Identity and Ideology of Coordination Framework and Al Tayyar Al Sadri: A Frame Analysis

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the interpretative aspect of mobilization employed by two important political parties in Iraq, namely Coordination Framework (CF) and Al Tayyar Al Sadri (TS). It utilizes frame theory techniques to illustrate the identity and ideology of CF and TS. The purpose is to uncover the factors that contribute to the two groups' successful mobilization. The article makes use of the idea of "identity fields" to investigate how the two parties create protagonists, antagonists, and audience members who represent in-groups and out-groups, respectively, and the idea of "core framing tasks" to investigate how their ideologies manifest in diagnoses, prognoses, and calls for protests. The findings show that CF positions itself as the defender of the nation's legitimacy and that TS is the only recognized religious authority in the nation. CF and TS emphasize and interpret their ideological frames in different ways despite sharing the same worldview. They engage in a conflict over power, privileges, and control over resources. While TS framing is mostly purely religious, CF mobilization frequently uses more political themes. However, in order to mobilize people, both parties use

political and religious concepts that are already present in the minds of Iraqi audiences.

Keywords: Identity; ideology; frame theory; Coordination Framework; Tayyar al Sadri

المستخلص

يركز هذا البحث على الجانب التفسيري لتعبئة الجماهير التي يستخدمها حزبان سياسيان مهمان في العراق، وهما الأطار التنسيقي والتيار الصدري. استخدمت في هذا البحث تقنيات نظرية الأطار لتوضيح الهوية والايديولوجية التي يستخدمها كل من الحزبين لتحقيق تعبئة جماهيرية ناجحة. استخدمت في البحث فكرة "مجالات الهوية" للتحقيق في كيفية قيام الطرفين بتكوين الأبطال والخصوم وأعضاء الجمهور الذين يمثلون داخل المجموعات والمجموعات الخارجية ، على التوالي ، وفكرة "مهام التأطير الأساسية" للتحقيق في كيفية تتجلى أيديولوجياتهم في التشخيص والتنبؤات والدعوات إلى الاحتجاج. تظهر النتائج أن قوات التحالف تصور نفسها على أنها المدافع عن شرعية الأمة بينما يصور التيار الصدري عل انه السلطة الدينية الوحيدة المعترف بها في البلاد سياسيا. يؤكد كل من الحزبين على أطرهم الأيديولوجية بطرق مختلفة على الرغم من مشاركتهم نفس الأفكار.حيث ينخرط كل من الحزبين في صراع على السلطة والامتيازات والسيطرة على الموارد لكن الأختلاف هو ان تأطير التيار الصدري هو تأطير ديني بينما يستخدم الأطار التنسيقي الأطار السياسي البحت. ومع ذلك ، من أجل تحشد الناس حولهم ، يستخدم كلا الحزبين مفاهيم سياسية ودينية موجودة بالفعل في أذهان الجماهير العراقية.

Introduction

Coordination Framework (FC) and Al Tayyar al Sadri (TS) have been the most prominent Shiite Islamic political groups in Iraq . Their dominance shows how successful their mobilization efforts were. Given that these two elements frequently contribute to mobilization, their effectiveness can be correlated with the identities and (religious) ideologies that the two groups present to prospective members. Therefore, identifying the elements that contribute to the effective

mobilization of the CF and TS can be aided by having a clear understanding of their identity and ideology. With the aid of analytical methods from frame theory, this insight can be attained. According to Gamson(1992),

frame theory deems identity a fundamental component of movement core functions. More particularly, the idea of identity fields looks at how movements create in-group and out-group identities to set the bounds of their mobilization operations. These lines define the environment in which movements carry out their mobilization tasks. Furthermore, ideologies primarily take shape as a result of procedures that relate concepts, principles, and values to actual occasions and circumstances (Snow and Byrd, 2007).

The study of frame analysis, and in particular the conceptual idea of "core framing tasks", examines how movements make use of these procedures to draw attention to issues, put out recommendations for solutions, and inspire prospective supporters to act. It has been demonstrated that these frame analysis aspects are helpful in understanding movement engagement and activation. Therefore, it is reasonable to presume that they can also offer light on what factors contribute to the success of CF and TS mobilization (Benford and Snow, 2000; Gamson, 1992).

Starting from this assumption, this study analyzes how the two groups frame their identities and ideologies using the ideas of identity fields and fundamental framing tasks. It aims to respond to the following questions: What identities serve as the framework for CF and TS's in-group and out-group affiliations? What core framing strategies do CF and TS use to energize their supporters? This study analyzes how CF and TS create the identities of protagonists, antagonists, and audience in their rhetoric in

order to provide answers to these concerns. It also examines the ways in which the two sides employ their main ideologies to define issues, place blame for them, offer solutions, and mobilize potential supporters. In this study, frame theory serves as the overarching framework for the examination of the ideological and personal identity components of CF and TS as well as the foundation for discussion and interpretation of their significance. The application of "identity fields" and "core framing tasks" is the first step in the research of CF and TS identity and ideology, and the conclusions are then explored via the lens of frame theory.

Frames of identity and group activity for studying social movements

The frameworks for collective action and identity, which are connected to the core goals of social movements, considerably aid in the explanation of movement involvement and mobilization. They are closely related, and occasionally they overlap to the point where one appears to be a part of the other. Because identity constructs are a fundamental aspect of the framing process, collective action framing procedures also help to link individual and collective identities (Benford and Snow, 2000).

According to Johnston, Laraa, and Gusfield (1994), identity can take on many different forms that are individual, collective, public, social, or cultural. Polletta and Jasper (2001) think that the concept of collective identity appears frequently in identity literature. It offers many definitions of collective identity, the majority of which refer to a sense of "we" and "collective agency," that is, a common understanding that encourages collective action. The importance of group identity for social movements was emphasized by many scientists. There is experimental support for

the relationship between collective identity and the success of movements, as well as their inception, participation, and fundamental activities. Despite the analytical importance of identity, mobilization cannot be entirely explained by identity. Without sharing the same identity, one can concur with particular viewpoints, concepts, and movements. Similarly, action does not always imply membership in a group or movement. As a result, Identity must be examined alongside additional concepts that help us comprehend mobilization more fully(Hunt and Benford, 2004; Polletta and Jasper, 2001).

Collective action frames and framing techniques seem appropriate for this use. One of the key areas of attention during the examination of social movements is the idea of framing, which concentrates on the interpretation social movements give to situations and events in order to energize supporters and potential believers while demoralizing opponents. Social movements transform actors, incidents, and grievances into collective action frameworks that may motivate mobilization (Oliver and Johnston, 2005).

The primary framing activities that social movements use to diagnose issues and assign blame for them, suggest solutions "prognostic framing", and develop justifications for action and motivating languages "motivational framing" are crucial functions in collective action frames. Snow, Vliegenthart, & Ketelaars(2018) claim that the achievement of one framing job does not ensure the success of the other two, and all three are necessary for participant mobilization.

The analytical significance of collective action frames in the study of social movements is supported by numerous research, and the relevant literature provides a complete understanding of the framing techniques and their function (Benford and Snow, 2000).There is indication that

frames can help shift both individual and societal perception, which can lead to new political possibilities (Noakes and Johnston, 2005). The framing idea, according to Snow (2004), is helpful in conceptualizing and analyzing ideologies because it places an emphasis on actual events and situations rather than rigid ideologic beliefs, conventions, and narration. Social movements attribute traits to groups of actors who play certain roles: the party and its supporters "protagonists"; the movement's adversaries, including counter movements and opposing publics "antagonists"; and the neutral or disinterested observers "audience". These groups of actors make up the identification fields in which social movements carry out their mobilizing actions and the boundary framing that situates them in the social sphere.

Methodology

Applying frame theory methods, this work seeks to analyze the identity and ideology of CF and TS. It analyses the ideological frames used in their texts. and looks for components that help the groups mobilize effectively. The study attempts to give answers to the following questions: Which identities do CF and TS use to differentiate their position in in-groups and out-groups? Which "core framing tasks" do CF and TS employ to energize their supporters? In order to discover how actions and situations are viewed and given meaning by the two parties, the notion of identity fields is used in this study to explore how the two parties define their identities and those of their adversaries. This data includes a range of texts that make up the population from which the sample for this research was chosen, including articles from online periodicals and tweets. Text is the unit of analysis. In order to find texts that adequately convey the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivating frames

used by CF and TS as well as provide insight into how those groups define their allies and enemies. These were the sample criteria:

(1) Leading members issued texts, and allied media outlets published them.

(2) The researcher for this study translated them from their original Arabic language.

(3)   They were texts deemed to represent the groups' viewpoint in respect to events and situations impacting their activities, and they served as illustrations of the ideologies of the groups.

Ten texts were chosen, five for each group, using the sampling criterion and subsequent process. First, in order to illustrate their broad ideological context, I chose five writings from CF and five from TS that were regarded as milestones. These were the key propaganda pieces of the CF leadership and the TS spokesperson (Saleh Muhammad al-Iraqi), respectively. A text analysis was performed on the data. The paragraph level was used to assess the ten texts.

The types of identity fields and core framing tasks were examined independently in the analysis. I examined the data from the two groups to make inferences about how they framed their identities and attempted to mobilize others using fundamental framing tasks. The objective was to identify which basic framing tasks the two organizations used more frequently in their mobilization rhetoric and how they hierarchize their allies and opponents. Observations regarding the qualitative parallels and discrepancies between the two groups' approaches to identity construction and core framing were included to the findings. Due to restrictions on its sampling, the study was limited. One can debate about what is typical of the CF and TS ideology and what is not because of the type and number

of text users, which permitted a variety of interpretations of the selection criteria. Another drawback was that only one individual performed the coding and analysis, so removing other viewpoints that would have been useful for the study.

The Conflict between the CF and TS

With around 140 parliamentary seats, Coordination Framework is a political coalition of Iranian military parties and Shiite organizations. Although it is impossible to state that the leaders of the bloc are in agreement, they are all working toward the same objective of defeating Sadr because they understand that Sadr's increasing power will result in further isolation for them. Muqtada al-Sadr is the leader of the Sadrist Organization (al-Tayyr al-Sadri), an Iraqi Islamic national movement. The movement enjoys widespread support from all segments of Iraqi society, particularly the nation's underprivileged Shi'a. The movement is both populist and religious. It aims to create a community where tribal practices and religion regulations coexist.

Despite gaining the majority of seats in the early elections held on October 10, 2021, Sadrist candidates for the Iraqi Council of Representatives withdrew from the political process in the middle of June. Muqtada Sadr, the head of the Sadrists, has failed to advance government formation during the interim by assembling a majority alliance. Now, their choice to completely withdraw from the process can assist in clarifying the nature of the political crisis Iraq is going through. In addition to the country's inability to create a government, it also faces other difficulties, such declining security (www.washingtoninstitute.org)

Sadr may utilize his political clout to challenge the Shia Coordination Framework if it attempted to antagonize him and curtail his influence, given the economic, political, and social influence of the Sadrists. The Shia Coordination Framework, which is led by the former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki, was informed by the Sadrists' withdrawal that they are now the dominant Shia political force in Iraq and that they must accept this new reality. It's still unknown how the winds will behave at this stage. Iraq is on the verge of a new political system centered on the confrontation between emergent Shia forces (the Sadrists) and conventional Shia groups, as evidenced by the Sadrists' decision to withdraw (the Coordination Framework). Given that the political system is no longer able to internally address its own conflicts, the early elections in October 2021 may be the final ones held under it. The political forces that established the current system are also no longer able to work inside it, which all point to a high level of uncertainty for the political system going forward.

According to CF members, this irks Iran and transnational Shi'a actors who seek a unified "Shi'a house." The fights on August 29 were generally viewed by CF members as a "victory" for them and a "loss" for the Sadrists. In comparison to Sadr, they portray themselves as the law-abiding, logical actor. According to TS, aL Maliki has been entirely excluded from the cabinet-forming process.

Results

The theory-based framework mentioned above was used to analyze the CF and TS texts. In order to define the borders between the "in-group" and the "out-group" and to provide meaning to actual

events and situations, the identity fields and core framing tasks used in the mobilization rhetoric of CF and TS are described in the study that follows.

Identity fields

The protagonists, antagonists, and audience are defined in the following sentences to show how CF and TS frame their identification categories. Based on how frequently the groups bring up their antagonists in their texts, they also demonstrate how important they are to the groupings.

Protagonists

CF defines itself as the defender of the state's legitimacy. They portray themselves as being the law-abiding, logical actor. Additionally, it seeks to satisfy Iranian and international Shi'a performers who want a unified "Shi'a house." On the other hand, TS wants to be the only legitimate representative in the nation. In an effort to regain some legitimacy, TS wants to establish a government that will bring all Iraqis together under Al Sader's banner and impose religious authority. Both groups present themselves as the nation's forerunners, asserting that they are the only defense against offensive attack as well as the nation's lone defenders and liberators.

Antagonists

Although it is impossible to state that the leaders of the bloc are in agreement, they are all working toward the same objective of defeating Sadr because they understand that Sadr's increasing power will result in

further isolation for them. Some of the groups, though, support Iran. Accordingly, they view Iran's opponents as their own.

America and Israel are the antagonists of TS as they are mentioned frequently in the slogans and chants of "death to America and death to Israel," However, rather than the enemy of Iraq and the homeland, the most mentioned antagonists for TS are the leaders of the CF, in particular, Al Maliki.

Audience

Both CF and TS target the Shiite community as their audience. All Shiites throughout the world who are devoted to Iran are included in CF. Members of the disbanded Mahdi Army and other supporters of Al Sayed Al Sadr are among the audience for TS.

Core framing tasks

CF and TS framing appears in situations the groups consider problematic (diagnostic), in the remedies they suggest (prognosis), and in the ways they influence their supporters(call to protests). The main framing duties for the two groups are discussed in the following paragraphs, along with how they are prioritized.

Diagnosis

The main tenets of CF's diagnosis were "defending the legitimacy of the state, the political process, and the constitution." The theme of defending the legitimacy of the state raises the issue of undermining and weakening Iraqi state institutions. The group solely attributes TS's responsibility for this mayhem. The fact that TS drains the Iraqi people

and organizes protests that end in the deaths of several demonstrators is something that CF continually draws attention to.

In reality, despite the theatricals of taking the parliament, TS's goal is to increase his control on his Shia rivals, in particular Nouri al-Maliki, rather than to bring about revolution or overthrow the political order. Sadr is happy to maintain the ethno-sectarian system and cooperate with the ruling Kurdish and Sunni elite as long as Maliki is out of the picture.

Practically, CF suggests that the only way to solve some of the issues is through demonstrations. It is a strategy used by adversaries to counteract aggressiveness and reassert their dominance in the nation. In practice, the CF aimed to protect a status quo that had already lost favor with the great majority of people, especially with the Shia constituency it was trying to win over.

Call to Protests

CF and TS incite their supporters and allies to participate in protests. Al Sadr, the TS leader, utilized his words to incite and mobilize the enraged masses of the impoverished, unemployed, and destitute. Large masses descended on the Green Zone, the heart of Iraqi politics and institutions, on Saturday, July 30, before barging into the parliament. For TS, this was a revolution against the status quo that carried the promise of eradicating corruption and rooting out those responsible, defending social justice, practicing righteousness in government, and ensuring a promising future for the next generation. Sadr was hailed as Iraq's leader in the chants of the audience. On Sunday, July 31, Sadr called the protests in a moving speech. "a peaceful, spontaneous revolution that liberated the Green Zone" and proclaimed the event a "golden opportunity for all who

have been burned by the flames of oppression, terrorism, corruption, occupation, and allegiance to foreigners." He went on to call it a "great opportunity for radical change in the political system, the constitution, and elections." Finally, he urged Iraqis to back the revolutionary reformers. "not under my banner or leadership but under the banner of Iraq and the will of its people." Such forceful words simply strengthened his supporter base and encouraged further demonstrators to join the crowd that was already occupying the parliament. Beyond simply his supporters, many disgruntled Iraqis—and particularly Shia—supported Sadr's call for reform, even if they didn't agree with his methods.

CF, on the other hand, urged its supporters to hold counter-demonstrations across the Green Zone's perimeter in Baghdad to "defend the state" against the "suspicious coup" organized by Muqtada al-Sadr, the movement's head. The defense of the state's legitimacy is the motivational frame for CF. In a statement released on Sunday, the Coordination Framework group in charge of planning the "pro-legitimacy" protests stated, "The recent developments portend plots of a suspicious coup to seize the state, abolish its legitimacy, insult its constitutional institutions, and cancel the democratic process in it," "Fulfill your promise and pledge. Never to humiliation," the statement added, "tomorrow at five in the afternoon at the walls of the Green [Zone]." In another statement, they added "We meet at the bridge. The free people will have a stance that rejects seizing the public opinion and monopolizing it under any circumstances. Iraq is for all. The parliament belongs to the people and the judiciary is a foundation of the state,"(https://shafaq.com/en/Iraq-News)

Discussion

The study's findings suggest that CF and TS contextualize and prioritize their ideological frames in distinct ways. While TS framing is largely religious, CF mobilization frequently uses more political themes. The group is portrayed by CF identity frames as the defender of the state's legitimacy. Its core framing was to uphold a status quo that had already lost support from the vast majority of people, especially the Shia constituency it was trying to win over. TS, in contrast, presents a religious leadership led by Sadr that is hostile to all opponents but mainly CF. TS's core framing was primarily directed against the status quo, which held out the prospect of eradicating corruption and rooting out those responsible, defending social justice, practicing just governance, and ensuring a bright future for the youth.

In an apparent effort to capitalize on their connection with the majority of the Shiite in the nation, CF matches its framing with "master frames" that already present. Movements employ frame alignment strategies to integrate their own interpretation with that of the individual. In these circumstances, CF takes the role of defender of the state's legitimacy. The relationship it develops with a big audience seems to indicate that the group views this as aiding its mobilization efforts. First, since it holds one common enemy (TS) accountable for all the woes of the Iraqi people, and second, because it places all the blame on the outsiders, absolving the intended audience of all possible liabilities. By being tolerant with its audience, ignoring theological and intellectual disagreements, and promoting a more inclusive identity, CF can improve the success of its mobilization efforts.

The diagnosis of CF also suggests that the group despises its rivals, including ISIS and other rival political parties, not just for "what they

do," but also for "who they are." The group declares there is a "war on Iraq" and shows its opposition to the values of the other group by stressing the shortcomings of its adversary. In the group's diagnosis, the two frames together outnumber the oppression frameTo emphasize ideals that are broadly accepted by its audience and to draw attention to the distinctions between protagonists and antagonists in order to strengthen their identities, CF appears to use frame amplification (Hunt, Benford, and Snow, 1994).

TS plays the religion card heavily and employs a different tactic to promoting its identity and philosophy. The benefit of using a religious frame is that it has credibility among believers. The believability of the frames used for mobilization is crucial (Benford and Snow, 2000), and religious frames are highly regarded by believers of all levels of piety. Since TS appears to be aware of this, its mobilization nearly always relies on religious justifications, and its materials are rife with allusions to the Quran and other theological sources. TS presents itself as the sole authorized spokesperson, rejects all other views, and offers a purist theological interpretation that it refers to as the "Al Sadrist line." This appears to be an effort to reframe religion to match its ideological goals and political agenda. In order to increase mobilization, movements might alter the meaning of current frames and correlate them with their own through the process of "frame transformation" (Snow et al., 1986). As a way to build its brand of religion and so strengthen its ability for mobilization, TS aspires to do precisely that: to dominate the theological sphere.

The adaptability of frames associated to religion also enables TS to define success in accordance with its requirements. For instance, The TS prognosis portrays protests as having a religious motivation of their

own rather than being a way to achieve a goal, which dissociates it from its usefulness. This ostensibly makes mobilization easier because it may lessen the possible harm to the integrity of the frames in the event of failures. The variation of its constituency suggested that TS frames were useful to the degree that they were a reality. Because the group had complete influence over his supporters across the nation, real-world outcomes have a stronger mobilizing effect than mere propaganda and are more likely to be taken seriously by viewers. In this way, it's possible that potential TS supporters flocked to the group in response to the "marjaa" materializing and the convincing motivational narrative that the group was triumphant.

Conclusion

This study examined the ideological and cultural frameworks of the CF and TS to pinpoint the components that contribute to the success of their mobilization. In contrast to TS's mobilization, which mostly used religious framing, CF's frames were more politically focused. The implications of this variation have an impact on the two groups' overall tactics. TS is more adaptable when it comes to forming alliances with organizations or people, even when they disagree with them on ideological or tactical matters. Due to this, TS is now able to work with other groups or coexist with them without engaging in conflict, as seen in the collaboration between the Kurdistan Democratic Party and Halbousi, the representative of Arab Sunnis. However, TS's pure viewpoints cause the group to become isolated from one another and engage in disputes with his adversaries, particularly CF.

Activities aimed at countering mobilization should also take into consideration these variations. Different frames require different approaches, tailored to the distinct ideas supported by the two groups. In other words, counter-mobilization should attack TS's theological validity and combat CF framing on a political level. A tactic like this might reduce the mobilization power of their framing.

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