



Struggle for Political Space in post-War Iraq: Contending Relations between ex-Exile Ruling Parties and Later-formed Parties

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Dai YAMAO*

Abstract

After the collapse of the Ba‘thist authoritarian regime by the U.S invasion of Iraq, the Islamic parties of Iraq, which had been under exile, came into power in Iraq through two elections. This *democratically* elected government, however, has to face serious challenges mainly from these that have strong foundations within local societies. These forces were, with no experience of exile, delayed in participating to the political process after the regime change, which consequently failed to get into power.

This paper aims to clarifying the patterns of power struggles between the regime and later-formed parties, mainly focusing on the Sadr Movement, by analyzing the policies adopted by the regime for achieving its stability as well as the strategies utilized by the later-formed parties.

I. Introduction

This paper aims to clarifying the patterns of power struggles between the Iraqi regime and later-formed parties (*opposition* forces), by analyzing the policies adopted by the regime for achieving its stability as well as the strategies utilized by the later-formed parties after the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Students of Middle East politics have been discussing why the Middle East does not democratize or why democratization is not firmly established in the Middle Eastern countries¹. Recent literature sheds some light on the reasons for the stability, durability, or persistence of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East rather than analyzing the

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¹ A large number of works have been published on this issue: Ghassan Salamé pointed out possibilities for democratization from inside criticizing the exception of the Middle East in arguing democratization (Salamé ed. 1994), Rex Brynen and his colleagues analyzed the democratization of the Middle East from an institutional point of view (Brynen et al. eds. 1995; 1998), August Richard Norton emphasized the increase in civil societies in the Middle East (Norton ed. 1995–1996), and Larry Diamond analyzed the “democratization” processes found in the Middle East as “liberalized autocracy” (Diamond et al. eds. 2003).

insufficiency or lack of democratization². Following this trend, for example, Jason Brownlee analyzed the reason why those conducting elections sometimes undermine authoritarian regimes and sometimes seem to fortify them (Brownlee 2007). This paper, partly relying on the perceptions of these arguments on the stubbornness of authoritarian regime in the Middle East, attempts to analyze the mechanism of interaction among regimes and opposition movements focusing on the political space in the case of post-war Iraq, from 2003 to the beginning of 2008. In other words, it attempts to understand political space in non-democratic Middle Eastern countries from both sides, the regime and its opposition, rather than focusing only on the regime, as other literature analyzing authoritarianism has been doing recently³.

The regimes have been taken over by the coups d'état that were carried out by military authorities or sympathizers of certain political parties who penetrated into the military apparatus in modern Iraq after it became independent from the British mandate. Consequently, the Ba'ath Party—which successfully monopolized violent apparatuses such as the military, the police force, and the secret police—established an intractable authoritarian regime over a long period. The Ba'athist regime constructed minute mechanisms for controlling society such as a wide spreading surveillance network, the utilization of cultural symbols, and the maintenance of a power balance among sectarian and tribal groups, in addition to the utilization of fear tactics⁴. Hence, opposition movements were not able to conduct their activities effectively at least within their own country, which led almost all of them to go into exile.

This persistent authoritarian regime was destroyed by the violent intervention of the superpowers in 2003. Consequently, political parties that had been active outside of Iraq for a long time came into power after the two elections. However, the process of democratization of Iraq imposed by the U.S. gradually came to reveal its weakness through repeated failures and the U.S. itself had to recognize that Iraq was facing “civil war”.

In this sense, it is unreasonable to estimate that the democratization process is progressing according to plan. Indeed, the Iraqi regime after 2003 achieved ‘institutional democracy’ in that free elections were put into effect based on the multiparty system, and in that there was actually a possibility for a change of ruling elites and regime change.

² It seems that the wave of arguments on the mechanism of the Middle East authoritarian regimes has become even higher after the publishing of a special issue on Middle East authoritarianism in *Comparative Politics* in 2004. Authors' awareness of the issues was from case studies of the Middle East that had not been discussed in the sphere of comparative politics as Marsha Posusney mentioned in the following manner: “Bringing the Middle East Back In” (Posusney 2004: 128). Subsequently, a number of works were published (Sakai and Aoyama eds. 2005; Posusney and Angrist eds. 2005; Schlumberger ed. 2007). About authoritarian persistence and democratization theory in the Middle East, see the significant review of Raymond Hinnebusch (Hinnebusch 2006).

³ This paper partly relies on Joel Migdal's “strong society and weak state” concept (Migdal 1988) and Ellen Lust-Okar's way of dealing regime and opposition (Lust-Okar 2007).

⁴ On mechanisms and structures of rule in the Ba'athist regime, see (CARDRI 1986; Baram 1989; 1997; Makiya 1998; Davis 2005; Sakai 2003).

However, more often than not, the political processes have been twisted by violent activities occurring outside parliamentary politics. Recently, some political forces have asserted that the al-Maliki regime was an “oppressive regime that came into power through election”⁵. Hence, it is reasonable to analyze post-war Iraq in the framework of a non-democratic regime.

After the regime change, as mentioned above, ex-exile parties came into power. On the other hand, local political elites such as tribal forces who had no experience of exile were far behind in their readiness to participate in the political process. This paper considers this *time lag* in their participation in the political process among political parties as having decisive importance when analyzing the political arena in post-war Iraq. Hence, this paper defines “*former-formed parties*” as *those ex-exile forces that became official political parties immediately after the collapse of the Ba‘thist regime and consequently participated in the political process much earlier than other political forces*; while on the other hand it defines, “*later-formed parties*” as *those local forces that were delayed in becoming official political parties after the collapse of the Ba‘thist regime and consequently lagged behind in participating in the political process*. To this end, the following research questions are answered in this paper:

First, what kind of cooptation policies did the former-formed parties consisting of ex-exile forces adopt in order to stabilize their regime? Second, how did the later-formed parties utilize their strategies for enhancing their political power? And third, how can the struggle for political space in the post-war Iraq be characterized and how is it different from normal—not by the intervention of a superpower—regime changes?

In order to answer these inquiries, the second section will outline the characteristics of the former-formed parties and those of the later-formed. The third section will shed light on policies for co-opting the later-formed parties adopted by the regime as well as the strategies utilized by the later-formed parties for enhancing their political power in chronological order. The last section will analyze the patterns of these struggles for political space. This paper mainly focuses on *the Sadr Movement (al-Tayyār al-Ṣadrī)*—which has had a casting vote—as a representative example of the later-formed party.

⁵ The Sadr Movement criticized al-Maliki regime for being as oppressive as the Ba‘thist regime at a press conference (*al-Hayāt* 28 Mar 2008).

II. “Democratization” Process and a New Regime of ex-Exile Parties in Post-War Iraq

1. Establishment of a “Democratic” Regime after the Transfer of Sovereignty and Two Elections

In April 2003, the Ba‘thist authoritarian regime was brought down by the U.S. invasion of Iraq. The *Coalition Provincial Authority* (CPA) came to control almost all political power in Iraq although the *Iraqi Governing Council* was established in July 2003, to which Iraqi political elites were appointed. The sovereignty was transferred to the Iraqi regime at the end of June 2004, and subsequently the Iraqi regime conducted the election to form a parliament that would draw up a permanent constitution in January 2005. After this constitution was approved in the referendum of October 2005, the election for the National Assembly based on the new constitution was held in December 2005. According to the above-mentioned process, a “democratic” political system based on a multiple-party system was established in post-war Iraq⁶.

year	date	Process of Democratization and Transfer of Sovereignty
2003	13 July	The Iraqi Governing Council (under the CPA authority/competence)
2004	1 June	The Iraqi Transitional Government (takes over sovereignty on 28 June 2004)
2005	30 January	Election of National Assembly writes the draft of a permanent constitution for Iraq → establishment of the al-Ja‘fari regime in April (the Da‘wa Party: Shi‘ite Islamism)
	15 October	Referendum on the Permanent Constitution of Iraq
	15 December	Election of the National Assembly → establishment of the al-Maliki regime (the Da‘wa Party)

All political parties formed alliances with some exceptions in these two elections. The *United Iraqi Alliance* (*al-I‘tilāf al-‘Irāqī al-Muwaḥḥad*; hereafter, UIA) was formulated when the core ex-exile parties such as the *Da‘wa Party* (*Ḥizb al-Da‘wa al-Islāmīya*) and the *Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq* (*al-Majlis al-A‘lā li-l-Thawra al-Islāmīya fī al-‘Irāq*; hereafter, SCIRI)⁷ forged an alliance with the later-formed parties such as the Sadr Movement by obtaining support from the Shi‘ite religious establishment and its authority, with Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani at the head of the list. In the first election for preparing the new constitution in January 2005, the UIA successfully obtained 140 seats out of a total 275 parliament seats and became the ruling party. It was at this juncture that the regime of the Shi‘ite Islamist parties that had been in

⁶ On the political process in detail, see (Herring and Rangwala 2006; Stansfield 2007; Sakai 2005b 2005c; 2005d; Yamao 2007).

⁷ This paper uses the abbreviation SCIRI although it changed its name to *al-Majlis al-A‘lā al-Islāmī al-‘Irāqī* by deleting “revolution” on 12 May 2007, subsequently it is often abbreviated as SIIC.

exile was established in post-war Iraq. On the other hand, almost all the Sunni parties—most of them were later-formed parties—boycotted the election.

In the election in December 2005 after the referendum, the UIA again became the first ruling party getting 128 seats, although it was not able to obtain a majority of parliament seats. The *Kurdish Alliance* became the second party. The Sunni parties such as the *Iraqi Accord Front* participated in the election at this time. The UIA constructed a coalition government with the Kurdish Alliance due to the fact that it failed to obtain a majority. Subsequently, it took 5 months to select the prime minister and the cabinet members because of various conflicts among the UIA and the Kurdish Alliance on policy-making. After repeated arguments, the leader of the Da‘wa Party, Nuri al-Maliki, was appointed as prime minister. The number of parliamentary seats and cabinet posts held by each party under the al-Maliki regime is shown in Table 1. In addition, at the very moment in which the ruling parties were choosing the cabinet members, the dome of *al-Askari Mosque* in the Shi‘ite shrine city, Samarra’, was destroyed by a bomb (February 2006), which subsequently triggered what is called the “sectarian civil war” in Iraq. This sectarian civil war gradually destabilized the al-Maliki regime and brought about the boycotts of later-formed parties from the regime.

As we have outlined, the political process of the post-war Iraq can be logically divided into the following four periods: (1) The period under Occupation, from the beginning of the CPA rule to the election in January 2005, (2) The al-Ja‘fari Regime period, from after the election in January 2005 to the beginning of the election in December 2005, (3) The former al-Maliki Regime, from after the election in December 2005 to the beginning of the boycotts of the later-formed parties (May 2005 to April 2007), and (4) The latter al-Maliki Regime, after the regime had to face new political challenges due to the boycotts (after April 2007). The following argument will be constructed based on this categorization.

【Table 1: Parties and their Blocs under the al-Maliki Regime】

* The later-formed party italics

Parties/Alliance	Major Parties *	Seats	Cabinet	Characteristic
The United Iraqi Alliance (UIA)	SCIRI, Da'wa Party, <i>Sadr Movement</i> , <i>Islamic Fadila Party</i> , Da'wa Party-Iraqi Organization, <i>Iraqi Hizb Allah</i> , Turkmen Islamic Union of Iraq	128	17	Shi'ite Islamism, cross ethnic characteristics, ruling alliance which includes the prime minister
The Kurdistan Alliance (KA)	KDP, PUK	53	6	Kurdish nationalism, secular
The Iraqi Accord Front (IAF)	Iraqi Islamic Party, <i>General Council for Iraqi People</i> , <i>Iraqi National Dialogue Council</i>	44	8	Sunni Islamism, largest Sunni alliance, strong connection to tribal forces
The Iraqi National List (ILL)	INA, Iraqiyun, Iraqi Communist Party	25	4	Secularism, supported by urban intelligentsia, former prime minister Allawi's bloc
The Iraqi National Dialogue Front (IDF)	<i>Iraqi National Front</i> , <i>Democratic Arab Front</i>	11	6	Sunni secularist especially ex-members of the Ba'th Party
Mithal Al-Alusi List (MAL)	Iraqi Umma Party	1		Sunni secularist especially ex-members of the Ba'th Party
The Islamic Union of Kurdistan (IUK)		5		Kurdish Islamism
<i>Liberation and Reconciliation (LR)</i>		3		Sunni secularist especially ex-members of the Ba'th Party
Turcoman Front (TF)		1	1	Turcoman nationalism
<i>Risaliyun (R)</i>		2		Faction of Sadr Movement
The Yezidi Movement (YM)		1		Yezidi party
Al-Rafidayn List (RL)		1		Christian party

Source: Compiled by the Author based on (Yamao 2008a: 107–111) and (http://www.ieciraq.org/Arabic/Frameset_Arabic.php).

2. Characteristics of the ex-Exile Parties—Ruling Parties—and Later-formed Parties based in Local Communities

Before starting an analysis of the political struggle between the regime and the later-formed parties, it is necessary to examine the characteristics of each party.

(1) The Regime of the Former-formed ex-Exile Parties

First of all, the ruling UIA can be characterized by the following two factors: the

weakness of its social foundation within the Iraqi society and the vagueness of its legitimacy.

The UIA has a weak social foundation and network within the Iraqi society due to the following three reasons. First, the main parties in the UIA had experienced long termed exile under the Ba‘thist regime, which unavoidably cut them off from the social network and the direct support of the Iraqi people. The Da‘wa Party, which started its modernized organizational activity in 1957, sought to expand its socio-political influences within the Iraqi political arena. However, increasing oppression from the Ba‘thist regime and subsequent illegalization of the party forced it to become a radical opposition movement. Consequently, as it gathered more and more support from the Iraqi masses, the Da‘wa Party shifted to a revolutionary movement in the mid-1970s (Yamao 2006; 2008). The ensuing chain of conflicts forced most of the Iraqi Islamists to go into exile in 1980. In the following 23 years of exile, the Iraqi Islamist groups were not able to construct a strong connection to the guerrilla opposition movements inside their country (Dodge 2005: 48), cutting their ties with their supporters within Iraq. The fact that the Ba‘thist regime had never attempted to include the members of the Islamist movements into the regime can be said to be one of the decisive factors in their losing social network in the society⁸. The above-mentioned factors of the UIA’s weak foundation notwithstanding, it succeeded in winning the elections because the Sunni parties boycotted the first election, plus it could include the well-supported Sadr Movement in its alliance, and it was able to rely on the mobilization of its support through the Shi‘ite religious establishment which worked with considerable effectiveness in its election campaigns⁹. For these reasons, the constituency of the UIA was concentrated on the slum district of Baghdad—the home base of the Sadr Movement in the capital—and the Shi‘ite region of the south (Yamao 2008a: 74, 112–113).

Second, competitions or conflicts in terms of policy-making among the UIA can be found on many occasions, which often resulted in exposing weaknesses in its unity. Different policy orientations between the Da‘wa Party and the SCIRI representatively exemplify these conflicts. As mentioned above, most Islamists affiliated to the Islamic movements went into exile and came to establish their base in Iran, where they found ideological sympathy with the Iranian authority. The SCIRI was established in the form of an umbrella organization for the purpose of integrating the segmented Islamist parties in 1982¹⁰. The Da‘wa Party also began contributing to SCIRI’s activities at the beginning. However, as the SCIRI came to intensify its characteristics as a single party organization

⁸ The Ba‘thist regime gradually appointed Shi‘ite cabinet members until the late-1980s consoling the frustrated Shi‘ite masses under the Iran-Iraq War, notwithstanding, the regime has never attempted to co-opt the Shi‘ite Islamists of the Islamism opposition groups such as the Da‘wa Party (Sakai 2003: 38).

⁹ The Shi‘ite religious establishment came to have decisive mobilization capability in post-war Iraq, which bridged the gap between the organized electoral campaign of the ex-exile parties and Iraqi masses (Yamao 2007a: 231).

¹⁰ See in detail (SCIRI 1983: 4–5; Jabar 2003: 235; Yamao 2008c: 252; 2008d).

in the mid-1980s, the main Islamist parties such as the Da‘wa Party withdrew from the SCIRI¹¹. Subsequently, the Da‘wa Party distanced itself from the Iranian authority; while on the other hand, the SCIRI maintained a comparatively strong linkage with the Iranian authority, which deteriorated two parties relationship. These historical relationships affect policy-making in the post-war period. On one hand, the Da‘wa Party seeks a unified state with centralization of power, while the SCIRI strongly emphasizes federalization with a decentralization system, under which the SCIRI wants to obtain a strong power base in the south (see Table 2)¹². This reflects the weakness of the UIA’s solidarity.

Third, the UIA lead regime is not in touch with the discontent or with problems within society. This is because the UIA has little apparatus to sense and deal with problems, which explains why many Iraqi people were dissatisfied with the result of the elections. Concretely, most Sunni Iraqis regard the result of the elections as being aligned with the sectarian cleavage¹³, which reveals the fact that election—which is supposed to be a mechanism to represent the will of people—does not contribute to building a foundation for the regime and enforce its legitimacy. More problematically, the UIA has few channels to sense and deal with the dissatisfaction within society. The scarcity of social networks that spread out all over the Iraqi state is apparent because most of the parties of the UIA were previously operating in the exile. The Ba‘th Party established numbers of such party apparatuses and various hierarchical organizations throughout the state which control local communities, and played a role as a means for dealing with social problems. Looking back to the situation of post-war Iraq, the militias of the ex-exile parties attempt to play similar roles. By shifting their militias to official institutions such as the security police¹⁴, the ruling parties partly succeeded in dealing with problems within society to some extent. This, however, has been limited to the Shi‘ite communities; while on the other hand, Sunni communities do not have any methods to present their problems to central government. Furthermore, the ruling party that succeeded in shifting its militia to an official apparatus was only the SCIRI. On the other hand, the Sadr Movement—which has much stronger bases within Shi‘ite local societies than the SCIRI does—did not shift its militia, *Mahdi Army (Jaysh al-Mahdī)*, to

¹¹ On alliances and segmentations among the Iraqi Islamist parties in the 1980s, see (Yamao 2008c; 2008d).

¹² One of the representative examples of a difference in policy orientation is that the Da‘wa Party stressed Iraq-ness and Arab-ness at the same time, the SCIRI refused to place Iraq in the *Arab Umma* and asserted that it was a part of the *Islamic Umma (al-Zamān 29 Apr 2008)*.

¹³ The result of the election of January 2005 was a great victory for Shi‘ite parties because almost all of the Sunni parties boycotted it and their will was not reflected in the regime. See (Yamao 2008a). This Sunni frustration can be observed in the opinion poll: the World Public Opinion conducted poll in 31 January 2006, which revealed the fact that 66% of Shi‘ite people positively answered to the question of whether the election was conducted fairly or not; while on the other hand, only 5 % of Sunni people positively answered to the same question.

See (http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/jan06/Iraq_Jan06_rpt.pdf).

¹⁴ The SCIRI was predominant in the Interior Minister under the al-Ja‘fari regime, in which one of the significant leading figures of the SCIRI, Bayan al-Jabr—former leader of the SCIRI’s Damascus Branch—was appointed as Minister of Interior (Herring and Rangwala 2006: 134).

the official apparatus, which resulted in not having any channels to deal with problems in the Sadr Movement's widespread constituencies.

With regard to the vagueness of the UIA's legitimacy, the UIA has contradictory aspects to its legitimacy. On one hand, the UIA was established by obtaining support from the Shi'ite religious establishment that began to have considerable influence within society (Yamao 2007b: 224), and this made it possible to come into power. The official support from the Shi'ite religious authority provides it with a strong legitimacy.

On the other hand, the ruling parties have weak legitimacy. First, the UIA's path to becoming the ruling party is problematic with regard to its legitimacy. The major factor that pushed the ex-exile Islamist parties into the ruling position was the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the subsequent collapse of the Ba'athist authoritarian regime. For this reason, the Shi'ite Islamist ruling parties cannot proclaim their legitimacy by maintaining that they overthrew the Ba'athist authoritarian regime which had been oppressing Iraqi people, and liberated the Iraqi people. Second, because the regime does not have the capacity to control security, it is considered to be dependent for its life on the existence of the occupying U.S. Army, especially after the fall into "civil war" in 2006 (Herring and Rangwala 2006: 274)¹⁵. If the most important reason for the regime's existence in the modern state is controlling security, the UIA cannot claim to play this decisive role. Moreover, depending for security on the U.S. Army means the regime is very prone to being regarded as "puppet", notwithstanding the fact that the UIA is an elected regime. Third, the Shi'ite Islamist oriented UIA cannot proclaim that it represents all the Iraqi people under storm of sectarian conflicts. As mentioned above, Sunni people consider the UIA leading regime to be a Shi'ite Islamist regime and criticize it for not being representative of all Iraqi people. The al-Maliki regime declared the overcoming of sectarian conflict and *National Reconciliation (al-Muṣālaḥa al-Waṭanīya)* as the regime's major tasks in their political manifesto, which seems to reflect contradictorily the regime's weak legitimacy¹⁶.

(2) The Later-formed Parties

Contrary to the ruling regime's weak foundation and vague legitimacy, parties that are not in the ruling position have a strong foundation within local society. The Sadr Movement, for example, took over the followers of its leader's father, Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr, who had considerably strong influence within Iraqi society in the 1990s. In addition, the Sadr Movement became so influential among the Iraqi masses because it established

¹⁵ For instance, a Sunni political organization, the *Iraqi Muslim Ulama Organization (Hay'a al-'Ulamā' al-Muslimīn fī al-'Irāq)*, asserted that the al-Maliki regime relied for its life on the presence of the U.S. Army and campaigned to the Iraqi masses for the establishment of a non-sectarian regime that was not supported by the U.S. and would promote the withdrawal of the U.S. Army. See declarations of 13 June 2006 and 2 December 2006 (<http://www.iraq-amsi.org/index.php>).

¹⁶ The al-Maliki regime proclaimed the National Reconciliation for overcoming the sectarian conflicts as the basis of its legitimacy because it could not address the withdrawal of the U.S. Army (*BJ* 13 Aug 2007).

Friday worship immediately after the war in 2003 and provided social services such as security and cleaning services in the slum districts of Baghdad and southern parts of Iraq (Allawi 2007: 167; Stansfield 2007: 177). Further, it attracted the frustrated youth and the Iraqi masses into its movement in general, and its militia Mahdi Army in particular. As a result, the Sadr Movement established a strong social foundation within the slums of Baghdad, the Marsh region in south eastern part, and southern Iraq except for Shi'ite shrine cities such as Najaf and Karbala (see Table 6).

Sunni parties and tribal forces as well gradually established their bases in local communities, as is exemplified by the formation of the *Tribal Council* in Anbar prefecture¹⁷. These forces attracted considerable attention from frustrated Sunni people as a result of the CPA's stereotyped anti-Sunni policy such as the *De-Ba'athification*¹⁸, in which the CPA simply considered that all Sunni people were previous supporters of the Ba'athist regime and excluded them from participating in the new state formation.

Looking at legitimacy, the later-formed parties have stronger legitimacy than the leading parties. The later-formed parties, without exception, stand strongly against the U.S. occupation of Iraq and are not a part of this occupation policy (see Table 2). Further, the Sadr Movement—which had endured severe oppression under the Ba'athist regime inside Iraq—obtained the support of the Shi'ite religious establishment by joining the UIA after the war, which provided the Sadr Movement with a strong legitimacy. Hence, later-formed parties have legitimacy both due to not being a part of the occupation and obtaining support from the religious establishment.

In sum, former-formed ruling parties—most of them had been in exile—have not succeeded in establishing a social foundation because of their lack of linkage within society and the vagueness of their legitimacy. On the contrary, later-formed parties have a strong social foundation within Iraq. As a result, ruling parties came to have a strong incentive to include the later-formed the parties into political process and make alliances with them. The following statement of the Sadr Movement reflects this contrast between the ruling parties and later-formed parties: “Without the Sadr Movement’s help, the UIA would not have come into power” (*al-Wasaf* 20 Apr 2008).

¹⁷ Al-Dulaymi Tribal Alliance in Anbar prefecture formed the Tribal Council from among 42 tribal leaders in June 2003 immediately after the war and attempted to seek their own political agenda (Herring and Rangwala 2006: 113-115).

¹⁸ The regulation adopted by the CPA, which prohibits members in the higher four ranks of the Ba'ath Party from being employed in the public sector (CPA 2003a). The De-Ba'athification policy and dissolution of the Iraqi Army by the CPA subsequently brought about increasing insurgency against the U.S. Army (Allawi 2007: 159).

III. Competition for Political Space between the ex-Exile Parties and the Later-formed Parties

This section first overviews the policies of the UIA-led regime focusing on cooptation in relation to the later-formed parties. Second, it attempts to analyze the later-formed parties' strategies and tactics for enhancing their political power in the face of the cooptation policies of the regime from after the war until May 2008.

1. The Policies of Cooptation and Inclusion of Later-formed Parties by the Regime

First of all, it attempts to analyze the policies of the ruling parties.

(1) Under the Occupation:

Two governments—the Iraqi Governing Council and the Iraqi Transitional Government—were formed in this period, both of which were under the direct control of the CPA and the decision-making power was in the CPA's hands. The CPA appointed and dispatched its advisers to each ministry of the newly founded Iraqi government (Allawi 2007: 120). More importantly, almost all of the ministers or important figures in the government were from the political elites who had been in exile under the Ba'athist regime¹⁹. The CPA attempted to obtain its stability by appointing and including ex-exile political elites who had some sort of linkage to local communities, and who also had been close to the U.S. government. By including these elite, the CPA estimated that it was possible to stabilize the new Iraqi regime by mobilizing these elites' social networks. The CPA appointed Ghazi Yawir—leader of a famous influential tribe—as a president. In other words, the regime attempted to stabilize the government on the basis of an alliance of the ex-exile parties by directly appointing individual political elites who had connection to local communities such as tribal sheikhs, as well as any linkage to the U.S.

However, this policy of relying only on appointing individual political elites gradually revealed its limitations, because the later-formed parties such as the Sadr Movement and Sunni parties that had a strong social foundation gradually increased their influence by declaring themselves to be anti-U.S. occupation. The CPA did not expect the increasing influence of the Sadr Movement at the beginning. The more the Sadr Movement increased its socio-political influence, the more aggressive policy the CPA had to adopt fearing insurgency or an uprising of the Shi'ite people (Stansfield 2007: 177). In the end, the newly founded Iraqi regime shifted its policy toward the Sadr Movement to include it within the official political process by the intermediation of the Shi'ite religious establishment after the clash between the Sadr Movement and the U.S. army in Najaf in August 2004 (Allawi 2007: 274–275, 322–333). After this event, the regime began to

¹⁹ 18 members out of 25 of the Iraqi Governing Council were affiliated to the ex-exile parties and did not have a strong connection to local communities within Iraq (CPA 2003b). The CPA apparently made little of local political elites and their insurgency and did not fully expect a rise of local strongmen in its vision of state formation from the beginning (Dodge 2005: 10–11).

attempt to stabilize the government by co-opting local forces such as the Sadr Movement and Sunni parties into the regime itself, because the former-formed ex-exile parties began to have an incentive under these circumstances to enter the election campaign in the end of 2004.

(2) al-Ja‘fari Regime:

After the election, the Ja‘fari regime first extended its policy of the individual appointment of political elites, which resulted in the increased promotion of local political elites and tribal leaders into the regime. Figure 1 illustrates sectarian and ethnic allotments among the cabinet members as well as the ratio of ministers who have no experience of exile (non-exile minister) from the Iraqi Governing Council to the al-Maliki regime. It indicates that the ratio of non-exile ministers nearly doubled from 11% in the Iraqi Governing Council to around 20% in the Ja‘fari regime, which shows that the Ja‘fari regime developed this policy of including the individual local elite. The regime, however, recognized this was not enough.

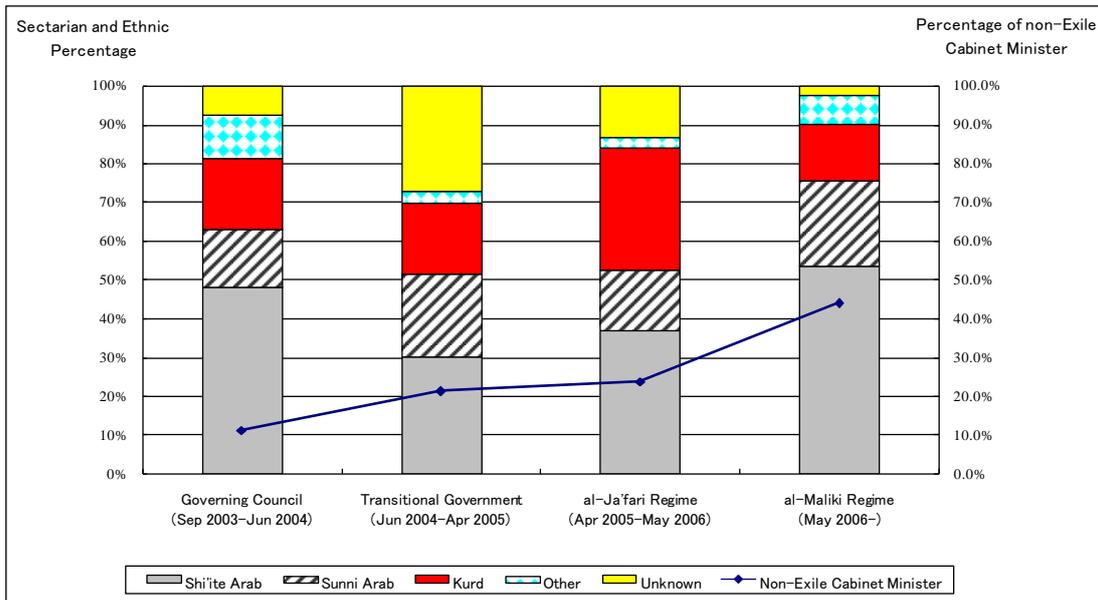
Secondly, therefore, the regime constructed a mechanism that allowed many political forces to participate in the regime. The Ja‘fari regime arranged for “Compensational Seats” in the election law, by which the regime could allocate a certain portion of parliamentary seats to small parties that could not obtain enough votes to secure the seats themselves, and appointed cabinet ministers from parties that did not obtain parliamentary seats²⁰. These policies reflect the regime’s stance to include as many varied socio-political forces as possible in order to stabilize the government.

Third, the ex-exile parties that came into power in the Ja‘fari regime attempted to stabilize the regime by transforming their militias into official security institutions, which was representatively exemplified by the fact that the SCIRI dominated the Interior Ministry and its militia—*Badr Army (Faylaq Badr)*—penetrated into the police institution (Herring and Rangwala 2006: 134). By controlling the security apparatus, the ruling parties attempted to stabilize the regime.

Fourth, and most importantly, the regime made the Sadr Movement an official political party and included it in the ruling alliance. Thus, the former-formed parties included the Sadr Movement into their alliance, the UIA, and distributed parliamentary seats and cabinet posts: the UAI distributed to the Sadr Movement 21 of the total 140 seats of the UIA (15% of the UIA seats) and 3 cabinet posts. This resulted in the Sadr Movement, as a single party, becoming the biggest party in the National Assembly, if 3 seats of another faction of the Sadr Movement (*Union of Independent National Elite*) are taken into consideration.

²⁰ The Compensational Seat system is an election institution that allocates 45 out of 275 seats of the parliament to those that cannot obtain a single seat in the election; that is 230 seats are actually competed for in the election. Cabinet ministers from the parties that do not have a seat in the parliament are appointed from the National Democratic Party, the Fayli Kurd Party, and the Islamic Task Organization. See (Yamao 2008a: 107–111).

【Figure 1: Transformation of non-Exile Cabinet Minister】



Source: Made by the Author based on various news reports.

In short, the Ja‘fari regime constructed institutions for including various political forces and appointed a multitude of local elites. In addition, the former-formed parties attempted to construct their foundation in order to stabilize the regime by making a Shi‘ite alliance including the Sadr Movement.

(3) Former al-Maliki Regime:

A typical characteristic of the al-Maliki regime is the considerable increase in the presence of non-exile ministers in the government. As Figure 1 shows, cabinet ministers who had no experience of exile hold more than 40% of the posts in the regime—four times the percentage in the Iraqi Governing Council and twice that of the al-Ja‘fari regime. This indicates that the al-Maliki regime attempted to stabilize the government by including political elites who had a strong influence and foundation within society with much more sensitivity than the al-Ja‘fari regime.

The al-Maliki regime, in the same manner as the al-Ja‘fari regime, distributed to the Sadr Movement a considerable number of parliamentary seats relying on the Shi‘ite alliance: the UIA distributed 30 of the total 128 seats of the UIA (23% of the UIA seats) and 4 cabinet posts to the Sadr Movement. This again resulted in the Sadr Movement, as single party, becoming the biggest party in the National Assembly, if 2 seats of a faction of the Sadr Movement (*Risaliyun*) are taken into consideration.

The succession of challenges such as the “sectarian conflict” and the “civil war” after the blowing up of the Shi‘ite shrine in Samarra’ in February 2006 that the regime had to face, paved the way to enhancing the policy of including later-formed parties that

had considerable foundation within local societies. In the face of these challenges, the al-Maliki regime began to aim to establishment of whole united cabinet proclaiming the national reconciliation (*BJ* 13 Aug 2007; *al-Bayyina* 19 Aug 2007). This enhanced the regime by including the later-formed parties that had considerable local networks.

(4) Latter al-Maliki Regime:

In the latter period of the al-Maliki regime, later-formed parties such as the Sadr Movement and the Sunni bloc began boycotting the National Assembly and pulled out of al-Maliki's cabinet²¹. The Sadr Movement boycotted and pulled out al-Maliki regime, criticizing its increasing dependency on the U.S. in April 2007. Further, the biggest Sunni later-formed bloc, the Accord Front, did the same as the Sadr Movement in August 2007 (*al-Bayān* 17 Apr 2007; *DS* 14 Aug 2007).

Unsettled in the face of these boycotts, the ruling parties first reorganized their alliance in order to stabilize government. Thus, the Da'wa Party and the SCIRI—two major parties in the UIA—allied to the KDP and the PUK—two major parties in the Kurdistan Alliance—, which consequently formed the *Four Parties Alliance* (*al-Taḥāluf al-Rubā'īya*) (*al-Bayyina* 19 Aug 2007). This newly formed alliance aimed at firmly establishing the regime's bases and conducting state affairs smoothly in the face of the split in the regime caused by its boycotting by the Sadr Movement. The formation of this alliance, however, brought about unfortunate results. The Sadr Movement, which was excluded from core part of the ruling alliance, seceded from the UIA and began to make a large alliance with other later-formed parties (see Table 5). The re-formation of the ruling coalition and the Sadr Movement withdrawal from the UIA meant the collapse of the Shi'ite alliance and the subsequent formation of various alliances among the later-formed parties.

Second, on the basis of the Four Parties Alliance, the regime began to co-opt the later-formed parties that had pulled out of al-Maliki cabinet. The regime immediately attempted to restore its relationship with the Sadr Movement²². This reflects the fact that the regime aimed at forming a completely united cabinet and the Sadr Movement was the biggest single party in the parliament which had considerable influence in society. The regime was in need of the Sadr Movement's mobilization capability.

Thirdly, once the negotiations between the regime and the Sadr Movement towards rejoining the ruling alliance had failed, the al-Maliki regime began to oppress the

²¹ For details of political transformation, see (Yamao 2008b).

²² It should be stressed that the one of leading figures of the Da'wa Party—ex-prime minister Ibrahim al-Ja'fari—took the initiative to restore the relationship with the Sadr Movement in this negotiation (*IS* 25 Sep 2007; *al-Bayyina* 26 Sep 2007). This reflects the difference in public relations between the Da'wa Party and the SCIRI; the SCIRI had to ask the Da'wa Party to bridge the gap to Iraqi society in its negotiation due to the fact that the SCIRI had an even weaker connection to local societies within Iraq than the Da'wa Party. Consequently, the SCIRI took over the negotiation to bring the Sadr Movement back to their alliance and succeeded in reaching an agreement for making the political program, which permitted the maintaining of their militias (*Badr* 30 Oct 2007; *IS* 6 Nov 2007; *al-Ṣabāḥ* 24 Nov 2007).

Sadr Movement, especially its militia, using official security police and the army. The negotiations failed because of the conflicting relationship between the SCIRI and the Sadr Movement in the face of the coming elections of local government in October 2008. The SCIRI is predominant in local government in the south because the Sadr Movement boycotted the election for local government in 2005, criticizing the U.S. led political process (see Table 6). However, it is reasonable to expect that if the Sadr Movement were to participate in the coming provincial elections, it would probably take over a majority of the SCIRI's current positions and posts because the Sadr Movement is considerably well supported by the people in the south²³. The SCIRI is very much afraid of the Sadr Movement's increase. Given this situation, the regime, especially the SCIRI, has started to split up the Sadr Movement by trying to dissolve the Mahdi Army and subsequently by oppressing it, which would make the Sadr Movement much more radical and create divisions between more radical factions and less radical ones²⁴. Hence, the regime began a military operation called "Assault of Chivalry" (*Ṣawla al-Fursān*) on the Mahdi Army in Basra at the end of March 2008, by which it attempted to co-opt the moderate members of the Sadr Movement and exclude the radicals.

In sum, the regime began to adopt a cooptation policy for stabilizing the government starting by including individual political elites. However, as the later-formed parties came to increase their political influence, it had to widen its cooptation. As a result of this, the regime gradually shifted to the policy of stabilizing by making an alliance based on Shi'ite Islamism in the face of the election in 2005. Further, after the withdrawal of the later-formed parties from al-Maliki's cabinet, the regime shifted to co-opt a part of the later-formed parties by splitting them on the basis of the newly formed ruling alliance.

²³ The SCIRI's domination of provincial parliaments in the southern prefectures is partly due to a boycott of the Sadr Movement in the provincial elections in 2005. The laws for the coming provincial election in October 2008 were passed in the National Assembly. One of the leading figures of the SCIRI, 'Adil 'Abd al-Mahdi, sent this provincial election law back to the parliament because the provincial council had less power than the SCIRI had expected (*AI* 27 Feb 2008). Almost all of the parties, except the Kurdish Alliance, severely criticized this decision. The Sadr Movement in particular criticized the fact that the SCIRI attempted to delay provincial elections or to disturb the electoral campaign of the Sadr Movement which had wide support in the south (*al-Hayāt* 7 Mar 2008). These criticisms forced the SCIRI to take back its decision (*IHT* 20 Mar 2008). This failure in political maneuvering resulted in making the SCIRI attack to the Sadr Movement using violent apparatus at the end of March 2008 in order to divide it.

²⁴ An number of works on authoritarianism have pointed out that such a regime often attempts to make a radical opposition group more radical by oppressing it, which reduces the incentive of a more moderate opposition group to stand against the regime and thus isolates the radical opposition group from the others (Tarrow 1998; Lust-Okar 2007: 49).

2. The Struggles for Power of the Later-formed Parties

Let me turn to analyzing the strategies of the later-formed parties against the above-mentioned policies of the regime.

(1) Under the Occupation:

The later-formed parties began their strategies such as criticism of the legitimacy of the U.S.-led foreign occupation and organizing street demonstrations against the U.S. occupation. The Sadr Movement organized an anti-U.S. demonstration in Baghdad in April 2004, in which it successfully gathered 5,000 people. Furthermore, in opposition to the U.S. attack on the Sunni city Falluja, in April 2004, the Sadr Movement organized a cross-sectarian anti-U.S. demonstration in cooperation with the Sunni parties, in which they gathered 20,000 people (Herring and Rangwala 2006: 150). In this manner, the Sadr Movement tried to establish unity among Iraqi people maintaining a strong relationship with Sunni Islamist groups and appealing for Iraqi nationalism in the form of anti-foreign occupation, at least at the beginning (Allawi 2007: 137). Part of the reasons why the Sadr Movement attracted considerable attention among the Iraqi people was the inspiring religious belief of people who had been oppressed under the Ba‘thist regime (inspiring Islamism) as well as a feeling of Iraqi nationalism which merged them altogether. The CPA was forced to prohibit the Sadr Movement organ²⁵.

In this manner, the Sadr Movement gradually increased its influence. After the clash with the U.S. army in al-Najaf in August 2004, the Sadr Movement came to be recognized as being much more influential than the regime itself, which convinced them of the need for cooptation rather than its exclusion. The Sadr Movement flaunted its mobilization capacity outside the regime on the basis of anti U.S. agitation during this period.

(2) al-Ja‘fari Regime:

First, the Sadr Movement, which came to have the advantage over the regime, shifted to being an official party and penetrated into the parliamentary system by maintaining influence outside the parliament. By doing so, it obtained the right to conduct its activities within the framework of official political process. Further, the Sadr Movement jointed the Shi‘ite Islamist alliance, the UIA, and obtained the largest portion of parliamentary seats in the UIA that won an overwhelming victory in the election of January 2005. In sum, the Sadr Movement successfully penetrated into the regime by contributing to the formation of the Shi‘ite Islamist alliance, attempted to change the policies of ex-exile party-led regime, and prompted strategies to control the decision making power.

Second, the Sadr Movement maintained its stance of merging Islamism and Iraqi nationalism and attempted to narrow the gap between the Sunni and Shi‘ite presence in the regime that had become tangible after the Sunni later-formed parties boycotted the

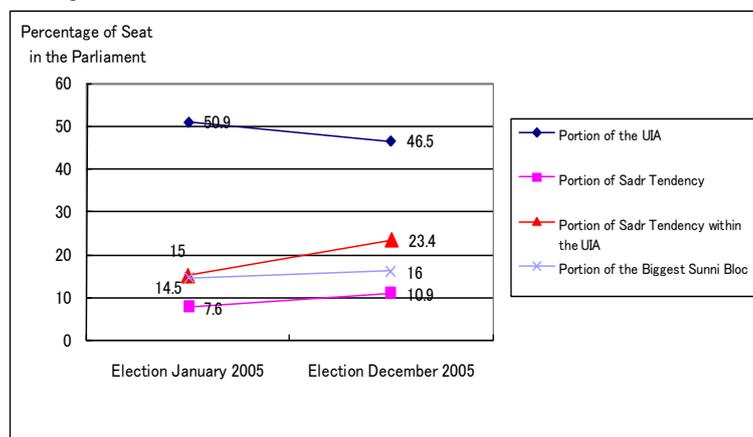
²⁵ One of the organs of the Sadr Movement called “*al-Ḥawza*” was banned for the first time on 28 March 2003 (Stansfield 2007: 178).

election of January 2005. The Sadr Movement stressed that it was crucial to include Sunni parties that had boycotted the political process (*al-Zamān* 28 May 2005). Hence, it left open the possibility of alliance with Sunni parties by proclaiming itself anti-U.S. occupation and pro-Iraqi solidarity.

(3) Former al-Maliki Regime:

The Sadr Movement adopted the same strategies as it did in the al-Ja‘fari regime. Thus, having obtained a large proportion of parliamentary seats and cabinet posts, it attempted to control the regime’s policies and decision making process. As Figure 2 indicates, the Sadr Movement increased its proportion again in the al-Maliki regime.

【Figure 2: Transformation of Portion in the Parliament】



Source: Made by the Author

(4) Latter al-Maliki Regime:

The Sadr Movement, however, did not succeed in controlling the decision making process, because it was still considerably difficult for the al-Maliki regime—it had to rely for the regime’s very existence on the presence of the U.S. Army in facing the “sectarian civil war”—to compromise with the demands of the Sadr Movement and clearly express a withdrawal timetable for the U.S. Army. As a result, the Sadr Movement developed the following strategies step by step.

First, the Sadr Movement as well as other later-formed parties began boycotting the National Assembly and pulled out their cabinet ministers criticizing the regime’s pro-U.S. occupation policies. It was the best option for the Sadr Movement and other parties to boycott, because this strategy had little risk and cost compared to an armed struggle²⁶. The strategy of boycott was effective because the al-Maliki regime that proclaimed the national reconciliation and establishment of a completely united cabinet could not leave those that pulled out from the regime.

Second, in addition to the boycott, the Sadr Movement withdrew from the Shi‘ite alliance, the UIA (*BJ* 16 Sep 2007; *TN* 18 Sep 2007). Contrary to the fact that the Sadr Movement was excluded from the core alliance of the regime, it rather came to have much wider political options and influence on the regime than it had before. As the

²⁶ Another representative later-formed party, the Iraqi Islamic Party affiliated to the Iraqi Accord Front, began to adopt other strategies rather than boycott. It proposed an alternative national reconciliation pact. The main elements of this pact were: restoring full sovereignty to Iraq over the U.S. occupation forces, enhancing the unity of Iraq by overcoming sectarian conflicts and plan of federalism, and establishing a consensus by means of direct negotiation among the parties (*DS* 30 Sep 2007).

regime attempted to establish a completely united cabinet, withdrawal of the later-formed parties such as the Sadr Movement revealed fragmentation within the regime and the loss of support from local communities that the Sadr Movement, for example, could efficiently mobilize. The Sadr Movement began to utilize the regime's constrained circumstances.

Third, in opposition to reorganization by the regime and the formation of the Four Parties Alliance, the Sadr Movement attempted to reconstruct an alliance to the Sunni later-formed parties and increased their criticism of the regime's policies (see Table 5). As Table 2 shows, it was acceptable for the Sadr Movement to make an alliance with other Sunni parties because they had a similar policy orientation. Sunni parties also began to have incentive to ally with the Sadr Movement, which resulted in the forming of various large alliances between the later-formed parties. These alliances indeed forced the regime to approve and pass the *Amnesty Law* that allowed the release of a large number of Sunni prisoners (*al-Hayāt* 28 Feb 2008).

Fourth, the Sadr Movement utilized the possibility of freezing the activities of its militia, the Mahdi Army, which have been one of the major factors of in the Sadr Movement's political and social influence outside the official parliament. The first decision to freeze the Mahdi Army was made immediately after the severe clash with the SCIRI's militia, the Badr Army, in Karbala in August 2007, which resulted in the killing of more than 50 people including civilians²⁷. The Sadr Movement effectively utilized this adversity for negotiations with the regime.

Fifth, after the failure of negotiations with the regime, the Sadr Movement began to disturb politics and security by using its militia. Thus, the Sadr Movement called for an uprising against the regime and the U.S. occupation and started to attack military bases and the offices of the police in the face of the regime's military operation, *Assault of Chivalry* in the end of March 2008²⁸. This strategy, however, ended up unsuccessfully. Although the Sadr Movement did not lose any influence through this chain of armed struggles with the regime, the regime gained more of an advantage over the Sadr Movement than it had before, because the *State Political and Security Council* decided that disarmament or dissolution of militia would be a condition of its participation in the coming provincial election in October 2008—it will probably be postponed—to which all

²⁷ A violent competition was taking place between Mahdi Army and Badr Army which craftily shifted to the police organization of Karbala prefecture, which resulted in a large number of casualties including civilians. In addition, numbers of executive members of the Sadr Movement were arrested. Consequently, Muqtada al-Sadr declared the freezing of the Mahdi Army's activities for six months on 29 August 2007 (*DS* 11 Sep 2007; *IS* 11 Sep 2007). Subsequently, the Sadr Movement extended the period of freezing its activities twice in December 2007 and February 2008 (*S* 21 Dec 2007; *al-Hayāt* 23 Feb 2008).

²⁸ The Sadr Movement called for an uprising and civil disobedience towards the U.S. occupation policy in protest against the regime's decision not to stop arresting members of the Sadr Movement (*al-Hayāt* 25 Mar 2008). After the regime started military operations against Sadr's Mahdi Army in Basra in particular, the Sadr Movement began to attack and destroy the branches of the SCIRI and the Badr Army (*MN* 26 Mar 2008; *al-Adāla* 27 Mar 2008; *al-Wasaʿ* 27 Mar 2008).

the parties welcomed (*al-‘Adāla* 7 Apr 2008; *al-Hayāt* 7 Apr 2008).

In sum, later-formed parties represented by the Sadr Movement showed off their mobilization capacity and influence on local societies by organizing a large street demonstration against the U.S. occupation. The subsequent tactic that the Sadr Movement used was penetration into the core of the regime by participating in the Shi‘ite alliance and attempting to take over the decision making process. After the clash of policy orientation with the former-formed parties, the Sadr Movement boycotted the National Assembly and pulled out the cabinet. Subsequently, it began to make a multitude of alliances with other later-formed parties in order to put pressure on the regime’s policy making. Interestingly enough, these later-formed parties significantly increased their influence after participating in the parliamentary framework, while maintaining their informal forces such as militias and tribal networks outside the parliament, because they began to choose wider options in the struggle for the political space. In other words, later-formed parties that had been struggling for power maintained their advantages over the regime.

【Table 2: Policy Orientations of the Major Parties under the al-Maliki Regime】

Issue of Policy	The UIA		The Sadr Movement	The Iraqi Accord Front	
	The Da‘wa Party	The SCIRI		Al-Dulaymis	The Iraqi Islamic Party
Sectarianism	×	×	×	×	×
National Reconciliation	○	○	○	○	○
Occupation of the U.S.	○*	○*	×	×	×
Federalism	△	○	×	×	×
Amnesty Law	△	△	○	○	○
Militia Maintain	×	×	○	×	×

Note: ○=Affirmation, △=Approval, ×=Denial

* indicates ostensibly approval, but in fact relying on the existence of the U.S. Army.

Source: Made by the Author based on (Yamao 2008a: 114–115) and other sources such as daily news papers and party organs.

【Table 3: Struggle for Political Space between the Regime and Later-formed Parties】

Later-formed Parties	Regime (Former-formed ex-Exile Parties)			
	Under Occupation	Al-Ja'fari Regime	Al-Maliki Regime: Former	Al-Maliki Regime: Latter
The Sadr Movement	—	Including to Shi'ite alliance, distribution of posts	Including to Shi'ite alliance, distribution of posts	Negotiation → cooptation partly (divide)
	Criticize of legitimacy, demonstration	Being official party, penetration into the regime	Penetration → boycott	Withdrawal → negotiation using militia → alliance of later-formed parties → armed struggle
Other Parties (Sunni Parties and Tribal Forces)	Cooptation of individual political elite	Cooptation of political elite, distribution of posts	Cooptation of political elite, distribution of posts	Cooptation partly (divide)
	—	Boycotting election, partly participate	Participation → boycott	alliance of later-formed parties

Norte: The upper paragraph indicates the policies of the regime; the bottom paragraph indicates the strategies of the later-formed parties.

— indicates no activities were conducted.

Source: Made by the Author based on daily newspapers and party organs.

IV. Patterns of Political Pacts and Cooptation under the al-Maliki Regime

Based on the above-mentioned chronological overview of the competitions between the regime and the later-formed parties, this section will analyze the patterns of their struggle for political space and the reasons for these patterns.

1. Three Patterns of Political Pact: Indicators of Alliance Formation

First of all, let me put in order how the alliances evolved between the ex-exile parties and the later-formed parties in the struggles among political parties, focusing on the competitions between the regime's cooptation policies and the strategies of the Sadr Movement. Political alliance is formed on the basis of political and social pacts among political elites²⁹. Taking this into consideration, it is justifiable to suppose that alliances between the ex-exile former-formed parties and the later-formed parties were made on the basis of the following three indicators of political pacts: (1) whether the parties are

²⁹ This paper relies the concept of pact on O'Donnell and Schmitter's work: agreement expressed clearly, not always explained or legitimized to masses, by the selective elites who attempt to define or re-define the rule related to exercise of power based on mutual guarantee of their decisive interests (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986).

ex-exile or indigenous, which means they were formed within Iraq after 2003, (2) whether the parties approved of the U.S. presence in Iraq or strongly opposed it, and (3) whether the parties were established based on a Sunni network or a Shi'ite one (see Table 4).

【Table 4: Pattern of Alliances in the post-War Iraq】

		Indicator of Pact for Alliance		
Classification	Parties	(1) Exile/Indigenous	(2) U.S. Approval/Anti-U.S.	(3) Sect: Shi'ite/Sunni
Former-formed Parties	The KDP, PUK	A-Exile	A-U.S. Approval	A-Shi'ite
	The Da'wa Party			
	The SCIRI			
Later-formed Parties	The Sadr Movement	B-Indigenous	B-Anti-U.S.	B-Sunni
	The Accord Front			

Source: Made by the Author.

The two major former-formed parties, the Da'wa Party and the SCIRI, put up indicators (1-A) ex-exile, (2-A) U.S. approval, and (3-A) Shi'ite in political pacts for alliances. The regime that was based on former-formed parties has been most importantly concerned about which indicator of a political pact would make their alliance largest and most enhance their foundation within societies in the process of the cooptation policies.

On the other hand, the Sadr Movement—as a representative example of the later-formed parties—put up the indicators (1-B) indigenous, (2-B) strongly anti-U.S., and (3-A) Shi'ite in political pact for alliances. The later-formed parties have been most importantly concerned about which indicator of a political pact would make their alliance largest and most enhance their political power in the process of the struggle with the regime.

In the period of being under direct occupation, the former-formed parties made an alliance on the basis of a pact among the ex-exile parties (1-A). This was due to the fact that promoting their position by such means as U.S. approval or Shi'ite characteristics, would considerably undermine their legitimacy for ruling the Iraqi state in the beginning. The Sadr Movement, on the other hand, attempted to make an alliance on the basis of the anti-U.S. pact among the indigenous later-formed parties (2-B).

In both the al-Ja'fari regime and the al-Maliki regime, the former-formed parties had no choice but to construct the Shi'ite alliance, co-opting the Sadr Movement—which had considerable ability to mobilize the Iraqi masses—in order obtain votes, guarantee a

victory in the election, and stabilize the coming regime (3–A). This was due to the fact that an alliance based on the ex-exile pact could not stabilize the regime because they had little foundation within the society, and the fact that an alliance based on the U.S. approval pact would exclude the Sadr Movement and undermine their legitimacy to rule the state. More essentially, they had no choice but to adopt the Shi‘ite Islamism pact in order to co-opt the Sadr Movement into their alliance. In other words, the former-formed parties could cancel off the two differences of indicators (1) and (2) by putting in Shi‘ite Islamism co-opting the Sadr Movement.

The Sadr Movement similarly participated in the Shi‘ite alliance in the same period (3–A). This was its strategy to penetrate into the parliamentary process to enhance its political power, while at the same time maintaining its influence outside the parliament keeping its militia.

In the later period of the al-Maliki regime, in the face of the withdrawal of the later-formed parties from the regime, the former-formed ex-exile parties made an alliance on the basis of the U.S. approval pact with two major Kurdish parties, the KDP and PUK, in order to administer the regime smoothly (2–A). Based on this alliance, they began to co-opt the later-formed parties in order to stabilize the regime. This was due to the fact that the former-formed parties would take as their priority the maintaining of the regime over an explanation of their legitimacy in the face of the serious challenge of a “civil war”, in which the regime had to rely for security increasingly on the existence of the U.S. Army.

Given this reorganization of the alliance, the Sadr Movement attempted to make large alliances on the basis of indigenous affiliation and an anti-U.S. pact among the later-formed parties (1–B / 2–B). Hence, the Sadr Movement, after failing to be dominant in the policy-making process by penetrating the regime, demolished the Shi‘ite Islamist alliance and turned back to the strategy of putting out anti-U.S. propaganda by allying with other later-formed parties as shown in Table 5.

In analyzing these large alliances among the later-formed parties, two issues should be taken into consideration. First, these alliances were strategic and tentative because they were formed against the reorganization of ruling parties’ alliance. Table 5 indicates these alliances of the later-formed parties. These tentative alliances could not maintain their solidarity because they were formed strategically and tentatively. Hence, the balance of power between the regime and the later-formed parties did not change. Second, the regime and later-formed parties share the pacts, or more precisely the rule, of alliance jointly. In other words, they have a common framework for ruling the political alliance as exemplified by the fact that the Sadr Movement made alliances based on the anti-U.S. pact, as opposed to the alliances of the regime based on U.S. approval pact³⁰.

³⁰ It is often argued that the regime and its opposition groups have a set of rules in the political system in common. William Zartman pointed out that a regime and its opposition groups construct an interdependent relationship by building common sets of rules, which reinforces the stability of the regime, by conducting

In short, the former-formed parties shifted their basis of alliance from the ex-exile pact to the Shi‘ite Islamism pact, and to the U.S. approval pact (1–A→3–A→2–A). On the other hand, the later-formed parties transformed their basis of alliance from the anti-U.S. pact to the Shi‘ite Islamism pact, and to anti-U.S. indigenous pact (2–B→3–A→1–B / 2–B). Hence, the struggle for the political arena in post-war Iraq can be clearly understood through the above-mentioned three pacts of alliance.

【Table 5: Reorganization of Alliance in the Former-formed Parties and Tentative Alliance of the Later-formed Parties】

Reorganization of Alliance of Regime	Changing of Alliance	Tentative Alliance of the Later-formed Parties
Four Parties Alliance (end of July 2007) • Da‘wa Party • SCIRI • PUK • KDP	→ Sadr Movement → → Islamic Fadila Party →	Gathering of anti-Four Parties Alliance • Iraqi Accord Front (August 2007) • Iraqi National List • Sadr Movement • Islamic Fadila Party
Reshuffle of Cabinet Plan (October 2007) = plan for reorganize cabinet and appoint of technocrat ministers		Alliance of Six Parties for anti-reshuffling Plan (end of October 2007) • Sadr Movement, Risaliyun • Iraqi Accord Front • Iraqi National Dialogue Front • Arab List • Independent Arab List
Three Parties Accord (24 December 2007) • PUK • KDP • Iraqi Islamic Party	← Iraqi Islamic Party ←	Anti- Three Parties Accord (7 January 2008) • Sadr Movement • Islamic Fadila Party • Iraqi National List
Five Parties Alliance (24 January 2008) • Four Parties Alliance + Iraqi Islamic Party (Four Parties Alliance + Three Parties Accord)		Anti-Four Parties Alliance and Three Parties Accord, which gathered 150 assemblymen of 12 parties (January 2008)

Source: Made by the Author based on daily newspapers and party organs.

case studies in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia (Zartman 1990).

2. Conditions of Alliances and their Results

As we have observed, there were three patterns in the creation of alliances based on three pacts. It should be argued, then, on what conditions or opportunities were these alliances made? To put it most simply, two conditions can be highlighted: first, an alliance on the basis of sect (3) was made on the condition of avoidance of uncertainty in the election; second, an alliance on the basis of the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact (1 / 2) was made on condition of the collapse of the sectarian alliance³¹.

First, the above-mentioned example shows that alliances based on the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact have been made when there was no incentive for a sectarian alliance or the collapse of sectarian alliances, as in the era of under direct occupation and the latter period of the al-Maliki regime. Concretely, the Shi'ite alliance collapsed because of the conflict that arose with regard to differences regarding the U.S. occupation between the ex-exile parties, the Da'wa Party and the SCIRI, and the later-formed party, the Sadr Movement. In other words, the sectarian alliance collapsed because of the conflict on the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact (1 / 2). Furthermore, after this collapse of the sectarian alliance, the alliances of both the regime and the later-formed parties were created on the basis of these two pacts. It is reasonable to speculate that alliance on the basis of these two pacts—the exile/indigenous and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S.—was accommodating to be formed because those that had these indicators in common also had similar policy orientations. In other words, all alliances were formed on the basis of the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact when the sectarian alliances were not effective.

Second, on the other hand, alliances based on sect have been made when both former-formed parties and later-formed parties faced the need to guarantee the collecting of votes and avoiding uncertainty—lost of votes for instance—in the elections. Thus, making sectarian alliance was the strategy for guaranteeing votes in the elections, because mobilization of Iraqi masses on the basis of religious networks—especially that of the Shi'ite religious establishment and its authority—were considerably effective. When the ex-exile parties need to have more socio-political mobilization to meet an occasion such as an election, they tend to address the factional factor, Shi'ite Islamism, in organizing political pacts in order to construct an alliance. The Sadr Movement participated in the sectarian alliance in the face of an election because its interests corresponded with those of the former-formed parties. However, allying on the basis of Shi'ite Islamism meant the exclusion of a multitude of non-Shi'a political forces. Hence, after the election, the ruling alliance had to co-opt the political parties that had been excluded in order to stabilize the

³¹ An alliance on the basis of the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact (1 / 2) was made based on similar conditions. Notwithstanding this similarity, these pacts should be categorized into two parts because the subsequent policy-making would greatly differ in each pact due to which alliance had been depended on.

regime. This reflects the competitions and struggles between the regime and the later-formed parties as analyzed in section III of this paper. The conflicts between the regime and the Sadr Movement were among these examples.

However, an alliance on the basis of a sectarian pact suspends the decisive differences of policy orientation such as the particular stance toward the U.S. occupation. These differences subsequently undermine relationships within the alliance, which subsequently collapses the alliance quite easily—notwithstanding the fragility of a sectarian alliance, it was constructed in order to guarantee a victory in the elections. In this manner, an alliance based on a sectarian pact was subsequently replaced by alliances on the basis of the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact

In sum, an alliance based on a sectarian pact was formed to avoid uncertainty in elections because the socio-political mobilization based on the religious networks was significantly active. Further, this sectarian alliance could be maintained only on condition that any conflicts related to the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact (1 / 2) did not become tangible among the sectarian alliance.

V. Conclusion

After the collapse of authoritarian Ba‘thist regime, the struggle for political space was transformed in various manners according to the development of the “democratization” process in the institutional sphere. The former-formed ex-exile parties—which had little foundation and could not centralize violent apparatuses—persisted in conducting cooptation policies in order to stabilize the regime. In other words, the regime continued its attempt to include the later-formed parties into the fragile regime.

On the other hand, the later-formed parties—which had strong foundations within local societies and could adopt their strategies both within the framework of the parliamentary system and outside of it—have been taking an advantage over the regime in the struggle. They have been shocking the regime by penetrating into it, demonstrating the possibility of mobilizing or freezing their militia, boycotting the parliament, making anti-regime alliances, and disturbing security. Their social networks and militias supported these strategies.

These struggles for power can be analyzed as the formation of alliances between the regime and the later-formed parties, which can be categorized in three patterns. Thus, alliances were formed on the basis of three pacts: (1) ex-exile/indigenous, (2) U.S. approval/anti-U.S., and (3) sectarian. The regime has been concerned about which pact would make its alliance largest and about enhancing its foundation within societies through the process of cooptation policies. The later-formed parties have been concerned about which pact would make their alliance largest and about enhancing their political power through the process of struggle with the regime.

Based on the analysis of this paper, political space in post-war Iraq can be characterized as following two points: (1) An alliance on the basis of a sectarian pact, which was formed to guarantee of sufficient votes in the election, would maintain its solidarity only on condition that any conflicts related to the exile/indigenous pact and the U.S. approval/anti-U.S. pact did not become tangible, (2) An alliance on the basis of a sectarian pact is considered fragile because it suspends the decisive differences in policy orientation, although it could mobilize widely on occasions such as elections.

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- AI: *Aṣwāt al-‘Irāq* (<http://www.aswataliraq.info/>)
- al-‘Adāla* (SCIRI; <http://www.aladalanews.net/home/>)
- Badr* (Badr Army / Organization)
- al-Bayān* (The Da‘wa Party)
- al-Bayyina* (The Iraqi Hizb Allāh Movement)
- BJ: *al-Bayyina al-Jadīda* (The Sadr Movement)
- al-Da‘w* (The Da‘wa Party)
- DS: *Dār al-Salām* (The Iraqi Islamic Party)
- al-Ḥayāt* (<http://www.daralhayat.com/>)
- IHT: *International Herald Tribune* (<http://www.iht.com/>)
- IMC: *Iraqi Media Center* (<http://www.iraqmc.com/>)
- IPA: *Iraqi Press Agency* (<http://www.iraqpa.net/>)
- IS: *Ishrāqāt al-Ṣadr* (The Sadr Movement)
- MN: *Mawsū‘a al-Nahrayn* (<http://www.nahrain.com/>)
- RS: *Radio SAWA* (<http://www.radiosawa.com/>)
- S: *al-Sūmāliya* (<http://www.alsumaria.tv/en/home.html>)
- al-Ṣabāḥ* (<http://www.alsabaah.com/>)
- TN: *Thawābit-nā* (The Sadr Movement)
- al-Wasaṭ* (<http://wasatonline.com/>)
- al-Zamān* (<http://www.azzaman.com/>)

【Table 6: Result of the Election of the National Assembly in Each Constituency (December 2005)】

Alliances Constituencies	UIA	KA	IAF	ILL	IDF	IUK	LR	MAL	TF	R	YM	RL	Total
Dhouk (K)		6				1							7
Erbil (K)		12				1							13
Sulaymania (K)		13				2							15
Anbar (S)			7		2								9
Diyala (+K)	2 *	2	4	1	1								10
Ninewa (S)	2	4	7	2	2		1				1		19
Salahaddeen (S)	1		3	1	2		1						8
Babir	9 ¹⁾		1	1									11
Baghdad	34 *	1	13	8	1			1		1			59
Basra	13 *		1	2									16
Karbala	5 ¹⁾			1									6
Kirkuk (K+)		5	1		1		1		1				9
Maisan	6 *			1									7
Muthanna	5 ¹⁾												5
Najaf	7 ¹⁾			1									8
Qadissiya	7 ¹⁾			1									8
Dhi Qar	11 ¹⁾			1									12
Wasit	7 *			1									8
Total	109	43	40	21	9	4	3	1	1	1	1	0	

Note: • (K) indicates constituencies in which a majority of the resident are Kurd, (S) indicates constituencies in which a majority of the resident are Sunni Arab, and constituencies with no indication indicates a majority of the resident are Shi'ite Arab.

• 1) indicates constituencies in which the governor is affiliated to the SCIRI.

• * indicates constituencies in which the governor is elected from local forces (Herring and Rangwala 2006: 130–136; Sakai 2005e: 38–40).

Source: Made by the Author based on various sources.