



## Iraq: A Country Standing Divided

Lynsey Addario

Reportage by Getty Images is proud to present this feature on behalf of the world-renowned photojournalist, Lynsey Addario. For this essay she travelled to Iraq to cover the rapidly changing security situation for The New York Times. We are now able to offer this work on an exclusive basis to our global clients.

In June this year Iraq's leading Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, issued a call to arms, urging his followers to join forces with the government's military in order to stop the march of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) through the country and towards the capital, Baghdad.

Simultaneously another of Iraq's foremost political leaders, Mooktada al-sadr has resurrected his Mahdi Army, one of the most experienced and largest battle groups in the country. Mooktada refuses to let the government have any control of the Mahdi army.

This direct challenge to the authority of Iraq's Shiite establishment highlights the fissures that exist, not only in the country's two Islamic sects, Sunni and Shiite, but also within the groups themselves. The fear being that these fissures could lead to a more fundamental breaking up of the fragile political system put in place after the US invasion of 2003, and perhaps the concept of Iraq as a nation state as well.

Left - Shiite tribal men and boys with the Shebil tribe dance around with their weapons during a demonstration calling for a united nationwide inter-sect fight against ISIS in Najaf, Southern Iraq. As Iraq descends further into sectarian war, Shiites are taking up arms across the country, and calling on civilians to join the fight against ISIS.

Lynsey travelled through Iraq to the regions in and around Najaf, Kufa and Kerbala to see for herself the feelings of the Shiite people as well as the forming of these new armies and militia.

In Kerbala Lynsey Addario witnessed the heightened state of tension as federal police and Iraqi security forces wait in readiness for the advancing forces of ISIS. Roughly two thousand men in this region have volunteered to help defend the country and its holy sites. In the police academy grounds, on the outskirts of Najaf they undergo training. It remains to be seen just what resistance they can present.

This show of unity and defiance toward the threat of the advancing ISIS forces is being mirrored across Southern Iraq. In Kufa, where Addario witnessed more civilian volunteers training in order to assist the Shiite militias, demonstrations were held by Shiite tribal men and boys where they danced and chanted, weapons raised above their heads in defiance of the encroaching ISIS forces.

All of this is happening against the background of a steady stream of bodies of fighters and those killed in the recent sectarian violence arrive in Najaf from north of Najaf for burial. Since ISIS began sweeping through the west of Iraq, and taking control of villages and cities, they have also stated their intention to attack Shiite holy places and shrines.



This Page - Shiite Muslims read the Koran and pray at the Ali Imam Mosque, one of the holiest sites for Shiite Muslims in the world, in Najaf, Southern Iraq.



Top left - Spokesman for Shiite leader Muqtada al Sadr, Sheikh Salaah, receives a phone call during an interview in Najaf, Southern Iraq. Following the historic call for a defensive jihad by leading ayatollah Ali Sistani, his younger, more aggressive competitor Muqtada al Sadr has called his own militia back on the streets for the first time since he disbanded his 'Mahdi army' in 2008.

Above - Shiite men wait on line to meet with Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani outside his office in Najaf, Southern Iraq commander of the Katiba Ahfad al Rasol, gives instructions during a battle in Jobar



Right - Male relatives and comrades pray over the body of As'ad al Saeedi, 38, a Shiite soldier with Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, before he is lowered into the grave at the Wadi al Salaam cemetery in Najaf, Southern Iraq.

Below - Young boys brandish weapons as civilians march in formation during military training to assist the Shiite Militia, the Mahdi Army, which is comprised of volunteers, in Kufa, in Southern Iraq instructions during a battle in Jobar



Top right - Friends and relatives of Mahdi army supporter, Alla Abbas al Rubaiye, 17, weep while Abbas' body is prepared for burial in the holy city of Najaf, Southern Iraq

Above - Muqtada Munzer, 12, stands in front of Shiite Clerics demonstrating with the Mahdi Army in a show of force against ISIS during a nationwide demonstration in Najaf, Southern Iraq.





Top left & bottom right - Shiite volunteers with the Mahdi Army march in a show of force against ISIS during a nationwide demonstration in Najaf, Southern Iraq.

Above - Shiite men and supporters of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani line up to register to fight against ISIS at a gathering in Najaf.

Top right - Shiite tribal men and boys with the Shebil tribe dance around with their weapons during a demonstration calling for a united nationwide inter-sect fight against ISIS in Najaf.

Bottom left - Roughly two thousand Iraqi men who have volunteered to help defend the country and its holy sites are trained at a police academy on the outskirts of Najaf.



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This page - Shiite men and supporters of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani line up to register to fight against ISIS at a gathering in Najaf, Southern Iraq, June 22, 2014. As Iraq descends further into sectarian war, Shiites are taking up arms across the country, and calling on civilians to join the fight against ISIS.

