Political Values as Essential for Democratic Consolidation

The Democratic Failure of Contemporary Iraq

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Abstract

This thesis proves that the political culture of Iraq has possessed a major obstacle for the country to consolidate the new democratic regime, established after the overthrowing of the authoritarian Baath-regime in 2003. More specifically, it tries the theories of recognized scholar Larry Diamond, strengthening his interpretation that the presence of liberal norms and values among the people is central for a democratic regime to consolidate. For that reason, this thesis form a contribute to the 60 years long academic controversy about what ultimately matters for democracy to emerge and successfully consolidate.

In order to prove these facts, this thesis resorts to a 2006 survey over political norms and values in Iraq, performed by the recognized organization World Values Survey. In this research, the answers have been distinguished for the three main ethnic groups of Iraq; Shiites, Sunni Arabs and Kurds. By presenting the results of 20 interesting value questions, this thesis reveals the political divisions between these groups that have made it impossible for them to consolidate a common democratic regime.

Key words: political culture, democratic consolidation, liberal values, "the Kurd issue", Operation Free Iraq

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1 Introduction

In the last 60 years, scholars of political science have been eager to analyze and explain the democratization of nations in different parts of the world. Many of the new democracies that have been established lately have proved more hollow then the well established democracies of the western world. As some of these regimes also have fallen back to what in practise seem to be more or less authoritarian rule, the question of what determines if a country really is to consolidate democracy is of great academic interest.

One of the major directions in this discourse is theory over political culture as an essential attribute for democracy to successfully consolidate. There is far from academic consensus that this is the case, as many scholars diminishes the significance of these attribute or empathize others much. However, one of the followers empathizing the political culture is the recognized political sociologist Larry Diamond. He stresses the values, beliefs and commitments to both the democratic regime at issue and democracy as a system, proclaiming the importance of these being in line with liberal norms.

An interesting case of unsuccessful democratic consolidation is the case of contemporary Iraq. Here, the transition from authoritarian rule to "democracy" was forced by foreign power as the absolutist Baath-party of Saddam Hussein was overthrown by an United States-lead coalition in 2003. In the aftermath of war, the allied countries have striven to make Iraq construct a democratic state. Through catalysing the holding of real parliament elections and a referendum for a new constitution, the intervening powers have pushed Iraq towards a democratic political setting. But in practice, what has characterized post-war Iraq is wide spread corruption, where political actors refer to bribes and fraud in order to achieve their political goals. Also, regular acts of terrorism is undermining the rebuilding process as US-troops and the Iraqi government is targeted. And perhaps most worse, the antagonist political preferences between the main ethnic communities of Shiites, Sunni Arabs and Kurds has resulted in bloody attempts featuring not only insurgent groups but possibly the now Shi'i dominated government and army.

But as it would be unfair to judge everybody in Iraq for anti-democratic actions taken by particular groups, what is interesting to explore is the political culture that ordinary people of Iraq constitutes. In doing so, the people's values, sentiments and commitments to the new regime and democracy as a political system could be identified. This would bring further clarity to if there really is a widespread resistance or reluctance to democracy among people in Iraq. If this could be proved, the Iraqi case could contribute in strengthening the theories of Diamond, thus illustrating the obstacle that an illiberal culture possesses.

1.1   Purpose and Question at Issue

The aim of this thesis is to bring further clarity in to which extent an undemocratic political culture really possess a severe obstacle for democracy to consolidate in a given country. More specifically, it will try Diamond's theory of liberal political culture as a necessary attribute for democracy to consolidate. In doing this, the thesis will explore the case of contemporary Iraq as an unconsolidated democracy. Therefore, this thesis will try to answer the following main question at issue:

- Is the unsuccessful enterprise of democratic consolidation in Iraq a result of an undemocratic political culture? If so, how is this connection to be explained?

As this is a rather general question, this thesis will be demarcated to the following attendant questions. The attendant questions are:

- What commitment do the Iraqi people express to democracy as a system?

- What commitment do the Iraqi people express to the new regime of their country?

- How much trust do the Iraqi people express in *other* ethnic groups within the country? What trust is expressed among people *within* these groups?

1.2   Method and Material

The survey over Iraq used for this thesis was performed by the recognized organization World Values Survey (WVS). WVS has since 1981 performed these surveys in countries all over the world, giving questions about different political values, sentiments and commitments (WVS homepage 1).

   The WVS survey over Iraq included 2701 respondents, which is not so much if one looks to Iraq's total population of 29, 5 million people (NE homepage, 2009). The smaller the sample size is, the harder is it to draw conclusions about the whole population from the sample (Teorell & Svensson, 2007:130). But these samples should give answers about the population accurate enough for the conclusions drawn here (see appendix for further regards about sample sizes).

   Another important aspect about the sample used is that the more unlike the units of analysis (here the respondents) are to each other, the less basis is there to draw conclusion about what the units look like *in general* (Teorell & Svensson, 2007:129f). The sample used here includes people from different ethnic groups in Iraq, and answers given about the values at issue might therefore be very different between these groups. The groups at issue consists of Shia Arabs, Sunni

Arabs and Kurds (se Appendix for how this groups where created). What this thesis will do therefore, is to distinguish what values these specific groups possess. In doing so, it will identify what values that there is the least consensus in between these groups. Moreover, it will examine the trust between the different groups and among people within these groups.

This thesis combines an intensive and extensive application of research, which provides it with some methodological advantages. The use of the WWS survey gives the possibility to treat several units of analysis (respondents), thus increasing the reliability of the results, one of the strong points of extensive methods (Teorell & Svensson, 2007:56f, 270). At the same time, this research is demarcated to Iraq, which gives the opportunity to go deep in the Iraqi case, focusing on troublesome areas in the process of democratic consolidation that is distinguished through the extensive research. This intensive approach will strengthen the *validity* of my results, as validity is one of the strong points of case-studies (ibid:267-270.

Finally, as this thesis is demarcated to the case of Iraq, care should be taken in trying to make strong generalizations from the conclusions drawn here, as case-studies as a rule have limited capacity to do so (Teorell & Svensson, 2007:268). But as Iraq represents an extreme case of failed democratic consolidation, it could very well illustrate the theory of Diamond as a contemporary empirical example.

Except for the WWS-database, this thesis will use several different empirical sources when giving important background information and looking in to troublesome areas of the political culture of Iraq. This way, my ambition is to stand on a broad base when giving my answers, with risks of bias reduced.

2 Theory of Democratic Consolidation

Fundamental for this thesis is a clear definition of what *democracy* implies as a concept. As this text will focus on Larry Diamond's theoretical perception of political culture, I will use his definition for democracy.

2.1 Electoral and Liberal Democracy

Diamond distinguishes between *electoral* – and *liberal democracy*. Put briefly, electoral democracy is by his definition a constitutional system where there are regular and competitive multi-party elections for the executive and legislative branches through universal suffrage. (Diamond, 1999:10). Although electoral democracy also as a rule implies some small levels of freedom of speech, press, organization and assembly, scholars has tend not to give these attributes very much attention when measuring democracy from this definition (ibid:8). Instead, these requisites and others are much more empathized in the definition of liberal democracy, which is a much deeper way of understanding democracy.

Despite of meeting the demands of an electoral democracy, there are several other criteria that must be met in a liberal democracy. Not only must there be a *vertical* accountability between the institutions of government and the electorate, but also a *horizontal* accountability between these institutions themselves. This way, the rule after constitution and law is protected. Liberal democracy also implies that there are no other actors than those represented by the electorate with reserved political power, like for example domains of army influence. Important is also that there is the possibility to have a political influence, individually or through groups, in between elections (ibid:10f).

These are the main principles of liberal democracy by Diamonds definition, but he also stresses more specific conditions. Important for the case of Iraq is that there are no cultural, ethnic or religious groups with limited possibilities to engage politically or practising their culture in a liberal democracy (ibid:10f).

2.2 Political Culture as Fundamental for Democratic Consolidation

According to Diamond, being liberal is almost a pre-requisite for a democracy to become consolidated. An important point of departure for this thesis is that

contemporary Iraq from the definition of Diamond is not a *consolidated liberal democracy*, but could qualify as an unstable electoral democracy. I will make this fact clear in section 3.2.

As for his definition of consolidated democracy, Diamond primarily emphasize the political culture of a given country, which must encompass a shift in order for democracy to consolidate. Larry Diamond sees political culture as "[..]a people´s predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals, sentiments and evaluations about the political system of their country and the role of the self in that system" (Diamond, 1999:163). Consolidated democracy requires that the behaviour and attitude among both public and elites in society are in line with democratic principles and methods (ibid:19f). Fundamentally, this implies a wide spread legitimation for the constitution, the democratic regime and democracy as a system as the best option for the country, even if the performance of the regime is currently unsatisfying (ibid:65).

As for the attitudes, the *normative aspect* of legitimation, the majority of elites (especially significant political leaders) and organizations believes in this legitimacy, which is indicated through their approach towards the public. At the *mass level*, more than 70 percent of people believe that democracy is preferable to any other form of government and that the democratic regime in place is the best imaginable for their country at the time. Important is also that no more than 15 percent are active advocates of authoritarian rule as a preferable option of government (Diamond, 1999:68f).

As for the political behaviour in the country, the *behavioural aspect*, there is respect for the democratic competition of power among elites and rhetoric that can ignite violence or other anti-democratic methods are avoided. No significant political party or other type of organization resorts to unconstitutional or other anti-democratic methods when pursuing political power or other political goals, like violence and fraud. At *the mass level*, there are no significant support for such organizations mentioned and ordinary citizens also restrains from this type of behaviour when expressing or pursuing political opinions and interests. Put clearly by Diamond, democracy can not be consolidated if followers of antagonist parties kills or terrorize each other (Diamond, 1999:68f). Section 3.2 will show that this is the obvious case of Iraq, which therefore distinctively breaks with the behavioural aspect of democratic legitimation. What is more unclear though, is the normative aspect of legitimation in Iraq. For that reason, this thesis will strive to find out what political norms and values that the Iraqi people express, thus making clear what commitment there is to democracy as a system from the definition of Diamond, but also the commitment to the democratic regime in place. Put clearly, this thesis will aim to map out the *normative aspect of legitimation of democracy at the mass level in contemporary Iraq.*

3 The Modern History of a Nation in Change

Historically, the area of present Iraq, centred around the nutritive rivers of Tigris and Euphrates, was referred to as *Mesopotamia*. This is possible the place where civilization first arose along with the agriculture revolution, the art of writing and other important inventions (Stansfield, 2007:11ff). Sadly, it is hard to perceive contemporary Iraq as one of the most civilized places on earth. As will be described, the country encompasses violent conflict and could be regarded as one the verge to civil war. In order to understand these incongruities more deeply, the modern history of Iraq is shortly described in the next sub-section.

3.1 Iraq Prior to Democratization

Iraq as a nation was not founded until the end of World War I. The war caused the Ottoman Empire, a long time ruler of the Mesopotamian area, to collapse. This made it possible for Great Britain to gain control of three of its important provinces; Baghdad, Mosul, and Basra. It was then decided that these three areas was to make up the nation of Iraq. Britain appointed the King for this new monarchy, and thus kept control over Iraq. (Pirincci, 2007:93f).

A complicating feature that nations originally set up as colonies or puppet regimes often encompasses is "constructed or artificial borders" (Stansfield, 2007:27ff). When constructing the Iraqi nation, little attention was paid towards the many different ethnic and religious groups and their interests (Pirincci, 2007:94). This explains why Iraq features such an ethnic heterogeneity. Today, the very majority is made up by Arabs, consisting of about 75-80 % of the Iraqi population. The biggest minority group consist of the Kurds, which mainly lives in the country's northern parts, representing 15-20 % of the people. The rest of the population, about 5 %, is made up by the minority groups of Turkomans and Assyrians among with some other very small groups (CIA homepage, 2009).

97 % of the Iraqi population are Muslims, making Islam the dominant religion where Christianity along with other religions make up for the remaining 3 %. But the two main branches of Islam encompasses a significant division among muslims in the country. 60-65 % of the Muslims recognizes the Shia tradition while 32-37 % confesses themselves to the Sunni branch of Islam (CIA homepage, 2009).

When establishing Iraq, Britain referred to the well used colonial strategy of "divide and rule". This meant that the British made a political elite exclusively out

of Arabs of the Sunni branch, further on here recognized as "Sunni Arabs, which the British depended on. The Sunni Arabs effectively dominated politics, excluding other ethnic groups from government. Consequently, the ethnic majority group of Shia Arabs and the Kurds, the largest minority group, lacked political influence (Pirincci, 2007:94).

As protests towards the British rule increased, Britain granted Iraq independence in 1932. But in practice, Britain keep a substantial political influence and control over the country through bilateral agreements with the Iraqi monarchy. Moreover, the independence did not imply further democratization, as the political system remained relatively unaltered. The Iraqi king had a vast influence in the government, the parliament and the judicial system, free to make any laws by himself or suspend and abolish the parliament (Pirinci, 2007:93f).

What did brought a change was a military coup in 1958, lead by General Abd al-Karim Quasim. The proclamation of an Iraqi republic meant the end of monarchy and British influence. But as the military stayed in power, it comes as no surprise that there was no further democratization of Iraq. The power of parliament in this republic was exclusively in the hands of General Quasim, who made his own laws through appointing cabinet members (Pirincci, 2007:94).. Using Larry Diamond's words, horizontal accountability between political institutions was not on the map in Quasims republic

The coup ´d Etat of 1958 set off a succession of coups and counter-coups during the following decade. Finally, the Baath-party accessed the power of government through its 1968 coup. This power change brought an end to the frequent regime changes and implied a more stable political order, although there was a struggle for power within the ruling party. Soon, it was obvious that Saddam Hussein was becoming the unofficial strong man of the Baath-party. In 1979 he achieved total control through a bloodless coup against general Ahmad Hasan al-Bakir, official president and party leader at the time. Saddam Hussein appointed himself prime minister, president of state and other significant posts of governance (Pirincci, 2007:94f).

Not only did Saddam Hussein proved to be an absolute and repressive ruler, it was also soon clear that he had expansive plans for Iraq. In 1980, his Iraq invaded Iran, the much larger neighbouring country in the east. The war, which lasted for eight years, resulted in a stalemate after serious losses on both sides. Only three years later, in 1991, Saddam Hussein decided to invade its small but oil enriched neighbour Kuwait (Pirincci, 2007:100). This time, the world community reacted against Saddam Hussein as the United Nations formed a military coalition with the United States in front against Saddam Hussein's army. The military power of this coalition proved to be superior to that of the Iraqi army, which was quickly defeated and forced out of Kuwait. The war lead to deteriorated relations with the US and the western powers and Iraq was subjected to different types of sanctions after the war (Pirincci, 2007:100).

In connection to the US war on terror, expressed especially though the struggle against the Talibans and the terror group al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, the tone was sharpened also against Saddam Hussein. Iraq was accused for the support of terrorist groups but in front of all for the possession of weapons of

mass destruction . With this expressed motivation, the US and Great Britain formed a second coalition against Saddam Husseins Iraq, this time without the legitimation of the United Nations (UN) (Stansfield, 2007:154ff). Moreover, the invasion of Iraq was presented as having the purpose of democratizing Iraq, and the operation was therefore to be called "Operation Free Iraq". This coalition was soon successful in defeating the army of Iraq and overthrowing the Baath-regime (Stansfield, 2007:163ff).

3.2 Problems Encountered in Building the Democratic Iraq

To defeat the Iraqi army and put the Baath-party out of power proved to be quite a easy task for the powerful US-led coalition . What instead has showed to be a great challenge is to establish security, law and order and to set up a legitimate, democratic regime (Stansfield, 2007:159ff). After overthrowing the Baath-Party, the US and its allies established a provisional government for Iraq that was under the control of the intervening states. The authority was named the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and was granted all the power needed in the executive, legislative and judicial branches in order to be able to carry out its missions (ICG no17, 2003:10). But the CPA soon faced protests because of the foreign influence in Iraqi politics, and at the same time attacks on American troops increased. The US was thus compelled to hand over power from the CPA to an Iraqi interim government, which was based on former political exiles in Iraq. In the end of June 2003, the new "Interim Governing Council" (IGC) was granted most of the political power, but the CPA kept much of its influence (ibid:11f). But further Iraqi displeasure of not being a sovereign nation pushed an US, faced with the more and more challenging task of building a legitimate state, to catalyse the holding of real parliament and provincial council elections in 2005. Also, a referendum was set up in order to give legitimacy to a new Iraqi constitution (Stansfield, 2007:182-189)

The resistance to the political process has been severe through out the rebuilding process, despite the fact that Iraq has been offered to establish a democratic state independent from the CPA. This resistance has been expressed through violent insurgencies, often in the form of cold blooded terrorist attacks. Even today, six years after the intervention, these attacks results in a high level of mainly civil casualties (UN-report 284, 2009:2). The attacks have primarily been aimed at US troops or at government offices and individuals, and thus at the rebuilding process itself. (ICG no17, 2003:6-9).   From the very start of this process, the scientific reporter International Crisis Group identified several groups possessing motives for these acts. At first, there are former members of the old regime which either strive to re-establish the Baath-party rule or, driven by nationalistic motives, force the "occupying" coalition forces out of Iraq. There are

also Sunni-Islamics, determined to fight all non-Muslims on Iraqi ground (that is the coalition forces). In addition to the indigenous perpetrators, Islamic militants from neighbouring countries have entered Iraq, perceiving its country as a battlefront in which to fight the US and the West . Also, some acts against the US forces are of a non-ideological nature, motivated with the revenge for military and civilian casualties caused by the allied warfare. (ICG no17, 2003:6-9).

The fact that Sunni-Arabs have possessed the political power since the days of British heritage makes the Shia-Sunni Arabic dived extra sensitive, as Shia Arabs where subjected to repression and marginalization through out the modern history of Iraq (Pirinci, 2007:92). This division explains the sectarian battle now raging between the two, with acts of terror against innocents and ethnic cleansing getting momentum in the Shi'i dominated south (Stansfield, 2007:176, 189f). Also the Kurds, possessing a partly autonomous region in the Iraqi north, was for long marginalized and occasionally subjected to mass murder by the Sunni-led regimes, especially the Baath-regime (ICG no90, 2009:2f). This is one of many political reasons to the tension between the Kurdish periphery and the rest of the Arabic country, a division that has already resulted in bloodshed (ICG no90, 2009:i). In the quest for influence, political groups representing the different ethnic communities have used threat and violence in order to push people in a certain political direction (ICG no82, 2009:2, 27). For this reason, the contemporary Iraq encompasses a political culture where actors use anti-democratic methods when pursuing their political goals. As political actors at all levels refrains from these acts in a consolidated democracy, it is from the definition of Diamond clear that democracy in Iraq can not be consolidated from a *behavioural aspect* unless these actions ceases or diminishes very significantly (Diamond, 1999:68f). The fact that widespread corruption in different of Iraq's political institutions have been observed do not make things better in this regard (ICG no82, 2005:10f).

From this perspective, Diamonds theory applies to Iraq. Despite the transition to a democratic regime, democracy is far from consolidated in contemporary Iraq which would be theoretically impossible from a behavioural aspect of democratic legitimation. It is true that the contemporary Iraq could be regarded as meeting the conditions set for an electoral democracy, and could therefore be treated as such a state. But it is even more evident that it do not meet the requirements for being a liberal democracy from a behavioural aspect. In the next sections, the *normative legitimation* of democracy will be investigated, to see if these results are more positive from a liberal point of view than those regarding the *behavioural legitimation*.

4 Democratic Norms and Values at the Mass Level

As made clear above, contemporary Iraq features a political mayhem in which the most fundamental democratic norms are disrespected. In this chapter, I will try to make clear what commitment is expressed for liberal norms among the Iraqi people, and more specifically among the different ethnic groups presented in this thesis. In that way, it will be made clear if the disrespect for these principles is subordinated to specific political actors, or if the Iraqi people encompasses a scepticism against their regime and towards democracy as a system.

4.1 Dubious Commitment to Democracy as a System

As table 1 shows us, a vast majority of the Iraqi people considers that having a democratic system is a good thing, with only about 4 % strongly rejecting the idea. When it comes to the three main ethnic groups of Iraq, it is clear that the Sunni-Arabs are the least enthusiastic about democracy as a system, although just about 15 % perceive this system as not good. Most of the hard-core resistance is represented by the Shia-Arabs, although truly marginal, while the reluctance to democracy is lowest among Kurds.

As presented in Section 2, Larry Diamond mentions statistical pre-requisites for democracy to consolidate in a given country, saying that more than 70 percent of the mass public must *consistently* believe that democracy is preferable to other forms of government with no more than 15 % actively preferring the authoritarian option (Diamond, 1999:69) . The survey material used here only give answers for a single survey performed in 2006, with the consequence that it is hard to say if the answers given are the *consistent* believes of the people (these regards are further discussed in section 1.2). Anyway, Table 1 indicate an attitude towards democratic governance that do not really meet the pre-requisites of Diamond. It is here suggested that only those respondents who believe that having a democratic system is *very good* can be assumed to really be convinced that it is preferable to any other form of government. From this view, the Iraqi people do not really meet the demand of 70 % true democracy believers, and nor do any of its major ethnic groups separately.

Table 1

Having a Democratic Political System

| | All Survey Respondets | | | | |
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Very good	61,3%	40,9%	60,8%	51,1%	54,8%
Fairly good	29,3%	43,5%	35,5%	34,5%	33,6%
Fairly Bad	6,3%	14,8%	1,8%	9,7%	7,9%
Very bad	3,1%	,9%	1,8%	4,7%	3,7%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Note: The "Total column" on the far right represents the answer of *all survey respondents*. As these where selected strategically radom, these numbers represents the best approximation of the average Iraqi (see section 1.2.1 and 7.2-3). Also see section 7.1 for exact formulation of survey questions.

Source: *World Values Survey 2005 wave-survey*: WVS2005-List B official file v.20090901 and the WVS 2005 CODEBOOK v.20090415

www.worldvaluessurvey.com 16 Oct 2009

Table 1 can also be understood in another way. As democratic and authoritarian rule can be perceived as the opposite of one another (if anarchic rule is not regarded) , it is suggested that only respondents saying democracy is a *very bad* thing can be assumed to be convinced advocates of an authoritarian form of government. From this view, table 1 indicates that the Iraqi people are well below the 15 % level of *active* authoritarian recommendation. For Diamond, not only must the authoritarian recommendation among the public reach the 15 % level, but it must also be an active recommendation (Diamond, 1999:69). The table results presented here do not let us know the level of activity among the authoritarian advocates of the respondents. But from the fact that they are far from reaching the 15 % level anyway, these results implies that authoritarian recommendation among the public is not strong enough to possess an obstacle for democratic consolidation. It is though important to stress that the 14,8 % result of Sunni-Arabs proclaiming democracy as *fairly bad* gives worrying signals. To really test if there are no widespread democratic resistance to democracy among common people, other relevant survey question results will be presented in the next sub-sections[1].

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[1]Note that the "Total" column on the far right represents the answer of *all survey respondents*. The "Other" column represents those Survey Respondents not specified as part of any of above mentioned groups. Their answers are hard to refer to as they represent a non-systematized group. But through including the "Other" respondents answers in the statistical software used, the Total column will include all survey respondents, thus representing the best sample for drawing conclusions about the whole Iraqi population. For the other tables in this thesis, the "Other" and "Total" column represents the same as for table 1.

4.1.1 Government Efficiency versus Democratic Representation

A common argument among resistors to democracy is that ordinary people are not qualified to have a political influence. In order to run the country as fair and effective as possible, it is better to have experts dealing with political issues in stead of elected politicians, contesting with one another. Moreover, democracy as a system can be questioned about its efficiency to make laws and implement decisions. It is better if a few people make import decisions instead of having an extensive legislative and executive which have to agree or compromise about urgent standpoints, one might argue. Especially two survey questions are oriented in these regards. Table 2 answers to the question of whether having a strong leader, who does not have to bother with parliament and elections, is a good thing. Table 3 answers to what Iraqis think of having experts, or technocrats, and not government to make decisions according to what these perceive as best for the country.

Table 2 shows that Shia-Arabs and especially Kurds are generally reluctant to the idea of having an absolute leader. But Sunni-Arabs express quite a support for this idea. Slightly more than a half of this group says it is a good thing, with roughly one fifth proclaiming it as very good. Understood fairly, more than 15 % of Sunni-Arab would like to have a leader with authoritarian powers, and could therefore in a way be regarded as advocates of authoritarian rule. Luckily, the overall population score of Iraq do not reach the critical level of 15 % for this question.

With these figures in mind it is hard not to think of the old Sunni-dominated Baath-regime with Saddam Hussein in front, unlimited in his power towards both parliament and government (see section 3.1). Even though people of all ethnic groups of Iraq suffered under the rule of Baath, it has been presented above that the Sunni-Arabs was privileged in the old system. This is a first sign of Sunni-Arabs expressing a nostalgia for the old political order. At the same time it is strange that Sunni Arabs cheers for authoritarian leaders in the new regime where Shiites have a political advantage as the majority of the electorate, now with Shia Arabic Ibrahim al-Ja'afari as prime minister (ICG no 82, 2009:17). If al-Ja'afari where given authoritarian powers, he would posses extensive possibilities to override other minsters in government, some representing Sunni Arabs. In section 4.2.1, these arguments about Sunni Arabic support for strong leaders are further tested.

About table 3, all groups give rather critical answers from a democratic point of view, but especially the so far seemingly democratic Kurds . A vast majority of Kurdish respondents actually diminishes the role of parliament as legislator, saying it is preferable with technocrats making important decisions on their own. There is a significant contradiction here in the expressed values regarding democracy as a system; if politics are to be based on the opinions of the electorate, how can its influence be secured when experts are free to make decision without parliamentary accountability? In this regard, the values of the Iraqi People, especially those of the Kurds, clearly break with Diamonds

Table 2

Having a Strong Leader

	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
		All Survey Respondets			
Very good	10,0%	18,8%	4,0%	12,9%	11,1%
Fairly good	4,8%	33,3%	4,9%	11,4%	9,7%
Fairly Bad	26,7%	22,2%	10,2%	22,3%	21,8%
Very bad	58,6%	25,6%	80,9%	53,4%	57,3%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see Table 1

Table 3

Having Experts make Decisions

	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
		All Survey Respondets			
Very good	28,7%	35,7%	58,9%	40,5%	40,0%
Fairly good	38,0%	51,8%	29,6%	31,8%	34,1%
Fairly Bad	15,7%	9,8%	5,7%	15,3%	13,7%
Very bad	17,7%	2,7%	5,7%	12,4%	12,2%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see Table 1

definition of electoral democracy, which absurdly encompasses a much wider definition than the more deep liberal definition.

4.1.2 Advocates of Religious Authoritarianism

As shown in table 4 all ethnic groups at issue expresses a significant dedication to their religion, which predominantly is the Islamic faith (see section 3.1). But apparently Iraqis do not make a clear distinction between religion and politics, which for some apparently should be the same. Table 5 answers to the question of whether it is good to have an Islamic government, where religious authorities have absolute power. Receiving limited support from Sunni Arabs and Kurds, Shia Arabs proclaims this idea as very good. If understood literally, this idea is doubtlessly incompatible with democracy. It transfers one's thoughts to the neighbouring country Iran, where the political system is ultimately regulated by a theological dimension, represented by the Shia-Islamic clergy (Roskin, 2007:549f). Do Shia-Arabs really see the political system of their larger neighbour, a country currently characterized by revolts and public disorder, as a model for Iraq? Well, the new constitution of Iraq clearly stresses a significant role of Islam in Iraq, as a source of legislation. But it also make a distinction between politics and religion, ensuring a democratic way of ruling Iraq.

Table 4

Importance of Religion in Once Life

	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
		All Survey Respondets			
Very important	95,3%	99,2%	92,4%	97,2%	96,1%
Rather important	4,6%	,8%	5,5%	2,4%	3,3%
Not very important			1,1%	,4%	,4%
Not at all important	,1%		1,1%		,2%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see Table 1

Table 5

Having an Islamic Government, where Religious Authorities have Absolute Power

	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
		All Survey Respondets			
Very good	33,5%	2,6%	5,4%	21,7%	21,7%
Fairly good	28,2%	21,9%	14,7%	27,4%	25,6%
Fairly Bad	26,9%	50,0%	14,4%	31,2%	28,7%
Very bad	11,3%	25,4%	65,5%	19,7%	24,1%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see Table 1

Moreover, it stresses religious freedom in Iraq, proclaiming all religious and ethnic groups are to be treated equally and with respect (Constitution of 2005: Article 2, Article 5). The answers from table 5 tells us that the Shia-Arabs, representing a majority of the electorate, do not favour a relation between politics and religion that is as democratic progressive and liberal as the constitution proclaims. Question is if Shia-Arabs are able to compromise with the other two groups in this regard, if there religious preferences are to leaven all through politics.

In this regard, there is an important division between Diamond's definition of liberal democracy and how Shia Arabs of Iraq perceive a true democratic system. As mentioned, an important requisite for a democracy to be liberal from Diamond's definition is that there are no reserved domains of powers for actors that are not directly or indirectly accountable to the electorate (Diamond, 1999:10). Clearly, religious authorities with *absolute powers* implies authorities *not* accountable to the electorate.

4.1.3 The Army and Politics

Regarding reserved political powers, Diamond specifically mentions the army as a potential source of power with lacking accountability of the electorate (Diamond, 1999:10). As presented in Section 3.1, the modern history of Iraq up until after the 2003-intervention, has been characterized by military influence in politics (see also Stansfield, 2007:3, 76). Table 6 answers to what Iraqis think of having the army to rule the country. A vast majority sees this option as something bad, but only half of Iraqis really rejects the idea, proclaiming it as something very bad (please keep in mind that it is the "Total" table column that is referred to when Iraqis as a population is analysed). There are some expressed differences between the ethnic groups at issue here, with Kurds being the most critical and Shia Arabs the least. Anyway, a rather sound attitude from a democratic point of view.

Unfortunately, when asked if the army should take over when the government is incompetent, people are alarmingly positive as table 7 shows. With about 27 % of the people and 45 % of the Sunni-Arabs saying this is absolutely an essential characteristic of democracy, the political values of Iraqis once more indicates incompatibility with democratic consolidation. Despite legitimating *democracy as a system*, the majority of the people must also legitimize the constitutional system of their country, even if its performance ever prove insufficient or unsatisfying.

The mass public must always be ready to defend and obey the political system of their country (Diamond, 1999:65f). About the 70 % legitimation-level, this do not only apply to the legitimation of democracy as a system, but also to the legitimation of the democratic, constitutional system in *place of the country* as the most preferable option imaginable (ibid:65, 68f). The current constitution of Iraq proclaims that the people of Iraq are the source of authority and legitimacy, exercised through a general ballot and constitutional institutions (Constitution of 2005: Article 5). It also stresses the prohibition for the armed forces to be subjected to control of civilian authority (ibid: Article 9A). Therefore, a military takeover of government would imply a break with the constitutional rule of Iraq, which statistically one out of four Iraqis perceive as an essential element of democracy if the regime would prove unsatisfying. Iraqis thus express a very hollow democratic legitimation, as they say they are committed to a democratic regime only when its performance is satisfying.

Table 6

Having the Army Rule

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Very good	7,7%	1,7%	5,0%	5,0%	5,5%
Fairly good	14,0%	13,4%	8,4%	12,0%	12,1%
Fairly Bad	33,4%	31,1%	9,3%	37,9%	32,2%
Very bad	44,9%	53,8%	77,3%	45,1%	50,1%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see Table 1

Table 7

Characteristic of Democracy: The Army Takes Over When Government is Incompetent

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Not an essential characteristic	12,8%	15,7%	10,6%	10,8%	11,6%
2	2,5%	5,0%	3,1%	3,6%	3,3%
3	2,7%	3,3%	4,1%	4,0%	3,6%
4	3,0%	1,7%	8,9%	4,3%	4,3%
5	13,6%	6,6%	4,1%	12,3%	11,4%
6	7,4%	5,8%	5,8%	9,7%	8,4%
7	8,9%	5,8%	6,8%	9,1%	8,6%
8	11,5%	5,0%	11,6%	10,6%	10,7%
9	10,1%	5,8%	14,0%	11,2%	11,0%
An essential characteristic	27,4%	45,5%	31,1%	24,3%	27,1%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: See Table 1

4.2   Insufficient Legitimation of the Democratic Regime

As mentioned, the level of 70 % public approval of democracy not only implies democracy as a system, but also the democratic regime in place (Diamond, 1999:69). In this thesis, an important point of departure has been that contemporary Iraq in fact encompasses a democratic regime already, at least from the definition of *electoral democracy,* but that it is not a *consolidated liberal democracy.* For these reasons, this section will investigate to what extension there is support for the democratic regime currently in place.

4.2.1   Defective Government Confidence

As seen in table 8, the confidence in the government is not very high among Iraqis, with only one third proclaiming that they have a great deal of confidence in the government. At the same time, the fact that about one out of four says they completely lack confidence in the government gives a rather bad picture regarding the people's legitimation of those in power. Once again, it is hard to translate the results given to Larry Diamond's 70 % public approval level of the democratic regime in place of the country. Here, the *regime* is to be understood as the constitutional, democratic system in which regular alternation in power takes place. It is not to be understood as the specific government, as the current executive power of the regime (Diamond, 1999:65-68). But of course, dissatisfaction and non-confidence with the executive power and its performance is likely to also imply displeasure with the way democracy works. Thus, the rather poor results presented in table 8 together with those presented in section 4.1 (sub-sections included) contribute to the picture of an Iraqi people not reaching the 70 % level of regime approval.

Important to notice is a severe difference in confidence in the government among the different ethnic groups. Especially Sunni-Arabs expresses a very significant distrust, with 81,7 % of respondents saying they completely lack confidence in the federal government. In section 4.11 (page 14), it was made clear that Sunni Arabs give signals of nostalgia for the old political order, encompassing strong Sunni leaders with authoritarian power – representing the interests of Sunni Arabs more than other ethnic groups. Here is a second sign of Sunni Arabs expressing reluctance to the new form of government, in which they no longer make up a political elite but instead the largest minority. A minority who are now in a rather weak position compared to the majority group of Shia Arabs.

Table 8

Confidence: The Government

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
A great deal	45,1%	2,5%	44,7%	23,4%	31,4%
Quite a lot	39,9%	7,5%	28,5%	26,6%	29,6%
Not very much	10,9%	8,3%	16,5%	18,0%	15,3%
None at all	4,1%	81,7%	10,3%	32,0%	23,6%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see table 1

But these results can also be traced to the post-intervention history of Iraq. Under the rule of the CPA and the ICG after the intervention, intensified insurgencies resulted in that more pressure came upon the US government to give Iraq sovereignty fast. Probably, the country was not ready for real elections due to the violent disputes characterising Iraq at the time, and there was a great fear that the electoral process would become subjected to insurgent attacks (Stansfield, 2007: 182). Anyway, the first real elections to the Iraqi National Assembly (national parliament) held in January 2005, resulted in a very uneven voting turnout. As the turnout was as high as about 80 % in Shii dominated areas and surprisingly 90 % in the Kurdistan region, it was remarkable low in Sunni-Arab districts. For some districts, for example in Mosul, it was as low as about 10 %. Those who did vote in these districts where predominantly Kurds. A possible explanation is that the Sunni Arabic terrorist group Al-Qaeda had proclaimed all participators as legitimate targets for acts of terror, a warning that seemed only to have significant effect in Sunni Arab districts (ibid:182). The low turnout for Sunni Arabs of course meant that they was much less represented in Parliament than the Shia Arabs and Kurds, although the new Shi'i prime minister Ibrahim al-Ja'afari granted the Sunni Arabs a number of cabinet post, in accordance to the size of the Sunni Arabic population (ibid:182ff).

As Shia Arabs accepted the idea, Sunni Arab negotiators envisaged not only a Kurdistan breaking loose from the rest of the federation but also a Shia dominated southern province. This would imply that Sunni Arabs were to be left with a resource poor central region (ibid:185). This can explain why most Sunni Arab districts voted distinctly against the proposed constitution in the referendum. But the fact that they participated, no matter if voting against, helped to legitimate the new referendum which Kurds and Shia Arabs generally favoured (and which therefore was approved). On the other hand, the parliament elections could not be regarded fair as Sunni Arabs had not participated. For that reason, new parliamentary elections was held in December 2005, resulting in a significantly higher voters turnout among Sunni Arabs, thus better represented this time (ibid:187). Due to their low representation, Sunni Arabs also encompassed less influence when the new constitution was created in 2005. In October the same year, the proposed constitution was subjected to a referendum. As the constitution

Table 9

Voted in December 2005 Parliament Elections

| | All Survey Respondets | | | | |
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
yes	93,4%	78,2%	96,7%	88,5%	90,5%
no	6,6%	21,8%	3,3%	11,5%	9,5%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see table 1

stressed that Iraq was to be a federal country, this meant that the autonomy of the Kurdistan region was to be further secured.

Table 9 shows the voters turnout for the December 2005 elections among respondents in the different ethnic groups. This facts indicates that all ethnic groups, although Sunni Arabs a little less, now participates in politics. From Table 8, we also see that the previously marginalized and suppressed groups of Shia Arabs and Kurds now have quite a confidence in the federal government. Although having realized that they must participate in order to have any political influence at all, Sunni Arabs express a severe non-confidence in the Government in which they are represented but are no longer dominating. But even worse is that majority of this group also sees the new constitution, and thus the democratic regime, as illegitimate (Stansfield, 2007:186f).

As Sunni Arabs makes up the biggest minority in Iraq, especially their sentiments towards the government and the new regime constitute an obstacle for its consolidation. Table 10 shows that when asked about how much freedom of choice and ability to influence their own lives they feel that they have, the Sunni Arabs again give the far most negative answer. The other two groups do not give to positive answers either, but they express much more freedom than the Sunni Arabs (also see means and median in Table Statistics 1 for these results). According to Table 11, all groups expresses problematic circumstances regarding the respect for individual human rights in the country, but Sunni Arabs experience the most severe disrespect of these principles. From these facts, it is even more evident that Sunni Arabs feel the most uncomfortable in the new political settings and circumstances in the county.

In Iraq, the terrorist insurgencies often targeting government offices or individuals, have been committed predominantly by Sunni Arabic groups (Stansfield, 2007: 176). But table 12 suggest that although not feeling free and fairly treated in their society, Sunni Arabs at a mass level do not support these attacks. When asked if it would be good if people in general achieved more respect for authorities, a vast majority of Sunni Arabs agree, with no respondent saying it would be a bad thin. This suggests that although contemporary Iraq encompasses a political and moral chaos, ordinary people still express respect for the political system that they live in. This further implies that those resorting to undemocratic methods for reaching political goals, as violence, fraud and bribes, are represented by a problematic minority and not the Iraqi public. It is though

Table 10

How much Freedom One Considers to Have

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Not at all	9,2%	35,0%	2,9%	14,4%	12,3%
2	3,4%	8,9%	3,4%	6,9%	5,5%
3	7,7%	8,1%	5,8%	8,4%	7,8%
4	9,4%	8,1%	9,0%	9,9%	9,6%
5	22,5%	13,0%	17,8%	16,1%	18,0%
6	12,5%	9,8%	19,6%	9,2%	11,6%
7	9,8%	4,9%	9,8%	10,1%	9,8%
8	11,2%	4,1%	9,5%	9,9%	9,9%
9	6,0%	4,1%	4,8%	6,8%	6,2%
A great deal	8,3%	4,1%	17,2%	8,2%	9,3%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see table 1

Table 11

Respect for Individual Human Rights

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
A lot of respect	7,1%	2,4%	25,8%	4,1%	7,9%
Some respect	35,0%	,8%	29,9%	23,8%	26,6%
Not much respect	30,3%	24,4%	30,4%	27,8%	28,7%
Not respect at all	27,6%	72,4%	14,0%	44,3%	36,8%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see table 1

Table 12

Greater Respect for Authority

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Good	99,2%	87,9%	86,8%	84,7%	89,2%
Don´t mind	,5%	12,1%	12,2%	13,6%	9,7%
Bad	,3%		1,0%	1,7%	1,1%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: see table 1

clear that there are severe problems regarding the legitimation of the democratic regime in place, as especially Sunni Arabs expresses a defective commitment and legitimation.

4.2.2 Public Aversion to the Coalition Forces

The violent insurgencies and rebellions of both Shia and Sunni Arabic groups have, from the time that the Baath-regime was overthrown, more often been pointed at the coalition forces (Stansfield, 2007:176). These forces, predominantly made up by American troops, have been perceived as foreign occupiers, and by some as non-Muslim intruders on the Iraqi land or the Islamic soil (ICG no17, 2003:6-9). As encountered in the previous sub-section, ordinary Iraqi people are very unlikely to commit or even support the terrorist attacks against the authorities of the country. In a way, the US forces can be perceived as an authority, as they have been responsible to maintain order in the country. This responsibility have been more and more passed to the new rebuild Iraqi police and national security forces. Supporting the attacks and sabotage against the US forces or not, it is interesting to know the public sentiments towards these, as they have constituted an important element in the state-reconstruction process of Iraq (See section 3.2).

Table 13 answers to what trust Iraqis have for the American Forces. As seen, there is a very strong reluctance to these forces, as about 9 out of 10 Shia Arab and almost all Sunni Arab respondents say they do not have any trust in the American Forces at all. This suggest that also ordinary Iraqi Arabs perceive the American troops as a harsh, occupying force. The US troops are not to be trusted as a fair liberator, upholding and promoting law and order in a legitimate way, according the Iraqi Arabs. But the Kurds also expresses a significant distrust, as half of respondents say that they neither have any trust at all in the American Forces. These results are more surprising as the US and the Kurdistan *peshmerga fighters* where close allies during the war that put down Saddam Husseins repressing regime (ICG no90, 2009:4). But it is hear clear that the Kurds do not trust the support of the US forces as a protector of their autonomy and safety in the Arab dominated country, which has suppressed and marginalized them before. Kurdish leaders express a sharp critic to the Barack Obama-Administration's decision to withdraw troops from Iraq before the summer of 2010 (ICG no88, 2009:24). It is likely that also the Kurdish people feels betrayed and left to their own destiny with their former protector and supporter leaving them on their own in the Arab dominated country.

In the WWS survey over Iraq, respondents where given a list of different groups of people and asked to mention those who they would not like to have as their neighbours. Table 14 answers to how many of respondents that mentioned Americans as people not preferable as neighbours. The results are in line with those of table 13. But what is interesting here, is that this question are not about US troops but about Americans as people. We see from these facts that almost all Shia and Sunni Arabs are uncomfortable to the idea of living close to Americans. This suggest that there is a pronounced distrust in Americans themselves not only among the insurgent and rebellion groups but among the Arabic people of Iraq. Also among the Kurds there is an expressed reluctance to the thought of living close to Americans.

Most important when it comes to consolidating democracy in Iraq is not the trust in the American forces specifically, but the trust in the US as a country and a

Table 13

<p align="center">Trust: The American Forces</p>

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
A great deal	1,3%	,8%	10,5%	,8%	2,2%
Quite a lot	1,7%	,8%	22,5%	1,1%	4,1%
Not very much	6,1%	,8%	16,7%	3,2%	5,7%
None at all	90,9%	97,5%	50,3%	94,9%	88,0%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: See Table 1

Table 14

<p align="center">Neighbours: Americans</p>

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Mentioned	96,2%	100,0%	46,4%	96,0%	89,8%
Not mentioned	3,8%		53,6%	4,0%	10,2%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: See Table 1

force, responsible for the rebuilding of the country they have defeated. The US was more or less ruling the country through CPA profoundly the first two years in the aftermath of war and have then catalysed the creation of the sovereign Iraqi regime as it is known today . Thus, even if the new regime has been founded on the voice of the Iraqi electorate, the US had a major role and influence in its construction (see section 3.2). For that reason, the public reluctance the US possess an obstacle for consolidation of the new regime, as one of its main founder and promoter enjoy such a pronounced illegitimacy.

4.3   Arab Unity and Kurdish Separatism

The acts of violence committed in the aftermath of war has not only been pointed towards the coalition forces or at the government apparatus. Perhaps even worse from a democratic perspective is the sectarian violence between Shia and Sunni Arabs, intensified during 2005 as a consequence of the political uncertainty that the parliament elections and constitution referendum resulted in (Stansfield, 2007:189). Not only was the acts pointed at political elites or members of the insurgent groups, as Shi'i population centres become targets for Sunni Arabic terrorists. Also, Shi'i militias was accused of committing retaliation killings of ordinary Sunni Arabs, with possible connections to the Shi'i dominated ministry of Interior. (ibid:189f).

On the other hand side is the Kurd issue. The ethnic split between Arabs and Kurds in the northern regions of Iraq has also resulted in horrible violent attacks

Table 15

Most people can be trusted

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Most people can be trusted	46,0%	19,3%	41,7%	39,7%	40,8%
Need to be very careful	54,0%	80,7%	58,3%	60,3%	59,2%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: See Table 1

Table 16

Trust : Shi'i

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Trust completely	89,7%	32,2%	17,0%	66,8%	64,8%
Somewhat	9,6%	42,1%	25,5%	21,5%	19,7%
Not very much	,4%	18,2%	17,9%	9,1%	8,3%
No trust at all	,3%	7,4%	39,6%	2,6%	7,3%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: See Table 1

Table 17

Trust: Sunni

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Trust completely	32,4%	84,3%	51,8%	57,7%	51,2%
Somewhat	38,7%	14,9%	27,2%	31,0%	31,8%
Not very much	20,0%	,8%	11,7%	7,9%	11,5%
No trust at all	8,9%		9,3%	3,3%	5,5%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: See Table 1

Table 18

Trust: Kurds

	All Survey Respondets				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Trust completely	27,4%	27,0%	89,9%	40,3%	43,6%
Somewhat	34,8%	53,3%	7,7%	37,0%	32,8%
Not very much	24,6%	18,9%	1,6%	16,9%	16,8%
No trust at all	13,1%	,8%	,8%	5,9%	6,8%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: See Table 1

in some smaller communities (ICG no90, 2009:i). Although the Kurdish autonomy have been strengthened, with the northern Kurdistan region partly independent from the government of Baghdad, tensions are critical between Arabs and Kurds – especially in areas presently contested by Kurdistan and the federal government (ICG no88, 2009:i).

The war of 2003 created possibilities for Kurds to claim their right to further areas in the north, outside the borders of the current Kurdistan region. (ICG no88, 2009:10). As a result, areas around the city of Kirkuk, Ninewa and others are contested by the federal government and the Kurdistan regional government. The presence of huge oil- and gas resources in some of these areas makes the struggle over territory very significant (ibid:16). Consequently, the federal government started to deploy military here in 2008, forcing out Kurdish semi-formal military (*peshmergas)* from districts that encompassed mixed Arabic-Kurdish population. In Oktober it started to deploy an army division outside the city of Kirkuk, which created a critical tension between the army and the peshmerga fighters (ibid:12).

Currently, the Kurds expresses a critical attitude towards the Shi'i Arab prime minister Nouri al-Maliki, who is arguing for a strengthening of the central government in relation to the governorates. The Kurds perceive this as a break towards the new constitution of 2005, which guarantees the autonomy of the Kurdistan Region (ICG no88, 2009:1,2).

Its inescapable to perceive the conflicts between the three main ethnic groups of Iraq as anything else than a huge obstacle for the consolidation of the new regime in the country. But its still interesting to see how these groups perceive each other at a mass level.

From table 15, we see that a small majority of Iraqis think that you should not trust other people to much, but rather be very careful in your engagements. These results are in line with the answers of Shia Arabs and Kurds, but Sunni Arabs are far more negative in this regard as only one out of five respondents say most people can be trusted.

Table 16 tells us that Shia Arabs of Iraq is rather unified as nine out of ten respondents proclaims that they have an absolute trust towards other Shi'i[2]. More surprisingly, we also see that Sunni Arabs in general do not distrust their Shia Arabic countrymen, despite the violent sectarian battle that has been described here. Only about 7 % of Sunni Arabs completely lacks trust for Shiites, while an astonishing 40 % of Kurds do. This tells us that despite reaching some progressive political agreements with the Shi'i countrymen through the constitutional refererendum in 2005, Kurds encompassed a severe distrust towards them. About table 17, it is almost shocking to see how mutual the trust is between Shia and Sunni Arabs. Again, only about 9 % of Shia Arabs proclaims they do not have any trust in Sunni Arabs at all. 32,4 % of Shia Arabs says they absolutely trust Sunni Arabs while table 16 tells us that 32,2 % of Sunni Arabs completely trust Shiites.

[2]Note that the table answers to the trust expressed in other Shiites, and not Shia Arabs specifically. But as more or less all Shiites of Iraq are Arabs, we can be assured that when asked upon the trust for Shiites, it is understood as the Shia Arabic group as it is presented in this thesis. This fact is further proved by table statistics 2 in the appendix, showing the religious denomination of different ethnic groups in Iraq.

Table 19

Trust: Kurds, among Iraqi Arabs in Different Areas

Region for interview		Iraqi Arabs
Baghdad	Trust completely	61,9%
	Somewhat	21,9%
	Not very much	12,7%
	No trust at all	3,5%
Total		100,0%
Ninewa	Trust completely	3,2%
	Somewhat	57,1%
	Not very much	28,8%
	No trust at all	10,9%
Total		100,0%
Najaf	Trust completely	14,8%
	Somewhat	37,0%
	Not very much	23,1%
	No trust at all	25,0%
Total		100,0%

Source: See Table 1

Table 20

How proud of nationality

	All Survey Respondets (Shia/Sunni Arabs, Kurds and other)				
	Shia Arabs	Sunni Arabs	Kurds	Other	Total
Very proud	89,0%	86,3%	54,4%	87,1%	83,1%
Quite proud	9,5%	13,7%	29,1%	12,5%	14,0%
Not very proud	1,5%		8,0%	,2%	1,6%
Not at all proud			8,5%	,1%	1,2%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Note: The question V209 was formulated as "How proud are you to be an Iraqi"
Source: See Table 1

These figures actually tells us that the distrust between the two groups at a mass level do not seem significant enough for civil war to rage between the two. These figures gives an idea that antagonist political preferences are the background to disputes and disagreements among common people in this groups and that the different religious preferences between the two have not caused them to become very alien to one another. Thus, it is a positive indication for the possibility of

these two groups to unite under the same regime. table 17 also shows that Sunni Arabs are almost as united as a group as the Shia Arabs[3].

About table 18, both Sunni and Shia Arabs express quite a trust in Kurds, although the Shiites clearly possess a poorer confidence in the Kurds than do the Sunni Arabs. But if one looks closer, it is evident that the seemingly high trust towards Kurds differers in different regions of Iraq. Table 19 shows us that the trust for Kurds are much more significant in the capital of Baghdad than in for example the now contested region of Ninewa, which encompass a mixed arabic-kurdish population (ICG no90, 2009:4ff). As the number of respondents specifying themselves as Shia or Sunni Arabic were to few for valuable results to be drawn in these regions, this table shows how Arabs in general preceive Kurds here. In the region of Najaf in south-western Iraq, the expressed trust in Kurds is even poorer.

Table 20 further indicates that Shia and Sunni Arabs are more proud of their Iraqi nationality than Kurds. Taken togehter, the tables of this sub-section tells us that:

- All of the three main ethnic groups expresses internal confidence and thus give a picture of unity within these groups. But only Sunni and Shia Arabs expresses a significant dedication to the Iraqi nation.

- At a mass level, the groups at issues do not express a very significant distrust towards one another, with the exception of mutual distrust between Shia Arabs and Kurds. What seem to be a challenge for the new regime to consolidate is to keep the Kurdistan region integrated as the Arabic-Kurdish split is becoming more evident with Kurds giving signal of separatist ambitions.

- Sunni and Shia Arabs express a significant trust towards each other at a mass level. As they also express that they are proud of their Iraqi nationality, it is suggested that these two groups are likely to be able consolidate a democracy within the same border. But only if the sectarian violence between the two groups subsides within a near future.

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[3]Note that also question reagrding trust for Sunni is not about trust for Sunni Arabs specifically. The problem is more significant here as than for table 16 as many of the Sunni muslims of Iraq consists of Kurds and not Sunni Arabs (Se table statsitics 3). But from the code book for the WWS Iraq Survey of 2006, we see that the interview table mentioned only four groups for respondents to express their trust towards. These where the groups of Shi'i, Sunni, Kurds and Christians. The presentation of these four groups alone implies that Kurds are not to be regarded as part of the Sunni community (WWS Codebook over Iraq). From these facts, it stands clear that the respondent answers regarding trust in Sunnis can be translated to trust in Sunni Arabs for this case. Sadly, it is possible that this inconvenience in part can explain why Kurds express such a significant distrust towards Shiites but not at all as strong towards Sunnis.

5 Conclusion: Illiberal Perception of Democracy

From the results of this research over the public legitimation of democracy, it is obvious that there is a severe difference between what Iraqis perceive as a good, democratic system and the definition of democracy of Larry Diamond, used for this thesis. This becomes evident as Shia Arabs stresses a religious influence in politics not compatible with the horizontal accountability between leaders and the electorate. More over, Sunni Arabs welcomes leaders with authoritarian political powers and Kurds cheers technocrats able to override parliament decisions. And even if Iraqis express commitment to a democratic system, it is clear that they are open for authoritarian alternatives in case its performance can not guarantee the interest of the three main ethnic communities of Shiites, Sunni Arabs and Kurds.

The split between these groups seem to possess the greatest obstacle for democracy to consolidate in the country, as it has so far proved impossible to form a regime which constitutional and representational features in line with their antagonist political preferences. In this thesis, it has been made clear that the sentiments expressed at a mass level regarding the mutual confidence of Shia and Sunni Arabs are not aversive enough to fuel a full scale civil war between these groups, all though the sectarian battle indeed have become bloody. Instead, it would have been possible for these groups to consolidate a democratic regime together from a normative aspect. But the awful behavioural breaks regarding democratic methods of political competition committed by minor sectarian groups have made this impossible. What has possessed a more clear obstacle for consolidation is the Kurdish distrust of the Shia Arabs, which through there position as an ethnic majority now dominates politics. As the Kurds express pronounced separatist tendencies, despite having tried to resort to a federal solution of the "Kurd issue", it is clear that sentiments also at a mass level can explain the failed consolidation of a common democratic regime. The fact that the aversion to the Americans, being founders of the new regime, also has been so significantly pronounced also explains the illegitimacy of the new democracy of Iraq.

Even if Iraqis seem to possess rather progressive norms and values from a democratic point of view at a first glance, it has been proved that they do not. Thus, the theories of Larry Diamond are applicable also to this case of enforced democratization of a western constructed nation in the Middle East, encompassing an Islamic culture. With a regarded attitude towards case-study generalizations, it is from this case easy to see that a country encompassing a normative and behavioural legitimacy for democracy not sufficient with the conditions necessary for a liberal political culture faces severe problems of consolidating a well

functioning democratic state. It further stress the weakness that electoral democracies may encompass, when liberal norms and values are lacking. To find out if these exist in any given country, we must look close in to the values, sentiments and political preferences of the people. Only in that way can we judge whether this people encompass a truly liberal culture, one that is compatible with a deeply consolidated democracy.

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7 Appendix: Complement Information to Table Results

7.1 List of Tables

Here, a complete list of the table used for this thesis is presented. The subtexts states how the survey questions was formulated to the respondents (although in Arabic or Kurdish in practise). The question codes (for example V151) states the the code given by WWS to these questions, if one would like to look in to the 2005 wave codebook (www.worldvaluessurvey.com)

Table 1 Having a Democratic Political System

Main question :"I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country?" .
Attendant question: V151 "Having a democratic political system"

Table 2 Having a Strong Leader

Main question: see table 1
Attendant question: V148 "Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections".

Table 3 Having Experts make Decisions

Main question: see table 1

Attendant question: V149 "Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country"

Table 4 Importance of Religion in Once Life

Main question: "For each of the following, indicate how important it is in your life"

Attendant question: V9 "Religion".

Table 5   Having an Islamic Government, where Religious Authorities have
                    Absolute Power

Main question: see table 1

Attendant question: V151IQA, "Having an Islamic government, where religious authorities have absolute power".

Table 6   Having the Army Rule

Main question: see table 1

Attendant question: V150 "Having the army rule".

Table 7   Characteristic of Democracy: The Army takes over when Government
                    is Incompetent

Main question: "Many things may be desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell me for each of the following things how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy. Use this scale where 1 means *not at all an essential characteristic of democracy* and 10 means it definitely is *an essential characteristic of democracy*".

Attendant question: V153 "the army takes over when the Government is Incompetent".

Table 8   Confidence: The Government

Main question: "I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?"

Attendant question: V138 "The Goverment (in your nation's capital)"

Table 9   Voted in December 2005 Parliament Elections

Question: V234 "Did you vote in your country's recent elections to the national parliament?"

Table 10   How much Freedom One Considers to Have

Question: V46 "Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. Please use this scale where 1 means *no choice at all* and 10 means *a great deal of choice* to indicate how much freedom of choice and control you feel you have over the way your life turns out"

Table 11   Respect for Individual Human Rights

Question: V164 "How much respect is there for individual human rights nowadays in this country?"

Table 12   Greater Respect for Authority

Main question: "I'm going to read out a list of various changes in our way of life that might take place in the near future. Please tell me for each one, if it were to happen, whether you think it would be a good thing, a bad thing, or don't you mind?" .

Attendant question:V78 "Greater Respect for Authority"

Table 13   Confidence: The American Forces

Main question: see table 8

Attendant question: V146ZA "The American Forces".

Table 14   Neighbours: Americans

Main question: On this list are various groups of people. Could you please mention any that you would not like to have as Neighbors?" "

Attendant question: V43AW "Americans."

Table 15   Most People can be Trusted

Question: V23 "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?"

Table 16   Trust: Shi'i

Main question: "I 'd like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely, somewhat, not very much or not at all?"

Attendant question: V130IQA "Shi'i".

Table 17   Trust: Sunni

Main question: see table 16

Attendant question: V130IQB "Sunni"

Table 18   Trust: Kurds

Main question: Se table 16

Attendant question: V130IQC "Kurds"

Table 19   Trust: Kurds, among Iraqi Arabs in Different Areas

Main question: Se table 16

Attendant question: Se table 18

Table 20   How Proud of Nationality

Question: V209 "How proud are you to be an Iraqi"

7.2 Table Statistics

Here, additional statistics to the tables of the thesis are given.

Table Statistics 1

Tables Encompassing a 1-10 Point Scale			
All Survey Repondets		**Table 9**	**Table 14**
Shia Arabs	Mean	6,70	5,59
	Median	7,00	5,00
	Std. Deviation	3,078	2,529
	N	693	714
Sunni Arabs	Mean	6,97	3,77
	Median	9,00	3,00
	Std. Deviation	3,516	2,772
	N	121	123
Kurds	Mean	6,97	6,31
	Median	8,00	6,00
	Std. Deviation	3,123	2,436
	N	293	377
Other	Mean	6,60	5,22
	Median	7,00	5,00
	Std. Deviation	3,001	2,801
	N	1294	1401
Total	Mean	6,69	5,41
	Median	7,00	5,00
	Std. Deviation	3,067	2,726
	N	2401	2615

Source: *World Values Survey 2005 wave-survey*: WVS2005-List B official file
v.20090901 and the WVS 2005 CODEBOOK v.20090415
www.worldvaluessurvey.com 16 Oct 2009
Table 9: The Army Takes Over When Government is Incompetent
Table 14: How much Freedom One Considers to Have

Table Statistics 2

Religious denomination among Iraqi Arabs and Kurds

Religious denomination among Iraqi Arabs and Kurds		Iraqi Arabs and Kurds			
		Arabic	Kurdish	Other	Total
Christian	Count	6	0	10	16
	%	,3%	,0%	18,2%	,6%
Muslim	Count	1378	260	30	1668
	%	61,1%	67,7%	54,5%	61,9%
Orthodox	Count	2	1	1	4
	%	,1%	,3%	1,8%	,1%
Roman Catholic	Count	1	0	2	3
	%	,0%	,0%	3,6%	,1%
Shia	Count	746	5	2	753
	%	33,1%	1,3%	3,6%	27,9%
Sunni	Count	124	118	10	252
	%	5,5%	30,7%	18,2%	9,3%
	Count	2257	384	55	2696
	%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Note: This table answers to how Arabic and Kurdish respondets chose to specify their religious denomination. See section 7.3 for information on how the respondet groups of Shia Arabs, Sunni Arabs and Kurds were created.
Source: See table statistic 1

Table Statistics 3

Sample size of the Constructed Respondent Groups

Ethnic Group	Frequency	Percent
Shia Arabs	746	27,6
Sunni Arabs	124	4,6
Kurds	384	14,2
Other	1447	53,6
Total	2701	100,0

Note: See section 7.3 for how these groups where created
Source: See table statistics 1

Table Statistics 4

Case Processing Summary of Tables

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Table 1	2325	86,1%	376	13,9%	2701	100,0%
Table 2	2332	86,3%	369	13,7%	2701	100,0%
Table 3	1984	73,5%	717	26,5%	2701	100,0%
Table 4	2687	99,5%	14	,5%	2701	100,0%
Table 5	2270	84,0%	431	16,0%	2701	100,0%
Table 6	2258	83,6%	443	16,4%	2701	100,0%
Table 7	2464	91,2%	237	8,8%	2701	100,0%
Table 8	2503	92,7%	198	7,3%	2701	100,0%
Table 9	2646	98,0%	55	2,0%	2701	100,0%
Table 10	2615	96,8%	86	3,2%	2701	100,0%
Table 11	2576	95,4%	125	4,6%	2701	100,0%
Table 12	2289	84,7%	412	15,3%	2701	100,0%
Table 13	2577	95,4%	124	4,6%	2701	100,0%
Table 14	2582	95,6%	119	4,4%	2701	100,0%
Table 15	2555	94,6%	146	5,4%	2701	100,0%
Table 16	2619	97,0%	82	3,0%	2701	100,0%
Table 17	2584	95,7%	117	4,3%	2701	100,0%
Table 18	2511	93,0%	190	7,0%	2701	100,0%
Table 19	752	27,8%	1949	72,2%	2701	100,0%
Table 20	2655	98,3%	46	1,7%	2701	100,0%

Note: As seen in this table, all table results used for this thesis encompass a very low rate of missing answers. Never was a respondet group allowed to consist of less than 100 respondent for any of the questions given. Table 19 shows a higher level of missing answers as the question results were demarced to specific regions of Iraq. Still, the respondet groups of Iraqi Arabs was 752.

Source: See Table statistics 1

7.3   How the Respondent Groups were created

As much of the empirical literature used here, this thesis identifies three major ethnic groups in Iraq; Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs and Kurds (more closely described in section 3.1). The results of the WVS survey over Iraq are included in the 2005 wave file of WVS (WVS homepage 2). In this file, answers to all the interviews conducted by WVS between 2005 and 2008, in several of the countries of the world, is to be found (most questions here are standardized and applies to all

countries). To treat this database, I have used the statistical software SPSS. With this tool I have managed to demarcate results for Iraq only. Moreover, this tool has made it possible to distinguish the answers of these different groups from each other. As the survey interviewers noticed the ethnic affiliation of their respondents, it is with SPSS possible to distinguish between the answers given by the Arabic and Kurdish population respectively. In addition, the respondents were asked about their religious denomination. As 97% of Iraqis are muslim, what is interesting here is to distinguish between the Sunni-, and Shia-direction of Islam. Unfortunately, in the survey over Iraq, the Iraqi Muslims did not *have do* specify their religious doctrine. The Muslims of Iraq had the possibility to choose between three alternatives for the answer of their religious denomination: Muslim, Shia and Sunni. A vast majority chose to mention themselves as Muslims, a greater group as Shia-Muslim and quite few as Sunni-Muslim.

From these facts I have created the three ethnic groups for my analysis in SPSS. The Kurdish group was simply created by including all respondents which was observed to be Kurdish. The Shia-Arab group was created by including those observed as Arabs *and* who had specified their religious denomination as Shia (and not Muslim in general). The Sunni-Arab group was created in the same way as the Shia-group. This means that in this thesis, the answers of possible Sunni- and Shia-Arabs who preferred to specify their religious denomination as Muslim only, are excluded when these groups are referred to.

Unfortunately, the subordination of the Arab Muslims into above mentioned groups makes up for rather small samples for the populations of these groups, especially the Sunni-Arab group used her is rather small (124 respondents). But I still think that these groups are big enough for the accuracy needed for useful conclusions to be drawn. As for the sample of Sunni- and Shia-Arabs, I think that while the respondents stressed their Islamic doctrine more than others, they really represent the core interests of there groups. Table Statistics 3 gives further statistical information of the respondent groups. Important to stress is also possible missing answer of the Survey. As missing answers were few for this Survey, never did the smaller group of Sunni Arabs consist of less than 100 respondents for any question given. This is confirmed in table statistics 4.

At a first glance it might appear as though ethnicity is mixed with religion when creating these groups. But in fact, as section 3 has showed, what really separates Sunnites from Shiites in Iraq is not religion but politics, as there is a struggle for political power and influence between these. What is interesting is to identify two antagonist political groups among Iraqi Arabs. This is why most of the literature choose to make the same division in above mentioned groups as I have made here.