe that there has been regional intervention, though not to the extent that allows significant change in the election results. Others argue that had it not been intervention, the outcome would have been different from what it has been so far. The political advisor of the Prime Minister, Al-Zuwayni, goes on to argue that:

> Iran truly has the most significant impact on the political process. Arabs also have negatively impacted the process as they rejected the changes in Iraq for fear that those changes might have extended to their territories, as indeed the events have impacted on Libya, Tunisia and Bahrain. Also, Kuwait has had a negative impact by causing instability to the situation in Iraq, and there has not been a tangible improvement between these two countries. So we do not expect much improvement with Kuwait, as they continue their provocation. We can conclude that the political parties and groups have received support from various countries in the region as follows: Saudi Arabia and Turkey have given support to Sunni parties and persons, while the Shiite parties have received support from Iran. In other words all neighbouring countries have been involved in one way or another by supporting parties or political groups in order to gain privileges in the country.\(^7\)

This point of view is also adopted by the leader of the Democratic Labour Party in Iraq, Kattab:

> The regional impact could be seen very clearly on the election process. Most significantly, the material and logistical support or even the altering of the results in favour of specific political parties linked to the agenda of neighbouring countries. That has been evident from the direct intervention of Iran which has had a negative impact on the democratic process in Iraq.\(^8\)

As a member of Baghdad County Council, the Head of the Women and Children Committee at the Provincial Council, Al-Barzingi, explained:

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\(^6\) Respondent A2, interview on 14\(^{th}\) April 2012, Baghdad.

\(^7\) Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29\(^{th}\) April 2012, Baghdad.

\(^8\) Shakir Kattab, interview on 21\(^{st}\) February, Baghdad. (The same views have been stated by Azhar Al-Shaikhali, Amer Hassen Fayaad, Omer Hussein Gazal, Hassen Hussein Falahi, Sabbar Al-Saidi, Hana Edwar, Saadi Mohamed Awad, and Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, in interviews between 23\(^{rd}\) February and 19\(^{th}\) May 2012, Baghdad and Al-Anbar).
The regional impact on the election process in Iraq has been obvious and tremendous, and the Iranian impact is clear and the main example. However, the impact of the Gulf States has been limited in the election process—i.e., the impact made by Kuwait. Yet, the Turkish position in Iraq can be to a great extent described as neutral.\footnote{Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, interview on 4th March, 2012, Baghdad.}

\subsection*{8.1.1.1 Summary of Interview Findings on Internal Factors}

The interview findings suggest that democracy has not been achieved in Iraq after 2003 because of continuing political crises among political forces. The political parties have not yet reached a political programme that can be accepted across the political spectrum of Iraqi society. In addition, the success of the democracy process requires efforts to re-shape the so-called ‘national partnership government’ regardless of sect, religion and political affiliations. In addition, the participants revealed that the political system, which is based on power-sharing and majority rule, have been obstacles to democratic transformation in Iraq after 2003. For instance, the defence, interior and national security ministries have been subject to the authority of prime minister since 2005. However, Iraq has witnessed democratic transformations and robust steps have been taken in this regard in terms of, for instance, freedom of expression, freedom of the media, and freedom of religion.

However, the legacy of Saddam’s regime is another challenge facing democratic practice in post-invasion Iraq. The participants affirm that policies of oppression have been exercised for a long time, and this has left a negative impact on the course of democracy in Iraq.

Altogether, the interviewees acknowledge the fact of regional intervention in Iraqi political affairs. For instance, the active involvement of Iran is asserted by the bulk of participants who recognize that the logistical support, or even the fixing of results in favour of the Shia political parties, has escalated the crisis. A member of Baghdad County Council, the Head of the Women and Children Committee at the Provincial Council, affirms that “the regional impact on the election process in Iraq has been obvious, and the Iranian impact is a case in point”.\footnote{Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, interview on 4th March, 2012, Baghdad.} While the leader of the
Democratic Labour Party in Baghdad emphasises that: “the election process has been under significant regional impact featuring the material and logistical support or even the fixing of results in favour of specific political parties linked to the agenda of neighbouring countries”.\textsuperscript{11} Arab support has also made a negative impact by causing instability, a case in point being Kuwait. Moreover, the political advisor to the Prime Minister claims that “Saudi Arabia has given support to the Sunni parties. Other neighbouring countries have been rather neutral such as Turkey”.\textsuperscript{12}

\textbf{8.1.2 External Factors (the Role of the US)}

To present a detailed account of elite perceptions of the democracy process in Iraq we need to also examine respondents’ views of the US role. To this end questions 10, 11 & 13 were used for the analysis. The opinions of the interviewees can be discussed from different points of view.

Question 10 addresses the idea that a chief objective of the Bush administration in occupying Iraq was to put an end to the dictatorship and introduce a democratic system by asking whether democracy, after ten years of political change, has been achieved, and whether the US has played a positive role in achieving that objective. As a member of Baghdad County Council, Al-Masari, representing local government in the case study in Baghdad, argues:

\begin{quote}
The US has played a positive role through putting pressure on the Iraqi leadership to recognise the principles of the constitution in order to establish a democratic state where the constitution takes control of the political process to allow the exchange of power.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

This view is supported by a county council member, Al-Gadi, representing local government in the case study in Al-Anbar, who emphasized that: \textit{“the Iraqi citizens, now, can feel the democratic experience”}.\textsuperscript{14}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{11} Shaker Kattab, interview on 21st February, Baghdad.
\bibitem{12} Bushra Al-Zawayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
\bibitem{13} Aisha Al-Masari, interview on 7th March 2012, Baghdad.
\bibitem{14} Rufah Yasin Al-Gadi, interview on 14th May 2012, Baghdad.
\end{thebibliography}
However, a county council Member Al-Tarmouz, representing local government in the case study in Al-Anbar, explained that “it is true that democracy has been relatively achieved, but as yet it needs years for the democratic practice to become fully established”.

A second viewpoint suggests that the US was serious about establishing democracy in Iraq but that it used democracy as a means to achieve its goals in Iraq. In support of that opinion the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Kattab, argues that:

Oil, the security of the state of Israel and the grand Middle East plan have been the main objectives behind the U.S. occupation of Iraq. In other words, democracy has not been one of the goals featuring on President Bush’s agenda in his war on Iraq. However, democracy has been among the minor goals used by the US as a cover up to achieve its main aims.

The Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at Al Nahrain University, Al-Maamouri, agrees, adding that:

Establishing democracy would be impossible considering this short period as democracy as a social product needs time to pass through “parturition”. That has been evident from the fact that as people supported Saddam and his policies they are doing the same with the current PM.

A third group is of the opinion that the Americans were never serious about this. For example, Al-Kilabi, representing the National Alliance for Iraqi Tribes in the case study in Baghdad, affirmed that:

Democracy was not a real motive behind the American campaign against Iraq, and the U.S. has not played a positive role to achieve that aim. Moreover, there was a hidden agenda behind the US invasion of Iraq, including reshaping the Middle East region by using Iraq as a model for change, as well as achieving the security of the state of Israel through eliminating Iraq from the equation. That could be achieved by destroying Iraq’s military power, and by taking control of its oil resources. By doing so, the US would take full control of the whole Middle Eastern region.

15 Arkan Khalaf Al-Tarmouz, interview on 14th May 2012 in Ramadi.

16 Shakir Kattab, interview on 21st February 2012, Baghdad.


This opinion is also consistent with the views of the Representative of the Islamic Fadila Party in the Iraqi Parliament, Al-Marae, who argues:

I do not believe that the US aimed to establish democracy in Iraq, and that its main aim was the removal of the dictator’s regime. On the contrary, it was because that regime was against its interests and aims in the region. That is evident from the fact that there are many other dictatorships in the Arab region that have not been toppled. It is simply that those regimes have not been against US interests.19

Another viewpoint is presented by Ex-Army Officer Higgi Ismael Baraa, selected for the case study in Fallujah City, who argues that: “A real democratic practice does not exist in Iraq, and the US has brought into power people loyal to its interests and not to Iraq”20. The political Adviser to the Prime Minister, Al- Azwaini, explained that:

We are in the process of building a democratic state, and it will need a considerable time. The reason is that Iraqi society has to be educated to be compatible with the principles of democracy. I do not think that democracy was at the top of the agenda behind President Bush’s campaign to invade Iraq. Additionally, one cannot say the US has established democracy in Iraq. However, had it not been for the conflict of interests between the US and the previous regime, the US would not have invaded Iraq. Democracy in Iraq can be described as a child at the crawling stage21.

Question 11 addresses the issue of to what extent the democratic system introduced by the US enabled the participation of Iraqi women in politics. The first viewpoint argues that the US has managed to make a real contribution in this area. For example, the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Katab, argues that: “In light of the political changes women in Iraq have become more politically active than before. This is evident from the 25% quota system”.22 This standpoint is supported by the Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at Al-Nahrain University Fayyad, who emphasized that: “the quota system has made a real contribution”.23

19 Hussein Al-Marae, interview on 30th April 2012, Baghdad.
20 Higgi Ismael Baraa, interview on 18th May 2012, Fallujah.
21 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
22 Shakir Kattab, interview on 21st February 2012, Baghdad.
23 Amer Hassen Fayaad, interview on 23rd February 2012, Baghdad.
Another proponent of that view is a county council member, a representative of the Communist Party in Iraq, Yasir, who says that:

A significant development took place when women’s contribution was granted by the constitution, which is a very important step featuring the will of the Iraqi people. But despite all that, women have yet to make a more effective and real political contribution in the society. In other words, it could be said that some positive changes, though to a relative extent, have taken place regarding the active participation of women in the political process.\(^{24}\)

According to Respondent A8, a faculty member at the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Baghdad:

A real change has taken place in respect to the participation of women and that women have achieved a larger share in their presence of political process after 2003, even though the contribution has been relative and limited to 25%. One achievement is the appointment of a woman to the position of Minister of Human Rights for the first time, and the US strongly supported the political participation and representation of women.\(^{25}\)

This view is also maintained by local council member Hussein Al-Marae, selected to represent the case study in Baghdad:

The democratic experience that was introduced by the US has led to the real contribution of women in the political process. The contribution of women in the political process has been so effective as to reach 25%. This percentage attained by women in Iraq has never been attained by women in any Arab country or other non-Arab countries neighbouring Iraq.\(^{26}\)

A second opinion argues that given the nature and culture of society, the contribution of women has been achieved through constitutional provisions (the quota). In defence of that opinion a member of Baghdad County Council, Head of the Committee for Women and Child, Al-Barzingi, explained that:

The democratic experience in Iraq has failed to achieve the real participation of women in the political process, as women are still subject to partisan influence based on the power sharing system. Moreover, the participation of women has been imposed by the Americans, and efforts made by non-governmental organisations and not from a true will from women.\(^{27}\)

\(^{24}\) Salih Yasir, interview on 18\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{25}\) Respondent A8, interview on 20\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{26}\) Hussein Suleiman Al-Marae, interview on 30\(^{th}\) April 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{27}\) Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, interview on 4\(^{th}\) March, 2012, Baghdad.
However, a member of Baghdad County Council and representative of the Sadr bloc in the Iraqi parliament, Al-Saedi, representing the case study in Baghdad, explained that:

Women’s rights have been established by the constitution and the quota system has given women their political rights, such as the right to vote, in addition to the formation of committees, particularly in issues related to women in the areas of health, family and education in the parliament. That situation places women in a better condition compared to the previous regime.  

Another viewpoint, offered by Al-Dailami, a faculty member at the Department of Politics at the University of Al-Anbar, is that: “a deal-share, so that women can be promoted to higher positions in the government without being elected is inconsistent with democratic principles”.  

A third line of thought believes that the US did not promote a democratic plan, but through the contribution of women the US meant to put an end to the established traditional culture of Iraqi society. In support of that opinion, the President of the Iraqi Teachers Organisation Kamal Ahmed Kamal, asserted that:

The problem is that the US did not prepare a realistic democratic project for Iraq. Iraqi women have lost many of their rights after the war. Also the quota system was imposed by the occupying forces. The women who have held positions were not real representatives of Iraqi women and they were appointed only to fill these positions.

The Head of the Centre for International Studies, University of Baghdad, Nabil Mohamed Salim, argues that: “the quota that has been introduced for women to become involved in political activities and parliamentary activities in particular has damaged the image of the Iraqi woman”.

According to a sample featuring the Iraqi Academics in Amman as represented by Dr Hussein:

The history of persecution and occupation indicates that women have been another commodity in the hands of the promoters of democracy to make them

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29 Mohamad Daham Al-Dailami, interview on 14th May 2012, Al-Anbar.
30 Kamal Ahmed Kamal, interview on 26th April 2012, Baghdad.
31 Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4th March 2012, Baghdad.
become involved in corrupt practices against the genuine and established traditions of Iraqi society.\(^{32}\)

Further, in interview with the head of the Foundation for Political Prisoners (anonymous respondent A2), the opinion was expressed that “the contribution of women has been marginal rather than real”.\(^{33}\)

The range of views expressed by interviewees here show that the perceptions of the role of women in democracy is sophisticated. While some argue that the role of Iraqi women has been damaged by their participation in politics they do not explain why. They also do not explain why women’s participation is undermining Iraqi democracy. The more interesting responses are the ones that argue that even though the US role in Iraq has been disorganised it has changed the constitutional position of women and has allowed more practical representation of women since 2003. This is also discussed below.

Question 13 addresses the issue of whether the continuation of the democratic process in Iraq was expected by the US and its supporters, although it encountered difficulties. The opinions of the interviewees are discussed from different standpoints as follows.

According to Respondent A8, a faculty member at the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Baghdad:

> The democratic experience introduced by the U.S. will continue as it has become a model for other Arab countries too, inspiring revolutions that have produced the change of political regimes in countries like Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, and thus enhancing the principles of democratic practice.\(^{34}\)

This perspective is maintained by a member of Baghdad County Council, Hassan Hussein Falahi, who goes further by suggesting that:

> The process will continue and develop year after year, generating better standards and expectations and overcoming many obstacles. For that reason the democratic process is likely to continue on condition that the various political groups come together to achieve national concord among the components of the country.\(^{35}\)

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\(^{32}\) Taha Ali Hussein, interview on 25\(^{th}\) May 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{33}\) Respondent A2, interview on 14\(^{th}\) April 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{34}\) Respondent A8, interview with the researcher on 20\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{35}\) Hussein Hassan Falahi, interview on 1\(^{st}\) March 2012, Baghdad.
According to Rufah Yasin Al-Gadi, a county council member selected to represent local government for the second-case-Al-Anbar: “the democratic practice in Iraq is on the right course and that the Iraqi people are looking forward to a better future”.  

However, the President of the Foundation for Political Prisoners (anonymous respondent A2) thought that: “the situation might continue provided that the political leadership abandon their personal and partisan interests in favour of the supreme national interest”.  

A second line of thought states that the idea is right, but the practice has highlighted the necessity for the introduction of some amendments. For example, one representative of that view is a member of a county council, a representative of the Communist Party in Iraq, Yasir, who argues that:

The option of democracy is the only available option to the Iraqi people despite the difficulties and obstacles that face the democratic process in the country. The failure of the democratic option means other non-democratic options, like a coup d’état or revolution.

The Representative of the Islamic Fadila Party in the Iraqi Parliament, Al-Marae, agrees that:

There should be certain amendments to the current form of democracy in place. Democracy is not to be blamed for our failure to solve the problems we face; the problem is in the sectarian division and the system of power sharing. The solution is the election of competent individuals capable of implementing democracy.

In an interview, an economist at Al-Nahrain University, Adnan Amin, asserted that:

The democratic process would have been more successful if it had been initiated from within rather than being influenced by external factors. Moreover, we need wise people rather than politicians, and from all parties.

Hana Edward agrees with this opinion, stating that:

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36 Rufah Yasin Al-Gadi, interview on 14th May 2012, AL-Anbar.
37 Respondent A2, interview on 14th April 2012, Baghdad.
38 Salih Yasir, interview on 18th March 2012, Baghdad.
39 Hussein Al-Marae, interview on 30th April 2012, Baghdad.
40 Hajeer Adnan Amin, interview on 17th March 2012, Baghdad.
The process will continue provided that political powers are organized according to the constitution; also, changing the current system based on ethnic and sectarian background.\textsuperscript{41}

Similarly, the Head of the Committee for Women and Children at the Province Council, Iman Al-Barzingi, is of the opinion that:

If the current situation continues the democratic experience will come to an end. It is the awareness and will of the Iraqi citizen in the first place that determines the continuation of the democratic process. In addition Iraq has to get rid of the sectarianism and partisanship in favour of establishing the civil society which marks the first step towards democracy.\textsuperscript{42}

A third opinion suggests that the US plan was to cause the collapse of Iraq. Among the supporters of this viewpoint is the Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at Al-Nahrain University, Fayad, who states that “\textit{The democratic experience that has been introduced by the US will not continue as it has not been initiated by the will and the action of the people of Iraq, but rather has been dictated from outside}”.\textsuperscript{43}

This viewpoint is supported by the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Shakir Kattab, who states:

It will not continue and that the collapse of the political process is most likely. However, the continuation of the democratic experiment is subject to a package of rearrangements that includes the agreement among the various political groups, and the avoidance of the sectarian power sharing system, establishing the democratic process on a professional basis, and also promoting the principle of citizenship among the various social sections in Iraq.\textsuperscript{44}

Other interviewees who also agree that the democratic experience might not continue in the long run are Ismael Isawi, Fahmi Awad Hardan, Respondent A3, Omer Hussien Gazal, Mohamed Daham, Yasin Kamar Hilal, Hiqui Ismael Barae, Adil Mahmoud Aboud, Saad Hamid Mahmoud, and Nabil Mohamed Salim:

It will not continue due to the mistrust of the Iraqi people regarding the process. A police state is likely to be the outcome; the constitution that secures the democratic rights will be violated and the continuation of the American

\textsuperscript{41} Hana Edward, an interview on 12\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{42} Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, interview on 4\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{43} Amer Hassen Fayad, interview on 23\textsuperscript{rd} Feb 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{44} Shakir Katab, interview on 21\textsuperscript{st} February 2012, Baghdad.
experiment should mean political instability as this Western experiment will cause dissatisfaction of the people of Iraq.\textsuperscript{45}

\subsection*{8.1.2.1 Summary of Interview Findings on External Factors}

The findings of the interviews indicate that some respondents believe that democracy has been relatively achieved, yet it needs years to become fully established. Some respondents believe that the promotion of democracy was not on the agenda of the US government. Kttab, one participant affirms that “it was not a main reason behind the occupation of Iraq”\textsuperscript{46}. Other respondents say that the democracy process has not been achieved in Iraq yet. For example, Dr Al-Mamouri, emphasizes that, “establishing democracy is impossible during this short period as democracy as a social product needs time to develop”.\textsuperscript{47}

The discussion of the role of women is an important point of the debate concerning the quality of democracy in Iraq. Some of the interviewees believe that the contribution of women has been a direct outcome of the efforts made by the US. Others see that it is the personal efforts of Iraqi women which have led to their active involvement in politics and claim that the US has nothing to do with this. On the other hand, some interviewees label the quota system dictated by the US as being a distortion which has allowed female representation to develop, even though the long term prospects are uncertain.

These are important research findings. A number of interviewees state that the role of external forces in Iraq has been negative for democracy (USA, Iran, and Saudi Arabia). However, a simple narrative that the US is responsible for everything that is problematic in Iraq is not held even by Iraqis who are very critical of the US. The majority of participants agree that the US was not serious about establishing democracy in Iraq and that it used democracy as a means to achieve its goals in Iraq.

Some interviewees see that the US has established a weak type of democracy. While some interviewees say that democracy is weak because of deliberate US policy, others

\textsuperscript{45} Ismail Mohamed Al-Isawi, interview on 14\textsuperscript{th} May 2012.

\textsuperscript{46} Shakir Katab, interview on 21\textsuperscript{st} February 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{47} Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, interview on 23\textsuperscript{rd} Feb 2012, Baghdad.
argue that democracy will take time to become stable because of the nature of Iraqi society. Sectarian and ethnic issues have hindered power sharing and the US has not helped in overcoming these issues, which are the only cause of the problem. Interviewees say that a number of things are necessary in order to fully achieve democracy: for instance, the various political groups need to come together to achieve national consensus and forget about their personal and partisan interests in favour of the greater national interest. Others argue that there is a need for Iraq to build up a stronger democratic civil society which will stabilise democracy.

8.2 Questionnaire Findings: (Iraqi Public Opinion)

This section analyses Iraqi public opinion towards democracy in post-invasion Iraq. It deals with six questions: The first two (7 & 6) relate to internal and regional factors, while the other four (4, 1, 19 & 8) relate to external factors.

**Question 7:** Do the political parties in parliament represent Iraqi opinion? (Internal factor)

**Table 8.1 Perceptions of Whether Political Parties in Parliament Represent Iraqi Opinion.**

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A very high percentage of respondents (85.4%) disagree with the notion that the political parties in parliament represent Iraqi opinion as a whole, while 6.1% of the respondents agree. In addition, 7.7% are neutral, and a very small percentage (0.8%) of participants did not provide answers. As an example, one respondent comments: “The political parties that emerged in Iraq after 2003 failed to represent a unified opinion of the Iraqi people, due to their links with neighbouring countries, in order to achieve their political gains in administering the country”. Another comments, “the multi-party system is considered to be the most important reason for the failing political process in Iraq”.

**Question 6**: Did the territorial effect of the neighbouring countries cause the failure of the democratic project (Regional factor).
The analysis of Question 6 shows that 58.5% of respondents believe that the influence of neighbouring countries on the democratic project in Iraq was significant, while 26.1% of respondents disagree with the statement. A further 13.1% take a neutral position and 2.3% did not answer. One participant comments: “The political experience failed in Iraq, because it was based on personal interests and also the regional impact played a big role in this regard”. Another affirms that: “The neighbouring countries contributed to the second factor in failing the democratic sample, which is quite evident through their support for some Shia and Sunni political parties in order to implement their goals in Iraq”.

**Question 4**: Has the US implementation of the idea of democracy in Iraq proved to be successful? (External factor)
Table 8.3 Perceptions of Whether the US Implementation of the Idea of Democracy in Iraq Proved to be Successful.

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Figure 8.3 Responses to Whether US Implementation of the idea of Democracy in Iraq Proved to be Successful.

Analysis of Question 4 reveals that the highest percentage of respondents (86.2%) claim that the US-backed idea of democracy in Iraq was not successful, while 6.1% acknowledge some improvement. A smaller percentage of respondents (5.4%) express a neutral viewpoint and 2.3% did not respond to the question.

**Question 1:** Has the application of consensual democracy given a negative image of democracy applied by the US?
The analysis of Question 1 reveals that 24.6% of the respondents disagree with the idea that the model of concord has given a negative impression about the US, while more than half of informants (53.9%) believe that the application of that model has given a negative impression about the plan the US intended to implement in Iraq. The smallest percentage of participants (16.2) was neutral, and 2.3% of the respondents did not answer the question. As an example, a few participants provided the following comments:
The presence of American troops in the country has had positive and negative impacts; the positive impact is seemingly saving Iraqis from a dictatorship, whereas the negative impact is the regional intervention in Iraqi affairs.

**Question 19**: Did the US-imposed democracy allow Iraqi women to participate in the political process? (External factor).

**Table 8.5 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether the US-Imposed Democracy Allowed Iraqi Women to Participate in the Political Process.**

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**Figure 8.5 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether the US-imposed Democracy Allowed Iraqi Women to Participate in the Political Process.**

- 49.3% agree
- 29.2% disagree
- 21.5% neutral
The analysis of Question 19 reveals that around half of respondents (49.3%) agree that the US-imposed democratic transformations have allowed Iraqi women to participate in the political process. Additionally, the other opinions are divided into those who deny any improvements regarding the presence of women in political life (29.2%) and those who possess a neutral viewpoint on the question (21.5%). Basically, the findings show positive developments in the democratic process concerning the position of women in politics. These findings are in line with comments made by participants: “The political process which was imposed by the US allowed Iraqi women to participate in the political process via the 25% quota”.

**Question 8**: Was the failure of the democratic process to be expected as it is incompatible with Iraq society? (External factor)

**Table 8.6 Perceptions of Whether the Failure of the Democratic Process to be Expected as it is Incompatible with Iraqi Society.**

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The highest number of respondents (83.1%) doubt the compatibility of the democratic processes with Iraqi society. Around 10.8% of them do not consider that there is incompatibility between the democracy process and Iraqi society, whilst 6.2% remain neutral on the question. For example, a number of participants commented during the questionnaires session that: “The democracy process brought about by the USA in Iraq seems incompatible with Iraqi society which is a conservative Islamic society”.

Figure 8.6 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether Failure of the Democratic Process to be Expected as it is Incompatible with Iraqi Society.
8.3 Discussion of Interview and Questionnaire Findings

This chapter has investigated the sub-research question concerning Iraqi perceptions of the extent to which Iraq has become democratic, as detailed in Chapter Two. More specifically, the analysis considers the contribution of the US invasion to the democratic structure of the Iraqi political system due to the US justification for invasion being to establish a governmental framework that would allow for more political and economic stability, keeping the country “free from dictatorship”.48 The post-2003 democratic process in Iraq has been affected by many factors, as shown by the previous interview analysis.

Evidence obtained from the responses of Iraqi elite shows that Saddam’s regime had a profound impact upon democratic practices in post-invasion Iraq. It was noted that the “legacy of the previous regime, is a social culture indispensable for the democratic process in Iraq”.49 This was backed up by an Amnesty International report on the human cost of the previous regime, which stated that: “Saddam presides over the all-powerful Revolutionary Command Council, which enacts laws and decrees and overrides all other state institutions”.50 The lack of expression of political opinions at the time left its impact on the democratic transition after 2003, and posed a major obstacle to the democratic transition.

After the first election in 2005, the government was headed by the Shia Prime Minister, Nori al-Maliki, as his party gained an electoral majority of 55%.51 This led to the domination of the Prime Minister over political affairs as he too had a dictatorial leadership style; he dominated all three branches of government: the executive,


49 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.


legislative assembly and the judiciary. This led to majority rule,\textsuperscript{52} which was a new concept and took some adjusting to, with one participant, Nabil Mohammad, seeing the Iraqi democratic process as improper; a “meaningless image”, so that “after 2005 the government has been underperforming and failing to live up to its responsibility”.\textsuperscript{53} Another participant stated that “Yes, elections have taken place but the question is as to whether the democratic principles have been observed or otherwise there has been monopoly of power”.\textsuperscript{54}

Evidence extracted from the findings of questionnaire findings show that the majority don’t believe that the political parties in parliament represent Iraqi opinion as a whole. These findings support the results of a study conducted by the information centre for research and development which investigated the type of political authority the US developed in Iraq during the occupation. The study particularly asked whether the political pattern was one of chaotic authority, fair authority or corrupt authority. The results indicate that the majority of respondents supported the view that the US political pattern was based on corrupt authority.\textsuperscript{55} Moreover, Whitehead, observes that Iraq was a good example of democratization theory which exposed “the ‘dark side’ which always exists within the course of the promotion of democracy by the U.S”.\textsuperscript{56}

Furthermore, Beetham\textsuperscript{57} notes that one of the reasons for the failure of the democratic project in Iraq was that it was imposed by force.\textsuperscript{58} Gharib claims that although the Bush administration presented the promotion of democracy as a pretext for invasion,\textsuperscript{59} what

\textsuperscript{52} ibid, p. 1-22.

\textsuperscript{53} Nabil Mohammad Salim, interview on 4\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{54} Jamal Hamid Al-Dailami, interview on 3\textsuperscript{rd} May 2012, Anbar.

\textsuperscript{55} The Information Centre for Research and Studies. “Questionnaire findings regarding the US forces’ withdrawal from Iraq”, the Information Centre for Research and Studies: Iraq, Baghdad, 2011, \url{http://www.infocenteriq.com/LionImages/PDFStore/usa.pdf} accessed June 22 2012.

\textsuperscript{56} L. Whitehead, "Losing ‘the Force’? The ‘Dark Side of democratization after Iraq”, Democratization 16 (2009), p. 215

\textsuperscript{57} D. Beetham "The contradictions of democratization by force: the case of Iraq.” Democratization 16 (2009), p. 444.


\textsuperscript{59} I. Gharib, The war on Iraq: The system has not changed, why did the war on Iraq change nothing? Beirut: Lebanon, 2005 (in Arabic).
actually occurred on the ground in Iraq following the war was instability, chaos and rebellion.60

Thus, sectarian violence61 emerged amongst the main components of society, namely Sunni and Shia factions, after the US invasion,62 constraining democratic aspirations; this was embodied by the political crises which emerged after the US troops’ withdrawal.63 For example, government forces used violence against their political rivals who were denied their democratic rights or those who were totally excluded from the political process, such as the members of the dissolved Ba’ath party.64 One participant stated that: “A new dictatorship that could [be] tougher than the previous dictatorship is anticipated in Iraq. That is for the simple reason that the regime that has been established by the US in Iraq is based on sectarianism”.65

This sectarianism led eventually to the creation of political crises, and arose within the Shia political blocs as well. One example is the Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who tried to put the blame on Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki for “turning Iraq into a farce”.66 While al-Sadr, managed armed groups comprising the so-called ‘Al Mahdi army’ militias, which emerged after 2004, fuelling violence and posing a serious threat to the democratic system. It was “the domination [of] militias and the influence they had on political parties within the government that encouraged murders and added to the displacement the citizens on [a] sectarian basis”.67

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62 The internal violence which has emerged in Iraq since 2003 has taken different forms; all is factional in some way. The one which most affected the democracy process was “partition violence” which escalated during the election campaigns in order to get rid political rivals. K Atwan, “The Future of the Phenomenon of Political Violence in Iraq”, p. 35-36.


Similarly, Al-Qaeda also placed constraints on the democratic process; one example of this is that they sent envelopes containing bullets to those who sought to be representatives of the Sunnis in the Iraqi parliament. This occurred mostly in Sunni, rather than Shia, areas. Al-Qaeda considered the democratic process a US intervention in Iraq; they believed it to be illegal due to Iraq being under American occupation. For example, one family received an envelope with the message; “if you want to be involved in the elections, this envelope, and the threat contained, is your price to pay”. Therefore, the population became frightened that the killings and political assassinations could become regular occurrences. All these factors cast a shadow on the democratic process and minimised the degree of participation in the political process.

The second example of the political crises emerged after the formation of the elected Iraqi government in 2005; a persistent crisis between the Prime Minister and his rivals. Many of the Vice-President’s followers were arrested by Iraqi security forces in 2011, while the Vice-President himself fled to Kurdistan, then to Turkey seeking safety, after he was accused of orchestrating the violence in Baghdad and its suburbs. This appeared to spark a political crisis. Meanwhile, former Prime Minister Iyad Aliwi stated that the withdrawal of the Iraqi Accordance Front meant the total collapse of the political process. He also described the government of Maliki as a sectarian one.

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Evidence from the interviews shows clear perceptions of regional (Iranian and Arab) interventions in election campaigns in Iraq. However, there was a range of opinions about the extent and impact on the course of the political process. The impacts of other neighbouring Arab countries were said to be limited and the Turkish government remained neutral. The majority of the interviewees believed that Iran contributed massively by rigging the elections to favour some of the Shia political parties. Equally, the questionnaire findings indicate that the majority of respondents believe neighbouring countries had a significant impact on the democratic project. This echoes Katzman’s argument that activities by the Iranian government intensified sectarian divisions and worsened the political crisis.76 These findings are in line with the conclusions of Al-Rubaie, who argues that Iran’s intervention in the election process was direct, under the pretext of protecting the Shia community, and the Arab intervention was indirect through giving money in support of election campaigns in favour of specific groups, rather than through direct means, which would be prevented by the government.77 This is consistent with Katzman’s conclusion that Iran sought to influence Shia Islamic groups, such as the Islamic Supreme Council (SIC) and the Da'wa Islamic Party (IDP).78

Regarding the effect of these factors upon democracy, Iran had a significant impact on the Iraqi elections, particularly between 2005 and 2009. First of all, Iran transported hundreds of filled ballot boxes across the border into Iraq in order to support some Shia political parties who had strong relations with Iran. Iran also sent hundreds of millions of dollars to buy votes from people in order to support Shia political blocs.79 In addition, Iran attempted to fraudulently intervene in elections in relation to voters that boycotted elections. One participant observed that “Iranian influence was larger and there is


regional support for many candidates”.

Iran employed “partition violence and/or electoral violence” in order to influence the results of elections between 2005 and 2009. According to Cordesman and Khazai, Iran worked hard to establish a Shia-led government and played a role in the Independent High Electoral Commission’s decision to bar Sunni and secular candidates from the vote.

Similarly, the US has been a main player, via its interference in Iraqi political affairs, and by turning a blind eye to Iranian involvement, or deliberately promoting sectarian violence while taking advantage of its powerful media machine and its strong influence over some of the political forces. Interview findings revealed a spectrum of opinion regarding the role of the US in promoting democracy in Iraq. Some of the respondents affirm that Iraq became democratic with the assistance of the US, but some assert that the US never intended to build democracy in Iraq, but followed other goals such as securing its own interests in the Middle East (e.g. protecting Israel and their oil interests, etc.). Others meanwhile affirm that the US was able to establish democracy, albeit weak and unsustainable. On the other hand, the questionnaire findings show that the vast majority of respondents (86.2%) assert that the US idea of democracy in Iraq was not successful because it was unsuitable for the Iraqi political system. Likewise, Saeed observed that the final result was a distorted democratic practice because the army and other security organisations were politically used to manipulate the security situation in order to exclude anti-occupation forces from taking part in elections.

The main political outcome of the occupation has been the formation of free political parties, regardless of the basic political principles of those parties in relation to the national interests of Iraq. This resulted in democratic chaos and led to the establishment

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80 Respondent A4, interview on 17th April 2010, Baghdad.

81 “Electoral violence” is one of the types of violence used to influence the elections through rigging, tearing up competitors’ propaganda papers, using bombs and the destruction of state institutions for propaganda, as well as exploitation of state resources to implement limited propaganda. P. Staniland, “Violence and Democracy”, pdf article, (University of Chicago, 2011). p. 11-16


of non-democratic totalitarian parties in post-occupation Iraq. The formation of such parties has been a major obstacle to the progress of democracy, causing division along ethnic and religious lines.85 Indeed, some parties have maintained their historical religious links with neighbouring countries at the expense of loyalty to their own country.86 In essence, the US could also be blamed for the deep sectarian divisions in Iraq,87 as Americans have done much to create a Shia-dominated government, as noted by Cordesman and Khazai. Consequently, the weak Sunni participation in the elections on January 30, 2005, proved to be a major blow to the American goal of forming an inclusive political process that could bring stability to Iraq.88 Regarding this, Dr Al-Attiyah, noted that, a functioning democracy requires the rule of law, accountability and peaceful transfer of power.89

Several views were expressed by the interviewees regarding the degree of women’s participation in politics following the US invasion. The first view is that the US achieved a great deal in elevating women into political activities. According to the questionnaires’ findings, approximately half of the respondents perceived substantial progress in encouraging women to engage more in politics. These findings are consistent with some open-ended comments made by participants.

By importing democracy into Iraq, the interview findings suggest that the US government had plans to extend its power and control over the country. Another group of respondents (83.1%) expressed doubt about the compatibility of the democratic processes with existing practices in Iraq, especially with regard to the complications in


the Iraqi political system and sectarian compositions. The perceptions of some of these respondents in the survey were that there are fundamental differences between the political values of Iraq and the US-imported democracy, which restricted the American version of democracy from working in Iraq. Some researchers, such as Atwan and Farhan, observed that the political process launched by the US government brought dire consequences and caused the dismantling of the country into ethnic and sectarian groups.\(^90\) Also, in his article about Arabic democracy, Fayaad noted that the US placed the political process in Iraq in a difficult situation by imposing their democratic system, e.g., the power-sharing system. The US also strove to establish democracy, which was unable to produce a modern Iraqi state.\(^91\) This echoes Cordesman and Khazai, who claim that the US and Iran backed the former Prime Minister, Nouri Al-Maliki, who dominated all three branches of government: the executive, legislative assembly and judiciary.\(^92\) This forced the Sunnis and Kurds to compromise on what was planned to be an inclusive Iraqi government, but became Al-Maliki-dominated. Thus, the outcome of the formation of a new government was more of a plot to enable Shia control of the government rather than forging national unity.\(^93\) This led to majority rule,\(^94\) which was a new concept and took some adjusting to, with one participant, Nabil Mohammad, seeing the Iraqi democratic process as improper; a “meaningless image”, so that “after 2005 the government has been underperforming and failing to live up to its responsibility”.\(^95\)

Cordesman and Khazai also argue that the creation of a new “unity” government resulted in a Shi’ite majority leadership in Iraq that benefitted Prime Minister Al-Maliki, who has since increased and consolidated his hold over Iraqi politics, security

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\(^95\) Nabil Mohammad Salim, interview on 4\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.
forces and oil revenues.\textsuperscript{96} The Prime Minister’s dictatorial leadership style was seen by the participants as a major obstacle to the democratic transition.

Nonetheless, there were some respondents who believed that the democratic failure in Iraq was internal. The extreme sectarian and ethnic divisions in Iraq, as well as the unstable political system and other intrinsic factors, were seen as Iraqi problems which the government should resolve. Abdul-Meguid observed that the future of the new Iraq relies on producing a government that will resolve sectarian differences and an insurgent power-sharing system in the country.\textsuperscript{97}

Linked to this, another segment of respondents expects termination of the artificial model of Iraqi democracy, and its replacement by a more traditional version. They avow that Iraqis should reject sectarianism and partisanship in favour of establishing a civil society which marks the first step towards democracy. This is in line with the point of view of Aliwi, who argues, "democracy will not be achieved in a society that believes in the philosophy of the gun and the gun in political action".\textsuperscript{98} This essentially means that because of the power struggles in the political system, the process of democracy has been defeated.

In brief, the democratic project was initiated in Iraq by the US as the sponsoring body; it remains fragile and the future of democracy in Iraq is uncertain due to the complex nature of Iraqi society which is based on sectarianism and ethnic factors, not to mention that the impact of regional and foreign factors fuelled the above. In others words, the democratic project brought about by the US (with Iraq as an example) in the Middle East region, has resulted in a divided society and the emergence of terrorism, with armed factions fighting each other, which together with political crises, wreaked havoc in the country.

\textsuperscript{96} Cordesman and Khazai. “Patterns of Violence in Iraq”, p. 1-3.

\textsuperscript{97} W. Abdul Meguid, “The new political order: Reading in the form of consensual democracy” (Cairo: Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, 2004), accessed 12\textsuperscript{th} July 2014 (in Arabic).

For the democratic process to succeed, pre-existing practices and culture should be incorporated, and the power-sharing system and the forging of consensus among political parties should be discarded.

Of course, ultimately, democratic change should come from within Iraq rather than being imposed from outside.

8.5 Summary

This chapter has shown that there are varied views on the condition of democracy in Iraq. The interviews and questionnaires consistently suggest the democratic project brought about by the US after 2003 has been affected by a number of factors which can be categorized as internal, regional and foreign factors. The foremost issue is the sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia factions, which emerged after 2003 as a result of the presence of US forces. The US is also responsible for undermining the democratic project by the establishment of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), which was based on the idea of power-sharing; the sectarianism that followed entirely undermined the democratic project. The US was unable to bring all Iraqi factions to the negotiating table, thus some were not represented in the so-called ‘inclusive’ Iraqi government, which aimed to embrace all components of Iraqi society regardless of their sect or religion.

The US imposition of a democratic system did not suit the traditional politics already established in Iraq, hence the failure to maintain a peaceful political system in the country. The legacy of Saddam’s regime is another challenge facing the practice of democracy in post-invasion Iraq. The participants affirm that oppressive policies have long been a feature of Iraqi democracy, leaving a negative impact.

Concurrently, neighboring countries, particularly Iran, interfered in the democratic system. The majority of interviewees acknowledge that regional intervention occurred in Iraqi political affairs and that Iran provided logistical support or even fixed results in favour of specific political parties linked to their agendas. On the other hand, Arab support was also agreed to have had a negative impact, causing instability; one example
being Kuwait, while Saudi Arabia was also seen as giving support to the Sunni parties, although some neighbouring countries, such as Turkey have remained neutral.

Contrastingly, the integration of a greater number of Iraqi political parties was identified representing minor groups, along with the establishment of an open political system. The respondents also noted the US’s enhancement of women’s participation in politics, and that Iraq has witnessed other democratic transformations, with robust steps being taken in this regard, such as towards greater freedom of expression, freedom of the media, and freedom of religion. That has been evident through the political process, which featured all the political spectrums of Iraqi society.

The US also paved the way for the emergence of so-called political Islam, which is considered a preliminary stage in order to reach the final stage, which is real democracy.

The promotion of democracy was seen by some respondents as a US agenda to destabilize the traditions and culture in Iraq, to enable the US to continue its control over Iraqi politics. This exposes the challenges the country had to face in terms of maintaining absolute sovereignty, which will be discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 9

SOVEREIGNTY

Introduction

The findings of the previous chapter showed that due to the unsuitability of US democracy to Iraqi political culture, the country was exposed to political instability, sectarian division and chaos. This chapter will examine the perceptions of the Iraqi people via the questionnaires and interview data in order to consider understandings of the question of sovereignty in Iraq 2003. The chapter analyses internal and external factors that affected Iraqi sovereignty after 2003 using relevant questions from the interviews and questionnaires.

9.1 Interview Findings - Iraqi Elite Opinion

9.1.1 Internal Factors

This section analyses the interview data collected from fieldwork in Baghdad, Anbar and Fallujah. To this end, questions 17 and 18 were used for the analysis. Question 17 examined the extent to which Iraq constitutes an independent state. The findings show that the participants held diverse opinions on this. For instance, the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Katab, observes that:

Despite the US withdrawal from Iraq both the national sovereignty and independence of Iraq have remained incomplete, and Iraqis cannot decide on their own matters. In other words Iraq has not been independent in terms of internal and foreign decision making.\(^1\)

Another participant, the Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at Al-Nahrain University, Al-Maamouri, mentions that: “Iraq is not an independent state as it is

\(^1\) Shakir Kattab, interview on 21st February 2012, Baghdad. The same views are held by Hassen Falahi Hussein, Rahim Al-Qurayshi, RufahYasin Al-Gadi, Respondent, A8, Yasin Kamar Hilal, Azhar Al-Shaykhali, Iman Jawad Al-Barzingi, and Salih Yasir, interviews between 1st March and 14th May, Baghdad and Anbar province.
haunted by Chapter Seven,\(^2\) not to mention the fact that the Iraqi government cannot use the oil revenues without the consent of President Obama.”.\(^3\)

The Head of the Centre for International Studies at the University of Baghdad, Dr Salim, agrees with this view, stating:

The sovereignty of the state of Iraq remains incomplete and its political will remains restricted. That becomes evident from the fact that Iraq is still haunted by Chapter Seven of the UN charter. Moreover, Iraq’s internal affairs have been subject to direct or indirect intervention by many countries in the region.\(^4\)

However, another line of thought emerged from the data which suggests that while Iraq was under US occupation, it regained its autonomy, which gave room for its subsequent independence in 2011. This view was shared by the Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at Al-Nahrain University, Fayad, who states that:

As far as the contemporary world is concerned the concept of independence is relative, so that in my view, following the withdrawal of the US troops, Iraqis are now in command of their own decisions in terms of internal and foreign policy. But the question remains as to whether the process of decision making is being influenced by others. It is true that this can be applied to all countries

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\(^2\) On 2\(^{nd}\) August 1990 Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait. The following day, 3\(^{rd}\) August, the UN Security Council issued Resolution No. 660 of 1990, referring to the Iraqi government as being a threat to international peace and security. A further resolution, UN Security Council Resolution No. 661 of 1990, was issued on 6\(^{th}\) August 1990, putting Iraq under the provisions of Chapter Seven as stipulated by Article 51 of the UN Charter. As a result, Iraq became the subject of a long series of provisions featuring UN resolutions, most importantly Resolution No. 687 of 1991 that devised specific methods for drawing up borders, compensation payments, and disarming Iraq of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). All the above resolutions confirmed (explicitly or implicitly), that Iraq still posed a threat to international peace and security, and for that reason it would remain under the provisions of Chapter Seven of the UN Charter. However, the provisions of that chapter would render the government of Iraq completely incapable of using its huge internal resources or of managing its wealth and assets abroad, or otherwise protecting them from calls for freezing and confiscation made by parties who believed they had been subject to damage due to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Following the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 another package of UN resolutions was issued by the Security Council which confirmed that, in one way or another, Iraq should remain under the provision of Chapter Seven of the UN Resolutions. The most significant of those resolutions was Resolution No. 1482 of 2003, which determined that Iraq was an occupied territory, and that foreign troops in Iraq would be considered occupation forces. This means that the US, as an invading force, would be in charge of protecting the resources, wealth and assets of the state under, occupation both internally and abroad. Security Council Resolution 660 2\(^{nd}\) August 1990. Available at: [http://www.iilj.org/courses/documents/iraqsecuritycouncilresolutions.pdf](http://www.iilj.org/courses/documents/iraqsecuritycouncilresolutions.pdf), accessed 10\(^{th}\) November 2014. Also see, UN- Security Council Resolution 1483, “the Rebuilding of Iraq”, 21\(^{st}\) September 2014. Available at URL: [http://www.asil.org/insights/volume/13/security-council-resolution1483-rebuildingofIraq](http://www.asil.org/insights/volume/13/security-council-resolution1483-rebuildingofIraq) accessed 10\(^{th}\) November 2014.

\(^3\) Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, interview on 23\(^{rd}\) February 2012, Baghdad.

\(^4\) Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.
worldwide as no state makes a decision in terms of internal or foreign affairs without taking both the internal and external facts into account.\(^5\)

A third perspective evident from the interview data shows that Iraq became an independent state from the time the power of the civil ruler, Paul Bremer, was terminated in June 2004. Some went further to claim that Iraq became independent from the moment the governing council came into existence in June 2003. This perception was embraced by Respondent A8, a staff member at the University of Baghdad, who believes that:

Iraq is an independent state at both the internal and foreign levels, and the elected government of Iraq after 2003 has the freedom and power to sign agreements without foreign intervention. In other words the government has the freedom of decision making in both internal and foreign affairs.\(^6\)

In agreement with these ideas, the political advisor to the Prime Minister, Al-Zuwayni, states that:

Yes, Iraq is an independent state, as Iraq in 2011 is different to Iraq in 2005. In this regard the level of maturity and awareness among the Iraqis has increased, and the Iraqi people have become more concerned about the national rather than the regional interests. That is obvious from the active role Iraq is playing at the regional level by interacting with regional and non-regional powers through the organisation of summit conferences to settle current disputes.\(^7\)

The Representative of the Islamic Fadila Party in the Iraqi Parliament, Al-Marae, expresses similar views by saying:

Certainly Iraq is enjoying independence, as after 2003 the country has played an important role in the Arab arena particularly following the success of the Arab summit conference.\(^8\) Also, Iraq is being counted on in major political dilemmas

\(^5\) Amir Hassan Fayad, interview on 23rd February 2012, Baghdad.

\(^6\) Respondent A8, an interview, 20 March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^7\) Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.

\(^8\) For the first time in 22 years, Iraq hosted the Arab Summit conference on 29th March 2012. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hoshiyar Zebari, expressed his joy at the convention of the conference in Baghdad stating that he considered it to be an indicator “of the beginning of a new stage in the history of the Arab region which was featuring unprecedented political changes”. He also saw it as giving a clear message for the return of Iraq to its Arab and regional surrounding so as to become integrated with the Arabs after long years of isolation. However, the main aim of the summit convention in Baghdad was to “ensure Arab unity and solidarity though teamwork, and through maintaining the security of all Arab countries, as well as ensuring their legal right to defend their national independence and preventing meddling with their affairs”. In a reference to Syria the convention has issued what has become known as the “Baghdad Document” in which the Arab state ministers convening in Baghdad condemned the foreign intervention in Syria calling for those responsible for civil rights violations to be
in the region, as in the supervision of the negotiations between Iran and committees on the prohibition of WMD.\textsuperscript{9}

The same view is also expressed by Dr Hajeer Adnan Amin, a staff member at the University of al-Nahrian, who explains that:

Despite all the fuss Iraq is an independent state. This is for the simple reason that the public movements have been represented in the parliament, and the process of decision-making at both the internal and external levels has been independent. Nonetheless, on the other hand the independence of the state is greatly subject to the type and nature of regional influence.\textsuperscript{10}

However, a county council member, Al-Tarmouz\textsuperscript{11}, also adopts the view, in conjunction with Khalifa, that what really sometimes matters is “the regional intervention in Iraq featuring Iran and Turkey”.\textsuperscript{12} The same opinion is held by the President of the Organisation of Political Prisoners. The President of the Organisations of the Civil Society in Iraq, Hana Adwar, argues that: “The situation has been chaotic, and relatively speaking Iraq still remains under pressure from the international community, including regarding the compensation for Kuwait due to the Iraqi invasion in 1991.”\textsuperscript{13}

With regard to Question 18, which addresses to what extent the security forces were able to protect the country from foreign interference and enforce stability, there were diverse opinions. Some claim that the imposing US presence affected the capacity of Iraqi security forces to maintain autonomy in securing the nation from foreign interference. For example, the Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies, Abid Ali al-Mamouri, explains that:

The Iraqi government is making great efforts to enhance security and stability through its security systems, but the problem is that the US government

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{9} Hussein Suleiman Al-Marae, interview on 30\textsuperscript{th} April 2012, Baghdad.
  \item \textsuperscript{10} Hajeer Adnan Amin, interview on 17\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad
  \item \textsuperscript{11} Arkan Khalaf Al-Tarmouz, interview on 14\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Al-Anbar.
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Nahlah Jabbar Khalifa, interview on 14\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Al-Anbar.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Hana Adwar, interview on 12\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.
\end{itemize}
deliberately meant to keep the army and security forces in Iraq below the required standard to underperform their duties.  

A county council member, the representative of the Communist Party in Iraq, Salih Yasir, believes that:

Progress has been made regarding the establishment of the security forces in Iraq, but that work has yet to be completed, i.e. those forces are still incapable of protecting the country. The main reason is that the formation of those forces featured sectarianism and power sharing rather than professionalism, making it unable to cope with potential internal and foreign threats.

However, Respondent A8, a staff member at the University of Baghdad, argues that:

After the establishment of an elected Iraqi government in 2005, the security forces have played a decisive official role in protecting the country from potential threats at both internal and external levels. Nevertheless, those security forces are still in need further training to gain knowledge, experience and professionalism in the service they provide, and how to abstain from involvement in political parties and militias.

Another viewpoint argues that the existence of numerous security systems can lead to instability as it represents an inappropriate approach to dealing with the security challenges Iraq faces. In this regard, the Political Advisor of the Prime Minister Al-Zuwayni, is of the opinion that

Numerous security systems should be unacceptable as they could lead to the deterioration of security, so that it would be preferable that the security task should be entrusted to specific systems, and that could have a positive impact on the security process in Iraq. Anyway those forces have, to a certain extent, contributed to the promotion of security and stability in Iraq.

The former Minister for Human Rights and member of Iraqi Alliance bloc Al-Shaykhali, is among the proponents of that viewpoint, arguing that:

The Iraqi security forces have been incapable of defending the country against internal and external threats given the numerous sources of decision-making and the lack of coordination between the various security powers, not to mention the numerous security violations and the incompetence and the inexperience of those involved in those forces.

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15 Salih Yasir, interview on 18th March 2012, Baghdad
16 Respondent A8, an interview, 20 March 2012, Baghdad.
17 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad
18 Azhar Al-Shaykhali, interview on 13th March 2012, Baghdad.
Another opinion finds participants arguing that the security dilemma goes beyond establishing and training the security forces to include the nature of the political process. For instance, the Head of the Centre for International Studies at the University of Baghdad, Dr Salim, believes that there are political reasons behind the security problems:

The Iraqi security forces have been incapable of defending the country from internal and external threats due to those forces being incompetent and inexperienced. Moreover, the majority of those forces have partisan links and have been infiltrated by the militias so that they have become unable to protect the country.  

The above viewpoint is endorsed by a county council member, Al-Gadi Rufah Yasin, who believes that the problem is political and that:

A lot of corruption is involved with regard to security matters in Iraq. However, confining the security issue to the duties of the prime minister has negative effects on the performance of the security systems that have been described as having partisan and sectarian links.

Some cast doubts on the security forces in terms of responsibility and performance. According to a Taha Ali Hussein, one of a sample of Iraqi Academics in Amman:

As long as the politicians are showing keenness to establish forces to match their partisan and sectarian agenda, the outcome will be forces incapable of defending the country against internal and external threats. Thus Iraq has to establish a regular army to perform its duties with due competence and professionalism, and the national interest should come before sectarian and partisan interests regarding the activities of those forces.

Among the supporters of the above idea is Sadi Mohamed Awad, representing the case study in Fallujah City. He explained that:

Any real deployment of security forces on the ground has been non-existent, and instead armed sectarian militias in military and police uniform have been deployed. However, many citizens have been kidnapped by those forces including a number of citizens who were abducted from the Iraqi Ministry of

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19 Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4th March 2012, Baghdad.
20 Rufah Yasin Al-Gadi, interview on 14th May 2012, Baghdad.
Higher Education and Scientific Research in 2006 and have either been tortured or killed.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{9.1.1.1 Summary of Interview Findings on Internal Factors}

The interview findings show that a number of participants agree that due to regional intervention in its affairs Iraq should not be considered as an independent state on the internal and external levels. However, some who believe that sovereignty remains incomplete at both internal and external levels due to the foreign commitments on Iraq, such as Chapter Seven of the UN charter and the imposition of reparations on Iraq after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. However, after the US occupation of Iraq, the country was also subject to another package of UN resolutions issued through the Security Council which mandated that Iraq should remain under the provisions of Chapter Seven resolutions. The most significant was Resolution No. 1483 of 2003, which determined that Iraq was an occupied territory and the foreign troops in Iraq would be considered occupation forces. This means that the US, as an invading force, would be in charge of protecting the resources, wealth and assets of the state under occupation both internally and abroad. This clearly has a negative impact on the independence and sovereignty of the country. Others stated that Iraq is an independent state which is evident through the active role Iraq it is playing at the regional level by taking part in regional and non-regional conferences to resolve current disputes, such as the Arab Summit Conference (2012) that was held in Iraq. This positively reflects the increasing level of maturity among Iraqis in general.

Furthermore, some interviewees believe the new Iraqi government has contributed toward building the Iraqi security forces as it is able to protect people from internal and external threats, even though some training is still needed in this respect. Others believe that the American government had a hand in developing the abilities of the Iraqi security forces. Some people agree that regional intervention has had a negative impact on the performance of the Iraqi forces. They also mention that the inability of those forces to secure the country was due to power-sharing and sectarianism rather than a lack of professionalism; this led to the inability to cope with potential threats which reflects in a negative way on the country’s sovereignty.

\textsuperscript{22} Sadi Mohamed Awad, interview on 19\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Fallujah
9.1.2. External Factors (the Role of the US)

This section examines the various opinions of Iraqis concerning external factors that affected the sovereignty situation in Iraq after 2003. The section is analysed according to the responses to questions 19, 20, 21 and 22 of the interview data. The interview data reveals a range of opinions in this area.

The analysis reveals a number of perceptions the US goals in the Middle East region in general and Iraq in particular. One particular notion is that the US has achieved its goal of sowing the seeds of disharmony among Iraqis with a view to going on to create division across the Middle East. For example, the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Dr Katab, believes that: “The US has not achieved its aims but has rather inflicted a great damage on the region. Yet, the US itself has suffered great losses but could probably be able to achieve its aims in the long run.”

For his part Ahmed Kamal believes that: “by invading Iraq the US has achieved its aims, and the invasion has started to pay out in neighbouring counties, and it has been rumoured a new plan to divide the region is underway”.

However, the political adviser to the Prime Minister Al-Zuwayni, is of the view that: “the US has achieved its goals featuring the restructuring of the political regimes in the Middle East and containing Iraq”. This view is supported by the President of the Iraqi Teachers’ Organisation, Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, who believes that:

It could be said that the US has achieved its desired aims in Iraq by toppling the previous regime and by inflicting maximum damage on the country’s social structure, not to mention the fact that the US introduced changes to the Iraqi economy to cope with the capitalist philosophy so that it would become an easy ride for US companies.

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23 Shakir Kattab, interview on 21st February 2012, Baghdad.
25 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
The same views are also endorsed by a religious advisor who preferred to remain anonymous, respondent A7, who adds that:

Yes absolutely, the US has achieved its aims in Iraq and the Middle East region as follows: the achievement of the grand Middle East plan aiming at integrating the Israeli economy into the Arab economy. This has been realised through the invasion of Iraq so that Israel can take its share of Iraqi oil, and also, the political and economic restructuring of the region.27

Another opinion, however, argues that the US has achieved its goals in Iraq but not in the region. A member of Baghdad County Council and representative of the Sadr bloc in the Iraqi Parliament, Al-Saedi, believes that:

The US has worked hard to achieve its aims and agenda which go beyond the invasion of Iraq, most importantly getting rid of the regimes in the Arab world one after another as those regimes have no role to play in relation to American interests, and Iraq is a case in point. Also, restricting the role of Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon, in addition to enhancing the security of Israel.28

Dr Al-Dailami, a staff member at the University of Al-Anbar, representing the case study in al-Anbar Province, believes that:

The US is making every effort to take full control of the Middle East, and has so far succeeded by installing pro-US regimes in favour of its own interests, particularly in Iraq which represents a safety valve in the Middle East.29

Some believe that by taking the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq in 2011 into account, it can be said that the US has failed to achieve its aims in Iraq. In this regard, a member of the County Council, and representative of the Communist Party in Iraq, Dr Yasir, in the case study in Baghdad City, argues that:

The US model applied in Iraq has proved to be a failure. Despite the fact that the US invaded Iraq as a liberator, once it set foot on Iraqi soil it assumed the role of an invader. Also, the US strategies in Iraq have ended in diverse results and have had negative impacts on Iraqi society.30

According to a sample featuring the Iraqi Academics in Amman as represented by Hussein,

27 Respondent A7, interview on 23rd April 2012, Baghdad.
29 Mohamad Daham Al-Dailami, interview on 14th May 2012, Anbar.
30 Salih Yasir, interview, on 18th March 2012, Baghdad.
The US policy in terms of its colonial and imperial aims is unlikely to achieve its goals either in Iraq or anywhere on the globe. That has been due to the inconsistency of US policies and the aspirations of the Iraqi people featuring freedom and a decent life away from the ideology of the invaders.\textsuperscript{31}

The President of the Organisations of Civil Society in Iraq, Adwar, agrees with this view, maintaining that “I do not think that the US has achieved its goals in Iraq and Middle East. The situation is still out of control and the conflict is still going on in the region”.\textsuperscript{32} The same opinion is highlighted by the head of the Foundation for Political Prisoners (anonymous respondent A2), who states that “by withdrawing from Iraq the US has become the loser”.\textsuperscript{33}

The responses to Question 20, as to whether the outcome of the Iraqi political experience indicates that the US presence in Iraq has been successful, show a range of perceptions. Some believed that the model was acceptable in Iraq and other countries of the region. In this regard Respondent A8, a staff member at the University of Baghdad, argues that:

> The US is considered a successful model in terms of politics and economics. Politically it supervised the change in the political regime in Iraq that provided the chance for all political forces and movements to take part in the political process. Economically, there has been an obvious improvement in the living standards of the Iraqi people as well as an increase in wages in the public sector.\textsuperscript{34}

The Representative of the Islamic Fadila Party in the Iraqi Parliament, Al-Marae, goes further to state that:

> I think that the changes that have taken place in Iraq since 2003 are worthwhile and contributed effectively to the demise of tyranny. Thus it could be said that the American experience in Iraq is unique and could be useful to neighbouring countries.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{31} Taha Ali Hussein, interview on 25\textsuperscript{th} May 2012, Jordan.

\textsuperscript{32} Hana Adwar, interview on 12\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{33} Respondent A2, interview, on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{34} Respondent A8, interview with researcher, on 20\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{35} Hussein Suleiman Al-Marae, interview on 30\textsuperscript{th} April 2012, Baghdad.
Others argue that even though the model has been acceptable there are some reservations. For example, an academic staff member at the Centre for Urban Planning and Civil Society who preferred to remain anonymous (respondent A3) argues that:

It is not easy to make a judgment on the experiment now. Formal democracy has opened the door to “non-democratic” political Islam, yet this stage is indispensable for real democracy to flourish. Importing democracy cannot create a democratic society, but practising democracy may lead after some time to a democratic society.\(^\text{36}\)

However, a member of Baghdad County Council, Hussein, believes that: “Politically speaking the US model is formally successful and the same could be said about the free economy based on competitiveness. But the situation in Iraq is completely different as the US model is not applicable for Iraq.”\(^\text{37}\)

This line of thought rejects the US model as being irrelevant to the region. In this respect, the former Minister of State for Women’s Affairs and member of the Iraqi Alliance bloc, Al-Shaykhali, believes that the American experiment in Iraq provides clear evidence that the model has been a failure, saying that:

The fact that the American experiment has been a model to be followed is inconceivable. The US and Iraq are two different entities in terms of the societies and the political environment. In short the US is not considered a successful model economically and politically.\(^\text{38}\)

Amin, a staff member at the University of al-Nahrain, also makes the point that:

It is out of the question that the US provides a model to be followed in terms of economy and politics. In brief, any model should emerge from within, taking into account the social circumstances of the country. Thus it becomes obvious that all countries that have achieved economic and political success have their experiment generated from within their territories.\(^\text{39}\)

In response to Question 21, which examines whether the US entered Iraq in 2003 as a liberator or as an invader, the interview discovered a range of opinions. Some participants believe that the American presence in Iraq could be described as liberation,

\(^{36}\)Respondent A3, interview on 19\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{37}\)Hassen Falahi Hussein, interview with researcher on 1\(^{st}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{38}\)Azhar Al-Shaykhali, interview on 13\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.

\(^{39}\)Hajeer Adnan Amin, interview on 17\(^{th}\) March 2012, Baghdad.
while others viewed it as an occupation. For instance, the Head of the Committee for Women and Children at the Provincial Council, Dr Al-Barzingi, suggests that:

Both descriptions could be applicable as the US entered Iraq as a liberator to overthrow the prevailing dictatorship that would otherwise be impossible for anyone to confront. On the other hand as an invader the US has brought the maximum political, cultural and economic damage upon Iraq. 40

Nevertheless, the head of the Centre for International Studies, University of Baghdad, Nabil Mohamed Salim, is of the view that: “The move has certainly been an occupation. That is evident from the UN Security Council resolution 1483 putting Iraq under international custodianship. In other words, the US was viewed as an invader rather than a liberator”. 41

Katab argues that, “the move has been an invasion and destruction of Iraq and the countries of the region in general”. 42 The same views have been reiterated by the Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies, al-Mamouri, who confirms that “the US entered Iraq as an invader rather than a liberator. Resolution 1483 provides a good example as it has given the US the mandate to control the situation at all levels in Iraq”.43 For his part, the political advisor to the Prime Minister, Al-Zuwayni, argues that:

Either description could apply to the US move into Iraq, i.e. as an invader or as a liberator. The former description could be understood from the UN resolution, while the latter description could refer to the fact that the US has saved the Iraqi people from the tyrant. 44

The response to Question 22, which addresses whether the security and political situation in Iraq necessitated the continuation of the US presence in Iraq, the interview data also reveals a range of opinions. Some of the participants believe that the continuation of the US presence was necessitated by the political instability in Iraq. For

40 Iman Jawad Al-Barzing, interview on 4th March 2012, Baghdad.
41 Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4th March 2012, Baghdad.
44 Bushra Al-Zuwayni, interview on 29th April 2012, Baghdad.
example, the Head of the Committee for Women and Children at the Provincial Council, Al-Barzingi, was of the opinion that: “The existence of the US in Iraq is indispensable as a requirement for the reform of the political process which has been subject to failures from time to time due to political disagreements.”

According to Gazal, a staff member at the University of al-Anbar, in the case study in Fallujah City, “a need exists for its presence, yes, security-wise the US must be present as the sectarian nature of the Iraqi security forces makes them untrustworthy.”

A second line of thought suggests that the US presence in Iraq was a result of a need to resolve the political instability in the country after 2003. For example, the former Minister of State for Woman Affairs and member of the Iraqi Alliance bloc, Azhar al-Shaykhali, believes that: “The continued US presence in Iraq is politically motivated. However, the political crisis that takes place between political groups has made this presence necessary in order to take control of the situation.”

For her part, Amin, a staff member at the University of al-Nahrain argues that the Iraqis were responsible for their undoing stating:

As to whether we are the ones who make that decision, if the answer is yes, then one should ask whether we have the intention to continue. For that reason it could be maintained that we just wanted them to continue as a formality. Thus, from now on I believe it is our duty as Iraqi people to define the mode of the US presence in Iraq while the politicians, despite their differences, agree to that.

A third opinion argues that the US presence in Iraq is not a necessity, and that the political and security regime in Iraq has become stable. For instance, the Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies, Al-Mamouri, agrees, saying: “the US presence in Iraq has not been a necessity; on the contrary its presence has had a negative impact on Iraq.”

The same viewpoint is endorsed by the President of the Iraqi Teachers’ Organisation, Al-Gorashi, who believes that “the US presence so far has failed to meet the aspirations

46 Omer Hussein Gazal, interview on 19th May 2012, Fallujah.
47 Azhar Al-Shaykhali, interview on 13th March 2012, Baghdad.
48 Hajeer Adnan Amin, interview on 17th March 2012, Baghdad.
and ambitions of the Iraqi people either politically, economically or in terms of security.\footnote{Rahim Muhammad Al-Gorashi, interview on 21st April 2012, Baghdad}

Al-Dailami, also believes that:

The US should be held responsible for the deterioration of security and stability in Iraq. It would be impossible to restore stability and security in Iraq without a real US withdrawal from Iraq. Thus, even a symbolic US presence in Iraq should mean political and security instability in the country.\footnote{Mohamed Daham Al-Dailami, interview on 15th May 2012, Fallujah.}

### 9.1.2.1 Summary of Interview Findings on External Factors

The findings of the interviews suggest that the majority of interviewees agree that the US has achieved its goals in the Middle East region and in particular Iraq, but some state that the US presence in Iraq has inflicted damage and crises on the country. Others admit that the US, on the one hand, has succeeded in toppling a dictatorship but, on the other hand, contributed to dismantling the Iraqi state. Some addressed what they see as the political agendas involved in the toppling of the Saddam regime, the most important being the Grand Middle East Project,\footnote{The Grand Middle East plan proposed by the US in 2003 involved four reforms to be made in the region: The most important was to reform the system of governance in the Arab world, to consider the peaceful exchange of power. The second was economic reform by considering the capitalist option and the free market economy. While the third reform was to reform the educational systems particularly religious education. And finally, considering freedom as an option including the freedom of women to undertake a wider role in the society. Nazemroaya, “Plans for Redrawing the Middle East: The Project for a New Middle East”, Global Research, 18th November, 2006), \url{http://www.globalresearch.ca/plans-for-redrawing-the-middle-east-the-project-for-a-new-middle-east/3882?print=1}, accessed 24th June 2014.} and to enhance Israeli security at the same time. In this regard, one participant, Fayad, states that:

The Grand Middle East programme could be understood to mean that the political entities in that area should feature on a new map indicating a break up and partition according to traditional standards (religious, ideological, national, tribal etc.), so that the state of Israel could be accepted in the Middle East as a religious state representing the Jews.\footnote{Amer Hassen Fayad, interview on 23rd Feb 2012, Baghdad.}

However, a number of interviewees state that the US attempted to diminish the role of Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon. They also believe that the US has not achieved its goals
because it entered the country as a liberator then immediately changed to an occupying power. Furthermore, there is an inconsistency between US visions and the reality of Iraqi society. Some interviewees say that the departure of US troops from Iraq coincided with its failure to achieve its goals in the region.

The discussion of the outcome of the US political experience in Iraq suggests that a number of interviewees agree that the American model was acceptable to Iraqis, and that this is evident through the change in the political system in Iraq and improved living standards for Iraqis. Some see the US model in Iraq as a perfect model, whereas others state that it is too early to evaluate and/or judge the democracy experience. One of the results of the experience is that it paved the way to the emergence of so-called political Islam, which is considered a preliminary stage in order to reach the final stage which is real democracy. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the democratic experience was brought from outside and Iraq did not contribute to the creation of the so-called democratic society itself. However, there is also a more general view that the US model is socially irrelevant to the countries of the region in terms of its political and economic aspects, or even security-wise in the aftermath of the American failure to promote security and stability in Iraq. Linked to this view, some interviewees believe that the success of a political model must come from within rather than be imposed from outside, due to the differences between the American and Iraqi societies and their different political systems. For example, in the case of Iraq it is important to take into account the social circumstances of the country as it is an Islamic society and the prevailing culture among its people is the Islamic culture; thus it is incompatible with the US model. Moreover, all countries which have achieved their political and economic goals have done so by internal rather than external capacities; for this reason the US attempt to apply its model in Iraq failed, particularly at the political level.

The findings of the interviews show that some of the participants agree that the continuation of the American presence in Iraq is necessary for political and security reasons. On the political front it is needed to reform the political process and also to settle political differences among the different political blocs. The security reason is the lack of trust in the Iraqi security forces which are based on sectarianism and ethnicity. Some believe that the continuation of the US presence in Iraq is to protect its interests in the region. However, they also see that the continuation of US presence in Iraq is less
important because their presence for more than ten years has brought no positive contribution regarding the security situation in Iraq. Contrarily, its presence caused the deterioration of the security situation. In this regard, one participant Al-Dailami, emphasizes that the “continued US presence in Iraq will mean political and security instability in the country”.54

A number of interviewees agree that the US entered Iraq as both liberator and invader. On the one hand it contributed to the toppling of the existing dictatorship and helped to save the Iraqi people from tyranny. On the other hand, one could say that the war led to the destruction of the Iraqi state politically, economically and culturally. However, some participants perceive the US presence in the country as constituting an occupation, evident through UN Resolution 1483 which calls the US and UK occupying powers. Moreover, the US contributed to dismantling the Iraqi state as a whole.

Furthermore, some interviewees’ consider independence to have been achieved relatively on the one side, whilst simultaneously there was influence from external processes on the other. In this regard, one participant, Amer Hassen Fayad, discusses the question: What does ‘independence’ or ‘sovereignty’ actually mean in the contemporary world? He offers the view that:

In our contemporary world, political independence and sovereignty are no longer thought of as absolute sovereignty and absolute independence as in politics things will always be thought of as relative rather than absolute. Nonetheless, having said that, for every political entity (state, organisation, individual), sovereignty remains strongly linked to free independent will. More importantly, independence has nothing to do with the process of decision making of the state as that process is a product of internal and external factors, but rather associated with the process of positive or negative decision making made by the free will of the person who has been constitutionally authorised to do so.55

In response to the question of Iraqis’ expectations of ‘independence’ he believes that:

As far as the majority of Iraqis are concerned the traditional understanding of independence is considered ideal whereas the contemporary understanding of independence among the minority of Iraqis is the pragmatic understanding.56

54 Mohamed Daham Al-Dailami , interview on 15th May 2012, Fallujah
55 Amer Hassen Fayad, interview on 23rd Feb 2012, Baghdad.
56 Amer Hassen Fayad, interview on 23rd Feb 2012, Baghdad.
Supporters of the first and second opinions discussed above have different political, religious and sectarian affiliations. Some belong to the Communist Party, while others belong to other secular and liberal parties, not to mention Islamic Sunni and Shia parties. In short, opinion varies regarding the independence of the state of Iraq based on religious, sectarian and political orientation. Supporters of the third opinion, those who believe that Iraq is an independent state, tend to reflect the views of their respective political parties.

9.2 Questionnaire Findings (Iraqi Public Opinion)

This section analyses Iraqi public opinion towards the issue of the sovereignty of the Iraqi state after 2003. It deals with six questions: the first two question relate to internal and regional factors (Iraq & Iran), while the other four questions relate to external factors (the role of the US).

**Question 11** (Internal Factors- after 2003, the Iraqi people became capable of designing and implementing their internal polices independently?)

**Table 9.1 Perceptions of Whether the Iraqi People Became Capable of Designing and Implementing their Internal Polices Independently after 2003.**

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The analysis of Question 11 demonstrates that 69.2% of Iraqis disagree with the notion that the Iraqi people have become capable of designing and implementing their internal polices independently, while 20.8% agree and 6.9% maintain a neutral position. The smallest percentage (3.1%) did not answer this question.

For example, one participant responded: “After, the presence of American forces in the country, Iraq is not considered an independent state. Rather, the American occupation has contributed to destroying all the political and security apparatus of the Iraqi state”

**Question 14** (Regional Factors - Has territorial interference been rejected by the elected Iraq government?)

Table 9.2 Perceptions of the Extent to Which Territorial Interference Been Rejected by the Elected Iraqi Government.

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Figure 9.2 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether Territorial Interference Been Rejected by the Elected Iraqi Government.

The analysis of Question 14 demonstrates that 78.5% of Iraqis disagree that the elected Iraqi government rejected regional intervention in Iraqi affairs, while only 13.1% agree and 8.5% express a neutral viewpoint.

**Question 13** (External Factors - Has the US occupation led to the emergence of a more unified Iraq?)

**Table 9.3 Perceptions of the Extent to Which the US Occupation of 2003 Led to the Emergence of a More Unified Iraq.**

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A high proportion (91.5%) of Iraqis disagree with the notion that the US occupation led to the emergence of a more unified Iraq, while 3.1% of respondents agree with the statement. Only 5.4% maintain a neutral position. This questionnaire data shows that as late as 2012 there was agreement across the religious, geographic and ethnic divide – a majority saw the US government as failing to maintain the unity and independence of the Iraqi state since 2003. One of the participants commented:

It seems that the main aim of the invader was to break up Iraq, which has been evident in its support for one sect at the expense of another. Furthermore, the US has ignored, or rather has turned a blind eye to, the continuing corrupt practices and sectarian killings. This suggests that the US mission in Iraq was unscrupulous.

**Question** 16 (External Factors- Is US policy failing to reach its objectives in Iraq particularly and the Middle East region generally?)
Table 9.4 Perceptions of Whether US Policy Failing to Reach its Objectives in Iraq in Particular and the Middle East Region in General.

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Figure 9.4 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether the US Policy Failing to Reach its Objectives in Iraq in Particular and the Middle East Region in General.

The analysis of Question 16 demonstrates that 50% of Iraqis agree with the notion that the US failed to achieve its goals in Iraq, while just 35.4% disagreed with the statement. Moreover, 8.5% remain neutral. The smallest percentage (5.4%) did not answer this question.
For example, one participant commented, “One of the goals of the US was to weaken the region and push it toward internal and religious conflict”. Another said, “The US invasion of Iraq has led to the complete destruction of the Iraqi state”.

**Question 15** External Factors - Has the presence of US forces in Iraq abolished the sovereignty of the state?

**Table 9.5 Perceptions of Whether the Presence of US Forces in Iraq Ended the Sovereignty of the State.**

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**Figure 9.5 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether the Presence of US forces in Iraq End the Sovereignty of the State.**
The responses to Question 15 show that the majority (71.5%) of participants agree that the presence of the US in the country ended the sovereignty of the state, while 20.0% disagree and 6.9 remain neutral. The smallest percentage (1.5%) did not answer this question.

According to one respondent “Iraq is an occupied state by the US; in other words, Iraq has lost its independence and its security since the presence of the US in the country in 2003”.

**Question 17** (External factors - Is the US presence in Iraq after 2003 generally seen as occupation or liberation?)

**Table 9.6 Perceptions of Whether the Presence of the US in Iraq after 2003 Generally Seen as Liberation.**

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</table>
Figure 9.6 Respondents’ Perceptions of Whether the US in Iraq after 2003 Generally Seen as Liberation.

A very high proportion (88.5%) disagree with the notion that the presence of the US in Iraq after 2003 is generally seen as liberation, while 8.5% of the interviewees agree and 3.1% remain neutral. One participant commented, “The US did not enter Iraq as a liberator, but it came to accomplish its own goals; the most important being to break up Arab unity across the Middle East through which Iraq was targeted.” Another said: “The American intervention in Iraq was not to liberate Iraq, but it could be described as occupation as a whole”.

9.3 Discussion of Interview and Questionnaire Findings

This chapter considers the fifth research question concerning the extent of Iraq’s sovereignty. The analysis of interview and questionnaire data indicates that Iraq’s independence is affected by a number of different factors, such as international, internal and regional forces intervening in its affairs.

Evidence shows that internal factors contributed to a weakening of the Iraqi government in terms of declining sovereignty. The majority of questionnaire participants do not believe that the Iraqi people have become capable of designing and implementing their internal policies independently. These findings are in line with a questionnaire conducted by the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, which

57 The Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies is a specialist centre in the study of political and economic issues. One of its main focuses is the study of the opinions of Iraqis toward the presence
investigated public opinion in Iraq. A huge proportion (81.45%) of respondents, claim that there is insufficient trust among political forces for them to work together to put an end to the occupation.\textsuperscript{58} Similarly, most of the interviewees disagree that the Iraqi government were capable of implementing their internal policies independently. This supports previous studies. For example, Atwan and Abdel Azim argue that in terms of international public law, Iraq would be viewed as lacking sovereignty and that this was made possible by the American presence in Iraq from 2003 onward.\textsuperscript{59} Therefore, Iraq should not be considered to be independent.\textsuperscript{60} Another view is that the regional dimension had a negative impact on the unity and independence of Iraq after 2003, as evident through sectarianism being fuelled, either directly or indirectly, by regional powers.\textsuperscript{61} These findings are in line with a statement made by the former prime minister, Ayad Allawi, who blamed regional powers such as Iran, which played a major role in the violation of Iraqi sovereignty through its intervention in Iraq’s decision-making process, saying, “the issue of identifying a candidate to head the government has become a matter of the conflict between Tehran on the one hand and the religious leaders for the Shia in Iraq”.\textsuperscript{62} In this regard, Atwan and Abdel Azim argue that the Strategic Framework Agreement between the US and Iraq in 2008 constituted a violation of the sovereignty of the state and justified American interference in Iraqi


affairs, for instance in political, military, security and economic terms, despite the US withdrawal at the end of December 2011.63

From the time of the arrival of American troops in the country, Iraq should not be considered as an independent state at the external level, according to the analysis. A majority of participants believe that the US intervention in Iraqi affairs was another violation of the sovereignty of the state; similar to the continuation of Chapter Seven sanctions imposed on Iraq under the UN Charter following its invasion of Kuwait. For instance, one participant observes that: “the Iraqi government cannot use its oil revenues without the consent of President Obama”.64 The findings of the interviews show that the US, on the one hand, succeeded in toppling the dictator’s regime, but on the other hand it contributed to dismantling the Iraqi state as a whole, including its civilian and military institutions. However, some say that there was a political agenda in the toppling of Saddam’s regime and that the most important aspect of this was the US aim of achieving its Grand Middle East Project and enhancing Israeli security. This is confirmed by a comment from one participant who argues that the US sought to weaken the region by fuelling religious conflicts, which meant that the Grand Middle East Project started to yield its fruits.65

However, on the positive side, some believe Iraq to be an independent state and that this is evident through the active role Iraq plays in the regional arena by taking part in regional and non-regional conferences to resolve current disputes, such as the Arab Summit Conference, which was held in Iraq in 2012.

Independence is believed, by the interviewees, to have been achieved in relative terms on the one hand, with simultaneous influence from external processes on the other. This means that political independence and sovereignty are no longer thought of as being absolute. The majority of Iraqis have an idealistic understanding of independence, while a minority are more pragmatic.


64 Abid Ali Al-Mamouri, interview on 23rd February 2012, Baghdad.

65 Omer Hussein Gazal, interview on 19th May 2012, Fallujah.
The US entered Iraq as an occupier rather than a liberator, according to both datasets, which completely contradicts the statements of President Bush and top officials in his administration that: “A liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region, by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions.”66 This findings are in line with a questionnaire conducted by the Information Centre for Research and Development to examine public opinion in Iraq regarding the American military presence in Iraq post-2003, in which the majority of participants (77.5%) answered that it was an occupation and that it violated the sovereignty of the Iraqi state.67 This is incompatible with the concept of sovereignty as explained in the chapter 2, that it is the ability of a state to manage its own domestic policy as it sees fit without any interference from another nation state, and that it should have independence at both internal and external levels.

Conversely, the US has failed to achieve its democratic goals in Iraq, according to the questionnaire responses. However, the continued presence of the US in Iraq is seen by participants as important for political and security reasons. The vast majority (90%) of participants believe that the American presence in the country has not led to the emergence of a more unified Iraq; rather, that it has caused its disintegration. These findings are supported by Shaaban, who argues that the US presence in Iraq led to the emergence of serious challenges, the first of which is political sectarianism, which intensified after the occupation.68 This continued even after the US withdrawal from Iraq, this view confirmed by Cordesman argues that following the US troop’s withdrawal, Iraq witnessed instability, political, sectarian violence and the emergence of


political crisis which impacted negatively on the sovereignty of the country due to regional meddling its internal affairs.\textsuperscript{69}

The new Iraqi government contributed toward building the Iraqi security forces to protect people from internal and external threats, according to some participants, even though some training is still needed in this respect. Furthermore, in terms of external factors, some of the participants believe that the American government was able to develop the Iraqi security forces. This view is supported by the former Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki expressed in 2008,\textsuperscript{70} who stated that: “After today, Iraqi security forces [ISF] will be able to protect the country from internal and external threats due to its professional and efficient abilities to achieve that”. However, a report by the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies and the Association of Muslim Scholars contradicts this claim and suggests that the government was unable to develop the Iraqi security forces to protect the country from internal and external potential threats.\textsuperscript{71} These findings are in line with those of the questionnaire, that the majority of Iraqi public believes that the Iraqi security forces have been unable to protect the country from internal and external potential threats because the US policies were not seriously aimed at enabling Iraqis to defend themselves from potential threats. See Table (9.1).

Regional intervention was reported to have had a negative impact on the performance of Iraqi forces, with indications that the inability of those forces to secure the country was due to power-sharing and sectarianism, rather than a lack of professionalism. This prevented them from coping with potential threats, which in turn affected the country’s sovereignty. Due to the fact that security is considered an essential component of sovereignty, the violation of the country’s security system caused increased problems with Iraqi sovereignty. In this respect, Iraqi scholar Khalaf points out that the state of a nation’s security determines its strength to withstand external forces. This makes security a basic requirement for a nation’s sovereignty. The data reveals that due to the


\textsuperscript{70} Shrofa.com, Former Iraqi Prime Minister, Nori Al-Maliki, “renewed his confidence in the Iraqi security forces”,al -Shrofa.com, (30\textsuperscript{th} August 2012), http://…main/20/0/feature, accessed 22\textsuperscript{nd} August 2014.

\textsuperscript{71} Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, “Iraqi opinion poll regarding the presence of U.S. forces in Iraq.”, 30\textsuperscript{th} December 2011. pp 26-47.
invasion in 2003 and the associated changes in Iraq, particularly the weakening of its military, security and economic capabilities, the sovereignty of the country declined. This provided an opportunity for regional forces to interfere extensively in Iraq, which had a negative impact on the unity and independence of the country from 2003 onwards. Kadhim equally pointed to the influence of the US in reducing the security systems in Iraq, which had consequences for its sovereignty. He argues that the purpose of the American occupation of Iraq was to eliminate the military capacity of Iraq as it posed a constant threat to American interests. Another view is that of Cordesman, who argues that the US committed many mistakes throughout its war in Iraq, which are seen in the lack of strategic plans and absence of a strategy to handle the security situation in Iraq.

9.4 Summary

This chapter has analysed the questionnaire and interview data to identify Iraqi perceptions of internal and external factors that encouraged the decline of Iraqi sovereignty after 2003. Responses to both the interview and the questionnaire pointed to the negative impact of the US invasion upon this, especially as it continued to interfere in Iraqi political, security, economic and social affairs even after its withdrawal. There was also the view that internally the inability of the Iraqi government to control its security forces and maintain adequate security in the country led to interference by regional forces in its internal affairs.

Based on the opinion of the Iraqi elite, independence was seen as being achieved in relative terms. This view accepts that in the contemporary, globalised world, political independence and sovereignty are not absolutes, but are relative values. However, the majority of Iraqis had a more idealistic understanding of the meaning of ‘independence’.

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Most of the participants believed that the US invasion led to the disintegration of the political system in Iraq, which reduced the ability of the government to maintain autonomy. The chapter also revealed some positive attributes about the US presence in Iraq. Although the US invasion and its continuous interference affected the sovereignty in Iraq, its presence equally increased security in the country, especially as they enabled development of the Iraqi security forces.

Iraqi elite opinion believed that Iraq is an independent state and that this has been evident through Iraq’s active role at the regional level, wherein it takes part in regional and non-regional conferences to resolve current disputes.

Notwithstanding, some responses to the questionnaire suggested that the agenda of the US went beyond its formal promotion of democracy or its liberation agenda, and aimed to weaken regional forces that posed a threat to its plans for the Middle East and wider Arab region. Hence, the analysis suggests that a majority of Iraqis blame the US for the deterioration of sovereignty in Iraq.

The following chapter integrates these points with those of previous chapters and presents the conclusions of this thesis.
Chapter Ten

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Iraq has gone from a brutal dictatorship and a sworn enemy of America to an Arab democracy at the heart of the Middle East and a friend of the United States.¹

Introduction

This study has aimed to fill a gap in the understanding of Iraqi opinion regarding the US invasion and circumstances leading to the establishment of formal democracy. The voices of the Iraqi people have been missing in the literature on this subject. This is more important because they learned to be silent for years during the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein which lasted for over thirty years. This is the first study to explore public opinion from the citizens’ perspective.

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part comprises the summary and discussion of the main findings of the study, their implications and contributions, and also examines the research questions and compares them with the findings of other research already conducted in the same area. The second part discusses the main limitations of the study. The third provides recommendations and the way forward for Iraq.

10. 1 Summary and Discussion of the Main Findings and Their Implications

10.1.1 Human Rights

Analysis of data relating to human rights and public freedom shows that while the elite are of the opinion that the US violated human rights, there are clear differences with some believing that the violations were not intentional.

In response to Research Question 1, in terms of to what extent human rights have been respected throughout the whole process, evidence emerging from this study, as well as comparative analysis drawn from previous studies, shows that these have not been respected in Iraq. The majority of the Iraqi elite are of the opinion that the US violated human rights. Thus, it can be maintained that the US actively violated human rights in Iraq breaching the UN charter and the international declaration of human rights. A smaller proportion of the Iraqi elite, however, remarked that they did not intentionally violate human rights. Another small percentage of respondents were of the opinion that the US made both a positive and negative contributions to human rights in Iraq. With regard to the negative side, the US troops in Iraq committed many crimes, such as the arrest of MP Fatah Al-Sheikh. However, some accepted that such abuse is bound to happen. The smallest proportion of participants said that not just the US but the UN were to be blamed equally for turning a blind eye to crimes, such as genocide, committed by the US.

These results reflect the observation that US forces were responsible for crimes committed directly and indirectly. One example is the case of Abeer Al-Ganabi, a child whose home was burned down after she was raped by a US soldier, which could be described as the worst crime in Iraq, and a direct violation of human rights.2 In addition, it can be said to have been indirectly responsible through incidents such as the killing of 17 civilians in 2007 in Al-Nisour Square in Baghdad by the US security company Blackwater. The above viewpoint is reinforced in the following quote:

The US government and its troops have been against the progress of human rights in Iraq. That has been evident from the way prisoners have been treated in Abu Ghraib prison, besides the random arrests, and that US policies have absolutely inconsistent with the international human rights declaration and the UN resolutions as well. Also, such practice is considered a stark violation of international law.\textsuperscript{3}

The above statement is similar to the following view in terms of popular opinion: “\textit{The main human rights violations have been committed by the US as indicated by the abuses in Abu Guraib prison, the Haditha massacre, and the rape at Al Mahmudiyah}”.\textsuperscript{4}

The role of the US in establishing grounds for active participation of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations supported the growth of human rights in Iraq which showed the positive side of US foreign policy government in the country. Though it was not anticipated by their initiator, the US, these civil society organizations condemned crimes committed by US forces and their allies, showing the fruitfulness of democratic input. This study has also shown that Iraq witnessed democratic reforms that were evident in the prosecution of former president, Saddam Hussein, who was given the right to defend himself, which was not offered by his regime.

The former Iraqi governments have played their roles. The findings obtained from Iraqi elite opinions showed that internal forces have had a negative impact in terms of human rights, with some suggesting that systematic human rights violations had been perpetrated by the security forces and police. The findings from the interviews also reinforced the idea of systematic human rights violations committed in Iraq by the security forces and them turning a blind eye to militia crimes. These policies and practices are incompatible with the principles of democratic development in Iraq after 2003.

Conversely, another significant finding is that the Iraqi governments have made some positive contributions in the promotion of human rights, such as the establishment of a Ministry for Women, the Women’s Care Department, and the newly established "watchdog", the Human Rights Commission, as well as the establishment of the Ministry of Human Rights and the Organization of Political Prisoners.

\textsuperscript{3} Shakir Kattab, interview on 21\textsuperscript{st} February 2012, Baghdad.

\textsuperscript{4} Nabil Mohamed Salim, interview on 4\textsuperscript{th} March 2012, Baghdad. The same viewpoint was adopted by Iman Al-Barzangi and Saad Hamid Mahmoud, interviews between 4\textsuperscript{th} and 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 2012, Baghdad.
Furthermore, most Iraqis do not believe that the security forces in Iraq played a role in the incorporation of human rights and public freedoms into the constitution and international agreements, as asserted by the majority of respondents who took part in the survey. A very small number, on the other hand, were neutral in their attitudes to the role of security forces in protecting human rights in Iraq. This lack of trust in the security forces is either due to their small number or lack of training and weapons, or because the basis for them being established was sectarian and based on power-sharing rather than national patriotism and loyalty. This distrust in the security forces is widely prevalent in different religious, regional and ethnic groups. However, some do believe that Iraqi security forces have handled the matter with due transparency and professionalism.

The sectarian violence among the main components of society, namely Sunnis and Shias, left its impact on human rights after 2003. There was an escalation of armed groups (militias) that were affiliated to Shia extremist forces which targeted innocent people of the Sunni component. The same could be said of terrorists activities attributed to Sunni extremists as these forces also targeted innocent members of the Shia Arab component. Thus, all types of people were victims as a result of the conflict, and it cannot be denied that there were foreign and regional agendas fuelling the conflict in order to implement their goals on Iraqi soil both of which received foreign support. Furthermore, the emergence of ‘death squads’ was another internal factor had had a profound impact on the human rights situation. These types of militia greatly impacted on human rights particularly as they targeted individuals from specific groups.

There are also diverse views among Iraqis, both the elite and the general public, regarding the situation of Iraqi women in Iraq from 2003 onward. In this regard, an important finding obtained from the views of Iraqis is that 25% of Iraqi women participated in the political process before 2003. Furthermore, the presence of US forces in the country has resulted in disregard for human rights and public freedom. A minority of Iraqi people were satisfied that the US government had elevated the status of women in Iraq since 2003. Moreover, Iraqi public opinion shows that as late as 2012 there was agreement across the religious, geographic and ethnic divide – with the majority of Iraqis, regardless of their religious, ethnicity and political loyalties, believing that the US government has failed to elevate the status of women.
Similarly, Iran’s intervention in Iraq’s affair by supporting some parties and militias has also had serious consequences on the human rights situation in Iraq. It has assisted by providing them with funding, weapons and training them to target other groups of Iraqi society, in particular those who had positions in, or were members of, the Baath regime.

From this, one can conclude, based on the views of both the Iraqi elite and the general public, that both previous and current human rights issues in the post-invasion phase have indeed worsened and this is blamed equally on the US and Iraqi governments and on Iran.

10.1.2 Security

What also emerged from this research is the view that although the US government contributed to toppling Saddam’s regime and liberating Iraq from dictatorship, it has also been responsible for the deterioration of security.

In response to Research Question 2 in terms of how stable the situation is, evidence emerging from this study, as well as comparative analysis drawn from previous studies, shows that mistakes were committed in the wake of the American occupation of Iraq; for example, the dismantling of the Iraqi army opened up Iraq’s regional borders and also encouraged sectarianism among Iraqi factions. The destabilised security position in Iraq was felt to favour the US. This view is asserted by the following evidence:

The US has deliberately left the Iraqi borders open to pave the way for neighbouring countries to meddle with Iraq’s affairs by supporting armed militias and by helping the occupation in its policies to wreak havoc in the security and economy of Iraq, not to mention the import of professional gangs and hired terrorist organisations to have a free hand in Iraq. Thus the US troops should fully be held to account for the mess.

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6 Respondent A5, interview on 14th May 2012, Baghdad.
There is general agreement among Iraqis that the presence of US troops in Iraq has had a profound impact on the country’s security, the US sowed the seeds of division among the Iraqi people, and its departure would help to speed up the healing of that division among the people of Iraq. Furthermore, the US deliberately ignored security in order to destroy Iraq. Other views suggest that the lack of security was simply a mistake but that it allowed violent politics to develop. This is an important indicator of the psychology of suspicion and distrust of Americans in Iraq. Moreover, the US used their foreign policy as a tactic to achieve their goal, which was to make Iraq an unstable country for their covert agenda to succeed. This view is supported by the following evidence:

The presence of the US forces constitutes part of the sustaining security problem, and withdrawal of US troops has become the preferable option to the Iraqi people. That is for the simple reason that the presence of the US forces has contributed to the killings, the promotion of chaos and instability. The people should be the source of the real security and that security should come from within and not from abroad.  

However, Iraqis did not believe that American withdrawal from Iraq would lead to a deterioration of the security situation; this was confirmed by the majority of Iraqi general public opinion. Similarly, the findings obtained from previous studies, such as the survey by Hammurabi Centre for Research and Studies the feelings experienced by citizens on encountering a US tank in the street. The results showed that more than half the participants said they felt sorry because the occupiers moving freely in the streets spread fear among the people. In others word there is consensus that the US presence in country planted fear and anger in the population.

Ironically, the viewpoints of general public from the case study in Baghdad Province indicate that the withdrawal of US forces led to the deterioration of security. In Anbar Province, the findings showed that more than half of respondents disagree with the statement (see Table 6.3 Chapter 6). In fact, Anbar city showed resistance to the US troops’ presence in the country from the first day of the war. The population of Unbar is mainly Arab Sunni, while the population of Baghdad consists of three main groups;

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7 Ahmed Kamal Ahmad, interview on 11th March 2012, Baghdad.

Shia, Sunni, and Kurd. As late as 2012 there was agreement across the religious, geographic and ethnic divide among the Iraqi elite, with the majority believing that the US withdrawal did not lead to deterioration in security. Both the general public and the elite agreed that the presence of US forces has had a negative effect on the security situation in Iraq since 2003.

From the viewpoint of the Iraqi elite, the US war on terror in Iraq is in stark contrast with the claim by George W. Bush before invasion of Iraq, who stated that: “We have no ambition in Iraq except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people”\(^9\). The study showed a unified opinion across the country that the presence of US forces had undermined the security situation. While the Iraqi elite expressed diverse opinions, nevertheless, it is clear that most Iraqi people are of the opinion that US troops in Iraq have been a cause of worry and fear to the people rather than a source of stability and security. This was an interesting finding of the study which also confirmed the survey conducted by the Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies.\(^10\)

The lack of security and stability in Iraq after 2003 could be attributed to the dysfunctional multiparty system. Due to the lack of law needed to govern and discipline the political system, the parties remain disorganised. To date there is still disagreement among political forces and parties as a result of power-sharing, sectarianism, terrorism and political exclusion and marginalization. In addition, some parties have adopted foreign agendas rather than national issues. Other factors can be classified as regional intervention, for instance, Iran’s support of some Shia political parties.

This study indicates political maturity on the part of the Iraqi elite who did not simply blame the US for their problems; they were also aware of the internal political tensions in Iraq which would have destabilized the party system. The Iraqi elite are well aware of the previous dominance of the Sunni elite, the lack of a genuine political party system under Saddam, the mistrust of the three main groups in Iraq (Shia, Sunni and

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\(^10\) Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, ‘Iraqi opinion poll regarding the presence of US forces in the country’, p. 19-22
Kurd) toward each other, and the unregulated nature of the political parties. It is interesting to note here that the opinions of the elite and the general public differ. The Shia elite are more in favour of the positive role of political parties since they were previously excluded. However, the general public feel less confident about the security situation and the positive role of political parties. The vast majority of the respondents from among the general public disagreed with the notion that the appearance of political parties after 2003 had improved security and ensured stability in the country. A very low proportion expressed their confidence in the role of the political parties.

This study, also investigated the view that the multi-party system in Iraq has actually contributed to an improvement in security and stability and that political parties which appeared after 2003 have had a positive impact on the political process. This view can be supported by the strong presence of parties; for example the Sadr movement has 40 seats in the Iraqi parliament and commands a wide power base on the ground. A very low percentage of Iraqis believe that the multiparty system has improved the security situation slightly. The study also concludes that issues in the domestic political system, such as the government’s inability to control the different sects effectively, encouraged division. The increased violence between Sunni and Shia factions as a result of the presence of US forces in the country can also be considered as one of the most influential internal factors which led to the destabilization of security. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that both the previous and the current Iraqi governments were important factor in the destabilization of security, secondary to the role of the US.

Iraqi elite opinion offers a different explanation of the phenomenon of Iraqis fleeing to neighbouring countries. Some attribute it to the existing political situation based on power-sharing, political exclusion and sectarian agendas, because it failed to accommodate the full Iraqi political spectrum. Others claim it is due to a lack of security and growing violence among Sunni and Shia factions which coincided with the presence of US forces. The majority of those who fled to neighbouring countries were former members of the Baath regime or government decision-makers. They had to flee as they were targeted by the new government forces and the armed militias. Also, Iranian intelligence deployed agents aimed at eliminating them. Furthermore, Iranian regional intervention in Iraqi affairs also had a negative effect, resulting in destabilized
security, with the Iranians supporting some political parties at the expense of other political forces.

From the viewpoint of the general public, the security forces failed to protect the country. That could be attributed to the fact that the security forces were affected by a number of internal and regional factors. The internal factors are the influx of militias into the security forces. The security forces are based on power-sharing and sectarianism rather than competence and qualification, not to mention their lack of training, insufficient weaponry and experience. Another factor that contributed to the failure of the security forces is the regional intervention, such as the Iranian role through its support of some extremists’ factions at the expense of other of the political forces. On this there was agreement across the religious, geographic and ethnic divide with the majority seeing security forces as failing in Iraq.

From that discussion, one can conclude that, based on the views of both the Iraqi elite and the general public, the lack of security in Iraq from the occupation in 2003 until the American withdrawal on 30th December 2011 could be attributed mainly to the US authorities working in Iraq. Deliberate mistakes were committed by Paul Bremer; the former leader of the occupational authority of Iraq. In addition to this, US plans for the post-invasion phase and the decision were made on inaccurate information. However, the situation in Iraq was further worsened by: firstly, the inability of successive Iraqi governments to reach a political compromise with their political rivals on De-Ba’athification law, terrorism, and the policy of exclusion and marginalization; secondly the security forces were incapable of maintaining security because they were based on sectarian lines and power-sharing and suffered from a lack of training and weapons; thirdly the outbreak of sectarian rivalry between the main components of Iraqi society, both Shia and Sunni, cast a shadow over security after 2003; and lastly, the multiparty system was dysfunctional and the parties remained disorganised due to inadequate laws governing political parties.
10.1.3. Economy

The third research question on the economy asked respondents what the impact of the invasion and occupation had been. Important research findings obtained from the opinions of the Iraqi elite indicate that external forces (the US, Iran, Kuwait) are believed to have had a negative effect on the Iraqi economy. However, there is widespread belief among Iraqis that the main reason for the invasion of Iraq by the US and its allies was access to oil. Furthermore, the geopolitical position of Iraq is also important from the US strategic point of view. Many Iraqis believe that US troops were involved in wide-ranging vandalism of the state’s resources. They emphasise that the US should be considered responsible for all the destruction whether deliberate or not. They also express concern about the indirect responsibility of the US through encouraging corruption and mismanagement; whereas others put the blame either on the Iraqi government or policies of neighbouring countries. These findings were obtained from the Iraqi elite. This study also showed that the vast majority of the general public (81.6%) also believe that oil was the main reason for the invasion of Iraq.

The research also found a belief that wide-spread corruption and unemployment reflected negatively on the economic situation throughout the occupation. It is believed that US policy in some way encouraged corruption and opened up access to public funds. This facilitated the process of privatization of state-owned enterprises and sectors after 2003, particularly in the oil industry. Finally, the huge inflow of imported products after the US opened the Iraqi gates resulted in a decline of local industries while generating increased unemployment.

There is a group within the Iraqi elite who believe that oil was not the main reason behind the occupation, but that a number of important factors overlapped one another, including the restructuring of US policies in the Middle East and ensuring US hegemony. In addition, it is thought that occupation was inevitable due to fears of Russian expansion into the region. The study found a belief that the main reason for the US waging war on Iraq was to secure their long term strategic interests in the Middle East region.

Furthermore, Iraqi elite opinion believed that the Ministry of Oil was only protected by US forces because of its own national interest; that the US was trying to keep
documents intact in order to access confidential oil contracts between Iraq and other countries during Saddam’s regime, while they allowed gangs and organised crime networks to engage in the destruction of the economy even allowing the burning of state institutions in Iraq. In addition, the study found that the destruction of the economy could be attributed to terrorist operations, which they believe were established by the US, contributing in one way or another to destroying the infrastructure.

This study also found that the Iraqi people believe that the damage to Iraq’s economy was carried out intentionally, both in the Gulf War and also the invasion in 2003. The US targeted strategic constructions, such as electricity power stations, were also indirectly involved in the destruction of the economy by allowing armed gangs and mafia groups to be involved in political life while committing acts of vandalism.

The majority of the general public in Iraq believes that the economy’s deterioration after 2003 could be attributed to both the Iraqi governments and occupation and its policies. This is justified from several angles. For example, the Iraqi government was not able to provide appropriate solutions for the prevailing economic problems; in addition, the government, in its handling of the different segments of society, paid attention to political rather than national affiliations, which is a political dimension to the problem. In addition, Iraqi elite opinion agrees that problems have arisen from the occupation and its policies; this can be seen in the lack of security which has affected the economy negatively. So to some extent this situation can be partly blamed on the legacy of the previous regime.

There are also diverse views among the Iraqi elite and the general public regarding whether the role of internal forces has been negative for the economy and significantly contributed to the weakening of the economy in Iraq. In other words, successive Iraqi governments have had no special programme directed at solving current problems such as corruption, unemployment and poverty. Furthermore, economic deterioration occurred due to rampant financial and administrative corruption, in particular the squandering of public money. The standard of living in Iraq has not met its potential due to inappropriate government policies coupled with the occupying regime.

On the positive side, the findings of elite opinion show that the country has witnessed economic reforms and increased per capita income. Unemployment was at about 10-
15% which is considered a reasonable percentage from the viewpoint of elites. In contrast to the prevailing economic indicators prior to 2003, the economic situation had improved rather than deteriorated.

The study has also shown diverse opinion among the general public who believe that poverty has not improved since 2003, while the majority of the elite assert that there has been an amelioration of poverty and claim that the government has been able to curtail it, especially when compared to the pre-2003 period. The study also found that the government failed to improve the economic situation despite the huge oil revenues. In addition to the increase in the level of unemployment from 2003 onward, there are approximately eight million Iraqis who are classified as being below the poverty line, in addition to which since 2003 Iraq has witnessed a decrease in key economic development indicators. This has led to the emergence of new forms of poverty such as ‘disguised poverty’.

The study found that differences in opinion regarding whether the economy has improved or not. Whereas some believe the economic situation has improved compared with the previous regime, others argued that the economy has plummeted since 2003, suggesting no improvement. One main reason for the difference in opinion is that Saddam’s regime maintained absolute control of the economy with no external influence. However, following the invasion of Iraq, there was regional and western (in particular US) involvement in Iraqi economic policies alongside internal forces (i.e., successive Iraqi government). All these stakeholders have a common interest, which is to control Iraqi resources, especially oil. As a result, they all battle to gain control of the oil revenue and this has had a negative impact on the economy. Another reason for differences in opinion could be the widespread phenomenon of poverty recorded prior to the invasion. Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that the level of poverty has reduced since the invasion. Perhaps it could be that some of the participants interviewed were employees of the Iraqi government, hence they may not have wanted to give responses or opinions that did not portray the government in a good light. They may even fear losing their jobs if they say something negative about the government. Again, this is a mere assumption. Future research that controls for extraneous factors, such as participant’s employment status, is needed to rule out this possibility.
From the above, one can conclude that the overall conclusion based upon Iraqis’ views is that there has been economic deterioration in Iraq and that both US and Iraqi governments are to be equally blamed. Additionally, Iran and Kuwait also bear some responsibility. Furthermore, one could say that according to Iraqis’ perceptions, the significant factors that led to the occupation of Iraq by the US and its allies are as follows: economic; security and political; and social and religious. As a result of the US occupation and the promotion of democracy imposed by the US government in Iraq in particular, and in the Middle East in general, there was deterioration in economic and social conditions which caused suffering to Arabs and eventually led to the so-called Arab Spring.11

10.1.4. Democracy

In response to Research Question 4 in terms of to what extent has Iraq become democratic, evidence emerging from this study, as well as comparative analysis drawn from previous studies and empirical data, has shown that external and internal forces in Iraq (the US, Iran and Iraqi governments) have had a negative effect on democracy since 2003.

However, the findings of the study reveal that even those who are very critical of the US do not consider it fully responsible for everything that went wrong in Iraq. In addition, the Iraqi elite believe that the US has been successful in establishing democracy but that this democracy is still weak. The research findings also show that Iraq has a weak democracy due to deliberate US policies, yet others argue that democracy will take time to stabilise, and that the nature of Iraqi society is making the process difficult. Sectarian and ethnic issues have hindered power-sharing. The US has not been helpful in this matter, yet most Iraqis admit that this has not been the only cause of the problem.

On the positive side, the research findings showed that some Iraqis believe that the US played a positive role in establishing a democratic state. Others agree that an externally engineered democratic model is incompatible with the values and traditions of the Iraqi

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people. In addition, the study found that the US was not serious about establishing democracy in Iraq but that it used democracy as a means to achieve its own goals in Iraq.

According to the questionnaire findings the US implementation of the idea of democracy in Iraq has not proved to be successful. On the subject of the application of consensual democracy giving a negative image of democracy applied by the US, the majority of respondents of the general public sample believe that the application of that model has given a bad impression of the plan the US intended to implement in Iraq. Another finding obtained from the opinions of the Iraqi general public is that the majority of Iraqis doubt the compatibility of the democratic processes with Iraqi society.

This study also found that the range of views expressed by the Iraqi elite show that they perceive the role of women in democracy to be complex. Moreover they suggest that the role of Iraqi women has been damaged by their participation in politics but they do not explain why. They also do not explain why women’s participation is undermining Iraqi democracy. The more interesting responses are the ones that argue that even though the US role in Iraq has been disorganized, it has changed the constitutional position of women and has allowed more practical representation of women since 2003. However, the discussion of the role of women is an important signal of debates about the quality of democracy in Iraq. Some Iraqis believe that the contribution of women has been a direct outcome of the efforts made by the US, while others among the Iraqi elite suggest that the active involvement of women in political life has nothing to do with the US. On the other hand, some interviewees label the quota system dictated by the US as being a distortion of the political activity but suggest that it has allowed female representation to develop even if the long term prospects are uncertain. The research has also revealed that nearly half of Iraqis think that US-imposed democratic transformations have allowed Iraqi women to participate in the political process.

The research also found diverse viewpoints among the Iraqi elite regarding whether internal forces in Iraq (Iraqi governments, political parties power-sharing, sectarian and ethnic factors, the legacy of Saddam regime, social culture) have had a negative effect on democracy. Some Iraqis believed that democracy in Iraq was not achieved after 2003 due to the continuing political crises among the political forces as the parties have not yet reached a political programme which is acceptable across the Iraqi political
spectrum. Others suggest that the success of the democracy process requires painstaking political efforts to re-shape the so-called “national partnership government” regardless of sect, religion or political affiliations. On the other hand, some also believe that the political system, which is based on sharing-power, and also majority rule which dominates power have been obstacles to democratic transformation in Iraq subsequent to 2003. For instance the Defence, Interior and National Security Ministries have come under the authority of the Prime Minister from 2005 until now.

The legacy of dictatorship is another challenge facing democratic practice in the post-invasion era. Participants affirmed that oppressive policies have been exercised for a long time which has had a negative impact on the democracy process in Iraq.

The research also found that internal violence escalated after the presence of US troops in country which posed another challenge to the US democratic project. Sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia which emerged after 2003 hindered efforts toward the promotion of democracy in the country, and this occurred while the US a turned a blind eye or even sometimes contributed to undermining the democratic project. One way this occurred was via assassinations among competing political forces, particularly during the election campaigns. This ultimately led to reduced popular participation in the political process and threats to the lay people again reducing participation. This was happening mostly in areas where Sunnis were in the majority.

Another significant positive finding is that the media, has contributed in one way or another to the increase in awareness among Iraqis of the concept of human rights, and that efforts have been made in favour of human rights. For example, the establishing of institutions concerned with human rights issues has contributed to enhancing the human rights situation in Iraq.

Moreover, the political parties and members of parliament do not truly represent the concerns of the Iraqi people, and the formation of such parties has constituted a major challenge for the progress of democracy as they have caused the biggest division of the Iraqi people along ethnic and religious lines in modern history. The study also found that the externally-engineered democratic model is incompatible with the values and traditions of local Iraqi people. However, based on Iraqi perceptions there are also some changes required in order to fully achieve democracy; for instance, the various
political groups need to come together to achieve national consensus with representation from each social components and the political leadership needs to forget their personal and partisan interests in favour of the supreme national interests. Others suggest that there is a need for Iraq to build up a stronger democratic civil society in order to stabilize democracy.

What also emerged from this research is that the active involvement of Iran in Iraq’s affairs is believed to have had a negative impact on the entire democracy process. This was the view of Iraqis who saw the logistical support or even the fixing of election outcomes in favour of Shia political parties. In fact, the activities of the Iranian government intensified sectarian division while adding to the political crisis. In addition, external intervention, especially Iran’s involvement in Iraqi internal affairs, destabilized the situation and added to the contraction of the democratic processes. This is an important finding of the research project in terms of the democracy process in Iraq after 2003. Arab support has had a negative impact by causing instability to the situation; a case in point being Kuwait. Other neighbouring countries, such as Turkey were neutral. The research also reveals that the majority of Iraqis believe that the influence of neighbouring countries on the democracy project in Iraq has been significant.

Thus, the findings of Iraqi elite and public opinion show the situation in Iraq as being completely different from the US model and therefore not applicable to Iraq. For example, in the case of Iraq it is important to take into account the social circumstances of the country as it is an Islamic society and the prevailing culture among its people is the Islamic culture; thus it is incompatible with the US model.

From the above, one can conclude that despite the efforts made to establish democracy in Iraq by the US, the process has not yet met the country’s requirements as there has been significant intervention from Iran too.
10.1.5. Sovereignty

In response to Research Question 5 in terms of to what extent Iraq has sovereignty, evidence emerging from this study showed different perspectives among Iraqis in terms of whether the role of external forces (the US and Iran) had a negative effect on Iraq’s sovereignty after 2003. There are conflicting opinions as to whether US forces entered Iraq as liberators or invaders.

Elements of Iraqi elite believe that the US entered Iraq as a liberator to overthrow the prevailing dictatorship that would otherwise have been impossible to defeat. The Iraqi general public believe that the US contributed to the dismantling of the Iraqi state as a whole. There is also an opinion that the US invasion led to the removal of legitimate state authority. Thus, it was found that the US occupation of 2003 has not led to the unification of Iraq, but rather caused its disintegration. Yet, the study also showed that some Iraqis believe that the continuation of the American presence in Iraq is important for political and security reasons. Also, the Iraqi elite assert that the US has achieved its goals in the Middle East region and in particular in Iraq. According to the elite the primary aim was to implement the ‘Grand Middle East Project’; this meant accepting Israel within political bodies both as a religious state and as a political body, so that the Jewish component would then be represented in the region.

The findings further indicate that in terms of general public opinion, the majority of Iraqis believe that the US entered Iraq as an occupier. Furthermore, the majority of the Iraqi public agreed that the presence of the US led to the legitimacy of the state being abolished.

On the subject of the US occupation of 2003 leading to the emergence of a more unified Iraq, the views of the general public showed that the vast majority of the sample believe that the invasion has not led to the unification of Iraq, but has rather been a cause for its disintegration. This indicates a general consensus among Iraqis even across sectarian and religious divides. However, on the subject of the US having failed to achieve its goals in Iraq, the majority of the Iraqi general public agree with the statement that the US has failed to achieve its goals in Iraq.

Based on the viewpoints of Iraqis, this study concludes that successive Iraqi governments have been incapable of designing and implementing independent internal
policies without the influence, regionally and internationally, of Iran and the US. The study also reveals a belief that the Iraqi government allowed regional meddling in Iraq’s affairs to which it often turned a blind eye, particularly with regard to Iranian intervention.

On the positive side, the research findings show that Iraq in 2011 is different to Iraq in 2005. In this regard the level of maturity and awareness among Iraqis has increased, and the Iraqi people have become more concerned about national rather than regional interests. That is obvious from the active role Iraq is playing at the regional level by interacting with regional and sub-regional conferences to resolve current disputes, such as the Arab summit conference of 2012 that was held in Iraq. The research also found that the majority of the Iraqi public disagree with the statement that the Iraqi people have become capable of designing and implementing their internal polices independently. On the other hand, the study shows that Iraqis believe that relative independence has been achieved. However, despite the American withdrawal from the country in December 2008 they still had influence on internal and external decisions.

The research findings also show that the fragility of the Iraqi army and security forces contributed to undermining the prestige of the Iraqi state. However, there is also a belief that it was important to build the strength of the security forces even though some training would still be needed. There are also some who feel that the US government has not been serious enough in its venture to develop independent security forces, or alternatively that the sectarian and partisan factors have negatively affected security performance. Yet on the other hand the study suggests that the militias have ruined the efforts of Iraqi security forces in terms of protecting the country internally and externally. Thus, the findings of this research project are similar to those contained in studies by the Hammurabi Centre for Strategic Studies,12

From the discussion, one can conclude that the violation of Iraqi sovereignty is considered to be due equally to the US occupation and the Iraqi governments. Additionally, the study points to Iran being involved in challenging Iraqi sovereignty since 2003. In return, Iraqi governments have turned a blind to this interference. The

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12 Hammurabi Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, “Iraqi opinion poll regarding the presence of U.S. forces in Iraq”, pp. 27-29.
study also shows that the majority of the Iraqi general public agrees that the government has allowed this regional meddling. A very small percentage of the Iraqi general public believed that, on the contrary, the government has not allowed the sovereignty of the state of Iraq to be violated by regional or international powers. Furthermore, the research findings show that the legacy of Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1990 continued to negatively affect perceptions of independence and sovereignty of the state even after 2003. A good example of this is the imposition of reparations imposed on Iraq after the 1990 invasion which continued until the American occupation in Iraq in 2003.

10.2 Contributions of the Study

The main contribution of this study is that it investigates the viewpoints of Iraqis regarding incidents during the occupation and withdrawal of the US after toppling the dictatorial rule of Saddam Hussein. It has contributed to the field of politics and international relation in providing new data about the perspectives of different categories of Iraqi people from various sectors of society, thereby giving empirical grounding to Iraqi citizens’ viewpoints as well as indicating implications for further explorations of such political issues in the future.

The research comes during a time when the people of Iraq who were silent during the dictatorial rule of Saddam can speak out about their opinions and attitudes. It is also important for a nascent democracy of eleven years, in that it reports the opinions of people who had learnt not to voice their opinions for fear of reprisals. Additionally, for the first time these opinions steer the debate toward changes which could propel the state towards future popular political and international debates in Iraq.

The empirical findings of this study indicate that there are now new-found voices in democratic governance. The people expressed both their negative and positive viewpoints on the presence of the US in Iraq. One of these is that US policy has failed to protect the interests of the people; there is growing agitation by the public against the US, which could result in revolution. The political system designed and advanced by the US led to only limited sovereignty of the Iraqi state, because it created disorder and chaos instead of peace. This was predominantly because the political system was designed according to the US agenda (i.e. globalization) and it failed to conform to Iraqi
political culture. Hence, it is suggested that the US reform their policy to suit the political and welfare needs of Iraqis.

While previous studies have focussed only on the negative aspects of the five major factors addressed by this study, these findings have provided a more balanced perspective. Here, some of the more positive aspects have been considered; consequently, it is the first to highlight these positive factors. This is visible in terms of increased human rights, freedom of expression and the establishment of the media and civil society. The US allowed freedom of the media, including the establishment of numerous satellite channels and an increase in daily newspapers, which increased awareness in Iraqi society and the world about the human rights situation in Iraq. It was observed that during the US administration, supervision bodies were established for the protection of human rights, such as the Ministry of Human Rights, the Organisation of Political Prisoners and the Committee of Human Rights. This has encouraged people to take part in public debates, in contrast to their silence when all expression of political opinion was controlled by Saddam and his cabinet. Also, through the media, avenues have been opened for people to learn about the world and for the world to learn about Iraq.

The study also has contributed at the local level (Iraq), contributing knowledge to the academic and scientific field in Iraq as no similar study had been conducted in the field of political science and international relations after 2003, particularly in the English language. Furthermore, it has investigated some significant areas related to human rights, security, economy democracy and sovereignty. Such a study is needed to inform students at Iraqi universities; thus, it will contribute towards new literature for political studies in Iraq. It is especially important as it will be available in English as well as in Arabic.

The occupation has had a negative impact on human rights, security, the economy, democracy, and sovereignty. Human rights violations were committed by the occupying forces, which also led to violations of the dignity of the wider population. Regarding the security situation, the occupation contributed to the creation of chaos, the lack of law and order, and eventually to the destabilising society in general. Economically it helped to escalate economic crises regarding unemployment, political corruption etc., not to mention the loss of sovereignty. Additionally, it allowed international and regional
powers to interfere in the political and economic affairs of the nation state, which in turn allowed the aggressor to gain political and economic benefits.

By taking Iraq as an example of a country suffering occupation, the impact of the invasion has been identified and its advantages and disadvantages have been reflected from the point of view of people who experienced life before and after the invasion. This research mainly contributes to the field of politics in presenting citizens’ perspectives on an invasion of their own country and its effects. It contributes by presenting how people evaluate the invasion; whether they support or oppose it and why.

Iraq suffered from serious deprivations of statehood during the American occupation. It witnessed a period in which the state was absent and the society became polarised by its primary cultural, religious and ethnic affiliations. This eventually resulted in severe political division. Therefore, in general the Iraqis perceived the occupation as a whole and American policy in particular as unfavourable throughout the period of this research between 2003 and 2009.

10.3 Limitations of the Study

The researcher conducted interviews and a survey via questionnaires distributed in Iraq during 2012 in three places: Baghdad, Anbar and Fallujah. Some difficulties were faced due to the destabilized security witnessed by Iraq from the occupation in 2003 and sectarian problems were a major obstacle throughout this research. However the researcher tried to overcome all these difficulties and was successful in meeting a number of those who have been influential in the Iraqi government. A number of interviewees preferred to remain anonymous for security reasons. Nevertheless, a considerable number of interviews were conducted and accurate data was obtained which contributed to the progress of the research.

The findings of both the interviews and the questionnaires have resulted in diverse answers to the main research question: What are the opinions of Iraqis toward the American policy in post-invasion Iraq? The Iraqi elite presented different perspectives of US policies in Iraq, while the questionnaires showed unified opinion regarding US
policies in terms of the five issues considered: human rights, security, democracy, economy and sovereignty.

10.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Given the above limitations regarding the differences in opinion of the elite and the unified opinion of the people, further research is needed to find out why this differs in relation to US policies regarding the five issues considered. The question that is open to further research is to find out whether class has anything to do with this different opinion, or what other factors may be responsible.

There is also a need to further study how far democracy has really taken shape in Iraq and whether the influence of the Iraqi government and other influential people still predominate, this leads to a key new research question: Is Iraq really free of dictatorship?.

10.5 Postscript and Recommendations

Lastly, before finishing this thesis, it should be noted that all the findings reported here present the events in Iraq from 2003 to 2009 and the opinions of various sections of the Iraqi citizens are made from the vantage point of the new voice they have found in political debates in the last eleven years. It is difficult to predict what the future may be for democracy, most especially given the sectarian divisions which Iraq is still witnessing. However, the study recommends the following:

There is a need to establish an inclusive Iraqi government, one that includes all factions of Iraqi society regardless of their religious affiliations. This will help to create a positive political environment that enables all political parties to participate in the political process. This will have a positive impact on different aspects discussed during this study but especially to the security situation leading to a united Iraq.

The De-Ba’athification law, article (4) has been misused and exploited in achieving political agendas by security officials at the expense of other factions of society and this
needs to be addressed. The outcome of this misuse has been random arrests and prison sentences without justification for thousands of innocent Iraqi men and women. This includes tribal leaders, elite people and even underage teenagers; the continuation of this will lead to further sectarianism. Thus, this research recommends that the government should take serious steps to ensure the fair application of these laws as prescribed in the Iraqi constitution of 2005.

Extracting statements from suspects in prison by force and brutal investigations by security bodies with no respect to the humanitarian legal right of the suspects is illegal and contradicts the principles of the Iraqi constitution of 2005. The government has turned a blind eye to these violations and has not been serious in protecting suspects’ human rights. It should, therefore reconsider the employment of those involved and select new neutral professionals capable of conducting investigations professionally.

The study showed that regional intervention in Iraqi affairs has negatively affected the situation in Iraq across all the factors that this study address, namely human rights, the economy, security, democracy and sovereignty. Thus, one of the recommendations is that the government has to take immediate and serious actions to secure and monitor borders using qualified security forces to stop the regional intervention in Iraq, regardless of whether it is from Iran, the US, or Arab neighbouring countries. This will contribute greatly to improving the state in Iraq at all these levels and offer Iraqis the right to run Iraq.

Marginalisation of human rights and civil society organisations also contributed to the escalation of the violation of human rights after 2003. Therefore, the role of human rights organisations in Iraq has to be verified and these organisations have to play their moral role in ensuring adherence to human rights legislations in Iraq. This needs to be done in general terms but also in favour of prisoners.

Separation and independence of the executive, legislative assembly and judiciary is crucial. This should prevent dominance of the presidency and so avoid further dictatorship.

The study affirmed that there are high levels of corruption among government officials and unemployment among Iraqis. Therefore, the government has to be serious in setting a strategic solution to eradicate corruption through verification and application of
corruption laws without excluding any individual in general, and the cabinet and politicians in particular. Accountability of the corrupt will also help minimizing the spread of corruption in the country. Equal distribution of the wealth and encouragement of foreign investment in the country will contribute greatly by creating more job opportunities for people in Iraq, which will be positively reflected in the economy of Iraq in general.
Appendix A

Introductory Letter and Interview

Interview Letter in Arabic translated to English:

Participant Information sheet: Department of politics and International relations
University of Leicester
7RH LE1
Email: jhs19@le.ac.uk

Dear Mr. /Ms


I am a PhD student at the Department of politics and International Relations, University of Leicester, UK. I am conducting a study on what people from various parts of Iraqi society think about Iraq since 2003. I would like to visit you and ask you some question about various issues.

Taking part is entirely voluntary:

However it would be very much appreciated if you would participate. The purpose of my study is to bring the views of Iraqis to a western audience. For much of the period since 2003 Iraq has been discussed in the West from a Western perspective. This study aims to gain the views of people from all parts of Iraqi society in the country since 2003. Therefore, your participation is important. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving reason.

If you take part I will conduct an interview with you. This interview will last 45 minutes. I will ask you a series of basic questions, but you can also add your own views if you wish to expand on a point. The interview will not be videotaped. The interview will be recorded on tape recorder but if you wish I will just take notes. You can have a copy if you wish.

The notes of the interview will be used in my PhD. Your comments will be used as part of my analysis.

Your details would look like this:

Thank you for reading this sheet.

Yours Sincerely

Researcher
Date: 10/01/2012
Appendix (A-1)

Interview form

Study title: Experiences and Views on Iraq after 2003

Interview form

This study is an attempt to achieve a doctoral thesis in the field of political science and International Relations at the University of Leicester, UK. The aim of the study is to obtain various perceptions of Iraqis towards the US policy in post-invasion of Iraq. The interviews will focus on five significant issues as follow: Human rights, Security, Economy, Democracy process and Sovereignty. Different segments of Iraqi society, including the political elites, academics, members of civil society, tribal leaders and local residents were the focus of these interviews. However, Baghdad, Fallujah and Unbar were the main fieldwork areas in order to obtain the required data. This research will take place between the 5th of February 2012 and the 25th of May 2012. Please note that any information provided by the participant will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you for your cooperation and taking the time to participate in the interview.

Jabbar Saeed
PhD student
Department of Politics and International Relations.
University of Leicester
Under supervision of:
Professor Mark Phythian
Dr Jon Moran

For more details, please contact:
Jhs19@le.cu.uk
Jhs_ss1966@yahoo.com
**Second section: Personal information**

1 Gender......
2 Age.....
3 Professions......
4 City..........

**Third section: Questions.**

**Please give your opinion on the questions below:**

**Security subjects:**

Q1: Some believe that Iraq’s stability requires the existence of US forces in Iraq. In your opinion, what enhances Iraq’s unity and the solidarity of its people: the existence of US forces or their withdrawal?

Q2: Some views indicate that the development of political parties in post-invasion Iraq 2003, helped improve the security, and the societal stability, through enabling different political trends to take part in the political process: what is your opinion regarding that.

Q3: Some people believe that the US invasion to Iraq led to weaken security control on the Iraqi international borders, do you think was due to the US ineffective invasion security policies?

Q4: Many Iraqi people fled to neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Syria and Egypt. Some of them fled for humanitarian aid and others for political reasons. In your viewpoint, what are the real causes behind that? Is it that the political arena in Iraq does not accept political competition any more, or has the security disorder spiralled out of control?

**Human rights subjects:**

Q5: Do you believe that the USA freely handled the Iraqi and Arabic outlets during the war period on Iraq, or did it seek to tailor the Iraqi situation according to what news it wanted to release?

Q6: Do you think that Iraq witnessed changes in the human rights level after 2003? If so, to what extent have those human right been respected or violated?

Q7: It is said that after 2005 the elected Iraqi government has contributed toward improving the human rights issues through the activation of army and security forces. In your opinion to what extent is that so?
Q8: What is your perspective about the US government having elevated the status of human rights or vice versa having sought to violate human rights through the crimes it committed in Iraq? Also, what was the America role in terms of the human rights issues, do you think it was compatible with the Universal Declaration for Human Rights and United Nations resolutions?

**Democracy Subjects:**

Q9: The democracy process in Iraq after 2003 has offered a number of advantages, an important on being the formation of the Iraqi government, which has resulted in being compatible with the nature of democracy. What is your evaluation of the performance of the Iraqi government at the time?

Q10: The termination of dictatorship rule and bringing about democratic rule in Iraq after 2003 was one of the main objectives of the administration of President Bush. Do you think that democracy has been achieved in particular after ten years of the political change in Iraq? Did the US play a real role in achieving that objective?

Q11: The US-imposed democracy allowed Iraqi women to participate in the political performance. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Q12: Most of the political forces have been able to get a position in the Iraqi parliament through their acquisition of the majority of voters’ votes and that was without territorial supporting. To what extent do agree or disagree regarding the territorial impact on the electoral process?

Q13: The continuation of the democratic process in Iraq was expected by the US and its supporters, although that it encountered difficulties. To what extent do you agree or disagree? Please put your opinion in details.

**Economic subjects:**

Q14: It is said that, economic factors (oil) played a role in the invasion of Iraq by the US government. Where this role could be noticed in the US starting to withdraw its forces from Iraq?

Q15: Do you think that vandalism of Iraqi infrastructures was on the agenda of American government, to achieve their economic goals? To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Q16: The unemployment, poverty and the low of living level were prevailing indicators in post-invasion Iraq. Do you think that was because of the occupation and its policies, or was the problem inherent in the Iraqi government?
**Sovereignty subjects:**

Q17: What is your standpoint on the independence of the Iraqi state on internal and external levels?

Q18: Following the formation of the elected Iraqi government in 2005, the security forces became capable of protecting the country from the foreign interferences and enforcing the stability. What is your view on this?

Q19: Following its war in Iraq the US sought to achieve their goals in the Middle East region in general and Iraq in particular. What is your perspective on this?

(20) The results of the Iraqi political experiment indicate that the US presence in Iraq is a successful example of ruling. To what extent do you agree?

Q21: Some believe that the American presence in Iraq could be described as that of liberators, others describe it as occupation. Which one do you believe?

Q22: Does Iraq need the USA to remain long term, in terms of the political situation and security.

**Fourth section:** If there are any comments, personal opinions and/or ideas which support the research.

**Participant name:**

**Signature:**

**Date of interview:**
Appendix (A-2)

Questionnaire form

Please answer all the questions asked in this sheet. Your opinion is extremely important. It gives the perspective of Iraqi people towards US policy post war Iraq. All the information provided by you will be used only for research purposes. Please note that, in no circumstances will we disclose the information provided by you to anyone else. It will only appear as anonymous general information in my PhD. Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire.

Jabbar Saeed
PhD student
Department of Politics and International Relations.
University of Leicester
Under supervision of:
Professor Mark Phythian
Dr Jon Moran

For more details, please contact:
Jhs19@le.cu.uk
Jhs_ss1966@yahoo.com
First section: Personal information

1 Gender...... Male           Female
2 Age...........
3 Professions........
4 city..........  

Second section: Questions.

Please circle how strongly you agree or disagree with the questions below.

The first option: agreed of the options.

1. Weakly agree
2. Agree
3. Strongly agree

The second option: disagreed of the options.

1 Weakly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Strongly disagree

The third option: 0. Neutral

Questions:

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<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<td>1 The United States’ withdrawal from Iraq led to the weakening of the security</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The appearance of political parties after 2003 improved the security and assured stability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Official Iraqi institutions, such as police forces and army, started to respect human rights after 2003 than it was before 2003</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The application of consensual democracy has given a negative image about democracy applied by the US</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 US managed to implement the idea of democracy in Iraq has proved to be as successful a sample.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Territorial effect of the neighbouring</td>
<td>1</td>
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countries caused the failure of democratic project

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political parties in parliament represent Iraqi opinion</th>
<th></th>
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<td>The failure of the democratic process was expected due to that incompatible with Iraqi society.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>General level of the poverty has been reduced to a large extent after 2003, compared with the period before 2003</td>
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<td>Oil was main reason for the invasion of Iraq</td>
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<td>After 2003, Iraqi people became capable of designing and implementing their internal polices independently</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Iraqi security services are protecting the country from internal and external dangers</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The US occupation of 2003 led to the emergence of a more unified Iraq</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Territorial interference has been rejected by the elected Iraqi government</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>US forces presence in Iraq abolishes the sovereignty of the state</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>US policy is failing to reach its objectives particularly in Iraq and the Middle East region generally</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>The presence of US in Iraq after 2003, is generally called as occupation</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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Third section: If there are any comments, personal opinion and/ or ideas which support the research.

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Appendix B


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Missing Q= 25 questions 21 male 4 female 41 participants From range-(18-24) 87= male 43= female 87 participant From those who have BSc qualification. 55 participant Baghdad 21 participant Fallujah 54 participant Unbar 27 signed
**Appendix D**

Showing the results of investigating the views of the academic experts regarding the contents of the questionnaire:

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<th>No</th>
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<th>The level of satisfaction with the questionnaire</th>
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<td>Prof Alsamad Sadoon Alshammari</td>
<td>International economics Nahrain University</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Governance administration Nahrain University</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Psychology Mustansirya University</td>
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<td>Prof Faiz Galal Kazim</td>
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<td>Prof Salim Humaid Mahmoud</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Prof Abbas Khudair Ahmed</td>
<td>International Politics Anbar University</td>
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</table>
Appendix E

To whom it my concern:

Student: Jabbar Hassan Saeed,
Student number: 0999006099
University of Leicester, United Kingdom
PhD title: ‘Iraqi perspectives of the development of democratic institutions and practices in Iraq since 2003’

This letter is to certify that Mr. Jabbar Saced is a PhD student here in the Department and is in Iraq to conduct interviews for his PhD project. It is expected that he will stay in Iraq for approximately 3 months. Iraqi scholar Dr Khudher A. Atwan from Al-Nahrian University is also involved in this project and will provide any assistance necessary for Mr Saeed to progress with his study.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

Professor Mark Phythian
Head of Department
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
دارة البعثات واللاقات الثقافية
قسم شؤون الدارسين في الخارج
شعبة المملكة المتحدة وأوروبا الغربية

جامعة النهرين / قسم الشؤون العلمية والعلاقات الثقافية
م / إبداء مساعدة

تحية طيبة ...

بناءً على الطلبات المقدم من قبل السيد جبار حسن سعيد، نود أن ننوه بأنه هو طالب بعثة في بريطانيا للحصول على شهادة الدكتوراه في اختصاص سياسة خارجية، راجين إبداء المساعدة الممكنة له وتكليف الدكتور خضر عباس عطوان / كلية العلوم السياسية
للغرض الإشراف على دراسة الطالب أثناء أجراء بحثه داخل العراق.

للاطلاع وإجراء اللائمة 300 مع التقدير

أ.د. وليد أمين محمود
مدير عام دائرة البعثات والعلاقات الثقافية وكالة

2013/1/26

- نسخة منه إلى:
- د. الأستاذ هواء الهادي / الذي يمثل المعهد
- د. الأستاذ هواء الهادي / الذي يمثل المعهد
- قسم شؤون الدارسين في الخارج / بريطانيا
- المصدر

Website: www.Scirdiaq.com
E-mail: generaldirector@mohesr.gov.iq

(263)
Appendix F

Republic of Iraq
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Scholarships and Cultural Relations Department

No. : S.B. / 5747
Date: 6/3/2012

To/ The Parliament
Sub./ Provide an Assistance

Dear Sirs,

Based on the request submitted by Mr. Jabbar Hassen Saeed, we confirm to you that the above mentioned is a scholarship student in Great Britain to obtain the Ph.D. Degree in the specialization of Foreign Policy, requesting you to provide the possible assistance to the above mentioned in order to facilitate the mission of applying his study in Iraq.

Thanking you for your cooperation with us … with appreciation

-Sgd.-
Dr. Salam Hasan Khoshnow
Deputy of Ministry of Higher Education and
Scientific Research for Scientific Affairs and
International Relations
4/3/2012

CC/ - Office of Mr. Scientific Deputy / reference to comment of his Excellency on 20/2/2012, for acknowledgment with appreciation.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ for the same above purpose/ thanking you for your cooperation with us, with appreciation.
- Ministry of Human Rights / for the same above purpose/ thanking you for your cooperation with us, with appreciation.
- Tribes Leaders Office of (Baghdad/ Al-Anbar) for the same above purpose/ thanking you for your cooperation with us, with appreciation.
- Council of (Baghdad / Al-Anbar) Governorate / for the same above purpose/ thanking you for your cooperation with us, with appreciation.
- University of (Baghdad / Al-Nahrain / Al-Mustansiriya / Al-Anbar) / for the same above purpose/ thanking you for your cooperation with us, with appreciation.
- Civil Society Organizations / Baghdad / for the same above purpose/ thanking you for your cooperation with us, with appreciation.
- Students Affairs Abroad Affairs / Great Britain.
- Issued Letters.

TRANSLATED BY:
WATHIQ A. HINDO

Date: 2 MAY 2013

Sworn Translator
License Number: 192 Since 1979
NADIR Bureau for Translation
Mustah Road, Baghdad, Iraq, Tel. 0780144849

[Signature]

[Stamp]

[Seal]
Appendix G

From: Berama Ibrahim

To: student Jabbar Hassen Saeed

Department of Politics and International Relations

Leicester University

Sent: 27 May 2014 22:53

Letter of conformation

Subject: interviews data translation from Arabic to English.

I am Berama Ibrahim an Arabic Interpreter and a long-time resident in the UK.

I have looked at the interview data in Arabic version presented to me by the above mentioned student. I hereby confirm, to the best of my knowledge, that the English version of the data provides a genuine translation of the Arabic version.

For further enquiries contact:

Mobile number is: 07580473057

Email address: Ibrahim Berama <beramaibrahim005@gmail.com>

Home address:

Website:
Appendix H

Transcript

Interview Questions for Accessing Data on Human Right, Security, Economy, Democracy and Sovereignty in Iraq.

Interviewee Name / Code No.: (A/H. Fayyad /BAGHDAD/55).

Location: First Case Study: BAGHDAD

Interview form

This study is an attempt to achieve a doctoral thesis in the field of political science and International Relations at the University of Leicester, UK. The aim of the study is to obtain various perceptions of Iraqis towards the US policy in post-invasion of Iraq. The interviews will focus on five significant issues as follow: Human rights, Security, Economy, Democracy process and Sovereignty. Different segments of Iraqi society, including the political elites, academics, members of civil society, tribal leaders and local residents were the focus of these interviews. However, Baghdad, Fallujah and Unbar were the main fieldwork areas in order to obtain the required data. This research will take place between the 5th of February 2012 and the 25th of May 2012. Please note that any information provided by the participant will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you for your cooperation and taking the time to participate in the interview.

Jabbar Saeed
PhD student
Department of Politics and International Relations.
University of Leicester
Under supervision of:
Professor Mark Phythian
Dr Jon Moran

For more details, please contact:
Second section: Personal information

1 Gender...... Male
2 Age......55.....
3 Professions..... Dean of the faculty of political science, Nahrain University.
4 City........Baghdad....

Third section: Questions.

Please give your opinion on the questions below:

Security subjects

Q1: Some believe that Iraq’s stability requires the existence of US forces in Iraq. In your opinion, what enhances Iraq’s unity and the solidarity of its people: the existence of US forces or their withdrawal?

“The security matter in Iraq has two dimensions: the positive dimension featuring the change that has taken place in Iraq after 2003 and the negative dimension featuring the damage that has taken place following the change with its negative impact on the security situation. In this regard before 2003, Iraq was labelled as being a place where freedoms are either restricted or non-existent, while after 2003 Iraq is labelled as a place where freedoms are greatly uncontrolled. Between those two states of restricted and uncontrolled freedoms, the security situation is surely instable with or without the existence of foreign forces. In short, the state of the security situation is not related to the existence or the withdrawal of the US forces as the security is still instable in spite of the US withdrawal”.

Q2: Some views indicate that the development of political parties in post-invasion Iraq 2003, helped improve the security, and the societal stability, through enabling different political trends to take part in the political process: what is your opinion regarding that.

“The establishment of societal stability and security will be impossible without the accommodation of all political components particularly the political parties provided that the activities of those parties are being warranted by the constitution and organized by Law. As far as Iraq is concerned, the multi-party system is indispensable and
actually provided by the constitution (article 38). However, in the meantime, the activities of those parties are disorganized as there is no law for political parties up till now. Thus the existence of political parties without a law organizing their activities has its negative impact on the security situation in Iraq”.

Q3: Some people believe that the US invasion to Iraq led to weaken security control on the Iraqi international borders, do you think was due to the US ineffective invasion security policies?

“The United States has contributed to the collapse of the Iraqi international borders”.

Q4: Many Iraqi people fled to neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Syria and Egypt. Some of them fled for humanitarian aid and others for political reasons. In your viewpoint, what are the real causes behind that? Is it that the political arena in Iraq does not accept political competition any more, or has the security disorder spiralled out of control?

“Migration constitutes part of a phenomenon besetting the Iraqi society since the 1990s rather than the outcome of the events of 2003 and after. But nonetheless, after 2003 the sectarian causes have escalated particularly after 2006. Thus the reasons cannot be summed up to be only political, but they are many reasons some of which are political particularly regarding those who have suffered from the change in 2003. Some reasons could be sectarian even though the economic causes come first”.

**Human rights subjects:**

Q5: Do you believe that the USA freely handled the Iraqi and Arabic outlets during the war period on Iraq, or did it seek to tailor the Iraqi situation according to what news it wanted to release?

“In our contemporary world the US and other countries are no longer capable of restricting media activities, despite all the efforts they are making to put restrictions by introducing laws that favour the US in terms of media coverage. But the question is whether the US has succeeded? The answer is yes, the US has relatively succeeded given its technological knowhow, which is sufficient to give the US the advantage to control media coverage locally and worldwide”.

Q6: Do you think that Iraq witnessed changes in the human rights level after 2003? If so, to what extent have those human right been respected or violated?

“Some positive changes have taken place, and yet those changes have not prevented the existence of some failures. Taking into account the two periods before and after the change in a comparative sense “the rights before the change have been non-existent while the rights after the change”...
Q7: It is said that after 2005 the elected Iraqi government has contributed toward improving the human rights issues through the activation of army and security forces. In your opinion to what extent is that so?

“To huge cultural legacy rather than to systematic policies. The government has considered support for human rights in Iraq through establishing the Ministry of Human Rights, and there attempts to establish an independent commission as dictated by the constitution. However, regarding the practices of the military and the police forces, they need a long time to positively react towards the issues of human rights.”

Q8: What is your perspective about the US government having elevated the status of human rights or vice versa having sought to violate human rights through the crimes it committed in Iraq? Also, what was the America role in terms of the human rights issues, do you think it was compatible with the Universal Declaration for Human Rights and United Nations resolutions?

“Many indicators of human rights violations in Iraq by the US forces exist featuring the behaviour of the US troops in Abu Ghraib prison and the malpractices of the US [private] security companies which has failed to take the human rights aspect into account”.

Democracy Subjects

Q9: The democracy process in Iraq after 2003 has offered a number of advantages, an important on being the formation of the Iraqi government, which has resulted in being compatible with the nature of democracy. What is your evaluation of the performance of the Iraqi government at the time?

“The government performance has been confused since the establishment of the first government following the elections until now. That confused performance is associated with the nature of the government formation that is based on power sharing”

Q10: The termination of dictatorship rule and bringing about democratic rule in Iraq after 2003 was one of the main objectives of the administration of President Bush. Do you think that democracy has been achieved in particular after ten years of the political change in Iraq? Did the US play a real role in achieving that objective?

“Until now Iraq is failing to practice democracy “and that it is not fair to describe the current stage in Iraq today as a democratic stage”

Q11: The US-imposed democracy allowed Iraqi women to participate in the political performance. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

“The quota system has made a real contribution limited to 25 % and that “contribution is deemed to be better than the previous years under the defunct regime prior of 2003 ”.
Q12: Most of the political forces have been able to get a position in the Iraqi parliament through their acquisition of the majority of voters’ votes and that was without territorial supporting. To what extent do agree or disagree regarding the territorial impact on the electoral process?

“The Iraqi question since 2003 until today goes beyond the local dimension to include regional and international dimensions”.

Q13: The continuation of the democratic process in Iraq was expected by the US and its supporters, although that it encountered difficulties. To what extent do you agree or disagree? Please put your opinion in details.

“I believe the democratic experiment that has been introduced by the US will not continue as it has not been initiated by the will and the action of the people of Iraq, but rather has been dictated from outside”.

Economic subjects

Q14: It is said that, economic factors (oil) played a role in the invasion of Iraq by the US government. Where could this role be noticed in the US starting to withdraw its forces from Iraq?

“Though the US has no military presence in Iraq, yet it has been economically and culturally present”.

Q15: Do you think that vandalism of Iraqi infrastructures was on the agenda of American government, to achieve their economic goals? To what extent do you agree or disagree?

“As far as the economy is concerned, the destruction of the economic infrastructure of the state is closely linked with the political decision of the Iraqi government as long as that destruction favours the US political interests in Iraq, and that the US will encourage the destruction process so that the opposite is also true. In other words, the US will definitely provide support to a strong economy in favour of its own interests. The US always prefers a consumption economy in other countries in order to create markets for its products, and a source for raw materials as well as cheap labour”.

Q16: The unemployment, poverty and the low of living level were prevailing indicators in post-invasion Iraq. Do you think that was because of the occupation and its policies, or was the problem inherent in the Iraqi government?

“Life indicators including the standard of living, unemployment, poverty level is inconsistent with the resources and capabilities of Iraq”.
Sovereignty subjects

Q17: What is your standpoint on the independence of the Iraqi state on internal and external levels?

“As far as the contemporary world is concerned the concept of independence is relative, so that in my view following the withdrawal of the US troops Iraqis have become in command of their decision in terms of internal and foreign policy. But the question remains as to whether the process of decision making is being influenced by others? It is true that can be applied to all countries worldwide as no state makes a decision in terms of internal or foreign affairs without taking both the internal and external facts into account”.

Q18: Following the formation of the elected Iraqi government in 2005, the security forces became capable of protecting the country from the foreign interferences and enforcing the stability. What is your view on this?

“Surely, after destroying the state and its institutions following the US invasion of Iraq-that Iraq needs a long time for the “security forces to be capable of protecting the country against foreign interventions”.

Q19: Following its war in Iraq the US sought to achieve their goals in the Middle East region in general and Iraq in particular. What is your perspective on this?

“He said that it had achieved its goals in Iraq by virtue of its status as being the only power that dominated the world. It is currently working “reshape the map of the Middle East”

(20) The results of the Iraqi political experiment indicate that the US presence in Iraq is a successful example of ruling. To what extent do you agree?

“It is impossible to grow a plantation on the wrong soil.” Thus democracy is an experiment associated with humanity rather than the US”.

Q21: Some believe that the American presence in Iraq could be described as that of liberators, others describe it as occupation. Which one do you believe?

“The US has liberated the thinking of the Iraqi people by getting rid of a tyrant, but having said that the US has occupied the Iraqi territories and resources. That situation would be reminiscent of Ibn Khuldoon who postulated that “invaders were brought in by tyrants”
Q22: Does Iraq need the USA to remain long term, in terms of the political situation and security.

“A strategic framework agreement” between Iraq and the US exists. That agreement highlights the commitment of the US to Iraq politically and security wise in the context of political, cultural and economic cooperation”.

Fourth section: If there are any comments, personal opinions and/ or ideas which support the research.

…………..no comments…………………………

Participant name: Dr Amir Hassan Al-Fayyad

Signature: Audio-Recording of the interview retained.

Date of interview: 23 Jan. 2012, his office-Baghdad, Al-Nahrian University
## Bibliography

### 1. LIST OF INTERVIEWS

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<th>Name</th>
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<td><strong>A) Academics:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Al-Barzangi, Iman Hadi (Dr)</td>
<td>4 March 2012</td>
<td>Baghdad</td>
<td>Member of Baghdad County Council. Head of the Committee for Women and Children at the Province Council. Audio-recording of the interview retained.</td>
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<td>Al-Dailami, Gamal Hamid (Dr)</td>
<td>3 May 2012</td>
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<td>Head of the Department of Geography, University of Baghdad. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.</td>
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<td>Al-Dailami, Mohamad Daham (Dr)</td>
<td>15 May 2012</td>
<td>Anbar</td>
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<td>Al-Isawi, Ismail Mohamed (Dr)</td>
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<td>Baghdad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Al-Mamouri, Abid Ali (Dr)</td>
<td>23 Feb. 2012</td>
<td>Baghdad</td>
<td>Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies, Al-Nahrian University. Audio-recording of the interview retained.</td>
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<td>Amin, Hajeer Adnan (Dr)</td>
<td>17 March 2012</td>
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<td>Dean of the Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Nahrian. Audio-recording of the interview retained.</td>
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<td>Anonymity Requested (Dr)</td>
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<td>Ex-General Director. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.</td>
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<td>Anonymity Requested (Dr)</td>
<td>19 March 2012</td>
<td>Baghdad</td>
<td>Academic staff member at the Centre for Urban Planning and Civil Society and activist. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fayyad, Amir Hassen (Dr)</td>
<td>23 Jan. 2012</td>
<td>Baghdad</td>
<td>Dean of the Faculty of Political Science; Nahrian University. Audio-recording</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gazal, Omer Hussein (Dr) 18 May 2012 Fallujah Member of academic staff. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

Hussein, Taha Ali (Dr) 25 March 2012 Amman Academic expatriates. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.


Salim, Nabil Mohamed (Dr) 4 March 2012 Baghdad The Head of the Centre for International Studies, University of Baghdad. Audio-recording of the interview retained.

Anonymity Requested 20 March 2012 Baghdad Member of academic staff, University of Baghdad. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

Yasir, Salih (Dr) 18 March 2012 Baghdad Member of a County Council, the representative of the Iraqi Communist Party. Audio-recording of the interview retained.

B) Government Political Figures:

Al-Attar, Ali 1 March 2012 Baghdad Member of Baghdad Province Council and Director of the Construction and Projects Committee at Baghdad Council. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

Al-Gadi, Rufah Yasin 14 May 2012 Anbar A County Council member.

Al-Masari, Aisha 7 March 2012 Baghdad Member of Baghdad Council.

Al-Shaykhal, Azhar 13 March 2012 Baghdad The former Minister for Women’s Affairs; member of Iraqi Alliance and MP. Audio-recording of the interview retained.

Al-Zuwayni, Bushra 29 April 2012 Baghdad Political Advisor to the Prime Minister. Audio-recording of
Anonymity Requested 17 April 2012 Baghdad Director of the National Institute for Human Rights. Audio-Recording of the interview retained.

Anonymity Requested 14 May 2012 Baghdad Ex-Ambassador. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

Anonymity Requested 26 May 2012 Amman Iraqi Expatriate. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.


Kamal, Kamal Ahmed (Dr) 11 March 2012 Baghdad The President of the Organisation of the Iraqi Teachers.


Mohamed, Sabbar Ali 1 March 2012 Baghdad Member of Baghdad County Council and the Representative of the Sadr Party. Audio-recording of the interview retained.

C) Civil Society Organization:


Al-Gorashi, Rahim Muhamad 21 April 2012 Baghdad The head of the Association of Iraqi Teachers Audio-recording of the interview retained.
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Shati, Sami 12 March 2012 Baghdad Civil society activist. Audio-recording of the interview retained.

D) Military Groups:

Awad, Awad Mohamed 17 May 2012 Fallujah Ex-Army General. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

Baraa, Higgi Ismael 18 May 2012 Fallujah Ex-Officer. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

Hilal, Yasin Kamar 26 April 2012 Baghdad Ex-Army Officer. Recording of the interview retained.

Mohamed, Sadi Awad 19 May 2012 Fallujah Ex-Officer. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

D) Tribal Leaders:

Al-Hardan, Fahmi Awad 14 May 2012 Anbar Tribal Chieftain. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.


Al-Tarmouz, Arkan Khalaf 24 April 2012 Anbar County Council member.

E) Religious Figures:

Abood, Adel Mahmoud 18 May 2012 Fallujah Religious leader. Copy of notes taken during the interview retained.

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