

The Path to civil sectarian war

A case study with the Greed and Grievances theory

Abstract

This study explains how the escalation of the Iraq War led to a parallel civil sectarian war between Sunni and Shia insurgents during the years 2003-2006. I used the method of process-tracing and the theory Greed and Grievances.

With the theory and method I could conduct the process-tracing and explain how the two independent variables opportunity and objective grievances fueled and enabled the insurgency to grow and divide into sectarian lines. Throughout my process-trace I found two formative events, the disbandment of the Ba'ath party and the Iraqi army which started the Sunni insurgency and Al Qaeda Iraq's killings of Shia Muslims which gave rise to Shia insurgents. I also found that the occupation, inability to reconstruct the Iraqi society and provide security by the Coalition helped to fuel the two insurgency lines as the conflict morphed into a parallel civilian sectarian war.

Key words: Greed, grievances, opportunity, objective grievances, insurgents, Iraq War, civil sectarian war.

Graphical Signs: 69 963

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1 Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, civil war has been the most common type of armed conflicts. The Iraq war started as a conventional war but the conflict escalated to an insurgency based conflict.¹ In 2006 there were 20,000-50,000 Sunni insurgents and 60,000 Shia insurgents in Iraq while 2700-3800 Iraqis died each month. On the 22th of February 2006 insurgents tied to Al Qaeda Iraq (AQI) bombed the Golden Dome Mosque in Samara which caused the conflict to morph into a parallel civil sectarian war between Shia and Sunni religious ethnicities within the Iraq War that ravaged the country for two years.²

Hashim notes that few observers of the post-Iraq invasion expected an insurgency based conflict.³ Still the insurgency did develop, and a civil sectarian war broke out despite the fact that the most powerful military force was responsible for the situation and security. The sectarian violence is still very much notable in Iraq, through the actions of the terrorist group The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). How then, did the war escalate to such extent that a civil sectarian war erupted between the years 2003-2006?

To understand this situation and to explain it in a scientific way with a clear overlooking view, I will use the theory of Greed and Grievances. This theory was developed by Collier and Hoeffler and has been subject to great ovations and is held high within the UK department for international development.⁴ The theory is developed to explain the start of a civil war with the two independent variables *opportunity* and *objective grievances* and the dependent variable *civil war starts*. The theory will be explained in chapter three. Together with this theory, the method of process-tracing will be used.

¹ Coker Christopher, *Ethics and War in the 21st Century*, Routledge, New York, 2008, p 53. Kilcullen David, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, Hurst & CO, London, 2009, p 117, 149-151. Collier Paul, Hoeffler Anke, *Greed and grievance in civil war*, *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, Oxford University Press, 2004, p 563.

² Kilcullen, the Accidental Guerrilla, p. 126, 152. Hughes Geraint, *The Insurgencies in Iraq, 2003-2009*, *Defence Studies*, vol 10, no 1-2, 2010, p. 164. Kaldor Mary, *New and Old Wars*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2012, p 165. Robinson E Glenn, *The Battle of Iraq: Islamic insurgencies in comparative perspective*, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol 28, No 2, 2007, p 270. Neumann R Peter, *Old and New Terrorism*, Polity Press Cambridge, 2009, p 142.

³ Hashim Ahmed S, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, New York, 2006, p 59.

⁴ Keen David, *Greed and grievances in civil war*, *International Affairs*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2012, p 758.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this essay is *to conduct a case study with the method of process-tracing to explain the Iraq war's escalation during the years 2003-2006 which led to a civil sectarian war by applying the Greed and grievances theory.*

In order to do this I will answer the following questions:

- *How did the Iraq war's escalation during the years 2003-2006 lead to a civil sectarian war and how could the Greed and grievances theory help to explain this?*

1.2 Motivation

I believe that a study of conflict with a high level of insurgency which has led to a civilian sectarian war is both relevant to society and science. Kilcullen notes that the Iraq war created a spillover effect of the conflict to neighboring countries.⁵ Today, Iraq is torn by terroristic violence and conflict, most notably conducted by the group ISIS who has its historical roots in the insurgency groups who were active in Iraq during the early years of the Iraq War.⁶ If you understand how a conflict escalates and a civil sectarian war erupts between religious ethnicities inside a war, you could take actions to prevent it. I believe that this could prove helpful for both academics and people who work with conflict prevention.

The reason that I chose Iraq and the years 2003-2006 is the fact that it was during these years that the escalation took place, thus making my choice easy. The reason that I chose 2006 as an end date for my study is that the bombing of the Golden dome Mosque is widely known to have marked the beginning of the civil sectarian war.⁷ Due to limits of this essay I don't find it possible to study more years than 2003-2006 without reduced quality of the essay.

⁵ Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p 184.

⁶ http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/15/world/middleeast/rebels-fast-strike-in-iraq-was-years-in-the-making.html?_r=0 Access 140720.

⁷ Kaldor, p 165, 175-176.

1.3 Limit

In order not to confuse the reader and to stay within the allowed size frame of this essay, the need for a definition is crucial. The Iraq War, the insurgency and the civil sectarian war between Sunni and Shia Muslims could be discussed in the light of an ethical discussion. This would have been interesting but the limit of this essay hinders me to conduct such a discussion. The human rights abuses conducted in the name of the war in Iraq could also be giving much more attention but the size frame is too narrow to be able to conduct such a discussion. Although it would have been interesting, I will not conduct any comparative case studies such as a comparison between the Iraq- and the Afghan insurgency and the violence between different ethnicities in the Afghan War.

In the Iraq war there was a high amount of identifiable insurgency groups, but I will not outline such groups.⁸ Furthermore, I will use the term insurgency consequently, but I will discuss the definitions of the terms terrorist and freedom fighter briefly.

1.4 Material

I have used both primary and secondary material. My primary material consists of the US army and Marine Corps COIN Field manual. I used this in order to get information about the term insurgency. I have used Collier's and Hoeffler's article *Greed and Grievances in Civil War* regarding my theory, as well as Keens article with the same name regarding critique against the theory. When I studied the empirical material I used various articles and literature. The most contributing sources to my empirical material have been Hashim and his work *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq* and various works by Kilcullen. Kilcullen is the author of several books and articles about counterinsurgency and insurgencies, topics that I need to take into account when studying the Iraq War since the insurgents were the main enemy to the Coalition and Iraq as a state. When studying material concerning this topic, the need for a criticism of the sources is crucial since the risk of tendency could prove to be present, especially since both Kilcullen and Hashim has conducted field work within the frame of the Coalition in Iraq. To avoid the risk of tendency I've double checked the facts and compared it with various other sources.⁹

⁸ Coker, p 101.

⁹ Thurén Torsten, *Sant eller falskt? Metoder i källkritik*, Kbm:s utbildning serie 2003:7, p 21. Esaiasson Peter, and others, *Metodpraktikan: konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad*, Norstedts juridik, Stockholm, 2007, p 321-322.

2 Terminology

2.1 Civil Sectarian War

According to Fearon, professor at the University of Berkeley, “A civil war is a violent conflict within a country fought by organized groups that aim to take power at the center or in a region, or to change government policies”.¹⁰ A second criterion is that there need to be at least 1000 combat related deaths per year of which at least 5 % are from government forces and an identifiable rebel group.¹¹

There is no full consensus to the label civil war inside the Iraq War. The Bush administration defied this label in 2006, but according to Fearon the violence between Shia and Sunni Muslims fits the label for civil war because of the high level of sectarian violence between armed groups with ties to the Iraqi government and the power struggle between such groups. According to Fearon the reason of the Bush administration’s defiance to the label is the semantic failure it would mean to the US engagement in Iraq. Hughes, Kaldor, Kilcullen, Keen and Neumann note that a civil sectarian war was a reality in 2006. Since the civil war in Iraq contained sectarian violence it’s commonly labeled “sectarian”. Furthermore, Keen notes that the civil war was a parallel with the “real” war.¹²

2.2 Insurgency

Insurgency is an umbrella term, meaning an organizational movement that wages a political struggle with the intent to overthrow a regime, occupying force or government with armed conflict and subversion. Insurgents throughout history have been called revolutionaries, terrorists, rebels, militias and freedom fighters. Irrespective of the term used, the same type of strategy is used, namely irregular warfare or in a more recognizable term – guerrilla warfare.¹³ Insurgencies rely on

¹⁰ <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/62443/james-d-fearon/iraqs-civil-war> Access 140811

¹¹ Collier, p 565.

¹² Kaldor, p 165. Keen, p 270. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/62443/james-d-fearon/iraqs-civil-war> Access 140811 http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/26/world/africa/26iht-civil.3675083.html?_r=0 Access 140811 Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p 147, 152. Hughes Geraint, *The Insurgencies in Iraq, 2003-2009*, Defence Studies, vol 10, no 1-2, 2010, p 152. Neumann, p 142.

¹³ Headquarters Department of Army, *Field Manual no. 3-24, Marine Corps War fighting Publication no. 3-33,5*, Washington, 2006, p 1-1.

local populations, often with socio-economic problems, repression from the regime in question and other grievances that can be used as sympathy and support for the insurgency's cause.¹⁴ Many insurgencies grow and recruit from pre-existing social networks, e.g. family, tribes, villages, political parties or religious attribute.¹⁵

Insurgencies are often concealed within an area with a high population or, as many of the modern insurgencies of today, in urban areas with no center of gravity and with an unclear hierarchy thus making it hard to counter them with regular methods.¹⁶ The term insurgency is not to be confused with the term terrorism, although modern insurgency tends to follow similar development as the current "new terrorism" does. Neumann notes that the structure of today's terrorism lacks a center of gravity with an unclear hierarchy which is a common theme with modern insurgencies.¹⁷ Not all insurgents are terrorists, but some use terrorism as a mean to achieve their goals.¹⁸ The biggest difference between insurgency and terrorism is that insurgencies often have a clear political goal and intentions to control land or resources while "new" terrorists don't strive to do this.¹⁹

The term insurgent could be viewed as a negative political definition of freedom fighters. However, I believe that the term insurgency is the least non-politicized term simply because it's an umbrella term and could mean rebel, revolutionist, terrorist or freedom fighter.²⁰

¹⁴ Field manual, p 1:1. Kilcullen, *Counter Insurgency*, p 6-10. Hashim, p. xvii-xx. Kaldor, p. 9.

¹⁵ Kilcullen David, *Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency*, US Government Counterinsurgency Conference, Washington, 2006, p 2 Coker, p 95-97.

¹⁶ Coker, p 101.

¹⁷ Neumann, p 18-19.

¹⁸ Hashim, p. xviii-xx.

¹⁹ Pirnie R Bruce, O'Connell Edward, *Counterinsurgency in Iraq 2003-2006*, Rand Corporation, 2008, p 25. Kilcullen, *Counter Insurgency*, p 1-8. Hashim, p. xvii-xix.

²⁰ Kilcullen, *Counter Insurgency*, p 1-2.

3 Theoretical Approach

3.1 Greed and grievances

The theory of Greed and grievance in civil war was developed by Collier and Hoeffler in 2004. As civil war has been the most viable type of conflict since the ending of the Cold war, Collier and Hoeffler developed an econometric model which tends to explain the outbreaks of rebellion and civil war.²¹ Their study was conducted on data from 79 large civil conflicts dating from 1960 to 1999 with a quantitative method which according to me gives their study and measurable variables a high external validity. Since I only study one case I will not do a quantitative study but a qualitative study using Collier's and Hoeffler's independent variables greed and grievances and their dependent variable civil war start.²²

Collier and Hoeffler takes the classic understanding of causes to rebellion and civil war (the notion that motive alone would be a sufficient cause when grievances are high and leads to civil war) to a deeper understanding with the notion that economic opportunity together with motive generated from grievances provides causes to civil war. They try both variables for themselves with quantitative data and then use both the variables and conclude that they have a stronger explanation value unified.²³

Collier and Hoeffler motivate their choice to bring in economic factors in their study and development of their model with reference to Grossmans work. Grossman notes that rebellions generate profit and make insurgents indistinguishable from bandits or pirates, hence rebellions create profitable opportunities.²⁴ The authors name the greed variable opportunity and develop two distinct factors, each with several indicators.²⁵ These will be outlined below.

Collier and Hoeffler also take Hirshleifer's work regarding perceptions in civil war outbreaks in consideration. Hirshleifer notes that causes of civil war could be wrongly perceived. However, if the causes were misperceived, the opportunity

²¹ Collier, p 563-564.

²² Ibid, p 563, 572.

²³ Ibid, p 563-565, 577.

²⁴ Ibid, p 564.

²⁵ Ibid, p 564-565.

and grievances that follows the civil war outbreak ought to be real and could generate genuine grievances and economic opportunities.²⁶

As all societies have some degree of grievances and since this is a term that could be viewed as subjective, Collier and Hoeffler uses four objective factors for the variable grievances which they name *objective grievances*. They only use factors that are known to cause conflict and civil war.²⁷ They use various data and scales in order to measure grievances. However, the opportunity factors have a more explanatory value, but as they conduct a quantitative search, that is not strange. It's hard to measure grievances since it's feelings and is difficult to measure in numbers.²⁸ A qualitative deductive search with might therefore suit the variable objective grievances better as I will delve deeper into relevant empirical facts than if I had used a quantitative approach. I will therefore take both variables into account. This will hopefully give me a more explanatory power regarding the objective grievances variable.²⁹

Collier's book *The Bottom Billion* is based on the theory of greed and grievances, among others, and it states that that the theory can't predict a civil war outbreak. In other words, there are no magic numbers regarding the different factors which tells when a civil war erupts. The variables and their inherent factors are prominent to be underlying structures that causes civil war but exactly when that happen, depends on the specific country and events in that country.³⁰

3.1.1 Opportunity

The first factor within the variable Opportunity is the *opportunity for financing rebellion*. Without finance it ought to be hard to conduct a long lasting rebellion and rebellion that do last over a longer period of time with funds that cover the rebellions expense's, tend to erupt in civil wars. Indicators for this factor are: extortion of natural resources, donations from diasporas and subventions from hostile governments.³¹

Extortion of natural resources

Extortion of natural resources could be a substantial income for rebel groups or for a government who disperse their income to chosen parts of the society, leaving others aside which could be a factor for civil war eruption. Collier and Hoeffler

²⁶ Collier, p 564.

²⁷ Ibid, p 564-565, 570-571.

²⁸ Ibid, p 563, 565, 571, 588.

²⁹ Teorell Jan, Svensson Torsten, *Att fråga och att svara, Författarna och Liber AB, Korotan Ljubljana, 2007, p 11.*

³⁰ Collier Paul, *The Bottom Billion, Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2008, p 17-23, 197.

³¹ Collier, p 565.

didn't find any particular decrease or increase in the natural resources Gross domestic product (GPD) index in their study. They did however find a big difference in the dispersion of the natural resources which points to corruption, poor public service provision or economic mismanagement. If a government conducts poor governance or a rebel group seizes natural resource production and disperses the income poorly, the risk for civil war increases.³²

When I conduct my process-trace I will look for signs in the empirical evidence regarding corruption, poor public service provision and economic mismanagement. Since Iraq has large quantities of oil resources, this should be the first place to look for evidence. However, I believe that it's important to look for other recourses of income, such as drugs and weapon smuggling in order not to hinder my analysis and have an open mind to the empirical evidence. Weapon smuggling for example could generate a substantial aid for rebel groups, both in funds and actual arms for their fighters.

Donations from diasporas

Donations from diasporas have not been the sole factor to explain the start of a civil war but they have an ability to prolong and renew a civil war. This is a crucial factor to take into account since donations help rebels to pay for their costs in or before the civil war.³³ When I begin my process-tracing I will investigate if there are any substantial donations from diasporas and if they can be traced to bigger organizations or countries.

Subvention from hostile governments

Subventions from hostile governments are a strong factor considering finance for rebels. Arms, education and funds that flow into favored groups in the country or region in question help such groups. This phenomenon was common during the Cold war when the two super powers aided several rebel groups in a great number of conflicts.³⁴

I will investigate in this factor in the same manner as "donations from diasporas". Since the Iraq War happened after the initiation of the War on terror and in an era of the globalization, this indicator might look different in the Iraq War scenery. Due to fear of exposure from the agents of the War on terror, subventions from hostile governments could be veiled in more secrecy, thus become harder to find. If this hypothesis from my part proves to be true, demands on criticism of the sources become very important.

³² Collier, p 565-567.

³³ Ibid, p 568, 588.

³⁴ Ibid, p 569.

The second factor in the variable opportunity is *atypical low cost*. Low costs could affect countries or regions in negative manner regarding the initiation of a civil war. Indicators for atypical low cost are: mean income per capita, male secondary school enrollment, growth rate of the economy, cheap conflict-specific material and a weak government military capability.³⁵

Mean income per capita

This indicator relates to the ability for rebel groups to give enough payment to their enlisted fighters. Collier and Hoeffler mention that desertion could be a potential problem if their pay is lower than “normal” jobs or if they can’t provide their families or themselves.

This indicator is problematic since many characteristics correlate with it. The mean income per capita index could be interpreted differently or not at all if you don’t know how much the specific rebel group is paying their enlisted fighters.³⁶ I will search for empirical evidence regarding desertion in order to be able to use this indicator. If there are a high number of deserters, the mean income per capita to the enlisted fighters ought to be low or vice versa. The reason that I choose to search for desertions is that I believe that a search for exact sums in payment to rebels could be hard to find.

Male secondary school enrollment

The greed and grievances theory state that young uneducated males are most prominent as recruits to rebel groups. If there is a large population consisting of young and uneducated males, the recruitment pool becomes larger and the costs lower as the supply becomes greater in relation to the demand.³⁷ To find this indicator I will search the empirical evidence for unemployment in Iraq during my stated years.

³⁵ Collier, p 569.

³⁶ Ibid, p 569.

³⁷ Ibid, p 569, 588.

Growth rate of the economy

The growth rate of a country's economy correlates with the risk for civil war. The lower the rate, the higher the risk for unconstitutional political change and thereby civil war. A low growth rate could also correlate with objective grievances but this will be outlined under the next chapter.³⁸ To succeed to investigate this indicator I will follow Iraq's GDP look for decreases. Even if Collier and Hoeffler didn't find any specific decrease or increase, I feel that I must be consistent with the theory and look for the GDP and see if it decreases or increases.

Conflict-specific capital and weak government military capability

If military equipment, such as weapons and explosives are cheap, the initiation of a civil war becomes cheaper and thereby the risk increases. The risk is greater if the government has a bad military capability and is not educated or equipped to sustain threats from rebels. Collier and Hoeffler take the geography into account since it correlates with the military capability. If the populations are dispersed in a wide area it becomes harder for the government forces to control them and maintain order which increases the risk for civil war.³⁹ To identify this indicator I will search the empirical evidence for how the access to military equipment was and how the government and the Coalition (since they were in charge of the security apparatus plus the government military forces) managed to meet the threat from the insurgency.

3.1.2 Objective grievances

There are four factors to consider in objective grievances: ethnic or religious hatred, political repression, political exclusion and economic inequality, all recognized to motivate and contribute to conflicts and civil war.⁴⁰ As I mentioned, these factors are hard to measure in numbers. If there are religious hatreds among a population, they are there for various reasons but you can't really measure how big the hatreds are in a number alone. What you can measure is how these hatreds affect the given situation and look for correlations in regards of the factors studied. For example; are there any violent acts based on ethnic or religious hatreds or could political exclusion contribute to uprisings, the rebellion's size and disorder.

³⁸ Collier, p 565-567, 569.

³⁹ Ibid, p 569-570, 588.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p 565, 570.

Ethnic or religious hatred

Ethnic or religious hatreds are according to Collier and Hoeffler widely perceived as a cause for grievances and civil war. They occur in societies that are multi-ethnic or multi-religious and are a result of polarization. If an ethnic group is dominant in percentage, above 45 % in a country, the risk for civil war increases.⁴¹ I will look for evidence regarding ethnic or religious hatreds and if it exists see how they contribute to the conflict.

Political repression

Political repression often differs between peace and conflict episodes, with a higher level during conflicts. Repression increases the chance for civil war although if there is a severe repression, it tends to decrease conflicts but exactly how much is left untold by Collier and Hoeffler.⁴² I will search the empirical evidence for signs of political repression and if it exists, what the result of it is.

Political exclusion

Political exclusion could also give rise to grievances especially if there is a clear ethnic majority who constitutes as a minority in the society as the extraction possibilities are higher in terms of funds. Collier and Hoeffler name this particular situation *ethnic dominance*. The situation in Iraq during Saddam Hussein's reign is a good example of an ethnic dominance as the Shia Muslims constituted as a minority despite the fact that they were a clear majority in percentage of the total population (60 %).⁴³ When I search for this factor I will see if there was any political exclusion and what this contributed to the conflict.

Economic inequality

Economic inequality is the last factor for the variable objective grievances. The authors note that the relationship between inequality and rebellion is closely tied together. If parts Rebellions to incite redistribution of income, violent acts to stop distribution against minorities from governments or rich regions that back rebellions to preempt redistribution are examples of how grievances could erupt from economic inequality.⁴⁴ To identify this factor I will search the empirical evidence for a clear and visible economic inequality in areas such as parts of cities and between ethnicities. Attacks against profitable industries and hostile takeovers are also patterns that I will search for since this could lead to economic inequality.

⁴¹ Collier, p 571, 581-582.

⁴² Ibid, p 571.

⁴³ Ibid, p 571-572, Hashim, p 230.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p 572.

3.2 Critique

Keen, professor at London School of Economics and Political Science, criticizes Collier on several points in his article Greed and grievance in civil war. The main critique is directed against Colliers work based on the greed and grievances theory, including *The Bottom Billion*, and his approach to grievances as a motive for rebellion and civil war.⁴⁵ As Collier uses his theory of greed and grievances this critique could be viewed against Colliers and Hoefflers theory. Even if Collier and Hoeffler concludes that the variable opportunity have a more explanatory power quantitatively, a danger persists if you ignore the variable objective grievances in future studies and work. Keen notes that grievances played a key role in the re-ignition of the civil war in Sierra Leone, when bitter soldiers staged a coup d'état after the rapid downsizing of the Sierra Leonean military.⁴⁶ Keen means that Colliers and Hoefflers approach to objective grievances tend to erupt in sweeping conclusion about grievances which could lead to misunderstandings. Such potential misunderstandings could lead to severe miscalculations in peace agreements according to Keen.⁴⁷ Keen also refers to Stewart, who finds that greed often interacts with grievances in complex ways and that they both stem from each other. Stewart emphasizes that it is crucial to understand how these variables interact, since both variables are needed.⁴⁸ I will take this critique into consideration in my analysis.

3.2.1 Motivation to the usage of the theory

The reason I chose this theory is that the two independent variables cover a wide range of factors and indicators which I think will be enough to explain the eruption of the civil sectarian war. Even if the theory isn't intended to explain an escalation in specific, an escalation with low and high intensity of the two independent variables ought to take place within a region or a country who are heading to civil war. As I will use this theory in a qualitative manner, it could be viewed that my ambition is to try this theory on my chosen case; however my case is in the center of this essay and thereby will this essay rather be a theory consuming case study.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Keen, p 757.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p 763.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p 769-771.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p 757-758, 770-771.

⁴⁹ Esaiasson Peter, and others, *Metodpraktikan: konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad*, Norstedts juridik, Stockholm, 2007, p 42-43.

4 Methodological Approach

4.1 Process-Tracing

In order to answer my stated questions I have used the method of process-tracing. Hall recognizes that process-tracing is especially good for testing or using theories marked by multiple interaction effects and where the outcome is hard to explain with a few variables. Greed and grievances theory may only contain two independent variables but the factors and indicators contributing to these variables are more.⁵⁰ The many factors and indicators for the two independent variables ought to help me to reach a higher internal validity as they cover both social and economic areas. This also ought to make it easier to not conduct any measurement errors. The method is also of good use when the specific outcome is known but not how and why it happened. Process-tracing is also a good tool to find so-called path dependencies, formative events of great importance that often sets the path for the future process.⁵¹

Process-tracing is well-suited when it comes to finding causal connections and it's an effective tool if the theory used can give you a hypothesis, preconditions for the process studied or the causal mechanism.⁵² Process-tracing allow you to do multiple observations within the empirical evidence and identify your independent variables; follow their causal chain and mechanism within the stated investigation and the chosen dependent variable's outcome.⁵³

Process-tracing can take several forms depending on what you study. If it's a linear casual chain that is studied you identify certain events that lead to a phenomenon in a simplistic scheme. If you study a more complex phenomenon with interacting variables you need to do empirical observations and identify the interconnections, the causal mechanism and their effects. You begin your process-tracing with a chosen starting point, which in my case is the Iraq war 2003 after the proclaimed victory. The end of the process-tracing is your dependent variables outcome, a specific event or a chosen year which in my case is the event of the Samara bombing in 2006 – the start of the civil sectarian war.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ George .L Alexander, Bennett Andrew, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Cambridge, 2005, p 205-207.

⁵¹ Esaiasson, p 63-66, 144-145.

⁵² Bennett, p 209-210.

⁵³ Ibid, p 206-207.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p206-207, 210-212.

Since I only look at one case this study is a single case study. The study would have a higher external validity if I compared two cases but a single case study can reach a high internal validity and if you stay open for various explanations in regards of your purpose and question which increase the chance for a high internal validity.⁵⁵

4.2 Operationalization

When I use greed and grievances theory I will use the two variables opportunity and objective grievances as my two independent variables. With my two independent variables I have the appurtenant factors and indicators that I mentioned in chapter three to search for when I do my empirical observations, identify the interconnection and causal mechanisms with deductive research identification. I will follow my independent variables' process through my stated years which hopefully will help to explain how and why the Iraq War escalated and the civil sectarian war erupted. I will measure the intensity in my two independent variables in terms of active *insurgents* and *daily insurgent attacks*.

The reason that I choose to measure the intensity in my independent variables in this way is that an escalation in insurgencies ought to precede the actual outbreak of the civil sectarian war. As the independent variables are causes to civil war, their indicators ought to be present and give rise to insurgencies which in their turn could give rise to civil war. To be sure that they actually do, I feel the need to measure this since I've an ambition to explain how the Iraq wars escalation led to a civil sectarian war. I need proof of an increased intensity and a clear link that the indicators for my independent variables actually lead to the civil sectarian war.

My dependent variable will be the start of the *civil sectarian war*. The reason I choose this dependent variable is due to the fact that Collier and Hoeffler uses it in their theory. The usage of a different dependent variable would be inconsistent. It would also hinder my purpose and the use of my method since you know your outcome or what you want to explain when using process-tracing. Even if I know the start of the civil war beforehand, a measure of my dependent variable needs to be clarified since I don't know the empirical evidence and the process before the outbreak of the civil sectarian war. Collier and Hoeffler use the standard definition of civil war, at least 1000 combat related deaths per year of which 5 % are from government forces and an identifiable rebel group.⁵⁶ I however, cannot use the standard definition in my study since I want to explain a civil sectarian

⁵⁵ Collier, p.220-221.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p 565.

war inside a war. The death numbers in the Iraq war ought to exceed the standard set rather quickly. I will instead use the first criteria of a civil wars existence; *when organized groups uses violent means that aim to take power at the center or in a region, or to change government policies.*

My pre-understanding of the Iraq war could hamper my empirical analysis. If I only look for evidence in regards of my factors in my process-trace there is a risk that I miss other important factors that was a result from interaction between the variables opportunity and objective grievances. Thus, I need to be open for other factors in order to keep my process-trace free from systematic measurement errors.⁵⁷ If I can't find any additional factors, Collier and Hoeffler will have proven to be right in their choice of factors.⁵⁸ This will also increase the chance for high internal validity of my result.⁵⁹ I don't aim for any external validity with this study; however, if the same study is conducted on similar cases, a higher external validity could be achieved.

⁵⁷ Esaiasson, p 23-24, 148-149. Bennett, p 221.

⁵⁸ Bennett, p 220-221.

⁵⁹ Teorell, p 57, 248-250. Esaiasson, p 23-25.

5 The Path to Civil Sectarian War

5.1 The Foundation 2003

After the invasion and proclaimed victory, the US and its allies (the Coalition) stood before an enormous task. Iraq was in ruins and the Iraqi army with approximately 100 000 members were defeated and Iraq's people awaited the proclaimed liberation. The Coalition consisted of 150 000 troops despite pre-estimates that the invasion and after match would require up to 500 000. The situation were however still manageable and many Iraqis still held some expectations that the Coalition were to succeed with their liberation from Hussein's reign and restore order. However, according to Mumford, political discussions about post-war reconstruction only took place days before the invasion and there was a chronic lack of inter-agency co-operation. The US government also showed reluctance to use the military for peacekeeping efforts and reconstruction.⁶⁰

Large parts of the Iraqi people welcomed the chance for change but the lack of a reconstruction plan together with insufficient number of troops created opportunity and space for severe looting and public disorder.⁶¹ This affected an already fragile socio-economic situation which became worse than before the invasion. *Unemployment*, electric and water distribution problems due to *poor public service* and *economic mismanagement* due to lack of a solid reconstruction plan, worsened the situation further.⁶² This takes two of the factors that I mentioned before into account. Even if the looting that took place was not of a specific natural resource it could be interpreted as *extortion of resources* and a *weak military capability* as the US troops, due to their limited number, didn't succeed to stop the looting which gave greed a chance. This point directly to the factors *opportunity for financing rebellion and atypical low costs*.

The reconstruction work of the Iraqi society that took place was directed under the American Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) with Paul Bremer as the director.⁶³ In May 2003 The CPA decided to disband the Iraqi army and the

⁶⁰ Mumford, p 187. Kaldor, p. 159.

⁶¹ Hughes, p 158.

⁶² Hashim, p 19. Pirnie R Bruce, O'Connell Edward, Counterinsurgency in Iraq 2003-2006, Rand Corporation, 2008, p 9.

⁶³ Hughes, p 158-159. Kaldor, p 161. Hashim, p 17-18.

political Ba'ath party.⁶⁴ Not only was this a great insult to the Sunni members of the Ba'ath party, they also possessed the skills in local politics since they had governed Iraq the last thirty years. Now they stood on the outside, *unemployed* with military and political skills, with vast assets to arms and ammunition in a ruined society.⁶⁵ *Conflict specific capital* and indicators for *mean per income* was now a reality in the after match of the American invasion.

The bulk of the Ba'ath party and the Iraqi army consisted of Sunni Muslims which had a powerful position during the era of Hussein despite the fact that the Sunnis are a clear minority in Iraq, approximately 20 % of the total population.

The population in Iraq has historically been divided into different tribes and ethnic groups. There are over 350 tribes in the Iraq which forms an important political structure. Tribe, nationality and religious identity plays an important role. There is also competition over influence and economics between the different tribes and during Hussein's reign the Sunni population was in absolute favor despite their minority to the larger Shia population.⁶⁶

In July 2003 the CPA hand elected the new Iraqi Interim Council (IGC) who was to work with the CPA, consisting mostly of Shia Muslims. Many members of the IGC were former exiles with no political connections and unfamiliar faces to the local Iraqi population which fueled resentment among the Sunni population.⁶⁷ The Coalition forces became occupiers instead of liberators in the eyes of large parts of the Sunni population and the former members of the Ba'ath party and Iraqi army, giving rise to the *objective grievances* variable as *political exclusion* became a reality for the Sunni population.⁶⁸

Both independent variables were now active in post-conflict Iraq. The insurgency started in the summer of 2003 as a result of the decision to disband the Iraqi army and Ba'ath party together with the inauguration of the IGC. Many of the insurgents and the different insurgent groups derived from the newly disbanded army were of Sunni ethnicity, Ba'ath party members and Sunni tribes who saw their economic position fade away when the Sunni Patronage disappeared. Tribal and national honor did also matter as the Sunni patronage found themselves victims of US arrest raids and questioning, especially arrest of tribal sheiks who held a distinguish position in the Iraq tribal system which resulted in *ethnic hatreds* against American forces. It's also evident that *conflict specific capital* and *a weak government military capability* played a key role in the start of the insurgency, as the bulk of it consisted of ex-army officers and *young unemployed males*, ex-soldiers and Ba'ath party members.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Kaldor, p 158. Hughes, p 158-159. Hashim, p 92. Pirnie, p 12.

⁶⁵ Kaldor, p 160-161. Hughes, p 159. Hashim, p 18-19, 27-28, 67-70. Pirnie, p 9.

⁶⁶ Hughes, p 155-158. Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p. 154-155. Hashim, p 66-68.

⁶⁷ Kaldor, p 160. Hughes, p. 159-160. Hashim, p 17-19, 31, 74-76.

⁶⁸ Mumford, p 187.

⁶⁹ Hughes, p 159. Kaldor, p 161. Hashim, p. 12, 27-29. Pirnie, p 59.

Opportunity for financing rebellion and *atypical low costs* thus created a situation where the initiation for an insurgency became easier and when *political exclusion* and *ethnic hatreds* started, the Sunni insurgency took root. Hence, the start of the insurgency and the start of the escalation of the Iraq War were a result of an interaction between the two independent variables *opportunity* and *objective grievances*.⁷⁰

The insurgency in Iraq was not expansive at first, however, Hashim notes that the security situation continued to deteriorate during the following months. In the fall of 2003 there was an estimated calculation of at least 5000 active Sunni insurgents and an average of 20 insurgency attacks a day.⁷¹

The two independent variables continued to interact during the fall which explains the worsened situation in the fall of 2003. Insurgents began to attack high value targets, such as socio-economic elements and foreign NGOs. Many of the NGOs left Iraq since the attacks made it too dangerous for them to stay and made the reconstruction more difficult.⁷² This affected the chance for a stable reconstruction phase while the CPA continued to show non-improvement in their governing ability. This created a lost momentum in the conflict and gave insurgents a chance to foster.⁷³ The *unemployment* was still high, peaking at 29,9 % together with a loss in -33,1 % in the *GDP* which indicates that *atypical low costs* still were a reality.⁷⁴

During the same period the attacks from the growing insurgency was met by aggressive warfare. Search and kill/capture operations and cordons became a standard operating procedure for the Coalition.⁷⁵ Civilian deaths in checkpoints, miss-guided air strikes further fueled *ethnic hatreds* among the Iraqi population which worked as a motivator to the insurgency.⁷⁶ US officials still held a positive view of the situation and kept their hopes to the ICG. US forces also managed to kill Hussein's two sons which US officials thought would hinder the insurgents will to fight. Their deaths instead proved to be a catalyst for more *ethnic hatreds* against Coalition forces and in turn made more Iraqis to insurgents.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ Pirnie, p 25-28.

⁷¹ Hashim, p 12, 31-33. Robinson, p 270. Pirnie, p 9, 26.

⁷² Hashim, p 31-33. Kilcullen *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p. 31.

⁷³ Hughes, p 159.

⁷⁴ <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx?isshared=true> Access 140814

<http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx?isshared=true> Access 140814

⁷⁵ A cordon is a military term and tactic which intends to box in an area to get full temporary control.

⁷⁶ Hughes, 159-160, Kaldor, p 166-168.

⁷⁷ Hashim, p 31. Robinson, p 271.

5.2 A Slippery Road Down Hill 2003-2004

Most insurgency groups were of Sunni ethnicity and had two overarching goals: to expel the US forces from Iraq and end the occupation and take back their former political and economic position.⁷⁸ This goal point to the fact that a civil sectarian war between Sunni and Shia Muslims was not yet at hand. On top of the insurgency, high activities of criminal gangs began to erupt as a result of the chance to *extort natural* resources. Looting and oil smuggling by criminal gangs began in the fall of 2003 and contributed with substantial funds to the insurgents. The criminal gangs also took part in drug trade, arms sales and kidnappings. The gangs supported various insurgency groups with foot soldiers, arms and funds. Many gangs also had relationships with tribes around the Iraqi border which made it easier to smuggle goods to the neighboring countries.⁷⁹ Wide spread *corruption* within the newly established police force left the criminal activity to be able to ravage the country mainly uninterrupted.⁸⁰ This evidently point to the factor *extortion of natural resources* both in regards of corruption and the illegal trade. As insurgencies need to have funds of various sort to be able to conduct their activities, this became an important factor for the insurgencies continued growth.

US intelligence estimates tells that the payment to conduct an attack against Coalition forces were USD 100 and USD 500 if the attack was successful at the start of the insurgency. In the fall of 2003 this sum had increased to USD 1000-2000 per attack and USD 5000 if the attack was successful.⁸¹ This point to the fact that more resources where extracted hence, *opportunity for financing rebellions* now included *smuggling* and *corruption*.

The smuggling across the border countries to Iraq raises the question if *subventions from hostile governments* were presence. Hashim notes that the US warned both Syria and Iran not to help the insurgents in Iraq but believes that it's safe to assume that covert support to the insurgency was at hand. As dubious this empirical evidence could look, Pirnie recognizes that the Iraqi border police was ill-equipped and under staffed, leaving large parts of the Iraqi border unguarded. This rather points to *weak government military capability*. Nonetheless, the smuggling contributed with funds to the insurgents, the factor atypical low costs thus made it easier to *extort resources*.⁸²

Iraqis who worked for the Coalition and within economic infrastructure such as oilfields, the new Iraqi army, police force and Iraqi Officials within IGC became targets to the insurgents during the late 2003 and continuously in 2004. This

⁷⁸ Pirnie, p 21. Hashim, p 65-69.

⁷⁹ Pirnie, p 32. Kaldor, p 172-173. Hashim, p 197-199.

⁸⁰ Pirnie, p 2. Hashim, p 169-170.

⁸¹ Hoffman Bruce, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, Rand Corporation, June 2004, p 12.

⁸² Hashim, p 35, 135-138, 193-196. Pirnie, p 50-51.

further hampered the reconstruction and a viable chance for recovery for the Iraqi society and raised increasing difficulties in the socio-economic sphere. This created more chances to attract recruits for the insurgents as *unemployment* still was large.⁸³ This led to *economic inequality* as violent attacks, aiming to hinder distribution of resources from oil fields, were evident with the attacks on economic infrastructure. An interaction between the two interdependent variables thus becomes visible again and yet again the first activity was in the independent variable *opportunity* which then led to *objective grievances*.

Despite the persistent failed reconstruction of Iraq, Coalition forces continued their aggressive warfare in 2004. In turn many attacks against Coalition forces conducted by the insurgents included IED attacks and quick ambushes. This often resulted in civilian deaths when the Coalition forces engaged back since the more agile and less heavily equipped insurgents could move faster and simply disappeared, but the civilian population often didn't have time to flee.⁸⁴ Civilian deaths often gave rise to *ethnic hatreds* since the civilian casualties' dependents had a culture of honour and revenge, thus civilian deaths gave rise to new insurgent.

In 2004 many of the Coalition forces stayed inside their bases outside towns or villages. This alienated them since they didn't show themselves on a regular basis. More armor and heavier guns due to refined development in insurgency methods, especially the IEDs, created alienation to the population.⁸⁵ An example of an alienating conduct is the Coalitions counter measures against vehicle borne IEDs.⁸⁶ The Coalition kept a distance against Iraq traffic and fired at vehicles that came to close even if they didn't constitute as a threat.⁸⁷ This behavior fits in into *political repression*.

To fire at civilian vehicles, regardless of threat and who is behind the steering wheel and in the passenger seat, is in my opinion a repressive conduct. Even if Coalition forces didn't enjoy any political power, they were closely associated with the IGC and CPA. This in turn increased *ethnic hatreds* against the Coalition.⁸⁸

⁸³ Hashim, p 35, 197-199. Hughes, p 166. Pirnie, p 28.

⁸⁴ Robinson, p 271.

⁸⁵ Kaldor, p 166-168. Pirnie, p 37, 45-46. Kilcullen, *the Accidental Guerrilla*, p 136.

⁸⁶ Vehicle borne IEDs is a vehicle loaded with explosives which you set off close to your target.

⁸⁷ Pirnie, p 44-45.

⁸⁸ Hoffman, p 4.

5.2.1 Foreign Insurgents

Parts of the insurgents in Iraq were foreign Jihadists and derived from various Islamic countries. Many were non-experienced fighters who sought Jihad, others were experienced terrorists and many received military training from the *political excluded* ex-army officers and Ba'ath party members. Despite the fact that the majority of insurgents were Iraqi nationals, the foreign insurgents played a big role in leadership, propaganda and radicalization regarding methods used in attacks.⁸⁹

Many of the foreign insurgents came to Iraq with the intention to fight their Jihad due to *ethnic hatreds* against the US presence which they saw as a *political repression* against Muslims. Clear evidence on foreign insurgents is Al Qaeda presence in Iraq 2004. There is no reliable evidence that Al Qaeda existed in Iraq before the invasion, however, in 2004 it was clear that they did.⁹⁰ The group Jamaat al-Tawhid wa'al Jihad was a foreign insurgent group led militant Sunni extremist Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. Originally from Jordan, Zarqawi had been in radical Islamic companies since the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. It's unclear when Zarqawi entered Iraq but he took responsibility of various attacks from 2004 and thereafter.⁹¹

Zarqawi incited killings on the Shia population in Iraq and pledged allegiance to Osama Bin Ladin and Al Qaeda on 17 October 2004.⁹² Severe atrocities – beheadings, suicide attacks, attacks against public places, such as markets and Shia religious monuments were exercised to start a sectarian conflict between the Sunni and Shia population, which he hoped would render the Coalitions attempt to rebuild Iraq and ultimately create a war against Sunni and Shia Muslims around the world. Zarqawi justified his action on grounds which mainly could be traced to the factor *religious hatreds*. He viewed the Shia Muslims as non-Muslims as they had strayed away from the true Sunni Muslim beliefs but also on the fact that most of the security forces and political power in Iraq were held by Shia Muslims due to the *political exclusion* in 2003.

As the CPA was dissolved on 28 June 2004 and the political power was handed over to the interim government, which was to hold democratic elections in January 2005, Zarqawi planned to disrupt this election.⁹³ AQIs actions and plans played a big part in the increasing violence during the year of 2004 and the actions conducted by him and his allied affected an already volatile situation.

Due to the *weak government military capability*, Coalition- and local security forces couldn't provide enough security for the Shia Muslims who became

⁸⁹ Pirnie, p 30. Hashim, p. 138-141, 149-151. Kilcullen, *the Accidental Guerrilla*, p 171.

⁹⁰ Kaldor, p 162.

⁹¹ Hashim, p 47, 142-143. Pirnie, p 30.

⁹² Hashim, p 143-144.

⁹³ Hashim, p 47, 181-182. Hughes, p 166. Neumann, p 27. Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p 172-173. Pirnie, p 45.

exposed to the new sectarian violence. Parts of the Shia population took matters in their own hands and the Madhi army emerged as an alternative community service for parts of the Shia population. The Madhi army had existed during the era of Hussein and worked as an anti-pole against the Ba'ath party in the Shia slums. The Madhi Army was led by Moqtada al-Sadr and was believed to have 10 000 insurgents under his command.⁹⁴

Not only did the Madhi Army contribute to the insurgency, they also began to infiltrate the political sphere and local security forces in order to get control over oil revenues.⁹⁵ Infiltration by Shia insurgents to the security forces and political sphere contributed with insights in Coalition tactics and protection, which led to refined developments of the attacks.⁹⁶ Even if this isn't strictly *extortion of natural recourses*, it indicates *corruption* as the extract of viable information could be used for their own benefits in combat which according to me is a substantial resource.

The growing corruption is evident with the fact that it was mainly, with a few exceptions, Sunni insurgents that were attacked by Coalition forces which entrenched the motivator political *exclusion* in the eyes of Sunni Muslims.

Due to *the weak military government capability*, Sunni tribes were also affected by AQI's violence. They were forced to pledge obedience to AQI since they, due to the absent Coalition forces, controlled the power through intimidation and grim violent attacks on those who refused to cooperate with them. While many of the local Sunni insurgents had relied on foreign insurgents to conduct more extreme attacks, such as suicide attacks, AQI turned the relationship over and used the Sunni insurgents as cover and support. A good example of support is that AQI took over parts of the *extortion of recourses* as a result when the Sunni smuggling operations was in AQIs hands.⁹⁷ This helps to explain AQIs ability to be able to remain operative within the Iraq War.

However, AQIs ability to sustain their attacks against both Coalition forces as well as the Shia population is not entirely based on the *extortion of resources* or AQIs willingness to conduct violent attacks and intimidate the local Sunni insurgents in order to gain power. Throughout the year of 2004 large cities in Iraq saw severe fighting between insurgents and Coalition forces as well as killings of government officials, NGOs and people who worked for the Coalition which further hampered the reconstruction and a chance for socio-economic improvement.⁹⁸ In November 2004 the city Fallujah was assaulted by the Coalition and the new Iraqi army. Thousands of Iraqi civilian and insurgents died which fueled further *ethnic hatreds* against the Coalitions. The soldiers in the Iraqi army who were used in this battle were Shia Muslims, which was viewed

⁹⁴ Hughes, p 165. Pirnie, p 23-24, 31-32.

⁹⁵ Pirnie, p 31. Hughes, p 162-163.

⁹⁶ Hughes, p 161-164.

⁹⁷ Kaldor, p 165. Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p. 171-173. Hashim, p. 138-139. Hughes, p. 163-164.

⁹⁸ Hashim, p 40-44.

with great anger and further fixed the *political repression* in the eyes of Sunni Muslims in the city. AQI took advantage of this and could recruited more insurgents to their organization.⁹⁹

The rise of AQI was thus a result of an interaction between the two independent variables, where *religious hatreds* and *opportunity for financing rebellion* were the main factors. The sectarian violence thus started in 2004 but the civilian sectarian war had not yet started as partly due to the fact that the Madhi army didn't possess the funds necessary but also that the sectarian violence was new as it began in October.

A reliable number of *active insurgents* in 2004 are hard to find in the empirical evidence, approximately 20 000 *active Sunni insurgents* plus the 10 000 *Shia insurgents*. The growing attacks (20 *insurgency attacks a day in 2003 to an average of 50 a day in 2004*) are a more reliable indicator that my independent variables give rise to a more intense conflict.¹⁰⁰

5.3 Inner Strife in 2005-2006

The election of a new government took place in 2005 with the help of a massive security congregation. Shia and Kurd population constituted a majority of the voters. Large parts of the Sunni population didn't vote due to threats from their own community, especially AQI and the Sunni insurgents, as well as a fear of further marginalization due to the uneven religious entity in Iraq. This led to a Shia Muslim majority in the new parliament the *political exclusion* got further entrenched. Despite the election and the inherent security operation, AQI alone claimed over 100 violent attacks in January, including suicide-attacks, attacks on religious Shia monuments and assaults on Shia dominated cities.¹⁰¹

The Sunni sectarian attacks against Shia Muslims were retaliated by the Shia insurgents who used death squads to kill Sunnis; academics, middle class people and merchants were the main targets as they often possessed funds. Hostile take overs against Sunni owned petrol stations and illegal taxation also took place. Thus, they began to *extort recourses* from the Sunni population which led to redistribution of resources that resulted in *economic inequality*. This evidently point to the fact that the two independent variables interacted in 2005.

Evidence that they had enough funds to maintain their activity were in the city of Basra where the Mahdi army began attacks against the Coalition forces in the city. The fighting in Basra could be traced to *extortion of resources* and thereby the variable *opportunity* as Basra had profitable oil revenues and smuggling

⁹⁹ Kaldor, p 167-168. Hashim, p 305.

¹⁰⁰ Robinson, p 270. Hughes, p 165.

¹⁰¹ Hashim, p 48-49, 57. Pirnie, p 23-24, 26.

routes. Unable to handle the security due to the *weak government military capability*, the Coalition forces had to take cover in their bases to protect themselves while the sectarian violence became more severe as Sunni population was heavily targeted by the Shia insurgents.¹⁰² Yet again the two independent variables interact when the factors opportunity for *financing rebellion, atypical low costs* and *religious hatreds* created a volatile situation.

Shia insurgents also continued their efforts to infiltrate the police force and the new government institutions and leaked plans from the armed forces in regards of upcoming security operations. This point to corruption which indicates *extortion of resources*.¹⁰³ As the Shia insurgents extorted more resources and infiltrated government institutions they became stronger and could match the Sunni insurgency.¹⁰⁴ Despite the growing Shia insurgency's capability most of the violent attacks were still conducted by the Sunni insurgents and were directed against the Shia population, Coalition forces and Iraqis who worked for the government or the Coalition.¹⁰⁵

As a result of *religious hatreds* the sectarian violence began to intensify during 2005 due to the Shia insurgents newly won capability to induce counter-attacks against Sunni insurgents. On the 16th of July 2005 a suicide bomber managed to kill 100 people and damage a Shiite mosque. This gave the Shia insurgents more support from the Shia community as they called for more security against the Sunni insurgents as *ethnic hatreds* continued to fuel the Iraqi society.¹⁰⁶ Overall there were an average of 70 *insurgency attacks* a day in 2005, an increase with 20 attacks a day which could be explained by a result from the growing Shia insurgency as more *religious hatreds* and more *extortion of resources* were extracted from Shia insurgents, an interaction between the two independent variables are thus visible again.

In early 2006 the sectarian violence escalated in areas that were mixed with Sunni and Shia religious entities while the Coalition estimated that there were between 20,000-50,000 *active Sunni insurgents*. However, Shia insurgents were in early 2006 estimated as a greater threat than the Sunni insurgents, mainly due to their infiltration to the government and Iraq police force.¹⁰⁷ Thus the Shia insurgents were definitely organized in the late 2005 and early 2006 and fought a violent struggle against Sunni insurgents and the Coalition over oil revenues and due to *ethnic hatreds*. To match the newly won Shia capability, Sunni insurgents relocated to what Pirnie calls sectarian lines (Sunni areas and neighborhoods)

¹⁰² Kaldor, p 169-171. Hughes, p. 162-163. Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, p 126.

¹⁰³ Hashim, p 305. Pirnie, p 23-24. Kaldor, p 163.

¹⁰⁴ Pirnie, p 13.

¹⁰⁵ Hashim, p 191-192. Pirnie, p 21.

¹⁰⁶ <http://edition.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/07/16/iraq.main/index.html> Access 140808. Hashim, p 354-357.

¹⁰⁷ Hughes, p 164. Pirnie, p 16-17, 50.

which made it easier for them to protect themselves from the sectarian violence and to retaliate.¹⁰⁸

Thus my dependent variable is present: *Organized groups uses violent means that aim to take power at the center or in a region, or to change government policies*, which in this case were: Sunni and Shia insurgents who use violent means against each other in order to take power in Iraq.¹⁰⁹

On 22 February AQI bombed the Golden dome mosque in Samara, one of the most important Shia shrines in the world. This erupted in retaliation from Shia insurgents and the sectarian violence grew. The Madhi army who had 10 000 members in 2004, had *60 000 active members* in mid-2006 due to the support they gained from the motivator *religious hatreds* as the Mosque was destroyed.¹¹⁰

Zarqawi's plan, to incite a sectarian conflict due to his *religious hatreds* against Shia Muslims succeeded as the insurgency conflict morphed into a sectarian civil war between Sunni and Shia insurgents. However, the attacks from both insurgencies against the Coalition continued. The civil war thus became a parallel civil sectarian war inside the Iraq War.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Pirnie, p 16.

¹⁰⁹ Kaldor, p 165. Kilcullen, the *Accidental Guerrilla*, p 120.

¹¹⁰ Kilcullen, the *Accidental Guerrilla*, p 126, Hughes, p 164. Robinson, p 270

¹¹¹ Pirnie, p 32. Robinson, p 270.

6 Conclusion

6.1.1 Result

How did the Iraq war's escalation during the years 2003-2006 lead to a civil sectarian war and how could the Greed and grievances theory help to explain this?

The beginning of the Iraq War's escalation could be traced back to the inability of the Coalition and the CPA to undertake the reconstruction of Iraq's society. This gave rise to the independent variable *opportunity* as *unemployment, economic mismanagement and poor public service* became a reality for the Iraqi society. As this happened, *extortion of recourses* was undertaken throughout Iraq as looting started due to *the weak government military capability* of the Coalition. The independent variable *objective grievances* was first seen when the decision to disband the Iraqi army and Ba'ath party gave rise to *political exclusion* as most of the Iraqi army and Ba'ath party members were of Sunni religious entity. As a result of an interaction between *opportunity* and *objective grievances* the insurgency began in a low scale and the escalation of the Iraq War began.

Thus an interaction between the two independent variables gave rise to the insurgency. Collier and Hoeffler's conclusion regarding the explanatory value of the variable *opportunity* is strong, more indicators are evidently at hand than *objective grievances* but there were still an interaction and the *political exclusion* gave in the fall of 2003 rise to *ethnic hatreds* against the Coalition who became occupiers in many Iraqis eyes. Thus both the independent variables helped to explain the start of the insurgency. The decision to disband the Iraqi army and Ba'ath are also according to me a formative moment as it set the path for the future process.

The start of sectarian violence could be traced to *Objective grievances* as this attracted Zargawi to Iraq. His *religious hatreds* against Shia Muslims resulted in killings and destruction on the Shia population and Shia religious monuments. As he pledged loyalty to Al Qaeda, AQI became operative and through intimidation and violent force they could *extort resources* through oil smuggling and other revenues, and AQI succeeded to grow.

The *weak government military capability* made the situation worse, giving rise to more *ethnic and religious hatreds* as the violence ravaged the country. The AQI entering is thus explained with the *objective grievances* and more closely with *ethnic hatreds* but in order to sustain their activities, funds were needed, hence they *extracted resources*. The two independent variables are here interconnected

again although in the opposite manner if compared with the start of the insurgency.

Due to the *weak government military capability* parts of the Shia population gave support to the Madhi army and Shia insurgents became operative as a mean to protect them against the *religious hatred* from AQI. However, Shia insurgents first became a substantial threat to the Sunni population in 2005 as they began to *extort resources* with hostile take overs. AQI entering in Iraq is according to me the second formative moment as this was the beginning of the sectarian violence which continued throughout 2004 to the end of this study.

The spike in violence and intensification in attacks in 2005 and early 2006 are explained with the increasing *extortion of resources* as both Sunni and Shia insurgents were organized, the persistent *weak government military capability*, fear of further *political exclusion* from the Sunni population and *religious hatreds* between Shia and Sunni Muslims. The indicator of my dependent variable, start of civil war, was actually first seen in the empirical evidence just before the Samara bombing took place. But since the sectarian violence culminated when AQI blew the Golden dome mosque in Samara, the bombing is commonly considered to be the starting point of the parallel civil sectarian war.

6.1.2 Use of Theory and Method

The theory and method have been of good use to explain the escalation in the Iraq War and the start of the civil sectarian war. The method allowed me to identify my independent variables and then follow them through my chosen years. The benefit to know my end date made it easy to know when to stop and what to look for. I did find that the two independent variables managed to cover the causes that led to the escalation and the start of the civil sectarian war. It became obvious that the two independent variables were needed in order to follow my purpose. They complement each other well and could be viewed in terms of how (opportunity) and why (objective grievances).

My choice to start the process-trace after the momentary victory in the Iraq war resulted in an explanation of why the insurgency started in the first place and the theory's independent variables were well suited to explain this.

This could also be viewed as a sidetrack that didn't fit my stated purpose since the insurgency didn't have a violent sectarian character. However, it's my opinion that an understanding of the foundation of the Iraqi insurgency and escalation is necessary to understand the start of the civil sectarian war. I also believe that this proves that I've been true to my theory, method and my chosen years which have resulted in a high internal validity since the theory and method managed to explain the escalation and the start of the civil sectarian war.

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