

THE DANGER OF DIVISION: A HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL EVALUATION OF PARTITION IN IRAQ

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When sectarian violence was increasing in Iraq, many feared that the country would, upon American departure, erupt into genocidal civil war. The leading course of action being considered by the United States Congress, along with several military officials, was the institution of a partition that would divide the country into three ethnic regions, dominated by Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds.

On September 26, 2007 the United States Senate voted 75-23 in favor of an amendment to the defense spending bill for 2008, authorizing the U.S. government to “encourage” a “federal” solution for Iraq (S. AMDT. 2011). The language of the amendment suggests the implementation of “soft partition”—an adaptation of strict partition that has been discussed most extensively by the Senator Joseph Biden, the amendment’s sponsor, and by Michael O’Hanlon from the Brookings Institute. Proponents of soft partition argue that it is significantly different from partition as it has been traditionally understood—that is, a partition resulting in the creation of distinct nation states, such as in the case of India and Pakistan.

A policy of soft partition would not divide Iraq into three independently governed nations but would instead take a federal approach, separating political and financial powers into regional governments that would have control over local linguistic and social policies (Brancati 14). Another alleged distinction between traditional and soft partition is the fact that the creation of regional units would not necessitate ethnic segregation. According to O’Hanlon, “it would be best to define three new autonomous regions as much by geography as ethnicity,” considering the com-

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plexity of ethnic relationships (O'Hanlon 16). A geographic division of Iraq would utilize natural boundaries that already exist such as the Tigris River. Furthermore, soft partition would enable more flexible borders than a traditional partition. People would be allowed to move from state to state more easily than if separate nations were created.

That said, while soft partition would not require ethnic segregation, there is a general consensus among proponents of the policy that this would be a preferable outcome. Both Biden and O'Hanlon have created proposals in which ethnic division is an objective. Additionally, Iraqis would be required to carry national identification cards that would indicate their ethnic and regional affiliation.

Under certain circumstances, this outcome would be plausible. According to Donald Horowitz, certain preconditions make partition involving ethnic segregation more likely to successfully decrease violent interactions between ethnic groups. He cites three primary factors that particularly impact the likelihood that partition would succeed: (1) the regions being created already experience a high degree of ethnic homogeneity; (2) there is a wholesale defection of forces formerly committed to a unified government, now willing to support partition; and (3) there is external foreign support for the movement (Horowitz 266).

My research suggests that none of these conditions is currently present in Iraq. In this paper, I will argue that the policy of partition is problematic generally because it necessitates a conception of ethnic groups as more cohesive than they are, and specifically because of the current conditions in Iraq. While a policy of soft partition may be different from that of strict partition in certain respects, it would still facilitate the imposition of ethnic separation, the policy's most problematic component.

Furthermore, drawing on the research of Nicholas Sambanis, I will show that, from a historical-statistical perspective, partition has had an insignificant effect on preventing the recurrence of violence in post-ethnic civil war societies. Considering the high costs of implementing a partition in Iraq—both in terms of the operation and its potential negative effects, this paper suggests that the

burden of proof is on the advocates of partition to prove its effectiveness in the country.

CHALLENGING STATIC NOTIONS OF ETHNICITY

Partition theory's underlying assumption that ethnic groups can be decisively and legally separated evinces a misconception of ethnic identifications as monolithic and stagnant. It frames ethnic conflict as a "clash of civilizations" based on ancient, primordial affiliations that cannot be overcome (Huntington). Many ethnic conflict theorists, however, indicate that the construction and reconstruction of group boundaries do not wholly occur prior to a conflict but can be codified in anticipation of a conflict. As ethnic conflict progresses, the development of tensions can influence the "shape and firmness" of the boundaries of ethnicity (Horowitz 74). This would suggest that ethnic identifications are dynamic and that ethnicity is not predetermined but is rather socially and contextually defined and redefined.

Additionally, while certain antagonisms may be directly related to clashes of identity, many external factors contribute to and alter the nature of ethnic conflicts. To successfully mitigate sectarian violence, policy proposals must address the multidimensionality of ethnic relationships. Due to its misconception of ethnic antagonism as a result of clashing, ancient or inherent identities, a partition policy would not adequately address material factors affecting the Sunni-Shiite conflict.

For example, one issue to be considered is the way in which sectarian violence relates to disputes over the distribution of oil revenue. In his book *Resource Wars*, Michael T. Klare contends that "conflict over valuable resources" is "often intermixed with ethnic, religious, and tribal antagonisms" and that it is the interaction of all of these factors that has resulted in the preponderance of third world conflict (Klare x). While O'Hanlon considers oil policy in his proposal for partition, he does not adequately address the potential risks of the partition plan regarding revenue distribution. A second factor that is not addressed by the partition policy is that of

political movements, and the way in which political systems have contributed to or detracted from certain conflicts. In the case of Iraq, the Baathist regime played a role in facilitating ethnic conflict.

ETHNIC IDENTITY FORMATION IN IRAQ

The fear of genocide in Iraq has sparked debate among theorists who suggest that ethnic groups in Iraq must be kept apart from one another in order to prevent civil war and draw upon Huntington's theoretical parameters articulated in *Clash of Civilizations* in asserting that the contention between these groups has been and will continue to be irreconcilable. Upon historical examination, however, it appears that the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites is not age-old. Ethnic division has not always plagued Iraq in the way that it does today; rather, it has been codified and fostered by various interest groups at various times for political and economic gain. First, division was encouraged by Turkish interference, then by British colonialism, again under the Baathist regime, and finally by U.S. intervention.

The policies instituted by the British further evidence this point and are especially pertinent to the discussion of current proposals. The British perceived Iraq as fundamentally divided among distinct urban and rural populations. Certain policies created under the British contributed to the creation and codification of ethnic identities, which were "supplied by the dominant cultural stereotypes of the day" (Dodge xi). For instance, under the colonial administration, the Sunni Arab minority was designated authoritative control over a predominantly Shiite Arab population. As often seen in racially stratified societies such as colonial Iraq, differential employment that disproportionately privileges ethnic minorities served "to build up a fund of resentment among the subject peoples and pretensions among the agents of colonial rule" (Horowitz 159). In this way, the so-called ancient sectarian conflict in Iraq can be understood instead as "primordial affiliations [that were] historically constructed."

When Britain relinquished direct colonial control of Iraq after World War I, British administrators devolved power to the Sunni leaders that they had been working with throughout the colonial period. As a result “inclusion of and comity among the different ethnic and religious communities were discarded to achieve Iraq’s formal independence as quickly as possible” (Dodge 31). Unfortunately, such actions have likely contributed to the complexity of the conflict today.

Following the rule of Abd al-Karim Qasim (1958-1962) marked by Pan-Arab nationalism among Sunnis and Shiites, the establishment of the Baathist regime in 1968 ushered in the return of sectarian violence to Iraq. The Baathists sought to facilitate the disintegration of “premodern tribalism” by using “extreme levels of violence... to co-opt or break any independent vestiges of civil society” (Dodge 159). In response to Baathist strategies of marginalization, reactionary cultural, religious, and ethnic groups gained support—especially among those who had been disenfranchised by Saddam Hussein, such as the Shiites.

The surge in sectarian violence that has occurred in recent years suggests that additional factors such as U.S. intervention could be contributing to the antagonism. Even throughout the Baathist period, joint Sunni-Shiite prayer services were commonplace. In considering ethnic conflict prior to US intervention, many first person accounts of the period assert that “most Muslims denied there was any real problem” (Rubin). While proponents of partition might argue that such statements exaggerate the potential for unified national identity in Iraq, at the very least they serve to demonstrate that interactions between ethnic groups in the region are complex, dynamic, and not categorically independent. It should be noted that this paper does not dispute the fact that there existed various distinctions between Sunnis and Shiites for hundreds of years. However, it does suggest that the violence of the sectarian conflict can, at least in part, be attributed to short-term political developments.

WHAT POLICIES ARE BEING PROPOSED IN IRAQ TODAY?

It cannot be ignored, despite relative periods of low-level ethnic conflict in Iraqi history, that the post-war insurgency has been ethnically divided and that the Sunni- Shiite conflict has become increasingly violent. According to Anthony Cordesman in a January 2007 insurgency update conducted by the Center for Strategic International Studies, "sectarian and ethnic divisions have expanded from the actions of extremists and activists to become popular movements with a steadily broader base" (Cordesman 10). The number of ethno-sectarian incidents had been steadily increasing from the start of the Iraq War and spiked dramatically starting in January 2006.

As a result of the violence, the number of refugees and internally displaced peoples continued to grow. As of January 2007, there were already two million refugees in Iraq, with between an additional 50,000 to 100,000 people being driven from their homes each month. In an unfortunate cycle of mutual reinforcement, massive displacement has contributed to further sectarian segregation, as a large portion of the internally displaced are moved into homogenous communities. Now less than 10 percent of Iraqi political parties represent more than one ethno-sectarian group (O'Hanlon 6).

Aside from overt violence, current studies indicate that ethnic discrepancies have permeated the political system as well. Many Sunnis report that they are not receiving the same services allowed to Shiite and Kurds. In one poll, 56 percent of Sunnis said that they had been subjected to police violence, while only 7 percent of Shiites reported similar experiences. Thus, as would be expected, government approval ratings are thus closely correlated with ethnic affiliation, with 85 percent of Sunnis reporting a dislike of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite (7).

Given these developments, policy-makers are under pressure to devise a strategy that targets ethnic violence in order to (1) prevent genocide and (2) facilitate respect for the national government. The emergence of soft partition as a viable option stems from

the underlying belief that, while “local governments may have less expertise...they have much higher standing with their own people” (O’Hanlon 27). Regional control would be preferable to the current federal system that is marked by a “lack of dependability and lack of independence from the ethno-sectarian conflicts” (27). The federal government of Iraq would not be abolished but would have significantly less power than in an integrationist system of national unity.

Though proponents of soft partition qualify their plan with the claim that it would not necessitate an ethnic division, the way in which they have devised the plan does, in fact, rely upon a separation of Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds. Utilizing the Tigris River as a marker, O’Hanlon assumes that the area north of Baghdad would be designated a Sunni region, while the area south of Baghdad would be explicitly Shiite. Dawn Brancati, in her article “Can Federalism Stabilize Iraq?” more directly advocates an ethnic breakup, calling for “division of regional borders along, not across ethnic/religious lines” (Brancati 17). Consistent with traditional partition theory, the use of ethnicity as a determining factor in the creation of new borders is considered to be a means of decreasing the frequency of interaction between ethnic groups and, consequently, decreasing opportunities for violence.

This is not to say that proponents of soft partition discount the possibility that it could exacerbate ethnic violence. Nearly all who have written in support of the policy acknowledge that the success of partition would require cautious planning and sensitive execution on the part of both Iraqi leaders and American policy-makers. Chaim Kaufman, for instance, admits that “even when carried out safely, population transfers inflict enormous suffering” (Kaufmann 121). Still, he makes the case that “the international community should stop trying to prevent the movement of refugees away from threats of ethnic massacres and should instead support and safeguard their resettlement” (156). In a sense, proponents of partition suggest that the implementation of a formal partition policy will help to control for certain risk factors in a process that would occur anyway.

WHEN IS SOFT PARTITION LIKELY TO SUCCEED?

Wholesale support for partition

Research such as Horowitz's shows that if partition is not agreed upon by all parties involved, it is far more likely to lead to "secessionist warfare" that would "reduce prospects for... post-partition harmony" (Horowitz 590). Even O'Hanlon concedes that an important factor for success is the willing participation of the Iraqi population. Commenting on the large-scale movements of people that would be involved in partition, he notes: "the key is to have the parties in Iraq accept the relocation policy at least informally" (O'Hanlon et al, 18). However, according to poll data, it seems this necessary condition would not likely be attained.

Despite the serious consideration of partition as a potential solution to ethno-sectarian violence in Iraq, the policy has garnered criticism from certain key parties involved in the region. Opponents of partition include Iraqi officials in the Maliki government, the Bush Administration, the Iraq Study Group, and "deeply splintered" Sunni Arabs who fear that, as the minority group, their rights would be endangered (1-2). Among the Shiite population, a 2006 poll indicated that 59 percent advocate the division of Iraq into separate states. O'Hanlon cites this statistic as a signal that Iraq is ready to move forward with the policy. However, one could also interpret this figure as an indication that a large number of Shiite are still opposed to partition. Since it is in the interest of each of these groups to find a solution to the quagmire in Iraq, it is all the more ominous that there has been such a reluctant and ambivalent response to proposals for partition.

Ethnic Homogeneity in Each Region

Despite clear antagonisms, the country is still characterized by a complex interaction of ethnic groups that would prevent complete homogenization. As O'Hanlon acknowledges, "the country is still too mixed demographically, with up to a third of marriages

across ethno-sectarian lines, and too unified culturally between its Sunni and Shiite Arabs” to allow for ethnic isolation (O’Hanlon 1). Brancati, advocating a policy of ethnic federalism agrees that “creating completely homogenous regions in Iraq is impossible because Iraq’s different ethnic and religious groups are intermixed in some areas of the country” (Brancati 17). Thus, even among proponents of partition, complete homogeneity is not considered feasible.

This is problematic for two reasons. First, according to the parameters set forth by Horowitz, ethnic heterogeneity decreases the likelihood that partition would mitigate violence. While proponents of partition may contend that ethnic isolation would not be legally required, Brancati and O’Hanlon both suggest using identity cards as a tool to help monitor population movements and regional demographics. This administrative task would prove controversial and complex for many including, for example, the children of one third of Iraqi marriages.

Ethnic heterogeneity also presents an obstacle to the implementation of partition, first, in regards to subgroup classifications that exist apart from the Sunni-Shiite divide. According to Horowitz, in the course of separating a population into two or three overarching categories, “subgroup cleavages will assume heightened importance” (Horowitz, 590). In Iraq, this could present itself among minority groups such as Turkomen and Assyro Chaldian Christians (O’Hanlon et al 16).

Second, the imposition of policies intended to encourage ethnic polarization is more dangerous when a population is ethnically heterogeneous. Even if ethnic groups could somehow be isolated—which, as discussed above, is unlikely—the necessary relocations could easily be manipulated in order to oppress minority groups. For instance, according to sociologist Daniel Elazar, society elites tend to support heterogeneity in general but impose homogeneity in groups that they control in order to “oust elements that they perceive as alien... and to achieve ideological, religious, or ethnic ‘purity’” (Stanovcic 367). O’Hanlon addresses the issue by suggesting that “coalition forces and Iraqi security units should plan for population movements that are fraught with danger” (17). However,

this would place significant pressure on a presumably newly created security force that is dealing with new political conditions.

External Foreign Support

Horowitz is ambivalent in the case of the third precondition he cites as conducive to the success of partition. Although he asserts that “virtually all of the strong post-war secessionist movements have been supported by powerful international connections,” he also acknowledges that such support can provoke “the central government to secure its own, overwhelming outside aid” (272, 277). In the case of Iraq, there exist many interest groups that, even if they consent to partition, will likely disagree on the specific terms of implementation.

Conflict between Iraqi groups regarding the specific conditions of various partition proposals would complicate the issue of foreign assistance. While the US might pledge its support for partition, it could not simultaneously support various conflicting plans for implementation. The Maliki government, for instance could garner the support of the United States to implement one partition plan, while other interests, such as radical groups, could align with other foreign powers in favor of another partition plan. Given the discrepancy between the national interests of various groups in Iraq—ethnic or otherwise—external foreign support for partition would, at the very least, be a source of complication rather than encouragement.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF PARTITION

In his empirical critique of Partition Theory, Nicholas Sambanis uses a dataset that includes all civil wars after 1944 to estimate the impact of ethnic partitions on the probability of war’s recurrence, on low-grade ethnic violence, and on the political institutions of successor states. In his initial analysis, Sambanis finds that the implementation of partition is correlated with a decrease in low-level violence. However, when he subjects the variable to

more rigorous models he finds conflicting results, indicating that “the partition variable is extremely fragile to different specifications of the model, in contrast to most of the other explanatory variables (such as human cost, war duration, war outcome, and the type of UN peace operations)” (Sambanis 23). Furthermore, he finds that the “positive impact of partitions on reducing low-grade violence is conditional on the involvement of a major power, on the patterns of third-party partial intervention in the war, on the type of war outcome, on the degree of ethnic heterogeneity... and on the size of refugee movements in the war” (16). From these results, he concludes that, on average, partition does not significantly reduce the possibility for new violence after its implementation.

For the purpose of examining the likelihood that partition would mitigate ethnic violence in Iraq, specifically, I will examine Sambanis’s dataset in relation to current data from the region. I will narrow Sambanis’s dataset to include only cases of ethnic civil war, to see if his findings still hold.

While the sample size for my examination of ethnic wars is limited, the results of my logistical and stepwise regressions, combined with the results of Sambanis’ examination of a larger sample, indicate that there is no significant statistical-historical evidence to indicate that partition is correlated with decreased violence in cases of ethnic civil war.

Data Collection:

The dependent variable in this equation is NOVIOL2. It is a dummy variable signifying the likelihood that there will be no violence two years after the implementation of partition. Below are listed the independent variables that I use in my regressions, and that I evaluate according to current conditions in Iraq.

BORDER: Variable denoting the number of land borders
6 (CIA World Factbook)

COST: Total number of deaths/displacements
3,124,180 as of January 2007 (Cordesman, CSIS Report)

To remain consistent with Sambanis, I will use the variable LogCost, rather than the direct cost value.

DEAD: Total number of Deaths

60,098 (Cordesman, CSIS Report)

I used the high number from a window given in January 2007, on the assumption that current deaths would be closer to the high estimate by this point. Again, for the sake of consistency in comparing my data-set with that of Sambanis, I will utilize the variable LogDead.

EH: Ethnic Heterogeneity index:

As discussed in the section above, this variable is one of the most important to consider because, as Horowitz and others have shown, the degree of heterogeneity at the sub-national level seems to be inversely related to the success of partition. However, for this study, it is impossible to determine ethnic heterogeneity at the sub-national level (that is, within the proposed partitioned states) for two primary reasons. First, because the Biden proposal does not yet delineate the borders of the proposed partition, we are unable to confine our analysis to the appropriate sections of the population. Second, accurate data collection of a defined region is nearly impossible due to the rapid movement of people amidst the violence, and the large number of internally displaced people.

As an alternative, I will measure the Ethnic Heterogeneity at the national level, using an index developed by Tatu Vanhanen, which was also used by Sambanis in his calculations. The index ranges from 0-144 and takes into account racial, linguistic, and religious heterogeneity via the formula below.

Unfortunately, it is likely that this calculation vastly underestimates the level of heterogeneity in Iraq because it does not allow for a consideration of tribal groups within these larger ethnic, linguistic, and religious categories. For example, while Iraq is 60 percent Shiite and 75 percent Arab, there are many tribes within these broad classifications that would not consider themselves politically or culturally aligned. I have decided to include the calculation because it allows for at least a low estimate of the average heterogeneity, but the reader should keep in mind that the results of

the analysis would be even more discouraging if I could accurately gauge just how intermixed the country really is.

$\%largest\ racial\ group + \%largest\ linguistic/national/tribal\ group + \%largest\ religious\ group = Ethnic\ Homogeneity$

Iraq: 75% Arab + 75% Arabic-speaking + 60% Shiite (CIA World Factbook)

Sum of the inverse percentages= Ethnic Heterogeneity

Ethnic Heterogeneity in Iraq = $25+40+25 = 90$

GARM: Size of the government military

350,000 (globalsecurity.com)

GDP CAP: Real income per capita, PPP-adjusted

\$1900 (CIA)

INTERVEN: Was there third party intervention?

Binary- YES (code 1)

LOGCOST: Natural Log of Deaths/Displacements

14.9547

LOGDEAD: Natural Log of Deaths

11.0037

MAJOR: Was there a major power involved?

Binary- YES (code 1)

MILOUT: Did the war end in military victory?

Binary- NO (code 0)- since the war has not conclusively finished.

PART: Was there partition?

Binary: YES (code 1)- because we are predicting the effect of partition on ethnic conflict.

RIDP: The number of people displaced both internally and externally due to the war

3,064,082 as of January 2007 (UNHCR via CSIS)

UNOPS: Number of UN peace operations

There have been no official UN peace operations in Iraq.

WARDUR: The number of months that the war has gone on.

56 as of January 2007 (CSIS)

WARTYPE: Is the war considered an ethnic conflict?

Binary- YES (code 1)

Research Design: Part I

For the first component of my research, I replicate Sambanis's table, but include only wars that involved some aspect of ethnic conflict (see Figure 1). Here I would like to point out that, while Sambanis uses a probit regression model, I employ a logistic model. Both models yield essentially the same results, however the logistic model does not assume normality in the probability distribution of the variable NONVIOL2. Because my sample size is smaller than that used for all ethnic wars, I did not want to assume normality, and thus, the logistic model is more appropriate.

My regression, confined to ethnic conflicts, supports the conclusion reached by Sambanis in his examination of all civil wars. Sambanis' Model 1 indicated that partition was not significantly correlated with a decrease in low-level violence.

Figure 1- Model 1: Ethnic Wars

| Dependent variable: NOVIOL2 | Odds Ratio | Std. Err. | z | P>z | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|----------|---------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| PART | 1.211267 | 0.837354 | 0.28 | 0.782 | 0.3124644 | 4.69547 |
| LOGDEAD | 0.8722071 | 0.1205988 | -0.99 | 0.323 | 0.6651587 | 1.143705 |
| OUTCOME2 | 1.47811 | 0.3035159 | 1.9 | 0.057 | 0.9883724 | 2.210513 |
| GARM | 0.9997127 | 0.0005478 | -0.52 | 0.6 | 0.9986396 | 1.000787 |
| GDP | 0.9999873 | 0.0001464 | -0.09 | 0.931 | 0.9997004 | 1.000274 |
| WARDUR | 1.002719 | 0.0031947 | 0.85 | 0.394 | 0.996477 | 1.009 |
| EHPOP | 1 | 1.50E-11 | 0.21 | 0.835 | 1 | 1 |

Research Design: Part II

As a second component of my research, I wanted to include additional variables in my regression, to see if further specifying the conditions to replicate those in Iraq might yield different results (see Figure 2). I expected that, given the data for these variables, the result would indicate that partition would be even less likely to succeed than when it was examined in relation to the variables

listed in Model 1.

On the contrary, Model 2 produces an odds ratio value of 3.79 for partition, indicating that, given this additional data, partition would be even more likely to succeed.

Figure 2- Model 2: Ethnic Wars

| Dependent variable: NOVIOL2 | Odds Ratio | Std. Err. | Z | P>z | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|----------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| PART | 3.792571 | 2.873603 | 1.76 | 0.079 | 0.8589832 | 16.74491 |
| LOGCOST | 0.7459285 | 0.0991094 | -2.21 | 0.027 | 0.5749108 | 0.9678186 |
| MILOUT | 0.184344 | 0.1398189 | -2.23 | 0.026 | 0.0416889 | 0.8151497 |
| PEACEOP | 1.113608 | 0.2551542 | 0.47 | 0.639 | 0.7107254 | 1.74487 |
| WARDUR | 1.004588 | 0.0033685 | 1.37 | 0.172 | 0.9980072 | 1.011212 |
| MAJOR | 0.4220978 | 0.2860141 | -1.27 | 0.203 | 0.1118504 | 1.5929 |
| INTERVEN | 1.555308 | 0.9565599 | 0.72 | 0.473 | 0.4659106 | 5.191947 |
| EH | 0.9954509 | 0.0076347 | -0.59 | 0.552 | 0.9805991 | 1.010528 |
| TRUCE | 0.1149092 | 0.1114409 | -2.23 | 0.026 | 0.017173 | 0.768891 |

To understand this outcome, we can refer to Sambanis's original examination, which also indicated that partition was significantly correlated with a decrease in violence. He eventually determined that his original model was not robust due to "overspecification." This occurs when multiple interacting variables contaminate the regression, producing significant p-values for variable coefficients that would not be significant if examined individually. To see if my results were contaminated by overspecification, I performed a stepwise function and found that, in fact, they were. Upon the stepwise variable selection, partition dropped out as a significant factor, affirming the results obtained in Model 1.

Research Design: Part III

Some might contend that, since the examination did not reveal

any significant figures, the lack of correlation between partition and no violence is not necessarily indicative of the relationship of the factors, but rather of the weakness of the model itself. Therefore, as a final component of my research, I compare the cases of ethnic war in which partition as been implemented. Of 80 countries included in the sample, 18 have been the subjects of some version of a partition policy. Of the 18 cases of partition, nine experienced a decrease in violence and nine did not. While approximately two-thirds of non-partitioned countries experienced violence and only one-third did not, the Chi-squared test below indicates that there is no significant relationship between partition and no violence.

Figure 3- Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

| | Partitioned | Not Partitioned |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| No Violence | 9 | 23 |
| Violence | 9 | 39 |

$$X\text{-squared} = 0.5048, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.4774$$

Due to the unquantifiable nature of many of the variables involved, this estimate is by no means conclusive. However, given the risks associated with the implementation of a partition policy, there is not significant evidence to suggest that it will be successful. To the extent that we can measure the costs and benefits of partition, the results are not encouraging.

CONCLUSION

As the French mathematician, physicist and philosopher, Blaise Pascal once said: "diversity without unity means anarchy, and unity without diversity means tyranny" (Stanovcic, 365). This reality, regarding the complexity of creating constitutional and electoral systems, is too often overlooked in the idealistic desire of stable nation states to facilitate the stabilization of other nation-states. However, as historical analyses have demonstrated, the imposition of government systems is a risky business that often causes more

problems than it solves.

Accepting the complexity of nation building does not necessitate the abandonment of Iraq, or any other country in need of international support. However, the imposition of electoral systems implies an understanding of local cultural specificities that are impossible for a third party to obtain, particularly given the fluid and transient nature of ethnic affiliations. As a result, third parties often serve better as supporters rather than formulators of policy.

In this paper, I have argued that the imposition of a partition plan in Iraq would not be an appropriate course of action. First, I have suggested that ethnic conflicts have often been misinterpreted by third party policymakers. As a result, such intervention has sometimes exacerbated ethnic violence. In examining the misunderstanding that British occupants displayed during the colonization of Iraq, one can see the way in which inappropriate ethnic policies can legalize and codify once-vague group distinctions.

Second, a historical overview of partition has indicated that its success tends to rely upon specific conditions on the ground, including (1) a wholesale defection of forces formerly committed to a unified government and (2) the homogeneity of each new region. As I have demonstrated, these factors are not present in Iraq.

Finally, a statistical analysis of the likelihood that partition would mitigate ethnic violence has weakened the argument of partition's advocates, who carry the burden of proof.

There exist several alternative solutions such as integrationist, consociationalist, and federalist models. Each policy would entail its own set of risks, and none presents itself as an ideal answer to Iraq's complex dilemma. My point, however, is that such questions are not to be decided by an outside party. The United States should provide support to Iraqis in whatever system they choose, especially in the realm of security, but American policymakers do not have the nuanced understanding of local culture that is required for this process.

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