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Course of Political sociology

# The prospect of western democracy in the Middle Eastern context, the question of compatibility, Iraq post 2003 as a case study.

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## **The prospect of western democracy in the Middle Eastern context, the question of compatibility, Iraq post 2003 as a case study.**

### ***- Introduction:***

The Iraq case has always been a crucial subject to study for me, since it has been a hot topic which was widely discussed and deliberated in the news, especially after the collapse of Saddam Hussein regime in 2003, and since it is also the country where I come from, understanding the obstacles ahead of why Iraq has not been a successful democratic country yet; is my main reason on why I am writing this paper. In order to answer the question of the western democracy in the Middle East prospect, and also Iraq as a case study, I will organize my paper as the following:

First of all we need to identify the pillars of Western democracy which honor constitutional liberalism. Therefore, the paper will try to shed light on: first, the concept of democracy, discussing the treatises of Larry Diamond and Leonardo Morlino. This diversity will open the window for different perspectives of western democracy; second, understanding the concept of political liberalism through focusing on John Rawls' theory of 'Political Liberalism'; and, third, analyzing the relationship between democracy and political culture in the west. Through this theoretical discourse, the paper will try to answer the main question which is: "is western democracy compatible to the Iraqi national particularities?"

Here, some difficulties might be raised during the discussion, most importantly are:

Democracy in the west is not a mere political concept. It is a result of an inclusive and comprehensive egalitarian process that respects the individual's socio-political concept which determines his/her choices in a plural society. Thus, liberalism is perceived as a corner-stone to western democracy, this hypothesis in itself represents a serious problem or obstacle before democracy in Iraq, especially if we take into consideration the fundamental difference in doctrines between Iraqi society and the western counterpart. Another problem is that national particularities play significant role in shaping the political process. Thus, theoretically it is very difficult to discuss a specific model of socio-political concept, e.g. democracy, into a wide range of local political atmospheres. To have better results the paper will try to answer specific questions, as follows:

- does western democracy applicable without honoring liberalism?
- Is liberalism honored in Iraq?
- Does the political process in post-2003 Iraq meet western democracy requirements?

## Chapter 1

### *The theoretical treaties on democracy*

#### *Definitions of democracy*

One can assume that democracy is a broad concept, thus, many scholars paid significant endeavors to describe it in various ways. Some believe that the definition of democracy was elaborated by the Western scholars, and of course, theoretical debate leads the process to which politicians established the institutions which intended to promote democracy. Nevertheless, it's believed that no single source of "democracy" can lead the global debate since socio, cultural, and political particularities always represent barriers before any cosmopolitan initiative. Thus, democracy is no exception of the discourse of disagreement. However, the research will try to underline a unique understanding to the concept which described as "the minimalist definition".

Before describing "The minimalist definition" of democracy, it is important to understand the definitions of Professor Leonardo Morlino and Larry Diamond<sup>1</sup>. For Morlino and Larry Diamond, a democratic regime requires at a minimum, the following:

1. Universal adult suffrage which means that all adults have the right to vote;
2. The importance of Recurring, free, competitive, and fair election;
3. Multiple political parties, if there is only one, then it is not a democracy;

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<sup>1</sup> Diamond L, and Morlino L. (eds.), (2005), *Assessing the quality of democracy*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

#### 4. Sources of information are alternative.

Morlino has also claimed that a good democracy or a high quality democracy is “a stable institutional structure that realizes the liberty and quality of the citizen through the legitimate and correct functioning of its institutions and mechanisms”<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, a good democracy has also different qualities, such as in terms of result, content and procedure. A good expectation from the citizens in governance is what makes a quality democracy in terms of results. The enjoyment of high liberty and political equality, from its associations, citizens and immunities is what a good democracy is in terms of content. If the citizens and their parties or organizations have the power to hold the politicians accountable for their actions, and also, according to rule of law, have the power to assess the government and evaluate their actions and their provision of liberty and equality, this is a good democracy in the terms of procedure.

They proceeded in adding the dimensions of democracy on how they can vary in quality, in which there are eight dimensions, the first five are procedural dimensions, which are<sup>3</sup>:

1. The rule of Law is important since it's related to the support of the citizens to the political process. The absence of the rule of law can lead to the abuse of power.
2. Free and guaranteed participation in the election.
3. Integrated competition among individuals and political parties.

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<sup>2</sup> Morlino L, (2011), *Changes for democracy: Actors, structures, processes*. Oxford: Oxford university press

<sup>3</sup> Morlino,L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie,B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd. P(104-108)

4. Free and integrated process of accountability.

The other two dimensions are substantive in nature which are:

1. The respect for political and civil freedoms.
2. Progressive implementation of greater political equality.

And the last dimension which is “responsiveness”, in which it measures the link of both the procedural dimension with the substantive in nature dimension, and how it correspond to the citizens preferences.

The minimalist definition is, as mentioned earlier, is perceived as shared ground by most cultures, due to the principal idea behind it, which should be driven from the common value of public good. In other words, they described it as the best way to have a simple power-sharing agreement.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, a terrific minimalist definition of democracy is the one mentioned by Professor Robert Alan Dahl, in which he pointed out that a regime in a state is democratic if it has at least some certain conditions such as<sup>5</sup>:

First, individual’s right to vote;

Second, Free, competitive, recurring and fair elections;

Third, there has to be more than one political party competing;

Fourth, there has to be different and alternative sources of information, to promote the right of access to information.

One can notice some similarity between Dahl conditions of democracy with the definition of Morlino, and Diamond. However,

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<sup>4</sup> Morlino, L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie, B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd, p. 82

<sup>5</sup> Dahl, RA, (1971), *Polyarchy: participation and opposition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Morlino and Larry Diamond have their own unique concept which concentrated on the “quality of democracy” and its dimensions on how they vary in their quality, and what a “good democracy” really represented.<sup>6</sup> Noting that in a very important manner that democracy cannot tolerate the missing of any of the conditions, mentioned above, if so, any regimes lacks the combination of the four conditions will be perceived as a hybrid regime or as John Rawls calls it “decent” in the “*Law of Peoples*”.<sup>7</sup>

A significant extension of the minimalistic definition of democracy was the one made by Schmitter and Karl, in which they pointed out that, democratic institutions, i.e., the essential rights and the decision-making process, should not be influenced by either non-elected elite or external powers.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, non-elected executive officials whether from civil servant or security apparatus have no right to assume power. From this point of view, it seems that democracy is simple and direct concept that needs only the proper way to guarantee individual’s right of vote. But this explanation does not reflect the substantive core of the concept which should tightly related to some other notions such as political liberalism, tolerance, solidarity, good governance, consolidated agreement to share power, and ...etc.

It is important to understand from behind Karl and Schmitter findings that, the decision making process should be made on the

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<sup>6</sup> Morlino,L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie,B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: ,A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd. P(104-108)

<sup>7</sup> Rawls J.,the *Law of Peoples: with, “The idea of public reason revisited”*. Cambride, Mass: Harvard University press, 1999

<sup>8</sup> <sup>8</sup> Morlino,L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie,B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: ,A global perspective* , London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd. (pp.79-91)



basis of the people's will.<sup>9</sup> However, there could be a positive external interference on local politics if it is meant to meet special socio-political requirements within the process of honoring democracy, the European Union as an example.

These ideas lead to a more complicated definition of democracy which was tackled by Schumpeter: "the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote".<sup>10</sup> This definition could be simplified as procedural explanation. By "procedural" the author assumes that it is not all decision making processes can be considered as being democratic, if lack one of the five requirements, which are:<sup>11</sup>

- 1- Effective participation: meaning that all citizens of the society must have equal and effective political privilege to make their voices heard and clear.
- 2- Voting equality: it means that all the members of a socio-political association must have equal and effective opportunity.
- 3- Enlightened understanding: all citizens must have equal and effective opportunities for learning about the policies and its consequences.
- 4- Control of agenda: the citizens must have the exclusive opportunity to decide how and what matters are to be placed in the agenda through voting.

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<sup>9</sup> Schmitter, PC and Karl, T, (1993) What democracy is...and is not. In: L, Diamond and M, Plattner (eds.) *The global resurgence of democracy*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University press, (pp. 45-46)

<sup>10</sup> Schumpeter JA (1942) *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

<sup>11</sup>Dahl RA, (1998), *On democracy*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

5- The political process should be inclusive to honor the citizenship rights either for groups and individuals without any kind of distinction.

Dahl acknowledges that it is necessary to understand which rules should prevail and institutions should be included in a democratic regime; the suggestions made by Dahl are the following<sup>12</sup>:

- 1- Set of formal and legal rules and procedures which is meant to guarantee the right to vote.
- 2- Free, fair, competitive and recurrent elections.
- 3- A decision- making and governing body elected with norms usually corresponding to a parliamentary assembly.
- 4- An executive structure that are answerable to parliament or are the result of direct election by the electorate.
- 5- Set of intermediary structures represented by political parties and interest groups.
- 6- All the bureaucratic structures (public administration, judiciary, armed forces, police, social welfare system, etc.) which continually interact with the elected democratic structures.

Furthermore, Sartori's definition of democracy is a more complicated than the one of Dahl, in order to understand the debate between Dahl and Sartori on democracy; one can compare the two of the definitions at a later stage. The Sartori's definition of Large scales democracy is generated from three principles which are

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<sup>12</sup> Dahl RA, (1989) ,*Democracy and its critics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

(free market of ideas, attributes power to the people, the officials' response to people expectations).<sup>13</sup>

The definition that was made by Sartori, has not been combined by the participation and opposition of parties as were mentioned by Dahl in his definition which is seen as it being empirical, while the definition of Sartori is more of a connection between the empirical and normative elements.<sup>14</sup>

However, there are other important elements to be add on the definition of democracy, such as, a governing body which is elected by the electorate, a prime minister and a government which is made to be able to meet people's expectations and needs, to answer to the questions of the parliament assembly of any issue, and to ensure the guarantee of rights of the citizens and liberty. According Larry Diamond "the new democracies... must demonstrate that they can solve governance problems and meet citizens".<sup>15</sup> He indicates that democratic structures have to work together in order to secure the safety of individuals and assure the liberty and freedom of their citizens in all the aspects.

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<sup>13</sup> Sartori, G, (1987) *Theory of Democracy revisited*. New York: Chatham House

<sup>14</sup> Morlino, L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie, B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd, pp. 79-91.

<sup>15</sup> Diamond, L, (2002), *The spirit of democracy: the struggle to build free societies throughout the world*, New York: Times Books, Henry Holt and Company.

## Chapter 2

### *2.1 The concept of political liberalism*

This chapter will address the concept of political liberalism by John Rawls, and the purposes and motivations behind this concept. By answering the question of political liberalism; a crucial inquiry might raise up to the surface of discussion concerning the prospect of the individual's behavior or endeavors in a democratic societies and how far his behavior could be rational, free, equal cooperative despite the differences in doctrinal backgrounds, e.g., religious, philosophical and moral doctrines.

The second important question which is, does reasonable pluralism essential to create or strengthen free institutions?

To answer these questions, according to John Rawls, is that we need to have certain family of ideas, in which the citizens, i.e., individuals can implicitly accept and acknowledge as a basic ground for power-sharing agreement. Furthermore, Political liberalism, for Rawls, is the necessary ideology to which a community needs to achieve political stability. The goal of political liberalism is to educate or create a person or a reasonable citizen that has the understanding and respecting the idea of pluralism as a feature of public culture.<sup>16</sup>

The set of ideas, according to Rawls, are the ideas through which political liberalism can be understood, are the following<sup>17</sup>

1. The Idea of political conception of justice:

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<sup>16</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University press. P. 134

<sup>17</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University press. Pp. 4-11

This conception is a moral conception in which it has three characteristics, the first is the one that applies in what Rawls calls “The basic structure”, in which it societies constitute main political, economic and social institutions; the second is the mode of presentation, in which it mentions that the political conception of justice is presented as a freestanding view, meaning that it should not presented as nor derived from a specific doctrine, it should be a general view. In other words it is a view in which all the doctrines in a society has to accept and does not disagree on the idea of it; the third characteristic is concerned of that the content of the political conception of justice is expressed on the fundamental ideas seen as a part of the democratic society and public culture.

2. The idea of society as a fair system of cooperation.<sup>18</sup>

Here, Rawls sheds the light on the free space of individual’s morality system that should come in conflict with the idea of the public good. If the individual feels that his own space of morals, i.e., doctrine being the subject for respect; and his needs tolerated by the collective endeavor, then cooperation will flourish. In other words, the values of the social order shall be not seen or imposed as fixed order; rather it should be a subject of social and collective deliberation. The society as a fair system of cooperation has also three characteristics which are the following<sup>19</sup>:

First, cooperation should be a publicly recognized rule in which that those who are cooperating accept and regarded it as their own conduct.

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<sup>18</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University press. Pp. 15-22

<sup>19</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University press. P. 15-22

Second, cooperation should be based on fair terms, which each individual reasonably accept. The fair terms should be guaranteed through honoring political justice by the basic structure.

Third, social cooperation shall be an inclusive process for the good of each individual. The system should reach every individual's needs without any political or doctrinal distinction.

3. The political conception of the person:

In this conception, Rawls describes the free person as having the moral power to have the conception of the good, and also having the power of changing and revising this good on their reasonable and rational grounds, that is if they have the will to do that.<sup>20</sup> Also, that they are free to change their own good. If an individual would want to change his doctrine, then he should be free to do that and not be obliged to follow any kind of restriction to his free will. Rawls also mentions that the citizen have their, what he calls, their noninstitutional identity, which is their association in which they belong to, which can be against or different in what the political conception is aiming. For Rawls these attachments shape the person's way of life and political choices. In other words, there should be no power have the right to control the individual's deliberation mechanism or decision making process, under one condition that he is as well respecting other's freedom of choice.

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<sup>20</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University press. P. 29-35

4. The idea of a well-ordered society: In this element Rawls simply explains that a well ordered society is a society in which it contains three crucial elements, are, firstly, it is a society which has the acknowledgement and acceptance of people's diversity; secondly basic structure should satisfy the beliefs of the people and work for the public good. The concept of public good should be based on the condition of securing each individual freedoms and basic rights; thirdly the citizens are complying with the institution of the society that honors the effective sense of justice.

Furthermore, for the society to be as well-ordered as possible, Rawls have also deliberated the idea of reasonable comprehensive doctrines that should be synergized with the idea of overlapping consensus. The idea of overlapping consensus to be successful needs two essential conditions; the first believes that comprehensive doctrines should honor reasonable pluralism; and the public conception of justice shall be presented as neutral and independent in the constitutional democracy.<sup>21</sup>

The question posed by Rawls is that how far the individual is ready to match his own private doctrines with the idea of social unity as the core of overlapping consensus on a political conception of justice. In other words, overlapping consensus can prevail and be conducive to socio-political stability as much the individual abandon or ignore specific cluster of objections to the idea of "modus vivendi" which aims to encourage agreement between conflicting parties to coexist together in peace.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University press. P. 139-144

<sup>22</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University press. P. 147-159

Therefore, stability is perceived as the solid ground and seen objectively as reason to overlapping consensus, and a result to *modus vivendi*. Therefore, society overlapping consensus is essential to guarantee that the vast majority of a society do not voluntarily pursue hegemony over the distribution of power and do not make that political conception of justice as a reflection for their own interpretation of good.<sup>23</sup>

Another objection to overlapping consensus is that it is a utopian concept, in which it highlights a way in which consensus seem to ensure social stability. To this end, constitutional consensus could be seen as reflection to the majority rule. Here, Rawls believes that the majority should express itself in a political manner that honors social justice. Otherwise, if the majority based its behavior on its shared comprehensive doctrine then that have great stake of risk in affecting the individuals' endeavors, i.e., regular citizens or officials. Rawls assigned this mission to the basic structure of the society so that it does not initiate any conflict among the doctrines in the society, and for Rawls, this also need the political cooperation and mutual respect in order for it to function in a better way. Not forgetting to mention that Rawls also indicates that the virtues of political cooperation of justice in which it makes a constitutional regime possible are Reasonableness, tolerance, and fairness.

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<sup>23</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), *Political liberalism*. New York: Columbia University press. P. 164-168



## ***2.2. The relationship between democracy and political liberalism in western societies***

According to Rawls political liberalism is a cluster of needed conditions for the society to be a fair and stable system of cooperation between free and equal citizens in which they are divided into their doctrines and social associations. There are three conditions in which it is needed, they are the following:

1. Political conception of justice has to regulate the society's basic structure;
2. The overlapping consensus of the comprehensive doctrines has to focus on the political conception of justice;
3. When there is a danger for constitutional essentials and of basic justice, then public discussion is needed, which is conducted in terms of political conception of justice.

This summation of political liberalism in which Rawls is describing is how it understands the ideal constitutional democracy, in which it is exercised in the western societies.

## ***2.3 Democratization***

In this chapter, the definition of democratization will be analyzed and discussed, also discussing the features of democratization are, also analyzing the process of democracy.

starting off with the definition of democratization, which is the structural change of a regime to a democratic one, however, the start of the establishment of the democratic regime has to be in the collapse of the authoritarianism, and the minimum definition, in which it was mentioned in the previous chapter of defining

democracy, will be observed. Moreover it can also be observed that an economic change can also occur when a change in regime happens.<sup>24</sup>

An important notice is that a violent and radical revolution can lead to the new regime, but, not necessarily a democratic. However, if there could be a change in the types of democracy, for example, the change from majoritarian to consensus democracy, then this is not a regime change, but just a shift of adjustments or adaptation in the shape of democracy.<sup>25</sup> The starting period of democracy will interfere with an intermediate period of transition. The previous regime have left in that period its previous governmental setup, which will lead to the institutions being fluid and conflicting political solutions in which the new actors are supported with. This will be noticeable when the political rights of a democratic regime will start to occur in the light of the collapse of the authoritarian regime. However, a transition from an authoritarian regime does not necessarily lead to a democratic regime, but can lead to different kinds of regimes such another authoritarian regime or hybrid regime.<sup>26</sup>

The transition of regimes of different countries in Latin America, and Western and Eastern Europe have shown that the process of democratization is diverse in terms of (degree of Continuity, i.e., power of resistance; the power-sharing agreement and

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<sup>24</sup> Morlino, L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie, B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd. P. 94

<sup>25</sup> Lijphart, A (2012), *patterns of democracy. Government forms and performance in thirty-six countries*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New heaven, CT: Yale University Press

<sup>26</sup> G O'donnel, PC Schmitter and L Whitehead (eds.), *transition from authoritarian rule: Southern Europe*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, P.6.

participation; the utilization of violence; and the duration of transition).<sup>27</sup>

The diversity in transitional process of democratization includes also the source of change, whether, it is a local security, social and political movements; or reflects an external intervention which leads to the outset of the authoritarian regime, e.g., the case of 2003-Iraq war. In both case, without the support of the national social and political powers, the process of democratization will be at a high stake of risk to fail.<sup>28</sup>

Here, one would ask, how far political liberalism can play a role in the democratization process. As could be noticed, according to Rawls, political liberalism is a prior condition to socio-political stability and success, i.e., democratic experience. At the same, it is not necessarily a prior condition to democratization. The last requires the minimum standards of agreement or understanding among social actors which encourages them to tolerate various comprehensive doctrines.

One would promote the role of International actors to be involved in the process of democratization in other societies.<sup>29</sup> A coalition which is formed in order to establish a new regime is another considerable aspect of the process of democratization. The agreements of the international coalition with national elites and institutions can lead to two different scenarios of results; can lead

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<sup>27</sup> Morlino, L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie, B. (2014). Political culture: The conceptual framework . In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd., p.95

<sup>28</sup> Diamond, L. (2005). Building Democracy After Conflict: Lessons from Iraq. *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 16, Number 1

<sup>29</sup> Zuckert, C., and Zuckert, M. (2006). *The Truth about Leo Strauss: Political Philosophy and American Democracy*. The University of Chicago Press.

to the distortion of democracy or to the success of democratization process. The process how will end up is in the hands of the elites which should be elected by the people. The individual is the core of this process. Whether this individual is a regular citizen or occupies an official position in the basic political structure. Here, the question is the following: can the process of democratic consolidation exist? And what are the characteristics of this consolidation?

In consolidation, it is meant by the process through which institutions and democratic rules become solidly rooted in a society and by which the relations between the civil society and the regime is structured.<sup>30</sup> However, the opposite of consolidation is internal crisis into which the institutions, political parties become distant from society and the overlapping consensus will be under huge pressure and distinctly questioned. Therefore, the necessary conditions of democratic consolidation are<sup>31</sup>:

1. Leadership stabilization: The observation of the turnover of elites whether locally or parliamentary. That is if both Recurrent models of competition and the stabilization of electoral behavior are achieved.
2. Recurrent models of competition between parties: The question here is if there will be a stabilization of the party system. If there is no change in the electoral system after two or three elections then the party system will stabilize

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<sup>30</sup> Morlino, L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie, B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd., p.100

<sup>31</sup> Morlino, L. Berg-Schlosser, D., & Badie, B. (2014). In Aguilera, N. (Ed.), *Political science: A global perspective*, London: Sage publications Ltd. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications Inc. New Delhi: Sage publications India Pvt Ltd. Singapore: Sage publications Asia-pacific Pte Ltd., p.100-101

3. Stabilization of electoral behavior: It is the creation of relationship between the political parties themselves and the relationship between the political parties with the voters, in which, voters tend to vote for the parties who are predictable, since its volatility start to be reducing with time.

The main elements of consolidation are the picture of stabilization of the political parties and societies relations, the analyzation will demonstrate how close the relation is between the political parties and society. In other words, questioning the sincerity and matureness of political parties to reflect and meets people's needs and expectations. Furthermore, to further extend the analyzation of consolidation and internal crisis is to see whether there is a process of legitimation and anchoring or not. Anchoring has the power to exercise an effect in citizens within the society to either involve or restrain. Not forgetting that Anchoring is a democratic principle to which the institution has to build solid ground of relationship with the civil society. While legitimacy means the acceptance of the political institutions and the belief that these institutions are better than other that might be established, and can demand obedience.<sup>32</sup> Civil society is the actor for legitimacy, while institutions and norms are legitimacy's objects. For Maffettone and Rawls, legitimacy is embodied in and incarnated by the constitutional principles and norms. Hence, Rawls calls this process as constitutional democracy.<sup>33</sup>

However the forms of the process of legitimation is not always the strong form of legitimacy, which is the form in which the citizens

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<sup>32</sup> Linz, JJ,(1978) Crisis, breakdown and re-equilibration. In: JJ Linz and A stepan (eds.) *The breakdown of democratic regimes*. Baltimore : John Hopkins University Press.

<sup>33</sup> Rawls, J. (2005), *Political liberalism*. New York: Columbia University press. P. 147

accept and recognize the institutions, but there is also the negative form in which are weaker forms of legitimacy. The process of legitimacy is related to the quality of democracy as crucial to understand how the democratic values and terms are exercised within the state, in which It was mentioned in chapter one in the definition of democracy.

The importance of studying and analyzing the studies of Morlino's democratization and the studies or the ideas of John Rawl's Political Liberalism is to analyze the experience of democracy in post- 2003 Iraq.

## Chapter 3

### The democratic experience post-2003 in Iraq

In this chapter, the discussion will be center on the democratic experience in Iraq post 2003, starting with the foundations of democracy in Iraq, and then moving forward to analyze the successes and failures of the political discourse of democracy.

#### 3.1 The foundations of democracy In Iraq

The foundations of democracy in Iraq took place after the Iraq war in 2003, by the outset of Saddam Hussein regime to enter an early stage of “Coalition provisional authority” (CPA).<sup>34</sup> The Law of administration for the state of Iraq in transitional period (TAL), was the first Iraqi law after the 2003 war, the law stayed effective till 2006 in which it was replaced by the permanent constitution after a referendum in 2005.<sup>35</sup> The Law of administration was signed by the Iraqi governing council which contained 25 members, who are distributed based on their religious backgrounds and ethnicities, and are 5 from a Sunni Islamic background and 5 are from the Kurdish ethnicity, while 13 of the members are from the Shiaa Islamic background and one Turkmen and one Assyrian.<sup>36</sup> The IGC gave its members the opportunity to have privileged positions in local politics. The member of IGC played vital role in set out the rules and values of political process through leading the process towards power-sharing agreement. However,

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<sup>34</sup> Bremer, P and McConell M, (eds.) Simon & Schuster, 2006, *My year in Iraq: The struggle to build a future of hope*, 1230 avenue of the Americas, New York

<sup>35</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/arabic/middle\\_east\\_news/newsid\\_3538000/3538185.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/arabic/middle_east_news/newsid_3538000/3538185.stm)

<sup>36</sup> Bremer, P and McConell M, (eds.) Simon & Schuster, 2006, *My year in Iraq: The struggle to build a future of hope*, 1230 avenue of the Americas, New York. P. 98

the permanent constitution was the replacement of the law of administration for the state of Iraq (TAL), in which it came into force after the referendum in 2005, the drafting of the constitution, came from the members of the Iraqi constitution drafting committee, who contained 55 members appointed after election in 2005.<sup>37</sup>

### **3.2 The political discourse of democracy in post-2003 Iraq, success and failures.**

It is important to look at the elections results of Iraq in post 2003, a comparison between the first election and the last election of Iraq post 2003 shall indicate the Iraqi people's preferences when it comes to election, the first election in Iraq was held in 2005, in which Iraqi people voted for their representatives in the Iraqi House of Representatives. However, there is a noticeable division of the Iraqi people regarding their religious doctrines and ethnicities; they are divided as the following<sup>38</sup>:

1. According to the data given, when it comes to the Shi'ite Muslims electorates, 12,239,631 voted in total, 42,2% of the voters voted for Shi'ite political parties, "the Iraqi Alliance" won by the majority of votes when it comes to the Shi'ites Muslims, and a total of 5,021,137 of votes, which makes them the highest voted Iraqi party.
2. When it comes to Sunni Muslims in Iraq, 90% of them voted for "The Iraqi national list" and "The Iraqi Accord front"

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<sup>37</sup> Aljazeera.net/2005/10/15/العرافي-الدستور-مسودة-العراقي

<sup>38</sup> [https://www.sasapost.com/iraq\\_parliamentary\\_elections\\_2014\\_2010\\_2005/](https://www.sasapost.com/iraq_parliamentary_elections_2014_2010_2005/)



which both were Sunni-majority parties. The rest voted for “The Iraqi front for national dialogue” which is also a Sunni Muslim Iraqi party or other parties

3. When it comes to the Kurds, who are also Sunni Muslims, but have different ethnicity, the majority of them voted for “Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan” who gained 2,642,172 of the total votes.

Which in total, The Shi’ites gained 130 seats in Parliament, while the Sunnis gained 85 seat and the Kurds 58 seats.

However, the election of 2018 in Iraq witnessed some small changes regarding the political parties voted for. But still, the majority of votes went to “Saairun alliance” who won 54 of the parliamentary seats<sup>39</sup>. Saairun was led by Muqtada Al-Sadr who is a Shi’ite Muslim leader in Iraq, but however the alliance of Saairun was not only consisting only Shi’ite parties but it consisted parties such as “The Iraqi Communist Party”<sup>40</sup>

“The Fatah Alliance” received the second majority of votes, which is a pro Shi’ite Muslim party in which consisted “Badr organization”, “The Sadiqoun Bloc”, “Kata’ib Hezbollah” and “Kata’ib Al-Imam Ali”<sup>41</sup> gained 48 parliamentary seats.

These results show that the Shi’ite Muslims still have the preference of voting the Shi’ite political parties in Iraq, while the Sunnis, voted mostly for “The National Coalition” who also consisted of Sunni-majority political parties.

The Kurds, voted mostly for “Kurdistan Democratic Party” which gained 25 seats in the Iraqi parliament.

<sup>39</sup> [Alhurra.com/Iraq/2018/05/18/النتائج-النهائية-لانتخابات-العراقية/](http://Alhurra.com/Iraq/2018/05/18/النتائج-النهائية-لانتخابات-العراقية/)

<sup>40</sup> [www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/movementsandparties/2018/5/19/سانرون-تحالف-الشيعة-والشيوعيين/](http://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/movementsandparties/2018/5/19/سانرون-تحالف-الشيعة-والشيوعيين/)

<sup>41</sup> [www.alaraby.co.uk/الخلافت-تعصف-ب-الفتح-هل-يتفكك-أكبر-التحالفات-العراقية/](http://www.alaraby.co.uk/الخلافت-تعصف-ب-الفتح-هل-يتفكك-أكبر-التحالفات-العراقية/)

The comparison of the elections in Iraq in both 2005 and 2018 implies that there has not been a significant change in the trends of preference of constituents in voting for the parties that represent their religious doctrines.

Here, one can indicate some points of criticism towards the experience of democracy and political liberalism in post-2003 Iraq, such as:

1. The lack of liberal political conduct despite the existence of a constitutional regime in Iraq.
2. Liberal personal conduct: political conduct, whether from the regular individual or the political elites, has shown great tendency in serving comprehensive doctrines, i.e., religious or ethnic doctrines. This represents a huge obstacle to an overlapping consensus which is necessary to the proper political conduct of the basic structure, and might put social justice at high risk of inequality and distinction.
3. The lack of political opposition to which impartial political debate is subject of questioning. The power-sharing agreement in Iraq is based on sharing authority not necessarily on sharing democratic values and principles. Therefore, overlapping consensus finds huge obstacles in its way to thrive in Iraq.
4. Ambiguity on transparency of the electoral system: there has been criticism about the transparency of the electoral system in Iraq. Former prime minister in Iraq, Ayad Alawy, questioning the Iraqi electoral system and called the process as a negative environment<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> <https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/2014/04/27/علاوي-يشكك-في-شفافية-الانتخابات-العراقية/>

5. Sectarianism and the absence of the opposition: Sectarianism is the core of power-sharing agreement in Iraq to which distribution of government positions to politicians made on the basis of the individual specific religious or ethnic background<sup>43</sup> which lead to the weakness of the basic structure and hinders sufficient decision making process.

### **3.3 - The debate between political liberalism and comprehensive political doctrines in Iraq.**

Since Iraq is a Muslim-majority country and religion played significant role in most of Iraqis aspects of life.<sup>44</sup> It is important to talk about democracy and prospect of political Islam in Iraq. Furthermore, the discussion about secularism and democracy is also crucial since it represents a trend in Iraq.

The debate on secularism in Iraq was tackled by various scholars and clerics, in which most of them, not tolerate, i.e., accept the ideas behind secularism and they perceived it as a threat towards Islam and the Islamic culture. Before moving towards the Islamic clerics and their ideology towards secularism and political liberalism, I will firstly discuss about Amer Fayadh, who is a well-known political theory scholar and the ex-dean of Political Science Faculty in Al-Nahrain university in Baghdad, who claims that in order to have a civic society, we need to have three elements which are (individual, groups, and authority).<sup>45</sup> According to his views, organizations modernity will be achieved through civil society

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<sup>43</sup> <https://akhbarelyom.com/news/newdetails/2935887/1/>-المحاصرة السياسية... هوية نظام الحكم في لبنان- والعراق - البوسنة والهرسك

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Iraq/Arabs>

<sup>45</sup> Fayadh, A. (2009). *{Iraq wa masat aldemocratayah}*, *Iraq and the misery of intended democracy*. Amman: Dar Osama publications

under the condition that the authority should be legitimate. He furthermore addresses that in order to have the civil society functioning properly individual's conduct and endeavor is crucial. Fayadh has never ignored the fact the existing doctrines but for him it is crucial to separate religious beliefs from politics in as diverse society like the Iraqi.<sup>46</sup> Thus, it is vital to have liberal political culture in order to construct constitutional democracy. In his conclusion, he asserts that there has to be a strategy in order to build towards liberal political culture in Iraq, and for this to happen, there has to be amendments in the Iraqi constitution of 2005.

For Fayadh, what happened in Iraq post 2003 is that the shortfall of the constitution was due to the weakness of political culture and political skills of the elites in Iraq. Furthermore, there is a problem with political liberalism, especially, towards the efforts in differentiating public and secular reason<sup>47</sup> Mohamed Al- Hashimi in his book, "Althaqafa alsiyasiyah lilsha'b aliraqi" which means "the political culture of the Iraqi people"<sup>48</sup>, he describes that secularism started when orientalism started to appear in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He claims that secularism was manipulated by the West in order to destroy the Islamic culture and the only resistant that secularism got was from Khomeini's revolution in Iran against the Iranian Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. the Shi'ite Muslims in

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<sup>46</sup> Fayadh, A. (2014). *{Mashakil bina' aldawlat al-Iraqiyah}*, *The problems of state building and the governing in contemporary Iraq*. Journal of political issues, Baghdad: Al-Nahrain University, p. 41

<sup>47</sup> Fayadh, A. (2009). *{Iraq wa masat aldemocratayah}*, *Iraq and the misery of intended democracy*. Amman: Dar Osama publications

<sup>48</sup> Alhashimy, M. (2013). *{althaqafa alsiyasiyah lilsha'b aliraqi}*, *Political culture of the Iraqi People*. Baghdad: Iraq Center of Studies

general are resistant to secularism more than the Sunni Muslims, in Al-Hashimi's opinion, is because of the Maarj'yah role in Iraq, which is the Shi'ites council of clerics. Al-Hashimi further claims, that the British created a pro-secularism middle class in Iraq during the Monarchy period.

Here, I find out it's very important to discuss the treatises of one of the most famous clerics in the modern history of Iraq, Mohamed Baqir Al Sadr, specifically his book concentrating on Islam and Liberalism, his book "Falsafatouna" which means "Our Philosophy"<sup>49</sup> he mentions that Liberalism have four types:

1. There is an association between political liberalism and economic liberalism, which it has dependency on productive property and an economy which is free. The most important idea of Al Sadr is the idea of equality as fairness in the economy and politics.
2. The bases of democracy are on unlimited individualism, therefore, the participation of public life and politics was the right given by political liberalism. Equality of rights must be what liberalism is depending on which should not be in clash with public good.
3. Intellectual liberalism which is the right of free thought in believing their own doctrines and religion.
4. The privacy of the individual.

For Al- Sadr, the liberal social system separates the individual from the doctrines in which he or she believe in and that the social system is a material, this is because religious liberalism is part of the ideology of liberalism but within its doctrinal sphere, and also a

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<sup>49</sup> Al-Sader, M. B. (1982). *{Falsafatona}, Our Philosophy*. Lebanon: Dar Alt'arof publisher.

private liberty. He emphasized that it is needed to have in the public sphere both the material and doctrinal values because religion should never be separated from the material life of the person. Therefore, for Al Sadr, Religion should be included in process of legislation. Furthermore, Al Sadr also mentioned that political liberalism for him is the majority lacking ethical context and therefore they rule over the minorities' interest, so he concludes that the private interest is crucial for individuals so that is the reason why individuals will rule over the minorities if they do not take the religious doctrine into consideration, and in which it will lead to the exploitation to and by individuals in the society. So for him, capital democracy will sooner or later fail.

To conclude, according to Al Sadr, in order to achieve justice is that Iraqi parties need to be Islamic and not liberal, since Islam as a comprehensive doctrine is the best way to achieve justice.

The comparison, of both the Islamist clerics such as Al Sadr and the liberal and secular views of Fayadh, indicates that Liberalism as an ideology that cannot be lived with in a society where tradition and religion have strong influence.<sup>50</sup>

The problems and critiques of political liberalism in Iraq can be monitored as follows:

1. The virtues of the individuals is not recognized in political liberalism;
2. There has to be a community in order for the rights to exist, and this is because the relationship among people is a social phenomenon;

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<sup>50</sup> Algharbawy, H. (2005). *{Mostaqbal Al-Liberaliya}, Liberalism: A vision at its intellectual premises and prospects*. Journal of political science, Baghdad: Baghdad University, Issue 41, 2005.

3. Popular sovereignty is not what political liberalism will achieve but instead it will make the majority of the society rule instead. In other words, popular majority will lead to stability;
4. The importance of the role of the authority to restrain the selfish will of the individualism;
5. The public sphere should have the priority since the society enjoys the power of judgment;
6. The maximization of private interest is what lead to the weakness of political liberalism since it is a contrasting idea of the equality of opportunity;
7. For the Islamists, the sovereignty of god is what should be prevailing in the society, and not the people's sovereignty.

## **Conclusion**

The problem of Iraq after 2003, is that the invasion of the US to set up a democratic regime which criticized as does not meet Iraqi society particularity and lacks the essential primer steps to enhance the political culture compatible to liberal constitutional democracy. It is not that simple, the Americans did not analyze the political culture of Iraq, and the transitional national assembly which contained 55 members were not experienced enough to write down the new constitution of Iraq.

In Iraq, the majority of the people are Muslims, but that does not mean it should only concentrate on the preferences of the majority, since it is against the ideology of equality and democracy.

In my opinion, the Islamist views on how the society should be governed in Iraq is totally wrong, since Iraq is a diverse country with different religions and ethnicities.

The separation of religion from politics can be the solution of the Iraq situation, however, the education of democracy for the Iraqi people should be crucial in order for the ideology of secularism to succeed. Also, the change of the Iraqi constitution is important since it is based on Islamic values and principles.

It does not mean that Islamic principles are necessarily threatening the democratic values, but it is crucial since Iraq is a diverse country.

The Iraqi government after 2003 have never been convincing for the Iraqi people, the Iraqi government have not provided even the simplest needs of the Iraqi people<sup>51</sup>, needs such as sufficient

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<sup>51</sup> العراق-غضب-من-البطالة-ونقص-الخدمات/ [www.alaraby.co.uk](http://www.alaraby.co.uk)



providence of clean water or electricity is still not resolved even after 17 years.

The lack of control of the Iraqi streets and borders have led to the infiltration of terrorist groups such as the Islamic state of Syria and Iraq, which controlled 3 provinces in Iraq have made it even worse for the Iraqi government<sup>52</sup>

The mistrust of people towards the Iraqi government and institutions have led that the Iraqi social groups to head towards militarization, such as joining the “Popular Mobilization Forces” which is an umbrella organization sponsored by the state of Iraq, which consisted 40 different militias. Their size had an estimation of 100,000-120,000 armed men<sup>53</sup>

In the process of democratization mentioned by Morlino, which is mentioned in page 20 of this paper, in which Morlino addresses the idea of consolidation and what the necessary conditions are for a democratic consolidation, which are, stabilization of electoral behavior, stabilization of leadership, and recurrent models of competition, however, in Iraq, there is a lack of stabilization of electoral behavior, since political parties enter different coalitions such as the “Sairuun coalition” which their leader Muqtada al-Sadr was a pro Shi’ite Islamic leader and decided to join the communist party in Iraq, which they lead contrasting ideas, so the volatility of parties are high. This what will lead to the destabilization of leadership and later on internal crisis, which the distanced relationship between the parties themselves and between the civil society and political parties.

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<sup>52</sup> [https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/06/140610\\_iraq\\_mosul\\_hq](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/06/140610_iraq_mosul_hq)

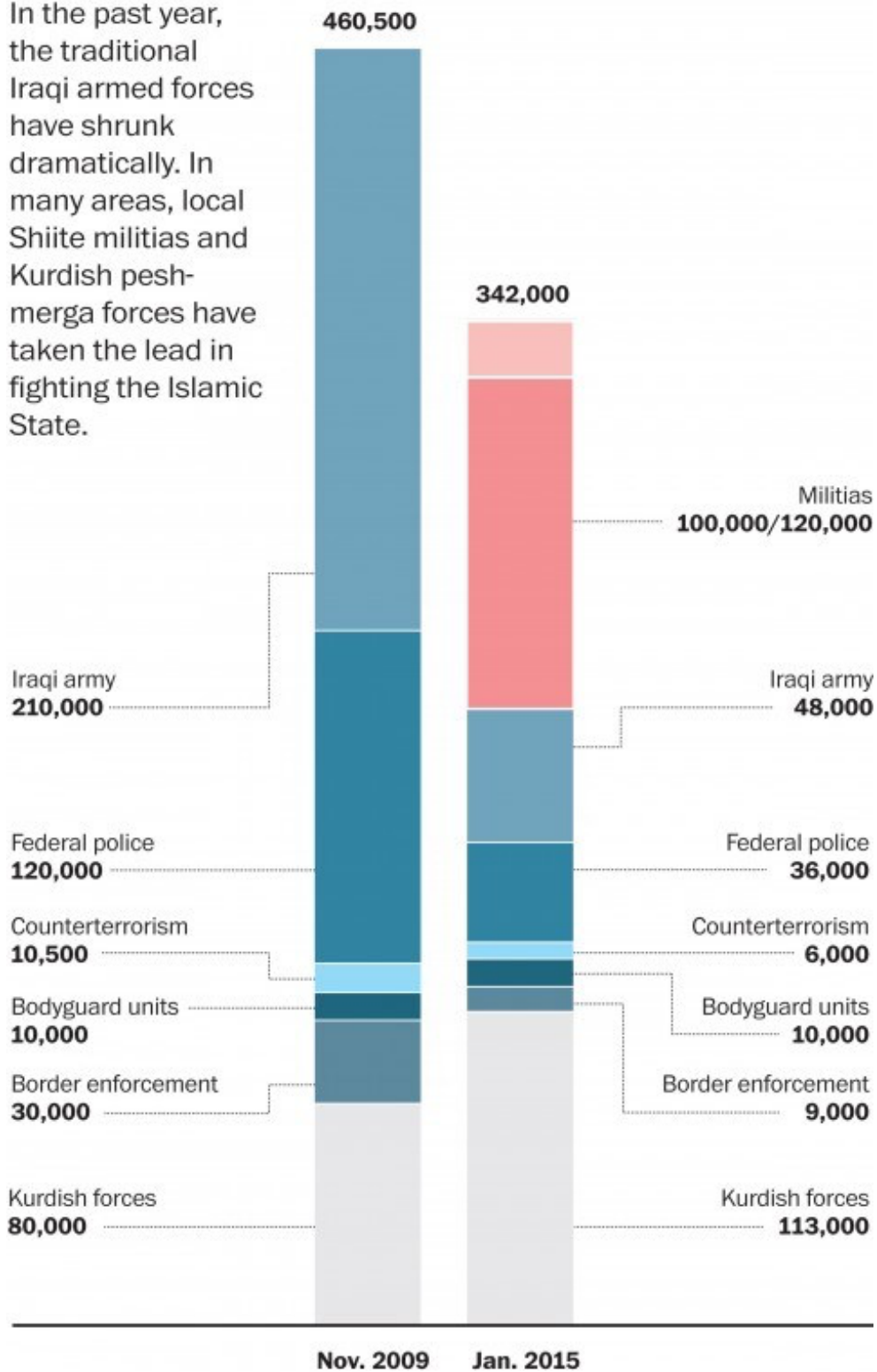
<sup>53</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/iraqs-pro-iranian-shiite-militias-lead-the-war-against-the-islamic-state/2015/02/15/5bbb1cf0-ac94-11e4-8876-460b1144cbc1\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iraqs-pro-iranian-shiite-militias-lead-the-war-against-the-islamic-state/2015/02/15/5bbb1cf0-ac94-11e4-8876-460b1144cbc1_story.html)

The set of ideas which John Rawls mentions about political liberalism such as the political conception of justice that it should not be presented as nor derived from a specific doctrine, however, Iraqi parties are mostly derived from specific doctrines, and not forgetting that “the basic structure” of the society does not satisfy the needs of the Iraqi people.

The trust of the Iraqi government has to be restored in order to make democracy succeed, and secularism could be the answer.

## The changing shape of Iraq's fighting forces

In the past year, the traditional Iraqi armed forces have shrunk dramatically. In many areas, local Shiite militias and Kurdish pesh-merga forces have taken the lead in fighting the Islamic State.



Source: Washington Institute for Near East Policy

THE WASHINGTON POST

## **Abstract**

In this paper, I used the Chicago style of referencing.

The purpose of the paper is trying to understand why Iraq's democracy is in a failing state even after 17 years since the fall of Saddam Hussein and his authority and the creation of the new democratic Iraq. In order to answer this question, I have firstly defined the various definitions of democracy from different scholars, secondly, I have defined the concept of political liberalism by Rawls and his idea of what the state requires in order for it to be constitutional and liberal, Thirdly, I have defined the concept of democratization and its various forms in different countries and how it can lead towards a "good democracy" and lastly I have discussed about the Iraqi democratic experiences post 2003, The political discourses of democracy in which a comparison between 2005 and 2018 elections in Iraq was made, and what the criticism of political liberalism toward that, and also debate between political liberalism and the comprehensive political doctrines in which I mentioned several Iraqi scholars and clerics who wrote about democracy and Islam and the Iraqi society.

## **Astratto:**

Nella seguente tesi, ho usato il format Chicago.

L'intenzione della tesi scritta è la concezione della ragione del fallimento della democrazia irachena, pur essendo passati 17 anni dalla caduta di Saddam Hussein e la sua autorità così come la creazione dello stato democratico dell'Iraq. Per rispondere a questa domanda, ho dato diverse definizioni della democrazia da parte di vari professionisti in questo ambito, ho definito il concetto del liberalismo politico di Rawls come la sua idea dello stato e cosa deve costituire quest'ultimo per renderlo costituzionale e liberale. In terzo luogo, ho definito il concetto di democratizzazione e le sue varie forme in diversi stati e come questo può portare ad una "buona democrazia". Infine, ho discusso le esperienze democratiche dell'Iraq dopo l'anno 2003, i discorsi politici sulla democrazia con vari paragoni tra le elezioni irachene del 2005 e 2018 con le rispettive critiche da parte della scuola del liberalismo politico. In oltre, dibattiti tra il liberalismo politico e dottrine politiche da parte di diversi studiosi e chierici iracheni specializzati nella democrazia islamica e la società dell'Iraq.

## **Acknowledgment :**

I will firstly thank my family, My mother and father who stood with me all the way

I thank my friends who helped me and encouraged me in finishing my degree and helped me with studying.

Special thanks to doctor Elaf Rajih who helped me in writing my thesis by teaching me how to write.

I thank my supervisor, professor Michele Sorice, who is a great professor and a brilliant guide in writing my thesis.

I thank my country Iraq, who made to the person who I am now, not forgetting the countries I lived in, such as Italy and Norway, where I learned how to be open minded and learned from their schools and university.

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