

The Struggle for Iraq's Future: Outline

Chapter 1: A legacy of oppression and violence

This chapter provides a brief overview of modern Iraqi history, focusing on the monarchy period, the first ten years of the republic period, and ends with a discussion of the period of Baath party rule.

Chapter 2: On the origins of Iraq's new political elites

Focuses on the context in which Iraq's new generation of political elites, most of whom lived in exile for decades, came of age. Provides some background on the years that they spent away from Iraq and looks at the impact that time had on their psychology, their capacity to administer a country and their ability to cooperate in what was supposed to be a multiparty democracy.

Chapter 3: Creating a new political order

Sets out the author's understanding of what went wrong during the first three years of US occupation, particularly as the new elites worked to design the framework of their new state. The chapter discusses the process through which the constitution was drafted and also its content.

Chapter 4: A country back from the dead

After the constitution came into force in 2006, violence exploded, leading to thousands of deaths a month and millions of refugees forced from their homes. Violence eventually receded in 2008, creating a new social environment, and unique political opportunity for the country's main political parties to unite behind a single programme focusing on reconciliation and reconstruction.

Chapter 5: Defective politics

This chapter explores how the ruling elites responded to that call. It questions the decision to create governments of national unity and looks at the impact it had on governance. I explore whether prime minister al-Maliki has been as successful as some people claim in capturing the state, and discuss the impact that his strategy is likely to have on the state in the long run, particularly on federalism, decentralization and service delivery.

Chapter 6: A country left to languish

Focuses on a number of vital issues, including basic services, the oil and gas sector, economic policy and the failure to engage in legal reform, particularly the framework for protecting fundamental rights.

Chapter 7: The ravages of corruption: The second insurgency

Explores how Iraq's constitutional and political system has create a huge space in which corruption can thrive. In particular, it describes the gaping loopholes that have existed for years and asks why the government and parliament have done virtually nothing to close those loopholes.

Chapter 8: The third insurgency: Environmental disaster

Focuses on environmental deterioration. The chapter describes in some detail the translations that have been taking place over recent decades, including desertification, drought, a decimated agricultural sector, and explores how the ruling elites have exacerbated that crisis.

Chapter 9: What is to be done?

Asks whether there is any political ground in Iraq on which a new, truly representative and accountable government can be created. The chapter concludes by proposing a road map for reform, focusing on the kind of substantive changes that can and must be embarked upon to repair the state.