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Combatants, Inside and Out: Battle-Spaces in 21st Century Civil Wars

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ABSTRACT

Rebels, Inside and Out: Battle-Spaces in 21st Century Conflicts

This dissertation provides an explanatory framework to explain the variations in battle-spaces, alternatively seen as wartime authority configurations across time and space. I place these variations along types of states along their functional dimension, and their respective forms of state power on the ground. I argue that these variations are best understood through the interaction of two structural factors, the nature of state power and social-structure of the area in question on the one hand, and the way combatants develop their infrastructures to harness social power and exercise agency on the other. Varying configurations of these combatant-state interactions shape institutional level outcomes that shape endogenous processes inherent to warzones that explain the variations in battle-spaces or wartime authority configurations. I apply my framework to battle-spaces in Turkey, Nepal, Iraqi-Kurdistan, and Iraq.

Acknowledgments

List of Abbreviations

AAH	Asa'b Ahl al-Haq
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
FIS	Islamic Salvation Front
GIA	Armed Islamic Group of Algeria
GOI	Government of Iraq
HAN	Harakat-al-Nujaba
HBI	Hezbollah Brigades of Iraq
IPB	Intelligence Battlefield Preparation
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISCI	Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq
JAM	Jayish al-Mahdi
KAS	Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
KIA	Kata'ib al-Imam Ali
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PKK	Kurdistan Workers Party
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
PYD	Democratic Union Party (PYD)
RPF	Rwandan Peoples Liberation Front
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
TPLF	Tigriyan Peoples Liberation Front
UN	United Nations
YPG	Peoples Protection Units

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket or a watch to take out of it, and, burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and was in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge. In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again."

- Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll

War zones have the character of Alice's tumble down the rabbit hole. They have the appearance until they do not, that nothing is what it seems and what is, is never what it seems. Until, just as Alice, one realizes that at every level down the rabbit hole is a reality as real as the one just passed. The elemental cause of this bewilderment, the constant uncertainty that surround ones' immediate as well as short-term and long-term decisions in times of war, is the transformed social order that govern ones' day to day reality. All the routinized and predictable interactions of individuals, communities, and organizations in a society are upended in war time. The contrast has a reason beyond simply violence.

In peacetime, there are routinized authority configurations that shape predictable societal interactions that generate social order. This peace, in this world of states, is a function of state power and a form of state society relations. Violence in times of war tears this tapestry of peace. Some aspects of the transition from peacetime to wartime is tangible. The killed and injured people, destroyed infrastructure, charred debris and the smell of scorched earth. There are also intangible aspects in the transition between peace and war. People find unable to trust the state, the overarching power arrangements that provides a hegemonic form of authority and order, and the people that are in control of it, the government. People begin to find it if not difficult, then uncertain as to who to trust and who not to trust. This is a moment that stand between trust and

distrust since a clear dichotomy is impossible. These moments also begin to erode the norms and values that reify social cohesion. Steady accumulation of uncertainties and social distrust begin to eradicate previous sense of social cohesion. There is an undulating and pervasive sense of uncertainty that begin to shorten time-horizons of individuals as social, political and economic agents. The overwhelming sense of insecurity induces a sense of disempowerment and pervasive sense of fear in people. Slowly, a sense of cynicism about the present and a deep sense of pessimism about the future begin to take hold. In this altered societal midst are combatants, rebels in the general parlance but used interchangeably here. They are societal actors with organized capacity for violence that exercise military power utilizing violence in pursuit of their respective goals. Being in this midst, whether an individual is a combatant or a civilian, is much like Alice with her initial moment of conceptual concussion.

To provide a concrete example, IPB - Intelligence Battlefield Preparation, (Field Manual 34-130, of the U.S. Army) that assess the operational environment in military interventions is designed to minimize this moment of conceptual-concussion. Soldiers and commanders walk into a war zone and they have to navigate it – both in terms of its physical and social realities, contingent on the mission, to realize their objectives. Even the best IPB does not always mean that even the best resourced organizations are immune from this conceptual-concussion in coming to terms with a war-zone. U.S. Army's V Army Corp Commander, Lt General William Wallace, during Operation Iraqi Freedom responded to a question about the threats he faced in Iraq with a comment that captured his own (and by extension the V Army Corp's) conceptual-concussion. He commented that "the enemy we're fighting is different from the one we'd war

gamed against"[1]. This is General Wallace being Alice, going downside-up in a rabbit-hole trying to figure it out in terms of the concepts and categories that he had and finding it difficult as things were getting "curiouser", and "curiouser" for him, and the V corp. It is a conceptual concussion because what one sees, hears and feels are not instantaneously translated into intelligible data-points. Once in the rabbit hole, some conceptual categories are adequate, and the moment has a semblance of clarity. But some are inadequate or are overwhelmed. This is the moment of conceptual concussion where it becomes necessary to go beyond existing concepts, frames, and categories.

Some war zones are especially difficult rabbit holes, particularly if, as this study asserts, some recent and contemporary civil wars exhibit significantly different social relationships, compared to most civil-wars of the 20th century. In these contexts, it is not merely the animated presence of violence that make these warzones rabbit-holes. In trying to come to terms with what is happening in a specific place at a specific time, the complex societal interactions that constitute war, what an individual see becomes entirely contingent on the positionality – ones' identity, role, and the sorts of societal power networks that the individual is part of in the given social context.

If it is civilians living through the war or civilian observers, when the shooting begins they realize that they can no longer take the peacetime certainties for granted. Beginning with the lived reality and the state of mind that is security, they have to readjust how they enter into even minimal levels of social interactions in pursuit of their goals, how they should relate to organizations and even to each other. Because those certainties are altered if not fully upended.

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[1] Quoted in Rick Atkinson, "General: A Longer War Likely," Washington Post, Friday, 28 March 2003, A01.

Organized violence has altered the old rules of the game but not necessarily in expected ways.

For example, violence within a setting where multiple groups are contesting will cause very

different reactions in people and in combatants compared to violence in a setting where people

are under the control of a single armed group. In this midst are combatants pursuing their goals

with the organized use of violence. At the most elemental level of exercising violence, how does

this same context look to the combatants when seeing through a scope layered with cross-hairs?

Combatants, organized groups with capacity to wield violence, exercising violence see

the same physical space and the social context but they see it in terms of a battle-space. Battle-

space is the combatants' understanding of what constitute their area of operation, so that they can

exercise violence effectively in pursuit of their objectives. How combatant understand the battle-

space play a role in shaping wartime social processes. And how combatants see this spatial and

social context in terms of a battle space is often shaped by both the nature of the combatants (the

combatant infrastructures that define them) and the local authority configuration that shape the

social structure in place that shape the societal interactions.

Combatants (clever ones, not all) also recognize the extent to which social structures,

synonymously used here as "societal networks of power"[2] shape the impact and outcome of

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[2] This study is predicated on Michael Mann's epistemic position on society, that it is not a single
unit of analysis and all societies are, are organized networks of power with limited degree of
boundedness. "Societies are constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting socio-spatial
networks of power…a general account of societies, their structure, and their history can best be
given in terms of the interrelations of what I will call the four sources of social power:
ideological, economic, military, and political (IEMP) relationships. These are (1) overlapping
networks of social interaction….. (2) They are also organizations, institutional means of attain-
ing human goals. Their primacy comes not from the strength of human desires for ideological,
economic, military, or political satisfaction but from the par- ticular organizational means each
possesses to attain human goals, whatever these may be. (Mann 1986; p8). Consequently, when I
refer to "social structure" broadly in this study, the reference denotes the "multiple overlapping

violence, as seen through the eyes of their targets, those at the receiving end of violence, and observers paying attention to this process, civilians broadly defined. Outsiders (observers, journalists, soldiers of an intervention or peacekeeping force) may walk into a warzone, into a rabbit hole by choice. But the rabbit hole metaphor become egregiously relevant when civilians in warzones never asked to be in one, and they themselves find that things are not what they seem. Because the context around them is constantly changing. Violence alters the social structure and the forms of authority previously in place. As a consequence, they have to now constantly keep evaluating their positionality in terms of their identity (whether it is an ascribed identity or a socio-economic identity) and their role in the broader societal networks of power that they are part of in their day to day interactions. The same also applies to combatants. Think of a clichéd example.

The combatants of the state – soldiers of the armed forces - that expected to find a clearly identified enemy faces a sudden shift in frames of references when guerrilla fighters blend in with the civilian population.[3] The enemy is a known-unknown, everywhere and nowhere. This sort of confusion is well known to students of guerilla warfare, but other kinds of confusions are significant but less well known. For example, government officials who are in regular communication with the combatants that they fight, insurgents or rebels, however defined, cause conceptual confusion (and intense personal frustration) for soldiers and diplomats alike. Civilians who hedge their bets by leaking information to multiple combatant groups defy the expectations of a combatant force that exercise overwhelming control over that civilian's home turf. This

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and intersecting socio-spatial networks of power" that characterize the specific societal context in question.

[3] General Wallace's comment applies to this specific moment of conceptual-concussion.

leakage is not supposed to happen, according to Stahhis Kalyvas' _Logic of Violence in Civil_

Wars, and in the expectations of skilled counter-insurgents as per FM 3-24.[4] Foreign

intervention forces - the Americans in particular - have difficulty in deciphering this kind of

change in the social environment of conflict. They often prepare to fight their last war and arrive

on the scene with (the necessary) high-expectations (of themselves) and little inside knowledge

about how violent conflict fits into the local societal-structure just as how the many local societal

networks of power that constitute the "society" in an area of operation in turn shape the conflict.

Rabbit with a Clock: Puzzle

This study seeks to understand internal conflict zones, or what are commonly (though contested)

termed "civil wars", conflicts that take place within internationally recognized boundaries.[5] Civil

wars have been around for a longtime, as historian David Armitage noted.[6] Political scientists,

however, define civil wars in terms of the conflicts' relationship to an incumbent state authority.

But if the fundamental nature of the state authority changes, how does this change affect the

logic of violence and actor's relations with each other? One way to understand a war-zone, even

at a specific place at a specific time, is to see it the way Alice did as a multilayered rabbit-hole,

go down and up, and back again because each level is as real as the other, are related but at times

also at variance from the others. What one sees from a bird's eye view is not incorrect, but it may

be at variance from what others see when they look up from the ground. And they both may look

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[4] Stathis Kalyvas (2006), _Logic of Violence in Civil War_, Cambridge University Press; _FM3-24, U.S.Army and Marine Corp Counterinsurgency Manual_, University of Chicago Press, 2007.
[5] Sambanis, Nicholas (2004), "What Is A Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition." _Journal of Conflict Resolution_ 48 (6): 814-858 (2004).
[6] Armitage, David (2017). _Civil Wars: A History in Ideas_, Vintage Books.

different seeing from the intermediate (meta, also referred to here as the institutional level) level

where macro-level and micro-level dynamics are mediated. In effect, this study needs a rabbit

with a clock that can talk, a conceptual puzzle, so it can tumble down with it.

In civil wars, state society relations that characterized peacetime - a reality in itself

underwritten by violence that used to define the social space - gets altered by violence. At this

moment the old rules of the game, the societal institutional configurations that defined authority

have changed. Non-combatants find in this moment an altered authority configuration that they

must navigate, and combatants find in it an altered "battle-space".[7] These changes differ across

war zones. How can we make sense of the varied wartime authority configurations from the

point of view of civilians and battle-spaces from the perspective of combatants across time and

space and along the levels of analysis?

So, What? Puzzle, & Its Relevance

The puzzle lies where violence, the state, and society meet. In seeking to resolve the puzzle I

build on existing literature on the processes of violence in wartime, the literature on state

institutions, and expound on how non-state violence and the state interact in shaping and creating

endogenous social processes in war-time. In simple human terms, civil wars fundamentally alter

the sense of predictability and the attendant normalcy taken for granted in peacetime. Absent

predictability and the sense of normalcy, people are compelled to figure how to navigate the

altered circumstances. Because when people have to internalize violence into their day to day

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[7] Battle-space is the awareness for combatants' area of operation so as to employ combat-power - violence - effectively. How individuals and communities relate to each other, relate to varied organizations and how they relate to the physical terrain. i.e. human geography matter in how combatants exercise military power in pursuit of objectives, whatever the objective may be.

decisions, it alters how they make decisions, and subsequently this has lasting ramifications in how they live their lives.

The moment organized violence comes into play, the moment first of what is to be many deliberate shots ring out, peace is gone, and it create a new authority configuration that governs the day to day and people now have to figure new ways of seeking security. This reflects the changes in who wields *power* and who has *authority*. At a personal, family and neighborhood level, this condition reflects the absence of a single hegemonic order. This is the crucial distinction in the wartime condition seen at micro-level, on the ground. It is not whether the state is authoritarian or democratic. Instead, it is whether a hegemonic state order exists or is absent. Consequently, "wartime" in this study denotes instances where there are more than one organized group exercising violence. Absent a hegemonic order, a task as basic as finding water, steady supply of electricity becomes complicated.

It is never about the water or about electricity. But authority induced order in peacetime has become separated into discrete units in wartime along both time and space by armed actors and are controlled by them. Consequently, the complications of maintaining consistent water and electricity supply reflect the truncated and discontinuous nature of authority and order on the ground. So, one must pay different groups on different days to maintain a constant supply, assuming there are groups that have some consistency in control. The significance of the moment is that under "normal, peacetime" conditions, when there is a hegemonic authority, the public or private utility providers could maintain consistent supply, usually by generating huge scale economies, and any fragmentation of the provision has to do with market decisions, not changes in authority configurations by folks with guns. Another implication of truncated order on the ground is manifest when the young girls wonder about getting to school using the safest route

assuming schools are open, and how to get to work for the parents. During the day they will diligently subdue the concerns of the evening commute in the event the circumstances change.

At the institutional level, an assiduous bureaucrat in middle management used to long-established procedure now wonders whether procedure is the prudent course of action. A previously secure political leader realizes that his position no longer provides this entitlement. Because war have altered the rules of the game, the humanly devised constraints that shape human interactions.[8] Organized military power dominates, not as a single entity. The interaction between armed groups, state and non-state, begins to play a defining role in shaping institutional configurations, the humanly devised constraints. The altered institutional configurations - rules of the game - have generated specific war-time authority configurations for civilians and a specific battle-space for combatants. How can we understand these authority configurations and the state society relations in these contexts? We have to contrast war, peace and in-between as we normally conceive of them.

Peace

Peace as commonly understood is an outcome of capacious state power. This power has to be predictable enough to be internalized, as no state is able to police every person's intimate actions all the time. Not even the most authoritarian states managed to police the intimate actions of individuals. But in authoritarian Russia under Stalin, in China during Mao's multiple leaps, and Communist eastern Europe, people internalized the broader contours of the authoritarian

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[8] North, Douglass. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, Cambridge University Press. (1999)

authority expectations and self-censored themselves. Differently but also similarly, a driver in a leafy American suburb in the middle of the night stops at a stop sign when no one is watching. In some neighborhoods the driver could leave the car unattended and unlocked, and even live a lifetime without ever locking the doors to the house. These instances of state society relations show how state power manifest authority on multiple dimensions, including one's own psyche, a reality of power so well internalized that it is habitual and involuntary. State power generates rational-legal authority backed with the credible threat of violence. That in turn generate obedience. It is routinized compliance to authority. It results in a particular type of social order that we are familiar with.

This peacetime individual, communal, and organizational obedience to state authority and power is not a simple function of violence but also of both support and complicity. People that stop at the stop sign may believe that abiding by rules of law generate a social order that allow for an amicable level of social cooperation. Therefore, one may be a vocal supporter of stop signs in suburbs. Another may find that stop signs to be a hindrance but would stop anyway because of that nagging feeling of violence, the possibility of a traffic ticket. That person would be complicit. There are people who stop and cruises through without giving it a second thought. And they manifest authority by habitual indifference. People generate, reify and perpetuate peacetime authority. There are similarities in the form of order whether it is coercion generated routinized obedience versus democratic version in terms of how individuals perpetuate it. Vaclav Havel related state authority in an authoritarian context. "Individuals need not believe all these mystifications, but they must behave as though they did, or they must at least tolerate them in silence, or get along well with those who work with them. For this reason, however, they must live within a lie. They need not accept the lie. It is enough for them to have accepted their

life with it and in it. For by this very fact, individuals confirm the system, fulfill the system, make the system, are the system".[9] That is peace and order. But the distinction, in a democratic version, is the idea that people are still the system but *that they need not live a lie because they have a stake in the system and can shape the system.*

That is, in an ideal state where support, complicity and the daily nonchalance generates and perpetuates predictable order, contestations may still take place. Individuals and groups may be in contention to alter existing power relations, derive different institutional outcomes, and attempt to or actually impose ideological positions. Contestations take place through routinized institutional processes where the individual's use of violence, or even the threat of violence, does not rise to the level of rivaling an altering existing power relation. Ultimately, violence plays no role in the locus where power is contested.[10]

But violence in itself does not create moments of war. The state of violence in the United States provides a good illustration of this relationship between hegemonic authority, violence predictable social order and a contrast with civil war. In 2016, for example, St. Louis recorded a homicide rate of 59.3 per 100,000 inhabitants, while Baltimore recorded 51.2 per 100,000 in the same year. These homicide rates are considerably higher than the estimated toll of 11.4 per 100,000 direct war-related deaths in Afghanistan in 2014. The overall situations for the general publics of these places, however, is very different in terms of how people make calculations

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[9] Havel, Vaslav. *The Power of the Powerless: Citizens Against the State in Central Eastern Europe*, Routledge Books. (1985)
[10] Weberian notion of state - coercion relationship, but really Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan, state monopolizes legitimate exercise of coercion so that the individual does not need to resort to violence, because Hobbes', I think, is about predictability.

about who is in control and what kinds of authorities need to be taken into consideration when planning for the future.

In an ideal state, there is predictability. Predictability allows economic agents to have longer time-horizons. Individuals and organizations plan their lives predicated on the underlying, institutionalized order. Students apply for university and expect to complete it without the fear of the state collapsing, even if they live in Baltimore or some other violent city. Rules are binding and enforced. Though anyone can refuse to obey, opportunities are probably lacking for establishing alternative machinery for implementing (their) contrary goals. They cannot create a parallel system. In a democracy, the elected law makers, and in an authoritarian system, "the few at the top can keep the masses at the bottom compliant, provided their control is institutionalized in the laws and the norms of the social group in which both operate," writes Michael Mann. "There is thus a simple answer to the question of why the masses do not revolt - a perennial problem of social stratification - and it does not concern value consensus, or force, or exchange in the usual sense of those conventional sociological explanations. The masses comply because they lack collective organization to do otherwise, because they are embedded within collective and distributive power organizations controlled by others. They are organizationally outflanked".[11] The organizational outflanking does not mean the absence of rebellion. In this context, the "rebels," or organized social groups challenging authority seeking change, work through routinized processes without the use of violence. The Civil Rights Movement in the United States fundamentally altered institutional depth and scope which in turn redefined how

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[11] Mann, Michael. *Sources of Social Power*, Volume 1, Cambridge University Press. 1986; 36

people related to the state as citizens just as it redefined how people related to each other as dignified individuals.

Contrast this kind of rebellion to the efforts of groups like the Branch Dravidians in Waco, Texas in 1993, when the Branch Dravidian group, a breakaway from the Seventh day Adventist Church, defied the efforts of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosive's attempts to disarm them. The 51-day standoff ended with the deaths of 76 people.[12] Various militias and other armed groups that reject the hegemony of the state-imposed order are far more likely to attract a swift and violent response than are criminal groups and lone criminals in US cities. In effect individuals exist inside states, even ones that defy the law and kill fellow citizens, caged by institutional processes and cloaked in a tapestry of peace as the state has manacled violence by retaining a monopoly.

This peaceful state generated cage is conceptual at an important level, as it need not ensure a total absence of violence. It does, however, need to lend assurances that others cannot use violence to make meaningful changes in the overall social system and in the basic principles underlying the relationship of citizens to state authority, that is, state society relations. In this ideal state, the state power and authority are not predicated on the state exercising violence everywhere at all times. It is more than 'Protecto ergo obligo' ('I protect therefore I am obeyed.'). It is predicated on the state credibly claiming the inviolability of its monopoly of violence. And it rests on the support, complicity and indifference of the people that acquiesce to the claim. People do so for many reasons and whatever the reasons, they contribute towards the

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[12] Report of the Department of the Treasury on the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Investigation of Vernon Wayne Howell Also Known as David Koresh, September 1993, https://archive.org/details/ reportofdepartme00unit.

single outcome of a hegemonic order generated authority configuration. These relationships that characterize the idea and the reality of peace change in moments of internal conflict.

Violence and War

Isolated acts of violence unnerve people, but it is war that alters the peace. A single incident of violence upsets state generated peace, but it does not fundamentally alter it, at least in the sense that it does not alter how people look at the future and people do not have to search for some other authority to protect them. The territorially regulated, routinized social life with long time horizons and the attendant modicum of normality gets altered only when violence become a viable option for non-state actors to alter power relations. That is violence in terms of organized military power begins to play a role in how power is contested inside the states boundaries. It alters the state society relations that people had taken for granted. This is civil war, or internal conflict as we broadly understand it.

Violence in this formulation is a dynamic process that shapes the sequences and course of decisions and events.[13] War and peace put violence in radically different contexts on a larger scale and as the challenges facing individuals habituated to peacetime but now lives in a war zone on a personal level. When organized non-state actors manage to challenge the legally constituted state or use violence as a means of deriving political outcomes, violence is politicized. Organized violence is no longer manacled in the sense that the monopoly of overall state authority is challenged. This challenge is not simply reflected in a failure to prevent

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[13] Kalyvas 2006; 22

homicides in St. Louis or Baltimore. Violence is now an instrument for more diverse purposes, foremost of which is to affect how people think about violence and its impact on their quotidian social interactions, and how this causes them to act in distinctly political ways. Consequently, the state can no longer guarantee the peace.

The state no longer has a monopoly in being able to claim credit for all the attendant positive externalities, such as the self-policing driver who obeys the stop sign when no one else is there to see, or how cooperation's directly usurp money on various contractual guises in terms of penalties written into a contract. They are all luxuries that comes from maintaining a society wide state generated peace. Consequently, war is a very different authority configuration from the stop sign, our bench mark of peace. Internal conflicts are thus instances where sate power and state generated hegemonic order is being challenged and truncated with the use of violence and become discrete units. But all internal conflicts are similar, and they are also different across time and space. Understanding this variation is also relevant to understanding the significance of the puzzle.

Diversity of Internal Conflict

Internal conflict zones vary across time and space. Think of the sample of cases since the end of world war two to include all the national liberation conflicts, secessionist fights, multiple civil wars characterized as insurgencies, etc. While these conflicts may vary on their causes, sources, goals, nature of the terrain, the time etc, they have been very limited in the variations of pursued combatants' strategies. In some instances, non-state combatants might attack a defined area as a means of weakening the state. They may leave the area instead of seeking to control the area. The objective on this instance is showing the population that the state is weak in its claim to

control the area and provide security. The civilians find that they face a new structure of choices and selects and elevates actors within these communities in radically different ways, as measured against the backdrop of what they once considered the politics of the usual.

People may find themselves in particular binds in instances, say for example, of guerrilla warfare. State and non-state combatants in this instance look at the same battle-space but see different things. Non-state combatants, challenging the state find easily distinguishable targets, other things constant, in individuals affiliated with the state and the many sovereign appurtenances of the state. State combatants – that is soldiers - do not see the guerrillas since their subversive capacity make them appear everywhere and nowhere all at once. The state may (or may not) attempt to distinguish between the enemy and the innocentas the Syrian regime is doing now, and as Russia did in its Chechnya war. People may or may not know the guerrillas in their midst but what they do know is that they have to heed to the demands of both the guerrillas and the state, making the existence precarious and uncertain.

Guerrillas may weaken the state over time and instead control the area. Islamic State in Iraq, areas controlled by the Maoists in Nepal during its civil war, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) controlled territory in Sri Lanka, Sudan People's Liberation Army, (SPLA) controlled territory in Sudan, Kurdish controlled regions in Syria (Rojava) broadly fit this category. But this is contingent on the time and the place since wars zones keep changing.[14] For combatants in this instance, the objective remains getting control of a territory with its

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[14] Ana Arjona with Nelson Kasfir and Zachariah Mampilly. *Rebel Governance in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press. (2015); Arjona Ana. *Rebelocracy: Social Order in the Colombian Civil War*. Cambridge University Press. (2016) And Staniland, Paul. "Wartime Institutions: A Research Agenda". *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 58(8) 1360-1389

population over long periods of time. The guerrillas may create a shadow state to use as a base and institute a form of authority that would be a reflection of the future state when they are victorious. Territorial control drives the logic of violence in this category. Battlefield superiority, that is, effective, selective and lethal engagement of opponents, or wholescale overwhelming scorched earth tactics as in Syria, translates into territorial and population control. The strategic logic of violence as it is pursued by the Islamic state in areas that they control at present, the Syrian regime, and Iraqi governments regaining control etc, fits this type. A civilian traversing a contested area may find herself crossing well defined and demarcated front defense lines. She will observe changes in uniforms. Different documents and attendant bureaucratic appurtenances show who is in control and how, contingent on the time and the place. This is a moment where battlefield supremacy has translated into territorial and population control. It is a particular form of wartime authority configuration and a particular battle-space.

In this instance, in its Maoist peoples war ideal-type (LTTE in Sri Lanka, Islamic State at its height, Maoists in Nepal etc) guerrillas have come down from the mountains or out of the woods creating shadow states. There is a form of hegemonic order in place and people find a sense of predictability in the routinized processes the guerrillas, now graduated into shadow-bureaucrats, impose. In terms of the battle-space, it is at a strategic stalemate, neither side can manage an outright victory. It creates instances of states and rebels maintaining starkly confrontational stances. These are civil wars as they are generally understood in their ideal form. The many national liberation movements of the twentieth century, many separatist movements until today fit this category. The state, however defined, remains intact and state forces maintain their command and control and institutional integrity. The non-state challengers also mirror a semblance of state forces as hierarchies with integral command and control structures.

Sometimes, the rebels overwhelm the state, as in the case of National Resistance Movement (NRM) of Uganda, Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), Tigrayan Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), for example.

Then there are the increasingly common occurrences that at times overlap with the classical ideal types and at times remain at stark variance from them. These types of wars remain little understood from within existing categories. And it is these war zones that form the backdrop of my puzzle, therefore figure prominently. Unlike violent US cities or Mexican narco-violence, some contemporary conflicts, such as in Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Iraq, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Chad etc and elsewhere take place in contexts where intensely fragmented state forces interact with equally fragmented armed groups.

Scholars have referred to them in their macro level conceptualization as failed states, weak states, dysfunctional states, ungoverned spaces, contested spaces etc. They provide us with the initial macro-level master concepts, but we need to develop on these existing concepts for a better understanding of the institutional and micro-level processes. Because failed, failing, dysfunctional states do not mean political, economic and social life ends. They instead reflect alternative ways of organizing societal power networks that regulate social interactions. These alternatives for one example include the construction of patronage networks, regime preferences for multiple security forces to watch each other as much as to police citizens, and clandestine state sponsorship of armed groups, including gangs involved in illicit commercial activities. Political authority in this context thus occupies social spaces that would not normally be considered as arenas for political authority in contexts where the state exercises a direct hegemony over the exercise of violence. As a corollary to this difference in the social structure

of political authority, the deployment of violence differs in these contexts than in ideal type civil wars. The deployment of violence in ideal type civil wars with their territorial logic and stark confrontation generates specific set of authority configurations that people must navigate and battle-spaces that combatants seek to shape. Intense state and rebel fragmentation shapes the deployment of violence differently, which produces its own specific types of institutional outcomes and set of authority configurations and battle-space dynamics. A brief survey of the case studies in this work highlights the overlapping moments of clarity and moments of complexity that provide a lens for investigating these different social structures of political authority and the corresponding logics of violence and their impacts on institutional outcomes that shape battle-spaces in internal conflicts.

Turkey

Turkey and Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) have been at war for almost forty years. This war is seen from the prism of the classical ideal type of a civil war; separatist and territorial. It is an asymmetric, weak against the strong, conflict driven by (mostly, since it is never constant) population and territorial centric logic of violence. The conflict is variously characterized as a fight for Kurdish independence, fight for Kurdish rights, a Kurdish national movement, and a Kurdish separatist fight. The PKK now characterizes it as a fight for Kurdish rights inside a confederal Turkey. Fighting that began after the "reconciliation process (2003-2015)" between PKK and the Turkish state broke down has become especially vicious.[15] Combatants affiliated with the PKK ousted state agents, mainly the police and the military, then controlled small cities

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[15] Crisis Group, *The Human Cost of the PKK Conflict in Turkey: The Caseof Sur*. Briefing / Europe & Central Asia. 17 March 2016.

and villages. They called them "liberated zones".[16] They carried out indoctrination campaigns to educate the people as to why they fight, said the guerrillas, to get the opponents and fence-sitters in line, said the opponents. The PKK even purported to govern momentarily. Turkish government tolerated these during the cease-fire but insisted that they will not allow the PKK to maintain "parallel-structures". Meaning the state would not allow PKK to create liberated zones and have the people under its control. PKK combatants were well aware and expected, as it often happens, to have the Turkish state respond with overwhelming force, oust the PKK from liberated zones, declare the cities and villages re-liberated. The momentarily defeated and surviving PKK combatants revert to hit and run guerrilla tactics using the population, and terrain to overcome their asymmetric advantage.

Now the authority configuration in the territorial and population centric war in Turkey can partially be understood through existing literature on rebel governance, but only partially, and not its implications in how it shapes subsequent battle-space dynamics. For example, as cited previously, rebel governance literature show that war zones create particular forms of social order. They explicitly discuss the territorial and population centric military strategy inherent to their cases. They take the strategic equilibrium in the battle space or the modus-vivendi between non-state and state combatants that allows combatants a level of autonomy to create a form of wartime authority, that Mampilly calls Rebel Governance and Arjona and Staniland calls Wartime Orders.[17] They show how in this situation rebels create forms of hegemonic orders.

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[16] Interviews in Turkey; 2014, 15 and 16.

[17] The strategic equilibrium or the modus vivendi could result due to political concerns, military constraints, or external interventions. Rebel governance literature is based on assuming it away. Arjona's and Mampilly's cases are predicated on this, and it works in their analyses since they

For example, during the PKK and Turkish cease fire, the literature suggests that the PKK

has to step up to provide services because people expected it.[18] Just as the relations between

LTTE and the Sri Lankan government during the cease-fire. But PKK does not have such

capacity and the Turkish state is far stronger and never withdrew its authority, only ceased its

violence against PKK combatants. PKK could not use the existing state infrastructures to deepen

their control through social provisions – it was hardly rebel governance.[19] Instead of third party

international organization (i.e., UN or NATO) interventions, PKK areas had diaspora support

just as in Sri Lanka. But there was a big difference.

The cease-fire in Turkey never meant the PKK combatants could carve out their sphere of

control the way the rebels in existing rebel governance cases assume. It was more complex and

nuanced. Kurdish society changed drastically and before the latest bout of fighting, members of

Kurdish parties took control through elections. They controlled most of the local governance

structures and numerous mayoralties. PKK used these structures to influence but not control. On

the one hand the Turkish state has enough capacity to not allow it. And on the other the Kurdish

parties, while espousing a non-violent form of Kurdish cause, carefully tried to navigate being

part of the formal electoral and governance structure while also working to boost the Kurdish

cause, while appreciating PKK sacrifices but with a degree of autonomy where they were not

beholden to the PKK. PKK fighters though used the opening to really be fish in their strongholds

and built an urban militia in terms of revolutionary youth-groups and brought the fight to the

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seek to understand rebel-governance, not how rebel-governance, i.e. authority configuration, shape the exercise of violence when the shooting starts.

[18] Mampilly in his discussion on LTTE governance explain how this dynamic worked in the Sri Lankan case.

[19] This moment also mirrors Staniland's typology of wartime orders.

cities - though PKK vehemently deny any links - but their battle drills, uniforms and equipment give away the game.

Further, rebel governance literature is predicated on the moment when there is a strategic equilibrium in the war. In itself it is a very specific military outcome that is arrived at through a specific logic of violence. And when there is renewed violence, as there always is after a stalemate in the absence of lasting peace, the previous strategic and tactical stalemate and the wartime authority structure shape the next round of the dynamics of violence. It shapes the battle-space when violence commences. That is to say, when rounds start flying and the combatants are exercising violence in its elemental form - trying to figure who to kill, where, and how, other things constant - the previous authority configuration shape the combatant understanding of their area of operation in a population and territorial centric fight.

In a population and territorial centric fight, theoretically, at a minimum, there are two direct protagonists and one indirect protagonist broadly in any internal conflict, state and non-state combatants and civilians. Ideally in this fight, people are the prize, and state and non-state combatants constantly try to isolate the enemy, distinguish between the enemy and the people. People in this instance are victims but not completely since they do have agency. Though the level of civilian agency and saliency of civilian safety is always contingent. Because peoples' agency is contingent on whether the combatants actually have to take civilians and civilian considerations into account, and in what form. The authority configuration shapes not only the combatant social-relations but also civilians' social relations and all of their geo-spatial relations. The two protagonists' social relations and their geo-spatial relations - are mutually constitutive in an ideal-type territorial and population centric fight. That is the battle-space. It is a very

particular authority configuration when rounds are flying, and all the protagonists navigate the same space with differing objectives. But existing rebel governance literature brackets violence just as studies of violence bracket social structures in their study of violence. For example, Kalyvas points out how violence shapes peoples' decisions and how control is a very information and coercive intensive enterprise. But how do local social relations, formal and informal authority configurations shape the logic of violence when shooting begins? Information correlates positively with control, and would not it be possible that the social relations, informal social hierarchies and authority configurations in the hills of Greece had a role in shaping the information flow, and subsequently how that (just might) shaped the combatants understanding of the battle- space, who to kill, when and how? Seeing from the existing prisms of both logic of violence and rebel governance we can understand much about both authority and the logic of violence. That in Turkey there are elements of a population and territorial centric fight in some ways but not completely and PKK try to create parallel structures both during the cease-fire and post cease-fire but differently. The Turkish-Kurdish internal conflict long seen as a classic separatist fight is no longer so clearly delineated. Therefore, seeing the same, but doing so in terms of variations in battle-spaces (alternatively as war-time authority configurations as civilians see it) might allow us to build on existing knowledge and better understand the dynamics of the ongoing PKK-Turkey conflict.

Iraqi-Kurdistan

Iraqi-Kurdistan is neither at peace nor at war in the way people usually assume war zones. With its ring roads, roof top Jazz bars, night clubs, foreigners and members of minority sects walking around with utmost safety makes Iraqi-Kurdistan stand as an outlier in the neighborhood. In

terms of the baseline ideal type of state generated hegemonic order, Kurdistan has a veneer of a

quasi-formal-state. But in reality, it remains a war zone that has arrived at a strategic equilibrium.

Iraqi- Kurdistan is surrounded by war and inside it is a frozen war zone. It can be seen very much

as a war zone if one looks closer through the logic of war-time authority and the prism of a

battle-space. It will allow us to build on existing concepts to understand its politics, logic of

authority and the role of violence.

At first glance, Iraqi-Kurdistan seems to fit into the category of state hegemony or

authority that in this case is reflected in the relative safety of people who otherwise would be

vulnerable to violence elsewhere in the region. The two dominant parties in Iraqi Kurdistan,

Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have so far stuck

to the letter and spirit of the 1998 Washington agreement that ended the civil war between

them.[20] The Kurdish Peshmerga forces in effect functions as the armed forces of the "Kurdish

Quasi-State"[21] as represented by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The formal KRG

political structure indicates that the Kurdish region is governed by a multiparty coalition with

elections that have consistently been "reasonably free and fair"[22]. Even at the height of the

Islamic State crisis, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International gave high marks to KRG in

how they respect individual and minority rights. KRG has built institutional appurtenances of a

future state where individuals and organizations navigate routinized processes to a greater

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[20] Interview of multiple law makers in KRG territory. Also see Stansfield, G. R. (2006). Governing Kurdistan: The Strengths of Division. *The Future of Kurdistan in Iraq*, 195-218.
[21] Natalie, Denise. *The Kurdish Quasi-State: Development and Dependency in Post -Gulf War Iraq*, Syracuse University Press. 2008.
[22] National Democratic Institute, *Iraqi Election Watch: KRG Parliamentary Elections*, November 19, 2013, Edition 7.

degree. One needs stamps, papers and signatures for everything providing signs of emerging bureaucratic power and a bureaucratic culture that one must take very seriously.

On a formal level the Peshmerga are the armed forces of a future Kurdistan. Any violent clashes with the Iraqi state actually takes place only along the contested borders, even then, the clashes are less with the Iraqi Army but militias directly and or indirectly linked to the Iraqi state. Seen through the prism of existing literature on separatist fighters the Peshmerga are the armed forces of the future Kurdish state. An Iraqi national from the south crossing into Kurdish territory is treated as crossing into a different country.[23] The dimension of territorial and population control is reified. There is a border that is unofficial and unrecognized in terms of global diplomacy and international law but is a very real and effective border crossing for any traveler who encounters it. At the institutional level and given the security situation, Iraqis from the south entering Kurdistan must obtain approval from Kurdish authorities to enter their territory, and pre-approved permission to move around. Complicating the issue analytically, representatives of the KRG are also part of the central government in Baghdad simultaneously as it does not hide its goal of independence.

Seen from Baghdad, The KRG use of its own armed forces is at odds with the logic and formal dictates of the central government. The Kurds are separatists seeking to dismember Iraq's territorial integrity along ethnic nationalist lines. Yet Baghdad recognizes the Kurdistan Regional Government, as per the 2005 constitution as a federal entity, and the Peshmerga is part of the

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[23] This state of affairs changed considerably after the Kurdish referendum and the Iraqi state reasserting its authority in 2017.

Iraqi security apparatus though the central government is loath to support its growth. But the

changed reality on the ground has led Baghdad to grudgingly accept the de-facto reality.

Inside KRG controlled territory, the reality of political authority is very different from the

idealized image of an institutionally capable and coherent separatist state. The electoral

representative structure and security architecture built on the spirit of the Washington agreement

hides an alternative reality. There are two parallel governance structures with different set of

core loyalists, supporters and clients complete with distinctly different aesthetics of how power is

broadcasted. The two hegemonic parties retain their own armed forces and control of their

respective de-facto territories in terms of the Yellow (KDP) and the Green Zone (PUK). The

territorial demarcation is informal and yet formal. This distinction is part of the everyday reality

for people who live with the contingencies of the moment. There is no escaping it for those who

want to start a business enterprise, buy or sell property or when in trouble with authorities.

The Peshmerga forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government are supposedly unified under a

single chain of command in their fight against the Islamic State that runs directly from the

Ministry of Peshmerga. Yet KDP allied Peshmerga fight on one front of the battle field against

the Islamic State while PUK affiliated Peshmerga fight on another front. Most Iraqi Kurds could

simply point at a Peshmerga soldier and recognize the differences in the uniforms and point out

to which party the soldier belongs to and where his or her ultimate loyalties are located.

So on the one hand, Kurds are separatists vis-à-vis the central government in Baghdad,

yet are also part of it. Inside Iraqi Kurdistan, the KRG really is predicated on two different armed

forces, controlling two separate parts of KRG territory. But they are unified under the rubrics of

the Kurdistan Regional Government. There are also truly representative political parties across

the entire array of ethnic, religious and linguistic cleavages. In spite of the political, economic and military crises the Kurdish quasi state has not collapsed. Existing discussions of rebel governance, wartime orders and logic of violence leave much unexplained on the nature of KRG authority configuration and the forms of violence that the protagonists exercise. And what is the state in Kurdistan region of Iraq? And yet the political -military dynamics in Baghdad makes Kurdistan appears to be an instance of exceptional clarity.

Iraq, Baghdad

Iraq's political institutions are exceptionally representative and as consociational as democratic Belgium.[24] The government of Iraq (GOI) is led by a majority Shia coalition with Kurds as minority partners along with some Sunni and other elected minority representatives. But it is a mistaken assumption to take these supposed sectarian and ethnic parliamentary grouping as monolithic blocs for they are not. Most, though not all, political parties retain their own militias or militias have their own political parties. Baghdad has no political center and its political and military dynamics are a contradiction on itself that, in the absence of external intervention, threatens to turn Iraq from a dysfunctional state to a completely failed state - but failed never means the absence of order, only different type of order.

Some assume away this internal contradiction that threatens to turn Baghdad into a failed state and refuse to see Baghdad as being governed in terms of a distinctive wartime authority configuration that is characteristic of contemporary failed states. Rather, they try to understand politics and military dynamics in Baghdad through the formal political and military institutional

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[24] Norris, P. (2008). Driving democracy. *Do Power-Sharing Institutions Work*, 29-50.

configurations that makes exceptional sense on paper but have very little congruence with realities on the ground. An alternative and a realistic way to understand the political and military dynamics, understanding Baghdad for the contradiction on itself that it is, is to see it in terms of a variation in wartime authority configuration and a particular battle-space for the combatants involved.

Several prominent examples will highlight the contradiction and the saliency of seeing Baghdad through the prism of wartime authority configuration, a particular battle-space that is neither at war nor at peace. Badr Organization of Iraq is a good example. Badr Organization fights side by side the Iraqi armed forces in its fight against the Islamic State. It has long been the military wing of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI), the prominent Shia political party that has always been part of the ruling coalition.[25] However, the leaders of ISCI, (Amar Hakim and others) sided with the coalition that supported Prime Minister Abadi against the previous leader Nouri al-Maliki. The leader of the Badr Organization, Haider Amiri, at the behest of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards broke away from ISCI and became an independent militia.[26]

The Badr Organization is structured as a conventional armed force. It also functions as its own political party with twenty-two representatives in the parliament. Its leaders have rotated in and out of numerous cabinet positions as civilian ministers, and many of its senior members hold the equivalent of non-elected Senior Executive Service appointments in the government and remained part of the United Iraqi Alliance, the Watani List, that consist of Shia Islamist parties and the largest electoral block. Badr leader(s) also directs military operations and act and pose as

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[25] Patel, D. S. (2015). ISIS in Iraq: What we get wrong and why 2015 is not 2007 redux. *Middle East Brief*, *87*, 1-8.
[26] Interview, former Iraqi Deputy Prime-Minister, 2017.

military commanders in battle fields though none of them holds any command position in the formal security architecture.

Then there was the Jayish-al-Mahdi, also known as Mahdi Army that fought the United States forces, and also the Iraqi Government Forces, while being part of it.[27] The same group has rebranded itself as Peace Companies, Saraya-al-Salam. They remain loyal to Moqtada al-Sadr, a mid-level Shia cleric with eminent clerical, nationalist and familial lineage, and heir to an exceptional clerical network. Sadrists' for short, Shia in persuasion, with its intensely sectarian history and outlook and part of the ruling coalition, Sadrists contravened expectations and surprised even ardent detractors when they chose to support the anti-government demonstrations led by Sunni's in Fallujah against the Shia prime-minister Maliki in 2011 calling it Iraq's Arab Spring and marched in Baghdad.[28] Sadrists represent the urban Shia broadly. It has a political party, elected members, networks of NGO's, community activists, and also its own armed force. Its members are in the parliament and it is part of the government. Yet its supporters also chose to ransack the parliament in protests against government's overall incompetence in May of 2016.[29]

Some militias remained completely outside the formal arrangements of power, Uzaib-al-Haq for example. But even it has transitioned into a formal political party. It started as a splinter

[27] Cordesman, A. H., & Ramos, J. (2008). "Sadr and the Mahdi Army: Evolution, capabilities, and a new direction". *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 4. For an exceptional account, see Krohley, Nicholas. *The Death of the Mehdi Army: The Rise, Fall, and Revival of Iraq's Most Powerful Militia*. Hurst Publishers (2015)

[28] Steele, Jonathan. "Iraq's Own Arab Spring", The Guardian, 25 April 2011.

[29] https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/04/protesters-storm-baghdad-green-zone-parliament-160430120004964.html

group from Sadrist Mahdi Army and fought the Americans with the support from the Iranian

Revolutionary guards when the Sadrists were sticking to a ceasefire.[30] They maintained their

military resources with Iranian support and allied with Shia law makers of the State of Law

coalition, led by former Prime-Minister Nuri Maliki. It also became Maliki's own hatchet men

and private army that hounded the Sunni lawmakers.[31] When the Islamic State almost marched to

the outskirts of Baghdad, they along with other Popular Mobilization Forces fought the Islamic

State and remained part of the broader coalition of actors that fought the Islamic State. It

provides security to affiliated lawmakers, had affiliated law makers in the Iraqi parliament, and

its combatants also got partial remuneration from the Iraqi state coffers. Now Uzaib-al- Haq falls

under the broader rubric of Popular Mobilization Forces and is formally part of the government

but is not part of the formal command-control arrangement. There are over forty such militias, of

which eight remain highly influential. There is also the Iraqi Army and its many specialized units

that the Americans train which is also seen as a militia by some sectors of Iraqis. In addition, in

the northwest of Iraq mainly along the Nineveh plain there are series of recently created militias

along confessional and ethnic lines that defend their respective little safe enclaves from the

Islamic State. This is a reality where multiple armed actors exercise various forms of violence in

different degrees of intensity and a world far from the baseline of a single hegemonic order

providing routinized obedience. It is also far from a battle-space with armed actors defending,

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[30] Cochrane, M. (2008). Asaib Ahl al-Haq and the Khazali Special Groups Network. *Institute for the Study of War*, *13*. And also, Knights, M. (2010). The evolution of Iran's special groups in Iraq. *West Point Counter Terrorism Center Sentinel*, *3*(11-12). Wyer, S. (2012). *The Resurgence of Asa'ib Ahl Al-Haq*. Institute for the Study of War.

[31] Numerous interviews in Iraq, and also see,
https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/28/world/middleeast/baghdad-abduction-of-sunni-figure-displays-gangland-edge-of-iraqi-politics-with-intimidation-and-violence.html

expanding or contesting clearly delineated areas of control. What is the nature of the battle-space that combatants navigate and the authority configuration that people navigate here?

Outcomes, Types, Processes?

As the brief descriptions of my cases illustrate above, my inquiry into civil wars cast in terms of trying to understand the variations in battle-spaces compels me to evaluate existing categories and improve on them to better understand both known and known-unknown outcomes, types, and processes in civil wars.

Outcomes

Civil wars arrive at varied equilibrium conditions on multiple levels of analysis while the broader conflict may drag-on. The notion of "rebel governance" is predicated on this reality. The current scholarly attention to rebel governance and the politics of civil war violence really is just a new version of the old fashion 20th century study of "liberated zones". Such as in the classical manner of Basil Davidson,[32] Patrick Chabal and James Scott. It is a military condition that is characterized by a 'stalemated battle-space'. Bracketing this moment as an equilibrium condition in the long process of civil war allows investigators the opportunity to study rebel and state behavior independently.

What does this equilibrium condition look like when combatants, for example, the Shia militias and Kurdish Peshmerga vis-a-vis Baghdad, are integrated into the state, with their armed

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[32] Davidson, Basil. *The Liberation of Guinea: Aspects of an African Revolution*, Penguin Books, 1969; *The Eye of the Storm: Angola's People*, Doubleday Books, 1973; Amilcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership And People's War, Africa World Press, (1983) 2003.

force structures intact? What is the state, who are the rebels? How do these moments appear as outcomes in the absence of clearly demarcated front-defense-lines and check-points when it pertains to Shia militias? The same applies in terms of the two Kurdish militant groups that are integrated into the Kurdish Regional Government state structure. The advantage in this study is that it forces us to pay attention to how some militants are integrated into the state and why some are not. The two represent contrasting institutional outcomes that in turn have contrasting ramifications to both combatant decision making and people since both must now internalize the arrangement and navigate it on a day to day basis. This development raise questions about modern warfare rooted in the nature of the state and its relation to its armed opponents just as it begs one to define this phenomenon in terms of a specific political military outcome. In order to come to terms with the varied processes we need to understand both the structural constraints faced by the state and combatants and how the state and combatant elites make decisions nested within those constraints. Framing these outcomes, I propose, in terms of combatant-state relationships, that is, how combatants relate to each other in terms of violence in a battle-space, allow us to understand the counterintuitive outcomes as well as predictable outcomes, but do so differently.

Types: Combatants, Rebels, and States

The casting of the puzzle in terms of variations in battle-spaces also forces me to critically evaluate existing types of rebels, synonymously used here as combatants, and states and expand on them conceptually. Begin with the conceptual, analytical and etymological conundrum of "rebels". Current understandings of civil wars are predicated on the assumption of "rebellion" and the starkly confrontational position that exist between rebels and the state. But if an armed

group is part of the state and its confrontational position is contingent and selective not

principled, can it be categorized as rebels as highlighted previously. Further, most of the existing

rebel types conflate goals strategies and causes in their definitions - anti-colonial, separatists,

insurgents - that provide little analytical utility in contemporary instances. Then there is the

underlying editorial position that goes with rebels. Rebels by definition evokes the sense and

reality of challenging existing power relations. But what about when these combatants are part of

the existing power structure? These realities contradict on the one hand the idea of "rebels per

se". And on the other, when these "rebels" are part of the state, their logic as non-state actors

with capacity for violence that seek to alter social control runs counter to the notion of the 'state.'

What is the logic of politics and violence in these instances? What is their relationship to the

people, and what is the nature of the 'state' and the nature of rebel-state relationship that make

the emergence of this possible? These contemporary instances cannot be assumed away as

exceptions to the rule for they appear to proliferate. Seeing these protagonists in terms of how

they relate to their respective battle-spaces allow us to evaluate the boundary conditions of

existing types, evaluate them critically and innovate on them. The situation is similar in terms of

the state.

States remain the inescapable political reality combatants of all types and hues must

grapple with, even in failed 'states' such as Somalia. A failed state, Somalia for example, lacks

the capacity to implement the prerogatives expected of a state. Yet even in such a state the reality

of a state still exists since a state is as much defined in terms of its capacity as much by the

international community that recognizes sovereign authorities as legitimate, making the state a

legally constituted political reality, even though the state on the ground may consist of series of

personalist networks. Consequently, there are "sovereign appurtenances" appointed and

internationally recognized leaders wield, that has implications on the battle-space in myriad

ways. Combatants in Somalia then face a particular kind of a state that generates a specific type

of state power. Similarly, the Turkish state is different, and it generates a specific form of state

power from Iraq, and so and so forth. Casting the puzzle in terms of battle-spaces forces me to

evaluate the many concepts of states with a fresh mind, so I could first typify the state so that it

explains the variations of the state and do so in a way that allows me to understand the variations

in the <u>forms</u> of state power and its impact on battle-spaces. This is not a call for a fundamental

reevaluation of scholarship on the state. Rather, using existing definitions, I will have to derive

variations that allows me to place the analysis at its institutional (what the state is) and its

functional dimensions (what the state does). That will also force me to evaluate the puzzle at the

institutional level where macro level cleavages and micro-level dynamics of violence are always

mediated. Variations along the level of analysis is also significant, hence my Alice in

Wonderland analogy.

Existing scholarships is replete with discussions of rebel state interaction at macro level

and at the micro level but very little is discussed and analyzed at the intermediate level. For

example, conflict between PKK and the Turkish state is usually cast in terms of an ethnic

conflict.[33] Similarly, the many conflicts in Iraq are also described along ethnic and sectarian

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[33] Kirişci, K., Kirisci, K., & Winrow, G. M. *The Kurdish question and Turkey: An example of a trans-state ethnic conflict*. Psychology Press. 1997; Harff, B. *Ethnic conflict in world politics*. Routledge. 2018. Lyon, A. J., & Uçarer, E. M. (2001). Mobilizing ethnic conflict: Kurdish separatism in Germany and the PKK. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *24*(6), 925-948; Berberoglu, B. *The national question: nationalism, ethnic conflict, and self-determination in the 20th century*. Temple University Press. 2009.

categories.[34] They are instances of explanations that takes place along macro-level (master)

concepts corresponding to master cleavages. Analysis using master concepts at the macro-level

are not-incorrect since they corroborate to a particular aspect of reality, but it is never the

complete truth. As Stathis Kalyvas points out, micro level dynamics are not always congruent

with macrolevel cleavages. Because "civil wars are not binary conflicts, but complex and

ambiguous processes that foster the "joint" action of local and supralocal actors, civilians and

armies, whose alliance results in violence that aggregates yet still reflects their diverse goals. It is

the convergence of local motives and supralocal imperatives that endows civil wars with their

particular and often puzzling character, straddling the divide between the political and the

private, the collective and the individual".[35] Further, even in conflicts where on the ground

dynamics closely resemble the macro-level ethnic or sectarian cleavages, protagonists on the

ground act strategically reacting to contingencies of the moment.[36] To better understand the

incongruity that exist between macro-level cleavages and micro-level dynamics, we have to look

at how the two are mediated at the institutional level. Casting the puzzle in terms of variations in

battle-spaces forces me to shift the analytical locus.

Processes

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[34] Galbraith, P. W. The case for dividing Iraq. *Time Magazine; 2006. Gelb, LH (2003). The Three-State Solution. New York: The New York Times;* Galbraith, P. W. *The end of Iraq: How American incompetence created a war without end.* Simon and Schuster. 2007.

[35] Kalyvas, S. N. (2003). The ontology of "political violence": action and identity in civil wars. *Perspectives on politics*, *1*(3), 475-494.

[36] Kalyvas, Stathis N. "Ethnic defection in civil war." *Comparative Political Studies* 41, no. 8 (2008): 1043-1068.

Lastly trying to assess the variations in battle-spaces, synonymously used here as wartime authority configurations, also allows me to understand the nature of multiple violent processes inherent to war-zones. In conflict violence is a means and also a process. Existing findings show how violence as a process correlates with the territorial control strategies pursued by combatants, both rebel and state[37], and how violence against civilians also correlates with the nature of combatant organizations.[38] These findings exist in a world without ideas and institutions with non-state combatants pitted against a state. But the nature of the state, its institutions, and the combatant narrative could also have an impact on violence as a process. Violence correlating with territory is very much a coercive intensive and information intensive process. But as highlighted earlier, how does these processes look like when the combatants are fractured, and the state is fractured while both are fused into the state? Existing findings also show that collecting information is a labor-intensive affair. The nature of combatant organizational capacity plays a huge role in generating information that allows combatants to employ combat power, violence, effectively. How does the information landscape impact combatant decisions, in terms of their understanding of the battle space, when existing combatants are non-sophisticated networks, and much less organizations? Further, processes of violence are an outcome of combatant decision making in how they choose to employ violence, and they decide contingent on their strategy. Therefore, combatant strategy gets causal primacy on explaining processes of violence, though these actors have to devise their strategies within the political world and the social structures that they inhabit. Think back to the nighttime driver in suburban America. Opposing that state, with stop signs that command that level of authority, is a very different

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[37] One of the empirical findings by Kalyvas in The Logic of Violence in Civil War.
[38] One of the empirical findings by Jeremy Weinstein in his seminal book Inside Insurgency

affair than opposing a state like Somalia's in which the formal measures of capacity are very low. The implication of these comparisons is that processes of violence are contingent on such matters as degrees of exclusivity of territorial control and the extent to which combatants have to pay more attention to social structures. This is the institutional interface where state and society interact, and one finds the development of different processes of violence in warfare.

The Premise: Societal Power Networks, the State and Global-Local Connections

This study is premised on series of core propositions. The study is predicated on Michael Mann's epistemic position on power and his conception of society. Michael Mann argued that the concept of "a society" provides a useful idiom but that "societies" are never total entities and do not constitute single units of analysis. Rather, societies constitute of "multiple overlapping and intersecting socio-spatial networks of power…and that a general account of societies, their structure, and their history can best be given in terms of the interrelations of what" he "calls the four sources of social power: ideological, economic, military, and political (IEMP) relationships. These are (1) overlapping networks of social interaction….. (2) They are also organizations, institutional means of attaining human goals. Their primacy comes not from the strength of human desires for ideological, economic, military, or political satisfaction but from the particular organizational means each possesses to attain human goals, whatever these may be".[39] Consequently, when this study refer to "power" it operationalizes power in Michael Mann's terms as an emergent need. Individuals, as purposive beings in pursuit of their goals generate power as an emergent need, and Mann derive four core sources of social power along which power is organized, ideological, economic, political and military. When this study refers to

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[39] Michael Mann (1986). *Sources of Social Power: A History of Power from Beginning to AD 1760*, Cambridge University Press. Volume 1, P.8

"societies" and "social structure" synonymously, the reference denotes that societies are "multiple overlapping and intersecting socio-spatial networks of power" with limited degree of boundedness that characterize the specific societal context in question. Though Mann identifies four broad macro-level sources of social power, he recognizes that there can be multiple sub-power networks that are derived from and organize around the major sources of social power.

The study is also premised on the reality that there are a constant global and local connections across space and time that shape contemporary internal conflict zones.[40] Many contemporary civil wars reflect profound changes in how communities are governed and changes in the defining relationship between what is local and global. I attempt to aggregate and see the iterative and changing global and local connections along ideational, economic, political, and military sources of social power. These connections play out in seemingly innocuous ways that has battle-space implications.

For example, Afghan army soldiers rallying around a deceased Taliban soldier are on some intense discussions. It is not about the Taliban fighter or the tactical relevant intelligence found on him but about the smart phone they have found him.[41] Similarly, an illiterate part-time pirate in the off-season doing his job as a waiter and a security guard at the hotel owned by the head pirate wants to friend the American visitors on Facebook.[42] A Kurdish soldier affiliated with the Peoples Protection Units (YPG) of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) leaned her sniper rifle along a wall during a break and she chatted with, admonished and imparted guidance to her

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[40] Kaldor, Mary. *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, Stanford University Press. 1999.
[41] Simpson, Erin. *War from the Ground Up: Twenty First Century Combat as Politic*s, Oxford University Press. 2013.
[42] Personal experience, Bossaso, Puntland, 2012

relatives in Cologne and Essen, in Germany, on their school work during the lull in the fighting, on WhatsApp. The local-global connections have direct implications on the battle-space. For example, Danny Hoffman discusses how global political-economy changes impacted the form of warfare he witnesses in West Africain the early nineties. Using the epistemic position of Deleuze and Guattari in his War Machines, Hoffman notes what he calls "nomads", by which he means individuals who are able to shift from global-networks to local social relationships, and how they were able to shape the logic of warfare.[43] Will Reno refers to a similar phenomenon with his concept of "Key Masters". A Key Master in Reno's conception is the ultimate Global-Nomad and local shape-shifters. They signify a significant node in series of local and global set of power networks. The power networks can be ideational, economic, political, military, or even familial. A Key Master is an individual, an ideological, economic, political or military elite, that sit at the intersections of multiple societal power networks. Consequently, Key Masters can mobilize people and resources along varied networks. Reno identifies that in most fragmented states, these Key-Masters, the best of them, sits at the intersection of multiple power networks. For example, he identifies that in discussing an issue with a Somali elite in Mogadishu, which dimension of the Key-Master he will be engaging is contingent on the time and the place. Mr. Key Master may meet him in the morning representing the imaginary Somali Federal Government underwritten by the international community as part of its decades long fake state building project. In the afternoon Mr. Key-Master will meet as the patron war-lord that provides security and underwrite property rights for his clan, and at the same time he is also something like a local level mayor for his community. In the evening over Qat and Chai he is transformed into an exceedingly engaging

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[43] Hoffman, Danny. *War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia*, Duke University Press. 2011.

conversationalist and an elite international businessman that is discussing his investments in

Dubai and imparts wisdom in the ways and means of profit transfers out of the country since

uncertainty reigns the business environment in Mogadishu. At night, he will be the liaison with

the al-Shabbab, or whichever the group that challenges the authority of the notional state and the

multinational force so that he can have some semblance of predictability in his security

arrangements vis a vis al-Shabbab to him personally and his clan broadly. Key-Masters in effect

draw on varied sources of social power to build, reify, and manage the power networks at the

nexus where local and global meet. They figure prominently in moments when state power and

authority are fragmented.

Similarly, Hoffman in his "war machine," reflect a particular moment of social-rupture,

an extreme manifestation of the contemporary global political economy and its un-rootedness.[44]

Though consistently cast in terms of primitive and tribal warfare in popular writing and popular

imagination, Hoffman points out that in the west African wars of the nineties, often featuring

"tribes" and seemingly archaic political ideas, are not backward and primitive. Rather, that they

are intensely contemporary phenomena and in his specific case, they were profoundly shaped by

the global processes of political economy. At the individual micro-level, the women and men

with capacity for violence leveraged their violent capacity as surplus labor, though the context

favored men, the opportunities were not exclusive to men. The organization of this kind of

warfare he witnessed in West Africa in the nineties, a harbinger of things to come, is networked

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[44] The term War Machines can be misleading in its resonance. Drawing from "A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia", a synthesis and also a critique of Marx and Freud, contemporary power state-market power relations, war machines in terms of the epistemic position of this study will be an extreme manifestation of societal networks of power that constitute a society are fundamentally and momentarily upended.

rather than hierarchical. At various stages of fighting, altered social structure, (societal networks of power) forces individuals to be contingent and flexible in their actions across different logics of fighting. This has contemporary relevance. In today's "collapsed states"[45], novel social structures consisting of "modern" people who have to live in an intensely globalized economy without the benefits of a conventional modern state, present possibilities for violent actors to make previously unheard of or unthinkable connections. The concept of "nomad" in Hoffman, and Key-Master in Reno, are particularly important in these context, as this kind of individual can shift across networks and utilize "social capital" (social relationships) into forms of power. Their positions provide them with what I would call "elite freedom of movement in battle-spaces". Their ability to seamlessly transition across and between power networks and hierarchies that few others could do that shape dynamics on the ground.

Similarly, the concept of "*hittiste*", referred to in the Algiers context is also relevant seen in contemporary contexts as I conceptualize here as "Local-Drifters".[46] Local-Drifters are the urban youth, who have no past, no future, and only the present with loyalty to the moment and the place they stand on. But I argue that in a deeply connected world, the "urban" and "rural" dichotomy does not really hold. An urban youth and a rural youth with a smartphone both can lament what they do not have and aspire similarly, if only the rural youth need to make it to the city while the urban youth dreams of getting on a boat. Local-drifters are a contemporary social

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[45] we will return to the logic of collapsed states and realize that no state is completely collapsed, and how it is **not** a very contemporary phenomenon, it is contemporary only in the interpretation of it.

[46] Lloyd, C. (2004). Understanding the Dynamics of Conflict: Insights from the Case of Algeria. *Al-Raida Journal*, 46-51; Lloyd, C. (2002). Thinking about the Local and the Global in the Algerian Context. *Oxford Development Studies*, *30*(2), 151-163; Adam Shatz, Algeria's Failed Revolution, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2003/07/03/algerias-failed-revolution/

category in many places, especially in failing and failed states. They live in an intensely modern environment, being fully aware of what lies elsewhere, and the glories others enjoy but they exist without the benefits of modernity as one understands the modern benefits. Local-Drifters in Algiers (the hittiste that became foot soldiers of FIS and GIA in the Algerian civil war) could argue with you on all the intricacies of premier league player exchanges, political and celebrity gossip, though not always accurate, that reflect their hyper connectivity. The similarity cuts across space, similar to the Pakistani Taliban caught with cricket clips on their smartphones, ISIS fighters watching premier league and clips of latest Lebanese music videos. YPG fighters intensely watching and dissecting ISIS propaganda videos on Youtube and other sites to assesses battle drills and isolate weaknesses. The connection between Key-Masters and local-drifters, have implications in terms of how the networks of power overlap, and also in how global-nomads turned local Key-Masters with their "freedom of movements" across hierarchies shape the global-local connections, and how that shape the fighting on the ground.

This study is also premised on the notion that these cross-border, and cross-national relations are taking place neither in a "post-sovereign state" environment and nor are these post-modern wars. Rather, these are intensely modern phenomena very much structured and shaped by the idea and the reality of the modern state, even in contexts when the ostensible state is absent, collapsed or have failed. The premise is that the state is an actor and it is also a space. The idea and the reality of the state profoundly shape warfare in obvious and also in non-obvious ways. The latter figure prominently in context of what are referred to as failed states. A central premise is that it is impossible to assume away the state in failed state contexts. As the pages below will illustrate, the wars of state collapse can in the first instance define the space for the fight just as quickly can also become wars of protection against the state, at least for many local

residents. Some fighters and residents may think of their own vision of the state (or of more basic forms of protection), as wars against the frontal assault of the global political economy, (Algerian Hittiste, fired up by GIA may not have thought in those terms, but GIA global-nomads and Key-Masters knew how to capture the moments, just as ISIS or any number of others do), against global ideas or forces that causes too much disruption. This is a moment of war-machine in Hoffman's conception, a social rupture with fluidity and speed. When the fluidity and speed is lost, War Machines become co-opted into the state. But this is not always possible as evidenced in the case of Somalia. Meaning in Hoffman's cases of west African states he is referring to de-territorilized logic of war-machines getting re-territorialized. The state (with external support and in varying degrees of effectiveness) captured the initiative of the war-machines. Given the growing number of collapsed states, there are more of Hoffman's war machines these days. But states and third-party interveners do a bad job of fighting these wars. But not always. The combatant counterparts of some state forces are also flexible, eminently adoptable and innovative given the changes in the global-local connections, social networks and the state. When state forces refer to "smoothing out space" for example, these are moments when the state forces want to engage armed groups in this fluid and adoptable social environment. This is about un-structuring physical as well as organizational and conceptual spaces so that a states' armed forces can capture the intricacies of the battle-space well enough to isolate and acquire the enemy, however defined, in a constantly changing and complex urban environment.[47]

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[47] Weizman, Eyal. *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, Verso Books. 2011.

The premises impact the agency of all the protagonists in a war-zone. War zones in the conventional imagination have at a minimum three protagonists, two categories of combatants, each opposed to the other, and the civilians in the middle. This essential idea of warfare gives each category a specific kind of agency. For example, existing scholarship tells us that the civilian is supposed to observe which combatants are strongest, and on that basis will plan accordingly to secure her own safety, this being an essential part of the logic of territorially defined warfare.[48] But civil wars in which combatants (and civilians) are linked to each other in networks of collusion and collaboration at the same time that they are opposed to one another are caught in an Alice-in-Wonderland context that is constantly changing around them. This condition forces them to constantly re-evaluate their positionality. That is, the battle-space for the combatants and the authority configurations for civilians that shape their respective decisions are constantly changing. This battle-space encompasses their social relationships as much as it does territory. Thus, the actor who observes the ebb and flow of social and territorial control simultaneously has more options and faces additional dangers compared to the territorially bounded actor in the classic conception of civil war violence in Kalyvas' Logic of Violence and US MIlitary's FM3-24 counterinsurgency manual. Complicating this picture, these interrelated processes also appear and work differently along the many levels of analysis.

Iraq's ongoing conflict(s) provides a neat illustration of these multiple dynamics. There are macro-level divisions along ethnic (between Kurds and Arabs) and sectarian (Sunni and Shia) cleavages. From a bird's eye view these cleavages neatly correlate with territorial divisions. The logic of violence also correlates with territorial control at times. More important to

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[48] Kalyvas 2006; 87-145.

most Iraqi's, however, populations are interspersed, and territorial divisions are inchoate. Individuals occupy positions across these divides and seem to shift and hedge their bets. Social and territorial cleavages do matter though they may not explain the nature of all the civil wars taking place inside Iraq at all times. On the surface, Iraq has a federal and a highly representative political system. Multiple political parties have affiliated militias, and sometimes contestation between these militias correspond to existing (ethnic, sectarian) cleavages. But sometimes they do not and instead correspond to new not so clearly delineated cleavages such as political affiliations and patronage loyalties. On the ground, at the micro-level, combatants exercising violence and civilians navigating contesting forms of violence find that those macro-level and meta-level cleavages matter but not always. It is contingent on the time and the place. And that realities inherent to the micro-level, localized political, economic, sectarian, territorial and personal, also contribute to the daily realities of violence. Those realities are also contingent on time and they may drive issues in the reverse directions, shaping events processes at the meta/institutional level.

Combatants and civilians navigate these multiple realities inhabiting the same space, within the recognized boundaries of a state. Combatants and civilians also find that no matter how weak, ineffective or supposedly absent, the state has an impact in shaping the reality that civilians have to navigate, and combatants contend with in terms of the battle-space. This is concomitant with the reality that the state is an actor and a space. But this also raises the auxiliary puzzle that we have to constantly be in discussion with in trying to understand war zones, what is the state, since it varies from place to place. And how does the state play a role in defining the nature of a war zone for civilians and the battle-space for combatants?

Conclusion

All civil wars are similar as they are all different. The variations of civil wars are explained by myriad variables and points of views based on different levels of analysis. The puzzle is how to understand the contours of these variations, so as to be able to parse out the institutional and micro-level processes that are context specific. The next chapter provides the argument about the key elements of state authority in contemporary civil wars that affect the logic of violence and the choices of actors—combatants and others—that face this Alice-in-Wonderland situation. And this Alice-in-Wonderland situation is not exclusive to scholarly and policy perspective looking-in from outside, but people in these contexts also face Alice-in-Wonderland situation except they face immediate choices that they must make with extremely imperfect information. Therein lies the significance of this study; to shed light on new concepts and categories in the process of explaining how to make sense of the rabbit hole that is civil-war.

Chapter 2: Theory of Battle-Spaces in 21st Century Civil Wars

It was much pleasanter at home,' thought poor Alice, `when one wasn't always growing larger and smaller, and being ordered about by mice and rabbits. I almost wish I hadn't gone down that rabbit-hole–and yet–and yet–it's rather curious, you know, this sort of life! I do wonder what can have happened to me!'

<div align="right">- Lewis Carrol, Alice in Wonderland</div>

Violence shapes the nature of authority and mediates the relationship between state and society at all times everywhere, but differently. The nature of the relationship between the state, society and violence vary across war-zones. How do internal conflict zones across time and space generate these varied state-society relations generating different war time authority configurations - what combatants call variations in their battle-spaces – that in turn shape the violent, economic, and political processes in wartime?

To understand these dynamics and their relationship to the wider political environment, I develop a framework that illuminates the causes and the nature of these differences between forms of internal conflicts from the past to the present. The framework highlights the complex relationships between state and society, relationships between violence and authority, and battle-spaces. It also highlights the defining relations across levels of analysis that shape our understanding of conflict zones.

State Sovereignty, Authority and the Battle-Space

The state, the notion of sovereign prerogatives of a state and authority are integral to the study of non-state combatants. This investigation of the behavior of armed actors starts at the state, the nexus where master concepts of power, sovereignty, and society interact with combatants.

States shape social interactions inside and outside state boundaries regardless of the varieties of organization and capacities of these states, even those in which domestic institutions are very weak. If an individual has no legal affiliation to a state, that person is forced to exist in the interstices of states as a stateless person being half-human, legally speaking, since that person is unable to even pass through most airports in transit. A core proposition is that non-state combatants challenging existing power relations in pursuit of goals, whatever they may be – holding constant the causes, sources and goals - reflect the state and the social structures of the state that they fight. This requires clarification.

The state and social structure though analytically autonomous, overlap and are fused together in reality. The relationship between the two has animated state theorists. The conception of the state here is as both a space and also an actor as conceptualized by Michael Mann.[49] Mann's proposition varies from the conceptualization of the state in both Marxist and pluralist

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[49] Mann, Michael. "The autonomous power of the state: its origins, mechanisms and results," *European Journal of Sociology/Archives européennes de sociologie*, *25*(2), (1984); 185-213. Mann elaborates his discussion in *The Sources of Social Power: The Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760-1914, Vol II*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), especially see Chapter 2, A Theory of the Modern State, (Page 44); and The Rise of the Modern State I, Rise of the Modern State II, Rise of the Modern State III, and Rise of the Modern State IV, (Pages 358 to 509).

theorists that see the state as purely as a space. His definition also defers from elitist theorists of state that give state elites an unwarranted level of functional autonomy. Building on Mann's concepts, the state defines the territorial contours, therefore it defines the space. It used to be, during the European state formation process – and it was a fundamental European phenomenon since in the rest of the world power was organized as empires, kingdoms, cities, clans, tribes – defining and defending the external boundaries was an essential precondition of and what also propelled state formation. Today, a state can define the space because the territoriality is externally guaranteed. This is a remarkable difference, a structural condition that emerged in the post- World War II world order that has ramifications in both the use of violence and development of state capacity for violence. In the previous periods, a state without capacity to defend its own borders, (leaving aside its offensives capacities), will be incorporated into the realm of a powerful neighboring state in quick order. Therefore, violence in the states in the early twentieth, nineteenth and eighteenth centuries had to have a duality in their military capacity, internal repression, and external defense. Today a state can take its external defense for granted since international community guarantees the sanctity of borders, therefore, the juridical sovereignty. Thus, a state's position as a space is externally guaranteed.[50] But the state is also an actor.

As an actor the state shapes the many societal networks of power that is referred to commonly as "*the social structure*" or "*the society*". As pointed out earlier, "a society" consist of series of interconnecting and overlapping networks of power with limited degrees of boundedness. In fact, the territorial boundedness is so taken for granted, that when people speak

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[50] South Sudan, Somalia, Central Africa Republic, Niger, Chad – essentially all the weak states today would be incorporated into a powerful neighbors' territory.

of societies at the macro-level, they refer to a group of people living in a demarcated territory caged by a state or some sub-national territorial demarcation, American society, Yugoslav society until it wasn't, Kurdistan society now that there is an autonomous quasi-state in Iraqi Kurdistan region, or the society in Telanaga in India now that it has become demarcated into a new federal state in 2014, and until then the society in Telanaga today was actually the society in Andra Pradesh state, etc. The state defines the territorial contours and shapes social relations within the territory. That is, it shapes how the networks of power that constitutes society in turn shape individual interactions. State power in effect creates social order.[51]

Predictable social order is a collective outcome of routinized obedience to hegemonic authority. The modern ideal type of order, such as the suburban stop sign in America, people leaving houses unlocked in Minnesota, is one in which the state is a predictable rational-legal authority structure that defines how individuals and organizations relate to power and how people enter into power relations with each other. As noted in the previous chapter, violence is pervasive in peace, but it is not recognized as such. Our obedience to predictable authority structures is a function of power relations, underwritten by violence. It is routinized and internalized well enough that it is possible to assume the violence away. Consistent obedience generates the familiar form of social control. The overlapping triumvirate of institutionalized authority, organized violence and logistics of political control constitutes the peace we take for granted. Logistics of political control, as Michel Mann pointed out, is what makes it possible for states to "cage" individuals within the defined territory. Caging individuals inside territorial

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[51] This is true in even the weakest states, since they create authority structures outside the collapsing formal state institutions on the basis of their status and prerogatives as agents of a globally recognized sovereign.

states, providing social order, is a sovereign prerogative of a state and this reality has wartime

implications.

State Sovereignty & Wartime

The rise of sovereignty in its monopolized form that gave Europe its Westphalian peace was an

unintended driver of state building processes throughout Europe.[52] Westphalian peace generated

the space necessary to produce states that had the internal capacities to fight wars. Their

sovereignty was earned by their survival in rough neighborhoods. Strength eventually was

measured in terms of the *Crown's* – king and the ultimate sovereign - capacity to build

administrative authority *(the Throne)*. This authority came to dominate the state internally. And

over time, inter-state war, industrial revolution and capitalism crystallized social power in terms

of the modern state, the classic Weberian model of the legal-rational bureaucratic state. Charles

Tilly pointed out how the relationship between capital and war making shaped the state

formation trajectory in Europe, while Michael Mann pointed out how the different combinations

of power crystallizations shaped the state formation path and the consequent nature of states.[53]

State construction outside Europe, particularly from the middle of the twentieth century, is quite

different. This difference has a major impact on the character of the battle-space in contemporary

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[52] The notion of monopolized sovereignty generates economies of scale in security, rulemaking, and enforcement. It reduced transactions costs in the proliferation of literacy, in the standardization of processes, standardization of rules of law and conventions, all of which contributed to the European economic divergence that began in the seventeenth century.

[53] Tilly, Charles. *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990-1990* (p. 100). Blackwell Publishers. 1992. Mann, Michael. *The Sources of Social Power: The Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760-1914*, Vol II. Cambridge University Press. 1993.

civil wars. Because the kind of state in which a war is fought has a decisive impact on the

character of that war. Thus*, I benchmark state power and state authority configurations in terms of variations of a state's exclusive sovereign prerogatives.*

State sovereignty is both granted (de jure) and earned (de facto), with corresponding impacts on authority structures. An authority structure is the overarching set of formal and informal rules, norms and rituals that individual, organizational and communities follow in entering into power relations in pursuit of their goals. When the international community recognizes a state, it grants juridical sovereignty which allows a state to acquire sovereign prerogatives and appurtenances that pattern how it relates to the rest of the community of states. This mutual recognition of sovereignty confers prerogatives on those who can lay claim to it, even in instances where domestic order breaks down and state institutions collapse, a form of "organized hypocrisy" in Stephen Krasner's words.[54]

Historically, a state earned sovereignty when it could project its rule and dominion over the territory that it claims to control—de facto sovereignty. That state has in place firm logistics of social control - in its socio-spatial (territoriality and differentiated institutions) and functional (rule making and enforcement) dimensions - and as a result, the state patterns social relationships, everyone as Mann pointed out, is caged inside a state. This state sovereignty is real, palpable and it is a lived reality. There are countries that possess de jure, that is, externally recognized sovereignty, but have not earned it by virtue of domestic capacity.[55] South Sudan is a

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[54] Krasner, Stephen. *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, Princeton University Press. 1999.
[55] This disjuncture between *de facto* and *de jure* sovereignty is explored in greater depth in Robert Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World,* Cambridge University Press. 1990.

good example. Granted independence in 2011, its government promptly split into multiple

factions and civil war broke out in 2013. There are countries that have earned de facto internal

sovereignty but have not been granted it de jure. Somaliland is a good example of this condition.

Its government maintains domestic order and engages its citizens. Despite this capacity, and its

unilateral declaration of independence, no other state formally recognizes Somaliland as a de jure

sovereign state. The concept and the reality of state sovereignty - on which the modern world as

we have come to know it is built - is both granted and earned. Embedded in this concept of

sovereignty, since its Westphalian inception, is the notion of a monopoly, whether it is

approximated by domestic control validated by mutual recognition, or in recent cases like South

Sudan, buttressed primarily by exclusive international recognition. The construction of

sovereignty on the basis of mutual recognition assumes a monopoly of domestic authority, as the

international system does not (or at least very rarely) recognize dual sovereignty in a single

territory.[56] Even though the domestic construction of state authority evolved along varied paths,

the (European) state and nation building story of the crown—ultimately replaced by the people—

came to embody sovereign power. Historically, external recognition was predicated on the need

of the sovereign to demonstrate mastery of logistics of political control, i.e. the need to

territorially cage individuals, pattern social relationships, and use social surplus to generate

revenue for war making. Both Charles Tilly and Michael Mann overlap on this point.

But the evolution of warfare, rise of industrial capitalism generated a formalized bureaucracy and

the need to generate conformity and routinize social regulation. Because in addition to war

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[56] There are rare exceptions, such as Soviet / Russian economic rights in the Norwegian territory of Svalbard, and the 20th century Anglo-French condominium of New Hebrides. L.A. Mander, "The New Hebrides Condominium," *Pacific Historical Review*. 13:2, (1944): 151–167.

making, internal repression also required violence. However, regulating social interactions

through bureaucratic means, logistics of societal control, proved far more efficient means of

social organization than exclusive reliance on violence.

Britain during the middle of its industrial revolution was emblematic of this trajectory, where

worker unrest was first mitigated by militias, affiliated with the owners, followed by the police,

which was followed by deploying the armed forces. Overtime, armed forces ceased to engage,

police and bureaucratic formalism took its place. This is one aspect that gave rise to the

infrastructural power of the state, according to Michael Mann. Infrastructural Power is the

capacity of the state to actually penetrate civil society, and to implement logistically political

decisions throughout the realm.[57] It is the power of the state to penetrate and centrally coordinate

the activities of civil society through its own infrastructure. However, Infrastructural power also

checks the despotic tendencies of the state elites, since infrastructural power is power through

society not over it, therefore civil society organizations also become embedded in state power

networks. But it did give states more functional autonomy. *To rephrase Mann, this de facto*

sovereign state possesses territorial control and monopolizes prerogatives that the state as an

actor can perform autonomously of the people.

State sovereign prerogatives and state power generated authority gets altered in wartime

when the state as a space turns into a battle-space. And the state also becomes an actor shaping

the very space. This is the beginning moment of political, economic and violent endogenous

processes inherent to internal conflict. Consequently, the form of state power figures prominently

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[57] Mann, Michael. "The Autonomous Power of the State: its origins, mechanisms and results," *European Sociological Archive*, Volume 25, Issue 2 (1984): 185-213.

in shaping the battle-space. Due to the contemporary norm of de jure recognition, there is always a form of state power that prevails even in in failed states. This happens because the rulers of even an utterly failed state still possess prerogatives of sovereignty by virtue of the external recognition of their sovereignty. These rulers, for example, hold seats in the UN, receive state-to-state security assistance, and regulate foreign investment in their territories. This situation creates a global context that tolerates a wide variety of orders within states. Historically, polities have organized their domestic orders according to a wide range of logics. Hendrik Spruyt notes that early modern Europe was a continent of empires, leagues, city-states and other polities that existed alongside states. Heterogeneity prevailed until non-state forms proved unable to defend themselves from warring states; extinction was the external reflection of domestic incapacity.[58] But unlike Spruyt's vision of early modern Europe, contemporary variation takes place within the parameters of a relatively uniform external façade of globally recognized statehood that is able to tolerate even the near total collapse of conventional indicators of domestic capacity. Contemporary states range from a high-infrastructure state with bureaucratic form of state power such as the US to a state with limited infrastructure power such as Niger, where authority is exercised primarily through patron-client relationships, to a place such as Somalia that is characterized as a failed state. Just as warfare in early modern Europe reflected and then shaped the changing regional system, contemporary warfare reflects this internal and external heterogeneity of state power. Thus, a key claim in this study is that the form of state power and resultant authority structures play a role in shaping wartime battle-space dynamics in specific ways.

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[58] Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors: An Analysis of Systems Change*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

States in Wartime

Systems of governance exist even in completely collapsed states. "Collapse" as it is

conventionally conceived, really refers to the demise of formal bureaucratic hierarchies. This

often comes with the incapacity to defend against external invasion. But since the latter is a very

rare occurrence since the end of the Second World War, and when it does occur (i.e., Iraq's 1990

invasion of Kuwait), it is hard to sustain. Thus, alternative internal orders are sustainable behind

the façade of internationally recognized state sovereignty. When these international and internal

dimensions are taken into account, the state is a space and an actor in peace, as in wartime. The

state in its external and domestic dimensions defines the territorial contours of the battle-space,

along with its attendant physical realities. As an actor with autonomy, the state defines, shape

and limit how the civilians and combatants, state or otherwise, relate to the state and to one

another, both in terms of their capacity for violence and non-violent forms of minimal social

cooperation. The state (or at least those who can convince outsiders that they have a legitimate

claim to sovereignty) shapes the battle-space in terms of a venue and in terms of the defining

power relations that govern society. The battle-space is always a mixture of physical realities and

social realities and combatants have to navigate both astutely. The form of state power generated

authority shapes how combatants have to navigate both the physical and social space.

For example, in a state with a high degree of extensive infrastructure power, there is a

high degree of institutionalized logistics of social control and physical reach of the state, i.e.,

advanced transit systems, and institutional tentacles with which the state provide services

reaching the furthest corners of the state, whether it be a post-man, a police officer, government

agent, a clinic, a judge. Combatants in these states always have to be able to navigate in the same

infrastructures to harness sources of social power and combat power specifically, and then deploy them effectively in pursuit of their goals. For example, some insurgents who try to govern people under their control often incorporate the existing bureaucracies of the incumbent state into an administration that looks a lot like that of the state that they fight.[59] Combatants in this state face power and logistics of social control at variance from the ones in a very weak state such as the Central African Republic. Consequently, these two constitute very different battle-spaces, all else constant, born out of the form of logistics of social control in place by the state. These different realities of state power and logistics of social control shape how combatants relate to the state in terms of how they deploy military power which in turn shapes the processes of violence. In concrete terms, if there are non-state combatants exercising military power inside US territory (pursuing whatever objective) then the nature of combatants in the US will stand in contrast to combatants in Yemen. One reason is now obvious: holding constant the nature of combatants, the US and Yemen constitute two starkly contrasting state authority configurations, social structures, and consequently battle spaces. Similarly, non-state combatants with a degree of agency and autonomy vis-à-vis the wider society emerge in a specific context of state authority and state-society relations. Though combatants possess analytical and ontological autonomy, that autonomy cannot come at the cost of neglecting the specific state authority and the social-structure in which they emerge. Because how the combatants develop - or do not develop - their (ontological) autonomy vis-à-vis society and the state is precisely what is defining about combatants. So, this study attempts to see combatants on their own terms – the study attempts to recognize their idiographic nature - as well as the context in which they emerge.

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[59] Mamphilly, Zachariah. *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War*, Cornell University Press. 2011.

Civil-Society and Battle-Space

Civil-society organizations play a role in shaping the emergence of the non-state combatants, state behavior, and in shaping the battle-space. As states emerged, "it became conventional in the eighteenth century - and it has remained so ever since - to distinguish between two fundamental spheres of social activity, "civil-society" and the "state"[60]. The concept, necessity and the reality of civil society as we know it emerged as people, societies, transitioned to modern commercial, capitalist, and industrial society with accompanying ideological economic, political, intellectual and legal changes. In the classic Adam Smith (and Marxian) sense civil society referred to the economic sphere of activity and economic institutions that functioned autonomously of the state. But as Mann notes, others, "notably, Ferguson, Paine, Hegel, and Tocqueville, believed it comprised…..of 1) de-centered economic markets resting on private property, and 2) "forms of civil association …scientific and literary circles, schools, publishers, inns….religious organizations, municipal associations… households".[61] "These two spheres carried vital de-centered and diffused freedoms that they wished secured against the authoritative powers of the state".[62]

Today, civil society organizations (almost always in the social sciences) are seen in benevolent terms as a check against the despotic tendencies of the state. It is absolutely true in Canada, but never across time and space. For example, Germany in the nineteen thirties was a country replete and dense with civil society organizations but most of them happen to be either

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[60] Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, vol. 2: The Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760-1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 23.
[61] Ibid. 24
[62] Ibid 25

Nazi's or Nazi sympathizers.[63] Therefore this study does not make a normative claim on the benign and malign nature of civil society organizations. *Civil society organizations are seen here, as Mann does in his book Fascists, as non-violent societal power organizations that harness sources of social power, in pursuit of a collective objective, representing the collective will of a group of people.* The relevance of the benign or malign nature of the civil society organizations matter depending on one's own positionality in society and biases. Civil society organizations (by its very broad definition, but also in terms of the more restrictive definition here) are always present in war-zones, religious associations, business networks, human rights organizations, etc even in the most unexpected circumstances. Sometimes they exist overtly, sometimes clandestinely and usually in both forms. Their size, shape, capacity and organizational logic will always change depending on the context, but they will always be present. They play a role in shaping wartime-authority and battle-space dynamics. In conflict zones, faced with violence, individuals lacking in organizations have very limited agency to alter their immediate surrounding, i.e. battle-space.[64] But civil society organizations fill that void in moments of conflict. They can be digital activists, religious, ethnic organizations, political parties, trade unions, trade associations, to mothers of lost and disappeared. The saliency is that even in the best of circumstances individuals have limited agency in a stratified society subject to and navigating myriad forms of political and economic power relations. In times of conflict, navigating contesting forms of authority arbitrated by violence, individuals have very limited

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[63] Michael Mann, *Fascists* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2000)
[64] Certainly, one can counter this claim and parse out an elaborate process of everyday forms of resistance shaping some aspect of the battle-space, people running for their dear life, for example. Certainly, that is possible, but it is contingent on the nature of the combatants. In moments of total war, civilians are incorporated into the battle-space.

agency. Civil society organizations actually play a role in generating and exercising collective agency. The degree of agency of course varies across battle-spaces.

Rebels, Inside and Out: Politics of Wartime Authority and Battle-Spaces in 21st Century

In the long history of power agglomeration and organization in societies, the modern "state" is a particular form of how social power is crystallized and societies are regulated.[65] Based on Mann's epistemic position and his definition of a state, I derive four state ideal types along a state's functional dimension and show how these ideal types correspond to different forms of state power. I show how the form of state power plays an inordinate role in shaping the subsequent wartime dynamics and shaping the battle space.

<u>Theory</u>: Combatants, Inside and Out

In internal conflict, when one or more non-state combatants rely on violence to realize objectives they alter power relations in societies. And the type of state and the corresponding form of state power shape the nature of combatant-state relations. That is, the form of state power defines the macro-level feature of state-combatant relations, how the combatants and state engage in terms of violence - the nature of the fight.

These state-combatant relations – the nature of the fight - generate specific institutional outcomes at the meta-level, the institutional level, where the macro-level and micro level processes are mediated forming new authority configurations. I conceptualize these new war-time authority configurations in terms of the sovereign prerogative of a state and term the various wartime authority configurations as, <u>Challenged</u>, <u>Contested</u>, <u>Compromised</u>, and <u>Fragmented</u>

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[65] The essential thesis in Mann's explanation in the rise of states, and then nation states.

<u>Sovereignty</u>. Each of the authority configurations that are functions of the form of state power generate unique sets of state society relations amidst violence that together shape the battle-space and the attendant political, economic and military processes.

In sum, to understand variations in battle-spaces we have to look at the macro-level outcome of combatant-state relations (how the non-state and state combatants engage in the fight) inherent to every internal conflict, and how that generates very different institutional configurations. These institutional outcomes in turn shape the micro-level economic, political and military processes, just as the same processes are mediated at the institutional level, creating a feed-back loop, the endogeneity inherent to every internal conflict. Once we can see a battle-space in terms of the macro-level combatant state relations and its corresponding institutional outcomes, we can make better sense of the endogenous processes inherent to civil wars, and by extension, make better sense of the war-zone in question both across space and along the levels of analysis. I first describe how the theory is derived and then explain it in detail.

DERIVING THE THEORY: VARIETIES OF STATES

The State in its ideal form "is a differentiated set of institutions and personnel, embodying centrality. In the sense that political relations radiate outwards from a center to cover a territorially demarcated area over which it exercises a monopoly of authoritative binding rule-making, backed up by a monopoly of the means of physical violence"66. What makes the state

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66 For the purposes of this dissertation, I rely on Michael Mann's definition where he expands on Weber's original definition.

different from other forms of power organizations in history according to Mann is its territorially centralized form of power organization. I argue that Mann's definition of the state can be seen in two dimensions that mutually constitute to cage individuals, the socio spatial dimension that consist of its territoriality, centrality and differentiated institutions and its functional dimension that consist of its outputs, rulemaking and making the rules bind. Together they work to cage individuals inside states. Simultaneously as Mann pointed out, the state maintains a degree of autonomy from society, regulates social interactions within its boundaries, and generates different forms of state power with a combination of its Despotic and Infrastructural Power.[67]

Figure 2:1 Variations of State Power

Despotic Power		
	High	Low
High	Authoritarian	Bureaucratic
Infrastructural Power		
Low	Imperial	Feudal

Varieties of States along the Functional Dimension

The state's functional dimension minimally defined is what the state does - how it creates rules and makes binding rules. Consequently, I argue that if one look at the <u>nature of the ruling</u>

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[67] Mann, Michael. "The Autonomous Power of the State: its origins, mechanisms and results," *European Sociological Archive*, Volume 25, Issue 2 (1984): 190.

coalition (that make the rules) and how the <u>state administers violence</u> (make the rules binding), we can see variations of states along its functional dimension.

Incumbent Ruling Coalitions: Inclusive vs Exclusive

The incumbent ruling coalition is holders of state power that form the constituted government and retain control over the sovereign identity of the state. They vary in their capacities to make rules domestically binding. But the prerogatives of de jure sovereignty – for example the fake government of Somalia - give those in the ruling coalition the ability to leverage sovereign appurtenances of the state, engage in varied forms of shakedowns for example. They fall within the realm of de-jure sovereign rights of a state domestically and the latter falls within the international juridical sovereign rights of a state. Both are predicated on specific forms of power. They are two fundamentally contrasting aspects of any state but equally significant, bring different strengths and weaknesses, advantageous and disadvantageous for the ruling coalition. While social stratification enhances collective power, in any stratified society stratification inherently also generates a form of distributive power. Those at the top, the ruling coalition, have access to distributive forms of power that individuals do not. The idea of "legitimacy" of the ruling coalition is of varied relevance. They can be elected, as in Iraq and Congo. They can be "recognized" by the international community as legitimate stakeholders, as in Somalia. They can outlast the election mandate, and continue to rule, as in Lebanon. Legitimacy is not all, and one has to look at the sources of social power that allow for the coalescing of a ruling coalition. Ruling coalition's differ in terms of the over-lapping and interlocking networks of power that crystallize, to use Michael Mann's term, into the final ruling coalition. I argue that the logic of ruling coalition formation - the alliance of personnel that remains at the head of networks of

power that 'crystallize' in terms of the ruling coalition - takes place along the same primary and derivative forms all derived from the sources of social power, ideological, economic, military and political. Ruling coalition's generally consist of representatives that combine all four sources of power. But the durability of some ruling coalitions may give primacy to one source, ideological for example in a theocracy, while some coalitions may give primacy to a couple, military and economic in a military dictatorship, with the ruling coalition consisting of military, economic and technocratic elites, for example, or economic, in a patronage system, all contingent on the time and the place, and all crystallize in polymorphous ways. That is to say, the context matters. Ruling coalition formation is based off of the power networks and the primary sources of social power - ideological, economic, military and political - and the form of ruling coalition formation across time and space will be determined by the context.

Ruling coalition formation in AKP in Turkey is different from coalition formation in Nepal. In order to understand the ruling coalition formation in Turkey, seeing through the prism of Weber's notion of "political parties" and Mann's model would be helpful.   In building ruling coalitions, incumbent ruler(s) will try to distribute benefits of power in ways designed to realize their own objectives - guaranteeing longevity, consolidating rule, favoring one's own clients, finding a congruity between the military reality on the ground with the political reality in government and vice versa. Ruling coalitions - interrelated networks of power, organized along some mix of the sources of social power - are situated between two extreme poles. These poles are **Inclusive** and **Exclusive** coalitions, on the basis of the ruler's calculations about how to assemble supporters based along ideological, economic, military, or political sources of social power.

Those building exclusive coalitions rely on networks of power elites organized along one or two sources of social power. That is, the loyalties of a single or small number of groups that identify strongly with the incumbent coalition are circumscribed by ideological, economic, military, or political logics. The identification of the exclusive coalition with the incumbent could take place along any of the sources of power network that could strengthen the ruling coalition. The saliency is the exclusivity. It leaves out other networks of power organized around different sources of social power. The precise logic of how ruling coalitions crystallize, other than to draw the broader contours in terms of the sources of social power is explained by prior conditions, the context, and along specific cases, as I show in the cases below.

Inclusive Ruling Coalitions are broad based coalitions that rely on networks of power along multiple arrays of the sources of social power. The origins dynamics of these inclusive coalitions remain context specific.

Administration of Violence: Direct vs Brokerage

Violence is a means to attain social goals. The social organization of concentrated lethal violence results in military power. Capacity for organized violence is the means to military power. How a state administers violence varies across time and space. The relationship in state power between despotic and infrastructural power is a function of how the state administers violence.[68] Iraq and the US have the death penalty. But off with her head captures a moment of despotic power which can be real in both places but far more effective in Alabama than in Iraq, because the state has

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[68] That is, though Mann analytically separated the two forms of state power, he recognized that in reality there can be a relationship between them. I say explicitly that there is a critical relationship, and it is in how the state administers violence.

better penetration into social realities in Daphne. In the US, administration of violence is deeply

ingrained and the deeply internalized reality of state capacity to monopolize violence that in turn

predicates the entirety of our social life. This is a function of both capacity for despotic power

and capacity for better logistics of political control, infrastructural power. The effectiveness with

which the state administers violence impacts how well the rules made by the ruling coalition or

state elites on behalf of the ruling coalition become binding. This analysis differentiates between

direct administration and ***brokerage administration*** of state violence.

Direct administration refers to the condition in which state agencies possess a monopoly

on the exercise of coercion, its legitimacy is irrelevant. That is to say, nearly every state retains a

multiplicity of internal institutions with capacities for violence ranging from armed forces, police

forces, to national guards etc. In directly administering violence, it is only the state actors that

exercise violence. Direct administration is not automatic, but it is achieved over time, as the

infrastructural coordination capacity of the state grows.[69] Therefore, in an advanced industrial

state, violence is well manacled in its administration that entire societal edifices of order and

regulation are built on it, but we need not think of it. If violence is ever pursued, it is pursued

following a specific set of rules either set out by the ruling coalition, or already internalized and

routinized. While it is always possible that an individual within a state agency may use violence

in some personal fashion, the dominant logic derives - at its most elemental interpretation, which

remains valid for strong consolidated states to local warlords - from the ruling coalitions' anxiety

to eliminate private exercises of violence within society and state agents outside of military and

security forces. Therefore, armed thugs that work on behalf of a politician in this setting would

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[69] See Mann (1984) on the development of Infrastructural Power. Pg 117

be defined as rogue operators that threaten state control over coercive power and would be subject to state prosecution, or worse.

Brokerage Administration of violence refers to the condition in which rulers allow people whose authority does not stem from occupancy of a state office to exercise violence on their own accord. Brokerage can be seen as the ruler requiring that this violence be used in ways that promote the incumbent ruling coalition's objectives, even if it also serves the private interests of the individual. This logic of administering violence means that the ruler either does not attempt or is unable to achieve a monopoly of violence under state control, and instead tolerates and even promotes the existence of multiple centers of organized violence outside the state. Private armies, armed thugs, and various other "private" exercises of coercion would be tolerated or even actively promoted in this setting, as they would either be seen as assisting state control, or outside state control but serves some purpose of the ruling coalition.

On the basis of these two aspects of a state's functional dimension, ruling coalitions and the administration of violence, we could derive four distinctive types of states. Classic Bureaucratics with bureaucratic form of state power; Authoritarian states with authoritarian forms of state power, Praetorian states with imperial forms of state power; and Negotiated states with feudal forms of state power.

In times of conflict, these forms of state power play a defining role in shaping the combatant-state relations and the consequent institutional outcomes in terms of challenged, contested, compromised and fragmented sovereignty. Each generates different forms of authority and mirror distinct battle-spaces in wartime in how the non-state combatant relate to the state.

Figure 2:2: Variations of States along the Functional Dimension

		Nature of the State Ruling Coalition	
		Exclusive	Inclusive
	Direct	Classic-Authoritarian State - Authoritarian form of state power	Classic-Bureaucratic State - Bureaucratic form of state power
State Administration of Violence			
	Brokerage	Praetorian State - Imperial form of state power	Negotiated State - Feudal form of state power

Figure 2:3: Stylized Representation of the Theory

		Governing Coalition	
		Exclusive	**Inclusive**
	Direct	**Classic-Authoritarian State** - Authoritarian form of state power - Outside-combatants - Contested Sovereignty - [Case:Turkey]	**Classic-Bureacratic State** - Bureaucratic form of state power - Outside-Combatants - Challenged Sovereignty - [Case:Nepal]
Administration of Violence			
	Brokerage	**Praetorian State** - Imperial form of state power - Combatants, Outside-In, Inside-Out - Compromised Sovereignty - [Case: Iraqi-Kurdistan]	**Negotiated State** - Feudal form of state power - Inside Combatants - Fragmented sovereignty - [Case: Iraq]

Classic Bureaucratic States, Outside Combatants & Challenged Sovereignty

Classic Bureaucratic states have inclusive ruling coalitions and direct administration of violence.

Its high degree of infrastructural power vis-à-vis despotic power generates a check on the state's

despotic capacity and state elite's capacity to engage in generating distributive power. This generates a form of state power that is bureaucratic in nature.

Power is both collective and extensive. The state has extensive infrastructural power and effective logistics of social control. But by definition, per Mann, civil society groups play a role in shaping state power, checking a state's arbitrary capacity to exercise despotic power and shaping state society relations. This same dynamic of active civil society groups plays a role in shaping wartime-authority and defining the battle-space in times of conflict.

Classic Bureaucratic States

A Classic Bureaucratic State's socio-spatial dimension (differentiation, centrality, and territoriality) compliments its functional dimension, binding rule making and monopoly on violence that provides enforcement capacity. A bureaucratic form of state power defines clear boundaries of direct state action, which leaves civil society the social space to voice interests independently of the state's authority. Inclusive ruling coalitions with direct administration of violence means the state in its ideal type will predicate itself on collective, extensive, and diffused modalities of power[70]. The state has intensive and authoritative capacity, but state elites

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[70] Modalities of Power from Mann

Distributive Power: A set amount of power is distributed among a group of people; when one gains, another loses (a zero-sum condition).

Collective Power: Persons in cooperation can enhance their joint power over third parties or over nature. Yet, in implementing collective goals, social organizations and a division of labor is set up. Organizations and divisions has a tendency to distribute power, therefore, actors institutionalize their control in laws and norms, since institutionalization is necessary to achieve routine collective goals, and thus distributive power, that is, social stratification, also becomes an institutionalized feature of social life. The institutionalization in turn takes different forms.

Extensive Power: The ability to organize people over far-flung territories in order to engage in minimally stable cooperation.

do not attempt to – brazenly - seek distributive power. Some members of the elite, such as in American telecoms and pharmaceutical enterprises may rig the process to their favor to the extent that they are able to offer among the highest priced services and products of their kind in the world. The most recent GOP tax bill in 2017 would be a classic instance of, and an outcome of distributive forms of political power in action, where economic resources are redistributed towards the less than once percent group where economic power is already concentrated, power begets power. But this is not done with violence but through a routinized institutionalized process. Civil society groups could also fight to mitigate such acts. That is, the state elites' capacity to wield states power for distributive, intensive and authoritarian modalities are checked, and circumscribed. If the need ever arises, and routinized processes are <u>not</u> followed, Classic Bureaucratic state will act just the same way as any other despotic state, at least as it applied to Branch Dravidians, Black Panthers, etc.

    In the long view of history, ideal type Classic Bureaucratic state and classic-authoritarian states have had the capacity to manacle violence as no other power configuration has been able to do. A person branded a violent fugitive by the state of Canada or Stalinist Soviet Union would be hard put to run away from it. The Canadian state has the capacity to reach deep down into the pockets of individuals, as long as they have a Canadian Social Insurance Number. European

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Intensive Power: The ability to organize tightly and command a high-level of mobilization or commitment from the participants, whether the area and numbers covered are great or small.
Authoritative Power: A form of power is willed by groups and institutions through definite commands and conscious obedience.
Diffused Power: This form of power spreads in a more spontaneous, unconscious, decentered way throughout a population, resulting in similar social practices that embody power relations but are not explicitly commanded. It typically comprises, not command and obedience, but an understanding that these practices are natural or moral or result from self-evident common interest. Diffused power on the whole embodies a larger ratio of collective to distributive power, but this is not invariably so.

governments such as in Sweden try to eliminate cash payments in their societies, in part to minimize tax fraud and track transactions for suspicious signals. This progressive elimination of informality and concealment is characteristic of almost all advanced industrial countries. They are the outcomes of decisions and their development is neither a natural progression nor automatic. The process of creating elements of the Classic Bureaucratic state therefore is reversible and contingent. States can move between the ideal types and the ideal types can overlap in reality, as the brief but relevant digression below will indicate.

Digression

Apartheid South Africa is an explicit case of state power and its complexity as it straddled between Guardian, Authoritarian and Praetorian States. So far as Afrikaners were concerned, it was a Classic Bureaucratic. The form of power was bureaucratic, at least for them. Even under P.W. Botha's government (1978-1989), Afrikaner civil society groups were as integrated into the state and state elites had their despotic power circumscribed. However, as far as the non-whites were concerned, it was a Authoritarian state, a very authoritarian form of power, and state elites relied on its despotic capacity. Both in the cities and as one moved further out territorially, the state fragmented power. Where the form of state power was more imperial, that is, administration of violence was brokered, while the ruling coalition remained explicitly exclusivist. The state made informal alliances with non-state actors who would in turn maintain order on behalf of the state and its ruling coalition, maintaining a veneer of uneasy order in the peripheries of cities and peripheral regions where states territoriality, centrality, and differentiated functions was more explicitly contested. Though the African National Congress was eventually formally integrated—an inclusive coalition—the state switched to direct administration of violence. However, one can still connect the lawless territorial pockets in parts

of South Africa to the vestiges of the apartheid state's brokerage administration of violence.[71] In sum, moving from brokerage to direct is not automatic, but is contingent on decisions and active pursuit by state agents.

Outside-Combatants and Challenged Sovereignty

Classic Bureaucratics in conflict give rise to violent state-combatant relations described as Outside-Combatants. This generates a form of wartime authority characterized as <u>Challenged Sovereignty</u>. It is a stark confrontational stance but that bureaucratic state power allows civil-society organizations much agency in shaping the context.

Challenged sovereignty is a wartime authority configuration where there is a distinct, identifiable difference between the contending forces and the form of control they seek to impose. The distinction is territorially defined. It is a violent battle-space that focuses on territorial control. This is the type of civil wars that characterized most 20th century internal conflict. Most of the literature on rebel-governance, wartime social orders, and existing literature on micro-level dynamics of violence is predicated on this form of battle-space. The conflict dynamics between the Sri Lankan government and LTTE, and Nepal's government and the Maoists during its civil wars would also be close examples. As non-state combatants, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria followed an identical strategic template though neither Syria nor Iraq resembled Classic Bureaucratics. Rebels create parallel governance structures that shows what the world would be if they were to take power outright. Strategically, these are moments where the rebels pursue Maoist forms of territorial and population centric people's war. However, civil

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[71] Ellis, Stephen. "The New Frontiers of Crime in South Africa," *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*, Indiana University Press, 1999, 49-68.

society plays a role in shaping the battle-space, as combatants see it and authority configuration as civilians see it. It is a nuanced, but critical difference that define the form of wartime authority between *Challenged sovereignty* in a Classic Bureaucratic and *Contested sovereignty* in an Authoritarian state, as will be better illustrated in the case studies.

Classic-Authoritarian States, Outside Combatants & Contested Sovereignty

A classic-authoritarian state ideal type is a megalomaniacal tyrant's fantasy come true. It is a garrison state. Stalinist mobilization during WW II and Mao during the Great Leap were two close moments of authoritarian state ideal types. Even then, Mann and other scholars found that even at its height, the liberal democracies of the west - epitomized with bureaucratic forms of state power - mobilized more people far more effectively in a diffused manner across their respective territories than the Authoritarian states of USSR, Nazi Germany ever did.

Part of the difficulty, as Michael Mann's macro theory of power organization indicates, is that an ideal power organization relies on all sources of social power and all modalities of power. The nature of power and its organization is such that they work at cross purposes; hence the great variation in the form of macro-level power agglomerations in history. In two extreme cases where a Authoritarian state approached its ideal type, Stalinist Soviet Union in the aftermath of the second World War and Maoist China at the height of the Great Leap Forward, an individual in Moscow experienced Soviet Authoritarian state power very different from a Soviet citizen in Tashkent, similar to a Chinese citizen in Beijing versus one in Urumqi during the Great Leap Forward.

An Authoritarian state has territorial reach, centrality, and institutional differentiation, and with its direct administration of violence and exclusive ruling coalitions, it can embody a

larger ratio of distributive power as opposed to collective power. The exclusive nature of the ruling coalition means that power could be distributive, without the need to make it collective, as in an inclusive coalition. The state retains authoritative and intensive forms of organizational power, so the state has the ability to command a high-level of mobilization and commitment from people. Whether the power arrangement will be collective, or distributive is a prerogative of the ruling coalition and with its direct administration of violence, meaning effective despotic and effective logistics of political control in place.

Some states move between quadrants. Post-Soviet Russia lies somewhere between an Authoritarian State and a Praetorian State while todays Germany lies squarely in the Classic Bureaucratic quadrant. China, in its political power remains distributive. That is, the ruling power is still the prerogative of the exclusive ruling coalition that constitutes the Chinese Communist Party elite. The state as a whole has direct administration of violence. In the sources of economic power, China has become more diffused, lying somewhere between a bureaucratic and an authoritarian state.

Ataturk's Turkish republic immediately following its inception in the 1920s, the Brazilian military dictatorship at its height in the early 1970s, Suharto's Indonesia at its height are close approximations of states that aspired to be Authoritarian state ideal types. The internal composition of the ruling coalition can change. For example, Ataturk's Authoritarian state - in spirit - drew on military power networks to build his ruling coalition. While the post-Ataturk Turkish republic remained Authoritarian in spirit, it changed the internal composition of ruling coalitions, with political and military elites gaining primacy, with ideological elites, hovering in the background. Suharto's Indonesia, also an Authoritarian state in spirit, at the height of its power, got rid of its explicit ideologically driven power networks of the Sukarno era (and the

Communists) and built a ruling coalition drawing on military elites first and then with economic elites. In both instances, the composition of the ruling coalitions changed internally, maintaining the exclusivist form intact, but neither of the ruling coalitions altered the state's direct administration of violence. In many real-world countries that approximated authoritarian states, total control was always aspirational since the state's administrative reach was always in question.

The further from the formal centers of state power one traversed, the weaker and more varied this control became. This enabled the creators of such states to benefit from a hybridity of power which ultimately allowed for its Authoritarian façade to remain intact. In authoritarian regimes in East Asia, informal networks of power that find no recognition in formal rules play important roles in binding together elite coalitions and extending the reach of state power.[72] Soviet era personal networks of favoritism, or blat, played important roles in a parallel system of exchange that helped to manage the inflexibilities of official procedures and plans.[73] These variances can become much more consequential later if the bases of state power shift, such as after the breakup of the Soviet Union. In that case, by the early 1990s, informal networks in some places became more dominant in the exercise of power, elevating the alternative logic of power and its personnel (such as informal sector brokers, organized crime groups and other violent individuals) in the creation of the post-Soviet order.[74]

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[72] Lowell Dittmer, Haruhiro Fukui & Peter Lee, eds., *Informal Politics in East Asia*. Cambridge University Press. 2000.

[73] Alena Ledeneva, Russia's Economy of Favors: Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[74] David Woodruff, *Money Unmade: Barter and the Fate of Russian Capitalism*, Cornell University Press, 1999.

If there is anything that binds ideal type Guardian and Authoritarian states, it is that they both have achieved great economies of scales in the provision of security by monopolizing violence, maintaining monopolized sovereign prerogatives of the state, and in their capacity for direct administration of violence. Therefore, both guardian and authoritarian states have local buy-in in terms of the provision of security from individuals and collectives alike. Security is very cheap. In real life this can mean that what an individual pay for security in Canada is infinitely cheaper than what one pays when contending groups are vying to provide security say in Baghdad or in Mogadishu.

Outside-Combatants and Contested Sovereignty

In times of internal conflict, upon the on-set of violence, in an Authoritarian state the combatant - state relations are characterized by Outside-Combatants and generates an institutional outcome of Contested Sovereignty. The macro-level outcome of Outside Combatants and Contested Sovereignty generate a condition very similar to what one finds in a Classic Bureaucratic, a starkly confrontational and bloody conflict. Territorial logic drives violence. Any strategic stalemates in the battle-space generate the equilibrium conditions and territorial control that gives rise to literature on wartime-social-order and rebel governance. Though this study will contest some of their conceptual assertions. Authoritarian states with authoritative form of state power retain a high degree of despotic to infrastructural power. As a consequence, civil society organizations are not able to play the mitigating role that works as a check on states despotic power. Consequently, the form of authority configuration one finds in Contested Sovereignty closely resembles Challenged Sovereignty except for the absence of civil-society organizations playing an active role. Active civil-society organizations during internal conflict increasingly

make a qualitative difference in shaping wartime authority configurations and the battle-space. It is an issue I take up at length in my case study chapters and suggest areas for future research, comparing and contrasting battle-spaces of Nepal and Turkey

Praetorian States, Inside-Out, Outside-In, & Compromised Sovereignty

Praetorian states consist of exclusive ruling coalitions and brokerage administration of violence and generate <u>imperial forms</u> of state power. The governing coalition that controls the throne, the state, is exclusive and closely guards its ruling prerogatives, leaving many groups out.[75] And yet its administration of violence is characterized by brokerage. Similar to an imperial state, a Praetorian state lacks capacity to extend its writ in exclusivist and monopolist terms across its realm. Necessity dictates brokerage administration of violence.

Brokerage administration of violence refers to the condition in which rulers allow people whose authority does not stem from occupancy of a state office to exercise violence on their own accord. In one conception, brokerage can be seen as the ruler requiring that this violence be used in ways that promote the incumbent ruling coalition's objectives, even if it also serves the private interests of the individual. This logic of authority means that the ruler (either does not attempt or is unable) to achieve a monopoly of violence under state control, and instead tolerates and even promotes the existence of multiple centers of organized violence outside of the state with the aim

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[75] Those building exclusive coalitions rely on networks of power elites organized along one or two sources of social power. The loyalties of a single or small number of groups that identify strongly with the incumbent coalition, along a specific source of social power or its derivatives, are circumscribed by ideological, economic, military, or political logic. The identification of the exclusive coalition with the incumbent could take place along any of the sources of power network that could strengthen the ruling coalition. The saliency is the *exclusivity*. It leaves out other networks organized around different sources of social power.

of asserting state power. Private armies, armed thugs, and various other "private" exercises of coercion would be tolerated in this setting.

An analogous historical instance that corroborates to this reality would be the Ottoman Empire during its attempt at state centralization detailed by Karen Barkey.[76] The state has the capacity to exclusively administer violence and install its writ in the center, but not extensively across far flung areas. Praetorian states manifest imperial forms of state power and project power out of the center and state power manifest in terms of logistics of social control in concentric circles. The state power organization is mostly distributive, and it is authoritatively administered. The state has limited infrastructural power but a high degree of despotic power. "The imperial state possesses its own governing agents but has only limited capacity to penetrate and coordinate civil society without the assistance of other power groups. It corresponds to the term 'patrimonial state' used by Weber and Bendix".[77] That is, the organizational reach of the state is characterized by authoritative and intensive forms of power but not everywhere, as the state cannot provide its basic function of order over the realm. Its territorial reach is limited. The state has the ability directly control centers but only to organize selective groups to control the outer regions.

The brokerage administration of violence also means the spatial reach of the state is limited by definition. The numbers that can be mobilized and organized directly at the behest of the state are also small. The Ottoman Empire's state centralization attempt mirrored the historical ideal type. Imperial form of state power embodies a larger ratio of distributive to collective

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[76] Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[77] Mann (1984) 186

power, a core set of elites disproportionate benefit. It is a function of both the exclusive ruling

coalition and brokerage administration of violence where power crystallizes along the

distributive end of the spectrum. Personalized dictatorships of Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte

d'Ivoire), Hasting Kamusu Banda (Malawi), Mobutu sese Seko (Zaire-Congo) and so forth, as

well as military dictatorships of Pakistan (in their use of tribal loyalties in the Federally

Administered Tribal Areas, (a euphemism for no state control) are contemporary examples.

Combatants Outside-In-Inside-Out

My framework suggests that in internal conflicts that takes place in Praetorian states the state-

combatant relations are best characterized as "Inside-Out, Outside-In". It generates a wartime

authority configuration that represents "Compromised Sovereignty".

Compromised sovereignty gives rise to very different forms of social control and patterns

of violence from challenged in Classic Bureaucratics and contested sovereignty in Authoritarian

states. In Praetorian states with brokerages administration of violence there is hardly a monopoly

in the use of coercion. But it does not lead to starkly confrontational, territorially defined

confrontational logics, because the Combatant-state relation is "Outside-In, Inside-Out".

That is, the administration of violence is brokerage, and the ruling coalition maintains its

exclusivist nature. But it uses non-state combatant groups as either governing agents that allow

for the heads of those networks to be part of, if not the ruling coalition, then be integrated into

the legally constituted state, with their capacity for violence intact, and that is Outside-In. But

these agents, as the machinations and give and take of power within the ruling coalition could

change, the previously combatants that were Outside-In, could end up being Inside-Out, while a

different group could be Outside-In. A crucial step here is in understanding the nature of the ruling coalition, the nature of the relationships between the ruling coalition and the violent actors used for brokerage administration of violence, and how the Imperial form of state power mediate this process.

Compromised Sovereignty

Guardian and Authoritarian states closely guard their sovereign prerogatives both territorially and institutionally. They go to great length to maintain their de-jure and de-facto sovereign prerogatives. Consequently, when sovereignty is challenged and contested, it creates defined areas of territorial control and bloody (often) uncompromising conflict. Compromised sovereignty in Praetorian states is a moment where the state compromises on its de-jure sovereignty both territorially and institutionally. Because the state has no monopoly on violence and rely on brokerage forms of violence, individuals have to internalize this reality and navigate it. Often, these are instances where it is neither war nor peace as we understand it but lies somewhere in-between. It is "wartime" by definition here since peace is defined in its ideal type as a moment where capacity for violence lies exclusively with the state and its agents and the state closely guards its monopolized sovereign prerogatives.

In moments of Compromised Sovereignty, it is neither war nor peace because there is a durable understanding between the parties. There is political, economic, military and ideological logic in terms of how armed-actors with capacities for violence go in and out of the ruling coalition. Maintaining compromised sovereignty becomes a form of regime survival. As a result, compromised sovereignty generates suboptimal yet durable equilibrium conditions in the sharing of sovereign prerogatives of the state either institutionally, territorially, or at times both. As an

authority configuration, there is some predictability, better stated as minimized uncertainty, that allow for a level of stability. But an individuals' or an organization's positionality, one's relations with those closest to the ruling coalition and organized violence, shapes the nature of predictability, the economic time-horizon and the sense of economic risk, of an economic agent.

This is not the peace one finds where people STOP at stop signs and one leaves vehicles unattended and doors unlocked. Compromised Sovereignty lies somewhere between traditional scholarship on rebel-governance and state governance. Compromised sovereignty is not quite rebel governance since "rebels" in this instance do not act independently and autonomously from the state and do not necessarily directly challenge the state in rebellious sense. This is counterintuitive since the very existence of multiple armed actors within the state runs counter to conventional conceptions of the state. Compromised sovereignty is also not quite state governance since the state does not have a monopoly on sovereign prerogatives, specifically on the administration of violence. In the case of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq, there is a duopoly of governance. In Lebanon, it is an oligopoly of violence. As long as the equilibrium condition holds, it provides a semblance of stability. Afghanistan is a similar case where there is an oligopoly of violence, and while the other armed actors use "compellance" as a negotiating tactics, it is only the Taliban that openly challenges the state.

Negotiated States, Inside Combatants and Fragmented Sovereignty[78]

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[78] The term Negotiated State is borrowed from Anatol Lieven, *Pakistan: A Hard Country*. Though in this conceptualization of state types, Pakistan lies somewhere between a Praetorian and a Negotiated State, but closer to the Praetorian State quadrant.

Negotiated states are a contemporary version of a feudal state. When observers refer to weak, failing, failed states and or ungoverned spaces etc., they are referring to contemporary instances of states that generate forms of state power that very closely resemble feudal arrangements of political power. Negotiated states have inclusive ruling coalition with brokerage administration of violence. They have low degree of despotic power and low degree of infrastructural power. So, the defining nature of state power organization resembles feudal forms. The feudal form of state power made sense and endured at the time, until more robust and enduring forms of power organizations, the modern state, replaced the feudal state. In the long view of history and in the modern context, negotiated states with feudal forms of power remain anachronisms. They should not be, but they exist. The converse is that feudal to modern is neither a straight path nor does the nature of the state, once realized, resilient at all times. Iraq for example in the eighties remained a highly bureaucratic modern state with a high degree of despotic and infrastructural power with very effective authoritarian state power. Somalia in the late seventies remained a highly personalist dictatorship with great degree of despotic power with limited but substantial infrastructural power, though with much less bureaucratic routinization than Iraq. But at the end of series of unfortunate events, Iraq and Somalia has regressed today to resemble negotiated states with feudal forms of state power. Countries such as Chad, Niger, Central African Republic, Afghanistan have never developed modern bureaucratic apparatuses and have muddled along with veneers of formal power and feudal forms of actual power organizations in reality. It is important to clarify that when I refer to "feudal power", I only refer to how the feudal state projected and administered power, and not the socio-economic realities that buttressed the historical feudal states.

In the medieval period there was nothing anomalous about a feudal state (todays negotiated states) since they corresponded to the international, regional and domestic logics of power at the time. In the modern context the anachronistic nature of negotiated states with feudal forms of power generate series of internal contradictions that explains their volatile and unpredictable authority relations. The same contradictions play an inordinate role in shaping the battle-space upon the on-set of violence and the consequent wartime authority configurations.

For example, Political power is collective in spirit with inclusive ruling coalitions but utterly incapable of providing collective benefits with limited infrastructural and despotic power. In reality, multiple heads of power networks that constitute the ruling coalition actually generate distributive power and provide selective benefits to members of the network. Limited infrastructural and despotic power means power within the territory is diffused. As Mann noted, "The Feudal state is the weakest, for it has both low infrastructural and low despotic power. The medieval European state approximated this ideal type, governing largely indirectly, through infrastructure freely and contractually provided and controlled by the principal and independent magnates, clerics and towns".[79] A negotiated state is characterized by brokerage administration of violence, with diffused forms of power, where power is spread in a more spontaneous de-centered way throughout a population, along multiplicity of networks of power, some armed, and some not. At its elemental, one cannot take security for granted but buy security. Buying security is very expensive, because the internal contradictions of negotiated states give them a distinctively dysfunctional character in both its functional and socio-spatial dimension. The ruling coalition is inclusive. This contributes to the strength of a regime that needs to marshal

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[79] 79 Mann 1984, p.115

connections and capabilities of other groups. But reliance on coalition partners for their capacities to act as brokers for the exercise of violence puts in their hands the capacity to challenge the regime. Some do, and some do not, for some genuinely rebel and some are merely status seeking rebels.

The rulers who stand at the heads of these coalitions have to ponder whether the risk of coups and other violent challenges is worth the gain from building larger coalitions. This leads many to hedge their bets, allowing some junior partners to act as more capable wielders of violence, provide that these actors can be pitted against each other so as to undermine their capacities to act in unison against the regime. Others are selectively excluded, often on a rotating basis, which fosters low-level localized conflict as coalition members compete with each other for the favor of their patron.[80] This resembles a perverse manifestation of an ideal-type pluralist state. Pluralist see the state as the cohesive factor in society, primarily a space, where multiple societal interest groups are both represented, and interests mediated. That holds true here except interest representation also requires capacity for violence. And that also shapes the state's role as an autonomous actor, as you shall see. The nature of power has both distributive and zero-sum dimension alongside the myriad networks that complete for power just as it is also collective. In that those who belong to a specific network of power share in the benefits of this exercise of power so long as one is part of the network. That is benefits of distributive power. Subsequently, power is authoritative, in that it is willed on the members of the network.

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[80] Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, Cambridge University Press. 2009.

But power is also diffused in society. In that extremely brokeraged administration of violence means, power is decentered throughout society. These conditions appear in places like Yemen Arab Republic before 2013, Somalia since 1991, Iraq after the US withdrawal in 2011, and Afghanistan. These states appear to have a propensity to collapse. By 2015, they hosted the majority of conflicts in the world and became venues for many different combatant groups, including ones in this study. Like other combatants, these groups have to contend with the particular environment in which power is exercised. They confront many networks, lots of global-nomads that are heads of networks and local-drifters that are members of them, and different actors who are (or were) part of the Negotiated state's decentralized and personalized exercise of coercion, and the distinctive ways that Negotiated states appropriated commercial networks and economic resources into their strategies for exercising power.

Economic agents in a negotiated state have limited time horizons and consistent enforcement of contractual obligations is a hope. Security remains extremely expensive given the lack of scale economies in the provision of security, a direct outcome of brokerage administration of violence. If at least some economic agents could have predictability in relying on exclusive coalitions in a Praetorian state, (much like a patronage outfit), then in a Negotiated State the tendency is a race to the bottom, though never inevitable since it is contingent on decisions, with groups with the most capacity for violence being the ones retaining the capacity to maintain a relative longer time horizon.

In a feudal state, order is truncated. Territoriality, centrality and differentiation of the state remain notions, hardly a reality. In a feudal state order that comes from administering violence and infrastructure coordination, that is regulation of social life, is contractually provided by independent magnates, clerics, and local principals. In a negotiate states, the situation remains

identical, or worse. Order, contract enforcement and social regulation is provided by independent

principals and one can notice this taking a walk or a drive across town in places such as

Mogadishu, Baghdad (in 2014), Sana'a, or Bangui, for example. If the reality in these capital

cities are so bleak where these respective states attempts to maintain a veneer of "stateness", then

one can imagine how regulation of social life works as one moves along the state's socio spatial

dimension from the capital to the outskirts of the country. Order provides for regulation of social

life, and some semblance of regulated social life is necessary for individuals to engage in

cooperative behavior, and for people to even begin to entertain the notion of a time horizon. It

follows that negotiated states are unable to fulfill the most elemental and minimal expectation of

a state in terms of its de facto sovereignty. In a negotiated state power radiates outward from a

center. This was a wish and a hope in feudal states just as it is in negotiated states. The sense of

territoriality of feudal states was a fluid concept, constantly shifting as local notables that

controlled the area would switch allegiance between multiple sovereigns. How the territory of

Schleswig-Holstein between Germany and Denmark became what it is, and its history would be

a great example. Feudal domains of control could switch between notables, but that did not

impact movements of people, they could, if they wished, but people were caged differently,

bound to land. That is to say, territoriality of feudal states was defined in terms of on the ground

power realties, de-facto sovereignty, and not predicated on juridical realities, de-jure sovereignty.

Modern European states formed congruent with on the ground realities where de-facto and de-

jure sovereignty overlapped. Think of the jagged lines in the borders that went through a state

formation process where de-facto and de-jure sovereignty overlapped in Europe versus the

straight lines and right angles in colonial and post-colonial borders. The territoriality of todays

negotiated states are juridical realities. As a result, in a negotiated state, there are constant shifts

in how social life is regulated, as an outcome of contestations of power, but individuals are caged at the border, literally, unless one registers as a refugee with UNHCR and move to a refugee camp in a neighboring country.

Feudal states retained no institutional differentiation; rather, the power arrangement was personalized. Negotiated States have personalized power, but they maintain and in fact go to great lengths to maintain a veneer of institutional differentiation because interacting with the international community, an elemental reality of modern life, requires that states at least maintain a veneer. The many fake cabinet ministers in Somalia that heads non-existent ministries are a god example. Though the institutional differentiation in negotiated states may mean little in reality because institutions are not doing what they are supposed to do, they begin to matter differently.

Institutional differentiation matters little for the average individual, at least in the first instance. But differentiated institutions remain manifest sovereign appendages of the state. Therefore, they perform a function of "distributive power". That is, providing selective goods to a specific coalition that is part of it, or used for personal gain. This is the world of institutional differentiation in negotiated states. Today's negotiated states, instead of a sovereign king at the center, have a legally constituted ruling coalition that is recognized as sovereign authority by the international community exercising de-jure sovereignty that is granted. Somalia's federal government (and the international communities continuous and persistent fake state building exercises) is a great example. The sovereign inclusive ruling coalitions do not translate into a center that holds. Because power organization across territory is diffused, and groups with capacity for violence are often part of the legally constituted state. Consequently, negotiated

states generate very different forms of wartime authority structures and political, economic and processes of violence on the ground.

Inside Combatants and Fragmented Sovereignty

My argument is that the form of state power shape the nature of combatant and state relations that shape the battle-space and pattern the form of wartime authority. In negotiated states, the combatant state relations are characterized by "Inside-Combatants" and they generate a wartime reality of "Fragmented sovereignty".

Inside combatants in pursuit of their goals (whatever they happen to be) rely on organized violence but differ from other combatants in how they relate to the state. Inside-combatants whole or in part infiltrate and join governing coalitions with their capacity for violence intact. They pursue a strategy that is a reflection of the nature of the state power of the state they challenge. Remember, Outside Combatants fight the power – the state – outright being outside of it because that is is the only option they have. Guardian and Authoritarian states covet the monopolized sovereign prerogatives.

In Negotiated states, combatants fight the power - the state - and pursue their goals with their capacity for violence intact while being part of the state. A combination of diffused nature of power organization inherent to a negotiated state and limited despotic and infrastructural power allow for the emergence of inside combatants. Inside combatants emerge out of political parties that have mobilized their own armies in the guise of supporters under the gaze of the state of which they have at times been a part. They emerge out of non-state combatants originated to serve diverse purposes in communities, such as protection of property and business interests, or mobilizing to support a community patron's seat at the political table. Others begin as para-

military outfits with only notional links to the political parties, often involved in organized crime that they then mix with more overtly political activities.

Illicit economic actors with organized capacity for violence can transform into Inside Combatants, and become part of the legally constituted state, while simultaneously straddling the licit-illicit boundary. Inside combatants play politics as defined by the state at the same time that they do not hide their capacity for violence. Inside combatants are part of the power structure. Their peculiar position makes it impossible to classify them in the classical binary sense of rebels versus state, or as militias, or as political parties. They could be "rebels" when they challenge power relations through their use of violence in order to pursue their goals. They could be partners in peace and ruling when they join hands with others in upholding state authority. Just as Inside-Combatants do not fit easily into existing categories, a state that hosts multiple armed actors with capacity to exercise violence autonomous of the state and society stands in fundamental contrast to conventional understandings of the state. The outcome is a wartime authority configuration that is characterized by "fragmented sovereignty".

Fragmented Sovereignty

The Negotiated state is fragmented territorially or institutionally or both. Inside-combatants are a specific macro-level outcome of state-combatant relations. The state is a space and an actor.

Inside-Combatants are part of the legally constituted state institutional configuration shaping the state's behavior as an actor. Inside combatants whether they challenge the state spatially, that is in terms of territory, or whether in terms of altering state behavior institutionally, that is, how combatants relate to the state as an actor, is contingent.

Inside-Combatants could pursue a territorial centric strategy in terms of controlling people or it could use an institutional strategy or both. This is a counterintuitive war-time reality of Fragmented Sovereignty that is increasingly common in weak states around the world In a negotiated state when both de-jure and de-facto sovereign prerogatives are open for negotiations and to be captured by armed actors.

De-jure sovereign prerogatives of a state consist of the official means with which it relates to the outside world, diplomatic representation, bilateral and multilateral engagements with countries and institutions, regulating trade and financial relations between domestic and international actors, capturing donor funds and engaging with international non-governmental organizations for example. Different groups could officially be in control of state institutions that pertains to de-jure sovereignty and use it to generate distributive forms of power, generating selective goods to their respective members.

De-facto sovereignty is about the logistics of political control. Territoriality, differentiated institutions, rule making and enforcement, capacity for violence all play a role in the logistics of political control. But negotiated states have no meaningful institutional differentiation though they maintain and in fact go to great lengths to maintain a veneer of institutional differentiation. Capture of Institutional differentiation performs a function of "distributive power," providing selective goods to a specific coalition that is part of it. Institutional differentiation itself becomes a means of fragmenting the sovereignty of the state. The de-facto sovereign prerogatives of the state are also open for negotiation and appropriation by armed actors turned legitimate actors, and for use towards generating distributional forms of power and towards providing selective goods.

The state's sovereign prerogatives are fragmented and controlled by armed actors and the fragmentation could be along institutional or territorial lines or both. This reality, unlike in instances of compromised - sovereignty, where the exclusive nature of the ruling coalition allows for a semblance of stability, fragmented sovereignty generates an authority configuration that remains very unstable both at institutional (meta) and on the ground at the micro level.

Stability of the ruling coalition – exclusivity and inclusivity – and the relationship between the ruling coalitions and their relations with armed actors has much to do with this. An inclusive ruling coalition is analogous to a big-tent political party that allows in multiple factions except in this instance the factions are actors with organized capacity for violence and could act autonomously and no one retains a preponderance of power. This military reality shapes the nature of political dynamics in a negotiated state.

In negotiated states engaging in politics, any kind of activism, let alone playing politics can be a death defying sport in quick order, and to be effective, capacity for violence is a necessary precondition. Engaging in politics requires either some capacity for violence, at a minimum for self-protection, and one certainly needs to be under some groups protective umbrella if to be really effective. That in turn provides the leaders of military organizations inordinate influence in politics both formally if they are part of the ruling coalition. And informally, if they are not formally part but are represented by proxies. A state's infrastructural power is what allows non-violent political actors, civil society groups and the like to thrive harnessing sources of social power other than violence. In the absence of that, political actors of whatever hue and predilection are always beholden to those with capacity for violence. This is a

political reality where the political incentives are such that "the bad drives out the good".[81] At

the institutional level this is a political reality with no political center, another inherent

contradiction in a negotiated state. Instead what there is, is a constantly shifting series of armed

political alliances. As paradoxical as it may sound, it is the inclusion of these armed actors at the

institutional level and allocating varied sovereign prerogatives - Fragmenting state sovereignty -

that is the essential mechanism with which negotiated states manage its precarious political

survival. On the ground, this institutional configuration creates a situation rife with instability,

insecurity and uncertainty. This is a world where organized capacity for violence, small or large,

is currency.

When violence is currency an average economic agent, not affiliated with armed actors

that are part of the legally constituted state is unable to maintain long time horizons. Economic

activity fulfills subsistence needs but there is hardly any long-term investment. Any investment

requires the affiliation of armed actors for enforcing contracts to guarantee property rights. The

armed actor whose protection one needs may change, contingent on the territory where one seeks

to invest to the specific sector that one invests in, and if both happened to overlap with the same

armed actor, (in control of both territory and controls institutions that pertains to the specific

business sector) then, the economic agent could simply buy protection from one actor. If it is not,

then the economic agent will have to pay both actors for protection. This is the precise opposite

of a monopoly on violence and has the opposite effect, of huge transactions costs.

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[81] Collier, Paul. *The bottom billion: Why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it*. Oxford University Press. 2008.

Security is truncated and turned into discrete salable units. Security has huge scale economies, consequently, when there is a monopoly, security is cheap. In situations where multiple actors provide security, it comes with a steep price tag. And this varies from place to place.

Varied military actors with organized capacity for violence are part of the ruling coalition, but state domestic authority is fragmented. This fragmentation can be territorial, institutional, and often both. Armed actors retain control of territory and people and use this control as the basis for inclusion in the ruling coalition. Their position in the ruling coalition in turn strengthens their hold on territory and people. These intermediaries retain control of institutions, using them to generate a network of loyalists. The two forms of fragmented authority could be mutually exclusive, one controls territory while another control an institution or they could overlap, when one actor has both territorial and institutional control. In this situation, with multiple non-state combatants turned legitimate armed actors inside the state, the armed forces of the state are usually reduced to the level of another combatant group. Thus, an inclusive ruling coalition and brokerage violence leaves the armed forces fragmented, like the state as a whole.

The armed actors in a negotiated state that are included in the ruling coalition usually have an interest in keeping the armed forces weak. Often the armed forces become just another state institution that non-state combatants could formally or informally capture. An armed force of a state ideally has a rational bureaucratic structure that resembles a bureaucratic structure with many moving parts. But if it works effectively in a negotiated state it becomes a threat to leaders of the coalition. In that case, the state may gain autonomy and develop an autonomous interest free from the many Inside-Combatants. More likely, a weak military gives Inside-Combatant opportunities to co-opt parts of the military, which further fragments armed violence. The formal

bureaucratic veneer may persist at ceremonial pageants evoking grandeur, but the reality will be at great variance.

In this context when violence flares up, usually reflecting political differences at the institutional level as elites rely on violence to overcome the differences, dynamics of violence take distinct forms. If the social base of power of the armed actor is predicated on holding territory, then violence will focus on domination of residents in a manner that resembles a mini form of rebel rule. If the armed actors' power is predicated on a patron-client network without a territorial base, violence will focus on members of the network. If the territorial boundaries of the negotiated state include multiple societal cleavages, violence induced population movements usually disrupts efforts to control territory, and the pursuit of power instead focuses on manipulating societal cleavages. Absent foreign intervention, an elemental reality of a negotiated state with fragmented sovereignty is that there is rarely a single actor with a preponderance of power. Consequently, when violence flares up, with multiple actors with more or less symmetrical capabilities, irregular-symmetric warfare shapes the battle-space. The intellectually lazy characterization of such instances as "senseless" or "wanton" violence misses the underlying political and social logics of violence in Negotiated States.

I began this chapter with the analogy of Alice going down the rabbit hole. War zones provide contexts that always vary across time and space, and the same time and space in a war zone may have variations along different levels of analysis. Consequently, war zones, an entire battle-space, or a specific battle-space, a town in a broader war, for example, understanding the dynamics forces us to view it both cross-sectionally and longitudinally across space and along the levels of analysis.

My framework of wartime authority configuration directs attention to the nature of the state and the form of state power. The form of state power in turn explain the macro-level combatant-state relations that broadly define the battle-space. That shapes the institutional level in terms of the form of wartime state sovereignty. And from the intermediate institutional level where macro-level and micro level dynamics are mediated, we can parse out both micro-level processes and how they generate endogenous wartime dynamics that feed into creating institutional change. It helps us encounter varied authority structures, processes of violence, and forms of control, inherent to war zones, and better understand how sometimes one can face multiple realities in the same space, sometimes across space, sometimes all at the same time. These realities are direct outcomes of wartime institutional configurations. And my claim is that the first step towards understanding war zones, be able to see clarity in the seeming chaos, since there is always clarity and logic in the organized use of military power in pursuit of goals, whatever the goals may be, is to figure out the wartime institutional configurations that shape power relations that regulate varied networks of power in societies that combatants in turn synonymously navigate as their respective battle-spaces.

CHAPTER 3: AUTHORITARIAN STATES AND CONTESTED SOVEREIGNTY

Turkish-Kurdish conflict in Turkey is taking place within, and with a state closely resembling an authoritarian state, though one would be hard put to call it a "classic-authoritarian state". The state generates a form of state power closely resembling an authoritarian form. The form of state power and the non-state combatants – Kurdistan Worker's Party, Partiya Karkeren Kurdistane PKK - generates the macro-level outcome of Outside-Combatants. The consequent institutional level outcome is Contested - Sovereignty. Contested - Sovereignty is the outcome of starkly confrontational stances between the protagonists. Theoretical expectation is a distinct, identifiable difference between the contending forces driven to claim monopolized prerogatives over territory and people. This create a specific authority context and a battle-space that shapes conflict processes on the ground. On the one hand, the Kurdish-Turkish conflict confirms many assumptions, and insights gleaned from territorially bound conflicts that characterized most of the 20th century civil wars. On the other-hand however, there are some aspects of the conflict in its latest iteration that does not easily fit into existing categories. The broader hope here is to be able to explicate the changes in terms of the framework and build on existing categories.

Turkey between an authoritarian and a bureaucratic state

Turkey today is a democracy, procedurally speaking. But it is evolving – in 2018 - into an unarguable one-party authoritarian state with authoritarian state power on the ground. Turkey has constantly oscillated between authoritarian and bureaucratic forms of state power. And this back-and-forth has had a huge impact in shaping the conflict overtime. States are the result of a polymorphous crystallization of societal networks of power. As the sources of social power networks change, the overall macro-level power arrangements also change. Hence, the transition

from empires to states, and states in a constant state of evolution.[82] Turkey has not been immune. Contrary to the hopes of the modernization theorists, history shows that there is no unidirectional state evolution. A state could start with people riding sheep and end up ultra-modern, cosmopolitan, pluralist, liberal and democratic – Ireland, South Korea, for example. They could also move in the reverse direction, shedding cosmopolitan and pluralist pretension for something else, as in Egypt, and slowly, in Turkey. What still holds of the modernization theorists, and what they got right, is that as societies get more complex as a result of coming to terms with modernity and espousing capitalism (and there is no choice on the latter, except variations of modernities and capitalisms), is the need for more specialized, differentiated institutions that can structure social relationships becomes ever more dire. The result is what Michal Mann termed the development of state infrastructural power, logistics of political control. Infrastructural power is a technocratic answer to the same puzzle Durkheim mulled over for years; what holds societies together as they transition from mechanical to organic solidarity, from traditional to modern societies. The answer is the territorial state with differentiated institutions with infrastructural power that allow the state to penetrate social life, to the most intimate level, marriage certificates, to today's corporate surveillance, built on state institutional structures, that can track one's heartbeat with peoples' complicity.

Turkish state followed these broad evolutionary trajectories. The founding vision and aspirations of the post Ottoman Turkish state was an attempt to realize an ideal type centralized modern state with a rational bureaucracy, firmly embedded infrastructures of social control and

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[82] For example, during the 18th and 19th century, military and economic power sources dominated the formation of the state, and ideational power in terms of nationalism played a subsequent role.

state power emanating out of a center with a homogenizing vision, of Turkey for the Turks. A

Turkish state for Turks modeled along Prussia that acts and emulates the west.[83] While the state

emerged when political sources of social power became primary (with its territorial

boundedness), other sources of social power, ideological, economic and military, are integrated

into the state and as they keep constantly shifting, the state keeps evolving.

No state in history has ever justified its existence in terms of logistics of social control or

providing the state with a form of autonomy vis a vis society though that has and will always be

one of outcomes of state building enterprises. Rather, the state building enterprises are always

justified in terms of a broad macro-level narrative, think the French and German unification and

state building projects. Germans are German, never mind that people from Munich would not

claim people from Nuremberg, an hour's drive north, to be true Bavarians, still. But there is a

broad notion of a national identity, part organic and part constructed. Then across the border one

could see a contrast. When the Germans, the French and Italians meet in Soccer world cup the

Swiss nation ceases to exist, and that would be the reality of a state-nation. Put otherwise, the

Swiss state has firm logistics of political control where Durkheimian puzzle is resolved, the state

holds the society together, while people could inhabit multiples spaces and multiple identities.

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[83] Autaturk's biographies by Andrew Mango and Lord Kincross explicate the outsized role he played in infusing his vision into what would become "Turkey". But what subsequently became "Ataturkism" was an amalgamation of speeches, comments, edicts, and never found in something like Mao's red book, the discussion of Ataturk's intellectual biography by Sukru Hanioglu provides a far better overview. Andrew Mango, *Ataturk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*. Overlook Press, 2002. Lord Patrick Balfour Kincross, *Ataturk: A Biography of Mustafa Kemal, Father of Modern Turkey*, Quill, Reissue, 1992. Hanioğlu, M. Şükrü. *Atatürk: An intellectual biography*. Princeton University Press, 2017.

In Turkey's founding narrative, Turkey is for Turks. Turkish founding vision, if fully

realized would look much like Eugene Webers' account of From Peasants to Frenchman.[84] The

Ataturk vision was to turn peasants into Turkmen, with the Turkmen epitomizing everything

modern, from the top-hat and the tail everything shall follow. The ideational trapping of the

Turkish state has been one of Turkish nationalism mixed with its forced laicism, borrowed from

France. But this laicism is hardly the French version, where the term originated, but in Turkey it

has a uniquely Sunni Islamic character.[85]

While the ideational trappings of the Turkish state for Turks has broadly remained true, it

ebbed and flowed with the broader ideational currents of the cold war between a mix of leftist

inspired autarchic policies and rightist inspired liberal economic policies. Crucially, throughout

the ideational struggles that shaped the outer trappings of the Turkish state has always been in an

unsure footing, being constantly challenged. This insecurity was best captured in the military

edict, "no leftist mustaches, rightist side-birds and ambiguous bears".[86] Throughout however, the

Turkish state has continued its expansion of infrastructural power and logistics of political

control over its territory in varying degrees. Today the Turkish state has a greater degree of

infrastructural power and a greater degree of autonomy vis a vis society than any time in history.

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[84] Weber's account is a classic modernization treatise and a similar outcome, it can be solidly surmised, was the founding vision. Weber, Eugen. *Peasants into Frenchmen: the modernization of rural France, 1870-1914*. Stanford University Press, 1976.

[85] Berna Turam's edited volume, though recent provides an excellent discussion of the continued dialectic taking place in Turkey since its founding. Turam, Berna, ed. *Secular state and religious society: two forces in play in Turkey*. (Springer, 2011).Also see, Keyman, E. Fuat. "Modernity, secularism and Islam: The case of Turkey." *Theory, culture & society* 24.2 (2007): 215-234. Göle, Nilüfer. "Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: The making of elites and counter-elites." *The Middle East Journal* (1997): 46-58. Azak, Umut. *Islam and secularism in Turkey: Kemalism, religion and the nation state*. (IB Tauris, 2010).

[86] William L.Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 5th Edition, Westview Press 2014; 288

The original homogenizing vision of Turkish founders have consistently run into conflict in a country with crisscrossing and cross-cutting societal cleavages, along ethnic, religious, linguistic, rural versus urban, religious vs non-religious, modernizing versus traditionalist, white-turks vs black-turks etc divisions. In Joel Migada, and James C. Scott terms, Turkey is a case of a strong-willed state centralization and modernization project running into constant conflict with a strong society. To be specific, to be part of a centralized state, and modern is to be subjects of a different from of power organization and authority, and it comes at the cost of destroying existing localized power structures, of clans and tribes. Turkey is replete with them and these social cleavages represent in many instances more than nominal forms of local power relationships. Though the French homogenizing model strongly resonated with the founders of the Turkish state, the reality on the ground proved far more resistant, the state capacity varied, and Turkey's attempt at (inevitably violent) homogenizing state building enterprise occurred at a different time.[87]

The resistance for the modernizing and centralizing attempts were not purely ideational, but also economic, military and political. Building a state, creating new institutions that shape social interactions, is all about rearranging existing power relations, it requires destroying some of the old and building new sets of relations, all of which inevitably leads to huge social displacements, for better and or for worse. In this long view, Turkey began as Praetorian state, coming out of the empire, and has since shifted between authoritarian and bureaucratic quadrants

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[87] There are countless shelves in libraries documenting the Turkish state centralization and modernization process, detailing its trials and travails. I find the edited volume by Sibel Bodogan and Resat Kasaba to be a great and in-depth discussion on the subject. Bozdoğan, Sibel, and Reşat Kasaba, eds. *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*. Vol. 7. (University of Washington Press, 1997). Also see, Lamprou, Alexandros. *Nation-building in Modern Turkey: The'people's Houses', the State and the Citizen*. Vol. 12. IB Tauris, 2015.

in the theory. Although for a considerable period in the 20th century, by design, in the south and

east, the Kurdish areas, the state infrastructural power and despotic power remained "light".[88]

Because the Turkish state relied on co-opted local notables for maintaining political order and

regulate society making some parts of Turkey resemble a Praetorian state with imperial forms of

stat power. Distinctions and in-case variations in the form of state power that bears on some of

the micro-level battle-space dynamics. That is to say, eastern parts of Turkey though long

remained part of the Ottoman empire, also managed to maintain the myriad local forms of

governance, power relations organized along tribal, clan, and lineage lines, primordial forms of

power relations. It was and is a common contestation that has taken place between the center and

the periphery in almost all state building processes. In this long evolution of the Turkish state,

today it closely fits the authoritarian quadrant, especially in the center, and also in the periphery

to a very great degree. This reality plays a role in shaping the nature of the conflict as we shall

see.

Turkey: the Authoritarian State

Turkey today is (mostly) resembles an authoritarian state with an exclusive ruling coalition and

direct administration of violence that generates authoritarian form of state power. These are

fighting words no doubt, and some are bound to disagree. Not everything in the case fits the

category. There are elements in the Turkish state that fit all four ideal type states. That displays,

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[88] White, Paul J. "Economic marginalization of Turkey's Kurds: The failed promise of modernization and reform." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18.1 (1998): 139-158; Mardin, Şerif. "Center-periphery relations: A key to Turkish politics?." *Daedalus* (1973): 169-190.

and the difficulty is noted, that real life cases always remain highly ambiguous. The claim here is that the defining features of the Turkish state is far more congruent with an authoritarian state and the ongoing conflict is best understood by seeing it through that prism.

Turkey has the necessary condition to be in either guardian or a centurion state category, direct administration of violence. At its founding Turkey was recovering from a failed Ottoman centralizing attempt and foreign occupation. As an occupied rump of an imperial state it was a Praetorian state that verged on being a Negotiated state, with multiple actors with capacity for violence vying for influence and power. The war of independence against the occupying powers was also necessarily a civil war aimed at mercilessly attaining the direct capacity to administer violence and then maintaining that monopolized prerogative. Turkey has closely guarded that prerogative ever since. Between military coup's and democratizing tendencies, Turkey has consistently oscillated between an authoritarian and a bureaucratic state, with the movement taking place along the inclusivity or the exclusivity of the ruling coalition. And part of the seeds of the conflict are also found precisely along this dimension.[89] At present, between 2015-2018, the time period under investigation here, Turkey is an authoritarian state.

Turkey's version of authoritarian state power today manifests itself mostly through routinized institutionalized means and also with overt coercive means in the centers but explicitly overt lethal means in the periphery, where it is an active battle-space. The state relies

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[89] Assuming nationalist narratives to be a form of ideological power, in terms of Mann's framework, the ruling coalition's consistently oscillated between inclusive and exclusive along all sources of power, except in its rigid foundational narrative. That is, the Turkish ruling coalition had always consisted of elite networks of power reflecting economic, military and political sources of social power, except everyone had to, at a minimum pay lip service to the Turkish national narrative, of secular, centralized state, for all Turks. The ideological source of social power was weaved into every aspect of the Turkish state, with little to no room for variations, complete with paying homage to Ataturk during school ceremonies.

on its infrastructural power, but despotic power dominates since the ruling coalition has managed to capture the state and its institutional tentacles with its loyalists. Consequently, there is little democratic accountability and civil society groups have ever diminishing power. The qualitative difference is significant. Unlike in older authoritarian forms where the secret police would show up to set things in order, in Turkey it will be a formal email, with a court order, requesting one's presence, at the magistrate. It will be completely within the institutionalized means and the accused will have opportunity for legal recourse. But the legal recourse is a legal veneer and a necessary political charade since the judiciary is completely dependent on and is loyal to the ruling coalition.[90] This is authoritarian state power in a democratic-despotism in the twenty first century.

In an ideal type authoritarian state, state power organization by definition is distributive, extensive, intensive and authoritative. In Turkey with the brazenly exclusivist ruling coalition and AKP capture of state institutions means power has become ever more distributive in its character. It is extensive in its organization and whether or not the form of power is intensive remain contingent. As a lived reality, an individual, (all else constant) experiences a great degree of unchecked AKP despotic power (vis a vis) infrastructural power with little legal recourse and even less recourse through civil society groups, the last line of defense.

Turkey is replete with civil society groups, except with AKP stranglehold on the state and its differentiated institutions only civil society groups that can wield power are increasingly allied with the AKP. The ruling coalition, AKP, has the capacity to wield intensive power, power that is commanded and willed, but only to a limited extent amongst its followers, but far more

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[90] Field research in Turkey, and conversations with series of Turkish lawyers in Istanbul (April 2018; March 2017 and Ankara in 2016).

and better than its opponents. The lived reality of this authoritarian state power of democratic-despotism is that it is not always consistent across space. An individual in Istanbul and Ankara for example faces a form of state power that is at variance from say, Diyarbakir or Silopi. A non-state combatant group exercising organized violence (in pursuit of whatever goal) faces this reality of state power in Turkey. But, non-state combatants, in this case PKK, that relies on violence to engage with and face the Turkish state, has had its own evolution overtime paralleling the changing state-and-societal context of Turkey.

State Power, Social Power and Combatants

Combatants are societal actors that wield organized, concentrated, lethal violence, military power. Being societal actors, they are shaped by the social-structure (referred in Mann's terms, the intersecting and overlapping networks of power that constitute society) and the state, that constantly shape the societal power-networks and vice-versa. The bulk of lethal violence is in the hands of the state, sufficient degree of both despotic and far reaching infrastructural coordination capacity allows for the monopolized claim to be upheld.

Combatants by definition give organizational primacy to the military source of social power. But in that pursuit, (like all societal power actors), combatants develop infrastructures that also harness other sources of social power in varying degrees so as to optimally organize themselves. This is a moment that Mann calls "the promiscuity of organizations" and how power organizations are always "functionally promiscuous".[91]   Promiscuity of power organizations, the

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[91] Read Mann (1986) pages 30-38 for a discussion on the European Pike Phalanx and the diffusion of salvation religions.

wanton nature of it helps better understand how combatants harness social power, and how that is shaped by state power and societal-networks.

At any given moment when power is organizationally manifested, it is a moment that represent a mixture of all four sources of social power in varying degrees, and this also applies to the combatant power organizations. Think of the stop sign in neighborhoods where formal authority is as psychological as physical and how that moment represents varied sources of power in that taken for granted moment that actually represents the logistics of social control. Similarly think also of a solider in the U.S. armed forces obeying a lawful order alongside a non-state combatant. The soldier obeying is not merely a function of intensive-authoritarian power organization (as it is in the military command hierarchies) if one extend that moment in terms of overlapping and intersecting forms of power that captures the moment. A soldier in a state's army obeying today first responds to an intensive-authoritarian form of power, the command. If the soldier is part of a state army, that has a capitalist economy, then political and economic power - capitalist economic power to be specific- also plays a role. All the training, indoctrination and legal bureaucratic maneuvers employed to justify employing concentrated lethal violence with impunity, kill people that needs to be killed and get away with it - represents a form of ideological power. In trying to understand this obedience, it is difficult to sort out which specific power source did the causal work, which has primacy, in making a soldier obey - the outcome of social power. Alternatively, we could recognize that, while by definition military power organization gets primacy, the moment is never alone in how it is related to all other power sources in varying degrees. Similar to the reality that, a state, as the macro level power organization crystalizes power around political source of social power, but it is never possible

without the polymorphous mix of other power sources. The same logic applies to combatants as societal actors.

PKK face a very modern state and experiences a specific form of formidable state power. The initial alternative power organization by PKK against the state was ideational. In the seventies, the very existence of the Kurds as a self-identified group was denied, and identifying oneself as Kurdish, using the language or taking part in culturally salient Kurdish activities - were seen - by definition predicated on the ideational foundation of the state as a threat to the Turkish state and as an act of treason. Actuating Kurdish identity - even to make it openly culturally salient - was seen by definition as a threat, requiring state sanctioned action to prevent the emergence of the identity. The contrast is built into the very identity and foundations of the state. Kurdish combatants faced this state-society reality simultaneously as they faced a formidable state, which has ramifications in combatant organizing the social source of military power.

PKK Combatant-Infrastructures, and Social Power

Building on Mann's concept of infrastructures, by combatant-infrastructures it means the routinized media through which information and commands are transmitted and the means with which combatants' harness and organize social power. All combatants small or large and across space, rely on similar infrastructures. They are analytically autonomous - but in reality, related - constitutive components without which no combatant enterprise could get off the ground; Narrative, Organization, Membership, Strategy and Tactics. These infrastructures make combatants similar at the broadest analytical level just as how they operationalize the infrastructures vary, since the operationalization is contingent, and context specific, therefore vary across time and space.

Combatants organize along military source of social power, and military power has both

extensive and intensive aspects and it is authoritative in how it shapes social relations (both in-

group and out-group). In mobilizing the combatant infrastructures to harness social power, PKK

gives primacy to military sources of social power alongside ideological sources of social

power.[92] Economic source of social power is always necessary, but it is not defining in the case

of the PKK since it relies on myriad economic sources varying from diaspora support,[93] illicit

economic activity[94] to local contributions.[95] A contrast with the warlords of the nineties west

African wars will clarify the point further. Warlord combatants gave primacy to military and

economic sources of social power in the organization of their infrastructures to re-state Will

Reno's seminal book on Warlord Politics and African States in Michael Mann's conceptual

terms.[96] Though African Warlords, such as Charles Taylor of NPFL and even Foday Sankoh of

RUF utilized context specific narratives, forms of ideational power, those narratives seldom

played a core mobilizing role.[97] Rather, the narratives of warlords were used after the fact, or

emerged as a result of or as a reaction to altered social relations after the on-set of violence. The

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[92] Aliza Marcus, *Blood and Belief: The PKK and Kurdish fight for independence*,(New York: New York University Press, 2009). Özeren, Süleyman, et al. "Whom do they recruit?: Profiling and recruitment in the PKK/KCK." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37.4 (2014): 322-347. Criss, Nur Bilge. "The nature of PKK terrorism in Turkey." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 18.1 (1995): 17-37. Kutschera, Chris. "Mad Dreams of Independence: the Kurds of Turkey and the PKK." *Middle East Report* 189 (1994): 12-15.
[93] Interviews with PKK affiliates in Germany, Netherlands and France between 2014-2017.
[94] Roth, Mitchel P., and Murat Sever. "The Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) as criminal syndicate: funding terrorism through organized crime, a case study." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*30.10 (2007): 901-920.
[95] Field research in the predominantly Kurdish regions of Diyarbarkir, Mardin, Nusaybin, Silopi etc, between 2014-2018.
[96] William Reno, Warlord Politics and African States, (Boulder: Lynn Rynner 1998); Reno, William. "The business of war in Liberia." *Current History* 95 (1996): 211.
[97] Discussion with Will Reno.

warlord combatants emerged in a particular state-society context and it shaped the way they

organized combatant infrastructures.

PKK cadres often point out that their struggle is twofold, one against the Turkish state

and another against their own society. It is also an ideological battle cutting both ways, against

the Turkish nationalist narrative as well as anti-traditional patriarchic and archaic Kurdish social

structures, in PKK point of view.[98] On the one hand PKK exercise of violence challenges state

generated authority relations primarily along ideological and military grounds but by extension,

it also impacts state generated political and economic relations. On the other hand, PKK violence

also challenges traditional power relations in Kurdish society organized along broad

patriarchical-traditional and tribal lines. Though the respective local elders may claim themselves

to be tribal leaders, elders, PKK on this count are far more accurate in pointing them out as "neo-

tribes" coopted to the state, that plays the traditional role as a form of purveying, what Weber

would call, traditional form of authority as a means of control.

In that sense, the tribes in the old sense of the word, a loose territorially concentrated

traditional governance arrangement, simply do not exist. In its place are Kurdish Neo-tribes

(very similar to Iraq, as will become clear later) that are fundamentally economic, political and

military patronage networks that are related to the Turkish state. They are economic, since the

Neo-tribal leaderships are part patrilineal but are also part based on grandfathered-in vast land-

holdings now turned into various business holdings, usually also linked to localized, regional and

a handful of cases national level crony capitalist arrangements. They are political because local

Neo-tribal leaders can deliver votes, and political also in the sense that their political capacity has

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[98] Myriad discussions with former PKK cadres in Europe. Özcan, Ali Kemal. *Turkey's Kurds: a theoretical analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Ocalan*. Routledge, 2012.

territorial closure. The military aspect of these Neo-tribes has been little discussed. And these traditions, context specific state-society relations arbitrated by the form of state power impacts PKK-State violence and shape the battle-space.

The Kurdish areas of the south and east of Turkey have long had a sense of autonomy in their form of governance but part by choice and part by necessity. As modern Turkey came into being, the first of the reactions against the centralizing tendencies also came in the Kurdish regions. Though later couched in terms of Kurdish national movement narrative, they were reactions by formidable local notables that reacted against the state usurping their political-economic-and military power.[99] Some got crushed, and some did not.[100] And those that did not, were coopted into the state, politically, economically, and also militarily. The Turkish state had a claim to monopoly, but also allowed some semblance of the traditionalist patriarchal arrangements to function, on the condition that those local notables also always do the bidding of the ruling coalition in Ankara. In state building terms, the more the state increases its infrastructural power into formerly tribal Kurdish lands, it inevitably meant a decrease in the power of the traditionalist tribal elders. The astute of them would transform themselves into Neo-tribal elders. They would be formal businessmen, in Italian suits, appointed state agents, governors etc, but would also maintain their customary appurtenances (much like the gold embroidered cloaks of the Iraqi Neo-tribal elders and their prayer beads, or the many Nigerian

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[99] Olson, Robert. *The emergence of Kurdish nationalism and the Sheikh said rebellion, 1880–1925*. University of Texas Press, 2013.
[100] van Bruinessen, Martin M. "The Suppression of the Dersim Rebellion in Turkey (1937-38)." (1994). Olson, Robert, and Horace Rumbold. "The Kocgiri Kurdish rebellion in 1921 and the Draft Law for a proposed autonomy of Kurdistan." *Oriente Moderno* 8.1/6 (1989): 41-56.

emir's) authority to govern societal norms, resolve family disputes, and resolve small scale community differences, use the influence and connections to assist tribal members in their own political and economic ventures etc.

In this context, the moment PKK picked up arms, it ran headlong into the monopoly claims of the Turkish state. That is the enemy on the left. And turn around and PKK faced context specific, meaning highly localized, territorially bounded Neo-traditional Kurdish power relations that are allied with the state. That is their enemy on the right. PKK organized combatant infrastructures in this specific societal context.

It is important to be reminded of a peculiar feature here. Listening to the Turkish president, its security officials, myriad other state affiliates, there is a constant sentiment (that varies across time) of the Kurdish terrorists about to outrun the daily routine of good people, and that the Kurdish PKK as threatening the very survival and territorial integrity of the Turkish state. A logical extension of all the PKK's own hyperbolic claims would give that impression, but everyone knows that PKK stands no chance of military victory. However, the PKK, as formidable as they have been and continue to be as a fighting force, has never managed to have more than 7000-8000 fighting cadres, the most die-hard PKK sympathizer would claim ten thousand cadres, but only to have him be corrected by a former PKK cadre turned life-long economic-middle man for PKK that they have never been able to reach that number. This is significant. Out of a Kurdish-Turkish population of 15 million, 20% out of 88 million of the total Turkish population, PKK can only afford to have 8000 cadres. So, on the one hand, if this is the best the PKK could do, that is a terrible reflection of their recruitment strategies and a very poor reflection of their own peoples support for them. On the other hand, if PKK with 8000 cadres, (a charitable number in the best of circumstances) and more than two thirds of them either hiding or

on rest-and-recovery in the Quandil mountains of Iraq at any given time, can get the Turkish ruling coalition and its security apparatus, and a sizable number of Turkish people to go into existential conniptions, it is also a hell of a reflection of how PKK harness's the sources of social power.

We have to look at the nexus of military and ideological power, in the overall organization of PKK combatants' infrastructures and their evolution over time. Ideology, synonymously used as combatant narrative, has a multiplicity of functions at multiple levels. It is the story with which combatants justify the fight, why they claim to kill, and be killed, the justification for their application of intensive, authoritative power amongst the cadres and the exercise of concentrated lethal violence on the enemy, and indeed, how shall one even define the enemy. It also has the effect of shaping the conceptual categories of observers, sympathizers and supporters. When people read, eat, act, think, and talk etc in terms of the idea, it is made manifest. Ideological power like all other sources of social power is always present, everywhere, at all times, but become manifest only in its organizational form. And the moment it become manifest in its organized form could be a moment made manifest by and individual all by his lonesome, waking up and praying by himself; making personal decisions that impacts only one's own self but doing so according to a broad framework of ideas; personally, identifying and sympathizing with a group that tells a particular story as opposed to another etc. The moment could be made manifest collectively, literally, as in a massive rally, a moment one point out as the mobilizing power of ideas.[101]

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[101] But it is important to note that in the moment when people rally, collectively, how that moment is also made possible by the infrastructures of all other power sources.

PKK narrative at the broadest level is one of Kurdish self-actualization and self-determination. Not coincidentally, PKK narrative remains (though they have softened it at the margins) primarily exclusivist in that it mirrors the state's Turkish narrative; self-determination defined in terms regional autonomy where Kurds could be Kurds. But not all Kurds agree, on numerous grounds, but mainly also because the PKK narrative directly counters existing social mores in the Kurdish regions. Because PKK narrative also remains Marxist and Leninist by lineage, thereby being very modernist (in the old communist sense) directly attacking traditionalist power networks and patriarchic nature of traditional Kurdish society. This is a direct result of the ideational background of PKK founders who came of age in the heyday of leftist versus rightist fight in Turkey, where most PKK founders happened to be leftist communists before they became Kurdish nationalists. In fact, one of the founding claims is that neither the mainstream right nor the left in Turkey ever cared much about the Kurds.[102] PKK though does not have a monopoly on the narrative. There are legal political parties of modernist and traditionalist hues, speaking to varied constituents; but PKK, with its capacity for violence, against the state and against its own people, do carry inordinate amount of weight in how the Kurdish narrative is perceived and propagated. The narrative, and PKK has also evolved with the changing domestic, regional and international context. It emerged as an uncompromising doctrinaire group that has softened its ideational positions over time, but in its organizational aspects, it has diversified while maintaining its "Stalinist core" characterized by its hierarchical

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[102] Yeğen, Mesut. "The Kurdish question in Turkish state discourse." *Journal of Contemporary History* 34.4 (1999): 555-568. Yeğen, Mesut. "The Turkish state discourse and the exclusion of Kurdish identity." *Middle Eastern Studies* 32.2 (1996): 216-229.

form of guerrilla organization based out of the Quandil mountains in Iraq, by way of Syria, and

the Bekka Valley. While the Quandil remain the core, there are multiple urban affiliates,

(Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement in Sur, for example) loosely connected to the PKK,

but acting out the narrative, challenging the state. The loose urban affiliates have brought the

rural guerrilla war into the cities in predominantly Kurdish urban centers while the guerrilla units

remain uniformed company and platoon size, highly mobile light infantry units carrying out

classic-hit-and run tactics being one with the physical and societal terrain.

Authority, Control and Battle-Space in Turkey

The time and the place matter in coming to terms with a war-zone. The fight between the Turkish

state and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) have gone through many mutations.

The latest iteration of the conflict began IN Jule 2015 precisely at the moment when the ruling

AK party hegemony was threatened, when the party pivoted both to the left to get the nationalist

vote and to the right to get the conservative vote, by ideationally and militarily assaulting the

PKK.

The renewed conflict partly comports with the guerrilla form of asymmetric warfare that

is consistent with existing scholarship. PKK combatants use the areas where the Turkish state is

least effective as its strongholds. PKK masters the harsh terrain and uses it to their advantage

blending their agile light infantry tactics seamlessly with the terrain, making the two mutually

constitutive.[103] They use the linguistic and ethnic affinities of the population to their advantage

by finding strategic depth & breadth. In their ability move in-and-out of the population helps

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[103] This is consistent with Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war." *American political science review* 97.1 (2003): 75-90.

them maintain a great degree of anonymity that helps them be everywhere and no-where, all at once. The logic of violence by the PKK has its guerrilla logic of puncturing the sense of predictability with its attacks, showing that the state is weak, and sow discord and drive a wedge between the communities, reifying the ethnic divisions. Turkish state's response has varied between information intensive discriminate targeting, indiscriminate targeting and drain-the-swamp strategies of forced population movements. There is also a territorial dynamic to the logic of violence, though the sense and idea of control in this territorial centric strategy is a nuanced one. Turkey is a formidable state. It has formidable and ever increasing institutional capacity and also a great degree of despotic power. The combination gives the Turkish state a great degree of autonomous agency from society. The PKK could never overtly control vast swathes of territory the same way LTTE did at the height of its civil war in Sri Lanka.[104] PKK can only control distant villages in inhospitable terrain overtly, and only until the Turkish soldiers dislodge them.

But in areas where the Turkish state had better reach, the PKK would partition control and create layers of control, a form of subversive control. With a mixture of coercion, collusion, co-optation and cooperation of people, PKK would partition the sense and the reality of state control of territory and its population.[105] The partition of control, altering of authority on the ground, happen along territorial, societal-networks, and temporal lines. Territorial control is explicit, easy to recognize, the state agents are either expelled or work at the behest of the PKK.[106]

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[104] Mohan, Rohini. *The seasons of trouble: life amid the ruins of Sri Lanka's civil war*. Verso Books, 2014.
[105] Field research in Diyarbarkir and other Kurdish regions during the peace process that lasted between March 2013 to April 2015. The civil war re-commenced in July 2015.
[106] Field research in Sur district, December 2014.

Partitioned control, that is authority truncated along societal-networks and temporal lines are harder to notice. Walking along Cirnak, in south-eastern Turkey for example, the Turkish state may appear to have a stranglehold, in many ways it does. But people, in specific business sectors, professions, would discreetly alter their behavior, and the insurgents control the night would be explicit manifestations of partitioned control along temporal lines. To walk down the same route in Sirnak or Cizre in Turkey, with civilians, with combatants from the Turkish state and then with PKK combatants (that remain in the city maintaining their anonymity) is to be able to see the same street, from three different vantage points, and consequently three very different realities, and the same realities also gets altered along the temporal dimension, and all of them constitute the whole battle-space.

Contested Sovereignty: Glimpse of Sur[107] in Diyarbakir

Faced with a formidable state with direct administration of violence, PKK is hardly able to exclusively control territory the way, for example, FARC did in Columbia. Instead, they mete out punishments, and create parallel judicial structures, while also, as existing scholarship shows in a fight concentrated on territory and population, they target state informers and Kurds allied with the state. As long as one provides them with guarantees of anonymity, they are explicit in articulating their logic of violence. Though, being astute combatants, PKK point out that in

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[107] The example of Sur is not posited as representative of the entire battle space in south eastern Turkey where the conflict predominates. Rather, that the author has been to the district of Sur in the Kurdish city if Diyarbarkir and that there are lot of primary data on the context and it also provides a pretty accurate glimpse into a very specific corner in a vast battle space. In any war zone, the nature of the battle-space remains different from neighborhood to neighborhood, due to differences in the nature of physical terrain, societal networks of power, the nature of state authority and the capacity of the combatants. Sur example is no different.

targeting informers, they resort more towards exiling them rather than capital punishment so as to not alienate the wider population.[108] It is also a sign that PKK is far more embedded into the societal context that their autonomy is limited. This is contested sovereignty both on territorial and institutional lines. Opponents point out that PKK version of territorial and population control and (what I term resulting contested sovereignty) has little to do with "the support" of the people but more to do with "the complicity" of the people since people are held hostage being at the mercy of violence. While supporters of PKK in the areas that they control (both overly and covertly) point out at the many occasions of Kurdish civilians unaffiliated with the PKK engaging in activities that reify their support for PKK - and by extension reify PKK control - as proof that PKK is firmly embedded within the Kurdish populations and their population and territorial control is purely a function of support. Empirical reality is complicated.

On the one hand the concepts of "control", and its attendant functional variables of "support" and "complicity" are hard to code and even harder to measure in this context. There is genuine support, violence induced complicity, and varied versions of sympathy across space but how much of each constitute towards overall control in shaping authority and the battle-space? Quantifying them is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

This contested reality for population and territorial control transpires within a multilayered set of formal power relations generated by the Turkish state and informal and highly localized set of power relations inherent to Kurdish society. The contestations centered on territory and people are always mediated by the attendant authority structures that simultaneously pervades and keep evolving in the local context. Any exclusivist claim (by opponents and

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[108] Discussion with PKK cadres in Essen, Germany. 2015.

supporters as well as scholars) that discount the mediating authority structures remain suspect in their exclusivist veracity. What is certain is that all three protagonists to the conflict, the Turkish state, PKK and the civilians navigate contested and ever-changing forms of power that generate specific forms of authority. This context is best represented with a glimpse into the historic district of Sur, in the Kurdish majority city of Diyarbarkir in south eastern Turkey.

The Sur district, situated inside the old district of Diyarbarkir (as well as Cizre in Sirnak Province, and Nusaybin, in Mardin province) have areas that resemble images coming out of Aleppo. The PKK affiliated youth militias erected barricades, dug in trenches, and fought the Turkish soldiers in Sur. This is explicit contestation of sovereignty on territorial grounds by weakening and at times defeating state agents. It is also institutional, especially since civilians must now navigate PKK imposed authority. The state responded in kind. Some of these urban fighters were either killed, captured and those that can escape, escaped. There are sizable number that engage in urban forms of guerrilla warfare with sniping and small scale urban ambushes. It is an urban strategy of winning by not being defeated. Turkish soldiers patrol the ruined parts of the city and attempts to provide services to those residents that chose to stay while engaging the remaining combatants.

Simultaneously, the same soldiers are bulldozing the tightly packed urban houses, that PKK uses as effective ambush sites. State also claims it is a state led urban revitalization process, with newer larger roads, and boulevards. Since the state is compensating the residents for their lost property, and or to move, critics argue it is generating a particularly pernicious patronage network beholden to the AKP, and destroying the social structure. They may have a point, but it also portrays the effectiveness of the Turkish state and its despoitic capacity. There is also the logic, much like building vast boulevards in post revolution Paris to prevent urban insurgents.

Along the way, as part of the urban revitalization process, the state is evicting people from their homes, generating large scale population transfers. This is the state imposing its territorial and institutional writ with the use of violence by shaping the physical terrain in a way that is more amenable to maintaining strict logistics of social control - smoothing out space. The specific physical terrain features make it easier for the state; flat, surrounded by a medieval wall. While the labyrinthine nature of Sur district that resembles Algerian Casbah makes it easier for the PKK affiliated militants to use the civilians as shields just as they rely on physical terrain. But civilian can become a tactical advantage only depending on how the adversary internalizes the presence of civilians into their tactical decision matrices.

In Turkey, the state responds with its approach to "urban revitalization", with large scale population transfers and fundamentally altering the physical terrain that favored urban insurgents. They drain the swamp and smooth out space. Further east of the city, in the hilly rural areas, Turkish soldiers and PKK are engaging in the form of warfare that they are used to; classic form of rural insurgency embedded into the terrain where the state finds itself difficult to reach. The experiences in Sur represent the urban dimension of the conflict in the conflicts latest reincarnation. It is not so much a transition of the PKK from being rural based combatants following the classical Maoist template of peoples' war to urban insurgents, but one where the PKK, with the use of informal affiliates of the PKK - contests the Turkish state sovereignty in urban centers.

It is a combatant strategy that makes the conflict that much more information and intelligence intensive for the Turkish state and a strategic shift where PKK has overcome its asymmetry in capabilities vis a vis the state, albeit at a high cost to both the state, civilians and to itself but a cost that PKK is willing to bear. The state has minimized its own intelligence and

information asymmetry with overwhelming force and wholesale urban transformation. A feat made possible by the state capacity to directly administer violence, strong infrastructural power with a preponderance towards to despotic power where civil society groups are silenced.

In fact, the reason people are unaware of the nature of the battle-space, the reality of life in the worst hit areas of Turkey is precisely because of the nature of the battle-space shaped by state power. Civil society groups, (media, activists, politicians, etc) are all fearful not of the despotic arm of state but the infrastructural arm, i.e. the sophisticated bureaucratic and legal form of oppression that leads people to self-censor and civil-society groups to be deemed illegal. It is also striking that "digital activism", "crowd-sourced activism", popular and highly regarded in other war-zones, (in some cases spoken of as game changing), are utterly absent. How many youtube videos are there of the images of destroyed villages and cities in the south-east of Turkey, if and when Turkey can ban Youtube at will, as it does often. Though diaspora Kurdish supporters try to keep the issue alive, very rarely does one see activists engaging the broader international community from inside Turkey. This is a huge contrast from the same civil war in the nineties, where the state had much less capacity. Now, with increased state capacity, individuals self-censor and civil-society groups are either muzzled out, and the state is effective enough to manage the internet providers, and even shape the content and accessibility of websites inside Turkey. This is very sophisticated logistics of social control. This form of state power and combatant interactions has generated a highly destructive battle-space.[109]

The Crisis Group report on the "The PKK Conflict in Turkey: The Case of Sur"[110] aggregated micro-level data to explicate the situation in Sur, and portray the gravity of the new

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[109] Field research in Diyarbarkir in 2015, 2016 and 2017.
[110] Crisis Group Briefing, No 80. Europe & Central Asia, 17 March 2016.

contested dimension. I quote it at length while complimenting it with my own findings on the ground.

In Sur, "the distinction between civilians and militants has been chiefly complicated by emergence of the Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement (YDG-H), an informal, pro-PKK youth militia whose members do not wear the loose-fitting, olive fatigues traditionally favored by the insurgency."[111] This is a deliberate PKK strategic and tactical shift, per PKK militants, that effectively makes the enemy for the state to appear everywhere and nowhere while for the PKK, the soldiers, state combatants, remain easily decipherable stationary or moving targets. That is, PKK may not know when is the perfect time to do the shooting or how, but they always know who to shoot while the state does not. The civilians must navigate this reality.

"Starting on 27 December 2015, YDG-H militias across the south east were restricted as Civil Protection Units (YPS), a shift accompanied by widening participation in the urban war of seasoned, rural PKK militants, known to the security forces from previous escalation cycles. Security-force casualties from snipers and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in curfew zones have increased markedly and are likely to increase further as spring conditions allow easier passage of PKK fighters from the Qandil Mountains".[112] In response, the security forces respond with a mixture of indiscriminate and discriminatory violence under the cover of curfews. In an urban terrain the armed urban youth that constitute the YDG-H are firmly embedded into the local societal context they come from. Therefore, societal defectors, i.e. informers that would identify the individuals are few, as the YDG-H combatants point out, because they could be easily identified by others in the community where 'words travel fast' and also because

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[111] Ibid. p 4.
[112] Ibid. p 4

developing such informers remain a time-consuming process for the state, the main adversary.[113]

This is further hampered by the notable ethnic division, the underlying basis for the fight. YDG-H combatants, coming from the neighborhood are explicit that, yes, Kurds stuck in the middle may not always like the YDG-H, but that they are also loathed to support the state while most despise those Kurds that inform on them.[114] As per the Turkish military officials operating in the region, YDG-H claims, while true, are not categorical. In that the Turkish military intelligence and its domestic intelligence services are not lacking in informers only that it had definitely added to the labor and information intensive nature of urban warfare if the state is to rely on information and intelligence intensive, discriminatory use of violence. One of the Turkish infantry commanders pointed at this tactical quandary and countered it by speaking in approving terms at the states urban revitalization program. Meaning the state could use overwhelming force, obliterate neighborhood, force population transfers, and then completely transform the neighborhood as civilian engineers and contractors rebuild the city in more decipherable spatial terms.[115] In effect the contested sovereignty is played out where the YDG-H has minimized the asymmetry of power by being one with the terrain, albeit in this case, terrain constitute embedding firmly within the multitude of interconnected and interesting socio-spatial networks of power that constitute the local society.

This contested sovereignty on the ground also plays out at the macro-level in terms of the respective narratives of the protagonists. The Turkish prime-minister at the time, Ahmed Davtoglu pointed out that the Turkish state is engaged in an existential fight, that terrorists have

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[113] Interview, March 23, 2016.
[114] Interview, March 24, 2016.
[115] Interview, August, 13, 2016

no place, and that the state, in addition to rooting out terrorists, also remain a magnanimous actor in its urban revitalization process where the uprooted civilians are hardly displaced for they are compensated for lost property, and that most of them could eventually return to the revitalized neighborhoods.[116] Besides, he pointed out, Turkey's southeastern cities were examples of "unplanned urbanization" as they rapidly developed particularly during the 1990s. "Even if such events [clashes] had not taken place, these cities would have to be rebuilt under urban transformation projects,".[117]

The PKK – and multiple civilians, observers and international rights groups - point out that this is overwhelming force, indiscriminate violence, deliberately displacing innocent civilians as part of a broader security strategy. And that those that are compensated and or have the right to return are all affiliated either formally or informally with either the ruling party AKP and or with the Turkish state. And conversations with Kurdish and Turkish civil society organization leaders that genuinely harbor no sympathies towards either party to the conflict except the civilians, point out YDG-H actions risked the civilians, and that the state remained callous towards the plight of the civilians, the state and the military accuses them of being PKK sympathizers or worst, "silent traitors as dangerous as the terrorists" while the PKK accuses them of playing into the hands of an oppressive state by highlighting their accusations verbatim.[118]

The Crisis group pointed at another dynamic that highlights the dynamic of contested sovereignty and how it is shaped by state-power. "Across the south east, affected residents

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[116] http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/diyarbakirs-ruined-sur-to-be-rebuilt-like-spains-toledo-vows-turkish-pm-94615
[117] Ibid
[118] Interview, August 15, 2016.

complain that curfews are often imposed indiscriminately and with little advance warning, forcing locals to flee their homes hurriedly, without knowing if they can return for days or months".[119] From the vantage point of the state, peoples complain actually explains consistent tactical logic of the Turkish state that shows they are doing what they must, working with limited information and on an open mandate to escalate violence, from discriminate to indiscriminate levels. The idea of escalating violence with limited information with the option to escalate violence indiscriminately requires being unpredictable in imposing curfews, so as to kick the nest, find the PKK combatants unexpectedly scattering at their weakest moment when their overt and covert logistics networks are disrupted. And that the people actually pay attention to, worry about curfews and complains means, unlike say the Somali army imposed curfew in Somalia, a curfew in Turkey is not simply a vacuous order but has practical implications on the ground for all three protagonists; combatants of the state, i.e. the soldiers; for PKK affiliated combatants; and civilians. The people complain since they have to navigate the contested space and contested forms of authority - and contested forms violence in the form of and under curfew.

Curfews are a very deliberate imposition of a particularly insidious form of despotic power - in abiding by the curfews or opposing them, peoples worry about the unpredictable nature of it, making it a matter of life and death. While the unpredictability of curfews, is in reality, as any Turkish commander in the region would explain, a deliberately manufactured predictability by the state for its own combatants since they are in a contest to define the battle space.[120] "A middle-aged man who had to leave his home in the Sur district told Crisis Group: "You never know when it is going to end. When it does, and you leave the area, you don't know

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[119] Crisis Group Briefing, No 80. Europe & Central Asia, 17 March 2016. P 8.
[120] Interview. August 15, 2016.

where to get help".[121] There is a man, a civilian, facing the reality of contested forms of violence and sovereign authority, whose sense of predictability in life is completely robbed out of him, and forced to be at the mercy of violent circumstances.

The same report further pointed out how supporters and opponents of both protagonists challenge this constant reality of contested sovereignty invoking changed forms of authority. "Kurdish political movement representatives say the curfews have no legal basis. Prior to summer 2015, there was no practice of imposing them except under emergency rule. In recent months, governors have cited the eleventh chapter of the Provincial Administration Law, which says governors and district governors ... take necessary decisions and measures to safeguard peace and security within provincial borders. The clause includes no definition of a curfew or rules on imposition and duration. In coordination with security forces, provincial chiefs use their discretion in declaring curfews, a practice that leads to legal arbitrariness and adds to the ambiguity of the measures"[122].

When Kurdish national movement leaders, meaning civilian politicians and civil society leaders, invoke previously existing forms of state power and formal forms of authority in order to explain the recent complicated imposition of curfews, they are pointing at the altered institutional configurations as a result of contested sovereignty. The same report also shows the multilayered nature of the Kurdish national movement of which the PKK and its combatants remain only a part. And how their actions and commentary add to overarching narrative that has battle field ramification to state combatants. Conversely, it also shows how various state institutional affiliates in their coordination with soldiers also play a role in shaping battlefield dynamics, and

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[121] Crisis Group Briefing, No 80. Europe & Central Asia, 17 March 2016. P.7
[122] Ibid. P.7

the form of contested sovereignty, that in turn shape peoples decisions and behavior on the ground. This shows cumulatively that in addition to combatants, how bureaucrats and politicians affiliated with the state, holding varied sympathies play a role in shaping the battle-space; a context specific wartime social system where combatants contest in terms of violence within a specific environment of contested sovereignty. The internal conflict in Turkey is characterized by politics of combatant-state relations where combatants remain Outside generating a form of wartime authority characterized by a contested sovereignty at macro, institutional and at micro level. We could use the same framework to understand the context in Cizre, in Cirnak province and also Nusaybin in Mardin, very different corners of the same battle space broadly characterized in terms of outside combatants and contested sovereignty.

CHAPTER 4: BUREAUCRATIC STATES AND COMPROMISED SOVERIGNTY

Seeing Nepal as a Guardian state is a conceptual leap, not a stretch. With limited qualifications however, it is possible to see how certain aspects of the Nepali state has had consistent tension between authoritarian and bureaucratic forms of state power, and how that had a defining role to play in shaping wartime dynamics.

Classic Bureaucratic states, in Mann's terms full-fledged democracies in effect, have inclusive ruling coalitions and direct administration of violence. Its high degree of infrastructural power vis-à-vis despotic power generates a check on the state's despotic capacity and state elite's capacity to engage in generating distributive power. The consequence is the generation of bureaucratic form of state power. By definition, per Mann, civil society groups play a role in shaping state power, checking a state's arbitrary capacity to exercise despotic power and play a huge role in shaping state society relations.

A bureaucratic state's socio-spatial dimension (differentiation, centrality, and territoriality) compliments its functional dimension, binding rule making and monopoly on violence that provides enforcement capacity. Bureaucratic state power defines clear boundaries of direct state action and it leaves civil society the social space to voice interests independently of the state's authority. The state has intensive and authoritative capacity, but state elites do not attempt to seek distributive power since the state elites' capacity to wield arbitrary power is checked.

Nepal as a Case

Models are approximations of reality. Belgium is the epitome of a bureaucratic state. The ruling

coalition epitomizes the very word "inclusive", and no one would doubt the Belgian states

capacity to administer violence directly. The state's institutional and functional dimensions

mutually compliment and constitute, caging individuals inside the state. Infrastructural power of

the Belgian state dominates, vis a vis the despotic power of elites. No one would doubt the role

of civil society in Belgian society and the capacity of civil society organizations to check the

temptations of Belgian state elites' impulses to arbitrarily exercise despotic power. The trials of

the Belgian king are an example of this![123] Canada also generates a bureaucratic form of state

power. Although, since models are only approximations of reality, Canadian ruling coalition,

with a ruling party and an opposition party, in a literal sense from within the framework

articulated here would not qualify as an inclusive coalition. The stringent conditions necessary

for parsimony is a recognized limitation. But it is possible to argue, that, given that Canada is a

democracy, albeit with a first past the post system, and that opposition still plays a role in

shaping rules, it is an inclusive ruling coalition. The defining feature is shaping rule-making. The

distinction is significant. Turkey is a procedural democracy just as Canada. But in Turkey the

ruling coalition is exclusive, since AKP acts and its leaders act at will and the opposition has no

capacity to wield power or influence AKP rulemaking unlike Canada's opposition. All three

states, Belgium, Canada, and Turkey has excellent logistics of social control, and effective state

apparatuses that can act with a great degree of autonomy. Nepal in this midst unarguably

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[123] See his latest trouble with a proposed pay cut to his salary;
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/01/belgian-prince-laurent-human-rights-breached-pay-cut

amounts to a challenging case. It is made worse by the fact that states know no stasis and are

constantly in a state of evolution, made worst by Nepal's decade long transition to democracy

with very little logistics of social control. Though Nepal oscillated between authoritarian and

bureaucratic types of state power, it consistently fulfilled the minimally necessary condition to be

in those two quadrants, direct administration of violence.

Outside-Combatants and Challenged Sovereignty

Bureaucratic states in conflict give rise to Outside-Combatants. Outside-combatants, in a

bureaucratic state generate wartime institutional configuration that gives rise to Challenged

Sovereignty. Challenged sovereignty is a wartime authority configuration where there is a

distinct, identifiable difference between the contending forces and the form of control they seek

to impose. The distinction is territorially defined. It is a violent battle-space that focuses on

territorial control. However, the form of state power - bureaucratic in its manifestation – allow

civil society organizations to play a role in shaping the battle-space, as combatants see it and

authority configuration as civilians see it.

State and Society in Nepal: Between Authoritarian and a Bureaucratic State State

During the period considered here, between 1996 to 2008, the Nepali state oscillated between a

Guardian state and a Centurion state. At the time the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (CPN-

M, hereafter, Maoists) decided to wage a people's war against the Nepali state, it was a

constitutional monarchy with incipient forms of bureaucratic state power. In that the monarchy

had a both formal and informal executive authority and the King's place as the head of the state

was never in doubt. The government was led by an elected prime-minister and that Nepal constituted a democracy in the Robert Dahl sense with elite contestation and mass participation. Its democratic credentials were also not in doubt.[124] Nepal's vibrant democracy – too vibrant according to the Nepalis - had an inclusive ruling coalition in the sense, the ruling parties and the opposition parties kept aligning and realigning, while even the Maoists – CPN-M, being in the parliament with four seats in 1996, though they were not part of the ruling coalition.[125]

The direct administration of violence in Nepal was also not in question. The Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) was loyal to the King and he was also the commander in chief. RNA was a highly professionalized armed force. "Professional" used in a very limited sense to denote that it was an armed force that was populated by officers and non-commissioned officers that took its institutional command and control structure as elemental to maintaining its institutional integrity. It was modeled along the British, trained by the British and very British in its emulations of regimental traditions. It prided itself and carried itself as the living embodiment of the Gurkha martial race.[126] Gurkhas as the martial race, (alongside Punjabi's, Pathans, the Somali's and whatnot) were long established urban legends born at specific historical junctures and colonial needs turned into reality by repetition.[127] Whereas the Gurkha legend rose when the Nepali soldiers sided with the British during the Indian mutiny that in turn brought Nepal its current borders and autonomous status during the British Raj. Nepal also remained a buffer state that

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[124] Whelpton, John. *A history of Nepal*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
[125] Prashant Jha, Battles of the new republic: a contemporary history of Nepal. (Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2014). P.12
[126] Barua, Pradeep. "Inventing Race: The British and India's Martial Races." *Historian* 58.1 (1995): 107-116; John Parker. *The Gurkhas: The Inside Story of the World's Most Feared Soldiers*, (Headline Books Publishing, 2000)
[127] This is a great encomium on the subject, Major Nigel Woodyat, "The Gurkha Soldier", Royal United Services Institution. Journal, Volume 50, 1906 – Issue 346.

guaranteed its territoriality in history during the colonial period.[128] RNA's loyalty and its institutional integrity, the capacity to execute what is expected of it, internal repression and external defense, while upholding its marital creed was also never in doubt. People also related to the RNA in terms of the exulted position the long public discourse had bestowed on it. Consequently, the RNA maintained an image of and remained an elite institution within Nepali society maintaining a level autonomy versus other government institutions since it answered to the king, and not the parliament.[129]

Nepali state security architecture also consisted of various police forces responsible for maintaining law & order that reported to the ministry of interior. They were accountable to the elected government. The police were seen in very different light from the armed forces. On the one hand the police were the coercive interface between state and society. That meant, with very limited oversight, the police had the most opportunities to use its coercive capacity for personal gain or use it on behalf of individual prerogatives of people that provide financial benefits to individual policemen, to the Inspector of the garrison and all the way down. On the other hand, since the police was answerable to the interior ministry and elected officials had oversight, it was seen as and was in actual fact highly politicized. The many coercive apparatuses that were under the purview of the interior ministry became a vehicle for patronage and were filled by partisan loyalists. In spite of the many inefficiencies, the state managed to hold on to its monopoly claim and was consistently effective in directly administering violence.

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[128] Rose, Leo E. "The Himalayan Border States:'Buffers' in Transition." *Asian Survey* (1963): 116-122; Ballantine, Henry. *On India's Frontier: Or, Nepal: the Gurkhas' Mysterious Land*. J. Selwin Tait and sons, 1895.
[129] Mehta, Ashok K. *The Royal Nepal Army: Meeting the Maoist Challenge*. (Rupa books catalog, 2005).

Nepal has also had a long tradition of violent resistance and both the RNA and the police have been used against dissenters and for internal repression from time to time. For example, in 1986 when the Communists attempted an ill thought out and poorly organized peoples war with RNA deployment being very limited. However, although the Nepali state retained capacity to directly administer violence, it was limited in its despotic capacity. Meaning, to use state power arbitrarily and especially in its violent form, partially because of the density of Nepal's civil-society organizations, especially after the 1990's democratic opening.[130] And also, because the proper administration of violence in its despotic form requires enhanced and advanced institutional and logistical capacity on the part of the security agencies.

For example, Turkish state can exercise despotic power in the form of lethal violence against opponents given its far more effective and far reaching infrastructures of military power. Nepali Army and the police forces lacked the necessary logistics networks to administer violence with an equal degree of intensity across Nepali territory. Therefore, while one man could tremble in fear in Kathmandu, if he could make it to Tarai region, it is all but certain that he could get away from the despotic wrath of the state. Add to the physical logistical difficulties the challenges of physical terrain, ranging from the Himalaya's, rain forests, to scorching deserts, and then the complexity of human geography. The relationship between people in Nepal across space and place is shaped by the inhospitable terrain layered with multiplicity of languages, cultures, ethnicities, religions, sub-religions, and castes. Giving into despotic tendencies in its violent form, arbitrary violence, is information and logistics intensive. Because despotic power

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[130] Bhattarai, Baburam. *Monarchy vs. democracy: The epic fight in Nepal*. Samkaleen Teesari Duniya, 2005.

does not mean wanton violence. On the contrary it means, discriminate violence directed at specific places or people outside of routinized processes. It requires time-sensitive information, that is highly compromised given the complexity of human geography and physical terrain compromises logistics efficiency. The two together limits the states violent capacity.

Logistics of social control is further compromised by the fact that although Nepal has inherited a strong bureaucratic culture, and a tradition of notionally differentiated institutions, their capacity remained very limited. A distinction of bureaucratic form of state power means people create a form of order through their routinized obedience to a specific set of power relations. In the case of the modern states, individuals internalize and routinize the form of authority generated by state power. The state power shape how individuals relate to each other and how they enter into power relations in pursuit of their goals. People in Paris and London no longer know their tribe, as does the vast majority of folks in Taipei – I say vast majority since there is a distinction, slowly disappearing between those descendants of KMT forces vs indigenous Taiwanese. Because it is socially no longer relevant, has no distributional consequences, and the state has subsumed those distinction into the form of state authority.

One could experience the Nepali form of bureaucratic state power only at the centers, mainly in the cities. Further out one moved from the cities, less one feel the formal power of the state shaping social interactions. Consequently, the formal bureaucratic power of the Nepali state at the beginning of the Maoist insurgency and even today consist of a patchwork of power centers across Nepal, with massive swaths of people and territory in between the cities governed along long established, very localized, autonomous authority configurations directly linked to the formal state. So, the Maoists claimed, and many scholars have repeated the claim that in Nepali

cities there was a bourgeois capitalist democracy and outside the cities Nepal had feudal

political, social and economic structures.[131] It is accurate but only partially.

The way the Nepali state evolved over time explain much of the social structure and the

nature of state society relations. The Rana Oligarchy between 1846 to 1951 froze in place varied

forms of traditional authority configurations. But the "Panchayat" form of authoritarian regime

between 1960 to 1990 defined the "re-feudalization" of parts of Nepali society that had a much

more intimate and direct impact in shaping the form of state power in Nepal at the time and its

state-society relations during its internal conflict.

Specifically, referring to Nepal society as representing a feudal form of social structure is

a useful idiom, and an analytical starting point. But it is not wholly accurate. Because it is a

contemporary reality. This seemingly feudal characteristic of Nepali society exists in a modern

state, that is part of the modern state system within a very much a capitalist system. There was

the king and his close royal family members and merchant elites controlling royal sanctioned

trade monopolies would be the nobles, the military elites and the armed force would be the

knights, and the farmers would be the serfs. In the twentieth century context this is not Feudal

but *Neo-Feudal*, a form of state-society relations, and a form of social structure – social networks

of power – shaped by how the modern Nepali state agglomerated power and generated logistics

of social control.

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[131] Maoist's main ideologue, deputy leader and onetime prime minister of Nepal, Baburam Bhattarai wrote his PhD dissertation on the subject. His dissertation subsequently became the main document on which the civil war was justified. Bhattarai, Baburam. "Nature of underdevelopment and the regional structure of nepal." (1986). Also for class cleavages see Mikesell, Stephen Lawrence. *Class, State, and Struggle in Nepal: Writings 1989-1995*. Manohar Publishers, 1999;

Nepal remained a "closed" society for a hundred years. This was not out of character at the time. The handful of state elites, three or four merchant families that liaised between British India had global interactions and were educated abroad, mainly India. But this was similar to most other countries at the time. It was ruled by the Rana Oligarchy, (1840-1950) in the name of the King that was held hostage in the palace. Essentially the head of the armed forces took control of the feudal royal court, held the King hostage, and made the offices of Prime Ministers and the main offices of the state hereditary until 1950. Nepal in 1950 had a human development index that closely resembled many backwater Indian provinces, with society stuck in a time-warp, where modernity had not encroached, except for the elites in the cities. Nepali state and its society was analogous to any number of "backward" maharaja states in British India. It kept the Maharaja beholden to the British, while the maharajas kept their subjects in check. Nepal had a common arrangement that was one with the mood of the times.

There was no Nepali independence movement but a democracy movement, led by educated Nepali elites (from the cities) that were educated in India, inspired by the Indian congress, and Indian independence movement. The Nepali democracy activists and leaders were educated in India in the forties and had links to Indian congress members. With Indian independence, Rana oligarchy was replaced by the King reasserting authority with Indian support. And there was the first democratic opening that brought the Nepali Congress Party, modeled under the Indian Congress, to power. The democratic experiment ended in 1960 when the King abolished the constitution, threw the politicians in jail and or sent others into exile and turned Nepal into an absolute monarchy, ruled by ministers and technocrats close to and appointed by the king. He called it the Panchayat system. Panchayat system innovated on the existing societal power networks and improvised logistics of social control. The combined

innovations during the panchayat system shaped the form of neo-feudal societal power networks that one encountered when the Maoist insurgency began and that persist in evolved form to this day.[132]

There were the merchant elites in the cities, there was the small bourgeoisie, and outside the cities were the landed elites. In reality, the preeminent landed elites and the merchant elites were the same with regional elites being the local landholding elites. Land played a prominent role in the logistics of social control in Nepal. Highly unequal land distribution, that generates a form of social-economic stratification was made worse in Nepal (just as in India) by the multitudes of social stratifications based on "value-rational" models, not observable, but very much in existence, the caste systems. In the cities, between 1960 to the democratic opening of the 1990's, it was an authoritarian form of state power but authoritarian-light, in comparison to Baathist Iraq for example. Outside of the cities the Panchayat system meant the local landed elites had people that work the fields essentially become indentured laborers forever beholden to them. The landed elites, their family members, and or members of similar families, also became the official government agents. They were also allied with the police that represented the state. The "state" in a typical provincial place in Nepal (in an ideal type situation) constituted the police station, the government agent, the post-office, the clinic, and the school. There was the landed big-man, the merchants in the village that ran the shops, usually the big-man would have

[132] Lohani, S. C. "The birth of Rana feudalism in Nepal." *Ancient Nepal* 8 (1989): 49; Pahari, Anup K. "The origins, growth and dissolution of feudalism in Nepal: A contribution to the debate on feudalism in non-European societies." (1996): 1994-1994; Regmi, Mahesh Chandra. *Thatched huts and stucco palaces: peasants and landlords in 19th-century Nepal*. Vol. 1. Vikas Publishing House Private, 1978.

a hand in that as well while most of Nepali society constituted of farmers but in reality, mostly landless – and mostly illiterate - peasants working as bonded laborers. Contingent on the time and the place, almost always the representatives of the state (in the school, clinic, GA, etc) were also either beholden to or were dependent on the local landed big-man, for economic assistance, to manage coercion, or simply for social mobility. This is neo-feudalist form of social control. This form of social control persisted throughout the democracy period – but in an altered form.

Nepal was also sucked into the wave of democratization at the end of the cold war, and previously banned political parties re-reemerged. It is important to note that, some of the Congress party members were in exile as were some of Nepali communist party members. But the critical mass of political leaders lived in Nepal, and engaged in political activism, semi-clandestinely and semi-publicly. It is an issue of the variations in the form of authoritarianism, and what made Nepali authoritarianism authoritarian-light. The political elites, loyal to the king, opposed to the king, working for him, versus opposing him, with varied socio-economic and family backgrounds were all friends as well enemies. Though the king relied on coercion to putdown mass unrest there were no targeted assassinations of political leaders. When the political parties organized mass rallies nation-wide in 1990 (read, Kathmandu, Pokhara and the rest of the few major cities) that brought the country to a standstill, which also happened with an economic blockade by India, the King reverted Nepal back to a democracy, with a new constitution. What this meant in practice was elite contestation in Kathmandu, mass participation, and the management of the state fell on the elected leaders while the King held executive authority and final arbitration powers.

Outside of the cities, in terms of logistics of social control, as beautifully portrayed in a number of fiction books that discusses the democratic transition in Nepal, the local-big men, also

become the democratic activists. *D*emocratic transition shaped state power and it altered

organizational means of power on the ground but not the realities on the ground. Meaning,

former royalists and political, economic and societal elites organized themselves into the Hindu

nationalist and royalist Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) and contested the elections. Voters in the

1991 elections gave the royalists a thumping, reducing them to mere six seats, with the Nepali

congress winning 112 seats, United Nepal Communist Party 68, United Peoples Front with 9

seats and the rest of the parties and independents getting the rest of the 24 seats.[133]

Then there was a political realignment. Congress party elites realized the value of the

landed elites to bring in votes. The landlords realized the way to maintain their status and prevent

land redistribution was to align themselves with the Congress. Landlords themselves or their

family members also became the regional Congress party leaders and they quickly switched to

the language of democracy and rights, while holding on to the same land tenure structure.[134] As a

consequence, democratic transition for someone in Rolpa region did not amount to anything in

terms of their socio-economic standing. The same people were in charge, in control, and they did

what was expected of them, to include voting their bosses into power. What it did amount to is

the awareness in a lot of people of their own situation and also the expansion of political

activism, made possible with slow encroachment of the elements of modernity (and also state

infrastructural power) – in terms of slow increases in literacy, physical infrastructure, media,

television, Bollywood movies.[135] People, some, not all, realized how the existing elites in society

captured the congress party and democracy as well as how democracy required that attaining and

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[133] Jha…
[134] Interview, February 5, 2015.
[135] Interview, February 10, 2015.

staying in power required that the congress party capture the local elites. The exponential growth of civil society organizations also aided this process of political awareness and increased social activism.[136]

It is not that civil-society emerged in Nepal during the democratic opening. Rather, the long history of political and social activism meant there were well organized civil society organizations, to include the well-established and organized political parties – even though they were banned they continued to function. Democratic opening reinvigorated the political space, and there was also the sudden increase in the density of local-global linkages. The latter occurred in the form increase in non-governmental organizations with direct links to international non-governmental and government funded organizational networks. Nepal also benefited from the proliferation of ideational networks – epistemic communities – that worked on rights issues, institutional capacity building, party building, democracy promotion. There were also the increased regional interactions and people to people exchanged between the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries. There was also the influx of foreign NGO's, development workers and aid. They have both tangible effects on the ground in terms of resource distributional outcomes and consequences and also the intangible effects of shaping ideational frameworks.[137]

Simultaneously, the democratic opening also allowed for the rise of formidable segmental economic power networks, i.e, economic civil-society organizations in the cities. Long history of communism meant there was a rise in unions, small and large, and there was multiplicity of "syndicates" as Nepali's would refer to them. Membership based economic power networks,

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[136] Interview, February 10, 2015.
[137] Interview, February, 2015.

ranging from taxi's, tourist industry, tourist guides, construction workers, to retail workers and

small business owners in every conceivable sector. At this moment, at least in the cities, the

Nepali state had many elements of a rudimentary bureaucratic state. During the course of the

war, the Nepali state moved from having rudimentary bureaucratic state towards an monarchical

authoritarian state, until it consolidated at the end of the war in terms of a rudimentary

democracy and a bureaucratic state with direct administration of violence and a highly inclusive

ruling coalition. In 1996, Nepal appeared to be a thriving and a happening place when the

Maoists gave their forty-point demand that made everyone scoff as expected since they were

unrealizable.[138] Maoists declared their peoples war with the aim of redressing grievances of the

down-trodden, turn Nepal into an equitable society by altering the feudal structures, and turning

Nepal into a republic by abolishing the monarchy, the symbol of the feudal order.

Rise of the Maoists[139]

Maoists were explicit in articulating why they were waging the war, how they are doing it and

the objectives they sought. The PhD dissertation of Maoists second in command, and the chief

ideologist was the ideational platform, *The Nature of Underdevelopment and Regional Structure

of Nepal: A Marxist Analysis*. It is now available on Amazon. This was the consistent Maoist

narrative. They prepared and waged the classic three phased integrated political-military struggle

termed Peoples War. They organized along classic Maoists Leninist lines with a political party

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[138] Interviews.

[139] I rely on three very different, but excellent books for background; Adhikary, Adiya. *Bullet and the Ballot Box: The Story of Nepal's Maoist Revolution*. Verso Books. 2014. Jha, Prashant. *Battles of the New Republic: A Contemporary history of Nepal*. Hurst Publishers, 2014. Sapkota, Dipak. *Ten Years of Upheaval: Reportage of the Decade Long Maoist Peoples War in Nepal*. Kathmandu. Revolutionary Journalist Association. 2010.

and a people's liberation army and attracted a cross section of society that represented Nepali society. That is, the leaders were almost all upper-caste men, with better social capital, that had benefited from access to the Nepali state, especially education. Most of the rank and file, both male and female, tended to be from lower castes but never exclusively. Maoists pursued territorial centric strategy and professed a combination of terrorism in the cities and guerilla warfare in rural areas. In reality Maoists capitalized on the advantages of physical terrain and human geography and stuck to guerilla warfare. Eventually, as the Maoists strategy lays out, the Maoists hoped to spread the ink-blot of ever expanding territorial control and overwhelm the cities into submission by completely surrounding them.

Maoists in Nepal on the one hand reified existing scholarship. On the other, they also raise series of new questions that are worth explicating since they prove to be avenues for future research. For example, Maoists fought a form of war that most thought futile predicated on a narrative seen as obsolete. Even worst, it was a narrative repeated so often in Nepal over the years since the Communist party had a long history that Maoists claims had no sense of captivating originality. And yet the Maoists almost pulled it off. Though this is not a central question in the dissertation, it is important to note the accepted wisdom on Maoist success. Specifically, by the time the war ended in a peace agreement in 2007, the Maoists had control of almost 90 percent of Nepali territory. In that instance, the Nepali battle-space reflected Outside-Combatants with a wartime authority configuration of Compromised Sovereignty.

Maoists Combatant Infrastructures

Combatants organize along military sources of social power and in doing so, develop combatant infrastructures along the core constitute components of combatant narrative, organization, membership, strategy and tactics. The ideal condition is to make sure all the components walk-lock-step, so success begets success. Ideally, combatants do so by operationalizing the constitutive components to fit the time and the place in which they wage the conflict. Maoists came close to the ideal type in pulling off their insurgency, though I contend not the way one conventionally believes it to be. Though they were immensely aided by the unexpected circumstances of the entire Royal family getting massacred, it aided the Maoists cause only because Maoists were at the zenith of their power and were able to capitalize on it. Maoists did so by harnessing military sources of social power and were shaped by the form of state power in Nepal that created wartime authority of compromised sovereignty.[140]

Maoists, as any combatant group, had their own imprimatur of power in the way they harnessed military power and waged their military campaign. And as any combatant group, they were also a product of their time and context. They were shaped by the nature of the societal power networks (social structure), the form of state power they encountered, and the global-local linkages that they had to navigate. Though on the latter, being a landlocked country, it was more the local and regional linkages with India that influenced them most.

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[140] In harnessing sources of social power (the organizational means of pursuing varied human goals), each power source benefits from what Mann called universal infrastructures. Think of literacy for example. Literacy is immensely helpful, but not necessary, to harness ideological power. Literary is also helpful in harnessing military power in terms of building a complex organizational structure. It is helpful in harnessing economic and political power. Similarly, as will become clear, Maoists were highly adept at utilizing the universal infrastructures to their ends and their efforts.

The objective conditions to wage a Maoist peoples war (poverty, inequality, oppression, etc) has been ripe in Nepal for so long, as the former Maoists point out. And yet the objective conditions do not automatically lead to internal conflict since the exercise of organized military power is an issue of agency in circumscribed circumstances. It requires both the objective context specific conditions, the objective constitutive components with which combatant's harness military power (narrative, organization, members, strategy and tactics) as well as non-objective measures of individual risk thresholds and personal commitments.[141]

The success in the way Maoists harnessed military power and created a virtuous cycle lies in the way they carefully operationalized the core constitutive components. They generated a level of operational autonomy from society and this autonomy played a huge role in the way the later attained territorial and population control where it was more minds, and less hearts. They did so while navigating between and also being shaped by the nature of the social structure and state power.

Begin with the narrative. The way Maoists operationalized the narrative helps elucidate how they weaved the rest of the constitutive elements to walk lock-step and harnessed the social sources of military power. Maoists faced a predicament in operationalizing their narrative. They were not saying anything new when they spoke of oppressed feudal existence in the villages and rapacious capitalists in the cities and their slavish bourgeoisie enablers. Maoists found themselves reciting hackneyed sets of talking points that the Communist Party of Nepal – Marxist Leninist (CPN-ML) had been reciting since before the end of the British Raj. Communists has had a prominent presence first in the cities and then in the rural areas that

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[141] Interview, February 2015.

Maoists narrative had no element of surprise or originality in its resonance. Even worst

according to the Maoists because the CPN-ML have begun to give Marxism a bad name.[142] Not

only have they been repeating the same talking points, but by the middle of the 1990's in the

words of the Maoists, they had very much become part of the "bourgeoisie clan of parties" in the

capital that never missed an opportunity to tap into state largess. The narrative was a means to

power, but they never and never could deliver except distributive outcomes in terms of patronage

to their close loyalists.

Faced with this challenge of operationalizing their narrative, Maoists resorted to novel

means. One prominent example is when they added a performative element to the narrative. And

performative not purely in terms of cultural troupes staging plays in villages. Maoists would

reach a village, herd the villagers to the center of town, and then the Maoists would act out a play

of feudal oppression. Partly it was a means of getting the narrative some traction when the

intended audience is illiterate. Maoists are simply acting out the lived reality of the village

peasants, sharecroppers, indentured and bonded laborers. The reality that they know so well. But

if they simply acted it out in a play they would not be any different from the CPN-ML that

repeatedly recite the egregious semi-feudal conditions only to never follow through. The

crescendo of the stage-drama would come when the real usurious moneylender, exploitative

landlord, the local government agent, (GA) if the GA has a reputation as particularly

unscrupulous character, etc, will have their property destroyed, the promissory notes and land

tenure documents destroyed, and the individuals, almost all of them upper caste men will be

treated the way untouchables were treated and they will be subject to extreme humiliation at best

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[142] Interview, February 2015.

(forced to clean toilets, clean and cook meat, wash feet, etc), beaten and some instances executed for crimes committed against the people.[143] The narrative is real and its impact to the audience is immediate. And its resonance is so heartfelt and the psychological and social impact is lasting and far reaching. Outskirts of Libang in the Rolpa district with a long history of communist activism preceding the rise of the Maoists, and an extremely poor area with a life expectancy at the time of fifty years provides a good case. Illiterate or not, oppression is intuitively felt, and it is both psychological (the manacles that keep the people bound in a subject status, some knowingly and some unknowingly) but it is also real in terms of the military, political, economic constraints that prevent individuals who would like to break the shackles from doing so. Nepal's extremes of neo-feudal forms of social stratification means, individual agency is limited, and they are organizationally outflanked. But to those whom oppression was a lived reality, the spectacle manifested deeply held anger and actualized unmitigated rage in subjecting those that had ruled them for so long, and slowly, into utter humiliation and at times, death. Sometimes the humiliation or the assassination of the "oppressors" is the denouement of a longer spectacle. For example, they would attack and destroy the police station before the Maoists would stage the play. The play would be conducted by the very people who did the assault, pointing out that their power in that moment is unrivaled. The impact is psychological, political, and economic for both the oppressed and the oppressors since the delicate sinews of neo-feudal power arrangements that had tied them together in that moment are shattered by means of violence. There is also the information impact as the news travels across villages shuddering some and emboldening others. The narrative has real implications. People know why people get killed, by whom, for what

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[143] Interview, February 2015.

reasons. Just as those who kill know why they do what they do, why they risk their lives to do so, and the implications of their actions.[144] The same moment also helps illustrates the organizational aspect of the Maoists in harnessing military sources of social power and how they related to both state power and societal networks of power, i.e. social structure and or forms of social stratifications.

Maoists were doctrinaire combatants and organizational fiends. They were also unbridled disciplinarians. On the one hand, they built a hierarchical Marxist party with politburo central committee, many subcommittees constituting primarily the political wing.[145] On the other hand, they also built a people's army, that they rechristened into People's Liberation Army. It essentially mirrored a conventional armed force in its hierarchical organizational structure (of companies, battalions, brigades and divisions) and also in its explicit and well-defined command and control system. With very limited indirect-fire capabilities (limited to mortars, and rocket propelled grenades), the entire people's liberation army resembled a highly disciplined, nimble and mobile light infantry force engaging in guerilla warfare where the local level commanders had huge amounts of operational autonomy.[146] Albeit, the local commanders had to discuss how they exercised power with their operational autonomy in public after-action reviews.[147] It is another example of Maoist internal discipline, how they attempted to maintain command and control integrity and leader accountability while also refining their strategies and tactics. Given

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[144] It is important to also note that along with the democratic opening came an influx of development aid projects that increased "universal infrastructures" such as roads, schools, influx of foreigners, tv, videos, etc that made the dissemination of the narrative even easier and the narrative have easier traction.

[145] As the resident journalist with the Maoists, Dipak Sapkota's book, *Ten Years of Upheaval* provides an excellent overview of the Maoist organization structure.

[146] Interview, February 2015.

[147] Interview, February 2015.

the limited state capacity Maoists knew they had an enormous advantage in finding operational

breadth, and utilizing the physical terrain to their advantage, they found operational depth. Reach

of direct state power was limited and, in many places, non-existent. Rather, the state power was

exercised through the existing neo-feudal power arrangements. The same neo-feudal power

arrangements also shaped the societal power networks as explained previously. Maoists had to

take into account the social structure far more seriously since informal arrangements drove rural

power relations and almost every cadre had extended family members that would be adversely

affected if the identities were known.

Maoists knew it is not possible to maintain the complete anonymity of thousands of

cadres, especially the lower level commanders and cadres that interfaced with villagers. In order

to maximize cadre autonomy, they consistently directed cadres to operate in areas furthest from

the areas where they called home.[148] PLA represented a cross section of society and if the same

power networks that shaped society is to work through the PLA organizational structure, that is

to be socially embedded, and compromise autonomy. To avoid the societal dynamics, work

through the organization and to avoid compromising autonomy is to pay attention to social

structure and specifically avoid individual cadres relate to their operational context in value

rational terms but only in terms of their narrative and organizational means to realize specific

combatants' objectives. One's caste, clan, and family relations should not matter. Party should

come first. Consequently, when a cadre, or a local commander is rounding up and either

humiliating or executing a usurious moneylender, landlord, police chief, government agent, local

member of parliament, they have no personal relationship to the individuals in question. Except,

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[148] Interview, February 2015.

that they can relate to the moment in abstract terms, as an enemy, a class enemy, and a timeless oppressor. And often than not the commander and cadres in question would have had personal encounters with similar characters from a different part of Nepal. In fact, many Maoist cadres, including its supreme leader, commander of the PLA down to countless cadres, would explicitly articulate how the sense of humiliation their family members, often their siblings and parents, suffered at the hands of similar "feudal agents" drove them to the struggle. The same moment also illustrate some aspects of their recruitment dynamic and the nature of membership, a core component in developing combatant infrastructures and harnessing social sources of military power.

Majority of the Maoist leaders hailed from relatively privileged backgrounds. This is a relative and a contentious claim that requires clarification. Because none of them were elites in the sense of elites. Most, not all, came from Brahmin or some other higher cast and spoke Nepali. They were marginal toilers in the context of their caste defined social context but by virtue of their ascribed societal position they had better access to resources and social capital that marginal and lower caste members lacked. Consequently, almost all of the core leaders have had access to public education both in Nepal and some even abroad. For example, Baburam Bhattarai, the chief Maoist ideologist was born to a peasant family in central Nepal. But a Brahmin peasant has different level of access, different set of social capital, than an untouchable peasant. In that gradation, Bhattarai would be a lower middle-class child. As a consequence, Bhattarai had access to public education, and became child prodigy and became a national celebrity at age 16 getting the highest marks in the national exams. Subsequently he received a scholarship through the Colombo Plan, studied architecture and completed a PhD at Jawaharlal Nehru University. His PhD dissertation became the basis of the Maoist combatant narrative as

Marxism applied to Nepal. Prachanda, the supreme leader also had a similar background of being

Brahmin peasants with access to education and he studied agriculture science and even worked

for a USAID project. Nanda Kishor Pun, the second in command and the eventual commander of

the Peoples Liberation Army was from Rolpa, (one of the poorest places in Nepal and a Maoist

stronghold), had access to education, and completed graduate studies in political science in

Nepal.[149] Second tier leaders also hail from similar backgrounds though not so exclusively and

consist of a mix of castes. But all of them had series of traits in common.

They all had access to education. Prachanda himself was a teacher as were many Maoist

political and military leaders. Partly teachers are already seen to be in a higher societal plain and

remain in leadership positions in their communities'. Therefore, they retain access to many

different context specific societal power networks making them effective local key-masters that

can bring people together. Almost all the founding leadership and the first of the disciples, as it

were, were dedicated communist –Marxists before they waged the peoples war having had long

interactions with other communist party members and long personal histories of political

activism. They all had transnational linkages in India and had on and off connections to the

myriad communist movements and Naxalites in India, from whom they drew inspiration and

received guidance at the founding.[150] They were all committed Marxists with conviction by the

time they coalesced their energies.

Maintaining that imprimatur on the subsequent cadres was a core element of the Maoist

training program. It required both creating committed believers and making believers into

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[149] Both Prashant Jha's book and Aditya Adhikari that had access to Maoist leaders have incisive
biographical sketches of the Maoist leaders.
[150] Interview, February 2015.

organizational creatures. They utilized their existing party networks to find loyalists and

believers and also wanted to recruit new non-believers and turn them into believers. Previously

highlighted Maoist stage plays in the villages were also recruiting tools with tremendous impact.

They would recruit young women and men from the villages on the spot, especially to join the

armed wing. Women from sub-castes ended up constituting one third of the people's liberation

army. They would volunteer to join on the spot, or some would engage in acts of violence on

behalf of the Maoists at their suggestion that they would not be able to remain in the same social

context. On occasion, young men and women would join in on the humiliation rituals or beating

up of the local oppressors, and they would instantly be sent to training camps to become full-

fledged members. Even here, Maoists point out, when Maoists would ask for volunteers to step

up – to beat up their oppressors – how very few, if ever step up, and those that do, also walk

away from the village with the Maoists.[151] Maoists, being very doctrinaire in their application,

but pragmatic enough to alter the doctrines to fit the local context point out another advantage

they had in recruiting, which partially answers why they were successful in 1996 and not in

1983.

In 1980, one could find many women and men stuck in the perpetual motions of their

miserable existence, having internalized it as the order of things, false-consciousness. But as

some Maoists pointed out, by the mid to late nineties, with very few exceptions, there were next

to no teenagers or women and men in their twenties and thirties that were mired in false

consciousness. Because they had long been exposed to movies, TV, and news. There were also

the increased local-global connections that made all Nepalese realize the misery of their own

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[151] Interview, February 2015.

existence given the explosive exodus of Nepalese going to work in the gulf as indentured laborers. It aided in their recruiting. They did not have to explain their reality, only explain the expected change and it allowed Maoists to pick those with conviction and further isolate those to whom violence had resonance. Then with training they were made to be organizational creatures.[152]

At this moment, *the accepted story goes*, that Maoists armed with a narrative that had macro-level clarity and micro-level resonance, organization with command and control integrity and members with conviction, declared the on-set of a people's war. Maoists commenced a territorial and population centric strategy. In the first phase is the establishment of base areas, (strategic defense), then slow deliberate territorial encroachment, strategic offense, and eventually, overwhelm by capturing the centers of power. And they relied on very deliberate discriminate use of force in their tactical application of military power. They were judicious on who to kill, when and how, and often made a spectacle out of it so as not waste the death.

It is accepted wisdom that by the time the peace negotiations began in Nepal that the Maoists, with their territorial and population centric strategy had control of about 90 percent of Nepal. essentially all of Nepal outside of the cities were supposed to be in Maoist hands. This is an often-repeated statistic with minor variations in the percentage. At this moment, the Maoists were Outside-Combatants vis a vis the Nepali state, giving rise to wartime authority configuration of Compromised Sovereignty. The reality though, I argue, remained at slight variance from the accepted wisdom.

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[152] Interview, February 2015.

Nepali Battle-Spaces, Outside Combatants, Compromised Sovereignty

Nepal with its extremes of physical terrain and human geography is little over fifty thousand square miles and over twenty million people. Maoists at their best had little over ten thousand PLA soldiers and few thousand local militias operating at VDC (village development council) level. Which suggests that, even if one assumes a 50 percent control rate of territory and population by Maoists at their highpoint, 20,000 Maoists (PLA soldiers and VDC militias) managed to control about 25,000 square miles, and about twelve million people. Put differently, Maoists with 20,000 soldiers controlled the territorial and (almost) the population equivalent of Sri Lanka. And they did this despite facing the Royal Nepalese Army of about 90,000 (including reservists) and over 50,000 police officers across harsh physical terrain and complex human geography? How is this possible? Is it possible?

I contend that the reality is at contrast from the accepted wisdom. Maoists waged a people's war, certainly. In that it provided them the template and then they improvised and how they improvised lies the difference. They stuck to the time proven precepts of utilizing the difficult terrain, and areas where the state power was weakest, to create base areas and training camps. The differences lie in their strategies of territorial control and popular support. They relied on a strategy of territorial control but a qualified one. The qualification goes hand in hand with the Maoist version of "gaining popular support, winning the hearts and minds" and administering base areas.

Compromised Sovereignty

Maoists territorial and population strategy that resulted in compromised sovereignty was not what people wedded to existing categories imagine it was. The battle-space was starkly confrontational and yet that starkly confrontational stance did not mean a complete and clean break between the state and territory. Conversely this also means, when people say Maoists controlled, they err because Maoist control was always a hybrid form with the state, and never exclusive. It is also questionable to say whether they "governed" in that it was hardly direct administration. And while Maoists never lost an opportunity to educate and do their bit to generate popular support, they were far smarter than to believe that popular support and winning people's hearts and minds would bring about the denouement. They are explicit that it would not.[153]

Rather, Maoists were territorial in that they rolled back the state but never completely – it is a critical distinction and critical tactical innovation. In rural areas, they destroyed or coopted the coercive capacity of the state. As previously noted, in most instances the presence of the state in, say Liwang in the Rolpa district was limited to few token modern appendages. Because the formal state was in fact tied to the local, (non-Weberian and informal, in that they work) neo-feudal power relations. State power worked through the neo-feudal societal power networks. The modern state, and what was there of modernity consisted of the police post, government agency, (property record protector!), the VDC, (village development council if it was formed), the school, the clinic and the general store. (It has certainly changed today in terms of increased roads, mobile technology, internet, but not much in terms of the HDI measures, but that's a

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[153] Interview, February 2015.

different story). The appendages of the formal state were invariably linked to the local societal, economic and political elites that usually consisted of if not people from the same family, of the same familial networks. Maoists reshaped this arrangement but never fundamentally. Because they could not directly control, only control indirectly and for that, they needed to capture same networks that the state had relied on previously as well as the state power networks themselves.

Maoists walked in and invariably assassinated the "worst" of the oppressors, as defined by the locals and based on the information from local Maoist representatives and their clandestine agents. They also assassinated the police agents but their decision to kill or not kill the police were contingent. They also humiliate and or assassinate the neo-feudal notables. Again, the assassination was a contingent decision therefore not a certainty. At this moment the hundred or at times less than that, of armed Maoists cadres become the ones with ultimate power. But being armed and organized military power does not mean, and never did, that the Maoists engaged in direct administration and direct control as people often assume they did. They did not because they could not. And they also did not because they knew that engaging in direct administration is to get sucked in, to get embedded into the society and lose their operational autonomy. Therefore in-direct control by capturing the existing power networks and altering them at the margins they knew worked best and violence is most effective if they use it towards few heads of localized societal power networks. It also freed up cadres to be used elsewhere instead of engaging in administrative duties for which the cadres were ill-trained. And the Maoists knew that speaking of misery is one things but that alleviating it is quite another and any direct administration would require them to do so. So, they wanted the local civilians, and state agents, indirectly controlled by the Maoists to be the interface between the people and Maoists. Except in the cases of meting out punishment, usually after elaborating formal rituals that reified

the Maoists as the ones with guns and that they also do not use it arbitrarily. Consequently, when the Maoists managed to get a foothold with the use of violence by executing, exiling or coopting local village guards or the police, they would most certainly destroy the property records, usury notes, and all formal links that worked to reify the oppressed situation of the farmers, peasants, sharecroppers etc. The property now belonged to the farmers, and the harvest is theirs to sell and keep. But altering societal power networks have ramifications when farmers have long been beholden to the networks already in place. Therefore, Maoists relied on the existing economic and state agents to continue their work, the school to continue teaching and the clinic to function, while they remain on the governments payroll, as pointed out by the conversation with one of the government agents who used to work in Rolpa during the conflict. This is neither direct control nor direct administration or governance. This is simply in-direct control by capturing the heads of existing societal networks of power, to include the vestiges of the formal state.[154] This point requires clarification.

In an ideal type bureaucratic or authoritarian state, state power (Ottawa and Ankara for example) means political and military power are fused. And the state with its logistics of social control and its differentiated institutions cage individuals within its territory. With de-facto sovereignty, the state creates an authority configuration that shape everyone's lives. State power generate authority, and peoples routinized obedience to it create a tapestry of control across its territory. At this point it is not merely a network of power but structure, the tapestry that shape behavior and keep people caged. In this context, other sources of social power networks (ideational, economic, and myriad localized power organizations classified as civil society

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[154] Composite account based on Interviews, February 2015.

organizations) certainly exist. But it is not possible to capture part of the state, its agents en-mass and its authority configuration, say in Saskatchewan for example, by an economic power network or an alternative power network and use it as a vehicle to advance an agenda at variance from the state.

In Nepal state capacity was weak. The state power was not a tapestry. It was not a structure, but a patchwork loosely weaved together, reified by peoples routinized obedience than the formal structures that imposed on them. The Nepali state cast a tapestry of control across the main cities. In Rolpa, the state political power network, while fused with other localized power networks, remained one of many other societal power networks. It is certainly far more powerful, because the central state kept paying its officials. But it was also weak since it cannot function autonomously, and it relied on other localized power networks to sustain itself, firmly embedded but lacking in autonomy. This weakness means, it can be captured and controlled just as any other localized power network. The Maoists in-directly controlled the state organizational appendages as their own, along with others to advance their own agendas and instill their edicts. This is capturing networks in a weak state and not direct control as people often attribute.

It is precisely because the Maoists resorted to in-direct control by capturing existing power networks that – in-spite of being in control of 90% of territory, assuming it to be true - they could not fundamentally alter the "feudal structures of society" as they said they would and hoped they would. To contrast, when the Chinese Communist party left Ya'naan after being in control, nothing of the old societal power networks were left intact - that was an outcome of direct control, and the CCP through death and starvation would do the same all over China overtime changing it beyond all recognition. No one in China save few in Xinjiang pays attention to clans, tribes and languages, that is state power imposed from above, and internalized from

below. And though Rolpa remained one of the few places where Nepali Maoists had near-direct control, not all but some old societal power networks are still intact. What has fundamentally changed however, as the former government agent that worked there during the insurgency pointed out, are the ideational frameworks of people of Rolpa. This was wartime authority of compromised sovereignty.

If the Maoists were so successful as to have 90% of territorial control in the conventional understanding, and managed effective level of compromised sovereignty, there is the question about what of the role of the state's direct capacity for violence?

Nepali internal conflict displayed the bifurcated form of military power that had existed in Nepal that shaped the form of state power and wartime authority. The RNA, reporting to the king, remained so completely autonomous from the conflict and the day to day politics as it was played out in the parliament. The ruling parties resorted to the police forces to engage the Maoists, and the RNA remained aloof since the king never deployed the RNA, and played the deliberate role of being above the fray – and that this was something for the ruling parties to figure out. The Nepali police force(s), the violent interface between state and society were already reviled in the cities as well as in the rural areas. They relied on the same universal infrastructures – roads, transport, communications infrastructure - to exercise violence and maintain control with very limited military logistics capabilities.

As a consequence, when faced with well organized, highly mobile, and agile, motivated force in the Maoists, the Maoists slowly and effectively dismembered the authority instilled by the police forces. There is no doubt in the Maoists minds that the ineffectiveness of the Police and the failure by the king to deploy the army allowed them the capacity to create a virtuous cycle of in-direct control from region to region and a cast a wide net of in-direct control. Maoists

effectively fragmented the police, but the Army remained intact and above the fray. But Maoists had indirect control of territory and people, though one would be hard put to say that the level of support correlated with the level of indirect territorial control. Nonetheless, the new king, after the massacre of the royal family, which had as much to do with subsequent changes in Nepal as the Maoists peoples war)[155], deployed the army, asserting dictatorial powers to crush the Maoists.

At this point the Maoists and the Army agree that the Maoists had the initiative and the Army did not. And the Army now had to claw itself back, and recapture territory, and instill direct state control. Always a tall order for any armed force, and RNA was not immune.

Counterinsurgency is difficult under any conditions if one were to do it "right" the way people imagine it to be waged. Since the ideal type of counterinsurgency is about instilling direct control and then institutional building. The outcome is routinized obedience to a single hegemonic authority – the state – and people abide by it either because they support, are complicit, or remain indifferent, much like the stop sign in a U.S suburb. Contrary to accepted wisdom, only one-armed force has actually won a counterinsurgency, the British, not in Malaya but in Oman. Fighting a Chinese minority with the support of the Malay majority that hated the Chinese does not count as victory. And nor did the British win the mau-mau in Kenya engaging in counterinsurgency but by resorting to good old-fashioned Victorian era colonial violence to include castrating the rebels. Purported successes are politically necessary urban legends that has seeped as truisms into conventional wisdom and tragically also into military and scholarly

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[155] See multiple accounts of the Nepali Royal Massacre; https://www.nytimes.com/2001/06/08/world/a-witness-to-massacre-in-nepal-tells-gory-details.html; https://abcnews.go.com/International/story?id=80302&page=1;

writing. The Nepali Army, with harsh terrain, limited capacity and Nepal's complex human geography could never defeat an entrenched insurgency. However, the Army knew what they faced and what was required of them. In the words of a former RNA officer, the Army fought to win battles because they had to fight to win while the Maoists fought not to lose. The outcome after the fight between 2002 – 2006 was that both the Maoists and the RNA were successful.

Their respective successes shaped compromised sovereignty. This also requires clarification. Specifically, the Army rolled the Maoists back from the outskirts of cities and managed direct control in the cities. But it was limited, and the Maoists controlled the rest. A map of control would create a contiguous red ocean with formidable royal Nepali army patches. At this moment, though the police force fragmented, the Royal Nepali Army in fact never fragmented. In fact, it was beginning to head in the trajectory of the Sri Lankan Army during the long LTTE conflict or the Nigerian Army during the Biafra war. The army kept getting bigger, more professional, and kept absorbing more of the resources and kept getting more and more autonomous. Though that trajectory would not guarantee victory, it guaranteed RNA's non-defeat. This was the macro level battle space in Nepal in 2006. The examples highlighted previously of Rolpa and Liwang would be a micro level example of Maoist control. The state had direct control in the cities, creating a patchwork while the Maoists had created an in-direct tapestry of control, creating a form of compromised sovereignty. State capacity, combatant capacity, armed forces capacity, all played a role in this but so did the civil society organizations.

The theory here suggests infrastructural power as shaping the role of civil society. But the Nepali state lacked infrastructural power – say in the Canadian sense, that is in the modern sense. Therefore, the discussion on civil society (just as Nepal as a case fits barely if at all as a case that represents a Guardian State) shadows the framework. But it remains very relevant, specially

seeing in contrast to Turkey, where a similar combatant group is pitted against authoritarian state power with a stronger state.

Compromised Sovereignty and Civil Society

Civil society organizations played a huge role in shaping compromised sovereignty as wartime authority configuration and shaping the battle-space. And civil society groups also had a hand in shaping the lead up to the negotiations at the height of bloodiest stalemate that generated compromised sovereignty in the war.

Neo-feudal, localized societal power arrangements would hardly fit within the normative bias of civil society organizations as universally benevolent actors popular in the social sciences. Conceptually however they fit in the classical civil society conceptual categories as power organizations that remain outside of the state and embedded in society. As explicated earlier, the neo-feudal civil society actors helped shaped the battle space, first being outside of the formal state apparatus but in-direct purveyors of state power. And later the same civil-society groups in slightly altered form became in-direct purveyors of rebel authority in the areas they controlled. These civil-society organizations shaped the battle-space and wartime authority indirectly – by being complicit with whoever has capacity for violence and towing the line. Therefore, their autonomy was limited.

There were also significant "modern civil society organizations" and their density played a huge role in close proximity to city centers. For example, the long established political party configurations played a role in being a very formidable non-violent form of civilian mobilization forces against both Maoists and the state armed forces that neither violent actors could either deny or destroy - but only deal with. Combatants use organized violence to alter individual and

collective behavior and they do so by robbing individuals of their agency. Civil society groups

exercise collective agency – not without risks – for, against, and sometimes counter to the wishes

and aims of all parties to the conflict. There is always the choice to rely on more violence in

either indiscriminate or discriminate form - as Russia and Syria does today, seeing civil society

as being against the state. In Nepal while there certainly were abuses as the rights community

point out, both RNA and the Maoists were circumscribed in their capacity to counter civil-

society organizations with violence, for very different reasons. It is partly the reality of the

context but also shaped by the nature of the combatants.

RNA actions were circumscribed for different reasons. RNA actions were always visible

as most militaries wearing uniforms are and subsequently their abuses were quickly highlighted

by civil-society groups, media, journalists etc. RNA had to worry about the international context

since the Nepali government had managed to inveigle themselves into the U.S Global War on

Terrorism and managed to receive military assistance. With military assistance came monitoring

both by the USG and also the scrutiny of foreign journalists and transnational civil-society

organizations. Global rights community increased its presence and linkages inside Nepal as their

mandate expects them to do, and also because the rights community – as long as you were white

– could traverse unimpeded in both government controlled and rebel-controlled territory. The

worst that could happen is be politely declined entry, a huge difference from Jihadists inspired

internal conflict where the rights community is seen as part of the enemy, espousing

blasphemous ideas.

And interviews indicate that the professionalism of the Nepali army, narrowly defined in

terms of command and control integrity, also prevented the army from resorting to extra-judicial

measures as some of the hardliners in the military wished to do. According to some of the senior

military officers, there were long discussions inside the Nepali army about the possibility of

creating possible death squads in the model of the Sri Lanka special forces and special task

forces that defeated their own communist insurgency in the nineties. There is close military to

military collaboration in officer training across boundaries, between Nepal, India, Sri Lanka,

Bangladesh and Pakistan – meaning the smaller SAARC countries make sure that their officers

train in both India and Pakistan. Nepal is no different. Essentially, the RNA was advised by

experienced Sri Lankan officers to put special forces officers in civilian clothes, in unmarked

civilian vehicles. But first they had to isolate the key-masters, generate the list, then begin the

process of arrest, assassination and disappearance through cremations immediately so their

bodies are never found. A practice common in most counterinsurgencies worldwide – where

"rowing unknown gunmen in unmarked vehicles" go after civil society actors. RNA had neither

the logistics capacity to generate a massive list, nor the capacity to carry out a sustained

assassination campaign and they also lacked the will. In moments there were handful of

massacres conducted by company grade officers, the backlash was sustained that made the more

conservative wing of the officer core to put a stopper into any ideas of a sustained campaign of

extra-judicial killings.[156]

There is another Nepal specific reason in circumscribing the RNA activities against civil-

society actors, and conversely why civil society actors had agency vis a vis the RNA. The Royal

Nepali Army answered to the king. And Nepal had a king with none of the traditional legitimacy

of his departed brother. And a king increasingly seen as a usurper, and a dictator meant the

Nepali military elites were not immune to the political winds and political temperament of the

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[156] Interview, February 2015.

time. Because the military elites, business elites, and traditional political elites in Kathmandu

consist of series of crisscrossing and overlapping familial, economic, and political networks.

Killing the enemy in Rolpa is one thing but when yesterday's drinking buddy, that happened to

also have attended, the same high-school, college with the rest of the family members, and see

them in various gatherings turns into a plausible enemy, it is a very different calculation, even if

one wanted to kill them off. It is not personal but professional. Extra judicial killing of an

untouchable village leader in Maila that mobilized his people in western Nepal is different from

assassinating "modern" civil society leaders. That target will be an Indian and western educated

lawyer, whose death will be mourned differently.

Modern civil society leaders in Nepal – as elsewhere in the developing world - come

from a stratum of society with social capital and in many cases also political capital and

transnational linkages. They are part of a global-middle-class. That is not a guarantee of safety if

the state decides to immunize the armed forces through legal codes, and the state unequivocally

commits to the sustained campaign of violence, as in Turkey, for example. But the political

center in Nepal was in flux with the new king. Simultaneously the former allies of the palace that

hated the Maoists, Nepali Congress for example, were ambivalent towards giving the new king a

free hand. Partly because they genuinely detested the dictatorial tendencies of the new king just

as they were suspicious of and feared the Maoists. The Congress party realized that the Maoists

were by then becoming an inadvertent check against the new kings' dictatorial tendencies,

therefore an indirect ally. Which ultimately meant, if the RNA were to engage in an all-out

campaign of assassinations and disappearances, they would not have political backing except the

backing of a king seen as illegitimate. Again, these contextual civil-society issues are relevant,

especially when seen in contrast to those with authoritarian state power.

Maoists in this midst faced a very different set of limitations that allowed the civil society organizations to have a level of autonomy. Maoists consistently looked askance and had a dim view of their former colleagues – and in many cases family members of the Maoist elites in "bourgeoisie political parties" in the cities.[157] Yet they were so deeply rooted in society and had formidable patronage driven popular mobilizing networks that they had to be taken seriously. In spite of the Maoist contempt for the bourgeoisie political parties, (meaning the Nepali congress) and as disruptive as they were to Maoist goals, there was never a campaign of assassinations against political party leaders by the Maoists. In fact, Maoist military cadres are explicit, everyone would have been better off had they wiped out the political class, and it would have been too easy.[158] But that would also have created a huge popular backlash. Partly this was strategic since to do so would mean alienating people and generating unnecessary opposition against them. Partly, these long established political elites continued to play a bridging role between the Maoists and the political centers of power in Kathmandu. And the Maoists are also explicit about another inalienable fact. Had they done so, India would not have tolerated it and India would have moved from being uncomfortable with the situation in Nepal to taking an active role to resolve the crisis, which would inevitably have worked against the Maoists, vis a vis the Nepali Congress and the Nepali Armed forces, both of whom have strong links to the power centers in Delhi. In fact, Maoists repeatedly point out that India's unease was also a mitigating factor in limiting despotic tendencies of the RNA. And the Maoists were happy with India's discontent but were worried to get India uncomfortable. An assassination campaign

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[157] Interview, February 2015.
[158] Interview, February 2015.

against the party elites would have led to just such an outcome, of India trying to resolve the crisis.

But it is in the areas Maoists controlled where Maoists had to seriously contend with civil society organizations in different ways than the way the RNA had to deal with them. Precisely because Maoists relied on them for maintaining in-direct territorial control. It ranged from former neo-feudal actors, reinvented Nepali congress agents etc. But there were also groups of their own creation that in turn had a mitigating effect on Maoist agency and autonomy.

Nineties democratic opening did not just open up space for political parties but also opened up space for myriad, until then, clandestinely held or organized groups along linguistic, ethnic, religious, caste, socio economic cleavages. And there was also the externally funded explosion of issue specific civil society actors. The externally funded issue may be environment, for people in Washington, Brussels, and any number of western capitals. But the local agents translate the environment issue to be one that also alters some local political dispute, a logic so common across the developing world civil society-actors vis a vis their western patron relation.

However, like any internal conflict, when the first shot and the preexisting tapestry of state authority created by peoples routinized obedience to existing authority structure begin to fray, it opens new social spaces that previously did not exist. Along also comes new opportunities and means to pursue goals. Maoists actively supported those "disruptive" civil society groups to take an active role, since their disruption in turn also dovetails with Maoist agenda of rolling back state control and altering existing societal power-networks. But that does not mean Maoists have control over them. Maoists violence created new space for activism that at times ran counter to Maoists vision but that they had to contend with.

Madhesi activism in southern Nepal is a classic example of this dynamic. Madhesi's benefited immensely with the weakening of state power. Madhesis are "bunch of brown people" that looks like the Indian one expects – which is stated decidedly. When Nepali highlanders of lighter complexion refer to Madhesi people from the Tarai region of Nepal, they are making a racial, ethnic, linguistic, caste and also a national distinction.[159] The attempt for a long time was to treat them as second-class citizens and a larger number as non-citizen, making them stateless peoples.[160]

Maoists supported their cause and encouraged them. But the relationship became complex. Madhesi activists on the one hand opposed the Hindhu Kingdom concept and the dominance of Nepali political and social life by the hill people – northern Nepalese. It dovetailed with Maoists objectives. But Madhesi activism was part anti Nepali nationalism, but also part an ethnic nationalist movement of their own. Maoists had a strong presence in Terai region, home to the Madhesi's but soon, Madhesi activists and their own narrative found better resonance among the Madhesis, than the Maoists. Maoists lost their presence and control of the Terai region substantially that the two groups of activists ended up in occasional violent clashes between the Maoists and the Madhesi activists after the peace-agreement was signed. Maoists used Madhesi grievances, mobilized them, and then the Madhesi's outgrew the Maoists since Madhesi's began

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[159] This edited volume puts the Madhesi issue among others in the broader context in post 1990 democratic Nepal. Lawoti, Mahendra, and Susan Hangen, eds. *Nationalism and ethnic conflict in Nepal: Identities and mobilization after 1990*. Vol. 58. Routledge, 2013; Dahal, D. R. "The'Madhsi'People: Issues and Challenges of Democracy in the Nepal Terai." *Local democracy in south Asia: Microprocesses of democratization in Nepal and its neighbours* 1 (2008): 128.
[160] Kalpana Jha, *The Madhesi Upsurge and the Contested Idea of Nepal*, (Springer 2017)

to see Maoists version of non-nationalism as a form of Nepali nationalism in a different guise that will continue to keep them as second-class citizens and in sme cases as stateless people non-citizens. Fast forward - today the Madhesi's constitute their own voting bloc and have a place in the new constitution as well. In sum, wartime authority of compromised sovereignty was shaped by the form of state power, combatants state relations but on the ground, civil-society organizations played a significant role in shaping the battle-space that combatants contended with and the form of wartime authority that civilians navigated.

CHAPTER 5: PRAETORIAN STATES AND COMPROMISED SOVEREIGNTY

Internal conflicts in Praetorian states generate combatant-state relations of combatants *"Inside-Out, Outside-In"*. And it generates a wartime institutional authority configuration that represent battle spaces in terms of *"Compromised-Sovereignty"*. It is a stalemated battle-space, with violence falling well below how one would characterize a low-intensity conflict. Because the exclusivist nature of ruling coalition provides a sense of stability. Praetorian states in the long view of state development are in an arrested form of development.

Praetorian States, Compromised Sovereignty: Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)

Two issues jump out in the discussion of the KRG as a Praetorian state with a form of war-time authority configuration or as an active battle-space. First is the ambiguity whether Kurdistan Regional Government itself fit either existing definition of a state and second is whether it is in a state of internal conflict. The baseline definition of using a state's monopolized sovereign prerogatives as the baseline condition of peace allows conceptual room to categorize KRG as having trappings of a state and also being in a state of civil war. Just as Lebanon will be in the same category, closely resembling a Praetorian State. This is definition of civil wars is also predicated on a conceptual critique of assigning arbitrary casualty figures to denote low-intensity, and high-intensity internal conflicts since most contemporary conditions of conflict would not fit existing civil-war conceptual boxes. It also tries to transcend the bias inherent to existing internal conflict scholarship where scholars only see instances of Outside Combatants, seeing combatants as rebels, and instances of only territorially defined Challenged and Contested Sovereignty as defining instances of civil wars.

KRG is in a state of internal conflict, in the sense that the non-state actors with capacity for violence use their military capacity as a means to play politics, both formally and informally. Whether politics with violence exacerbate into intense application of military power – that is intimidation and or killing people - is contingent. The state has no monopoly and individuals have to internalize this reality and navigate it. This is a rampant reality in weak states around the globe. Part of the objective is in seeing whether one can understand the political military dynamics in states, that are best characterized as instances where it is neither war nor peace as we understand it but lies somewhere in-between. The boundary conditions of 'compromised sovereignty' requires clarification from Contested and Challenged. In Contested and Challenged sovereignty there is a starkly confrontational stance with combatant-state relations characterized by outside combatants and a battle-space where the enemy plays no formal role inside or with the state except be in a confrontational stance.

In compromised sovereignty there is a suboptimal and yet durable equilibrium condition in the sharing of sovereign prerogatives of the state, that renders these places relatively stable, hence neither war nor peace.

KRG as a Praetorian State[161]

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[161] This discussion considers KRG until the end of 2014. For detailed history of Kurds see; Meiselas, Susan, and Martin van Bruinessen. "*Kurdistan: In the shadow of history*." 2nd Edition, University of Chicago Press (2008); McDowall, David. *Modern History of the Kurds*. IB Tauris, 2003; Yildiz, Kerim, and Tanyel B. Tayşi. *The Kurds in Iraq: the past, present and future*. London: Pluto Press, 2007 For an excellent discussion of Iraqi-Kurdistan and the rise of Kurdistan Regional Government see; Natali, Denise. *Kurdish Quasi-State: Development and Dependency in Post-Gulf War Iraq*. Syracuse University Press, 2010; Ahmed, Mohammed MA. *Iraqi Kurds and nation-building*. Springer, 2016. Stephen Mansfield, The Miracle of the Kurds: A Remarkable Story of Hope Reborn in Northern Iraq, Worthy Publishers, 2014; Quill Lawrence. Invisible Nation: How the Kurds' Quest for Statehood is Shaping Iraq and the Middle East, Walker Books, 2008.

Kurdistan Regional Government is part reality part notional. Therefore, it challenges conceptual

categories. KRG does not have juridical or 'de-jure' sovereignty and remain a federal region of

Iraq. Yet in actual fact, KRG retain 'de-facto' sovereignty in the areas that it claims to control

than the Federal Government of Iraq (GOI) – at least by 2014. Though there is no recognition,

the KRG has a president, a cabinet, a parliament, and a multiparty electoral system and elections

and the people and politicians do take the elections very seriously.[162] Simultaneously it is either

directly or indirectly involved in multiple wars generating combatant-state relations

characterized by both "Outside Combatants" in the case of the fight against the Islamic State and

the -relatively low-intensity separatist war with the Government of Iraq (GOI). Again, this war

between the GOI and KRG would not fit existing categories of civil-war given the limited

number of people killed. But it is war if one considers the fact that exercise of and or threatening

the use of military power is seen as an acceptable way of discussing differences and military

muscle flexing as a form of communication. Inside what is regarded as KRG territory – but

excluding the contested territories as defined in the Iraqi constitution of 2006.[163] There are

combatant state relations characterized by "Outside-In and Inside-Out". This status exists

between the two main ruling parties, Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of

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[162] Whether elections do what they are supposed to is a different discussion for which we shall return later.

[163] For a discussion of the most recent situation see, Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°55. Oil and Borders: How to Fix Iraq's Kurdish Crisis Brussels, 17 October 2017; For a detailed discussion see, Crisis Group Report 120, *Iraq and the Kurds: The High-Stakes Hydrocarbons Gambit.* Middle East & North Africa, 19 April 2012.

Kurdistan (PUK), as well as myriad small scale, ethnic, and sectarian specific militias created as part of the fight against the Islamic State. The object of analysis is KRG proper. KRG is an outcome of a conflict, a stalemated battle-space seeing from the existing civil-war conceptual boxes and a quasi-state in a form of arrested development, with compromised - sovereignty.

Kurdistan Regional Government

A Praetorian state is marked by an exclusive ruling coalition with brokerage administration of violence with imperial forms of state power. In-spite of elections, the governing coalition in KRG remains exclusive, between KDP and PUK members. The elections continued to generate a form of routinized legitimacy for the exclusivist ruling coalition. That is to say, one can win elections in Iraqi Kurdistan and be in the parliament, even hold a cabinet position, but that does not necessarily mean that actual political power comes with it. There is a disconnect between the parliament - the representative political institutions- and the actual state, the power organization that crystallize political sources of social power in a polymorphous fashion.

The defining nature of state political power organization is distributive and authoritative. The ruling parties, KDP and PUK, closely guard political power and dispense distributional outcomes. In return they expect strict obedience from their cadres. There is a zero-sum nature to political decisions with distributional consequences. And within the members affiliated with the ruling coalition, political power is willed, expecting obedience, similar to neo-patrimonial arrangements. The state has a high degree of despotic power with a low degree of infrastructural power. Together KRG generate a form of state authority similar to an imperial state, relying on respective party affiliated agents to enforce its will and writ, though always on behalf of and in terms of maintaining the pretense that it is the party writ or the state writ, contingent on the time

and the place. Because the state relies on respective party affiliated Peshmerga and attendant security institutions to impose authority. It has created a form of compromised sovereignty of the state.

With compromised sovereignty, KRG, in as far as the KDP and PUK are concerned, is in a deliberate state of neither war nor peace as one understands it, with a state closely guarding and executing its monopolized sovereign prerogatives. Therefore, behind the formal veneer of the KRG is a state best described as being in an arrested form of state building with Compromised Sovereignty buttressed by a "duopoly of violence".

KDP and PUK, as Combatants

Until the Algiers agreement between Iran-Iraq in 1975, KDP remained the main representative of the Kurdish national movement in Iraq. Rapprochement between Iran & Iraq with the US acquiescence meant a cessation of support (and supplies) to KDP allowing the Iraqi government to militarily engage the KDP unhindered. Within a year KDP was in disarray with its fighters dispersed and or killed with its leadership in exile. At this time series of KDP leaders that had disagreed with KDP leadership, and leaders of series of smaller parties converged in Syria to organize a union, which became the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). These two parties, so similar yet so different, have fought each other, fought their adversary together and separately, and still dominate Kurdish politics in Iraq. Animated by a nationalist-self-determination vision, KDP and PUK began as combatants and later evolved into political parties while retaining their capacity for violence. As combatant organizations they have had and continue to have very similar combatant-infrastructures. But there are nuanced differences.

Both parties maintain ethnic nationalist narratives of Kurdish independence. Both pay

necessary homage to other Kurdish groups waging struggles for self-determination in

neighboring countries, and the nature of the state the Kurds inhabit also influence the form of

Kurdish-Nationalism that has taken place.[164] KDP and PUK are both modernist in the sense of

maintaining a narrative reminiscent of national liberation narratives of the sixties, imbued also

with a sense of modernizing the traditional. The two parties part ways here and the basis of

separation has far reaching ramifications on both groups as well as the evolution of the Kurdish

fight in Iraq.

KDP is nationalist and modernist in the sense they aspire to create a modern secular state.

And yet some Kurds characterize them as 'tribal-traditional and conservative".[165] They are

reflecting on the qualitative and the formative differences in the form of power that KDP

harnesses and part of the logic of their power organization. It is also part function of historical

lineage, constituency and organization. KDP was founded by series of traditional Kurdish (clan)

elites. The surviving founders, and the closest supporters of the founders and their descendants

have consistently been at the core of the organization relying on a solid base of support from

their respective tribes and clans. Implicit is the assumption that KDP favors the traditional

governance structures inherent in traditional areas of Iraqi Kurdistan, and that they would not

curtail the powers of traditional elites, if only they will try to enhance them. The empirical record

is checkered on the latter and not so clear-cut. Because KDP narrative has elements of

traditionalist and conservative tenets and yet they remain staunch neoliberal capitalists. Even

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[164] Denise Natalie. *The Kurds and the State: Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey, and Iran*. Syracuse University Press, 2005.
[165] Composite conclusion based off of numerous interviews in KRG

'modernization-light' means some form of rational-legal structures that if not destroy, then curtail the capacity and reach of peasant and traditionalist governance structures. It has also been true of Kurdistan and KDP constituency. One could see it in real time in KDP (tribal) heartland in Dohuk, outskirts of Erbil and in Masif-Salahaddin and it plays into the authority and battle-space dynamics.

The local elites that allied themselves with the KDP were allowed to regenerate themselves and consolidate their traditional leadership structures along 'neo-tribal and neo-clans'. Meaning, they became heads of either political, economic or military power organizations within the rubrics of the KDP party apparatus. Though within the party apparatus, only the closest loyalists were allowed to organize along military sources of social power. Though these elites themselves refer to them as clans or tribes in the traditional governance sense, their direct capacity to regulate their members remain extremely limited, except in terms of deploying norms, traditions, and monopolized *ritual prerogatives and interpreting meaning,* a very Bourdieu form of traditionalist cultural elites. The real power of these traditionalist elites actually come from the form of political and economic patronage networks they have built, always with an attachment to the KRG Praetorian state, by way of one of the ruling parties. It is important to note that the Neo-tribe power networks can be economic, political, and ideological as long as the ideas do not undercut the narratives of the ruling parties but rarely military. In effect their semblance of power today lies as a result of being part of a patronage network with an old tribal or clan sticker on top - and not clan and tribal power in the classical anthropological sense. However, KDP has traditional authority in the Weberian sense, having almost been at the founding of the Kurdish national movement. It also carries with it plenty of historical authority. Subsequently the KDP narrative on the one hand is of change but is also of continuity and of

reifying existing networks of power. In Michael Mann's sense, the KDP ideational power, its narrative, is immanent in its frame, meaning the ideational power goes to reify and make something that is already there - the sense of Kurdishness - into a more cohesive sense of Kurdish identity. Even in the broadcast of power, KDP aesthetics of power always have many (authentic and made-up) traditional forms and rituals.

PUK is similar and different. PUK began when series of left leaning KDP elites joined hands with the leaders of series of Kurdish Leftist movements and Communists that happened to be Kurds.[166] Again, history, the time and the place, the elite networks play a critical role. Communist parties remained one of the most powerful social movements in Iraq proper. And Communists in Iraqi Kurdistan were prominent but not as much as in Baghdad in the sixties and seventies. Communism as an ideology found little resonance in the Kurdish hinterlands. But Communism found ready resonance among a sector of Educated Kurdish elites that were also close to Communists in Iran and Baghdad – the transnational ideational linkages. In the Kurdish regions, Marxist - Leninist Komala, Kurdistan Socialist Movement dominated, and they became the most significant partners in PUK in addition to Talabani's familial network and his followers that came from the KDP. In fact, for a time, the leader of the PUK also became the head of the Socialist International.[167]

PUK also maintain staunchly nationalist and avowedly secular narrative coupled with traditional Marxist-Leninist version of modernity, of empowering the peasants, workers, and crucially, breaking down traditional patriarchic tribal structures and empowering women, which

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[166] Interviews with retired PUK cadres and former Kurdish Communist Party officials, March 2017.
[167] Interview, March 2017.

was the standard practice and hope of most sixties and seventies leftist social movements.[168] The

outcome of this ideational impacts is readily visible in the areas dominated by and considered the

heart of PUK territory in north-eastern Iraq. As a consequence of its founding alliances and

ideological affinity, there are ideological as well as military, political and economic affinity with

the PKK in Turkey and YPG in Syria. PUK and KDP, though not always obvious, but is obvious

to Kurds of Iraq, used to present very different visions of a future independent Kurdistan's to

come, with PUK offering a socialist, egalitarian, secular, democratic, and modern version, ruled

by the PUK, with its politburo central committee and regional party members being the real

power holders. Although today both ruling parties have become personalized networks of

military, economic, and political power. Therefore, the two parties today have much more in

common than not, and that has to do with the broader changes in the regional and international

context as well as their respective domestic constituencies.

KDP in its formative days had explicit Soviet support and subsequently the KDP

organization mirror Leninist party structures, with the armed forces of the party subsumed into

and under party control. PUK with its explicit Marxist and Leninist heritage mirror a similar

organizational structure. While the formal organizational structure is not entirely a veneer and it

matters, the unity one expects seeing the formal structure is misleading since both parties remain

internally fragmented replete with internal factional politics. In the KDP the fragmentation

mirrors the power networks and the constituency that founders, and the closest supporters

brought. But it remains centered around the Barzani family, and the heart of the fragmentation is

within the family. In PUK case, the internal fragmentation mirrored the factions of the original

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[168] Interview with former Iraqi and Kurdish communist party officials.

founders and the constituencies they brought while increasingly power became centered around the Talabani family and some of their closest supporters[169]. The armed forces structure of both parties today, while formally unified, and work together internally, also mirror the fragmentation inherent to the party and also remain highly personalized.[170] KDP has maintained a far more convincing veneer of a unified party that can withstand the centrifugal forces of fragmentation. But the family feuds have now come to the open and it is as fragmented as the PUK. PUK has fragmented in light of the Talabani family personalizing the party, but the fragmentation in both cases has only been political and not military.

KDP and PUK for a long period, during the actual fighting phases, were effective at making organizational creatures out of members, and there were distinctions between various versions of Peshmerga and party functionaries. Today members in both parties come from a cross section of society. However, given the long-established lines of territorial demarcation KDP members predominately come from Erbil and Dohuk governorates while PUK members come from Suleimani governerate. But it is neither exclusive and nor is it purely a function of tribal and clan affiliations as some like to point out.[171] Highlighting the interconnected nature of combatant infrastructures, this bias is also an outcome of long established strategy and tactics of both parties.

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[169] This personalization of party leadership played a critical role in leading one of the founders, the Marxist-Leninist Komala party led by Nechirvan Mustafa, to break away from PUK and found the Goran (Change) movement.

[170] As a consequence, KDP has its own conventional Peshmerga led by KDP stalwart, its own security agency, (led by the President's son), a praetorian guard led by the interior minister, in addition to multiple other internal security forces, as a brief example. Similarly, in the PUK, there is the PUK Peshmerga led by old PUK stalwarts, their sons, and a PUK's own praetorial guard of sorts led by one of Talabani's son's while the other remain a deputy Prime-minister.

[171] Interview, KRG officials, 2016.

KDP and PUK in their fighting strategy against the central government of Iraq, the Baathist state, pursued classic territorial and population centric separatist insurgency strategy relying on guerrilla and terrorist tactics. That is, vis a vis the central government, within the framework espoused here, PUK and KDP fit outside-combatants vis a vis the central government, maintaining explicit confrontational strategies resulting in contested sovereignty. Subsequently the territorially driven battle space shifted north and south along Kurdish controlled regions and central government-controlled regions, contingent on the effectiveness of respective party's offensives and counter-offensives. PUK and KDP in their internal Intra-Kurdish fighting also pursued territorial centric strategy which shifted the battle space east-west in the Kurdish regions, again, contingent on the effectiveness of the offensives and counter-offensives of both parties. The 1990 gulf war unexpectedly altered the dynamics of the Kurdish fight.

The unintended consequences of Operation Provide Comfort I, Operation Provide Comfort II and Operation Northern Watch laid the ground work towards creating what the Kurds had long hoped but were unable to realize on their own. It allowed for the development of a Kurdish autonomous region north of the 36th parallel in the historically Kurdish regions of Iraq independent of and unhindered by the central government of Iraq. Albeit this time with a multi-national combined task force providing air-cover. Though the Kurds had a de-facto autonomous region, there was a power vacuum in the center and was also under "twin-sanctions".[172] That is the Kurdish region fell under the overall UN sanctions imposed against Iraq while the central government imposed its own internal sanctions on the de-facto autonomous region. Nearly

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[172] Twin sanctions consisted of KRG being subject to both overall UN sanctions against Iraq as well as sanctions put in place against the nascent KRG by Iraqi Federal Government.

insurmountable necessities could generate collective political will and compel action. The two

dominant parties agreed to hold elections. Elections were held on 19 May 1992 and subsequently

the first Kurdish National Assembly convened, declaring it to be the sole legislature for the

Kurdish region on July 15, 1992. The two dominant parties essentially controlled the parliament

in a fifty -fifty power sharing agreement. No elections were held in the Kurdish region again

until 2005 which coincided with Iraq wide elections held in post 2005 Iraq.

Combatants Outside-In, and Compromised Sovereignty: PUK & KDP Duopoly

The Kurdish National Assembly (in post 1992 election) was formally a power sharing agreement

split fifty-fifty between the two parties. But if the Parliament is not sovereign then it can neither

share power nor resolve differences that arise out of asymmetries in power. KDP and PUK

decided to give their best attempt at resolving their differences militarily.[173] It led to the Kurdish

civil war (1994-1998) until Washington stepped in, arbitrated the differences and brokered an

agreement which in effect formalized the existing military realities on the ground while the

National Assembly provided a formal veneer.[174] Dual sanctions were eased with oil for food.

While PUK and KDP would share revenue, maintain political power and control of their

respective territories. In effect, under the unified veneer of an incipient Kurdistan Regional

Government would be a duopoly of political and military power and two centers of power.

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[173] Kurdish region was under dual-sanctions and under dual sanctions, the marginal utility of every dollar increases exponentially. Smuggling oil and taxing oil smugglers became a huge source of revenue running into the millions of dollars a week.

[174] Though everyone agree on that the Washington agreement created the peace between PUK and KDP, none of the PUK and KDP officials that I interviewed are able to provide me with the fine print of the agreement that explicates the details of the power sharing agreement between the two parties.

In post invasion Iraq the duopoly held even better. The new Iraqi constitution formalized the Kurdish federal regions. And as long as the Kurds maintain their Kurdish alliances in Baghdad vis a vis the rest of Iraq, Kurds also had a veto. In 2005 Kurdish regional elections (with a unicameral 111 seat parliament), KDP won 40 seats with PUK winning 38 seats. It formalized the existing duopoly of political, economic and military power.

The two hegemonic parties formed the government, shared power and maintained the status quo. There was also another informal division of labor between the two parties. While KDP leaders held the presidency and the Prime Ministers' post in Kurdistan, for the (mostly) nominal position of the Iraqi presidency, the candidate would come from PUK.[175] This reality remained during the 2009 elections when KDP won 30 seats and PUK 29.[176] It still allowed the two dominant parties to maintain the duopoly, but they could no longer take it for granted.

Because the new party, Goran, the movement for change, managed to get 25 seats.[177] Goran party was led by one of the PUK stalwarts, founding members, deputy president of the PUK, and a renowned PUK war hero Nechirvan Mustafa who broke away as a reaction to the PUK increasingly turning into a familial fief of the Talabani family. However, the duopoly of

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[175] Though the appointment is largely for a ceremonial position, any position can be turned into an effective position wielding real power if the person has a solid constituency, political acumen and recognize politics is part art and part craft. The joke is that Jalal Talabani loved being the President of Iraq that he almost forgot about Kurdistan. But being the President of Iraq, he became a steadfast champion of Kurdish interests in Baghdad, and within the international community. In addition, being a seasoned political operator, he also used his ceremonial office to arbitrate differences between Arab parties turning the largely ceremonial position into a very effective one. The contrast between Fuad Massum the incumbent, and Talabani on this count remain striking.

[176] 2009 election outcome. KDP (30), PUK (29), Goran 25, Kurdistan Islamic Union (6), Kurdistan Islamic Group (4), Kurdistan Social Democratic Party (2) Further 11 seats are allocated to minority Chaldean, Assyrian, and Turkmen representatives.

[177] One of the founding members of PUK, Nechirvan Mustafa was from the Marxist-Leninist Komal faction, and was second in command of the PUK

violence continued to hold. Because the duopoly is deeply woven into the institutional tentacles of the KRG. Though KRG at this point was seen more or less as a relative democracy with more or less free and fair elections by observers, many Kurds saw it as a country run by two family mafias[178] while the Goran party leaders called KRG a "Hybrid Regime".[179] In effect, at the macro-level, this is a Praetorian state held together with a political military duopoly that had deliberately compromised state sovereign prerogatives as a means of regime survival.

While hardly ideal, this institutional outcome of compromised sovereignty with a duopoly of violence generated positive externalities in the form of provisions of public goods expected of a state at the most basic level beginning with a form of hegemonic authority on the ground. That is, people have a sense of predictability. Though there were disagreements at the level of elite politics, meaning at the level of the politburos of the two ruling parties, they both used their respective separate security apparatuses to provide order on the ground. While there is order on the ground, at the micro-level, and at the level of small business operations from an economic standpoint, correlating with this political-military duopoly developed two centers of economic power as well. Both parties have created alliances with or created business conglomerates that are intrinsically linked to the respective parties and compromised - sovereign state institutional networks. Essentially, one could start a corner store, a small restaurant, any number of small scale businesses without the intrusion of or alliances with the ruling parties.

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[178] That KRG is governed by two families, and their assorted "mafias" is a common reference.
[179] Interview, Goran leader, 2017. He is a Goran MP and a political scientist by training and was referring to, Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Way. "The rise of competitive authoritarianism." *Journal of democracy* 13.2 (2002): 51-65; and Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. *Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

However, if one were to engage in the core sectors, natural resource extraction, banking, media and communications, and large-scale construction, the business operations as well as profit allocation will correlate with the compromised -sovereign prerogatives of the state, meaning, ones' linkages to the elite networks of the ruling parties begin to matter.

The direct micro-level consequence of this arrangement, a Praetorian state stuck in an arrested form of development, is a formidable sense of stability. Though everyone is aware that there is uncertainty, the sense of uncertainty does not loom large but tends to hover in the horizon, which makes average people act, plan, and engage in the day to day, inadvertently drawing Bayesian inferences intuitively. Casual observers interpreted this veneer of stability in the KRG as a secular, liberal, multi-ethnic and multi confessional oasis of bohemian calm.

But this purported Bohemian calm was shattered during the 2013 elections. The KDP got 38 seats, PUK 18, Goran 24, Kurdistan Islamic Union 10, Kurdistan Islamic Group 6. The elections were in fact real and truly represented peoples' choices. Not only did PUK loose seats in the Kurdistan parliament coming in third place but it also lost its position in the Suleimani governorate which has been the PUK stronghold ever since it was founded. Technically the two hegemonic parties could form the government and maintain the duopoly, but no longer so brazenly when there is a genuine opposition. With a genuine opposition it is no longer possible to hand out ministerial appointments without actually giving them power. And it is especially not possible when the opposition essentially call on the inimical effects of a duopoly, compromised sovereignty, and want to dismantle the duopoly, overcome the state of compromised sovereignty, and make the parliament the sole sovereign authority and make the state beholden to the

parliament, and by extension to the people.[180] It is a critical juncture in the trajectory of KRG state and institutional development.

PUK and KDP carefully consolidated the duopoly of politics and violence staying within the KRG structure even against the opposition of sizable number of people against the two-party hegemony, a clear verdict of the 2013 election. The outcome of the election upended the sense of performance legitimacy that the ruling parties used to justify the duopoly. As a consequence, the opposition, decided to walk out and the parliament was suspended and there appeared visible cracks in the purported veneer of stability that KRG had thus far maintained. This instability continued until 2104 and then the Iraqi state nearly collapsed, and the Islamic State appeared. It is no exaggeration to say that the Islamic State became a deus ex machina to the hegemonic parties. In that they could postpone the seemingly intractable issue of compromised sovereignty inherent to the Kurdish quasi state.

Outside-In, and Compromised Sovereignty

As a result of the Islamic State advance, KRG ruling parties, with international support began the creation of local militias, militias that overlapped along territorial and sectarian lines. Instead of KRG Peshmerga moving into these neighborhood, the KRG, under the aegis of the both the ministry of Peshmerga and the Ministry of Interior created Christian and Yazidi militias.

This is classical form of brokerage administration of violence driven by necessity. Even here, it is necessary to notice that both ruling parties created localized militias and the militia's answer to their respective patrons, either the PUK or the KDP. This form of necessity driven

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[180] Conversations with Goran movement leaders.

creation of Combatant-Inside-Out phenomena was made complicated for the KDP in the case of

the Yazidis. Because in the face of the Islamic State advance, the Zervani forces in and around

Sinjar mountains retreated.[181] The Kurdish combatants led by PKK and its Syrian affiliate YPG

instead decided to move in and create a corridor to evacuate the Yazidi's and created a Yazidi

militia loyal to them.[182] Overall, these Combatants Inside-Out, fit the category of "Parochial

Rebels".[183] They maintain a communal and a localized narrative of protecting themselves from

the Islamic State. But born out of experience, and knowing it has resonance in their respective

communities, they also contain not so subtle allusions that they also seek protection from

Muslims Arabs, of whatever sectarian persuasion. It also resonates with their patrons, the

Kurdish authorities.[184] The interests, objectives and the logic of their enterprises are repeatedly

highlighted with exclusive focus on the protection of their respective communities and good

relations with their Kurdish neighbors. The militias are organized along conventional

hierarchical military command and control structures, with members, male and female, drawn

exclusively from their respective communities. They maintain a defensive posture while also

acting as the local authorities maintaining law and order for the moment. They help KRG

administer the territory and work as the local protection force. From the point of view of

respective communities and the militia leadership, they are a local protection force embedded

into their respective communities. From the point of view of the KRG administration, they are

battalion size local community protection forces with loose formal affiliation but strong informal

affiliation that runs through either the Peshmerga Ministry and the Interior Ministry. If the KRG

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[181] Interview, Zeravani force commanders, December 2014.
[182] Interview, Sinjar region, 2015.
[183] William Reno. *Warfare in Independent Africa*. Cambridge University Press. 2011. P 206.
[184] Interviews, 2015, 2016, and 2017.

were to make them a formal part of the KRG security architecture, they would integrate them

into the existing structure but would not allow them to exist as independent community based

armed forces acting autonomously of the KRG. This is classic brokerage administration and fit

neatly into the category of how Combatants Inside Out could be turned into Combatants Outside-

In. They are allied with the state and relies on the KRG for their creation and sustenance but is

not directly part of the broader KRG security architecture as complicated as that is.

Compromised Sovereignty: Outside-In, Inside-Out

In the existing literature on civil war, Compromised Sovereignty lies somewhere between

scholarship on rebel-governance and state governance. Compromised sovereignty is not quite

rebel governance since "rebels" in this instance do not act independently and autonomously from

the state and do not necessarily directly challenge the state in rebellious sense. This is

counterintuitive since the very existence of multiple armed actors within the state runs counter to

conventional conceptions of the state. And compromised sovereignty is also not quite state

governance since the state does not have a monopoly on sovereign prerogatives, specifically on

the administration of violence.

In the case of KRG and compromised sovereignty, there is a duopoly, but it need not

necessarily be so. In Lebanon, it is another case of compromised-sovereignty, the situation is

similar but there is more than a duopoly with brokerages administration of violence. And the

ruling coalition is not exclusive at first glance since there is a confessional arrangement. But it is

indeed very much exclusivist in that the members of the ruling coalition has consistently been

the same. But they would be rotating different prerogatives amongst each other from time to

time. But this exclusivist nature of the governing coalition, the coalescing of interests to maintain

the exclusivity means, they are selective in the brokerage administration of violence and one

could count on the ruling coalition to close ranks when necessary if all their interests are at risk.

This provide the underlying sense and the semblance of stability. But as pointed out, it also

generates perverse political, economic and military dynamics on the ground, predicated on the

organization of military power, as one could see in KRG, and no doubt also in Lebanon, to a

greater degree.

Implications of Compromised Sovereignty and Arrested Development

If wars make states and states make war, then in a microscopic sense in the grand narratives of

state making, PUK and KDP evolution bears out bellicist theories of state making but also its

limitations in a contemporary setting.

KRG case shows the development of a Praetorian state, slowly overtime. It was a

coercive intensive process with state power initially crystallizing along the military sources of

social power. Contestation for control over territory, resources and people, as bellicist theories

would predict, did give rise to a formidable security and law and order apparatus in both the

Yellow zone, controlled by KDP, and in the Green Zone, controlled by the PUK. Instead of

building a bureaucratic apparatus for taxation as a means of revenue extraction, both sides built

formidable rentier state structures relying on oil sales, at first illegally and now, quasi-legally.

And both PUK and KDP quasi states in the Green and Yellow zones crystallized, primarily along

military, political and economic sources of social power. Wartime elites became peacetime

elites. Both parties used their military forces and the leaders with credibility that had been in the

fight as the core of the party. And they in turn recruited loyalists into the ranks of the peshmerga.

The entire security apparatus (which in itself is fragmented along familial and factional lines of

military leaders), the largest sector in the government, is filled with loyalists ranging from full time operators to small time neighborhood informers. In effect to be in the security apparatus, and be a leader is a route to power and privilege while paying homage to and being beholden to the party. Both parties use the party structure and membership to build a formidable political patronage network, essentially paid full time political staffers. But crucially, since both parties control all the compromised state institutions, party membership and rising through the party ranks is also a route to advancement in the government bureaucracy while being beholden to the party.

Until 2003 both parties controlled the shared revenue from oil for food program and collected taxes on smuggled oil, KDP into Turkey and PUK into Iran. After 2005 shared oil revenue from Baghdad and oil sales from their own wells were also elaborately managed by the parties. And that lead to the last sinew with which both parties maintain control, economics, specifically crony capitalism in a state with Compromised Sovereignty.

With the exception of close relatives, and long-term party members that have effectively become families that engage in large scale ventures, and either own or manage direct party affiliated conglomerates and holding companies, both parties in their respective regions have their reliable capitalist partners in every conceivable economic sector. This is a natural outgrowth of the two sides having a monopoly in the provision of security in their respective territories. Security, as reiterated numerous times, is a sector that generate huge economies of scale.[185] The security provider enforces contracts and guarantees property rights on which the entire edifice is built. As a result, at the inception of KRG, it was in a state of extremely compromised

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[185] Tilly, Charles. "War making and state making as organized crime." *Violence: A reader* (1985): 35-60.

sovereignty. Two states inside the KRG with KRG prerogatives compromised along territorial and institutional lines complete with a demarcated front defense line between yellow and the green zone. At this point, extending bellicist theories to their logical conclusion would mean - in the old-world sense - a unified, ideal type Iraqi Kurdish state would emerge if either the PUK or KDP emerges victorious. However, the local, regional and international realities make such an outcome impossible. Indeed, both PUK and KDP have tried their best to vanquish each other, even making pacts with the Baathist state that attempted genocide against their own people. It is the slow realization in an iterative game. Both sides realized the certainty of non-defeat and also the certainty of non-victory. That made it possible to formalize the divided realities on the ground under a formal KRG veneer in 1998.

KRG state has now evolved whereas we can see a form of vertical-institutional development, (for the lack of a better term) while in a state of compromised sovereignty. That is, in some areas, the arrangement is not simply a formal veneer. The two quasi-states that emerged in the Yellow and Green Zone - have effectively transferred much of their sovereign prerogatives to KRG state institutions, relying on patronage networks to either wield or influence power relations. In a day to day pedestrian level one could start a small business as one would anywhere, going through the KRG bureaucratic mechanism, one could rely on the justice system to resolve issues, and the police forces do provide accountable security to its citizens, under the aegis of the Justice Ministry. People can identify with the KRG and the agitation is to empower it further. At the micro-level one could not feel the effects of compromised sovereignty on a daily basis, except on occasion. When one crosses the Green Zone to the Yellow Zone one notices the different security officials with a separate set of loyalties, but even there, the two zones now, induced by ISIS, attempt to coordinate security and information. But further up you go, to the

institutional level one begins to notice the effects. The government appointments are carefully divvied up. The two parties have effectively transferred their party loyalists and party-based patronage system inside the KRG structure, to include maintaining a huge number of ghost employees. They have almost formalized the patronage networks. One notices the compromised sovereignty of the KRG with this being most noticeable at the macro-level political arrangement that is stuck in a political death-grip.

Both KDP and PUK are fractured from within, Goran movement challenges the two party hegemony but without capacity for violence. And Goran leaders, even without their capacity for violence has only faced occasional intimidation and discrimination in the media, (which they overcame by starting their own), suggests how the logic of violence has also shifted, from the elemental (killing) to the more sophisticated, using the compromised state institutions to hound the opponents with legal veneers. Hegemonic parties are loathed to relinquish their last prerogatives, because their political and economic fortunes rests on maintaining a grip on their respective partisan coercive capacities. Here, one could see the anxieties. The animated discussion in Kurdistan is about finding a way to overcome the political impasse to avoid another civil war. One could also notice the changed mood of the times. Thirty years previously (when the same elites were in the same positions) Goran's intransigence would have meant a military response. And though the capacity for violence is the single important prerogative that neither hegemonic party has transferred to KRG, and makes KRG remain in a compromise sovereign condition, patterns of violence in KRG remains at the level of intimidation, while not acceptable in a democracy, that is a far cry from disappearances and assassinations of earlier years. At this particular juncture in the growth of the KRG, suspended in a Praetorian state status, the bellicist theories of state building logic also runs into contemporary realities.

The military and political logic drives the crystallization of power in the KRG territory. That is, the KRG state is in a perpetual motion of state and institutional development. The state is trying to be an actor not just define the space. But it is trying to do so within an externally defined territory. Revisiting one of the premises, the state in its ideal type is both an actor and is also a place. In the classical state developmental accounts, the state became an actor and a place, simultaneously, so the two became mutually constitutive, as the actor increasingly defined and shaped patterns of social regulation. That is, the juridical sovereign realities play a defining role in shaping the logic in the exercise of military power in contemporary internal-conflict. According to the old logic, (of the 18th and 19th century military power led state building processes), PUK and KDP, instead of being forced to face each other, a reality forced on them from the external boundaries, KDP and PUK could extend their writ, in other directions, and legitimize the territorial acquisitions. This is not an acceptable outcome, given the lesson of the post war world order. Indeed, the analytical category of civil war-itself is a reflection of this taken for granted reality, that military power is no longer an acceptable means of altering state boundaries. The consequence is a very different military logic with processes of state and institutional building at variance from the classical theories, and a consequent area of future research.

CHAPTER 6: NEGOTIATED STATES AND FRAGMENTED SOVEREIGNTY

Negotiated states are contemporary feudal states. Violence play a defining role in the relationship between the state and society because it shapes the nature of authority configurations. In a negotiated state violence remain most intimate, most palpable, and far more visibly present. It does not mean violence is manifest in its most elemental form - that people are dying left right and center. Intimate presence of organized violence means, the only certainty of authority configuration is of constant uncertainty. People have to internalize the probability of violence and everyone is. Bayesian in a negotiated state. This is the reality of most states characterized as dysfunctional, failing or failed. Contrast this moment with a state with bureaucratic forms of state power, Mogadishu or Kandahar versus Toronto and Montreal. The form of state power induced order, peacefulness, found in Canada, a bureaucratic state, is replete with violence everywhere at all times but it is monopolized and deeply routinized. Therefore, completely hidden and never intimate, very occasionally visible and rarely palpable.

In Iraq, Baghdad, for example, a negotiated state, there are crisscrossing and cross-cutting processes of organized violence at work in different levels of intensity across time and space. The result is that violence plays a far more prominent role in the day to day and it generate a very particular authority configuration that people must navigate. A negotiated state has inclusive ruling coalition's representing nearly every organized interest group. And the ruling coalition rely on brokerage administration of violence. With very low degree of despotic and infrastructural power, these states generate state power that resembles feudal forms. The idea and the reality of the state in countries such as Iraq, Somalia, Chad, Niger, Central African Republic,

Mali, etc closely resembles this type.[186] These states have series of internal contradictions that profoundly shapes political processes and wartime-dynamics.

Taking a detour along some classical state theories will illustrate this contrasting reality better. Think of Marxist state theories, classical pluralist, neo-pluralist, elite-pluralist and corporatists theories of the state for a moment. Marxists and Pluralist theories both agree that the state remains the central place - unifying element, the cohesive entity but always a place - where power is distributed among power actors in society. Then the Marxists parted ways on who and to what degree power is distributed and how it is exercised. Pluralist theories, theorizing essentially on advanced industrial nations, seeing a reflection of themselves in their theories, saw the state as the place and the defining mechanism in which analytically autonomous political power is distributed and influence political processes. The state had little if no agency. And civil society actors, societal power organizations, in terms of Michael Mann's framework used here, shape political processes, the more the better. In the pluralist view, the evolutionary high point is consociational form of government, where (nearly) every group that represent societal cleavages are represented at the state and have a place at the table of power. Iraq, in this view, in terms of its political institutional configuration is a consociational dreamboat.

The disconnect that lie between the conceptual dreamboat and the political reality lies in the conception of the state and also in assuming away the role of violence. Pluralist theories theorizing on reflections of themselves, they could assume away violence, since military source

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[186] Although, Iraq also raises a follow-up question. That though it became a negotiated state and continue to be a version of a negotiated state, it has managed to make a (relatively) remarkable recovery normalizing civilian life, in comparison to other examples mentioned. Which points out that, antecedent conditions matter. Iraq has the institutional and individual memory of being at one point a modern authoritarian state, that helps its recovery than say Mali, or Niger, where the states institutions never became as functional as they were in Iraq at its heyday of the eighties.

of social power was already integrated into the power arrangement and made subordinate to

political power. Imagine for a moment, the consociational arrangements in the Netherlands,

Belgium, Switzerland etc, where the capacity for violence is a necessary condition to be a

representative group that are part of the political processes. Negotiated states are sometimes

deliberate consociational arrangements, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and sometimes necessity

dictates it, such as Somalia and Mali etc. In the classical conceptions, negotiated states are forms

of militant consociationalism arrangements.

Negotiated states, mirroring their feudal siblings, have very limited despotic or

infrastructural power. The story of state development tells us that the strength of both despotic

and infrastructural power comes as a result of scale economies, the more there is less it costs, and

more it gets routinized, the more it trends towards monopolization and more the individuals are

caged in societies. In a negotiated state, the logic of power, with multiple groups, all armed,

works counter to this monopolizing logic. This is the reality that play a defining role in shaping

the state power and combatant-state relations and the consequent authority configurations.

Inside-Combatants and Fragmented Sovereignty

The state is a place and an actor with a level of autonomy. In Negotiated States Inside

combatants are part of the legally constituted state. They also retain the capacity to exercise

violence autonomous of the state of which they are a part and the society that they come from.

This reality generates a fragmented state sovereignty. Maintaining a monopoly on the sovereign

prerogatives of a state here remain a distant dream. States are characterized by the very fact that

both "de-jure" and "de-facto" sovereign prerogatives of the state are open for negotiations and to

be captured by armed actors turned legitimate political actors that are part of the state.

Fragmenting state "de-jure" and "de-facto" prerogatives is part of the give and take of regime survival mechanism.

Specifically, "de-jure" sovereign prerogatives of a state consist of the official means with which it relates to the outside world, diplomatic representation, bilateral and multilateral engagements with countries and institutions, regulating trade and financial relations between domestic and international actors, and engaging with external donor community for example. Different groups could officially be in control of state institutions that pertains to de-jure sovereignty and use it to generate distributive forms of power, generating selective goods for members of the power network.

"De-facto" sovereignty is about the logistics of political control. Territoriality, differentiated institutions, rule making and enforcement, capacity for violence all play a role in the logistics of political control and the state in its ideal form has a monopoly on them. De-facto prerogatives are also open for negotiations and appropriation by armed actors and used towards generating distributional forms of power and towards providing selective goods. State's sovereign prerogatives are fragmented and controlled by armed actors. And the fragmentation could be along institutional or territorial lines or both.

This reality, unlike in instances of compromised - sovereignty, where the exclusive nature of the ruling coalition allows for a semblance of stability, fragmented sovereignty generate an authority configuration that remains very unstable both at institutional (meta) and at micro level. This is shaped by the relationship between the ruling coalition and the administration of violence.

An inclusive ruling coalition is analogous to a big-tent political party that allows in multiple factions, with each organized faction has capacity for violence and could act

autonomously. At the institutional level an inclusive coalition with multiple actors generate a political reality where there is no political center. Instead it is a constantly shifting series of alliances between organized political-military actors. Inclusion of these armed actors at the institutional level and allocating varied sovereign prerogatives to them become the mechanism with which negotiated states manage political survival, as precarious as the survival is. At the micro level, this institutional configuration creates a situation rife with economic, political and military instability. Therefore, organized capacity for violence begin to generate huge premiums.

When violence is currency an average economic agent, not affiliated with armed actors that are part of the legally constituted state, are unable to maintain long time horizons. Economic activity takes place that fulfill subsistence needs but hardly any investment. Conversely, any investments require the affiliation of armed actors for enforcing contracts to guarantee property rights. And the armed actor whose protection one need may change, contingent on the territory where one seeks to invest to the specific sector that one invests in, and if both happened to overlap with the same armed actor, (in control of both territory and controls institutions that pertains to the specific business sector) then, the economic agent could simply buy protection from one actor. If it is not, then the economic agent will have to pay both actors for protection. This is the precise opposite of a monopoly. Security has huge scale economies when there is a monopoly and security is cheap. When multiple actors provide security, it comes with a steep price tag. And this vary from place to place. As weak and ineffective as a negotiated state can be, even negotiated states, much like a feudal state, retain little oasis of bohemian calm, almost always near the center where all the protagonists vying for power and position congregate.

Engaging in politics in a negotiated state is dangerous. Therefore, it requires either some capacity for violence, at a minimum for self-protection, and if not, one certainly needs to be

under some armed groups protective umbrella. That provides the leaders of military organizations inordinate influence in politics, both formally, if they are part of the ruling coalition, and informally, if they are not formally part but are represented by proxies. Negotiated states retain little despotic power and infrastructural power. A state's infrastructural power is what allows non-violent political actors, civil society groups and the like to thrive, harnessing sources of social power other than violence. In the absence of that, political actors of whatever hue and predilection are always beholden to those with capacity for violence. This is a political reality that generate incentive structures in the words of Paul Collier where "the bad drives out the good".[187] Politics is a death defying sport and not for the faint of heart.

State sovereignty is fragmented, and armed actors reflect this reality. They could retain control of territory and people and use it as the basis to be part of the ruling coalition. And their position in the ruling coalition in turn strengthens their hold on the territory and its people. They could retain control of institutions and use the institutions to generate a network of loyalists beholden to them. The two forms of fragmented sovereignty could be mutually exclusive, one controls territory while another control an institution or they could overlap, when one actor have both territorial and institutional control. In this reality with multiple non-state combatants turned legitimate armed actors inside the state, the armed forces of the state are usually reduced to the level of another combatant group, albeit an ineffective one. In fact, with inclusive ruling coalition and brokerage violence, the armed forces meet the same fate as the state, fragmentation, and for a reason. If there is a consensus on the armed actors in a negotiated state that are part of

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[187] Paul Collier refer to this tendency in both his Bottom Billion and Democracy in Dangerous Places. Collier, Paul. *Wars, guns and votes: Democracy in dangerous places*. Random House, 2011;

the ruling coalition, it is to make sure the armed forces remain weak. Armed forces become

another state institution that non-state combatants could formally or informally integrate into or

fragment. An armed force of a state by definition is an archetypal rational bureaucratic structure

with many moving parts. It makes the whole of the armed forces have a greater impact than the

sum of its many units. In a negotiated state with brokerage administration this either means

danger, if it works, and if it does not, it means opportunity. The armed actors could fragment the

many components of the overall armed force into discrete units, different groups controlling

different parts. The formal bureaucratic veneer may exist in the books and at ceremonial

pageants evoking grandeur, but the reality will always remain at great variance. In this context

when violence flares up, usually as a result of political differences at the institutional level

spilling out into the streets, where elites rely on violence to overcome the differences, dynamics

of violence could take different forms. If the social base of power of the armed actor is

predicated on holding territory, then violence will comport with existing territorial dynamics. If

the armed actors' source of power is predicated on a patron-client network without a territorial

base, then violence would correlate along the members of the network. If the territorial

boundaries of the negotiated state include multiple societal cleavages, as the existing literature

indicate, violence induced population movements makes territory to overlap with societal

cleavages. Violence creates heretofore nonexistent community and context specific security

dilemmas[188] and anxieties about the future that people previously did not entertain.[189] In the

absence of external influence, one of the elemental realities of an ideal type negotiated state with

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[188] Posen, Barry R. "The security dilemma and ethnic conflict." *Survival* 35.1 (1993): 27-47.
[189] Lake, David A., and Donald Rothchild. "Containing fear: the origins and management of ethnic conflict." *International security* 21.2 (1996): 41-75.

fragmented sovereignty is that there is rarely an actor with a preponderance of power. In an ideal type negotiated state multiple actors with more or less symmetrical capabilities lock the state in an uneasy alliance that is always subject to change. At the on-set of violence this translates into irregular-symmetric warfare.

Evolution of the Iraqi state

The Iraqi state that is considered a case consist of Iraq between 2010 to 2014. Every state in their long evolution can fit all four categories and also none, contingent on the time. Because the state types, in addition to being specific categorical ideal types, also correspond to a continuum of states in varied stages of institutional development. Negotiated states with feudal forms of state power is the least institutionally developed state category. In this long view of history Iraq under the Ottoman's, British mandate and even through part of the monarchical period reflected imperial forms of state power, with multiple brokerage actors wielding capacity for violence, with exclusive ruling coalitions, fitting the Praetorian state quadrant. The tail end of the Iraqi monarchical period, and the Free officers rule (1958-1963), to the ascendancy of the Baath party period from the Ramadan coup in 1963 to the high-point of the Iran-Iraq war we can see the Iraqi state moving from the Praetorian state with imperial forms of state power to an authoritarian state. At the highpoint (late seventies and early to mid-eighties) Iraq boasted the highest HDI in the middle east, and the state retained a very high degree of despotic to infrastructural power, with very effective logistics of societal control.

During the sanctions period, between 1991 to 2003, Iraq moved from an authoritarian state quadrant to a Praetorian state quadrant. Meaning Iraqi state power moved from being a highly authoritarian system with deeply routinized bureaucratic culture and social control (they

did also keep log books of their torture subjects, and political prisoners, and even of their extra-judicial killings) to a highly personalized dictatorship that closely resembled the rule of someone similar to Mobutu Sese-Seko, Hastings Banda, or Boigny. That is, Iraq had an exclusivist ruling coalition surrounding the dictator that concentrated and personalized rule at the center. The concentric circles of power, military, economic, political and ideational power networks all allied to the dictator and reified personalized power. But the more personalized power became, the more the Iraqi bureaucracy got hollowed out making the formal state a veneer of authority. The de-bureaucratization of logistics of social control meant the ruling coalition, the state, increasingly relied on varied societal power actors to regulate society. They ranged from formerly out of luck Sunni tribes (and some Shia tribes in the south) reconstituted into neo-tribes, fragmenting the centralized security apparatus, allowing formerly banned ideologists to generate and expand ideational networks of power, which is generally referred to as the "islamization campaigns" and generating myriad economic patronage networks. The economic patronage networks varied from state sanctioned UN sanctions busting processes, state sanctioned smuggling operations ranging from oil, to essentials of food, medicine, mechanical and industrial items, cement, fertilizer, and the list is unending, since everything was banned under stringent UN sanctions regime.

When normal economic engagements were deemed illegal, and the economic sphere shrunk precipitously, illegal economic activity becomes the only option, and the state became the arbiter on managing the illicit economic affairs, making it easy to quickly generate patronage networks of loyalists, create new loyalists, and create many accomplices who are complicit out of necessity. This further reified the exclusivist ruling coalition's stranglehold. Finally, the creation of the Iraqi Public Distribution System, under UN authorization, inadvertently worked

to fundamentally empower the very ruling coalition that the sanctions sought to weaken, and it also made the people become fundamentally beholden to the one thing they hated the most, the Baathist state. The Public Distribution System further altered the bureaucratic composition of the state and its form of state power. Specifically, during the sanctions period, the Public Distribution System (PDS) made subsidy transfers to households and injected food into local markets. The PDS increased the purchasing power of Iraqis by 50%, WFP estimated that 25% of poorest Iraqis were directly dependent on it, with further 35% partially dependent on it.[190] And since it was not needs based, it also helped those in the cities maintain their middle class existence, in effect, making the entire country, those with a ration card, essentially beholden to the state, since PDS was run by the Ministry of Trade. PDS also generated opportunities for further refining and entrenching control of the ruling coalition, by generating new and entrenching existing loyalist networks.

The PDS from its starting point, UN transfer of revenue from oil-for-food, (after the UN bureaucrats get their own commission)[191], purchasing, (food, medicine, fertilizer, grain, you name it), its import into Iraq, its distribution inside Iraq, and at every step of the way, the PDS was formally both and an international and national public-private partnership to maximize efficiency from beginning to end. In reality, the moment funds became available to the Iraqi government, until the subsidized bag of rice is delivered to the recipient, per the families ration card, elite regime loyalists would manage the process from purchase, internal logistics of distribution to final transfers. At every level, these elite regime loyalists were the heads of

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[190] World Bank Report on the Iraqi Public Distribution System, http://projects.worldbank.org/P122031/iraq-public-distribution-system?lang=en
[191] https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/iraq-oil-food-scandal

societal power networks. Military officers with family members in Jordan that could handle cash transfers, business elites with the ability travel, Neo-tribal leaders that can manage distributional networks etc, these elites, become the "Key Masters", in Will Reno's words.[192] They are the heads of networks, and also nodes of national and international power networks therefore Key Masters. Meaning they sit at the intersection of multiple intersecting and overlapping societal power networks and they have the capacity to unlock networks by mobilizing beholden loyalists.

Consequently, when the United States walked into Iraq in 2003, there were two Iraqi states. One Iraqi state was the one that appeared in paper, a highly bureaucratic state with authoritarian form of state power, where the centralized and formidable Baath party, much like the soviet Communist party, and its centralized armed forces structure still generated the form of state power on the ground that had existed in 1985. The reality of the state was that the formal structure was a veneer, when series of primarily military, and economic networks consisted of the state, while state sanctioned non-state ideological, military and economic networks, generated an imperial form of state power on the ground.

The immediate actions of the U.S. of dismantling the Iraqi armed forces and the Baath party is a reflection of their anachronistic frames of references they used to derive misguided policies. They thought it was a highly bureaucratic state held together by the formal structures. Effectively, with two orders, the Coalition Provisional Authority in 2003 wanted to turn Iraq into a 'clean-slate' on which to build a dream palace.[193] But societies are and will never be clean-slates in terms of power organization and dispersion in societies. Societies constitute of multiple

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[192] Interviews in Baghdad, 2018.
[193] Pfiffner, James P. "US blunders in Iraq: De-Baathification and disbanding the army." *Intelligence and National Security* 25.1 (2010): 76-85.

networks of power drawing on varied sources of social power and faced with change, slow or

sudden, they shift in shape, size, scope, effectiveness and they transform. The same networks and

the key masters played a crucial role in shaping the post 2003 environment. What followed when

U.S. destroyed the previous forms of formal and informal logistics of societal control between

2003 to 2011 is chronicled at length elsewhere.[194] The focus in this chapter is the period between

2010, the end of Operation New Dawn to 2014.[195]

The premise is that in the wake of the U.S. departure at the end of Operation New Dawn,

the U.S armed forces, Iraqi counterparts, regional allies, and enemies turned partners all played a

part in turning Iraq from a completely failed state with no semblance of de-facto sovereignty to a

Negotiated State, with feudal forms of state power, with combatants' state relations characterized

by inside combatants with an institutional arrangement of Fragmented Sovereignty.[196]

Iraq was a failed state, the highpoint being the middle of 2006, over 3000 civilian deaths

a month, multiple groups exercising violence in its elemental form, to a dysfunctional-functional

Negotiated state with deaths of over 300 a month by December 2010. Multiple combatants

negotiated their way and became part of the legally constituted state. The form of state power,

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[194] There are many books that chronicle the debacle that was the war in Iraq. But these books stand as some of the best chronicles. Ricks, Thomas E. *Fiasco: the American military adventure in Iraq*. Penguin, 2006; Chandrasekaran, Rajiv. *Imperial life in the emerald city: Inside Iraq's green zone*. Vintage, 2010; Sky, Emma. *The unraveling: High hopes and missed opportunities in Iraq*. Public Affairs, 2015; Rosen, Nir. *Aftermath: Following the bloodshed of America's wars in the Muslim world*. Nation Books, 2010;
[195] https://www.army.mil/article/44526/operation_new_dawn
[196] Ricks, Thomas E. *The gamble: General David Petraeus and the American military adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*. Penguin, 2009; Biddle, Stephen, Jeffrey A. Friedman, and Jacob N. Shapiro. "Testing the surge: Why did violence decline in Iraq in 2007?." *International Security* 37.1 (2012): 7-40.

and the attendant military, political and economic dynamics inherent to a negotiated state directly

contributed to the eventual collapse of Iraq in the wake of the Islamic State's advance in 2014.

The inevitability of complete state collapse was avoided only because of the timely external

interventions. Post Islamic State Iraq has again reverted to a Negotiated state. Albeit this time

with a contradiction, that on the one hand are over thirty non-combatants groups becoming part

of the legally constituted state. And on the other, except for some minor skirmishes between

groups, there has -so far-been no overt conflict between the combatant groups.

Iraq's Negotiated State, Inside-Combatants and Fragmented Sovereignty

This is counterintuitive. Combatants did not hustle their way into the legally constituted state

with all guns blazing. Political parties with military capacities did so, using formal and legitimate

political processes. Elections are a means of attaining control of the state, therefore political

power. To have control of the state or parts of it is a means of gaining and exercising ideological,

economic, political, and military power. But politics in Iraq, indeed, in any country without

peace, remain risky business. Ideally, free and fair elections as a routinized means of contesting

the means of political power (that is control of the state) is possible only when there is a basic

level of security, usually as the monopolized prerogative of the state. So unarmed organizations

can engage in politics, without being influence by organized military power. In its absence, non-

state military actors, combatants, retain an inordinate advantage in the political process.[197]

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[197] There are many examples that highlight the acute insecurity. A regular member of parliament
is allocated at a minimum a twenty-person security detail, and usually more. And the MP
chooses his or her own security detail. Compare this with the House Speaker in the US,
effectively one of the most powerful people in the US and by extension, the world. If the Iraqi
parliament is to meet and every MP is to have their minimum-security detail, one is speaking of

because political parties have to rely on non-state military actors for security. A well-organized

political party could also organize its own security detail. Conversely non-sate military actors

could create political parties or rely on political parties as a means to integrate into the state.

Iraq hosts an electoral system with open-list proportional representation using

governorates (provinces) as constituencies.[198] It shapes the inclusive coalition formation in Iraq

representing the kaleidoscopic nature of Iraqi society as was intended by the framers, mainly the

US with Iraqis making minor adjustments.[199] The 2005 election produced a ruling coalition that

was only relatively inclusive. Though over 75% of Iraqi's participated in 2005, many Sunni

parties either boycotted the election or Sunni's stayed away out of fear of the insurgent threats,

and as a result of public calls to boycott the election by many Sunni clerics. Something that most

Sunni's today considers a huge mistake.[200] The Shiia ruling coalition led by United Iraqi

Alliance, at American urging, invited and incorporated series of prominent Sunni politicians into

the ruling coalition. The 2010 parliamentary election in Iraq though one could say was truly

representative, at least nominally. Iraqis of all hues looked forward to the elections in 2010.[201]

Numerous Iraqi's, of all sectarian, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds spoke of using the elections

as a means to highlight their displeasure at the government that had ruled them since 2005.[202]

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over 6000 security personal for MP's alone! But this is not so is also because security details become its own patronage network and money making enterprise.

[198] Brown, Nathan J., and See Nathan Brown. *The final draft of the Iraqi constitution: analysis and commentary*. Vol. 16. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005.
One seat per 100,000 citizens, as defined by the constitution. Number of seats has gone from 225, 275, 325 to 328.

[199] Al-Ali, Zaid. *The struggle for Iraq's future: how corruption, incompetence and sectarianism have undermined democracy*. Yale University Press, 2014.

[200] Interview,

[201] Interview

[202] Interview

Many Sunni Iraqis that either did not or could not vote in the 2005 elections especially looked

forward to the opportunity to make their vote count.[203] Iraqis especially appreciated the open-list

in the election in a sign of how, in quick order, Iraqis had familiarized themselves with the

electoral system.[204] Elections resulted in a parliament that truly represented the Iraqi society.

Iraqi National Movement, a broad based explicitly secular Sunni-Shiia alliance came in first with

91 seats with its leader, former Prime Minister Ayad Allawi seen as the favorite and the person

who should be the PM of Iraq. Though the Sunni-Shiia secular Iraqi National Movement gained

a majority, the Shiia Islamist State of Law Coalition led by Prime Minister Maliki managed to

form the government. Primary reason is that the political institutional configuration in Iraq

makes it nearly impossible for a single party to form a government, and forming a government is

about the sort of horse-trading and alliance building. In addition, people also claim that

Obama administrations eagerness to wash its hands off of Iraq, and Obama's approval of Maliki

for a second term as prime minister as opposed to the victor of the election made it possible for

Maliki to maneuver himself with Iranian support to become the PM, despite the opposition of

even some of the largest Shiia parties. But Prime Minister Maliki did put together a broad-based

coalition. In fact, the nature of the political institutional configuration necessitates a broad-based

coalition to form a government. The issue is how effective each member in the coalition can be

in delivering. The final shape of the ruling coalition, in terms of the distribution of many

appointments, reflected an inclusive governing coalition, at least in its formal manifestation. This

inclusive governing coalition had control of the formal government apparatus. A look at the top

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[203] Interview
[204] Interview

30 most significant posts in Iraq in the November 2010 government show how they were

carefully distributed along party lines.

Figure 5-1: Iraq 2010 Elections

Electoral Block / Alliance	Composition	Seats
Iraqi National Movement (al-Iraqiya)	Shia-Sunni coalition	91
State of Law Coalition	Shia alliance led by PM Maliki	89
National Iraqi Alliance	Shia alliance led by former PM Jafaari and formerly United Iraqi Alliance	70
Kurdistan Alliance	KRG ruling parties, PUK -KDP	43
Movement for Change	Kurdish / Goran movement	8
United Alliance of Iraq	Anbar governorate, led by former SOI leader Abu Risha	4
Iraqi Accord Front	Sunni party, seen to be representing Baathist officers and former regime loyalsists from Anbar, Ninaveh	6
Kurdistan islamic Union	Muslim Brotherhood from Kurdistan	4
Islamic Group of Kurdistan	Former militant Islamist party from Kurdistan	2
Minorities	Assyrian, Turkoman, Yazidi etc	8

Figure 5-2: Ruling Coalition Composition in 2010

Portfolio	Minister	Coalition	Party
Prime Minister	Nouri al-Maliki	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Dawa Party
Deputy Prime Minister for Energy	Hussain al-Shahristani	State of Law Coalition	independent
Deputy Prime Minister	Saleh al-Mutlaq	Iraqiyya	Iraqi National Dialogue Front
Deputy Prime Minister	Rowsch Nuri Shaways	Kurdistan List	Kurdistan Democratic Party
Sovereign Ministries			

Defense Minister	(acting) Nouri al-Maliki	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Dawa Party
	Saadoun al-Dulaimi	State of Law Coalition	Unity Alliance of Iraq
Finance Minister	Rafi al-Issawi	Iraqiyya	National Future Gathering
Foreign Minister	Hoshyar Zebari	Kurdistan List	Kurdistan Democratic Party
Interior Minister	(acting) Nouri al-Maliki	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Dawa Party
Oil Minister	Abdul Karim Luaibi	State of Law Coalition	independent
Other Ministries			
Agriculture Minister	Izz al-Din al-Dawla	Iraqiyya	al-Hadba
Communications Minister	Mohammed Tawfiq Allawi	Iraqiyya	Iraqi National Accord
Construction & Housing Minister	Muhammad al-Darraji	National Iraqi Alliance	Sadrist Movement
Culture Minister	Saadoun al-Dulaimi	Unity Alliance of Iraq	independent
Displacement and Migration Minister	Dindar Najman	Kurdistan Islamic Union	
Education Minister	Mohammed Tamim	Iraqiyya	Iraqi National Dialogue Front
Electricity Minister	Hussain al-Shahristani(acting)	State of Law Coalition	Independent
	Raad Shallal al-Ani	Iraqiyya	al-Hal
	Abdulkarim Aftan	Iraqiyya	
Environment Minister	Sargon Lazon Sliwah	National Rafidain List	Assyrian Democratic Movement
Health Minister	Dr. Majeed Hamad Ameen	?	?

Higher Education & Scientific Research Minister	Ali al-Adeeb	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Dawa Party
Human Rights Minister	Muhammad Shiya al-Sudani	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Dawa Party
Industry & Minerals Minister	Ahmad Nassar Dali al-Karbouli	Iraqiyya	Renewal List
Justice Minister	Hasan al-Shammari	National Iraqi Alliance	Islamic Virtue Party
Labour & Social Affairs Minister	Nassar al-Rubayie	National Iraqi Alliance	Sadrist Movement
Municipalities and Public Works Minister	(acting) Dindar Najman	Kurdistan Islamic Union	
Science & Technology Minister	Abd al-Karim al-Samarrai	Iraqiyya	Renewal List
Trade Minister	(acting) Rowsch Nuri Shaways	Kurdistan List	Kurdistan Democratic Party
	Khairalla Hasan Babiker	Kurdistan List	
Transport Minister	Hadi Al-Amiri	National Iraqi Alliance	Badr Organization
Tourism & Antiquities Minister	Liwaa Semeism	National Iraqi Alliance	Sadrist Movement
Water Resources Minister	Mohaned al-Saadi	National Iraqi Alliance	Sadrist Movement
Women's Affairs Minister	(acting) Hoshyar Zebari	Kurdistan List	Kurdistan Democratic Party
Works & Planning Minister	(acting) Nassar al-Rubayie	National Iraqi Alliance	Sadrist Movement
Youth & Sport Minister	Jasim Mohammed Jaafar	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkoman
Ministers of State			
Minister of State and Government spokesman	Ali al-Dabbagh	State of Law Coalition	Independent Iraqi Kafaat Gathering

Minister of State for Parliament Affairs	Safa al-Safi	State of Law Coalition	independent
Minister of State	Abd al-Mahdi al-Mutayri	National Iraqi Alliance	Sadrist Movement
Minister of State	Bushra Husseing Saleh	National Iraqi Alliance	Islamic Virtue Party
Minister of State	Hassan Radia al-Sari	National Iraqi Alliance	Hezbollah Movement in Iraq
Minister of State	Yassin Mohammed Ahmed	Iraqi National Alliance	ISCI
Minister of State for National Reconciliation	Amer al-Khizaii	???	???
Minister of State for National Dialogue	(acting) Ali al-Adeeb	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Dawa Party
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs	Ali Abdullah al-Sajeri	Unity Alliance of Iraq	Iraqi Constitutional Party
Minister of State for Tribal Affairs	Hussein Ali al-Shaalan	Iraqiyya	Iraqi National List
Minister of State	Salah Mazahem al-Jibouri	Iraqiyya	Iraqi National Dialogue Front
Minister of State	Nurhan	???	???
Minister of State for National Security	(acting) Nouri al-Maliki	State of Law Coalition	Islamic Dawa Party
Minister of State for Provincial Affairs	Turhan Abdullah	Iraqiyya	Iraqi Turkmen Front
Minister of State for Non-Governmental Organizations	..		

Inside Combatants, and Fragmented Sovereignty: Iraq between 2010-2014

Prime Minister Maliki's government as portrayed above was unarguably broad based

representing a diverse array of political parties, and not combatants. It was deliberately inclusive,

in the spirit of the muhasasa ta'i ya that characterizes the sectarian quota system the Americans built into the system. But in the absence of differentiated and specialized state institutions with traction on the ground, popular support translated into votes actually does not translate into actual political power. Votes translate into actual political power if and only if there is a proper state that can act with some autonomy and the political processes of getting control of the state is sufficiently routinized.

Imagine the contrast, Republican Party in the U.S. received a royal flush, (2016 election) and control of all branches of the government, house, senate, the executive and the supreme court, though they did not win the popular vote. The process is routinized therefore votes translated into actual power arbitrated by the system. Then the minority ruling party transferred 1.5 trillion dollars to its core wealthy supporters and it is perfectly legitimate. That is actual political power in a democracy, right or wrong is irrelevant, routinized processes manifest power and political elites could then use the power to generate distributional outcomes. No violence was involved, only expert knowledge and political party discipline, and propaganda. Though the process of getting control of the state through elections is sufficiently routinized in Iraq, in the absence of proper state institutions, nominal appointments does not translate into actual power, only limited power to generate very specific personalized gains for members of a patronage network. Even then, actual power that can generate distributional outcomes is predicated on capacity for organized violence, and economic power. Economic power in Iraq is how oil revenue is distributed but the two are inextricably linked. In the 2010 Iraqi cabinet real power actually remained with Shia and Kurdish political parties with their own armed forces. But these armed organizations are deliberately created and are embedded into the wider society that they come from.

By embedded, the operational meaning of embedded into the society is when the subjective issues that affect society are also played out within the organizational configurations of these armed organizations.[205] Consequently, not only are these varied combatants defined and organized along their broad sectarian and ethnic societal cleavages, but that their internal compositions of sub-groups, i.e. the many Shia militias, also play out along the subjective issues that represent further societal cleavages inherent to Shia society, Kurdish, and Sunni societal networks. In sum, they are societal power actors, harnessing military sources of social power, very much embedded into the societal context that they come from. And they are also the deliberate products of a particular time, place, societal context and historical experiences. Therefore we have to understand them in terms of societal power actors and see how they become an integral part of and contribute to the peculiar political and military machinations inherent to a negotiated state as Inside-Combatants.

Inside-Combatants of Iraq, 2010-2014

Kurds, Shia, and Sunni groups represented in the parliament have either directly or indirectly affiliated combatants.[206] Kurdish block, though fragmented themselves, represent themselves in

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[205] This is derived from Mann's discussion on Fascists, and also his references to Max Weber. He spoke of the autonomy of the bureaucracy, and the instrumental rationality as the driving force of bureaucratization. And while this holds true in ideal type situations, one of the outcomes of increased bureaucratization and the development of state infrastructural power is that civil-society organizations, interest groups, also begin to influence the bureaucracies. So when the subjective, value rational issues that animates society begin to play out in the bureaucratic space, the bureaucracies gets embedded in society, and their autonomy is relative. Hence the ideal type bureaucracies attempt to formalize and regulate instrumental rationality - the deliberate a-political nature of military organizations and General George C Marshall famously never voting in presidential elections, is a case in point. Chapter 14, Mann 1992 has an extended discussion on the rise of modern bureaucracies that touch upon this subject as well.
[206] The variations in their affiliations also tell different stories.

the parliament as the Kurdish block but only the PUK and KDP maintained military power. That

is, Kurdish duopoly of violence in the KRG was reflected in Baghdad. But Kurds always

checked their violence at the de-facto territorial border and maneuvered themselves into being

perpetual inside combatants by writing themselves into law in 2005.[207] Their capacity for

violence, Kurds claim, prevents annihilation by the Arabs, and also by each other inside Iraqi-

Kurdistan. Kurds in Baghdad, while playing an arbitrating role, more or less have consistently

allied themselves with the ruling Shia block and maintained a low political profile. It is the Sunni

and Shia inside combatants that figured prominently in Baghdad during this period. The Shia and

Sunni combatants prominent in Iraq emerged from identical historical circumstances with

ideational underpinnings that are mirror images of each other, with the exception being in the

form of internal organizations and external patrons.

Sunni Combatants

Older Iraqis are quick to point out that one's sectarian identity did not matter much in the

seventies. It was socially relevant but politically less so. It was how one was affiliated to the

ruling party, the ruling coalition and the state that mattered during the pinnacle of the Baathist

state. In 2010, sectarian identity was relevant in terms of security, economics and politics. Ethno-

sectarian identities had also been written into law therefore doubly impacted how one related to

the state and each other. Sectarian identity was also far more socially relevant since the Iraqi

society had transformed over time from the highpoint of Baathist socialism to the present.

Baathists had a vision. And modernity was defined in terms of pan-Arab socialism, and Sunni's,

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[207] For an exceptional account on the Coalition Provisional Authority, Transitional
Administration Law and the formation of the constitution, see Allawi, Ali A. *The occupation of
Iraq: Winning the war, losing the peace*. Yale University Press, 2008.

whether believers or not, played along with the pan-Arab-secular socialist script, as expected by the Baathists. Outwards manifestations were men in suits and western outfits, women, almost all the professional women in western outfits, and plenty of alcohol and bars around. But during the sanctions decade, as the state became personalized, localized identity markers began to matter differently. Because Sunni Neo-tribes became brokers for the state, and tribes and clans became vehicles for economic and security patronage. The state also allowed Sunni ideologists to make headway. Consequently, Sunni identity markers, in its many jurisprudence varieties began to figure prominently, with Salafists being the most inclined to wear their markers. Overall, Sunni's had their own prominent discursive tradition that had developed in the sanctions decade. Sunni combatants were as much prisoners of this as everyone else. Consequently "Sunni combatants" in 2010 consisted of the series of highly-localized combatants that identified as Sunni and fell under the broad term Sunni Awakening Councils, also referred to as the Sons' of Iraq. Except for the consistency in the narrative of victimhood and grievance along sectarian lines, Sunni combatant infrastructures are best seen as highly personalized military power networks that were embedded into and emerged from within the Sunni societal context.[208] Their broader narrative had changed by 2010.

Opposing the Americans were not the same as supporting Jihadists as it was in 2004 through 2006. The Americans were leaving and the Jihadists, as foreign as the Americans were, not about to leave. The many Awakening Councils had just beaten the Jihadists into submission with American assistance. Consequently (most of) the Sunni regions were essentially under the

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[208] For an exceptional account of this, see the Surge section in Nir Rosen's *Aftermath* and also, West, Bing. *The strongest tribe: War, politics, and the endgame in Iraq*. Random House Incorporated, 2009. And also personal experience, and interviews.

control of Sunni armed actors. There were many Sunni "neo-tribes" that initially opposed the US invasion and allied themselves with AQI. They are "neo-tribes", because they are hardly "tribes" in the old anthropological sense built and governed along kinship lines and traditional rituals refining authority. Because during Iraq's rapid (and forced) modernization processes of the sixties to eighties both Sunni and Shiia tribes were seen as great impediments to progress and as formidable challengers to sate centralization project. If modernity means losing one's tribe, then most Iraqi Sunnis lost their tribes in a functional sense where they relied on the state rather than the tribe. But they had their tribal labels. The tribes matter in a patronage sense but one could forget the tribe and rise through the ranks to the level of elites if one belonged to a different tribe, called the Baath Party - for example, or the Iraqi civil service, or the armed forces, etc were multi-sectarian. During the sanctions decade Saddam resuscitated the tribes in terms of formidable economic patronage networks built along old tribal affiliations as means of controlling the restive Sunni regions as the state became personalized. At that moment, the Sunni's, Iraqi Shia would claim, had a militia and it was called the Iraqi army, since the personalized regime did not bother maintaining nationalist and inclusive pretensions.

Some of these neo-tribes first allied with foreign and local jihadists and then allied with the US. In a world of competing victimhood narratives with some basis in reality, the Sunni narratives at this point were something along the lines of we were as victimized as the Shiia under Saddam, and further victimized by the Americans and AQI. And the Sunni community leaders pointed out that collectively they ran the risk of being completely being shut-out of power as a result of the machinations of Shiia parties and Iranians. The rise of the Sunni parties and the simple fact that an explicit Sunni-Shiia alliance, Iraqi National Movement, led by a former prominent dissident Baathist of Shia sectarian identity came in first meant the leaders

narratives had traction and resonance. And that people also hoped the Sunni-Shia alliance led by

Ayad Allawi perhaps provided the best chance of maintaining a place in the new Iraq.[209]

The Sunni combatants though, unlike their Shia counterparts, had complicated and

tenuous relations with their political representatives. The Sunni militias varied from region to

region and from neighborhood to neighborhood. They were loosely arranged armed networks,

held together less by organization or conviction but by a combination of immediacy of the

present and American capacity to play the hegemonic arbiter, and of course, American currency.

Crucially, the most astute older Sunni elites, in Nineveh and Anbar, some of whom that had lost

power after the Americans came and some that had lost power under Saddam, organized

themselves into political parties making informal alliances with regional and neighborhood

Sunni militias. They portrayed themselves as representing the interests of the Sunni's. Unity

Alliance and Iraqi Accord Front were explicit, and they carried Anbar province and parts of

Ninaveh. Iraqi Accord Front also had formidable supporters in the mostly Sunni Adhamiya in

Baghdad.[210] The local Sunni militias in effect became local security agents and also political

activists. The higher echelons of the membership of the political parties came from older elites,

the Key Masters, that can navigate the local and the global and on whom multiple power

networks would overlap. The military leaders of them also came from established elites, ranging

from former bureaucrats to military leaders or tribal leaders, such as abu-Risha. They liaised with

the Americans while the mid-level and low level of the militias were populated by young men

from the neighborhood. In that sense these Sunni militias were very much embedded into the

localized societal context that they came from but some of the elites were removed from the

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[209] Interviews
[210] Interviews

localized contexts.   Elections was the means for them to integrate themselves into the center

so as to make sure they have a seat at the table of political power. Albeit they also knew that

capacity for violence also play a role in the forum, the state, where politics was contested as well

as guaranteeing their survival. As the inclusive ruling coalition was put in place, the Sunni

militias on the one hand had informal - representation in the green zone. They were inside, but

not quite. Because their leaders in the green zone could rely on the armed allies to provide

security to them and maintain a military power network that runs through their constituencies.[211]

The state, controlled by the Shia, were expected to work with them. Because the state, led by

Nuri Maliki was expected to rely on the Sunni leaders in the green zone and by extension those

armed Sunnis that are directly and indirectly linked to them to maintain some semblance of local

control by means of brokerage administration of violence and not actively oppose the state.

There are a couple of subtle but salient points hidden in this seemingly clear-cut

arrangement. Political power does not come from being elected and having a formal position in

the ruling coalition and holding a position in the state alone. It is contingent on the armed

constituents, that provide both personal security and security to one's own constituents. The

"neo-tribes" that reasserted power in Anbar and Ninaveh had more of close relationship with

their armed clients than the many neighborhood-based Sunni militias. The old Sunni elites that

won seats, based on their reputations and social capital were least effective in maintaining links

to armed Sunni groups. For them, it was a complicated arrangement that, in my words, captured

class conflicts, the new Sunni militia foot soldiers felt they were doing the dirty work for old

Sunni buzzards that barely knew them while the Sunni elites in the green zone with their suits

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[211] Interviews

looked condescendingly at their Sunni militants as well as found it difficult to find common

ground, in terms of political objectives to finding a common vocabulary to speak to each

other.[212] They tried to reconstitute old networks but the urban elites found that they could not. In

the former case, the neo-tribes, that were much better embedded into the societal context, their

elites became tribal leader, businessman, militia commander and politician, all rolled into one.

But the patrons' patron, the ultimate patron, the Americans were leaving.

In the case of the localized smallest of the Sunni militias, the direct patron remained the

Americans, usually a battalion commander. All the Sunni militias were organized along the

broadly defined military source of social power and resembled armed patronage networks than

hierarchies with proper chains of command. In that specific context they each had varied social

bases of political support. What was unequivocally certain from this period was that both the foot

soldiers as well as Sunni elites did put faith in the ruling coalition as a means of having a place at

the table of power where the Sunni interests would be represented. And they also hoped that the

Americans would underwrite their place in the shaky ruling coalition.[213] Americans had weaved

a patchwork tapestry of neo-tribes and patronage networks that maintained a form of local

hegemonic order that kept control while being loyal to them. They were hoping to transfer that

loyalty to the center, green zone, hoping to turn the new center, the Government of Iraq, into the

patron. The many Sunni's "hoped" to become "inside-combatants" and became that, but barely.

Because unlike Americans that remained hegemonic, in a negotiated state with an inclusive

[212] Inference based on conversations with former combatants.
[213] Interview with former Awakening members from Amiriya, now in hiding, in exile, and recently released from prison.

coalition, there is no center but series of shifting alliances in lieu of a center. This was to prove very fateful in 2014, when the Islamic state moved in.

Shiia Miltias & Popular Mobilization Forces

By the middle of 2018, the streets of Baghdad were littered with posters extolling the virtues and bravery of Shiia militias, now legally designated as Popular Mobilization Units or Popular Mobilization Forces. Their leader, Amiri, came in second in the Iraqi national elections in May 2018, as of this writing. The streets are also littered with posters of martyrs belonging to various Shiia militias. They are a prominent presence and a taken for granted reality in Iraq. It is important to remember that in 2003 there were no Shiia militias. In 2010, there were four very prominent Shia militias, and by the end of 2017 it has ballooned to about forty.

Time and the place: Shia, then and now

Shia militias are embedded into the society they come from, meaning the subjective and value rational issues that animates their specific societies runs through the militias. Some, though not all, also retain a great level of autonomy from the very societal context from which they come from. The latter is a function of organizational cohesiveness and their sources of resource mobilization and dependence. Just as with the Sunni militias, Shia combatants, organized explicitly along Shia sectarian identity, and using myriad (invented and traditional) Shia ritual practices and Shia sectarian paraphernalia also reflect a changed societal context in the Shia world. Not every Shia person buys into the changed context. The implications of change are most apparent when even those that oppose have no choice but to follow the societal script of the altered circumstances.

Altered Shia societal context is something similar to what people refer in terms of the changes in Cairo, that one could find more bars and next to know head scarfs in the sixties while today its exact opposite has happened. In Iraq, the core constituencies where some of the Shiia militias find a solid home have names like Freedom, Awakening, Flame, Revolution City, (which turned into Saddam City and post 2003 into Sadr City) for example. These are neighborhoods built in the sixties named by and inhabited by Communists. Iraq was on a state led modernization process that resulted in mass urbanization. These neighborhoods were filled with people migrating from rural areas. They were the hot beds of Communist activism, and the Communist Party was most successful in Iraq in all of the middle east.[214] They remained one of the most formidable political forces. The ideological struggle at the time was between Communists with a firm footing in the working-class neighborhoods, trade unions of which there were many in Iraq, irrespective of sectarian identity, versus Pan-Arab Socialism and Baathism espoused by some of the military, political and a big chunk of the Iraqi intelligentsia. If one were to try to recruit young men for a Shiia militia, or any sectarian militias for that matter, in the same neighborhoods in the sixties they would have been laughed off the reservation. But the children and grandchildren of the same folks from the same neighborhoods are the foot soldiers and leaders of Shiia militias today. Instead of posters advertising the virtues of communism and trade union activism and realizing pan-Arab socialism are today filled with sectarian posters,

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[214] Interviews with numerous Communist party officials. In addition see; Franzén, Johan. *Red star over Iraq: Iraqi communism before Saddam*. Columbia University Press, 2011; Ismael, Tareq Y. *The rise and fall of the Communist Party of Iraq*. Cambridge University Press, 2008; And of course, there is always the magisterial work by Batatu, Hanna. *The old social classes and the revolutionary movements of Iraq*. Vol. 13. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.

usually with a fluttering image of martyr Hussein at the top, followed by numerous martyred

ayatollahs and martyred militia soldiers at the bottom.[215]

Shiia discursive practices permeates the neighborhoods and manifest in myriad ways,

dress, language, mannerisms, to frames of references with which they discuss the past, present

and the future. These Shiia neighborhoods still as then are not affluent and prominent having

deliberately been neglected by the Baathist regime for a quarter century. If anything, these

neighborhoods face the same trials and travails they faced then, except today they face them with

an acute intensity and a renewed sense of urgency.[216] What had changed is the way these

neighborhoods articulated their problems then and the best means of finding solutions to their

travails. It is a fundamentally altered political narrative.

The concepts and categories with which they used to relate to their immediacy of the

present and possibly transform their future has changed. This changed narrative has had a

transformative affect both at the macro level (in terms of how elites articulate, if not understand

the present as well as how people relate the day to day to the broader problems and vice versa)

and at micro level (in terms of how people relate to each other and the broader context that

shapes their relations with each other) discourse. The party members and clandestine armed

activists in the sixties happened to include both Sunni and Shiia in equal measure[217]. The fight

then was not articulated along Sunni-Shiia lines but along Communists versus first Monarchists

and then Baathists, along the peasants and traditional landlords, bourgeois capitalists versus the

working class, modern versus traditional and progressives (in the cities) vs backward forces

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[215] Field research in former Communist turned Shia militia strongholds.
[216] Field research
[217] Discussions with a former ICP member, and also former ICP member turned Kurdish
Communist Party member.

(tribal chieftains). It is a fundamentally altered social context today.[218] It is the altered social context that makes it possible for someone to walk in today to Freedom City, with a poster and exhort that "The revolutionary reference represented by the munificence of our leader, el mufti el iman ali el husseini el khomeini is the absolute incubator of the mujahideen and the resistors of the world", therefore join "The military luminary for the islamic resistance movement, el qiam el husseini Brigade". He gets a thunderous ovation and will not be laughed out of the neighborhood. Husseini brigade recruiter will be followed by Imam-Ali brigade, will be followed by Knights of Hope, by Peace Companies, by (imam Ali's uncle) Abbas Division, Soldiers of Hussein, Marty's for Ali, the League of the Righteous etc. Points of references, concepts and categories have changed. One cannot understand Shiia militias of today without understanding the changed societal context of the people that happened to be Shiia and how that identity has become socially, politically and militarily relevant.

This change was the result of active proselytization by dedicated group of clerics, ideologists, that harnessed ideological sources of social power.[219] And in Mann's terms, it was a classic example of ideational power networks rising interstitially through existing power

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[218] One could see peoples' family albums in these neighborhoods. The bearded grandfather in a jellabiya with prayer beads is wearing a quintessential sixties suit, ultra-slim-fit black suit with a thin tie, pointed shoes and often a nicely trimmed very lush pencil mustache that might make Clark Gable envious. The grandmother sitting with an abaya has shoulder length wavy hair, sporting a miniskirt posing next to the entrance to the university, and on another, she and her beaux (the grandfather) at a friend's engagement party looking dapper.

[219] Faleh A Jabar's extensive discussion and writing on the rise of Shia in Iraq remain invalaubel; Abdul-Jabar, Faleh. "The Shi'ite movement in Iraq." (2003); Abdul-Jabar, Faleh. "The Genesis and Development of Marja" ism versus the State,"." *Ayatollahs, Sufis and Ideologues. State, Religion and Social Movements in Iraq* (2002): 61-89; Jabar, Faleh A. "Rethinking Iraq: Tribal Identities." *Middle East Journal* (2004); Nasr, Vali. "The Shia Revival." *Military Review* 87.3 (2007): 9. And Juan Cole provide a longview on the rise of Shia in Iraq. Cole, Juan. *Sacred space and holy war: the politics, culture and history of Shi'ite Islam*. IB Tauris, 2002.

networks to overwhelm and overtake them. Shia ideologists reacted against secular modernizing

forces, which they referred to as atheist forces. Dawa party, (todays ruling party) was created

with the explicit aim of countering the atheist forces Communists, Baathists, and Pan-Arab

Socialists. In spite of the repression Shia ideologists continued their work, some inside Iraq and

some in exile. But during the sanctions decade, the Shia ideologists of the vocal-hawza, the Shia

clerics that believe the clerics shall play a role in politics, gained the upper hand, and were

allowed to openly engage their communities. But only as long as they did not directly threaten

the ruling coalition. The rise of the Sadrist version of the vocal-Hawza, and its transformation

into a social movement that managed to get a monopoly on the Shia urban enclaves in Baghdad

and Basra, with some other cities in between transpired during the sanctions decade.[220] Altered

Shia social context did not mean there were militias in 2003. In Shia urban enclaves, such as

Sadr City, Shu'ala in Baghdad, Sadrist affiliated mosques, social service providers, had also

generated a subversive group of local vigilantes, affiliated with the Sadrist organization. Because

the state by 2003 had lost its control of the urban Shia enclaves. But subversive law-and-order

providers did not mean directly challenging the state. Shia militias emerged when the state

collapsed after the US intervention in 2003.

Rise of the Shia militias 2003 - 2010

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[220] Interviews. Also see, Aziz, Talib M. "The Role of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr in Shiʿi Political Activism in Iraq from 1958 to 1980." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 25.2 (1993): 207-222; Shanahan, Rodger. "Shi a political development in Iraq: the case of the Islamic Da wa Party." *Third World Quarterly* 25.5 (2004): 943-954; Cockburnm Patrick. Muqtada: Muqtada al-Sadr, the Shia Revival and the struggle for Iraq. Simon and Schuster, 2008.

Iraqi Shia society had fundamentally transformed internally by the time the Americans walked in. The ideological underpinnings, the Shia narrative, with which militias today attempt to recruit already existed then. But there were no militias, because there was no room for them to emerge interstitially from within existing networks of military or political power. The Iraqi state was personalized and weak, but it still retained its veneer of authoritarian form of state power. Rise of Shia militias had both internal and external sources. It was made possible as the Iraqi state changed overnight (from being somewhere between a Centurion and a Praetorian state into a Negotiated State) generating the necessary space. And there is also a critical mass of networks that cuts across almost all the prominent Shia militias, going back to the days of the resistance. In Reno's words, a core group of Key Masters from the Shia world play a prominent role in the formation of these militias. Between 2003 to 2010, there were two prominent militias and multiple splinter groups that evolved from them.

The Sadrist created the Jayish-al-Mahdi, the Mahdi Army, and the exiled Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq had its long established Badr Corp that was already battle hardened, fighting side by side the Iranian's against the Baathist regime during the Iran-Iraq war. While the ISCI rode the American coattails and captured multiple ministries in the first elections. While the Sadrists quickly turned themselves into a political party as well as a militia and became part of the ruling coalition in 2005 while also fighting the government that it was part of. But Sadrists were also splintered into multiple groups. These accounts are chronicled in the many books covering the U.S engagement in Iraq. By 2010, these groups had morphed and splintered from their original form. The personal and professional affiliations of the core leaders in these militias continue to figure prominently in the evolution of Shia militias in Iraq, post 2010.

Militias from 2010 to 2017[221]

Dawa party formed the broad-based coalition government in Iraq in 2010. Technically, ever since its founding and at the suggestion of its founder, Ayatollah Barqir al-Sadr, Dawa prides itself in not having an armed wing. Which is a partial truth. Because Dawa party certainly did not have as formidable a militia as JAM or ISCI and its Badr corp. But Dawa at one point did have its armed wing in exile, and engaged in terrorist acts, and series of its leaders also appeared in the US terror lists. Though Dawa did not technically have its own militia, it had many individuals, trained and closely linked to the Iranian Quds force, with their own network of military personal that could be mobilized.

Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI), rebranded Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, was founded by Ayatollah Hakim (who was assassinated in 2003 in Najaf), son of a former grand Ayatollah, in exile in Iran. Founded in Iran and supported by Iran it is rebranded as ISCI. This organization has clerical lineage, sits at the top of a million-dollar foundation that oversees schools, charities and social services, and one of the largest political blocks in the Iraqi parliament. And it used to have its armed wing, Badr Organization which eventually split from it, under Iranian influence to go its own way, when ISCI realigned itself towards the quietist Hawza in Iraq, as opposed to supporting the Iranian position of rule by jurists. It also was vocal in its displeasure of Maliki. ISCI, though fought against Iraq during the Iran Iraq war and are seen as fundamentally Iraqi, and Iraqi Nationalists and are now closely allied with quietist Hawza. They represent the Traditionalist - Conservative Shia clerical

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[221] Profiles of Shia militias are generated based on multiple interviews with American and Iraqi military officers, numerous Iraqis, Stanford University database on non-state combatant groups, and also informed by my personal engagements with them as a soldier. All errors, unintended inaccuracies and or inconsistencies are my own.

constituency and their followers in the Iraqi Parliament. It is headed by Amar-al-Hakim, the grandson of a former head of the Quietist Hawza, Muhsin-al-Hakim, and in all likelihood, his cousin will be the future Marja (the grandest of grand Ayatollah and object of emulation in the Shia world) of the quietist Hawza. When its own armed wing, Badr organization split, it created its own militia, Knights of Hope. One of its members and commander of its armed wing, Baqir Jabr al-Zubeidi aka Bayan Jabr Solagh was the head of the interior ministry, then minister of housing and reconstruction and then the finance minister and under PM Abadi, minister of transportation. The titles are irrelevant what matters is having a place at the table where politics is contested. ISCI, while Shia Islamist more or less stick to the Baqir Sadr notion of Wilayat e-Umma, governance by the people as the ideal form of government but does not push it vociferously as others do. Partly because they don't have to since others already do and partly because the Iraqi constitution contain an inherent contradiction. Islam is the source of legislation, but it also upholds liberal and pluralist traditions. The two, naturally are in constant conflict.

Badr Organization for Reconstruction and Development

Before moving on its own and explicitly paying homage to the Iranian Supreme leader, Badr Corp remained the armed wing of SICI and was headed by Haider al-Amiri. Known as the oldest Iranian Proxy, its leader Haider al-Amiri now openly professes his loyalty to the Iranian supreme leader, his soldiers carry the images of the Iranian Supreme leader in their armed convoys and take him as their spiritual leader. Amiri was the minister of transportation and later one of his close allies became the minister of interior in the ever shifting games of musical chairs in the Iraqi cabinet. Just as with ISCI, Badr being one of the most influential political parties have number of its military commanders scattered in political positions in the defense ministry,

interior ministry, finance ministry and now in the Committee that oversees the Popular Mobilization Forces. Having split from ISCI and pledging open loyalty to Iran's supreme leader, Badr core seeks to create a federal Shia province in the south of Iraq and support the notion of Wilatat-al-Faqih, Governance by the Jurists. Naturally, if one were to become an Iranian proxy it is imperative that they openly espouse Iranian version of Islamic governance and recognize Iran's supreme leader (and not the head of the Quietist Hawza) as the leader of all Shia Muslims (and technically all Muslims everywhere) of the world. Both Shia and Sunni critics of Badr Organization accuse them of trying to turn southern Iraq into the 32nd provinces of Iran. It is well known today that IRGC, Quds force operators worked side by side Badr commanders down to battalion level, and its head is seen side by side the head of the IRGC Quds force. Badr takes pride in being an open Iranian proxy and though unthinkable five years ago, some Iraqis openly claim that head of Badr might one day even become the Prime Minister of Iraq.

Jayish al-Mahdi (JAM) rebranded to Peace Brigades

JAM was the military wing of the Sadrist movement, representing the Traditionalist - Radicals. Sadrists, keeping in line with their ancestors, remain avowedly nationalist, and also has a strangle hold on what would be the grandchildren of former communists in Iraq's main urban centers. JAM fought the US forces and was 'disbanded' at the end of the US withdrawal saying that it has fulfilled its duty of resisting the occupiers (never mind that it also had ministers in government and those ministers coordinated with the Americans) and rebranded itself as Peace Brigades. Sadrist also remain one of the most influential Shia parties, upholds the Governance by the People version of Islamic governance propounded by late Ayatollah Sadr, current Sadr's

uncle. Given its credentials as mavericks, and repeatedly carrying out acts to reify its position as mavericks and not part of the establishment.

Sadrists actually represent a group Shia counter-elites. First JAM fought the Iraqi government while it was part of it and also fought Badr members. Sadrist critics point to the movement as opportunists and a group that has made a habit of scoring political points by moving from one self-generated political crisis to another. It is also a close family affair with Ayatollah Mohammed Mohammed Sadiq al Sadr's son, Muqtada al- Sadr now is its spiritual head, while his cousin, assassinated brothers' (heir apparent to his father) son, Ahmed-al-Sadr is the head of the Sadrist movement political committee in the parliament and manages the 23 MP's of the Sadrist current. Peace Brigades, its own militia, remain under a separate chain of command from the MP's. They work side by side the Iraqi forces, also side by side the US forces in the fight against the Islamic State and also occasionally claim that it would attack US forces if they overstay their welcome. The significance of the Mahdi Army was that it was loosely organized, and it allowed for easy fragmentation which resulted in Iranian's creating series proxies out of JAM commanders who left JAM in search of better patrons and charting their own political paths.[222] JAM publicly has an uneasy relationship with Iran but has received technical aid from both Iran's IRGC and the Lebanese Hezbollah. Lebanese Hezbollah and Sadrists movement have many overlapping pedagogical and familiar lineages in addition to institutional affiliations.

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[222] Katzman, Kenneth. "Iran's activities and Influence in Iraq." LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE, 2009; Knights, Michael. "The evolution of Iran's special groups in Iraq." *West Point Counter Terrorism Center Sentinel* 3.11-12 (2010); Petraeus, David H. *Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq*. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (PUBLIC AFFAIRS) WASHINGTON DC, 2007.

Asa'b Ahl al-Haq (AAH)

AAH was created by Iranian IRGC talent scouts breaking away a particularly capable JAM

commander out of the Sadrist movement, hence also known as Kazali network. AAH since its

inception remain an explicit Iranian proxy, promoting its agenda and interests inside Iraq. It

fought alongside the Lebanese Hezbollah in the 2006 war with Israel. AAH was also what the

US military called one of the "special groups" created by Iranians that attacked coalition forces.

Upon the US withdrawal it became a nationalist political party with its own militia, a

requisite to be in politics. AAH also worked as a proxy for PM Nouri Maliki in conducting

targeted assassinations of his political opponents.[223] It allied with PM Maliki's political coalition

and actively worked to weaken JAM, waging a targeted assassination campaign against Sadrist

leaders. Apparently with the understanding of both Iran and PM Maliki, in retribution for

Sadrists allying itself with 2011 political demonstrators against PM Maliki's increasingly

divisive rule and authoritarian tendencies. In the run up to the 2014 elections AAH essentially

became Maliki's hatchet men and were responsible for the killing of over a hundred Sunni

notables and opponents. Being an Iranian proxy, it openly claims Ayatollah Khameni as the

Supreme spiritual leader and of course, claim to uphold Governance by the Jurists. AAH remains

under direct tutelage of Iran's Quds force. In a reversal of roles, AAH now fights alongside US

forces and openly claimed its willing to accept US assistance in its fight against the Islamic

State, as long as US does not intend on extending its stay. AAH militiamen today roam around

with US vehicles and equipment supplied to the Iraqi security forces. The core leaders of AAH

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[223] Interviews

all come from Sadrist movement and their loyalties and friendships were built during their student days studying in Sadrist schools.

Hezbollah Brigades of Iraq (HBI)

HB is also an Iranian backed proxy in Iraq that also was termed a special group by the US and attacked coalition forces. It was founded by Abu-al-Muhandis, a former Dawa operative suspected of masterminding Kuwaiti embassy bombings and considered a terrorist by western governments. He also collaborated closely with Lebanese Hezbollah and became a commander of Badr organization and fought in the Iran-Iraq war against Iraq on behalf of Iran. He also became an elected MP in post 2005 Iraq until the Americans realized they have a wanted terrorist in their midst and got him out. At which time he went back to his old patrons and created Hezbollah Brigades using his old networks. It is its own organization while it also claimed to be the Militia of the Dawa party since the Iraqi Army in effect became the ineffective militia of the ruling Dawa party. HB is its own combatant organization with great degree of autonomy. HB retain a close working relationship with Lebanese Hezbollah. At Iranian behest HB remained one of the first groups to send Iraqi militia men to fight side by side Lebanese Hezbollah on behalf of the Assad regime. HB is also implicated in series of Sadrist political assassinations as a means to weaken in (when Sadr called Assad to step-down! And sided with the demonstrators keeping to its working class revolutionary spirit)

HB was also responsible for the disappearance of literacy thousands of Sunni's, both during the sectarian fight in 2006, between 2010-2014, and during its fight against the Islamic State. Where HB operates, Iraqi Army and police stays away. Its leader is now appointed by Abadi as the head of the PMU' in all of Iraq, making him one of the most influential and

powerful figures. Since he is also an unabashed loyalist of Khameni and IRGC, by extension

with Muhandis at the head of PMU's, Iran has great capacity to shape the evolution of PMU's

into the future. In 2015 HB openly opposed Prime Minister Abadi's attempt to create national

guards and turn into law, thereby bring the Sunnis into the table of power, and the differences

spilled out into the streets with HB and Iraqi security forces openly clashing in the streets. The

law was revised, Iranian's intervened, deals were made, and now head of HB is at the helm of

PMU's. Some claim that the actual opposition was simply playing politics with violence to get

its way which it eventually did with Iranian help and the acquiescence of the government. It

ought to be noted that while in different camps, head of HB, Muhandis, PM Maliki, PM Abadi,

former PM Jafaari, and all the exiles from ISCI and Dawa remain close affiliates with collective

histories going back to the days of resistance against the Baathists. Naturally, as an explicit and

open Iranian proxy, where all its soldiers swear loyalty to the Iran's supreme leader, and carry

his photos, HB proclaims the Iranian version of Islamic governance, governance by the jurists as

the ideal form of Islamist government, and recognizes Irans supreme leader as the leader of all

Shia people everywhere. That puts them at odds with those close to the quietist Hawza in Iraq.

Harakat-al-Nujaba (HAN)

Though HAN today remains its own militia and an explicit Iranian proxy, its origins really lies

in, and is best seen as, a milia recruiting clearing house. It was founded, with Iranian and

Lebanese Hezbollah support by some former commanders of AAH, HB all of who had parted

ways from the Sadrists. It began as a clearing house to channel Iraqi's to fight on behalf of the

Syrian regime, and remained one of the first Iraqi militias to fight in Syria. It is also said that at

the time, Badr head Amiri, another Iranian proxy, arranged logistics for the transfer of HAN

fighters into Syria. HAN leaders also, explicitly propound their loyalty to the Iranian supreme leader, believe in Wilyat-el-Faqih as the righteous form of Islamic governance. Upon the onset of violence against the Islamic State, HAN has also become a formidable member of the PMU's fighting side by side Iraqi security forces.

Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada (KAS)

KAS is essentially an evolved and better organized version of a formerly Iranian funded "special group" that fought the US forces. It was founded by another former Badr commander with Iranian support. Its prominent leaders were variously known as Hamid al-Sheiban, Abu-musafa Sheiban, Hamid Thajil al-attabi who fought with and was a member of the ISCI and also Badr organization and also another former exile and militant by the nom-de-gurre Abu-derra. They founded KAS with Iranian support and as an Iranian proxy where they were both renowned for assassinating Sunni members and for their attacks against coalition forces, with of course, Iranian support. They remained one of the most wanted men in the coalition target list for his actions against US forces. But in 2010 when Maliki formed the coalition government they were allowed to return and in return, they also hold partial loyalty to former PM Maliki. Now however, KAS remains its own autonomous militia (wherever it shows up it is accused of killing Sunni's). It came into prominence when the Syrian war began as they fought alongside and on behalf of the Syrian regime. KAS also claims Iran's supreme leader as the leader of all Muslims, and adheres to governance by jurists as the ideal form of government. It is also now part of PMU's in Iraq, therefore part of the government but acts with great degree of political and military autonomy.

Kata'ib al-Imam Ali (KIA)

Kata'ib al-Imam Ali (KIA) was founded by a former Mahdi army commander under the aegis of

Abu-Mohandis of Hezbollah brigades with Iranian support. KIA receives aid from the Iranian

government and works with the IRGC. As part of the PMU's, it also cooperates closely with the

Iraqi government and the Iraqi Army as well as the other Shiite organizations. KIA is also

fighting in the Syrian Civil War side by side Syrian regime forces.[224]

Ashura Brigades and Abbas Division (Not to be misconstrued with Syrian version)

Ashura brigades (closely allied with ISCI) and Abbas division (closely allied with the

tribal groupings close to the Quietist Hawza) essentially remains the only two PMU's that

explicitly remain loyal to the government. Partly because these two militias remain close to the

Traditionalist-Conservative's, explicitly Iraqi and what the people call "fatwa militias". Meaning

the militias formed after Grand Ayatollah Sistani called on all able bodied men to rise to the

occasion to defend the nation against the Islamic State. Both groups are formed by tribal

affiliates close the Hawza and is filled with members from the south and east. It openly claims to

support the government, takes orders from the government and explicitly claims that they will

disband the moment the government's request them. Since these two groups have essentially

become two combat divisions under the Iraqi Security forces, it is likely that when the "fatwa"

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[224] Groups formed out of JAM commanders quoted from al-monitor. "Jaish al-Mahdi is considered the breeding ground of most factions and Shiite militias in Iraq. The most prominent of these defections is the League of the Righteous, led by Qais al-Khazali, followed by Sheikh Akram al-Kaabi, who defected and formed Hezbollah al-Nujaba; Sheikh Jalal al-Shahmani, who formed Kataeb al-Tayar al-Risali; Sheikh Aws al-Khafaji, who formed the Brigade of Abu al-Fadl al-Abbas; and Sheikh Abdul Zahra al-Sueiadi, who established the Revolutionist Hussein formation.

runs out at the end of the Islamic State fight, these two groups will either be seamlessly integrated into the formal armed forces structure or be disbanded.

Political and military dynamics with Fragmented Sovereignty

Iraqi government in 2010, as the table indicate, was extremely inclusive. But an inclusive government, filled with multiple actors with capacity for violence, and in the absence of a state with autonomy, means it has inside-combatants and resembles a negotiated state with feudal state power. The nature of authority configuration that shapes state-society relations is fragmented sovereignty. Every groups have control of some aspect of de-jure or de-facto sovereignty. The group that controls it, in turn use it to generate distributive power and selective goods for its own power network. Of the three groups of inside combatants, representing Sunni, Shiia and Kurdish constituents, Kurds vis a vis Baghdad stuck to their script best. And the form of fragmented sovereignty they faced also made it possible for them to do so. Because fragmented sovereignty for Kurds meant explicit territorial fragmentation. Baghdad relied on the Kurds to mind their own keep which worked just fine for the Kurds. While they were always partners in the ruling coalition they could consistently advance Kurdish issues effectively or defend them if they were trampled. In the rest of Iraq fragmented sovereignty was both territorial and institutional, sometimes the two overlap and sometimes they do not. Fragmented sovereignty in Iraq is pork barrel politics pursued brazenly with capacity for violence and all executed within legal bounds. Every state institution becomes the fief of the political party and its militia.

Take two prominent examples. Badr organization got control of the Interior ministry. They had effectively been controlling it since 2005 (and continue to do so). It is filled with Badr and SCIRI loyalists. Its commanders are Badr commanders in interior ministry guise carrying

interior ministry ID cards. It become its own patronage network with their place inside the state being the spigot that maintains the gravy train to its own constituents and members. In effect, Badr organization with its own hierarchical corp level armed force is in controls of the interior ministry. It was/is certainly not the interior ministry controlling the Badr organization. Because the organizational critical mass was found in the Badr core not the ministry since it was gutted at the American behest. To put otherwise so as to highlight the counterintuitive nature, usually in wartime states create para-militaries to do its extra judicial work. In Iraq a non-state armed organization has its para-military arm inside the state in the form of the interior ministry to do its work.[225]

Then there was the Sadrist movement. The specific ministry, the institutional fief that different groups pick says a lot about their own agendas as much as a lot about political expediency. True to its narrative and beholden to its constituents, Sadrist got control of the Health Ministry. An institution with lot of resources and in Sadrist strong holds, they provide health services under the banner of their own organization, not the state, while its militia filled the ranks of the health ministry security to hospital security etc. Health is a skill intensive sector and one cannot appoint non-health professionals. But one could always appoint series of administrators, bureaucrats and peons while half of them remain ghosts. While people in Anbar did not see health, ministry expand its services into Sunni neighborhoods. That had to do with fragmented sovereignty along territorial lines.

Sunni neighborhoods were under the control of Sunni militias. A militant Shiia party control the health ministry. And this is not too long after the sectarian killing where hospitals

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[225] Badr organization was repeatedly accused of assassinating former Baathists.

controlled by different sectarian militias refused to treat members from the other sects. This

creates a very particular situation. The sovereignty prerogatives of the state are fragmented along

institutional lines. The fragmentation is reified with groups that can exercise violence

autonomous of the state. Regime survival requires maintaining the allegiance of at least some,

hopefully the strongest, of the armed actors inside the state, and keeping them close. Meaning,

paradoxically, the fragmented sovereignty and inside combatants becomes the means with which

a weak regime maintains its survival. Consequently, with regime elites constantly haggling on

issues of regime survival, little happens by way of governance and the state doing what it's

supposed to, providing public provisions.   An anecdote from a former deputy prime-minister is

instructive. To paraphrase, it is impossible to formulate a coherent policy. And if somehow one

manages the herculean task of formulating a policy that others could agree on, after expending

much political capital, because everyone want something, therefore its best to spend the capital

elsewhere, usually on one's own loyalists, it is guaranteed impossible to implement the policy.

Because each step of the implementation process becomes both a skimming operation and

attempts to collect political capital. The net effect, (and he may be exaggerating), if a million

dollars is allocated towards some form of social provision the actual impact on the ground would

be a thousand dollars and even that, highly unlikely. In sum fragmented sovereignty along

institutional lines means political stasis, nothing happens.[226]

A similar anecdote from a former intelligence operative turned security official in one of

the top five oil majors in the world is also instructive, how one must navigate institutions when

there is fragmented sovereignty. To paraphrase, corruption can be endemic but that does not

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[226] Interview

mean it is impossible to do business. Because there are people who could deliver on the bribes small and large. In Iraq, from the moment of the visa application which amounts to the beginning of a long shakedown operation, to immigration, customs, security, every permit, (bureaucratic culture in Iraq is strong and lasting, and reified since every stamp holder become his own stamp wielding extortionist), every stamp (of which one needs a lot) and all along the way at every step is a shakedown. They do, because they can, and with constant shifting of personalities it is impossible to know who to bribe and who can deliver.[227] This is not surprising given that an infantry battalion commander in the thick of fighting was asked to pay a bribe to a politically appointed (non-general) general before he would authorize the transfer of tanks for indirect fire support.[228]

There is political stasis, lack of public service provision and wide spread public disenchantment. One has to have means of control when the means of coercion are limited and infrastructural power, in terms of logistics of political control, nearly non-existent. Fragmented institutional sovereignty also generates a bloated public sector. Because public employee remains a control mechanism. Iraq's annual oil revenue amounts to billions of dollars. Yet there is a level of corruption at the highest levels of Iraqi government that is so brazen as to be breathtakingly staggering.[229] But billions of dollars of the budget go towards paying civil servants. Civil service

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[227] Consequently, two ways they overcome the difficulty. Use one of the local prominent security firms that is affiliated with the government and a militia. Badr organization being the strongest, companies close to them are best. They will take care of it, and though they have to pay others if and when they step out of their lines of demarcation, they have an understanding. The other is to create self-contained areas of oil-operations where they rarely have to deal with the state.

[228] https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iraqs-army-is-still-a-mess-two-years-after-a-stunning-defeat/2016/06/09/0867f334-1868-11e6-971a-dadf9ab18869_story.html?utm_term=.d39ec3e2add2

[229] Looney, Robert E. "Reconstruction and peacebuilding under extreme adversity: The problem of pervasive corruption in Iraq." *International Peacekeeping* 15.3 (2008): 424-440; Dodge,

employment is highly coveted. They are sold at very high prices where the new employee then

pays off the debt over time to the political patron from the civil service salary. But for every

public employee there are direct and indirect families that benefit from his (it is mostly men)

salary and if he were astute, then from his effective shakedown operations leveraging his

bureaucratic authority and political patronage.[230]

Fragmented sovereignty also manifests in territorial terms. Kurdistan is a classic

example. But in Iraq in 2010, coming out of multiple civil wars, and urban fighting along

sectarian lines, there were many urban (in Baghdad, Mosul, Baquba, etc) neighborhoods that

were fragmented and remained under the control of sectarian militias. In the Sunni triangle there

remained a patchwork of territorial fragmentation along the many Awakening councils. In fact,

most of the Sunni triangle remained out of the reach of the Iraqi central government. They had

their informal patrons in the green zone. But as we all know, they were ineffective when

instability inherent to fragmented sovereignty eventually rose interstitially within the cracks.

Fragmented sovereignty is characterized by its instability that makes it easily susceptible to even

subtle social shifts to shatter the calm. With Fragmented sovereignty, it is illogical, to strengthen

the armed forces. The logical extension of the armed forces will be its capacity to act

autonomously and eventual monopoly of violence, which no inside combatant that is part of the

government has an interest in doing. Instead, the armed forces become its own institution that

can be fragmented and turned into a vehicle of patronage. In Iraq, the nominal heads of the

armed forces (a Kurdish and a Sunni general) had no capacity to actually command, since the

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Toby. "State and society in Iraq ten years after regime change: the rise of a new authoritarianism." *International Affairs* 89.2 (2013): 241-257.
[230] Interviews

lines of command and control did not exit. Instead, divisions of the armed forces in turn were turned into private fiefs, with military purchases, logistics and personal contracts etc becoming opportunities to make windfall profits. Purchase and the use of fake bomb detectors, multiple years after discredited was one outrageous example. Half the soldiers remained ghosts, some had to pay to get a job as a soldier, and then not show up but receive the salary as long as part of it is contributed to the patron. Fragmenting the military strengthens the autonomy and the capacity of militias while increasing the loyalty of heads of power networks whose continued loyalty is necessary for regime survival.

At the day to day pedestrian level, of teacher, the student, the doctor and the bureaucrat, institutional and territorial fragmented sovereignty does not translate into every banality in life is turned into a death defying sport. It is not mad max fury road. It is so only sometimes, and it depends on being in the right place at the wrong time. Even in most horrific and intense war zones one could find a beer joint where people sip their beers in peace just as there are numerous tea and coffee shops where people smoke hookah as fighting rages a few miles down, sometimes few blocks down. Pause, inhale at the noise of the explosion, look around, shrug and continue on at the next second. At the micro level this is a form of existence that is characteristic feudal state power. Meaning there are little oasis of calm instances where people enjoy their simple pleasures. There is the high-end oasis with their shopping malls (which was bombed and burnt killing over three hundred people), green zone or Mansour where the rich, powerful and the foreign live. Sadr city while hardly upscale remain calm and peaceful under the gaze of the Sadrist militias. But crossing those fragmented territories could get one in trouble which makes people very cautious in their route planning. Teenagers are not encouraged to loaf about in unfamiliar neighborhoods especially if one is even remotely affluent for the fear of being

kidnapped. Fragmented sovereignty is unpleasant, unstable easily susceptible to societal forces but if it is home, then it becomes navigable, and do so as one must.

Into the Bog: Fragmented Sovereignty to State Failure

A negotiated state with fragmented sovereignty does not have a political center but only a series of fissiparous alliances with very limited degree of adhesiveness, since there is a constant problem of making credible commitments. Consequently, the political, economic and military dynamics trend towards a race to the bottom, where a sub-optimal equilibrium condition eventually holds, that usually locks these states in a state of perpetual misery. In the long view of history, such a government, with limited military capacity will be ripe for invasions and absorption by bigger powers. But that world has ceased to exist. This is where structural change in the global environment, both ideationally and also as a matter of policy, where external interventions are no longer acceptable means of altering international boundaries or expanding state territory. State elites could take the external security environment for granted, that they will not be invaded, and only concentrate on means of domestic security, meaning the suppression of internal dissent. This was Iraq between 2010-2014. But the Iraqi inclusive governing coalition that formed in 2010 eventually resulted in a failed government and a failed state by July 2014. It happened precisely because there was an external intervention in the form of bunch of guys with fifty caliber machine guns mounted on pick-up trucks calling themselves ISIS.

　　Nothing is inevitable, and everything is contingent on decisions subject to political, military and institutional constraints. From a negotiated state, a state could move in any number

of directions. It could become a bureaucratic state, (as the Americans hoped) an authoritarian state (as some Shiia elites hoped with them in power), or a Praetorian state, as the Sunnis thought where they could govern their neighborhoods with some of them being "Combatants Outside-In", while some would be "Combatants, Inside-Out" Of course they thought of their respective outcomes in different terms. What transpired was state failure.

The dominant narrative is a virulent sectarian fight made worst by the regional machinations of external spoilers.[231] Sectarian narratives, politicized religion and external influence by both Shiia Iran on the one hand and Sunni Gulf countries and Saudis that supported extreme Sunni groups certainly played a role in turning Iraq into a proxy battle ground. There is a degree of truth to this claim. Another narrative is the increasing paranoia of the hardcore Shiia coalition that slowly worked to push the Sunni's out of the coalition and marginalize them in terms of their dues from the state. It meant the Sunnis again made a fateful alliance with Jihadists against the Shia. Alternatively, the claim is that had Prime Minister Maliki and the state of law coalition maintained the inclusive coalition and allowed for the patronage gravy train to run to the Sunni regions, Iraq would not have collapsed. There is an element of truth to that claim as well. But these dominant narratives missed the institutional dynamics of fragmented sovereignty. It is less an alternative explanation but filling in a missing piece.

Without minimizing the sectarian dynamics inherent to Iraqi politics but while not being intellectually lazy to put everything in the macro level sectarian categories, Iraq's slow march into the morass has a serious institutional explanation. In fact, Iraq's slow march into a failed

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[231] The role of Iran on the one hand, and the GCC countries that supported varied Sunni groups are often cited by Iraqis. But I would also add, though external spoilers certainly played a role, they could only because domestic dynamics of a negotiated state made it possible.

state status actually is symptomatic of how coalition politics plays out in negotiated states. The only exception was the external intervention of ISIS. Politics in an intensely fragmented state with an inclusive coalition represented the whole gamut of Iraq with multiple armed actors and brokerage violence.   In the wake of complete US withdrawal incidents of violence that had decreased picked up in tempo in 2011. Former AQI elements, with substantial external support from individual Gulf and Saudi patrons began reorganizing in terms of a reconstituted al-qaeda in terms of an Islamic State of Iraq. Simultaneously the Iranians were directly engaging with the Shiia militias and helping build some of them into formidable military actors with substantial autonomy from the state and society. One could see the slow simmering conflict soon flaring into a low intensity conflict by 2013. It did not threaten to unravel the ruling coalition. Rather it had become the new normal. There was also the increasing popular anger aimed at the ruling coalition, by a cross section of Iraqi society without regard to their sectarian identity. Their claims were government failure to provide either security or services. As explained earlier, with fragmented sovereignty, the paradox of weak states is that the ruling coalition relies on inside combatants as a means of regime survival. It generates fragmented sovereignty that generates political and economic stasis. Providing services is not high on the agenda when the coalition members engage daily on machinations to maintain power. This is an inherent problem made worst by the disconnect that exist between the ruling coalition and state institutions. People expect the institutions to exercise their sovereign prerogatives. On the one hand the state has little infrastructural or despotic capacity. On the other hand, what little capacity there is, is deliberately fragmented as a means of regime survival. In this midst "Arab Spring" also came to Iraq. It came in the form of people, civil society groups, (there are quite a few, if one considers community organizations that were built around the mosques) that were exhausted with

navigating fragmented sovereignty eventually coming into the street and engaging in protests. It is crucial to notice that the protests in Baghdad represented a cross section without regard to their sectarian identity.[232] And they also did not call for regime change but only asked the regime to simply deliver on their expected responsibilities.

Popular unrest and anger affect the calculations of political elites in the ruling coalition since they represent their respective social bases of power. Fragmented sovereignty is a highly fissiparous and unstable condition replete with every inimical condition inherent to internal conflict; conditions of lawlessness that favors rapacious instincts, extremes of grievances, multiple security dilemma conditions along preexisting societal cleavages made worst by violence, cynical and ideologically driven actors exploiting the conditions to their advantage etc. Ruling coalition, as the political, societal and security logic dictate, attempted to address the concerns while also controlling popular unrest, in an environment increasingly replete with brazen terrorist attacks by reconstituted Jihadi groups.

Addressing popular concerns is nearly impossible as it is, an endemic problem in a negotiated state. Political parties and actors that were part of the ruling coalition simultaneously supported their respective constituents in their demonstrations claiming to distance themselves from the very ruling coalition that they were part of while also doubling down on their position inside the state since it remains the only means of attaining any form political outcome, and acquiring resources. Simultaneously controlling unrest means instilling order by resorting tactics of collusion, possible cooperation and coercion. This was untenable. All the political jostling of the ruling coalition, its attempt at brokerage administration of violence, with a fragmented

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[232] This moment coalesced with the demonstrations in the Kurdish region against the Kurdish ruling parties as well.

security sector meant, in quick order the various parties in the ruling coalition began resorting to their own armed networks for security and order.

However, the violent machinations of armed actors quickly make the combatant-state relations along inside-combatants also highly untenable. Suddenly, actions on the ground begin to work at cross-purposes within the reigning political logic inside the ruling coalition. Soon the notional alliances inside the ruling coalition frayed as logic on the ground dictated the actions of armed actors allied with political actors and vice versa. The delicate tapestry that barely held the place together in the form of fragmented sovereignty quickly become actually fragmented. This was made worst by ideological driven actors, violent Islamists from both sects, utilizing the unrest to drive a wedge which would allow them to gain the upper hand at the political frontier.

Suddenly the fragmentation becomes along territorial and institutional lines become real. Sunni actors representing Sunni regions, and locales, and some of the Shiia regions that remained the social bases of support for prominent Shiia parties both began shifting away from the ruling coalition. Capacity for violence became currency, and dynamics of violence in Iraq suddenly began to correlate along both territorial lines as well as along the many networks of power, defined along their respective patronage networks. Suddenly, the many state institutions that were doled out as political payback appeared to be what they actually were, discrete organizational units without actual capacity except for vehicles to dole out patronage and recycle the shares of oil revenue. Meaning the state is unable to act cohesively. Territorial fragmentation become noticeable as any semblance of security slowly began to disappear. The armed forces had also become a series of personalized militias with leaders making alliances with separate political factions. The increasing instability led the Sunni political and military actors to coalesce

along territorial lines where Sunnis were concentrated while the same happened in urban Shiia neighborhoods. Suddenly there is a race to the bottom, albeit this time, without the hegemonic presence of the US forces, the strongest tribe previously, that was able to assist the coalescing of an inclusive coalition with a mixture of coercion, collusion, and cooperation. In lieu of that, and with American disengagement, Iraq slowly became a proxy battle ground, with the most virulent Sunni groups with Gulf and Saudi patrons becoming the prominent anti-government activists, while the most virulently Shiia actors with Iranian support became to represent the regime. It was a failed state. It was a short step for the extremists inside the regime to start hounding the Sunni politicians inside the state, leading most of the moderates into exile while marginalizing the Sunni's with capacity for violence that were concentrated in the Sunni triangle. The crescendo came when the former AQI that had reconstituted themselves as the Islamic State moved into Iraq. The Islamic State had built a nearly conventional armed force and gained territorial control in Syria using regime collapse there while also relying on the logistics networks the Syrian regime built to transfer Jihadists into Iraq with Iranian support to fight the Americans during the US intervention. Suddenly, couple of hundred "technicals" managed take over one third of Iraq and stopped thirty miles north of Baghdad in the outskirts of Taji. The Islamic State coup-de-grace was a moment that was made possible by the institutional and territorially fragmented negotiated state in Iraq.

Negotiated State to an Oligopoly of Violence

Internal political and military contradictions in the government of Baghdad encourage centripetal tendencies. This is exacerbated by the political institutional configurations, the proportional representation, and fractured political party system. A similar situation led to state failure in

2014. Iraq is now moving towards national elections, with over forty non-state armed actors. However, the tendency it seems is towards an Oligopoly of violence. Unlike in 2014, U.S. and Iran, while at opposite ends, are shaping events in Iraq and are actively working to avoid a repeat of state failure. Fortunately, there are also enough major domestic actors with enough overlapping interests and interactions – the critical mass of Shia militias leaders come from similar background with closely linked pedagogical, familial, and patronaget networks - that can reconcile and close-ranks if and when necessary creating room for an oligopoly in the use of violence. In other words, despite the proliferation of armed actors, there are underlying structural dynamics in Iraq, this time also favored by external actors, that favor an oligopoly. Again, the core of the Shia militia leaders has crisscrossing networks will make it easier. They appear comfortable enough to integrate smaller militias into the larger ones, and Iran is assisting this process. While the U.S. is assisting the growth of the armed forces. Eventually, it just might be that there will be five or six political parties with their own armed forces, creating a polity much like Lebanon. This will be highly sub-optimal, but if all of them can be integrated into the ruling coalition, an oligopoly in violence would certainly be far more desirable than a disintegrated state in the Somali tradition.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This study began with the observation that walking into a warzone, indeed, sometimes, living in a warzone, is analogous to Alice's trip down the rabbit-hole. Combatants, actors with capacity to wield military power – military power being the social organizations of concentrated lethal violence - exercise violence in pursuit of their political goals. Exercise of violence alters the existing authority configurations that shaped social interactions, giving rise to new, and often, fast changing, authority configurations. People must figure out the new authority configuration that shape their social interactions and navigate it. Combatant actions alter the authority configuration and they also have to navigate the altered authority configuration in how they exercise violence. The combatants see the same space civilians do but also in terms of a battle-space. And the nature of battle-spaces varies across time and space.

The animating puzzle was can someone make sense of the varied wartime authority configurations from the point of view of civilians, and battle-spaces from the perspective of combatants across time and space and along the levels of analysis?

The argument is predicated on defining civil wars in terms of the conflicts' relationship to an incumbent state authority, and benchmarking variations in battle-space in terms of varied forms of state power. Because, since the state – even when the state has purportedly failed – it plays a role in shaping social interactions, and by extension the society within its externally defined boundary. Consequently, the form of state power shapes the wider society and the form of battle-space dynamics that define battle-spaces. That is, with the onset of violence, all the

endogenous process inherent to conflict begin apace. But if the fundamental nature of the state authority changes, how does this change affect the logic of violence and actor's relations with each other? One way to understand a war-zone, even at a specific place at a specific time, is to see it the way Alice did as a multilayered rabbit-hole, go down and up, and back again because each level is as real as the other, are related but at times also at variance from the others. What one sees from a birds eye view is not incorrect but it may be at variance from what others see when they look up from the ground. And they both may look different seeing from the intermediate (meta, also referred to here as the institutional level) level where macro-level and micro-level dynamics are mediated.

From the point of view of the theory articulated here, to understand a battle-space, we have to look at the nature of the state along its functional dimension, and the form of state power it generates. Then, by understanding the combatants or rebels on their own terms, in terms of the combatant infrastructures – the way in which combatants harness social power – we can infer the form of rebel-state relations that broadly define the battle-space at macro-level. That macro-level relationship, contingent on the nature of the state and combatants, shape the war-time institutional configuration of challenged, contested, compromised or fragmented sovereignty. And those institutional configurations both shape micro-level dynamics, and are shaped by the micro-level dynamics, the endogenous processes inherent to conflict. Though the subsequent case studies depicted how some of these dynamics play out on the ground, further fine grained research could go a great way towards better theorizing on how the constant endogenous interaction between the institutional level and the micro level leads to both institutional change over time and shape micro-level processes over time.