

DEMOCRATIZATION SPRING 2008
FINAL PAPER
DUE IN CLASS THURSDAY APRIL 24

In 9-11 pages, answer ALL of the questions for your paper topic. You can answer them as separate questions without an overarching introduction or conclusion. For both topics, the answers will be contained in the readings and lectures we have done in class and the readings listed below. For both topics, make sure to have the class reading *Iraq: Elections, Government, and Constitution*, Congressional Research Service, June 15, 2006, pp. 1-3, handy, and read pages 4-6 as well.

Paper Topic #1: Muqtada Sadr

Muqtada Sadr and his Mahdi Army (MA) have played an increasingly important role in Iraqi politics. He has always refused to cooperate with the U.S./Coalition forces in Iraq, but politicians loyal to him won seats in the January 2005 elections, and in the December 2005 elections which created the current Iraqi parliament 30 Sadrist deputies running on the United Iraqi Alliance list of Shi'ite parties along with SCIRI/ISCI and Dawa. Winning 30 deputies made the Sadrists the single biggest group in the parliament, and made it impossible for the Shi'ite parties to form a governing coalition unless the Sadrists were invited into it, and thus given control of some ministries. In November 2007 the Sadrists left the coalition due to dissatisfaction with its policies, and in March 2008 Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki ordered the Iraqi armed forces to attack Sadr's militias in Basra in particular, arguing that this was necessary to establish the control of the army over the country and end militia control. This attack ended with the MA strengthened, as national army forces under Maliki's control proved unable to defeat the MA forces and a truce brokered by Iran which largely kept the MA forces intact was agreed to by Maliki.

One of the key problems that Muqtada Sadr poses to the central government is that he has been able to use his control over key social services and his control over the MA to has been able to establish areas where Sadr, not the central government, is in control.

- 1) A national army pays for its soldiers through taxes. If a private citizen or group wants to create a militia whose power rivals that of the army, he/they is immediately faced by the challenge of raising the money necessary to pay soldiers and buy weapons. How does the MA pay its soldiers and secure weapons?
- 2) Gaining control over the provision of social services, both locally in Sadr City and at the national level through control of key ministries, has been key to MS's strategy for gaining power. How did he come to gain control of these services at both the local and national level? Why did Sadr prefer to take control of service provision ministries rather than, say, the Ministries of Defense or Foreign Affairs or other ministries which might seem more powerful?
- 3) Many critiques of parliamentary (as opposed to presidential) systems point to the danger, after elections which produce no majority party, of relatively small extremist parties

being able to play the role of kingmaker and gain much more power than their numbers would suggest.

3a) In the government formed after the December 2005 elections, would it be accurate to call MS's deputies kingmakers?

3b) Whether MS's deputies are kingmakers or not, how SPECIFICALLY has Sadr's control of 30 deputies, and his decision to let them join the ruling coalition or to leave it, affected the policies the governing coalition has pursued? (One way to think about this is: has the governing coalition experienced more freedom to pursue certain goals after the Sadrist deputies left the coalition?)

3c) The current Iraqi constitution specifies that after the elections a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly will elect a presidency – a president and two deputy presidents – who must, by consensus, then invite “the nominee of the... Council bloc with the largest number” (of seats) as Prime Minister. The system is basically, however, a parliamentary system in which the prime minister has most legislative power.

If Iraqi legislators in the future decided, as Nigerian legislators did, that moving from a parliamentary to a presidential system would benefit Iraq, would such a move decrease the power that MS would have in government? Assume that the vote totals for the parliament in December 2005 would still accurately reflect the preferences of the population (i.e. that each group there would still get the same number of seats, and the Sadrists would still have 30 seats).

Readings

Note: the readings below are organized in chronological order, so as you read them pay attention to how over time MS and MA are changing/increasing their roles.

- “Iraq’s Shi’ites Under Occupation, International Crisis Group, 9 September 2003, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=2436&sr=2>, 6-11 and 15-20
- “Iraq’s Muqtada al-Sadr: Spoiler or Stabiliser?” International Crisis Group, 11 July 2006, 1-20 <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1275&l=1> (NOTE: all Crisis Group publications listed below can be accessed from this page.)
- “Iraq Tells U.S. to Quit Checkpoint,” Ellen Knickmeyer and John Anderson, *Washington Post*, November 1, 2006 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/31/AR2006103100225.html>

- “The Calm Before the Storm: The British Experience in Southern Iraq,” Michael Knights and Ed Williams, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, February 2007, 12-14, 22-25 (until “Iraq’s Security Forces: Built to Last?”)
<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC04.php?CID=267>
- “Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra,” International Crisis Group, 25 June 2007, 1-4, 11-16 (site above)
- “Shia Bloc Quits Iraq’s Governing Coalition,” CBC News, September 16, 2007
<http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2007/09/15/irag-discord.html>
- “Trial Near For Shi’ite Ex-Officials in Sunni Killings,” Michael Gordon and Alissa Rubin, *New York Times*, November 5, 2007
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/05/world/middleeast/05baghdad.html?scp=5&sq=al-Zamili&st=nyt>
- “Iraq’s Civil War, the Sadrists, and the Surge,” International Crisis Group, 7 February 2008, 1-13, 16-20 (accessible from website noted above)
- “Truce Calms Iraq, Weakens Prime Minister,” *Associated Press*, March 31, 2008
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080331/ap_on_re_mi_ea/iraq

Paper Topic B: The Kurds, the Iraqi Constitution, and Kirkuk

As a minority that represents only 20% of the population, and which experienced brutal repression at the hands of the central government under Saddam Hussein, the Kurds entered negotiations on the form and powers of the new Iraqi government determined to maximize the powers they would hold and the protections the government might afford them as a minority group. This determination first became clear in the 2004 negotiations over the Transitional Administrative Law, or TAL, which was written by the CPA and the Iraqi Governing Council. The TAL outlined the form of government that Iraq would have until a permanent constitution was ratified, which occurred in October 2005.

The TAL contained several provisions favorable to Kurdish interests, including Article 58, which later became Article 140 of the constitution. This article calls for the government to “act expeditiously to take measures to remedy the injustice caused by the previous regime’s practices in altering the demographic character of certain regions, including Kirkuk, by deporting and expelling individuals from their place of residence,” and outlines a process by which this remedy will be undertaken, including a census and a referendum to determine the future status of Kirkuk. While this referendum was supposed to have occurred by the end of 2007, the deadline has now been extended for six months.

The permanent constitution of Iraq specifies that after the elections a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly will elect a presidency – a president and two deputy presidents – who must,

by consensus, then invite “the nominee of the... Council bloc with the largest number” (of seats) as Prime Minister. The system is basically, however, a parliamentary system in which the prime minister has most legislative power.

1) What specific arrangements did the Kurds try to secure in the TAL to protect their interests?

2) Shi’ite religious parties have had the largest number of seats in both the Constituent Assembly elected in January 2005 and the current parliament elected in December 2005. But at several junctures these parties have changed their original plans/preferences to fit the preferences of the Kurds.

2a) How has the structure of the government – a parliamentary system with the type of presidency outlined above – helped Kurds to maximize their power, arguably allowing them much more power than their 20% of the population might suggest they would have. GIVE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES.

2b) Why did the Shi’ite parties agree to put Article 140 in the constitution?

2c) What are the major problems facing the implementation of Article 140?

3) If a referendum on whether Kirkuk should join the Kurdish Regional Government or the rest of Iraq, Kurds may have enough votes to win the referendum, but if this is done against the wishes of the Arab and Turkmen residents of Kirkuk this may lead to instability. The International Crisis Group argues that “rather than convincing Arabs and Turkomans in Kirkuk that they would be better served by being inside the Kurdish region because of its stability, effective government, and protection of human rights – compared with the chaos, violence, and mismanagement in the rest of Iraq – the Kurds had achieved the opposite effect. The two communities were reinforced in their belief that the only thing that mattered to the Kurds was Kirkuk’s annexation and that any other issue, such as dialogue or minority rights within the Kurdish region, was secondary at best.

3a) Could the ways that the Iraqi constitution and government were used to increase the status of Kurds in Iraq and protect their rights provide a model that could be used to increase the rights and protection of the non-Kurdish minority in the Kurdish Regional Government? If so, how – be specific, pointing to specific ways the Kurds were protected/gained more power in the Iraqi government process and specific ways they could replicate these protections for minorities in Kurdistan (the ICG piece will give you some guidance here).

- Larry Diamond, *Squandered Victory*, 140-144, 148-151, 161-178
- “The Next Iraqi War? What Kirkuk’s Struggle to Reverse Saddam’s Ethnic Cleansing Signals for the Future of Iraq,” George Packer, *New Yorker*, October 4, 2004 (ER)
- “In the Balance,” Nir Rosen, *New York Times Magazine*, February 20, 2005

http://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/20/magazine/20ELECTION.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

“Iraq and the Kurds: Resolving the Kirkuk Crisis,” International Crisis Group, 19 April 2007, 1-15

http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/middle_east_north_africa/iraq_iran_gulf/56_iraq_and_the_kurds_the_brewing_battle_over_kirkuk.pdf
