Homogeneity in Social Groups of Iraqis
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*June 2006*

With appreciation to the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies for initiating the Second World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies, this paper summarizes findings on homogeneity in community-level social groups derived from inter-ethnic research conducted during 2005 among Iraqi Arabs and Kurds living in the city of Basra, Iraq, and in the Netherlands.

We found that perceptions towards out-groups were not based on religion, ethnicity, class, or location as in traditional individual-focused social networks. Patterns of perception towards out-groups seemed to be rooted in homogeneous social sub-groups with combinations of these factors.

This research project used a 192-item survey of two hundred Iraqi business owners and managers in Iraq and in the Netherlands. It measured homogeneity of social group memberships. Survey elements included items drawn from the World Values Surveys (Inglehart), the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (Roper Center), and the Social Capital Inventory (Narayan and Cassidy).

Homogeneity, relationship segregation, social trust, and community influence in social networks were estimated through indices reflecting components of social relationships in priority in-groups emerging from factor analysis of survey responses. Other indices included civic participation (socialization), perceptions of threat from out-groups, ethnic and religious identity, social trust, personal security, and contribution to community-based resources.

Uniformity of responses to certain items about out-groups corresponded to findings by other authors on segregation and membership in social networks (Burt 1997, Buskins 2005, Inglehart 2004, Narayan and Cassidy 2001, Putnam 1995).

This work was an expansion on a study on perceptions of threat from out-groups among Iraqis in five locations conducted in 2003 (Gresham 2004).

This paper presents the following major sections:
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Homogeneity in Social Groups of Iraqis

I. **Introduction**

     This paper summarizes findings on homogeneity (all members being of the same kind) in social group memberships derived from inter-group research conducted during 2005 among Iraqi Kurds and Arabs.
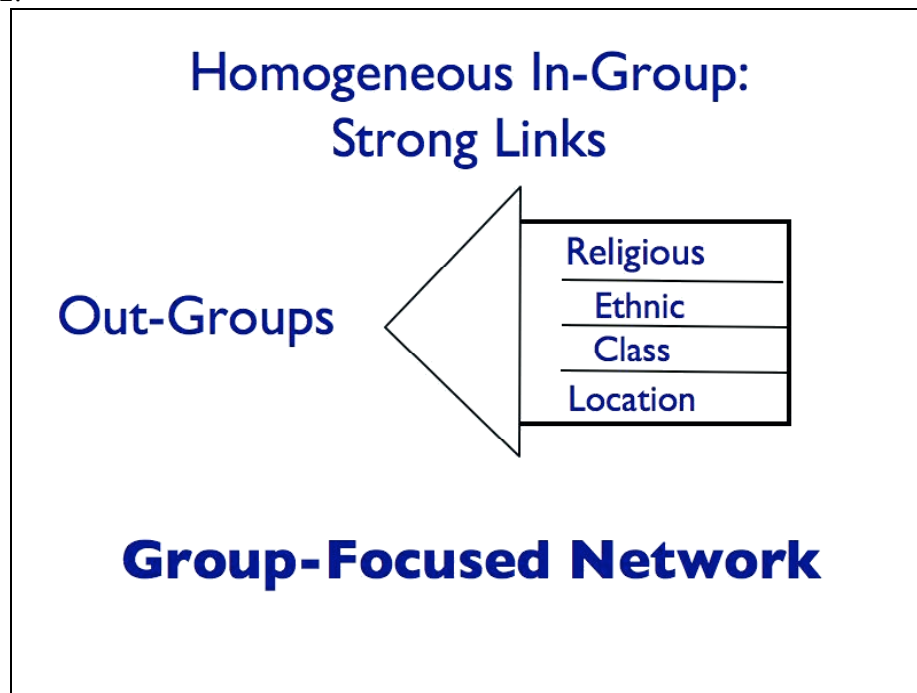
     We found that individual and group perceptions towards out-groups were not based on religion, ethnicity, class, or location as in traditional weak-linked, individual-focused social networks, Figure 1, below.

Figure 1.
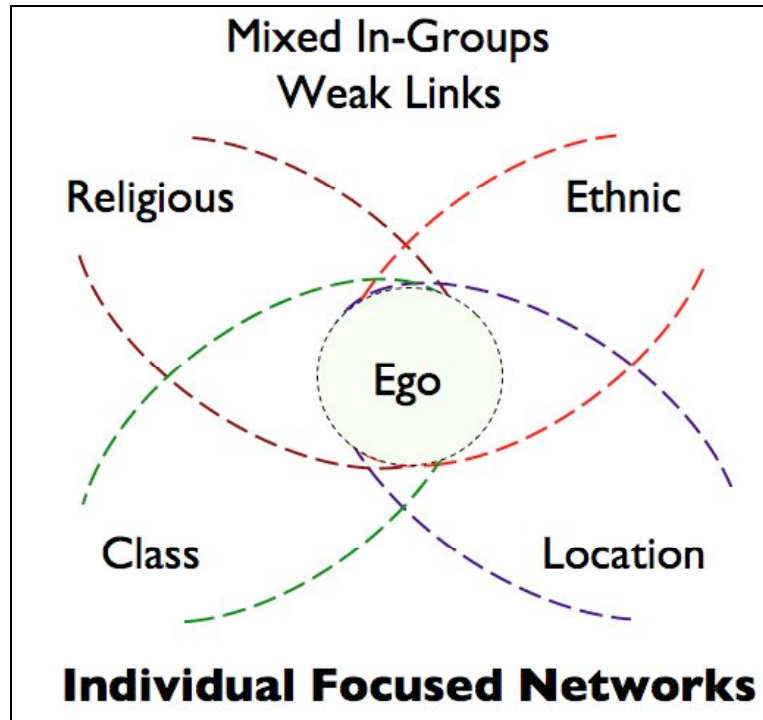
Patterns of perception towards out-groups, instead, were found to be rooted in homogeneous social sub-groups with strong internal links that had combinations of these identity factors, Figure 2, below.

Figure 2.



## Homogeneous In-Group: Strong Links

Out-Groups

Religious
Ethnic
Class
Location

## Group-Focused Network

II. **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to compare inter-group perceptions in social networks of communities of Iraqis. The main research questions addressed how social group memberships related to religious and ethnic identity, geographic location, and social capital.

This project used a 192-item survey of one hundred Iraqi business owners and managers in Basra and one hundred Iraqis in the Netherlands in 2005, following up from a 32-item survey of 479 people in four locations in 2003.[1] The 2005 survey, the focus of this paper, addressed homogeneity of social group membership among business owners and managers. Survey elements included items drawn from the World Values Surveys (Inglehart[2]), the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (Roper Center[3]), and the Social Capital Inventory (Narayan and Cassidy[4]).

The merchant class was singled out for attention, as it seemed to be a social group with much to lose by changes in the marketplace and governance systems of Iraq.

Patterns of response from our respondents to certain questions about out-groups corresponded to findings by other authors on segregation and trust in social networks (Burt 1997, Buskins 2005, Inglehart 2004, Narayan and Cassidy 2001, Putnam 1995).

III. **Background**

A. **What are the differences between "us" and "them"?**
   In research terms, a group which is "just like me" is my "in-group," and a group which is "not like me" is my "out-group." In-groups and out-groups help me distinguish between me and others, and form my perceptions of how I see myself, how I see others, and how I protect myself from others who might harm me.[5] A familiar saying in the Middle East is, "I am against my brother; my brother and I are against our cousins; our family is against the world." 79% of the Basra respondents said that in case of a need, they would first ask their own family for help instead of a non-family organization. Trust (like its opposite, fear) depends on the social distance, which is the degree of familiarity and the resulting predictability of behaviour, between groups. The first point in the above saying is, "I am against my brother," and this relates to another saying of, "The friend of my friend is not necessarily my friend." Protecting myself perhaps is a higher personal priority than protecting others, and closer relationships are more valued than those which are farther away.

B. **Assumptions**
   As a social being, I make assumptions about myself, my group, and other groups to justify claims that "my group" is better than "their group." This research seeks to narrow the gap between assumptions and facts comparing in-groups and out-groups. An example of an assumption or generalization would be to say, "All Iraqis are like ...," but a statement of fact would be, "Based on the 681 survey samples this team collected, our respondents indicated that ...."
   We did assume in this project that respondents would give consistent, if not truthful, answers to questions about their primary social group memberships.

C. **Social Networks**
   For the purposes of this paper, a social network is "a community of individuals together with the sets of connections between them, varying in number and intensity of relationships." For example, in Basra, we surveyed business owners and managers, many of whom knew of each other and lived or worked in close proximity to each other or shared common business interests. Members of those social networks have different intensities, or strengths of relationship, based on "frequency, reciprocity, emotional intensity, and intimacy of that relationship"[6]
   Barry Welleman and associates[7] found that 42% of active social contacts studied live within one mile of each other and meet each other an average of 123 days per year. Workmates were 26% of active network members. Integrating these two networks of contacts (home and work), Welleman calculated that 63% of all face-to-face contacts occur between people who either live in close proximity or work together. Geography and physical proximity are important in maintaining social relationships and social group membership.

D. **In-groups and Out-groups**
   As long as one group regards another group as "those others," the potential for mistrust is higher. For protection and personal benefit, we can belong to in-groups and out-groups along shared values of religion, ethnic background, and class identities. Each affinity or identity group provides different combinations of resources that make it easier for me to take care of myself. This "social identity" relates to how I see myself and also validates my desire to exclude others who are not like me.
   Strong affinity group ties are what propels the "us vs. them" attitudes that can influence uncooperative or conflictual behavior. In a society without centralized authority and power to control inter-group behaviour, like Iraq at present, in-groups are the source of power to encroach on others or to prevent encroachment. Robert Bates and colleagues described organized violence in a stateless society, and many principles apply to the Iraq situation.[8]

E. **Main Social Groups**.

Many of our survey questions related to the core idea of "main social groups," which we assumed to be the primary "in-groups."  The core specific question was worded as, "Choose the two most important groups with which your family has strongest social contact."  Choices for "most important social group" included sport, culture, arts, religious, political, business or economic, ethnic, family, and  other.

Based on which social groups were chosen as the most important, respondents addressed items about membership of those important social groups, and contrasts between memberships in those most important groups (in-group memberships) with members belonging to other social groups (out-groups).  This was the main focus of the survey and yielded the most important and surprising results.  Membership can be held in multiple in-groups  simultaneously in the networks constructed around any of the most important social groups.  For comparison purposes, we chose to compare in-group and out-group relationships based on the most important social groups as identified by the respondents.  Subsequent studies measure actual rankings of the many different social groups that a respondent is part of and compare these ranked social groups with perceptions about out-groups.

**F. Homogeneity and Social Group Action**

Social Contact Theory[9] proposes that increased contact between social groups may result in decreased conflict between those groups.  Our research project compared the amount of social group homogeneity between in-groups and out-groups of Arab and Kurdish respondents to assess the validity of measuring out-group perceptions as related to in-group homogeneity.  For example, if the in-groups of a respondent appeared to be highly homogeneous, we wanted to measure the correlation of homogeneity with frequency of contact with out-groups, and attitudes towards out-groups.

Another aspect of homogeneity is that of "group think", where highly-connected people limit their opinions and actions to those which are acceptable to the group and which may violate norms of behaviour or limit creative thinking by individual group members.  Researchers Heath and Gonzalez found that group interaction increased consensus and confidence in decision-making, but did not improve the quality of decisions which were made.[10]   Richard Bates states, "By promoting urban migration and education, ethnic groups advance the private fortunes of their members. On the other hand, ethnic groups organize politically; occasionally they engage in acts of violence, destroying wealth and discouraging the formation of capital. Ethnic groups can thus both generate benefits and inflict costs on societies."[11] Bates claims that "...it is diversity, not homogeneity, that lowers the probability of conflict," and his paper concludes that ethnically homogeneous regional units within a federal system "would only transfer the locus of violence to the local level."  Another issue is that, according to Bates, when one ethnic group has more than 50% of a population's members, there is more likelihood of one group using violence to gain power or wealth, since the rewards of violence are much greater than in situations when there is parity among groups.

Our previous and current research on social groups of Iraqis seeks to assess in-group homogeneity as well as attitudes towards out-groups.

**G.  2003 Iraq Project**

This current project began in 2003 with a pilot project on perceptions of threat between and among Iraqi social groups, based on 479 surveys collected; 203 surveys were collected in 2005. We looked at perceptions of out-groups based on ethnicity, religion, income level, and geographic location.

Questions explored in 2003 included:
1. How do ethnic and religious identities relate to perceptions of threat from other groups? i.e.: Would all Sunni respondents express similar perceptions towards Shia Iraqis?
2. How do locations of respondents relate to perceptions of threat from other groups?

i.e.: Would respondents in urban areas give different opinions from those in rural areas?

3. How do feelings about return migration differ among groups and locations?

i.e.: Would all Iraqis express similar feelings towards the return of expatriate Iraqis?

4. How do perceptions differ concerning threat by foreign states?

i.e.: Would all respondents perceive the intentions of Turkey the same way? Or those of Iran?

The most important finding from the 2003 study of perceptions of out-groups in Iraq, in my (Jon Gresham) opinion, was that "Ethnic and religious identities, taken by themselves, did *not* relate directly to perceptions of out-groups."

That is, perceptions of threat from other groups could not be attributed solely to either ethnic or religious background. And, that "moderate" Arabs in Iraq were the group most opposed to foreign involvement and were the most opposed to expatriate Iraqis returning to Iraq.

After the first survey, a more-detailed look at the social networks was needed. In specific, an exploration into the domain of social capital seemed appropriate.

**H. Civil Society and Social Capital**

Before presenting the 2005 research process, it is important to describe my (Jon Gresham) understanding of Iraq's social situation, because it seems that hope for stable and good living conditions in Iraq will come from three integrated types of civility which form important background elements in the search for stable social systems in the Iraq context.

These types of civility include:

1. Personal norms, morals, and values promoted as "good" in a community,

2. Associations of organized groups and informal networks that are active in geographic, financial, political, and religious interests of their members, and

3. Overarching authority to provide equality before the law, provide food-shelter-clothing resources, and provide a voice in shaping their common future.[12]

These are reasonable coinciding ambitions for nation-builders in Iraq. According to Michael Edwards, the World Bank working definition for *civil society* is "the arena in which people come together to pursue the interests they hold in common; it includes all organisations and associations between family and state, except firms".[13] Sudipta Kaviraj contributes a historical perspective, saying that "Civil society is not a new, post-Hegelian concept....In its original sense...it simply meant a community, a collection of human beings united within a legitimate political order, and was variously rendered as 'society' or 'community'."[14]

This "civil society thinking" applies here because nation building in Iraq needs a government established through just political and legal processes, and the provision for threat-free associations for the common good. This seems a reasonable basis from which to deal morally with criminal actions, individual or collective, while increasing security for non-criminals.

Without a strong central government with local support to facilitate equal protection under the law and equal access to resources, yet without evidence of many non-state organizations with membership across ethnic and religious lines, security and social capital seem to be mostly based in social networks among near-kinsmen and close friends. Without security beyond such a small circle of relationships, civil society (in both actions and structures) is unlikely to happen.

T. Nelson claims that traditional prejudice (bias) research relies upon measures that fail to separate emotional response from general group evaluation or stereotypes.[15] For example, bias is usually measured as the difference between how members evaluate their in-group and how they see their out-groups.

We here suggest that exploring expressions of bias and prejudice as they affect the social environment in Iraq needs to begin with overt *and* with discreet uncovering of personal perspectives on generalized out-group classifications to refine relevant questions to ask in future, follow-on studies, and only then to move towards analyzing group perspectives and

group identities as they have impact on policy development.

Without this objective, step-wise foundation of social stability for the more-distant future, an "implosion" of society is almost certain to occur. Laura Drake uses this term "implosion" as follows. "The model for Iraq's disintegration, if it occurs, will likely not be the Soviet Union but rather Lebanon; in contrast to the notion of "breakup," which implies a territorial explosion of an entity into separate states, I refer here to the opposite notion of "breakdown"--a form of civil anarchy resulting from the implosion of society, economy, and polity within the boundaries of a failed state."[16]   Drake goes on to state that although a synthetic overarching superstructure can be militarily enforced, it does not do away with the underlying group characteristics, though they may be hidden from view.  Since the groups are not geographically limited, a geographic identity, as described by Andreas Wimmer, is also not present to nurture cooperation and conciliatory behavior.[17]. Neither is there evidence of many inter-ethnic non-state organizations, other than the General Federation of Iraqi Women, the UNICEF/WHO-promoted Primary Health Care services, and the agricultural research system.

However, the lower-level groups and "patron-client" networks are very strong, as they are the resource pools to which group members have first allegience.[18]  A confessional-pluralist democracy is not yet evident, but neither is an absolute re-tribalization of Iraq.  That gives hope that inter-group tensions can be mediated and reduced at local levels without resorting to tools of violence to do so.

The article  "UNDP and Civil Society Organizations" at http://www.undp.org/cso/ states, "On the ground, civil society organizations (CSOs)--including community-based organizations, women's rights organizations, environmental groups, think tanks, religious congregations, grass roots and indigenous peoples' movements--have always been vital partners in helping communities build their own solutions to development challenges. From debt relief to land mine movements, the ideas and energy...have come from within civil society."

Government agencies see civil society organizations as groups that are not part of a government, while international organizations, such as the United Nations, may see civil society organizations as community or trans-community groups within a nation-state or within a geographic region.  Within Iraq, there are multiple definitions of civility and civil society defining the future of civilization in Iraq. *Social capital* is here defined as the community-based pool of norms, values, attributes, and resources available to community participants. In addition to resources in the community, the other important factor is that of *human capital*, that is, the education and work experience that qualifies a community participant to improve his or her own quality of life because of what he or she is able to do or produce.  Human capital is what allows them to get work based on what they can or should be able to do.  Social capital is what allows them to improve their social status because of what the community is willing to share with them[19] Social and human capital are the practical and useful reasons that individuals may align themselves with many different social groups--to ensure that resources they need can be accessed on demand.[20]   Social capital in community life includes behaviour, attitudes, and social systems for positive benefit, not just to minimize negative aspects of community life, and this relates to concepts  of  social networks, as "the features of the structure of social relations that facilitate action."

## I. Historical Context of Iraq: Power against Out-groups

The history of Iraq demonstrates the existence of many constraints on the development of "civil" forms of government, and the importance of clarifying in-group/out-group relationship factors.

There are several important historical facts that strongly influence life and decision-making in Iraq today.  The below list emphasises significance of the non-civil past.[22] The area known as Iraq was the birthplace of agriculture, domestic animals, the wheel, and writing.  It was also home to the mega-power centers of the Akkadian, Assyrian, Chaldean, and

Babylonian empires, which introduced and supported state-sponsored violence against their own populations.

--The Arab conquest in the 7th century AD magnified power struggles between Mesopotamian and Arab cultures. Ali ibn abi Talib, son-in-law and cousin of the Prophet Mohammed, who was murdered in Kufa, Iraq, "appears to have been of a mild and kindly disposition, insufficiently ruthless to dominate so turbulent a community".[23]

--Mongol massacres in the 13th - 14th centuries left the land and peoples destitute of their famous irrigation systems, their literature, and their organized social systems.

--Turkish occupation in the 16th century reconstructed government systems for taxation and rule by decree and power, and not always by law.

--Britain and France drew the first political boundaries (the Sykes-Picot Agreement) deciding on the distribution of land from the Turkish/Ottoman Empire in 1916, with rule over Arabia, Palestine, and Mesopotamia given to Saudi Arabians.[24] The new king of Iraq was not considered as representing the interests of the Iraqi people; his reign was brief.

--In 1958, control of Iraq by pan-Arab Baathists led to Saddam Hussein and his near kinsmen becoming the ONLY in-group; everyone else was of the absolute out-group. There was little capacity for Iraq to become a socialist welfare state or democracy, because under the Baath party no sphere of life was outside of state control. There were NO civil or private affairs in Iraq. Approximately four million Iraqis left the country to seek a better life elsewhere during the Baath reign.

--The 2003 overthrow of the Baathists was not by popular elections, and rule by law is not yet the norm.

This past is not forgotten;  it is not even past
(paraphrasing William Faulkner in Requiem for a Nun)

IV. **Methodology**

Research attempts to explain the variance in answers to questions. Ideally, different answers to some questions, (the <u>dependent</u> elements, the *effect*), should be explained by a few answers to other questions, (the <u>independent</u> elements, the *cause*). The effect we can measure should be explained adequately by simple answers to simple causes. Here is the explanation of how we attempted to do this.

A. **Survey design**

1. **Inter-group Perception Studies.** The 2005 survey was an expansion from the 2003 survey on Iraq civil society, which was adapted, tested, and validated for Iraq and Europe situations in 2003, following the example of Russian Federation out-group perception studies by Hagendoorn, Linssen & Tumanov (2000).[25] Surveys were written in English, with a mixture of open-answer items for demographic items as well as multiple choice opinion answers. Completed forms with the 192 items were translated into Arabic and Kurdish, back-translated into English by others to test for meaning coherence, and then given to survey collectors.

2. **Focus locations and Populations**. In the spring and summer of 2005, trained surveyors were prepared to collect data in Iraq and the Netherlands, but we were unable to locate competent surveyors who were willing to work with us in Amman, (Jordan) or other places in Iraq. Thus, we focused on optimising the surveys for these locations and collecting data with known surveyors. We then moved on into the data processing steps instead of continuing to search for surveyors in other locations. This was unfortunate, but we have now located competent surveyors in northern Iraq in preparation for future work.

B. **Collection of data**

Surveyors worked through their existing relationships to find Iraqi business owners, managers, or former owners or managers who were willing to complete the survey forms. Each respondent was offered the opportunity to complete the survey form in Arabic, Kurdish, or English. In some cases, the respondent completed the survey form by themselves, but in most cases collection moved more quickly when the surveyor maintained control of the interview speed by reading aloud the questions and completing the responses as given. There were frequent requests by respondents to the surveyors to explain certain words or concepts.

The highest completion rate was with personal, live interviews and was estimated at approximately 90% completion.

Each respondent or contact was asked if they knew others who might also be willing to complete a survey about business ownership and social capital among Iraqis. This allowed the few surveyors to gather their target goal of one hundred surveys each.

C. **Processing of data**

Another Iraqi Kurd (not one of the data collectors) provided translation of survey forms into English, and helped to standardise spellings, place names, and responses to the write-in items. Other steps in the process included:

1. Recode variables. Multiple-response item answers were recoded to standardise answers. Responses to the 77 open-ended items were grouped into meaningful categories and converted to multiple-response format responses to allow correlations between responses.

2. Separate variables into demographic, independent, and dependent groups. Survey items were grouped to allow easier comparison between answers on the basis of demography (age, location, education, etc.), independent or factor variables (seeking to identify predictors of answers with questions about importance of religion or ethnicity or connectedness in social networks), and dependent variables (the elements that we really wanted to measure, such as attitudes about certain foreign powers, attitudes about other ethnic and religious groups, etc.).

3. Review data for missing data, incorrect entry, duplicate entries, etc., and look through the percentages of responses for each item, seeking patterns of response and outliers (responses

that are far outside of the usual ranges of responses).
4. Factor Analysis on independent variables to group into new factors (indices), such as "giving to their community," or "feelings of personal security"
5. Factor Analysis on dependent variables to group into new factors (indices such as social trust, social group homogeneity, perceived threat from foreigners, etc.).
6. Spearman correlations for variables internal to each index to view how well different variables co-related to each other.
7. Test correlations among independent and dependent indices, and against individual variables not falling into indices (such as interaction with out-groups, individual demographic variables plus attachment to religion and ethnic identity, best known people in community).

Data analyses included:
a. Frequencies.  How many people in which group(s) provided which answers
b. Other descriptive statistics:
    1. Means (averages) and ranges of responses.
    2. Standardized (z-score) comparisons of skewedness and kurtosis
        for normal distributions by Shapiro-Wilk tests of normal distribution
        for parametric data.
    3. Levene's Test of sphericity affirmed that equal variance can be assumed.
c. Descriptive Cross-tabs and Pearson's Chi-square.
d. Factor and main effects analyses.  How do answers relate to other answers?
    Correlation and pattern matrixes helped to build multi-item constructs to build explanations of relationships between items.
e.  ANOVA.  This test allowed answers to specific question pairs concerning interaction
f. MANOVA. These provided more answers to questions about the variance and covariance
    of answers from the sample averages.
g. Factor Analyses. They provided groupings of variables useful to construct valid indices based on variables which demonstrated similar patterns of responses.

**D. Inter-relationships of items**
    Comparison of Means, Cross-tabulations, Pearson correlations, and regressions showed the relationships between responses to questions. To explore details of apparent relationships, simple main effect analyses were performed. In the factorial design, a main effect for each independent variable was considered. The analysis of the main effects involved considering a single independent variable, ignoring effect of other independent variables.
    That is, a main effect of an independent variable is the effect of that single variable averaged over all responses of other variables. No single response to one of these independent variables always produced a certain effect, regardless of the response to a second independent variable, thus showing that there is an interaction between the variables. That is, the effect of one of the variables differs depending on the level of the other variable.
    Example: Because of the <u>inseparable</u> factors of ethnicity (Arab) and religion (Islam) for most respondents, the most important details were found through interaction analysis among the independent variables, not simple main effects of any one single independent variable. ANOVA was chosen to build an explanation of the variances between individual items, and MANOVA was used for general comparison of multiple items at the same time.  Cross-Tabs screened for significant associations between categorical variables.

V. **Results**

A. Basic summaries of findings from 2003 research.
--Location Factors.  Location of respondents had a significant relationship with many survey questions, such as those dealing with return migration, threats from foreign powers, attitudes towards the new government of Iraq, and importance of ethnicity.
    *In Baghdad and the Netherlands, few respondents saw the division of the country as

bad.

      *Those in Baghdad expressed more often that there could again be a regime similar to Saddam's.

      * Expatriate Iraqis expressed full confidence that Iraqi people would profit from return migration, but those in southern Iraq and Baghdad were more opposed to the return of migrants.

      *100% of those in urban Basra expressed that all Iraqis have a duty to defend Iraq.  This was not the case in other places.

      *Expatriate Iraqis were confident that "the new government of Iraq will be able to give peace and safety", and that "all Iraqis will support the new government," more than were Iraqis living inside Iraq.

      *Those in southern Iraq did not express confidence in the government.

      *Those in Baghdad and Jordan did express confidence in the new government.

--Religion and Ethnicity

Religion and importance of religion showed correlation with ethnicity (F 74.98 and F .424 at p<.001, respectively) and with importance of ethnicity (F .138 and F .215 at p<.001). Religious identification showed a strong relationship with importance of religion (F (3,398)=39.07; p<.001). Cross-Tabs screened for significant associations between categorical variables.

      I.E.:  Those who identified themselves as Shia expressed less trust in the government.

--External Threats

      *Those who expressed belief that foreign countries were expected to help protect Iraq's natural resources also expressed more support for division of Iraq, but those who expected the USA to protect Iraq's natural resources did not support the division of Iraq.

      *Those who believed that Iran, Turkey, or Russia were expected to support creation of an Islamic Republic also expressed greater support for division of Iraq.

      *Russia was not seen as seeking to either dominate Iraqi people or to promote an Islamic republic.

      *Turkey was seen in southern Iraq and among expatriate Iraqis as almost identical to Russia in perceived threat of domination and exploitation.  The small number of Kurdish respondents, none of whom lived in the north of Iraq, would limit the extent to which findings would be representative of Kurdish people living elsewhere.

      *Iran was seen to promote an Islamic Republic and to seek to dominate Iraqi people. More perception of this threat was expressed in non-Basra locations, which relates directly to ethnic and religious backgrounds of respondents.

      *The USA was expected to dominate Iraqi people but also to protect Iraqi oil (against other foreigners).

      *In southern Iraq, the USA was expected to dominate the Iraqi people but NOT to support an Islamic republic or to exploit the natural resources.

B. **Presentation of the Correlations**

      "Moderate" respondents expressed the greatest perception of threat from out-groups, whether foreign powers or on the basis of ethnicity.  The strongest perceptions of threat were expressed by those of moderate income and those whose religion was of moderate importance to them.

      Again, the potential for out-group conflict did not appear to be based in either ethnic or religious identity alone, but rather in homogeneous groups with similar identities in ethnicity, religion, class (income), and location.

C. Findings on Homogeneity

      An index of homogeneity measured the degree to which social group members shared

similar values in ethnicity, religion, class (income), education, and location. Patterns of perception towards out-groups were found to be rooted in homogeneous social sub-groups with strong internal links that had combinations of social identity factors, shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.
**Elements of a group-focused network among Iraqis**
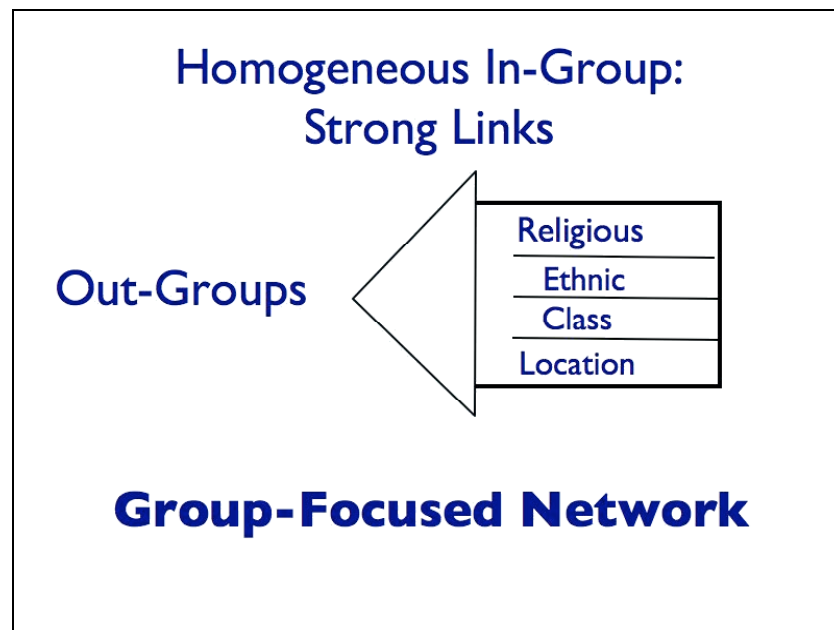


A tight social identity is reflected in this current report by an index of primary social group homogeneity, shown below in Figure 3, a chart with a possible scale of 0-18. This index measured the relative homogeneity of the main social group of respondents (across the horizontal axis) with respect to factors of ethnicity, religion, gender, vocation, family membership, education, income, reading skill, and contact with non-in-group members, contrasted on the basis of percentage of respondents. Shia Arab business owners of Basra were very homogeneous, but not as homogeneous as were the Kurds of the Netherlands. For each of the main group memberships, respondents judged the groups as having less than half of their main social group members as the same, or more than half of their group members as having the same ethnicity, religion, gender, vocation, family membership, education, etc. The Kurdish respondents had more than half of their main social group as being the same as them in every identity.

Figure 3.
**Index of Social Group Homogeneity vs. Ethnicity**
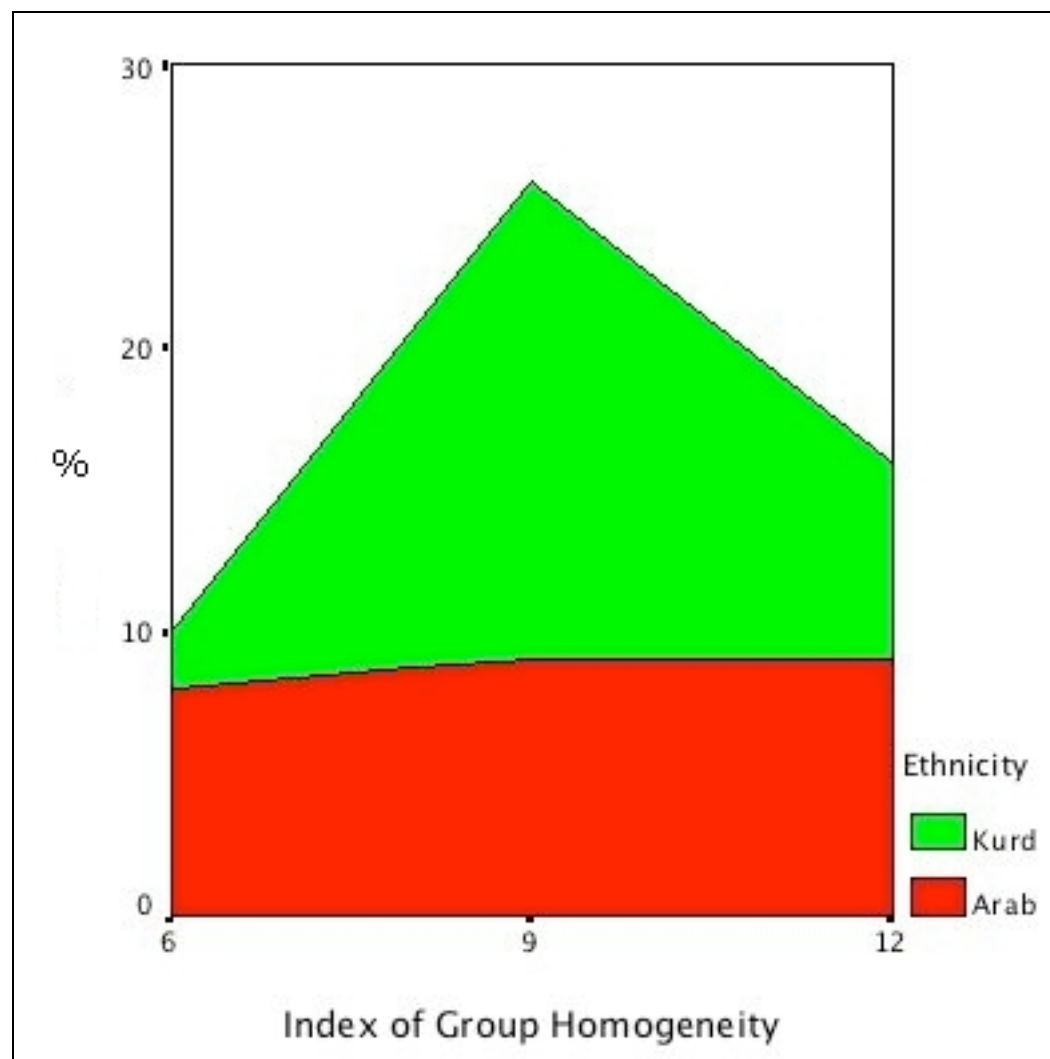
Another factor in group homogeneity is the type and degree of importance allocated to social group membership.  Respondents were asked to identify their two most important social groups out of a list of seven possible types of groups.  Below is a composite showing difference between percentages of Arab and Kurd group membership priorities, to which we might attribute a degree of group loyalty.  Arab memberships were more evenly distributed across many types of voluntary associations, but Kurd memberships were more focused on ethnic and religious memberships.

Figure 4.

**Priority Social Group Memberships vs. Ethnicity**
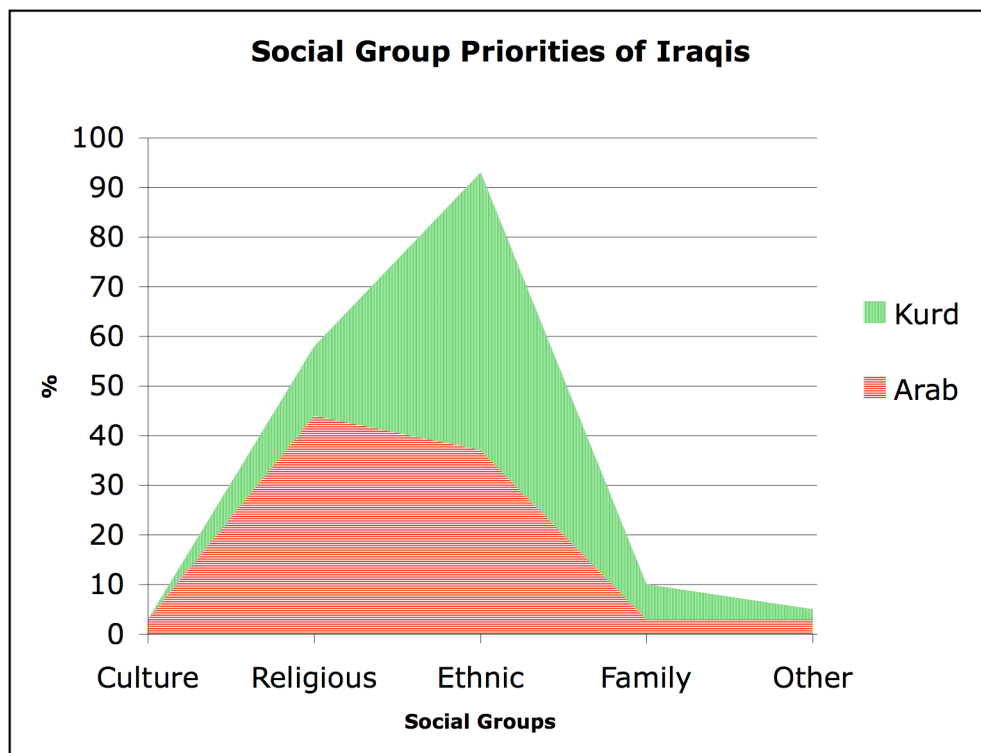
**Perceptions of Foreign Powers**

     Measures of in-group homogeneity did not reveal significant correlations with attitudes towards foreign nation-states, after correcting for insufficient variance in the measure of homogeneity for "Iran and Aggressiveness of Support for Islam in Iraq", "USA and Aggressiveness in Political Domination of Iraq", and "USA and Exploitation of Natural Resources of Iraq."  Respondents with more out-group contact (regardless of level of in-group homogeneity), expressed more threat from Iran with respect to promoting an Islamic republic in Iraq.

     An interpretation could be that contact with out-groups led to more news about the world (as reported by a Kurdish friend), which is consistent with a popular opinion that homogeneous groups know less about the world outside of their own circles.

1. In-group homogeneity (a more-closed network of social group membership) and the perception that Iran would battle to promote an Islamic republic in Iraq showed a significant relationship. ($F(1,60)=11.210$, $p<.01$. Levene: .419, $p<.1$.

The correlations and percentages of responses indicated that members of more open social groups (less homogeneous group membership and more contact with out-group members) saw Iran as more aggressive in its intentions to promote Islam in Iraq.
Members of closed social groups (more homogeneous group memberships and less contact with out-group members) saw Iran as less aggressive in its intentions towards promoting Islam in Iraq. This was very highly correlated by rigorous statistical testing.

2. Group homogeneity vs. domination by Iran.
Those with strongest in-group homogeneity and least out-group contact, 18% of responses, expressed less expectation that Iran would seek to dominate the people of Iraq.
Those with least in-group homogeneity and more out-group contact, 28% of responses, expressed more expectation that Iran would seek to dominate the people of Iraq. These categories of responses were not significant at the $p<.05$ level, but are worth looking at in another study in greater depth.

There were <u>no</u> significant levels of response (other than item 1, above) to threats of foreign political domination, control of natural resources, and promotion of Islam byRussia, USA, Turkey, or Iran.
     There were five significant correlations found between closed in-groups and threats from foreign nation-states, but four of these were suspect correlations because of uneven variance in responses; when this was compensated for, the correlations became insignificant for all except the point given in section one, above.
     In the community of Basra business leaders who were surveyed, those who were in closed social groups with little contact with those outside their groups did not feel threatened by foreign nation-states.  But, those leaders who were more connected to social groups outside of their own main social contacts, <u>did</u> feel threatened by Iran's intentions to promote Islam in Iraq.  There are strong trade and education connections to Iran, nurtured by political coalitions where there is motivation towards greater homogeneity of worldview.  Those with less homogeneity of political and trade connections, the non-business class, perhaps, seem more connected to other social and political networks which provide more mistrust of Iranian influence, especially since they were the most affected by the war with Iran in the 1980s.  Does this mean, as William Dalrymple claims, that terrorism and civil war promotion are nurtured by the bourgeois?[26]

VI. **The Reporting Process**

From the beginning of the project in 2003, rapid communication was prioritized by using combinations of printed reports, email reports, online reports, and live presentations.

Handling of the research process itself was reported onto the website, http://CivilSocietyIraq.seedwiki.com.  This wiki (live internet web forum) contained many "pages" or areas, including a the basic review of literature, current events that related to research interests, links to other agencies and individuals with an interest in Iraq, and, most importantly, forums where visitors could participate in the writing and rewriting of the web content. The "wiki" was hosted at http://www.seedwiki.com under the management of Kenneth Tyler.  Choosing content over high-bandwidth graphics, we choose a text-only format after experimenting with a variety of graphics and other features that looked good but interfered with fast skimming for information. The wiki led to contact with many other academics and field worker administrators with documents and research to contribute.  There were regularly over one hundred different visitors per day to the wiki.

## VII. **Conclusions**

A. **Homogeneity**.  Based on answers to social group memberships, an index was constructed for in-group homogeneity and used to compare group homogeneity between Arabs and Kurds. In-group homogeneity did not reveal any significant correlations with attitudes towards foreign nation-states, after correcting for insufficient variance in the samples.

High levels of homogeneity did not mean social group members were closed to contact with out-groups.  Many of the Arab business respondents were in homogeneous social groups, but reported much contact with out-group members.  This was also observed with Kurds-- extremely high group homogeneity, but also high levels of contact with out-group members. This is consistent with research by Martinovic, Tubergen and Maas on social integration of immigrants in the Netherlands, where they reported that amount of  contact by immigrants did not correlate to social integration.[27]

B. **Trust**.  Arab respondents reported an overall index of trust of 18.4 (on a scale of 0-28) and Kurd respondents reported an index of trust of 16.5.  This was a significant difference at $F(1,146)=5.741, p<.05$. This index measured trust of others with personal money and cooperation with other ethnic groups for personal or group benefit.

Other questions about trust addressed concepts such as asking neighbors to help care for sick children and trust of business associates.  In these items, lower levels of trust towards others were expressed by Kurds than by Arabs, but differences were not statistically significant.

Our summary is that both Arabs of Basra and Kurds of the Netherlands surveyed claimed membership in strongly homogeneous social in-groups, sharing values of religion, ethnicity, social class and education, and that high measures of trust were held towards co-members of their in-groups.  The strongest expressions of group homogeneity were with respect to religious and ethnic identity.

VIII. **Further Work**

A. Social networks.  The initial impetus for this work was to lay a foundation for the study of conflict and ethical/unethical behaviour between social groups of Iraqis.  An assumption is that violence against out-groups has root in "us vs. them" thinking, whether based on ideology of a Kurdish independent nation-state or the charismatic following of a Shiite ayatollah. Significant work in this field has been described by Daniel Brass and colleagues.[28]  Unethical behaviour, according to Brass, "is inherently a social phenomenon--it involves a relationship between actors that is also embedded in a structure of other social relationships.  By most definitions, ethics involves a consideration of 'the other.'"  As members of a network increase frequency of interaction, they increase in trust and predictability of behavior within that closer social group.  Larger social networks support existence of smaller groups formed along affinities of special interests or natural divisions such as social status, decreasing the overall homogeneity of the network with respect to ethnical behaviour. Brass claims that lower status actors within a system are "less likely to act unethically, because the more powerful actor can retaliate with more force." But, strong groups "also may have more power...and, therefore, may be able to act unethically without fear of retribution."

Combining social network studies with analyses of social capital (when methodologies are improved to reduce missing responses) would provide tools to support development of strong commercial sector systems as well as niche market nurture for small business owners and entrepreneurs.

B. Theories of social contagion, equivalence, conspiracy, and differential association can contribute to understanding of the transmission of unethical behaviour patterns throughout social networks, and could reveal significant breakthroughs in mapping and clarifying the local and regional affiliations dominating the civil war in Iraq.

For example, why is there unresolved unrest in Falluja and among the tribes of Jumaila, Albu Issa, Shumar, and Azzawi?  And what about the  "spoilers?"  Leonard Wantchekon states "Spoilers are factions that believe that 'the emerging peace threatens their power, world view, and interests, and who use violence to achieve it.'"[29]  There are no perfect typologies of terrorists, or of "insurgents," and yet there are growing bodies of research to profile common ideologies of those willing to use any means for personal benefit.[30]  Adler and Kwon propose that a guiding principle in social capital research is that "actors' resources are a function of their location in the social structure."[31]  The "spoilers" of the new, more civil society have resources. Those resources are found in their social networks and are related to the social connections that both facilitate and limit the behavior of the spoilers.

Since the spoilers are not defined by national, ethnic, or religious identity alone, they must then find identity in other groups.  Because the few captured "spoilers" seem to have no common megagroup identity, and they come from small, unknown groups, then the "bridging connectors" between those groups are a serious problem.  These bridgers have power because of their role in linking groups together. Their role in creating many "weak links" and fewer "strong links" puts them into the social network category of Marwan Al-Shehhi and Mohamed Atta, the strongest nodes of the September 11, 2001, attacks.   There is little need in this paper to generalize our findings to concepts such as "pan-Sunni" or "pan-Shia", and we also must not be too quick to lump all spoilers into a single ethnic group.[32]

What does that mean for sociologists?  It means that social systems, social networks, and the movement of social capital must be in the forefront of Iraqi  stabilization research.  Future work should include aspects of both <u>behaviour</u> from underlying norms and values and a <u>structural</u> <u>support</u> for collective identity and function.  Social capacity building is important.

C. Social topography analyses should address economic, social, and cultural class identities among civil war protagonists as well as in business enterprise systems, possible built from analyses in the tradition of social identity theory.[33]  Not since Hanna Batatu's work in 1978

(republished in 2004), *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq*, has there been material published, academic or otherwise, dealing with social classes in Iraq.[34]

D. Ethnic hierarchies.  Social identity is tied to the concept of "our group is better than their group."[35]

E.  Stereotypes and prejudice work is needed on  in-group/out-group perceptions between Arabs, Kurds, Shiites, and Sunnis.  Word choice has a great importance in clarifying inter-group relationships, and some respondents asked for so much clarification of terms that we must assume that our word choice was not optimal for this type survey work.  Future work must allow more time for more testing for word choice.

VIII. Appendix

Appendix 1.  Table of responses from four locations in 2003.
(71% in Iraq and 38% outside of Iraq) from 412 respondents (479 surveys).

Demographic Item Responses (% of Respondents by Location, N=412)

| | LOCATION | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ITEM | Baghdad N=225, 55% | Basra (urban) N=13, 3.2% | Basra (rural) N=14, 3.4% | Jordan N=129, 31% | Netherlands N=31, 7% |
| Ethnic Identity | Arab 59%, Kurd 6%, Other 35%a | Arab 100% Kurd 0% Other 0% | Arab 93%, Kurd 0% Other 7% | Arab 73%, Kurd 14%, Other 13%a | Arab 80%, Kurd 20% Other 0% |
| Ethnic Importance | Little 3% Important 61% Very 28% Most 8% | Little 7.7% Import. 31% Very 54% Most 7.7% | Little 0% Import. 50% Very 21% Most 29% | Little 33% Import. 44% Very 18% Most 5% | Little 10% Import. 59% Very 17% Most 14% |
| Religious Identity | Shi'a 20.3% Sunni 12.4% Other 67.3% | Shi'a 76.9% Sunni 15.4% Other 7.7% | Shi'a 57.1% Sunni 35.7% Other 7.1% | Shi'a 43.4% Sunni 41.1% Other 15.5% | Shi'a 76.7% Sunni 23.3% Other 0.0% |
| Religious Importance | Little 5% Important 15% Very 36% Most 44% | Little 8% Import. 15% Very 54% Most 23% | Little 0% Import. 14% Very 36% Most 50% | Little 23% Import. 39% Very 24% Most 14% | Little 6% Import. 32% Very 39% Most 23% |
| Age (Years) | Mean 31.5 Std. Dev 11.2 | Mean 35.8 Std. Dev 5.2 | Mean 35.9 Std. Dev 9.0 | Mean 32.4 Std. Dev 9.28 | Mean 31.5 Std. Dev 9.53 |
| Number Dependent Children | Mean 2.8 Std. Dev 3.5 | Mean 6.1 Std. Dev 4.2 | Mean 4 Std. Dev 3.4 | Mean 7.5 Std. Dev 3.5 | Mean 3.1 Std. Dev 2.9 |
| Years at this location | Mean 24.4 Std. Dev 10.8 | Mean 33.8 Std. Dev 5.4 | Mean 34.9 Std. Dev 10.9 | Mean 3.7 Std. Dev 2.2 | Mean 10.5 Std. Dev 4.6 |
| Probability of another Saddam-like regime | Never 46% Unlikely 37% Likely 13% Absolute 4% | Never 54% Unlikely 23% Likely 23% Absolute 0% | Never 43% Unlikely 43% Likely 14% Absolute 0% | Never 56% Unlikely 29% Likely 14% Absolute 1% | Never 73% Unlikely 23% Likely 4% Absolute 0% |
| Division of Country Good/Bad | Very good 8% Good 22% Bad 44% Very bad 26% | Very good 0% Good 0% Bad 61% Very bad 39% | Very good 7% Good 7% Bad 22% Very bad 64% | Very good 1% Good 2% Bad 40% Very bad 57% | Very good 16% Good 13% Bad 39% Very bad 32% |
| Return of Expatriate Iraqis | Help 45% Allow 33% Must Ask 17% Deny 5% | Help 31% Allow 69% Must Ask 0% Deny 0% | Help 100% Allow 0% Must Ask 0% Deny 0% | Help 62% Allow 29% Must Ask 9% Deny 0% | Help 32% Allow 52% Must Ask 16% Deny 0% |

| ITEM | Baghdad N=225, 55% | Basra (urban) N=13, 3.2% | Basra (rural) N= 14, 3.4% | Jordan N=129, 31% | Netherlands N=31, 7% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| USA will ... for domination | Battle 8% Encourage 70% Discourage 20% Do Nil 2% | Battle 8% Encourage 92% Discourage 0% Do Nil 0% | Battle 36% Encourage 64% Discourage 0% Do Nil 0% | Battle 25% Encourage 73% Discourage 2% Do Nil 0% | Battle 7% Encourage 93% Discourage 0% Do Nil 0% |
| Iran will ... for domination | Battle 17% Encourage 48% Discourage 34% Do Nil 1% | Battle 46% Encourage 23% Discourage 31% Do Nil 0% | Battle 0% Encourage 21% Discourage 15% Do Nil 64% | Battle 5% Encourage 44% Discourage 49% Do Nil 2% | Battle 3% Encourage 65% Discourage 32% Do Nil 0% |
| Turkey will ... for domination | Battle 12% Encourage 18% Discourage 51% Do Nil 19% | Battle 0% Encourage 62% Discourage 39% Do Nil 0% | Battle 0% Encourage 36% Discourage 0% Do Nil 64% | Battle 0% Encourage 17% Discourage 61% Do Nil 22% | Battle 0% Encourage 35% Discourage 52% Do Nil 13% |
| Russia will ... for domination | Battle 4% Encourage 6% Discourage 46% Do Nil 44% | Battle 0% Encourage 0% Discourage 100% Do Nil 0% | Battle 0% Encourage 21% Discourage 14% Do Nil 64% | Battle 0% Encourage 6% Discourage 49% Do Nil 45% | Battle 0% Encourage 10% Discourage 48% Do Nil 42% |

a Other Ethnicity. Baghdad: Chaldean 11%, Assurian 3%, Armenian .4%, Not-defined: 86%; Amman: Assurian 100%

b Number of Children: Amman 98 missing responses; Netherlands 19 missing responses

c. In Basra, we tested a repeated measures effect in combination with the priming effect. There were three versions of the survey form (ethnic primed, religious primed, and neutral). We administered the three versions of the survey to the same respondents, at one sitting, to assess if they would respond to the priming, or if they would differ in their responses to the primed versus neutral versions of the surveys. In other locations, each respondent completed only one survey form, with one of the three versions only. For reporting purposes, here and elsewhere, only the neutral-priming version of the survey was used.

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