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The drivers of sectarian violence: A qualitative analysis of Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey

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The Drivers of Sectarian Violence: A Qualitative Analysis of
Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey

An Honors Program Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Arts and Letters
James Madison University

by Catherine Ruth Antosh

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Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Political Science, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors Program.

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Dedication

I wish to dedicate my senior honors thesis to my wonderfully patient and supportive parents, Steve and Cindy Antosh. Whatever future success I achieve, I owe it all to your loving guidance and wisdom. I am blessed to call you my family.

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Abstract

The issue of sectarian violence is widespread in today's world of intra-state conflict. Though it appears that religion and ethnicity fuel these civil wars, insurgencies, and terrorist acts, there are in fact many more factors that contribute to sectarian violence. In this article, three case studies of Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey are examined to determine what causes sectarianism to break into violent conflict in some cases rather than others. Through analysis of four independent variables—disparities, grievances, foreign intervention, and regime strength—it can be determined that the true drivers of sectarian violence are much more complex than simple religious and ethnic divides. Since the relationships between the independent variables are highly interrelated, it is ultimately impossible to isolate a single variable as being the sole spark that incites a sectarian disagreement to turn violent. The final conclusion is that foreign intervention and regime strength play a more significant role in stirring up violence than disparities and grievances, however a more empirical study will need to be carried out to arrive at a more definitive answer.

Introduction

When observing conflict in the world today, large-scale multi-national wars such as the ones that dominated the 20th century are no longer the norm. Instead, warfare is becoming increasingly an internal affair. A significant amount of these domestic conflicts, including civil wars, guerilla warfare, and acts of terrorism, seem to stem from deep seated sectarian divides. Sectarianism is difficult to define concretely, however it can be said to include politicized identities involving religion, ethnicity, and other ideologies. A sect is comprised of an exclusive group of people who find identify primarily with their sectarian ties, separating themselves from the “other” of different groups. The specific question that will be examined in this paper is why sectarianism escalates into violence conflict in some cases and not in others.

Sectarian violence is a highly underestimated force in global affairs today. In multiple conflicts, great powers did not recognize the delicate balance of sectarian relationships within other nations, or created colonial systems that enshrined aggravated sectarian differences. Given the nature of conflict in the world today—civil wars, insurgencies, and ethnic strife—it is vital to the study of international affairs to better understand the triggers of these types of violent engagements. A prevalent misconception seems to be that religion drives much of the discord seen around the world, especially in the Middle East. While religious beliefs and ethnic identities are integral aspects of all cultures around the world, there are numerous other factors that create an atmosphere conducive to the eruption of violence. Without being aware of the nature of sectarian relations and being ignorant of what

factors cause sectarian differences to escalate into physical violence between populations, future foreign policy will be shaped using similar mistakes that led to disastrous situations. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to better comprehend sectarian violence and explore which factors drive the outbreak of violent conflict. Given the complex nature of sectarian violence, this paper will focus solely on the Middle Eastern region's conflicts through three case studies on Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey. Studying three countries from the same region will allow for greater control over the variables and will hopefully reveal insights into that tumultuous area of the world.

The first chapter will explore the literature on sectarian conflict and the triggers that have been identified thus far. The second chapter will explain the methodology used in the case studies and provide hypotheses that will be examined throughout the paper. The third chapter will be a case study of the state of Lebanon, a country that has been identified as a prime example of a sectarian state. Its colonial history, political system based on confessionalism, and involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will provide valuable insights into the question of sectarian violence. The fourth chapter will focus on the case of Iraq, a state plagued by various foreign incursions that seemed to have exacerbating its sectarian balance. British and U.S. involvement in Iraq will be carefully explored, along with the brutal regimes of Saddam Hussein and Nouri al-Maliki. Both leaders strove to ensure the dominance of the Sunni and Shi'a sects respectively through repression and systematic disenfranchisement. The fifth chapter will explore the case of

Turkey, a state with a similar historical and regional context as Lebanon and Iraq but with low levels of sectarian violence. Turkey's commitment to Atatürk's six guiding principles, including secularism in government, along with a strong military seem to have contributed to the stability between its sectarian groups. The sixth and final chapter will be a further discussion of findings and a few final thoughts. It is my hope that this qualitative analysis will provide an increased understanding of the complexities of the sectarian violence issue and shed some light on possible areas for future research.

Literature Review

The consensus of the literature on sectarianism acknowledges that sectarian differences vary widely according to states and regions. However, the essential nature of sectarianism remains the same. Ussama Makdisi writes that sectarianism is the “deployment of religious heritage as a primary marker of modern political identity (Makdisi 2000, 6). In his work on sectarianism, Roy Wallis also writes that scholars agree that sectarianism deals with groups that organize themselves around a shared ideology that excludes them from other members of society (Wallis 1975, 9). The exclusivity of these groups marked by their religious identity is ultimately what comprises sectarianism. Although it is defined by its exclusion of others, it is not inherently violent. A necessary attribute of sectarianism is the involvement of religion in politics. This does not necessarily mean that the members of a sect are extremely religious, but rather that they utilize their religious identity as a way to rally their group. Groups within a sect are unwilling to compromise with others, as conceding on political positions could be akin to compromising their religious stances (Margalit 2008, 39). Another characteristic of sects are a tendency to withdraw or be at odds with the rest of society (Wilson 1990, v). However, being a sect does not require being an oppressed minority. Sects such as the Sunni or Shi’a in the Middle East can make up the majority of a nation’s population. However, the idea that a sectarian group is at odds with the rest of society, including minorities and oppressed populations, is what characterizes a sect. A sect is primarily interested in maintaining its size and position in power, if applicable. They do not

necessarily strive to increase their numbers by bringing others into their fold, but rather to strengthen their own (Wallis 1975, 181).

Religion, while a defining characteristic of sectarianism, is not the only identity that causes people to divide into segregated groups. Race and ethnicity are also a key element to a sectarian group's identity. Most scholars agree that ethnic identity is defined as "membership in an ethnic community" that provides one with an identity that is separate from other groups (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 4). Max Weber postulated that ethnic identity was a social construct, but a powerful one that provided a community to various "human groups" (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 5). Since the end of the 20th century, there has been an increasing amount of violent disputes between different ethnic groups, despite the rise of the nation-state, which was meant to unify populations within state borders (Mishali-Ram 2015, 314). Studies on intra-state conflict have shown that communities that are divided along ethnic lines are susceptible to internal violence. There is debate amongst scholars whether religious or ethnic identities are influential on intra-state violence, or whether there are other factors that contribute to the violence (Mishali-Ram 2015, 315). Again, the mere presence of different sectarian groups, whether religious or ethnic, does not always lead to violence. The number of violent engagements seemed to be declining from 1995 to 2003, with about ten groups estimated to be actively in battle. While ethnicity and religion separated these groups, that alone could not be said to be the cause of the conflicts. Instead, vying for political power and territory seemed to be the main driver of the violence (Kaufman 2013, 94).

Theories of Ethnic Conflict

There are three primary theories in the literature surrounding ethnic violence: the primordial, the instrumental, and the modernization model. All seek to explain the reason that ethnic and other sectarian differences erupt into violence in some cases and not in others. The primordial approach focuses on ethnic identity as the leading reason for conflict between different groups. Proponents of this theory believe that communities desire to be governed by members of their sect and that they view being ruled by others as degrading (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 16). Primordialists agree in essence with Samuel Huntington's theory from the *Clash of Civilizations*, in which he postulates that cultural and religious differences will be the main drivers of conflict in the post-Cold War era. They propose that grievances between groups will turn into violent conflict due to long held hatreds for each other. The weaknesses to this approach are that even if such hatreds exist, there are other factors such as the opportunity to assemble forces, funds to finance warfare, and the lack of an autocratic government (DeRouen 2015, 94). This theory also fails to explain why violence occurs at certain moments rather than others, especially when sectarian divides are long-held and unchanging.

The second theory, the instrumental model, is drawn from the belief that sectarian wars are caused by external forces that expose inequalities between people groups, thus spurring them into war. These external forces could be foreign entities or individuals, including elites from within the state who seek to consolidate their own personal power and wealth (DeRouen 2015, 95). Michael

Hechter argued for this, saying the exploitation was at the crux of ethnic conflict. The core group would benefit at the expense of the outer group, leading to protests and separatist movements that could end up in civil war (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 18). If this were the case, ethnicity could almost be removed from the equation entirely as conflict would not be based on ethnic origins but rather outside interests and competition over resources (Kaufman 2013, 91). However, when closely analyzing sectarian conflicts, it is clear that ethnicity still plays a role in creating strong ties among communities and serving as a powerful rallying tool. Therefore, while elites definitely manipulate sectarian identities for their own gain, it is not the only driver of sectarian violence.

The third theory that the literature examines is the modernization model, which states that sectarian violence occurs when a country begins to modernize, thus putting new pressures on sectarian relations. The new fields of industry, business, and jobs create competition among groups for the best positions, along with increasing the contest over resources (DeRouen 2015, 96). Modernization is also said to decrease diversity within a country by reducing local identities through the creation of competition between the working class and the elites (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 18). The problem with this theory involves placing an inordinate amount of blame on manipulating elites rather than examining the problems of systematic inequality and the still existent sectarian identities. These identities still serve as a unifier for groups that decide to rise up against the governing elites (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 19).

Drivers of Violent Conflict

Scholars James Fearon and David Laitin write that some group leaders try to create strong ethnic identities among their followers in order to galvanize support and create hostility against rival groups (Jesse and Williams 2011, 35). Some scholars argue that ethnic pluralism is a result of foreign conquest, colonization, population movements, and the trend towards self-determination that followed the World Wars. These factors created conditions where strong calls for ethnic loyalty were effective as a rallying political tactic (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 9). Other governments, afraid of their nation's widely divided ethnicities, tried to reduce marginal groups in order to make war less likely. However, the tactics used for this, such as transmigration, resulted in increased grievances and sectarian tensions. When tensions flare up, strong enough grievances have boiled over into violent conflict, including civil war (DeRouen 2015, 11).

Disparities and Grievances

Disparities and grievances between populations are generally considered to be a significant driver of violence between sectarian groups. There is a consensus among political scientists that a revolt occurs when there are enough grievances among a population to spur them into violence (Collier and Hoeffler 2004, 564). Collier and Hoeffler postulate that there are four objective ways to measure grievances: ethnic and religious hostilities, political repression, political exclusion, and economic inequality (2004, 570). They state that ethnic and religious hostilities—sectarian hostilities—are commonly viewed as a driver of civil conflict and are only seen in

nations with multiple ethnicities or religions (Collier and Hoeffler 2004, 571). Collier and Hoeffler created a model using regression analysis to test whether grievances were a contributor towards the start of a civil war, one of the most significant manifestations of sectarian violence. They concluded that that if a group had the available funds to finance their rebellion, the risk for conflict increased. However, inequality and political rights tested insignificant. Only ethnic dominance was significant (Collier and Hoeffler 2004, 588). However, there are multiple critiques of Collier and Hoeffler's model. Laurie Nathan writes that Collier and Hoeffler fail to take into account the nuances of history, ideology, government, regional context, and the "constraining effect of repression" into their analysis of civil war. Their reliance on numbers, he says, fail to address ethnic politics and religious ideologies (Nathan 2008, 274). Another critique from Erica Simmons involves looking at grievances closely to identify their meanings and levels of intensity. She argues that grievances that arise from threats to essential resources are important to the mobilization of sects, but so are threats to religious communities. They will react similarly to a community threatened with the loss of something as important as water (Simmons 2014, 540). Another study finds compelling evidence that inequality and discrimination between sectarian groups can mean a higher risk of armed conflict. According to Cederman, Wimmer, and Min (2010) and Gurr (1993), during the rise of nationalism, mainly after the French Revolution, the ruling power found that by discriminating against ethnic groups, they could keep wealth and power within their own sect. However, this soon gave

rise to deadly conflicts as grievances began to spread among oppressed populations (Buhaug, Cederman, and Gleditsch 2011, 11). Economic differences between the privileged few and the periphery can aggravate sectarian relations (DeRouen 2015, 12). These, among other critiques, argue that grievances cannot simply be integrated into statistical models without losing a substantial amount of meaning and analytical work. Since grievances vary so widely, they must be considered on an individual basis.

Security Dilemma

Grievances are only one of the drivers of sectarian conflict. While they provide the reasons and motivation for violence, it is not enough in itself to cause a disagreement to escalate into warfare. Sectarian conflict, as has been seen, is characterized by irreconcilable differences and intense disagreements over the distribution of power and resources (Carpenter 2014, 23). Grievances serve as a basis for revolution to occur as it provides common ground for a group to rally around. However, in order to turn violent, there must be a significant enough threat to a sectarian group to arm itself in order to protect its interests and even existence. This “ethnic security dilemma” has warranted significant attention in the literature on sectarianism, with mixed results on its accuracy as a predictor for sectarian violence. In political science, the security dilemma is the theory that argues that if a state works to increase its security by building up its military capacity, another state could view these actions as threatening and work to build up its own capacity which can result in increased insecurity. The ethnic security dilemma follows the

same line of thought. The theory is that when a sect acts to increase its security through strengthening its identity, it causes a second actor to react by increasing its own strength in order to secure itself against the first sect (Nalbandov 2010, 48). This situation is aggravated by the absence of a government that can exert control over society to avoid these threatening conditions.

For ethnic security dilemmas, there are several factors that play into groups feeling threatened. Distance, for example, makes groups feel uneasy as they are unable to observe their rival groups to determine their levels of strength (Nalbandov 2010, 49). Some scholars have suggested partition as a solution to ending ethnic-based sectarian conflicts, especially since the end of the Cold War. However, this idea has not gained traction, as it has not shown promise for promoting peace between groups (Johnson 2015, 25). The ethnic security dilemma was said to explain why ethnic civil war occurred because after the collapse of a state, the sects within the country would have to build themselves up to defend themselves against other inhabitants, leading to increasing insecurity among groups. In a country with anarchy, groups cannot rely on a governmental force to defend their interests or even personal security. This is viewed through the lens of constructivism, in which ethnic identities are changing (Johnson 2015, 29). Tang examined the security dilemma in ethnic terms and concluded that it was difficult to use the security dilemma to analyze ethnic conflict, citing the lack of sound ethnic theory available to make certain determinations about the origins of the conflicts. Again, he cites the fact that each ethnic conflict is unique (Tang, 2011).

According to Kaufman (1996), one difference with the ethnic security dilemma and the general inter-state security dilemma theory is that the latter occurs as a result of two states vying for power against each other, while the former can be intentionally brought about by sectarian leaders to incite the masses (Roe 1999, 190). Roe concludes that the security dilemma has some merit in explaining ethnic violence, but that it is not as useful in this context as in the inter-state arena (Roe 1999, 200). Ultimately, the consensus of the literature is that the ethnic security dilemma is an element of ethnic conflict but not sufficient to cause violence. A security dilemma would likely only lead to violence if the regime of the country in question lacked the ability to control violence within its borders.

Regimes and the Monopoly over Violence

A nation's stability is greatly influenced by its regime and its ability to enforce law and order within the country. Countries where anarchy reigns or where the government does not have the capability to contain violent groups are more likely to experience conflict and instability than countries with strong regimes. Max Weber, in his theory of the modern state established after Westphalia, defined a state as an organization that "has been successful in seeking to monopolize the legitimate use of physical force as a means of domination within a territory" (Redner 1990, 639). This has been widely accepted by the literature, however there are some challenges to the theory based on the reality of states being comprised of various different communities who might not be completely loyal to the ruling power (Redner 1990, 652). The existence of a heterogeneous population can make it more difficult for a

government to hold legitimate force over violence, especially if there are grievances and an emerging internal security dilemma.

One theory of ethnic conflict states that when central authority decreased, ethnic relations grew increasingly hostile and violent. This theory was based on the premise that ethnic groups have ancient hatreds for each other, which as discussed earlier, is not necessarily the case in all instances. This theory observed nations under strict communist rule that experienced less sectarian warfare while the communist regimes were in control. After the communist nations fell, the groups—Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, and others—went back to violent ethnic disputes (Taras and Ganguly 2002, 25). A weak regime was not the only factor contributing to this escalation of violence, but a power vacuum did provide the opportunity for groups with grievances against each other to strive to secure themselves within the country. A regime's ability to act as a mediator is harmed when it becomes a cause of the sectarian strife within a country. When one sect largely controls the government, it is likely to alienate the other sects in its country. Even if a regime can be considered strong and command force within its borders, it still opens itself up to risk if it grieves the other groups in the country to a breaking point (Elfvorsson 2015, 792). States tend to be more likely to intervene in their nation's conflicts if their sectarian ties are involved, thus further discriminating against the grieved group (Elfvorsson 2015, 802). When considering regimes, the consensus seems to be that if a government is too weak or too biased to maintain effective, impartial law and order in a nation, the risk of sectarian violence increases.

Methodology

The purpose of my thesis is to identify factors that can drive sectarianism to break into violent conflict, specifically across the Middle Eastern region. According to the literature on sectarian conflict, there are a variety of drivers of sectarian violence. These include economic disparities between groups, a history of foreign intervention and colonialism, grievances between groups, and politicized religious differences. There is difficulty in quantifying some of these variables, given the significant differences among them. Grievances between sectarian groups, for example, are often complex and vary widely in every conflict. Since grievances could range from disenfranchisement to genocide, it is necessary to take the specific grievances into account to measure their effect on the violence between groups. It would very difficult, however, to quantify such differences. The other variables have similar levels of complexity, and so it is simply not feasible to quantify these types of variables.

Therefore, the comparative study approach through the use of a small number of case studies will be used to guide my research for this thesis. In his work regarding the comparative study process, Arend Lijphart writes that the statistical method of research should be used if possible but that a superficial study using this method will not be as effective as a comparative study (Lijphart, 1971). Given that this thesis is concentrating on the Middle Eastern region, studying worldwide data on sectarian violence would not necessarily be applicable to this limited part of the world. Also as discussed, since some of these variables are not easily quantifiable, a

statistical approach would likely give less than accurate results if all the variables were simplified in order to quantify them. The small number of case studies that will be completed in this thesis also do not allow for statistical controls to be utilized. The single case study approach, while it would provide a thorough understanding of a singular instance of sectarian violence, would not be sufficient to answer the overarching research question of what drives sectarian differences to erupt into violence over the entire Middle East. Therefore, for the scope of this thesis, the comparative approach lends greater support to generating and testing hypotheses.

The comparative method, by including multiple case studies, will allow for broader investigation and understanding of the influences of the independent variables on the dependent variable than a single case study. It will also allow for close examination of the nuances on variables that would be lacking in a statistical study. Comparative study does have its limitations, including problems of many variables and a small number of cases (Collier, 1993). By exploring many variables over a few cases, it is difficult to determine what the driving factors of the dependent variable are. It also does not have the robustness of empirical study. Lijphart gives suggestions to improve the comparative study approach, especially with its problems of many variables and small number of cases. He suggests increasing the number of cases, focusing on key variables, and using comparable cases to reduce these weaknesses (Lijphart, 1971).

In this thesis, the comparative method will be utilized through analyzing three case studies of sectarian violence. Two or three cases tend to be the norm in comparative study, therefore three Middle Eastern countries have been selected for analysis of the dependent variable (Lor, 2011). The weaknesses associated with the comparative method will be addressed by having multiple, comparable cases, and a focus on the key variables identified in the literature as drivers of sectarian violence. The limitations of my approach will include the inability to institute statistical controls to gather empirical data to support my hypotheses. Since I am focusing exclusively on the Middle East, my findings may not be applicable to the entire world given that sectarian divides differ region by region. However, by comparing my variables across three countries, I hope to identify national differences between them and look for similarities and trends that could provide evidence of causation. Additionally, I intend to generate ideas for future research and hypotheses that could be empirically tested.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study will be defined as violent sectarian conflict. These conflicts can take on a variety of forms, including but not limited to terrorism, revolutions, rebellions, coups and civil wars. In order to explain variation between the three cases studied here, the dependent variable will be measured with a continuum scale of violence. On the low end would be a country with sectarian differences and isolated incidences of violence. On the high end would be a country with a full-scale civil war being waged as a result of sectarianism. An ever-

increasing rate of violent incidents would cause a country to be placed higher on the continuum. A country's placement on the continuum is very fluid and could vary based on certain time periods in its history. Lebanon is located on the higher end of the continuum, as it experienced the longest running sectarian conflict among the three cases, in addition to random acts of sectarian violence. Iraq is also high on the continuum scale, though a little lower than Lebanon due to a less protracted civil war. Turkey, though not a completely non-violent country, is on the low end of the scale due to its relative lack of sectarian based violence. The three cases will be analyzed over several different time periods. Therefore, their positions on the continuum are not meant to be a quantitative marker of violence but rather a tool to illustrate the flexible and often complex nature of sectarian violence. Each case study will begin with a brief history and introduction to the sects within the country. Next, the independent variables will be identified within each country and analyzed in respect to their relationship with the dependent variable.

Independent Variables

The list of possibilities for motivators of sectarian violence is extensive. Therefore, for this thesis, the variables under analysis will be limited to the most prominent variables found in the literature on the subject; disparities between sects, severity of grievances between sects, the strength of the regimes, and the presence of foreign intervention.

The first variable is that of disparity between sectarian groups will be one of the more complex variables to analyze, as the types of disparity can vary widely

between the groups involved. It could involve economic disparity or political disparity, where one group is significantly poorer or less represented than the other. Disparities between the Coptic Christians and Muslims in Egypt existed during Anwar Sadat's presidency in 1971, and then the Islamist era of the 1980s. Sadat supported bring *sharia* law and *hodoud* (Islamic penal codes) to Egypt, which created a legal advantage for Muslims over the Copts. Other forms of disparities included lack of state support for Coptic studies and no representation of Cops in high-level government, military, or judicial offices (Bayat, 2011). Again, disparities can be difficult to quantifiably measure. For the purposes of this study, disparities will be identified as a dichotomous variable and I will simply note whether they are present or not between sectarian groups.

Second, there must be grievances between groups, whether past or recent. These grievances could be based on persecution of one group by another, a history of rivalry, or competition for territory to name a few. Grievances are very closely related to disparities, since disparities often give rise to grievances. For the purposes of this study, I will create a distinction by identifying which grievances became significant enough to create an existential threat. Grievances could arise because of the political or religious climate of the day. In the Middle East, the most prominent sectarian conflict exists between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims. The Sunni sect of Islam has expressed many grievances against Shi'a led governments across the entire region, including Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. They cite oppression as their main grievance against these governments, which has led to many of the

major conflicts seen in these nations today (Mneimneh, 2015). Similar to the disparities, grievances are difficult to quantify. In the case studies, these powerful grievances will be examined in respect to their role in creating an escalating ethnic security dilemma.

The third independent variable is a regime type that lacks the monopoly of force over its territory. As was seen in the literature, control over violence is essential to providing law and order within a state. In nations lacking this necessary infrastructure, the government is unable to control civil wars occurring on its soil and cannot control rebellions and uprisings against its rule. Syria is an example of a nation where the government has not been able to quell the sectarian violence against itself or others within its borders, which has resulted in a prolonged civil war with no end in sight (BBC, 2015). The case studies have varying levels of regime strength based on different time periods in their history. This is one of the more difficult variables to measure, as regimes vary widely within each country. For the purposes of this paper, I will examine the regimes in respect to the role it plays in suppressing violent insurgencies, revolts, or civil strife to determine its level of effectiveness.

The fourth independent variable is that of foreign intervention. The intervention of other countries into another state's domestic politics can have profound effects, as will be seen the case studies of Lebanon, Iraq, and to some extent Turkey. The history of foreign interference in the Middle East stems back to the pre-colonial era and has continued to present day. The now infamous U.S.

invasion of Iraq in 2003 completely rearranged the sectarian power structure when Saddam Hussein was removed from office and Nouri al-Maliki was given control. Foreign intervention can arrive in many forms, both with economic and military interference. For this study, I will focus solely on foreign military intervention and analyze the role foreign entities played in creating advantages of one sect over another.

Hypotheses

Given the small number of case studies presented here and the limited scope of this thesis, it is difficult to fully test a set of hypotheses. Rather, the purpose of this thesis is to help generate ideas for hypothesis that could undergo statistical testing and generate ideas for further research. This thesis, however, can show support of certain relationships that the literature identifies as existing in sectarian conflicts. Below are three relationships that the case studies presented here will seek to explain.

H1) Grievances and existential threats between sectarian groups are the tipping point for sectarian violence erupting.

H2) Countries with governments without control over the use of force will experience a greater degree of sectarian violence than a government with a strong monopoly of violence.

H3) Foreign intervention in the areas of governance increases the likelihood that a country will experience higher levels of sectarian violence.

The absence of empirical analysis in this study will limit my ability to find a statistically significant correlative relationship between the independent and dependent variables. However, I hope to provide qualitative support for the existence of causative relationships between the variables through my case study analysis.

Case Studies

Three case studies will be undertaken for this thesis. First, the case of Lebanon will be considered. This country has been labeled a sectarian state *par excellence* due to its confessional system of government initially created during the colonial era. Its sectarian differences are long-lived and enshrined advantages for some sects over others (Hirst, 2010). Lebanon has also experienced a variety of conflicts, including a sixteen-year-long civil war. It will illustrate a weakened regime that institutionalized sectarianism in different ways than Iraq. Regional conflicts in neighboring countries, especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, led to foreign incursions by both sides onto Lebanese soil. Its current day situation is also different from Iraq's, as its civil war came to a conclusion, although with deep scars, and Iraq's war still continues.

Second, I will look at the case of Iraq. This case was chosen because it will illustrate a country that ranges on the continuum of sectarian violence. Iraq has a variety of sectarian divisions, both religious and ethnic. Throughout its history, there have been significant disparities that continue to exist between sectarian groups in Iraq. Saddam Hussein and Nouri al-Maliki both ran brutally repressive

regimes that fueled much discontent among the Iraqi people. Those grievances could have motivated much of the violence among them, especially due to regimes that were unable to quell conflict and have since succumbed to the advances of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

The third case will be the state of Turkey. This country, though also comprised of a mixture of religiously and ethnically diverse people, has not been affected by sectarian violence on the same level as many other Middle Eastern states. While disparities exist, the government's strong policies on secularism and republicanism allowed for peaceful avenues for airing grievances. Turkey remains much more visibly stable than Iraq and Lebanon and has a much more unified national identity. However, its present day situation will be of interest, since the spillover effects of the Syrian civil war are beginning to affect the sectarian situation in Turkey (Letsch, 2013). By examining these case studies in light of disparities, grievances, regimes, and foreign actors affecting sectarian violence, I hope to gain insight on what drives the civil wars and other conflicts in the Middle East.

The Case of the Lebanese Republic

The state of Lebanon has a long history of intermittent violent outbursts and long protracted conflicts between sectarian groups. The civil war of 1975-1992 was only one of many incidents that divided the country and contributed to its seemingly endless state of war. According to historian David Hirst, Lebanon is “the sectarian state par excellence” (Hirst 2010, 2). From its initial structure, the state seemed doomed to be locked in clashes between its various sects. The prolonged nature of the conflicts between the Muslims and Christians in Lebanon contributed to the state being in near constant conflict that eventually escalated into a long-lived civil war. Therefore, the case of Lebanon warrants a thorough investigation in any study of sectarian driven violence. First, I will take a brief look at the formation of the state and identify the various sects present within its borders. Next, the independent variables will be examined in the Lebanese context. The disparities and grievances will be explored together, followed by an analysis of the regimes that held power throughout Lebanon’s history and their ability to maintain control over the country. Finally, the dependent variable of sectarian violence will be examined to determine its level of intensity in this case. The time period examined in this case study will be from roughly 1920 until present day. As will be seen, Lebanon arguably ranks highest on the sectarian violence continuum used in this study. The final analysis of the effect of the independent variables on sectarian violence will again be reserved until the final findings chapter.

Lebanon: A Brief History

Prior to the 20th century, the territory now known as Lebanon was part of the vast Ottoman Empire. It had been under Ottoman control since roughly the 16th century, although throughout the 19th century, there was a great deal of western intervention in Lebanon and most other Middle Eastern states. The events surrounding World War I offered hope to Middle Eastern populations that colonial rule would soon end and that they would be granted the right to self-government. However, the Sykes-Picot Agreement decided upon by the British and French empires ultimately decided the fate of most Arab nations (Gettleman and Schaar 2012, 105).

After the Ottoman Empire's collapse following World War I, the provinces comprising the area of Greater Lebanon were declared as a Mandate by the League of Nations and were placed under French control in 1920. In the state of Lebanon, from the very beginning, sectarianism was enshrined into the political framework. The system was designed to provide greater power to the Maronite Christian population over both the Sunni and Shiite Muslim communities, as well as over the Druze and other Christian peoples (Gettleman and Schaar 2012, 105). The Maronite community, an important sect within Lebanon, considers itself to be an Eastern rite of the Catholic Church and is named after St. Maron. They practice an orthodox Christian faith and follow the "patriarch of Antioch" as their spiritual leader after the Catholic Pope. Essentially, it serves as a sect within the Catholic Church. The Druze is an ethno religious group protected as a minority in modern Lebanon. They

are largely considered heretical by most Muslims but nonetheless are considered a sect of Islamic origins (Harris 2011, 35).

As many other states in the region, the arbitrary borders of Lebanon were created without significant input or consent from the native populations. French and other European interests took precedence in this case, and thus the Lebanese nation would be divided within itself for decades to follow (Traboulsi 2007, 75). The Muslim population living in the newly established Lebanese borders protested the Mandate and called for the formation of an Arab state independent from the essentially Christian Maronite state (Traboulsi 2007, 80). Many Orthodox Christians and Greek Catholic inhabitants of the Lebanese Mandate sided with the Muslim population in this disagreement over the system that favored Maronites (Traboulsi 2007, 81). The beginnings of sectarian violence can be seen in this initial conflict, which resulted in violence against the French and with Christian villages being attacked in southern Lebanon (Traboulsi 2007, 80). The terms of the Mandate instructed that Lebanon was to receive a constitution in order to facilitate government by the native population. The French drew up a constitution for Lebanon, hoping to appease the various groups frustrated by the system. However, at a meeting in 1926, thirty-seven of some of the most prominent Sunni leaders from Beirut refused to participate in creating a draft. The French went ahead with the founding of a parliamentary system with full French control over its political and legal system (Kanaan 2005, 130). The constitution changed the name of the state from Greater Lebanon to the “Lebanese Republic” and distributed government

posts according to sects. The republican system focused on individual rights and equality for all, however it also declared the legality of the Mandate and French control. Although the president would hold executive power, he would ultimately have to answer to the French government (Traboulsi 2007, 90). In 1943, the French government agreed to hand over power to the Lebanese, due to rising conflicts and pressure (Gettleman and Schaar 2012, 294).

Finally, in 1946, Lebanon gained its independence from France when the last French troops left the country. However, the colonial framework instituted at the time of the 1920 mandate still heavily influenced its political system. Maronite Christians dominated the leadership positions in Lebanon and although Muslims were rapidly growing in number, the Maronites resisted the idea of political change and an Arab Lebanon. Furthermore, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had begun to escalate and spill over into Lebanese territory. This had a dramatic effect on sectarian differences within the state, as some factions decided to side with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and others with the Zionists (Gettleman and Schaar 2012, 294).

After the Arab-Israeli War and the events surrounding the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, Lebanon was flooded with Palestinian refugees. This brought about significant challenges for Lebanon, including the involvement of neighboring states and Western governments in the state's affairs (Harris 2012, 203). Lebanon was spared Israel's aggression against Arab states due to its large Christian population. David Ben-Gurion, a founder of Israel and its first Prime

Minister, said Israel would try to “establish a Christian state” in Lebanon and use it as an alliance. However, Israel never carried out this plan (Hirst 2010, 51). Within Lebanon, the sectarian tensions were beginning to intensify based on the divide between the Western friendly Christian sect and the Arab Muslim sects. Muslim and Druze citizens in Lebanon tried to challenge the incumbent president Camille Chamoun, who opposed Gamel Abdel Nasser from Egypt who was leading the rising Arab nationalist movement, which made him look like a Zionist to the Lebanese public (Hirst 2010, 69). The north, comprised of mainly Sunni Muslims, tried to secede from Lebanon after Muslim and Druze fighters rose up against the government with support from Syria. The Maronite Christians countered their efforts, having strong loyalist ties to Lebanon. Both Jordan and Iraq sent military aid to Chamoun. The US and Israel sided with the Christian loyalists, hoping to keep Lebanon free. The brief civil war resulted in 2,500 dead and the Muslim rebels controlling the Mount Lebanon area and the Christians controlling the eastern side of Beirut (Hirst 2010, 70). The US held off on intervening in the conflict until other events in the Middle East motivated them to send Marines into Lebanon in 1958 in order to protect what was left of the pro-Western Christian state in Eastern Beirut (Hirst 2010, 71). This time period was characterized by a breakdown of political order and central authority was diminished (Khalaf 2002, 107). Syria and Egypt were strongly opposed to the Christian loyalists and continued assisting the rebel fighters (Khalaf 2002, 110). As will be discussed in the analysis of the dependent variable, this conflict was characterized by a reaction to injustice, which led to

violent revolt (Khalaf 2002, 113). Beirut was divided into two separate communities, distinguished through their sectarian affiliations. The Western area of al-Basta was mainly Muslim, while the east was comprised of the Christian forces. Bloody fighting occurred in this area (Khalaf 2002, 119). The fighting in Tripoli raged the strongest, with its strong opposition to the pro-Western loyalists (Khalaf 2002, 127). This conflict in 1958 was an important moment in Lebanese history, as it marked the first significant eruption of violence as a result of a disordered political system after a period of relative stability.

In the years leading up to the civil war of 1975, sectarian differences continued to increase throughout the country. After the brief civil war in 1958, each sect within Lebanon continued to be at odds with one another and vied against each other for power. The Muslim population, as well as Lebanese Arab nationalists, united as the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) to support the presence of the Palestinian military in Lebanon, as well as bring about political change. They had support from the PLO, Syria, and Libya. The framework of the Lebanese political system did not allow for peaceful political changes or airing of grievances (Rowayheb 2011, 417). The new president, Faud Shihab, replaced President Chamoun on September 24, 1958. He collaborated with Prime Minister Rashid Karami to create a government that excluded Chamoun loyalists, which incited the Maronite Christian population. After a flare-up of violence, Karami and Shihab compromised on their government and formed an emergency cabinet with two

Muslims and two Christians who determined the end of the fighting (Harris 2012, 212).

Shihab wanted to implement social welfare into the Lebanese system, primarily to benefit Muslims, as well as strengthen the state as a whole. He aimed to equalize Christian and non-Christian politics, with the hope that the sectarian differences would fade away from Lebanese government (Harris 2012, 213). He used the military and other bureaucrats to implement his reform and grew the size of the parliament from sixty-six to ninety-nine members in 1960 (Harris 2012, 214). However, Shihabism did not prove to be an effective measure against sectarian relations in Lebanon. Shihab supported Musa al-Sadr, a cleric activist based in Iran who came to Lebanon in 1958, who helped establish the Higher Shi'a Islamic Council to match the Supreme Islamic Council of the Sunnis and the Druze Communal Council (Harris 2012, 217). Political grievances continued against the Maronite advantage and the divisions between the sects continued to grow. However, the tipping point came during the 1967 Six-Day War between Israel and the Arab States when conditions in Lebanon began to rapidly deteriorate, which led to the violence of the war in the 1970's.

On February 26, 1975, when anti-government protesters encountered the army and other security forces, two protestors were killed and seven others were wounded. A prominent Sunni leader was among the dead and the Lebanese Army could not work to diffuse the situation, due to public distrust and sectarian differences between the soldiers and military leaders. This protest in Sidon was

followed up a few months later by an attack on a Palestinian bus in Eastern Beirut. This attack led to the outbreak of the 1975 Lebanese Civil War that raged for over fifteen years, leaving thousands dead and the country in chaos (Rowayheb 2011, 417). This breakdown in inter-sectarian relations led to Lebanon losing its independence in 1975, and even for years afterwards, it continued to remain under the control of other states. Palestine, Israel, and Syria had interests in the state that led to continued intervention (Harris 2012, 232). The violence raged strongly between the Christian and Muslim sects within Lebanon during the war. The Palestinians were also involved in the discord, with the PLO waging its war against Israel from inside Lebanon (Harris 2012, 239). The sparks that ignited the war back in 1967 brought out the strong sectarian differences in Lebanon and combined with intervention by Syria and the Arab-Israeli conflict, this spelled disaster for the Lebanese state (Harris 2012, 258).

The 1989 Taif Accord, which was credited with ending the civil war, raised hopes in the nation that the agreement could bring reconciliation between the warring sects (Khalaf 2002, 289). It did not bring about the complete expected outcome, but was still a significant point in Lebanon's history. Throughout the 1990's, Lebanon struggled to rebuild after almost two decades of warfare (Harris 2012, 259). The Taif Accord essentially changed the balance of power between the sects. Sectarian quotas were done away with in the civil service, the judiciary, the military, and law enforcement (Traboulsi 2007, 244). The position of prime minister and the legislative body were made more powerful than the president, making him

more of a figurehead than actual leader of the state. This led to new imbalances, which resulted in different types of conflicts within Lebanon (Traboulsi 2007, 245).

The year 2005 brought on a new wave of violence with the assassination of Rafik Hariri, Lebanon's prime minister, by a car bomb in Beirut. The resulting political and violent upheaval involved international outrage and Lebanese protests against Syria's involvement in the country, as well as calls for independence (Harris 2012, 269). 2008 led to more conflict between the Lebanese government and Hezbollah but sectarian violence dropped for the next few years (Rowayheb 2011, 429). In the years following 2011, there have been a number of violent clashes involving the spillover of armed conflict from the Syrian civil war, with people getting killed in Tripoli and Beirut. The Lebanese sectarian landscape is facing the challenge of Syrian refugees entering Lebanon in large numbers to flee the civil war (BBC, 2015).

The Sects

The sects that will be examined in this case study include Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, and the Maronite Christians. All these groups have long histories in Lebanon. According to a census taken in 1932, the population in pre-Mandate Lebanon consisted of 32 percent Maronite, 18 percent Sunni, and 16 percent Shi'a (Pearlman 2013, 114). After colonialism and the establishment of a sectarian system of government by the French, these groups have essentially been pitted against each other in a struggle for power. A unique aspect of Lebanon is that a Christian population held the balance of power rather than a Muslim group for many years.

As in Iraq, the political system was designed to prioritize the interests of one group over another and these disparities led to grievances, which ultimately led to the outbreak of prolonged civil war.

The Sunni

During the formation of an independent Lebanon under the French Mandate, the Lebanese Sunni population was cautious. Their future security became dubious as Lebanon came under Western control and many Sunni were very strongly opposed to the Maronite-friendly policies established under King Faisal. A subsequent power struggle ensued between the Maronites and the Sunnis during the formation of the state (Kanaan 2005, 109). During the creation of the “National Pact,” the aforementioned census was used to determine the positions in the sectarian power sharing government. The Sunnis gained the position of the prime minister, and Muslims and Christians divided seats in parliament and other government offices on a five-to-six ratio, respectively (Pearlman 2013, 114). In early independent Lebanon, the Sunnis worked alongside the Maronites to govern the new state, but when tensions arose with neighboring Syria, Lebanese Sunnis began to feel the effects of marginalization. In the years leading to the 1975 civil war, Muslim and Christian communities clashed over disproportionate political and economic power. The Palestine Liberation Organization was comprised of largely Sunni background members (Pearlman 2013, 118). The expulsion of the PLO from Lebanese soil left the Sunnis threatened by the rising Shi’a and Maronite powers in post-war 1980’s (Khashan 2013). When the Taif Accord made Syria the main mediator in Lebanon,

it changed the ratio of Muslim and Christian governmental seats to fifty-fifty. This change weakened the position of the prime minister, a Sunni post, although the position remained the most influential of the three top leaders consisting of a Maronite president and Shi'a parliament speaker. Sunni led coalitions during the March 14 Movement, marked by anti-Syrian stances, led to further clashes between the Sunni and Shi'a populations. In present day entanglements, the Sunnis in Lebanon tend to be more pro-Western, Saudi Arabia, and the insurgents in the Syrian civil war (Pearlman 2013, 119).

The Shi'a

When the confessional system in Lebanon was first put into place, it was established with the understanding that the Christian population held a slight majority, and that the Sunnis held a strong majority within the Muslim population. However, the hopes that both of these populations would cooperate were dashed as the Sunnis collaborated with Palestinian allies who alienated the Maronites. Furthermore, the Shi'a population grew extensively to become a powerful, if repressed, voice in Lebanon (Norton 1987, x). The Shi'a have traditionally faced discrimination and persecution throughout their history. Before independence in Lebanon, the Shi'a struggled against the Ottoman Empire and eventually against the French for security and representation. The Shi'a community living in Lebanon was included in the area during the 1920 creation of Greater Lebanon (Siklawi 2014, 278). The current Shi'a population in Lebanon is the largest community within the country and is primarily located in the South, the Baalback-Hermel area,

and parts of Beirut (Siklawi 2013, 279). With the system of sectarianism created under the French, the Shi'a community was recognized as its own confessional community under French law in 1926. The National Pact ensured a Shi'a member would be the speaker of parliament in the Lebanese government (Kawtharani 2015, 161). However, despite the efforts to give all groups representation, the Shi'a suffered many political and economic disadvantages as they struggled to integrate themselves under the emerging narratives of pan-Arabism and Lebanese nationalism (Kawtharani 2015, 163). As they were annexed into the territory of Lebanon, the Shi'a viewed this as being thrust into a country with an already established Maronite advantage (Hazran 2013, 164). From the time of independence through the 1950's and onwards, the Sunni and Maronite citizens of Beirut prospered under Lebanese economic policies, as evidenced by their affluence. The Shi'a, however, predominantly populated the poorer areas and were more loyal to the Arab nationalist identity and the Syrians rather than Lebanon. The Shi'a were affected by Israeli occupations in 1948 and the years following with Palestinian forces in Lebanon. This caused the population to migrate into Beirut, which exacerbated tensions between the Shi'a and other sects (Siklawi 2014, 285). When Musa al-Sadr became Mufti of Tyre, he called for a reform starting with the elite and then going down through the ranks of power to ease marginalization of the Shi'a. Sadr was successful to creating the Supreme Islamic Shi'a Council, which brought the Shi'a closer to a level of equality with the Maronites, Sunnis, and the Druze (Arsan 2006, 16). Al-Sadr mobilized the Shi'a to form organizations that

empowered the Shi'a community. The *Harakat al-Mahrumin* (Movement of the Deprived) began in 1974 through various Shi'a institutions and the Amal militia was formed in 1975. Their main efforts were to fight against injustice and discrimination against the population and became a sectarian movement after the beginning of the Lebanese Civil War (Siklawi 2014, 287).

The Maronites

In early modern Lebanon, the Maronite Christians found themselves in conflict with the Druze people in the area around Mount Lebanon (Harris 2011, 147). Under the Ottomans and the *mutasarrifiya* system of sectarian government, there was often tension between sectarian groups that culminated in war and a massacre of Christians in 1860 (Harris 2011, 148). After the Ottoman Empire collapsed following World War I, the French established their new regime. Activism by the Maronites helped form a relationship between the two (Harris 2011, 149) and the constitution formed under French oversight during the pre-independence period in Lebanon was built with Maronite dominance enshrined, giving them higher representation and a slight majority in the political system (Traboulsi 2007, 94). Tensions existed between the French and the Maronites at times as well. Ussama Makdisi says the French conducted a “gentle crusade” in Lebanon, using soft power in its Westernization of the country. Economic and military activity, however, was very much an aspect of French power. The monopolization of tobacco by the French, for example, drove Maronite leaders to form alliances with the Lebanese Muslims in order to defend their interests (Abisaab 2014, 298). The Lebanese Constitution and

National Pact, however, enshrined Maronite supremacy in various elements of the government, including a Maronite holding the office of president in the Lebanese government (Kanaan 2005, 274). In 1949, the Kata'ib Party was established as a modern political group rather than a party based on kinship ties (Kanaan 2005, 248). This party, along with other Maronite political groups and leaders modeled themselves after more Western styles than other groups. In 1958, certain elements in the Maronite community were displeased with President Chamoun's policies, leading to tensions within the community. When US Marines arrived in Beirut in 1958, the Maronites had mixed reactions. Chamoun's loyalists were pleased, as they feared what would happen if Chamoun and the Maronite community lost power to pan-Arab forces, inspired by Egypt's Nasser (Kanaan 2005, 276). In the events leading up to the 1975 Civil War, the Maronite Christians increasingly leaned to the Right, in opposition to the left-leaning Muslim community. As a result of the National Pact, the Maronites continued to hold the majority share of power, which led to rising alienation between the two religious communities (House 1989, 10).

The Lebanese Civil War raged between the Maronites and Muslims, with interference from outside forces with interests in the conflict. In the mid-1980s, the Maronite controlled areas began increasing their sectarian rhetoric, with slogans such as "Christian republic" and "Christian security." Maronite General Michael Aoun, appointed to the cabinet by President Amin Gemayel, called for a war of liberation, namely against Syria, which resulted in further Syrian presence in the country. In 1990, Aoun's troops clashed with the Lebanese Forces militia, another

Maronite organization, which weakened their ability to oppose the Taif Agreement (Krayem 1997). The Taif Accord also targeted the Maronite elite, forcing many into exile and prison (Haddad 2001, 467). The Maronite community was distrustful of the new government institutions established after the war and the Maronites remain concerned about their safety in the new sectarian power balance (Haddad 2001, 477). In recent days, the Maronites and Shi'a have formed alliances once again to counter what they view as a growing Sunni political dominance. The Maronites view other uprisings in the region such as the Arab spring and the Syrian civil war as threats to the Christian population and continue to fear their minority status in post-war Lebanon (Khashan 2013).

Independent Variables

The independent variables of disparities, grievances, and regime types will be explored in the following section for the sectarian groups in Lebanon. The disparities and grievances created a rapid escalation in threats to stability within the nation. This internal security dilemma contributed to the outbreak of the long-lasting civil war and other ensuing tensions. The governments under the Ottomans, the French, and during independence and the modern day will be explored to see how their sectarian composition and general ineffectiveness to maintain control also helped form an unstable society.

Disparities and grievances

The Sunnis, the Shi'a, and the Maronites all experienced various grievances due to the disparities inherent in the confessional system of governance that defines

Lebanese history. The first such system was established during the Ottoman era of the *mutasarrifiya*, where power was divided based on sectarian affiliations.

Maronite Christians and the Christian community in general received support from the French and Catholic Church who wanted to see a Christian-controlled state in the Middle East. After the French mandate following World War I, the Maronite Christians, who predominately inhabited the Mount Lebanon area, quickly became the controlling power among the large communities of Sunni and Shi'a. This led to increasing alienation and feelings of inequality between the various groups that had become members of the same nation overnight (Siklawi 2014, 278).

Under the Ottoman Empire, the Shi'a were taxed highly by the government in addition to being massacred by Ahmed Pasha, who targeted the Shi'a *ulama* and demolished agricultural stores of local Shi'a, as well as their libraries. This led to several revolts in the region of Jabal Amil, and in the 19th century the Shi'a rose up against the Egyptians as well. These efforts were unsuccessful in remedying the situation (Siklawi 2014, 280). After the Civil War in 1860, and the establishment of the *mutasarrifiya*, the French decided to support the Maronites, the British the Druze, and the Russians and Austrians supported other Christian groups. The Shi'a, however, did not gain any backing from the colonial powers and had little power in the new system. Their religious rights also came under attack as they were forbidden from practicing their rituals in public (Siklawi 2014, 281). Lebanon's independence in 1943, with the advent of the National Pact, continued to keep the Shi'a a political minority, with the Shi'a speaker of parliament serving a more

symbolic than substantial role. The few upper-class Shi'a families remained wealthy due to their land and positions in office, but the rest of the Shi'a population lived in poverty, which led to a large trend of migration to Beirut. There, the Shi'a remained impoverished while observing the well-to-do Maronite and Sunni families enjoying the economic policies of the day. The widespread poverty led many Shi'a to join left-wing movements and organizations with Palestinian ties (Siklawi 2014, 286).

Sayyid Musa al-Sadr capitalized on these grievances to create the Supreme Islamic Shi'a Council, as mentioned previously, which he hoped would increase equality between the groups (Arsan 2006, 16). His rhetoric, however, became increasingly inflammatory and he began calling for the Shi'a to take up arms against the government, still dominated by the Maronites. His militia, Amal, did not gain as much traction as he had hoped, but laid the groundwork for the rise of Hezbollah, a Shi'a backed militant group (Arsan 2006, 17). Throughout the great civil war, these grievances of lack of political power and poverty persisted. Another significant grievance held by the Muslims in Lebanon in the post-war time period was a strong disagreement with the government's choice of international relations and alliances, especially in regards to Israel and the West (Rowayheb 2011, 418). In 2005, certain Lebanese leaders who had carried out human rights violations and other violent acts went unprosecuted and came to hold powerful position within the government. This left any grievances against them unresolved (Rowayheb 2011, 419). Attempts at reconciliation were underdeveloped in the post-war era. The Taif Accord, as will

be seen, provided some avenues for peaceful ways to air grievances that had not been possible prior to the civil war (Rowayheb 2011, 430).

The Sunni Muslims in Lebanon had various grievances as well, although their position was stronger than the Shi'a in the early days of the Lebanese state due to their higher status after cooperating with the Ottoman Empire. After independence in Lebanon, the Sunni continued enjoying ties with the Maronites and the dominant position among the rest of the Muslim community of the Shi' and the Druze. However, only the wealthy, powerful Sunni who migrated to Beirut benefitted from the Lebanese constitution and economic growth. When comparing education levels, the Sunni, specifically those living in rural areas, had the lowest education in the country (Tfaily, Diab, and Kulczycki 2013, 68). The Sunni elite protested the ineffectiveness of the prime minister, the position they were allocated in the confessional system. The masses were also largely excluded from the political process (El-Khazen 2000, 243). The Palestinian organizations inside Lebanon used the grievances among the Muslim population to create alliances to resist the Maronites and pressure them to consider political reforms (Makdisi and Marktanner 2009, 7). After the Taif Accord, the Sunni elite in Beirut again benefitted but the Sunnis in Saida, Tripoli, and other rural areas remained disenfranchised (Tfaily, Diab, and Kulczycki 2013, 70). When the Palestine Liberation Organization was expelled from Lebanon in 1982, the Sunni feared the rising power of the Shi'a and Maronites during the civil war. The Shi'a and the Druze allied against the Sunni, who experienced various assassinations of political

leaders, leading to increased fear and distrust among the Sunni (Khashan 2013). After the war, the power of the Sunni prime minister increased, but the Sunni continued to harbor grievances against the Shi'a as their main rivals (Pearlman 2013, 119). The Sunni also had fears of Nasserism and his pan-Arabism ideology and the growing support for Israel among the Maronites. The uprisings in other countries seemed to fuel the feelings of embitterment due to grievances among the Muslim population in Lebanon and contributed to the rising desire to take up arms (Khalaf 2002, 212). After the Taif Accord and the withdrawal of Syria as a mediating power, the Sunni felt unrepresented by the two major political parties of the day, Hezbollah and the National Free Movement, since the Shi'a and the Maronites supported both of these parties respectively (Makdisi and Marktanner 2009, 4). For the Muslim population in Lebanon, the initial disparities of unequal education and income-level led to their grievances against the Maronite-controlled government, which manifested itself in street protests and calls for reform. The turning point, however, came when the threat became a grievance against loss of their religious identities and freedom, which was exacerbated by the outside events occurring in the region (Khalaf 2002, 147).

Regimes and Foreign Intervention

The Lebanese regimes varied in strength and legitimacy, but all have suffered from the same weakness of enshrined sectarian differences. The Ottoman Empire and the French Mandate, as has been seen already, were comprised of systems deliberately formed to give the Maronite population a slight majority to ensure that

Lebanon remained a Christian state (El-Khazen 2000, 243). The *mutasarrifiya* and French Mandate systems were fraught with problems. These included the eventual disproportional representation of sectarian groups, due to a growing Muslim population, and the lack of an arena to air grievances in a peaceful manner (Kanaan 2005, 77). These regimes, as well as those which would come after, had a serious lack of legitimacy outside the sectarian loyalties of their supporters. The violence of the civil war of 1975 and 1990 will also be explored here.

The Lebanese constitution, put in place in September 1926, limited the ability of the Lebanese state to control its own political system, placing it under French control despite the intention that Lebanon would gain autonomy (Kanaan 2005, 130). The constitution created a system that joined the Maronite and Sunni populations in opposition to France to some extent. The Sunni leaders refused to cooperate with the Mandate, but eventually some of the leadership began trying to cooperate advantageously with the Mandate to further their standing (Kanaan 2005, 132). However, this support was not widespread enough to gain traction with the rest of the community. The French continued extending the constitution and elections, appointing people they hoped would encourage Sunni participation (Kanaan 2005, 135). The increasing disturbances in Syria, however, led to strife between the Maronites and the Sunnis due to differing loyalties to parties involved in the conflicts (Kanaan 2005, 136). These rising grievances against the French, combined with Syrian and British interests in Lebanon, led to the formation of the “National Pact.” Unfortunately, the pact did little to solve the sectarian disparities

existent in the constitution, nor the problem of a lack of Lebanese national identity (Kanaan 2005, 142). The National Pact, based on the 1932 census, gave the Maronites an advantage with unclear checks on power (Naor 2013, 990). The first president, Bishara al-Khuri, entered office in 1943 and encouraged competition for sectarian power in government, limiting Sunni and Shi'a politicians (Harris 2011, 201). The Arab Israeli war, which occurred during al-Khuri's term, brought new dynamics in the political system of the day, especially with the influx of Palestinian refugees (Harris 2011, 202). The second president, Camille Chamoun, used the power of the presidency to institute reforms but the system continued to keep sectarian groups apart, making it extremely difficult to foster cooperation. While free market reforms encouraged economic growth, those benefits were limited to the Christian upper class (Harris 2011, 208). During his presidency, there were signs of unrest among the Sunni population, including literature denouncing the Maronites and the rise of Arab nationalism following Nasser's rise to power in Egypt (Harris 2011, 209). He further alienated the Lebanese people by interfering with elections by gerrymandering, and sought U.S. and British support for an extension to his terms. The Kata'ib party defended Chamoun in the street violence that ensued at the hands of the Sunni and Shi'a, who feared the actions of the Lebanese president, as well as the U.S. attempt to overthrow the Syrian government (Harris 2011, 210). The fighting in 1958 was a result of Christians and Muslims clashing over the balance of power in the National Pact. While certain Sunni and Druze leaders continued to support Chamoun, he ultimately decided to step down and yield to

Fuad Shihab. Outside interests such as the U.S., Syria, and Egypt refused to get involved in the sectarian strife at first, although the U.S. eventually entered the fight to ensure stability in the region (Harris 2011, 212). The administrations of Fuad Shihab, Charles Helou, and Suleiman Frangieh were characterized by continued conflicts in determining whether Lebanon would side with the West or with the Arab world. In the early 1970s under Suleiman, the rift between the Sunni, Shi'a, and Maronite leaders of government widened even further as the president tried to balance the internal and external politics in Lebanon (Naor 2013, 991). When Suleiman appointed Sunni Aman al-Hafez as prime minister, the situation seemed promising as al-Hafez had widespread support. However, in 1973, violent confrontations began between the Lebanese army and Palestinian organizations in the country (Naor 2013, 993). Shihab attempted to deescalate the sectarian tensions by introducing social welfare to the impoverished Muslim population (Harris 2011, 213). However, Shihab failed to change the political system to include representation for the sects. He also could not change the country's population from choosing political affiliations based on their sectarian loyalties (Harrison 2011, 217). In fact, his new policies only cemented sectarian divisions (Krayem 1997). The great civil war began shortly after, as the rising tensions exacerbated by outside actors still had no outlet for peaceful resolution. Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization clashed with Christian leaders and gained sympathy among the Sunni. Clashes between the Palestinian/Left and the Maronite militias began on February 28, 1975 during

demonstrations by fishermen against a company led by President Chamoun. The second incident, led by the Kata'ib party, resulted in the deaths of twenty-seven Palestinians. Fighting broke out in Beirut suburbs, leading to a period of war (Harris 2011, 227). During this time period, from 1975-1990 the government underwent various regime changes, with the presidents and prime ministers holding little power over the security situation in the country. The Christian Kata'ib, Lebanese and Palestinian organizations had their own warlords who governed militarized areas and foreign actors controlled various military groups within the country as well. President Faranjiya and Prime Minister Rashid al-Sulh faced an anxious Sunni populace, leading al-Sulh to resign and Rashid Karami, a Sunni leader, to be appointed as prime minister (Harris 2011, 234). Karami calmed the strife for a couple months, but when nothing was done to meet the Left's demands to end Maronite advantage in government, warfare broke out again, dividing the city into strongholds for fighting. In the nearly sixteen years of the war, approximately 100,000 people were killed and 800,000 were forced to leave the country, with half a million being displaced internally. The regimes in power lost all ability to quell the fighting, with the warlords and foreign governments of Palestine, Syria, Israel, Iran, the US, and the Soviet Union working towards their interests (Harris 2011, 235).

When the Muslim and Palestinian forces took command of the Matn district above Beirut, the Maronites began to fear for their position of power (Harris 2011, 237). While they feared Syria, the Maronites recognized that Syrian power was

necessary to keeping the Muslim forces at bay. The Syrians also did not want to lose their influence in Lebanon, and helped keep President Faranjiya in office for a time. More disputes arose from the Syrian presence, for example when the Syrians shot a Druze and the Druze retaliated against the Maronites, killing 170 people (Harris 2011, 239). The Israeli invasion in 1982 dealt a heavy blow to the Muslim/Arab coalition and ushered Bashir Gemayel into the presidency. His brother Amin soon replaced him after Gemayel was assassinated days after the election. The Israeli occupation brought Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Christian militias into large areas of Lebanon, including Beirut, which only contributed to the ongoing civil war. The Israeli invasion hoped to weaken the PLO and loosen their grasp on Lebanon. An Israeli-Maronite alliance emerged during this time, although not all Maronites supported the Israeli Zionism of the time. However, their attempts to establish a pro-Israeli government were thwarted with the assassination of Bashir Gemayel.

U.S. involvement also increased at this time, with the hopes of brokering a peace treaty. In 1988, after Gemayel's time in office, there was a failure to elect a new president. This created a vacuum in power, during which talks of partition began within the country. Michel Aoun, a military commander, was appointed to lead the cabinet but only had legitimacy in Christian areas. The military and civilian government were split during this, with the two governments vying with each other for control. No speaker of parliament was present during this time, further exacerbating the problem. During the time of escalating violence, intra-fighting also broke out between Maronite groups and Shi'a groups. These conflicts

laid the groundwork for a dominant Shi'a organization and the Taif Accord (Krayem 1997).

In the 1980s, the organization known as Hezbollah rose from the Shi'a community, as a response to the civil war and political and economic grievances. The Islamic Revolution in Iran and the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982 also contributed to its formation. Hezbollah changed from an armed militia to a full-fledged political party that exists within the Lebanese state, holding positions in the Lebanese Parliament and cabinet (Harb and Deeb 2011, 12). Hezbollah resisted Syrian presence in the nation during and after the civil war, vying for control of the Lebanese state. They focused much of their efforts on protecting culture (Harb and Deeb 2011, 18). The Taif Accord, conducted with help from Saudi Arabia, was ratified by the Lebanese parliament in 1989, with the hope of ending the civil war. The power-sharing dynamics on the government were modified, changing the allocations of political power. However, again, there was a failure to include true democratization into the process. While the proportions were corrected to 50:50, with Maronite Christians no longer having a 6-5 ratio, the system remained rooted in sectarian loyalties (Haddad 2002, 293).

Syria took control of Lebanon's political system after the war ended, but it did not have much success in limiting sectarian strife either. Syria tried to bring more stability between the Sunni and Shi'a in Lebanon, but failed to integrate the Maronite community into the new order after the Taif Accord. The new Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and his policies on investment in the center of Beirut caused

grief to the Shi'a, who continued to live in the underdeveloped suburbs of the city (Harris 2011, 258). The National Unity Government, established in 1990, tried to include the Kata'ib, but they did not feel included in the governmental process. In 1992, the Lebanese currency collapsed and protestors marched in front of the prime minister's home. Karami resigned and Syria continued to govern in the postwar era. Prime Minister Hariri tried to rebuild the city from all the destruction following the civil war, but continued facing tension between the Shi'a and Maronites (Harris 2011, 261). Throughout the 1990s Hezbollah continued to grow in Lebanon, with two to three thousand professional fighters. Eventually in 2000, Israel withdrew from the state. Hezbollah began benefitting from a relationship with Syria, especially with President Bashar al-Assad (Harris 2011, 265). During the rise of the Shi'a, the Sunnis began feeling increasing alienation, as did the Maronite Christians (Haddad 2002, 301). A turning point was the murder of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in 2005 (Harris 2011, 268). This led to a rare moment when the Maronites and supporters of Hariri, including Shi'a and Hezbollah followers, united against Syrian intervention in Lebanon. The March 14 independence movement brought about a brief unity, which disintegrated quickly as the Maronites began to oppose what they perceived as Sunni and Druze advantages in the political system (Harris 2011, 269). Throughout 2010-2011, leaders in Lebanon faced legal actions by the STL, a tribunal seeking justice for Hariri's murder, leading to decreases in legitimacy (Harris 2011, 274). Lebanon's court system began improving, but real authority still rested in an international justice system (Harris 2011, 275). The

Shi'a continued supporting Hezbollah or the Amal militia, while Sunnis rallied behind other leaders, including Salafists, Islamists, and the Kata'ib and Aounist parties. The Maronites and Sunnis tended to agree with each other more on state security, endorsing a state monopoly of force (Harris 2011, 276).

Analysis of Sectarian Violence in Lebanon

Though the Lebanese civil war has ended, Lebanon has continued to face sectarian conflict. After the Cedar Revolution in 2005, which involved the mass demonstrations seen after Rafik Hariri's assassination, new movements arose to protest Syrian troops in Lebanon and other reforms to the Lebanese political system. In recent years, the March 8 and March 14 Alliances have characterized the enduring divides between the people of Lebanon. The March 14 Alliance emerged to support Syrian interests in Lebanon, which has led to further sectarian divisions inside the political climate of the state. This coalition also includes some Maronite Christians and Sunni Muslims. Their goals also include limiting Hezbollah's involvement in Lebanese politics, seeing it as threatening to the sectarian balance and as an avenue for increased Iranian influence in the state. The March 8 Alliance appeared as a pro-Syrian coalition of Shi'a and Christian Lebanese political parties, led by Prime Minister Najib Mikati from 2011 to 2013 (Solomon, 2015). The 2006 Lebanon war waged between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006 was a roughly thirty day conflict where forces clashed over rockets fired at Israeli border towns. Amin Gemayel, who had been president during the time of Israel's previous invasion, denounced Hezbollah's unilateral actions against Israel. Many thought it served as

a mere proxy for Iranian and Syrian Shi'a interests at the expense of the Sunni, Christian, and Druze.

These relatively new coalitions and resulting modern violence mark the complexity of foreign intervention on Lebanese sectarian politics. After conducting this case study, I have concluded that foreign intervention and the confessional system of governance imposed during the French mandate played the most significant roles in exacerbating sectarian relations. The civil war of 1975 marked an eruption of sectarian tensions that had been brewing since the formation of the state. The sectarian system had ensured that cooperation between the sects was virtually impossible, as any capitulation would result in the weakening of one's own sect. The Maronite Christians, though initially the majority, soon became the minority after thousands of Palestinian refugees began arriving after fleeing the conflict in their homeland. Soon, the Muslim population outnumbered the Christians and they became increasingly polarized. In 1975, these tensions boiled over in violent conflict between the Maronites and the PLO, with support from Muslim Lebanese groups who hoped to bring pan-Arabism to Lebanon. Israel and Syria continued their involvement, trying to advance their interests while Lebanon was crippled by the war. Without these foreign entities vying for their interests on Lebanese soil, the disparities and grievances held by the Shi'a and the Sunni may have endured for much longer before they turned to violence. Throughout the nearly sixteen years of violence, the regime in Lebanon was unable to quell the violence. Even before that, President Camille Chamoun repressed the Muslim populations,

which incited violence during the brief 1958 crisis that almost escalated into civil war and saw U.S. intervention. Israeli and Syrian competition for power over Lebanon during the civil war contributed to the prolonged instability, with acts such as the assassination of Gemayel only exacerbating the chaos. Even after the Taif Accord, the sectarian nature of the Lebanese political system remained unchanged and thus, there is no remedy in sight for easing sectarian tensions given that one's political loyalties remain entangled with one's religious or ethnic identity. Ultimately, it seems that when regimes became the most repressive or when foreign intervention intensified, violence increased in Lebanon. In recent days, Lebanon has become an arena for proxy wars with its own population being forced to choose their alliances based on foreign interests. The March 8 and 14 Alliances are evidence of this and without a significant reform to the confessional system, a reduction in tensions is unlikely to occur.

Sectarian Violence in the Republic of Iraq

The case of Iraq serves as a prime example of various types of sectarian violence between different people groups. For the purposes of this case study, the sects that will be investigated include the Sunni Muslims, Shi'a Muslims, and Kurds in Iraq. Although this is not an exhaustive examination of all the sects within Iraq, these three groups are the major players in the political atmosphere of the state. The majority of the literature on sectarianism in Iraq focuses on the relations between these three groups in the civil wars, uprisings, and other types of conflicts seen within the nation. These are the only groups within Iraq that have vied with each other for political power and representation, or domination in some cases, on a consistent basis. The disparities and grievances between these groups will be discussed in conjunction with each other, followed by an exploration of the various regimes in Iraqi history and their ability to hold a monopoly over violence. The study will conclude with a discussion of the dependent variable of violence as seen in Iraq. The time periods examined here will include a brief background of the formation of the state of Iraq, and a deeper exploration of the 1980s-1990s, the events surrounding the 2003 U.S. invasion, the regime of Nouri al-Maliki, and the rise of the terrorist group known as ISIL.

Iraq: A Brief History

The land where the modern state of Iraq now exists used to be known as Mesopotamia, a territory that saw the rise of a number of empires. During the 10th century, at the time of the historic Islamic Caliphate, the city of Baghdad rose to

prominence. After the Caliphate under the Abbasid Dynasty, the Mongols ascended to power but only for a short time. Eventually, Persia gained control of Iraq and continued to hold it until the rule of the Ottoman Turks in the 20th century. When the Ottomans gained control, Iraq was partitioned into three separate regions; Mosul, in the northern Kurdish region of Iraq, Baghdad, a predominantly Sunni populated city, and Basra, in the Shiite dominated south (Keegan, 2004). This partitioning served as one of the earliest divisions between the people groups in Iraq, which would eventually have an effect on the modern day tensions between different sects. During World War I, Basra was taken by the British in order to assist Russia and also to protect British economic interests, specifically in regards to oil resources in the Gulf region. After a complete occupation in 1918, the British began establishing colonial-like rule in Iraq and formed plans to maintain Iraq as a unitary state. At the end of World War I, when Britain was about to be handed control of Iraq, both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims joined together to resist British rule and proceeded to mount attacks on the British garrisons in Iraq. The British responded by deciding to rule Iraq indirectly, rather than pursuing a military government. The British chose Sunnis to comprise the new civilian government, not trusting the Shi'a or the Kurds due to a greater willingness on the part of the Sunnis to cooperate with Western interests (Keegan, 2004). However, this new government under King Faisal of the Hashemite dynasty failed to gain legitimacy in Iraq. Though democracy was the ideal, Iraq never achieved this goal. The League of Nations charged Britain with forming a constitution for Iraq, with special

consideration towards the various groups living in the territory. The constitution that was drafted, however, was written in a way in which the British continued to have control over the country. Ultimately, British rule over Iraq consolidated the three regions created by the Ottomans – Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra – and constructed a society that favored British interests. The Iraqi people for the most part did not have a significant voice in forming their new government (DeFronzo, 2010).

In 1932, Iraq officially became an independent state before the League of Nations. During World War II, Iraq faced a coup that was quelled by allied forces in 1941. Iraq became a member of the United Nations in 1945, as well as being instrumental in founding the Arab League. The Kurds launched an uprising against Baghdad that year led by Mustafa Barzani. It ultimately proved unsuccessful. After this, Iraq transitioned into a republic rather than a monarchy. The Ba'ath party rose to power in 1963, and immediately began working against a Kurdish rebellion that threatened to tear Iraq apart. After the First Kurdish-Iraqi war ended in 1970, the Kurds were given more autonomy and representation. Finally, in 1979, a man named Saddam Hussein rose to power as the President of Iraq, as well as Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council (DeFronzo, 2010).

Saddam Hussein became notorious for being a ruthless dictator who established a totalitarian governmental system in Iraq that revolved around his person. His main objectives included absolute control of Iraq and powerful leadership status in the Gulf. Hussein entered the First Gulf War in 1979, as a

result of his seizure of Kuwait. He tried to engage with the Islamic government in Iran, but the Ayatollah Khomeini, a leading figure in the Iranian government, did not accept his advances. In 1980, Hussein fought the Iran-Iraq war in an attempt to destroy Iran by surprise, much like the Israelis did to some Arab states during the 1967 war. The U.S. backed the Iraqi regime in this war, viewing Iran as a dangerous enemy. During this war, Hussein resorted to the use of chemical weapons, an act that ultimately led to the fall of his regime at the hands of the U.S. In 1990, after Iraq invaded Kuwait, the U.N. subjected Iraq to economic sanctions, an act that crippled the country and harmed civilian life (Keegan, 2004).

U.S. 2003 Invasion

After the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11th, 2001, the U.S. government reacted by launching the War on Terror. The entire national security apparatus in the U.S. changed to focus on terrorist threats and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Due to evidence that Saddam Hussein had utilized WMDs in the Iran-Iraq War, the U.S. determined, along with the U.K., that Saddam was a threat to the international community. The United States denounced Iraq as a rogue state and declared the need for military action to be taken in order to secure the region from the proliferation of WMDs. Furthermore, the U.S. harbored suspicions that the Iraqi dictator sponsored part of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and thus the U.S. became committed to removing him from power (Ali, 2011). Iraq's experience after this invasion differed from Lebanon's dealings with foreign intervention. Lebanon primarily remained mired in regional conflicts,

escaping French rule relatively early on in its history. Foreign military forces that intruded on Lebanese territory included Israeli, Palestinian, and Syrian forces, all of which had competing interests. Though Syria helped to nation build following the Lebanese civil war, its methods undoubtedly differed the manner in which the United States attempted to reconstruct Iraq. As will be seen, Iraq's experience with U.S. intervention deeply affected its sectarian relations in primarily negative ways.

The U.K. joined the U.S. in denouncing Saddam Hussein in 2002 and made a commitment to help change the regime if necessary. In October 2002, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution that gave President George W. Bush the authorization to guard U.S. national security through the use of force against Iraq if the situation called for it. A month later in November, the U.N. passed a resolution that offered Iraq a final offer to disarm itself of WMDs or else face the chances of military engagement. However, it was the U.K. and the U.S. who ultimately decided that Iraq was in violation of that resolution and issued Saddam Hussein a 48-hour window in which to resign and depart from Iraq. Against the wishes of the international community and against international law, the U.S. formed a coalition of forces including a variety of countries and launched Operation Iraqi Freedom. It began with a bombing campaign and then sent ground forces in from the neighboring country of Kuwait. The U.S. forces took control of Iraq's oil resources and eventually seized Baghdad. Initial hostilities ended on May 1st, 2003 and Saddam Hussein was caught and arrested seven months later (Ali, 2011).

The United States attempted to establish a temporary government under Paul Bremer, a former Foreign Service Officer, who established a government called the Coalition Provisional Authority. It sought to equalize representation among the three main sectarian groups in Iraq - the Sunni, Shi'a, and the Kurds - but it ultimately proved unsuccessful. Additionally, many policies implemented by U.S. forces served to worsen the security situation, which led to various escalations of violence between sects (Packer, 2005).

After the outbreak of the Iraqi civil war, the Iraqi population began to recognize the problems caused by the sectarianism that was rampant in the country. In late 2006, after suffering from widespread violence from sectarian conflict, Iraqi voters began forming negative attitudes towards voting along sectarian lines. By 2009, 79% of the Iraqi public thought that differences between sects had to be settled and that national policy should instead be focused on unifying the government rather than keeping to sectarian affiliations (Yamao, 2012).

However, sectarian division did not go away with the departure of U.S. troops. Violence and instability continue to rage in the Iraqi region. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki was pressured to step down, which he ultimately did, failing to reconcile the conflict between Iraq's people groups or repelling insurgents such as the Islamic State of Syria and the Levant. This group, also known as ISIS, ISIL, Daesh, or the Islamic State advanced with relative ease across Iraq and has upset the already delicate security situation in Iraq (Muresanu-Ignat, 2014).

The Sects of Iraq

The Shi'a, the Sunnis, and the Kurds have populated Iraq for thousands of years and their history involves numerous fluctuations in the terms of their relationships. In modernity, their relationships have become strained, in part to external intervention, but also to the local government of the Iraqi state. Though some scholars dismiss the idea of Sunnis and the Shi'a being separate sects (Penaskovic, 2014), in the case of Iraq, the separation and conflict between the two groups has been shown to proportionate to the discord between the Arabs and the Kurds in Iraq. As will be seen, the Kurdish people have undergone perhaps the worst of the atrocities due to sectarian violence in the country. Here, the characteristics of each group will be explored along with the major points in their history since Iraq's formation. Here again, Iraq differs slightly from Lebanon. In Lebanon, the two competing ideologies of the Maronites and Muslims clashed whereas in Iraq much of the violence was intra-religious. Though the effects of the independent variable seem similar in both cases, this is an interesting distinction that warrants mention.

The Shi'a

The Shi'a branch of Islam has existed dating back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad. The word "Shi'a" means follower, a term used to describe the early members of the Islamic branch that supported Ali ibn Abi Talib, the first imam after Muhammad and one of the four rightly guided Caliphs. Following the death of the Prophet, the Shi'a split with the Sunni over disagreements on the leadership of the believers in the Muslim faith or the *ummah* (Panjwani and Tripp, 2012). They

do not differ significantly from the Sunni branch in terms of basic doctrine, but there are some variations in law and rituals. In the modern state of Iraq, Shi'a Muslims comprise the majority of the population. In 1920, the year that Iraq was established as a state, the Shi'a made up approximately 55% of the population. The sect lived predominately near the Tigris and the Euphrates, to the south of Baghdad. Despite their numerical majority in Iraq, the Shi'a have long been minorities in the Muslim world and have formed a strong identity as a persecuted and victimized group. The leadership of the Shi'a sect is predominantly located in the cities of Karbala and Najaf, which are of spiritual significance to the sect (Baram, 1991). A 1991 British census recorded the Shi'a as numbering at 1,500,000 out of a total population of 2,857, 077 in Iraq. The vast majority of this number were Shi'a Arabs, followed by about 5% Persians, and less than 1% Indian (Nakash, 1994).

During Ottoman rule, the Shi'a were excluded from serving in the government and this tradition continued under the governance of King Faisal, installed by the British government in 1921. Despite comprising a smaller part of the overall population, the Sunnis comprised the majority of leadership positions in both the military and civil service. The Shi'a largely served as foot soldiers in the army, many were peasants, and were not privy the same education as Sunni Arabs had access to (Baram, 1991). Although accustomed to this type of treatment, the continued repression of the Shi'a added sustained fuel to their identity as a persecuted minority. In 1911, prior to the establishment of Iraq under the British

mandate, an Italian occupation of Libya had a strong influence on the ethnic identity of the Shi'a in Iraq. Poetry at the time reflected how these attacks had a profound effect on the sense of victimhood held by the Shi'a afterwards (Nakash, 1994). These feelings only continued to increase after British control of the Iraqi region did nothing to improve their situation, and even after the withdrawal of British forces. Persecution, however, has not eliminated discord and even violence among the Shi'a themselves. Some of the conflict in recent years has occurred between the Shi'a, especially in the southern region of Iraq. The animosity has arisen out of disagreements over whether there should be federal structure over the southern areas that produce large amounts of oil (Panjwani and Tripp, 2012).

Before and during the rule of Saddam Hussein, the Shi'a faced repression and sometimes violence at the hands of the state. However, as they still consisted of a majority of the population, their persecution was not as acute as the kind experienced by the Kurds in the north. At the time of the First Gulf War in the 1990's, the Shi'a felt a new wave of repression by Hussein. The Shi'a, feeling abandoned by the U.S. government in their struggles for better representation, rose up against Saddam but ultimately failed. Hussein quickly addressed all Shi'a movements that could be viewed as threatening. This repression sparked the beginning of the Sadrist movement, which would eventually become critical (Hagan, 2015). After the fall of Saddam Hussein, the Shi'a gained power under the new administration established by the U.S. and proceeded to benefit from a turn of the tables in the Sunni-Shi'a power balance (Ismael, 2008).

The Shi'a in Iraq followed a different type of leadership model than other Shi'a parties, such as in Iran and Lebanon. Rather than purely clerical or non-clerical leadership, Iraq's leadership in post-Saddam Iraq combined Islamic scholars and non-scholars in support of a technocratic regime that follows Islamic tenets. This type of organization was seen during the rise of Hizb ad-Da'wa al-Islamiyya party (Da'wa party) as a response to Arab nationalism following anti-British revolts in Najaf in 1918. The ideology for this party drew highly on the works of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, a prominent figure in the Shi'a community who will be explored in further detail later. The party's more moderate stance in terms of religious leadership combined with non-religious leaders made them attractive in the public eye, however it still struggled to implement Islamic law effectively and suffered with maintaining unity within the party (Shanahan, 2004). Nouri al-Maliki, a Shi'a politician, was a member of the Da'wa party. Al-Maliki was appointed prime minister with backing by the U.S. government His administration ultimately failed to unify the country and to govern it effectively (Haddad, 2014).

Following the rise of ISIL, Nouri al-Maliki was pressured to step down as the Iraqi PM after a long period of disillusionment with his policies of repression. In the 2014 elections, a member of the Kurdish Democratic Party, Fuad Masum, was elected by the Iraqi Parliament to serve as President of Iraq. Masum charged then Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Haider al-Abadi, now Prime Minister, with forming a new government. The government is seeking to address the problem of ISIL and the instability it has brought to the country and region.

The Sunni

The Sunni sect of the Islam arose alongside the Shi'a, also at the time of the Prophet. Their early followers followed the caliphs that succeeded Mohammed as leaders of the *ummah* and comprise the majority of Muslims in the world today. Sunnis in Iraq have enjoyed the position of being the "norm" in the country, and holding the majority of power although they comprise a numerical minority in the state. Between 17-20% of the population of Iraq at the time of its establishment were Sunni Muslims and made up the majority of the residents in Baghdad (Baram, 1991).

During the 1920 Revolt against Britain, the Sunnis, the Shi'a, and the Kurds collaborated against the British occupiers in a fashion that seemed to indicate that sectarian divides did not exist between these parties at the time. However, despite coming together against a common enemy, the Sunni still continued to enjoy the greatest position of power among the three and went on to benefit the most from the subsequent reign of King Faisal (Haddad, 2013). Part of the reason for this is that the Sunni were more willing to collaborate with the British in the rebuilding of the Iraqi government and invested themselves in gaining a foothold in the new ruling body. The Shi'a on the other hand were less preoccupied with gaining political office due to waiting for the twelfth Imam to return (Panjwani and Tripp, 2012). This problem was exacerbated by the Sunni attempts to create a sense of Iraqi nationalism that was essentially attempting to introduce Iraq to pan-Arabism. This created a feeling of alienation for the Shi'a and the Kurds, who associated pan-

Arabism with Sunni Islam (Dawisha, 2013). Conflicts arose between the Sunnis and the Iraqi minorities throughout the decades leading to the U.S. invasion, but the consensus of the literature points towards 2003 as being the tipping point of the breakdown in sectarian relations. The Sunnis were usurped from the long-held position of power as the U.S. government engaged in a de-Ba'athification program aimed at eradicating Saddam Hussein's supporters from governing positions (Haddad, 2014). The Sunnis, however, encountered a problem in mobilizing themselves to stand up for their rights because up until then they had never been unified under a sectarian identity. As the Sunnis within Iraq had not experienced consistent persecution based on their religious identities, they had not formulated the same sense of victimhood that had become so deeply rooted in Shi'a and Kurdish identities. The Sunnis viewed themselves as the "norm" of society, and thus did not know how to rally around their sectarian identity with symbols, rituals, and key figures in the same way that Shi'a Muslims had for decades. It did not take long for them to recognize and become unhappy with the new government where the Shi'a were given the ruling positions and become significant political actors (Haddad, 2014). The Sunnis responded by resisting the democracy that the U.S. tried to install using insurgency and terrorist tactics. The U.S. dismantlement of the Iraqi army, largely Sunni fighters, left many young men with little recourse but to join armed Sunni insurgent groups. They even sided with al-Qaeda in their fight against the U.S. occupation. The Iraqi nationalism that had been so highly stressed by Sunni rulers quickly disintegrated as Iraq became highly factionalized along

sectarian lines (Khedery, 2015). The imbalance of power led to years of instability and sectarian conflicts between the Sunni and the Shi'a and Kurds, which involved a peak in violence in 2006 during the civil war. After the U.S. withdrew from Iraq, the sectarian violence had settled down relative to its 2003 period of high levels of conflict, but that stability proved to be short lived. Sunni militants from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) arose and came through the north of Iraq, rapidly defeating Iraqi forces, and easily taking large portions of land. ISIL consists of former Ba'athist fighters who strongly opposed the now Shi'a dominated government.

The Kurds

While both the Sunni and Shi'a sects experienced marginalization and violence throughout various times in their history, neither has undergone the same types of repression as the Kurdish sect of Iraq. The Kurdish people are natives of the land they inhabit, and thus their history dates back thousands of years with no determinable origin. The area known as "Kurdistan" is comprised of the mountainous region on the borders of Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey. The Kurds do not speak one common language, rather various dialects. The majority of Kurds are actually Sunni Muslims, however their ethnic identity takes precedence over their religious affiliations. The Kurds currently comprise about 25% of the population in Iraq, numbering at approximately 4 million people. The theme of Kurdish history revolves around an endless struggle for autonomy (Yildiz, 2004). After the fall of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I, the Kurds hoped for the chance to gain

autonomy under the Treaty of Sevres. However, this treaty was voided in 1923, dashing the Kurds' hopes as the British established the mandate for Iraq under King Faisal. Even after independence from Britain, the Kurds failed to break free from Arab Iraq. While the Sunni and Shi'a had continuous strife over centralized government, the Kurds pushed for self-government within Iraq. At best, however, the Kurds were only granted minority rights. Being isolated from the rest of the world, the Kurds had little leverage to advance their sect's agenda. They do, however, have a strong militia known as the *peshmerga* and plenty of natural defenses due to their geographic location, which permit them to engage in guerilla warfare (Bengio, 2012). Under Barzani in 1918-1946, the Kurds gained some political direction and in 1946, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDPT) was formed. The Kurdish national movement appeared during the 1960's. After the rise of the Baath regime in 1963, the Kurds began to consider the idea of federalism as a method of obtaining autonomy. Once these ideas were rejected, the Kurds escalated their violence intermittently until 1966. During the 1980s, the al-Anfal campaigns were conducted against the Kurds, attacks that eventually were identified as genocide (HRW, 1995). Following Saddam Hussein's failed invasion of Kuwait, the Kurdish people were able to establish the Kurdish Regional in 1992, a step closer to autonomy. Though the Kurds initially were pleased with the U.S. occupation of Iraq, they soon found that the new Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki was challenging to work with. After Haider al-Abadi became prime minister in 2014, relations between the groups improved and Kurds were permitted to enter the new

government. Despite their having no direct involvement in the current crisis involving ISIL, the Kurds and the *peshmerga* have been drawn into the conflict. The Kurdish forces at first were unable to stave off all ISIL advances until they began receiving help through air strikes. They are currently collaborating with foreign and local forces to counter further ISIL advancements (Strategic Comments, 2015).

Disparities and Grievances

The two independent variables of disparities and grievances between groups are closely related since a disparity often gives rise to a grievance. For the purposes of this case study, these two variables will be examined in conjunction with other, following by a separate discussion of the third independent variable; regime strength. The variable of foreign intervention has already been thoroughly examined in the historical section.

All three sectarian groups in Iraq share very similar disparities and grievances, although they differ in scale. As has been seen in the literature on the different sects, disparities include political, economic, educational, and social differences. These have sparked numerous grievances that culminated to unrest in forms ranging from protests to civil war. In the early Iraqi state, an evident disparity was the lack of representation for Shi'a and Kurds in the Arab state. The pan-Arab rulers of the state advocated strongly for unity with Abd al-Nasser's United Arab Republic, a union that would be seen as the elevation of the Sunnis over the Shi'a and Kurds. When General Abd al-Karim Qasim led a coup to overthrow the Hashemite Iraqi monarchy, he did so because of the grievances of the

inhabitants of Iraq against the government (Baram, 1991). These grievances included the exclusion largely felt by the repressed minorities in the Arab state. This was remedied slightly for the Shi'a by focusing on building feelings of Iraqi nationalism rather than pan-Arabism. However, this did not appease the Kurds, who did not identify as falling in the same group as their Arab neighbors. After Qasim was overthrown himself, the successive regimes made no effort to integrate Shi'a into the government, leading to continued underrepresentation (Baram, 1991). Another disparity present between the Shi'a and the Sunni is access to education. The Shi'a advocated for more resources to teach, schools in the countryside, along with Shi'a scholars being allowed to participate in educational missions (Bashkin, 2009).

After the U.S. invasion, the Sunnis aired several grievances based on disparities that they perceived around them. When the U.S. began its process of De-Ba'athification of the Iraqi government, the Sunni felt they were unfairly discriminated against due to their religious or ethnic identities. However, the hostility towards Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath regime was so great that U.S. generals completely dismantled the Iraqi army, leaving thousands of young Sunni men unemployed and unable to find work elsewhere. The Iraqi Constitution drafted by the CPA and other Iraqi representatives excluded Sunnis from political participation in many high-level governmental positions. The Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), a governing body put in place soon after the regime change in 2003, included 13 Shi'a Arabs, five Sunni Arabs, five Kurds, a Turkoman, and a

Christian. This ultimately led to increased identity politics. Sunnis felt particularly victimized because the Shi'a were now in the ruling position, something the Sunnis were not accustomed to. The Sunnis responded by not voting in the parliamentary elections, leaving them essentially disenfranchised. Many of them joined the insurgencies against al-Maliki and the U.S. occupiers (Haddad, 2014).

The Sunnis and Kurds had strong grievances against Nouri al-Maliki. Ayad Allawi, the interim Prime Minister of Iraq from 2004-2005, described the situation in Iraq as, "the country is slipping back into the clutches of a dangerous new one-man rule, which inevitably will lead to full dictatorship" (Dodge, 2012). Although the U.S. government had hoped al-Maliki would unify Iraq, the Prime Minister suffered from extreme paranoia that others, specifically the newly marginalized Sunni community, would usurp his rule. Rather than creating an inclusive government, Maliki brought those he knew were loyal to him, including family members and members of the Da'wa Party, to his government. His son, Ahmed Maliki, was appointed as al-Maliki's deputy chief of staff, which made him directly responsible for the prime minister's and the nation's security (Dodge, 2013).

Nouri al-Maliki showed his sectarian leanings through a reluctance to pursue rouge Shiite militias, but was completely opposed to Sunni insurgents in the Anbar Awakening Movement, a rise of Sunni fighters who came alongside the U.S. soldiers to counter al-Qaeda. He viewed them as still being loyal to Saddam Hussein and feared that they would be a threat to his government (Parker, 2013). His operatives began carrying out a campaign of terror against the Sunni population in Iraq,

including assassinations and systematic imprisonments of Sunni communities (Dodge, 2012). Groups of young men were arrested during the night and often never heard from again (Al-Ali, 2014). Much of al-Maliki's power came from his consolidation of power over the armed forces. Al-Maliki appointed people close to himself as military leaders and created two organizations that had not been part of the Iraqi constitution. These offices, the Office of the Commander in Chief, and the Provisional Command Centres, helped Maliki gain a tighter hold over the armed forces in Iraq. He named Farouk al-Araji, a loyal ally, to head the Office of the Commander in Chief. In this role, Maliki and al-Araji issued orders directly to the military officers on the field, circumventing the chain of command and removing parliamentary oversight from their actions (Dodge, 2012). They removed Kurdish, Sunni, and questionable Shi'a leaders from the office or minimized their roles. Al-Maliki also came to command the Iraq Special Operations Forces and created the Counter-Terrorism Bureau to run it. These Special Forces were responsible for conducting the mass arrests of Sunnis in Mosul and human rights officials who objected began to be threatened with arrests as well (Dodge, 2013). On the day after the last U.S. troops left Iraq, Maliki continued his repression of the Sunni minority by issuing an arrest warrant for Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi, a Sunni who had pushed for a more balanced, representative government. He was accused of terrorism and sentenced to death. In 2013, this led to protests against al-Maliki, which eventually led to revolt (Stratfor Geopolitical Diary, 2014).

The Kurds also experienced similar disparities in lack of education, housing, employment, and representation when compared to the other two groups. However, their grievances also included sustained military attacks, economic embargoes, forced displacement, destruction of native regions, and lastly and most significantly, genocide at the hands of Nouri al-Maliki. These combined with many broken promises for autonomy have alienated the Kurds from the rest of Arab Iraq (Yildiz, 2004). In order to put limits on Kurdish autonomy, al-Maliki began to place restrictions on their ability to export crude oil (Stratfor Geopolitical Diary, 2014). Due to his fear of losing power, al-Maliki succeeded in marginalizing all three sectarian communities within Iraq, including Shi'a that did not agree with his policies and ultimately led the state to increased division and violence.

The Regimes in Iraq

The regimes under exploration here will be the Ba'ath party, and the Coalitional Provisional Authority under the U.S. and Nouri al-Maliki. The conditions of sectarian conflict during each of these time periods will be assessed in the next section. This examination will focus on the ability of each regime to maintain a monopoly over violence, meaning the ability of the government to hold legitimate and exclusive ability to use force on its citizens (Weber, 2008).

Ba'ath Party

Syrian students who had heard Ba'ath ideas in Lebanon and Syria founded the Ba'ath party, a Sunni-led organization, in 1949 in Iraq. By 1958, the party had grown to only a few hundred. The Ba'ath joined Colonel Abd Al-Salam Arif in trying

to join immediately with al-Nasser's campaign in Egypt. When Qasim was removed from office, the Ba'athists took control of the party. The party ended up splitting into three groups, divided along personal, factional, and sectarian lines. Under the Ba'ath party rule, the balance of power was clearly obvious, with Ba'ath party leaders comprising sometimes the entirety of a governing body. No Shi'a served on the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), the highest decision-making institution in Iraq. Though the Ba'ath party spoke about being in the name of Sunni-Shi'a, their policies indicated otherwise (Baram, 1991).

From its earliest days in power, the Ba'ath party wasted no time in making an effort to bring Iraq under its full control. It used coercion on the Shi'a and the Kurdish population in order to subjugate them. In 1969, the Ba'athists shut down religious institutions and jailed hundreds of their students. The Shi'a soldiers who protested fighting in the campaign against the Kurds in 1974 angered the regime enough that they put five members of the al-Da'wa movement to death. The regime also tried to interfere in religious activities of the Shi'a, afraid of the link between Iraqi Shi'a and Iranian Shi'a. Many were deported, executed, or arrested. The Ba'athists also tried to control the Kurds and defeat their national movement. An agreement was reached between the two parties where the Kurdish right to autonomous rule was recognized, but it did not last. In 1974, the regime attacked the Kurds in the north again and destroyed the rebellion (Marr, 2011). In 1979 the power of the regime was firmly in the grasp of Saddam Hussein. The regime in this case had a fair amount of control of the monopoly of violence. However, his control

was maintained by brutal repression of others, meaning that the nation was not necessarily at peace or under just law and order. People could be arrested at any time for any reason. His tyrannical rule proved to be more precarious than he must have thought (Dawisha, 2013).

The Coalition Provisional Authority

The consensus of the literature on the actions of the U.S. government after the initial invasion of Iraq in 2003 is that at this crucial instance, failure to plan appropriately led to the instability that followed. First, the creation of the Coalition Provincial Authority contributed to the institutionalization of sectarianism in Iraq, as well as the beginning of the current widespread sectarian conflict. Second, the dismantlement of the Iraqi army gave rise to the insurgencies that plagued U.S. efforts in Iraq for years to follow. The purpose of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was to remove all trace of the previous Ba'ath Party administration. This principle of de-Ba'athification led the United States to commit various blunders that created an unstable system composed of inexperienced members from different Iraqi sects. In 2003, President George W. Bush appointed L. Paul Bremer III, a former Foreign Service officer, as the Presidential Envoy to oversee the reconstruction of Iraq. He immediately took control of the situation and dissolved the Iraqi Army and dismissed the members of the Ba'ath Party (Packer, 2005). Granted, Bremer was not allocated enough funds or personnel to be as effective as he could have been, but he also lacked the experience and regional knowledge to manage the incredibly complex problem of completely rebuilding the Iraqi government (Rieff, 2012).

One of the largest failures of the CPA was that it dismantled all standing institutions in Iraq, leaving a huge gap in the government that resulted in what Mueller (2005) referred to in his article for *Foreign Affairs* as an “instant failed state”. Additionally, all senior experienced members of government with ties to the Ba’ath Party were removed, an act that left the country run by appointees with little practical knowledge of the Iraqi government. The posts in the CPA were filled with members of the different ethnic and religious sects of Iraq, in the hopes of creating a representative government. However, this ultimately backfired as it resulted in voters casting their ballots along sectarian lines (Yamao, 2012). This was largely because the Iraqi people had no experience with democratic elections and there were no existing constituencies. Therefore, during the 2005 elections the only way parties could mobilize voters was through appeals to their religious or ethnic identities (Yamao, 2012). Although some argue that sectarianism is driven by loyalty ties to an ancient cultural past (Weiss, 2010), it is clear by looking at the situation before the pre-U.S. occupation to the climate directly after the 2005 elections that the CPA played a large role in creating conflict between the sects by enshrining separation in the sects by divvying up political posts within the CPA. The sectarianism in post-invasion Iraq resulted from this and other harmful decisions (Yousif, 2010).

A perhaps more dangerous move was the dissolution of the Iraqi army. This, in addition to the release of the Iraqi police force, left half a million people without employment, not counting those who depended on them for financial support. This,

combined with the loss of national institutions due to De-Ba'athification, left Iraq in a near lawless state (Monten, 2014). The Iraqi people were more at risk in this environment than they were under the violent rule of Saddam in terms of the crime rate. Getting rid of the Iraqi army was the most damaging aspect of Bremer's Iraqi plan. Removing the military and top officials in the government drove them to join insurgencies with Islamist militants, including Al Qaeda, as they were condemned to either unemployment because of their previous political affiliations or to brutal murder by those who were bent on taking revenge against Saddam's old associates (Chehab, 2005). Ultimately, the government under the CPA lacked monopoly over the use of force in Iraq.

Nouri al-Maliki

As has been previously discussed, al-Maliki brought discord and divisions to the Iraqi state by marginalizing the Sunnis, Kurds, and even part of the Shi'a population by removing Sunnis and Kurds from office and replacing them with loyalists. The complete control over the armed forces led to him being in charge of the official sources of violence in the state. However, unlike Saddam Hussein's regime, al-Maliki was unable to have a monopoly of violence over Iraq. Sunni insurgents operated constantly throughout his rule, to an extent that civil war broke out. His own government carried out extrajudicial killings and arrests, and thus neighborhoods that had once been safe were now dangerous to even walk through (Dodge, 2012). Not only did al-Maliki create an unsafe environment, he also neglected to continue building up the infrastructure in the country. After the

widespread looting and vandalism following Hussein's fall from power, the Iraqi state was slow to rebuild due to the inability to the government to provide safety, basic services, or the conditions for increased economic performance. In 2011, the United Nations estimated that only 26% of the population was connected to a public sewage network and only about 25% of the population could access safe drinking water. (Dodge, 2013). While working with the CPA, Nouri al-Maliki's government suffered from the violence that resulted from the dissolution of the army, as discussed above. After the U.S.' departure, he continued to suffer from violence as a result of his government's inability to completely quell the insurgents.

Sectarian Violence in Iraq

The sectarian groups in Iraq have all been identified, along with any disparities, grievances, and types of regimes that govern them. Throughout the chapter, there have been brief mentions of violent occurrences. In this final section, there will be a closer examination of the sectarian violence during the 1980s-1990s and the years 2003-present day in Iraq. This investigation will cover several of the most prominent incidents of violence in Iraq: the al-Anfal campaigns, the severe outbreak of fighting between 2006-2007 that escalated into civil war, and the various conflicts surrounding al-Maliki's regime and consequent fall to the Islamic State.

Al-Anfal Campaigns

In the year 1988, the Ba'athist regime under Saddam Hussein engaged in a horrific campaign to exterminate the Kurds in the northern part of Iraq. The attacks spanned from February 23rd to September 6t, and were carried out by Saddam

Hussein's cousin Ali Hassan al-Majid. He served as the secretary general of the Northern Bureau of Iraq's Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party. Al-Majid ordered the regular Iraqi army to carry out the attacks, assisted by military intelligence and the pro-government Kurdish militia. The attacks were a culmination of a series of processes. The Ba'ath party was trying to establish its control on Iraq and they ended up giving the Kurds a fair amount of autonomy. However, the regime purposefully gave the Kurds land that excluded large oil reserves. The Kurds did not accept his offer and in the mid 1970's, the regime began to turn against the Kurds, forcibly displacing them from their homes on Iraq's borders with Turkey and Iran. During the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980's, the Kurdish army, the *peshmerga*, began to grow, led by Mas'oud. The KDP assisted Iran to capture an Iraqi border town, which brought back quick retaliation from the Ba'athist regime. Concerned about the relationship between the KDP and Iran, Hussein gave the order for al-Majid to proceed with his campaign to not only counter, but also destroy the Kurds (HRW, 1995). The estimated damage of the attacks was devastating. 3,000 villages were destroyed, 1.5 million people had to flee their homes, and there were reports of mass executions of civilians. Approximately 180,000 people were killed during the genocide. During these attacks, the Ba'athist troops used chemical weapons against the people in the villages. Women and children were left in desolate places to fend for themselves, and men and boys were taken away in vehicles and never returned. Kurdish troops tried to resist but were no match for the superior government forces. The infamous attack on the town of Halabja is known for being both bombed from

the air and then attacked with chemical weapons. It was the most severe attack in the Anfal campaigns and served to greatly demoralize the Kurdish fighters (Yildiz, 2004). On the continuum of sectarian violence, genocide lies on the higher end. This type of violence remains in the realm of sectarian violence because the *peshmerga* had been warring with the Ba'athist regime for years for political advantages. The Kurds were simply outnumbered and overpowered when the Ba'athists decides to strike back with their full force. The al-Anfal campaigns are only one example of the violence carried during the time period examine period. Saddam Hussein systematically crushed rival sects as he continued his reign of terror, yet because he held the upper hand in terms of force, he remained unchecked for decades.

Violence After 2003

When the U.S. entered Iraq in 2003, it quickly took the country and completely changed the entire social order. The Shi'a found themselves in power for the first time in decades, and the leaders took full advantage of their new positions. The Sunnis, findings themselves cast out of their long held government or military roles, had no recourse to address grievances except to begin insurgent movements that eventually culminated in civil war from 2006-2007. As early as 2004, there were bursts of violent activity and there was an increasing feeling of marginalization among the Sunnis (Marr, 2011). Sunni insurgency occurred mainly in the major Iraqi provinces of Baghdad, Diyala, Anbar, and Salah ad-Din. It was estimated that close to 90% of the insurgents operating in the fifty or so insurgent groups in these areas were Iraqi Sunnis, many former army members. They initially resisted what

they perceived to be the Shi'a and Kurdish take-over of the government, along with perceived U.S. imperialism and fears about a lack of Iraqi military strength against rival Iran. The events in Abu Ghraib prison sparked increased violence as well (DeFronzo, 2010). In 2005, Shi'a families began to be targeted by Sunni neighbors, and a few extremists began killing merchants for violations of minor religious violations. Even before the escalation of violence in 2006, there were 700 murders in one month (Marr, 2011). The excessive amount of time it took to form a functioning government after Nouri al-Maliki became prime minister exacerbated tensions to reach a boiling point, which resulted in the bombing of the al-Askari Mosque in Samarra, a place of great religious significance for the Shi'a. This subsequent sectarian conflict lasted until 2007, resulting in 700,000 people displaced from this conflict alone, putting the number of Iraqi refugees at 1.12 million (Dawisha, 2010). Neighborhoods were completely destroyed and the death toll rose to 34,400 (Marr, 2011). The civil war arose at the time when the U.S. was trying to establish a new, functioning Iraqi army. However, the process of forming this army did not begin until 2004 and as the sectarian violence escalated in 2006, the timeframe of handing over responsibility for security in Iraq was pushed back 18 months. This contributed significantly to the civil war, as the Iraqi Army was ill prepared to maintain security as the U.S. troops began to withdraw (Dodge, 2012).

The security vacuum left in Iraq after the dissolution of the army and the departure of the U.S. created perfect conditions in Iraq for the rise of militant groups wanting to gain control of the state. Al-Qaeda, having been driven out of

Iraq through the efforts of the U.S. and the Sunnis of Anbar, regrouped some of its members in Syria. It was these members who advanced into Iraq as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as ISIL/ISIS/Daesh. The cities of Mosul and Tikrit fell to the ISIL warriors with astonishing ease. Mosul had very few defenses, and there were many reports of Iraqi soldiers abandoning their stations and fleeing before ISIL's initial attack on the city. Tikrit fell to ISIL after mismanagement of the city's defenses and lack of action by Baghdad (Al-Ali, 2014). The systematic disenfranchisement felt by the Sunni community is credited with helping the rise of ISIS, as the exclusion of Sunnis by al-Maliki led to the security vacuum being formed where the Ba'athist party used to rule. Ba'athist supporters and other Sunnis lent support to ISIS as it swept across the country (Kayani, Ahmed, and Shoaib, 2015). The violence that occurred because of the deteriorating security situation in Iraq ultimately made it easier for the terrorist organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant to conquer large areas of territory in both Iraq and Syria. Currently, there is a question about what the future of the region will be. The Kurds continue to resist against ISIL, still hoping to one day gain autonomy from the Arab Iraq. All three are preoccupied maintaining a functioning government in spite of ISIL and rebuilding the state of Iraq from all the devastation it has suffered for several long decades

Analysis of Sectarian Violence in Iraq

This case study seeks to offer insights into how disparities, grievances, differing regimes, and foreign intervention affect the level of Iraqi sectarian violence. The

case of Iraq clearly illustrates the independent variables and their grave impact during several time periods of Iraq's history. The disparities and grievances that were felt across all sectarian lines were of such a severe nature that it is not surprising to see frequent escalating security situations. Not only were the Shi'a economically and socially marginalized in Iraq during Saddam Hussein's rule, but their lives were also threatened during his oppressive campaigns to quell any rebellion. His imprisonment and executions of dissenters created an atmosphere of rising tensions within the Shi'a community. The massacres at Anfal created an extremely dire situation for the Kurdish people as Saddam proved to be almost the definition of an existential threat to their survival. However, due to the iron rule by Saddam, neither marginalized group was able to mount an effective resistance until the arrival of the U.S. army in 2003. The role of foreign intervention in Iraq became key during this moment. While British rule initially forced disparate sects together into one nation, Saddam Hussein would likely have exploited his power to bring advantages to his Sunni sect regardless of the demographics dwelling within Iraq's borders. The U.S. invasion, on the other hand, involved willing and planned manipulation of sectarian power allocations through its establishment of the CPA. The abolition of the Ba'ath party created a newly marginalized group that lacked the ability to regroup itself peacefully. The Sunni became driven by existential threats as well, suffering violent suppression at the hands of the freshly empowered Shi'a government under Maliki. Maliki's paranoia about losing his power over Iraq led him to systematically oppress the Sunni and continually exclude the Kurds from

the political process in Iraq. Driven by its own interests, both economic and ideological, the U.S. military stayed in Iraq for years trying to rebuild the state. Upon its withdrawal, however, everything collapsed with the arrival of the Islamic State and its former Ba'ath party members hoping to regain their former power over the region.

After examining this case, I am able to observe the interaction of the independent variables with the dependent variable for sectarian violence. Though this singular case does not definitely prove causation, it is clear that foreign intervention changed sectarian dynamics enough that violence increased to similar if not increased levels than before. The existential threats that the Sunni faced following Saddam's fall, combined with their lack of options for employment and their new disparate social and economic conditions, seemed to drive them to join insurgencies which eventually acquired enough power to revolt into civil war. Therefore, I believe this case serves to illustrate that relationships do exist between the variables and sectarian violence. This will be further examined in the case of Turkey, where the variables appear in different forms than they have in Lebanon and Iraq.

The Case of the Republic of Turkey

The previous cases of Iraq and Lebanon have served as examples of high levels of sectarian violence within Middle Eastern countries. The final case study examined here, looking at the state of Turkey, will highlight a country with low levels of sectarian conflict in the same region. Although similar populations reside within the country, Turkey has enjoyed relative stability and non-violent transitions of power throughout its modern history. Only in recent days has Turkey experienced rising sectarian violence, mainly involving nearby conflicts spilling over its borders. Turkey has been constructed from a shared sense of national identity, with roughly 75 percent of its people identifying as Turks (Howard 2001, 4). This sense of community, as will be explored later in the chapter, is a unique aspect of the state when compared to Iraq and Lebanon. While Turkey fell under the Western Mandate system after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, it united in ways that Iraq and Lebanon were unable to. While separate communities definitely exist inside Turkey, their ability to air grievances and fight for representation in a non-violent manner, as will be seen, are important factors of the stability within the nation. After an introduction to the history of the country, the different sects within Turkey will be described. Disparities, grievances, and strength of Turkish regimes will then be examined to determine their relationship to the lack of violence seen in the case of the Turkish nation.

Turkey: A Brief History

The Anatolian region where modern day Turkey exists has an ancient history. As the territory connecting Asia and Europe, it has always served as a central hub for imperial rule. In an effort to regain lost power and strive towards equal standing with the West, the rulers during the Ottoman period instituted the *Tanzimat* reforms across their territories. These reforms were meant to strengthen the empire through military and administrative reforms, as well as changes to taxation policies, legal codes, and economic liberalization (Findley 2010, 76). In the later years of these reforms, a group of intellectuals known as the “Young Ottomans” rose up to oppose the *millet* systems of separate religious governance in the empire. They supported parliamentary government and a constitution where all citizens would have rights (Gettleman and Schaar 2003, 76). The “Young Turks,” a group comprised of military officers and young professionals, who had been educated in Western-styled schools, continued this movement for a representative government. Among these young leaders was Mustafa Kemal, a man still renowned as the founder of the modern state of Turkey (Gettleman and Schaar 2003, 77).

In July of 1908, the Young Turks of the Third and the Second Army revolted in Macedonia, demanding the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution of 1876. The officers who mutinied belonged to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), which had been established in Paris in 1889 during Sultan Abdulhamid’s reign to oppose him. Ahmed Riza, the son of an Ottoman parliament member, led the Young Turks with his vision of a secular Turkish nation that sought to embrace modern

European ideals, especially those of scientific and rational advancement. He strongly opposed European intervention in the region and fought for nationalist economic policies (Howard 2001, 73). The CUP sent messages to all major towns in European provinces and announced that the constitution would be reinstated. The reaction of the general public in Istanbul was very positive. The populations living there at the time, including Muslims, Jews, and Christians, hoped the reform would improve their lives (Zurcher 2004, 93). Although the sultan was not removed from his position, the Young Turks worked to control the government's politics from behind closed doors. They prepared for parliamentary elections, in which the CUP would only run against one opponent, the Ottoman Liberal Party. The CUP won overwhelmingly in the elections, winning all but one of the 288 seats of parliament. Ahmet Riza became the speaker. However, this early government angered the general public when they ordered the resignation of the Grand Vezir Kamil Pasha in 1909. The following revolt was initially fueled by the Muhammadan Union, an extremist organization, and eventually large crowds who demanded the reinstatement of *sharia* law (Howard 2001, 74-75).

This uprising was ultimately suppressed and in 1918, with the Ottoman Empire's collapse, the Young Turks began forming a new regime (Howard 2001, 76). The Turkish leaders faced two struggles: creating a united nationality and retaking the western Anatolian territory from Greece (Findley 2010, 219). In 1919, Mustafa Kemal, an Ottoman commander during World War I, emerged as a leader in the resistance movement, becoming president of a standing committee created by the

Sivas congress in Erzurum, Turkey. The Sivas congress represented a mixed meeting of the Anatolian and Thracian communities. Kemal stopped communication between these provinces and Istanbul, growing his power. The standing committee eventually moved to Ankara, where it began establishing the beginnings of a national government. In 1920, the parliament adopted the National Pact, declaring independence of the Ottoman lands and using the name “Turkey” for these territories. The Grand National Assembly formed on April 23, 1920, with Mustafa Kemal as president (Findley 2010, 222). A fundamental aspect of this program was the establishment the Turkish national identity was including all Muslim Ottomans, including the Turks as well as the Kurds, along with other minorities (Zurcher 2004, 139). Several conflicts and a Turkish-Greek war ensued following the rearrangements of the territories of Istanbul and other Turkish territories. After several years of conflict, and high mortality rates, the war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. Turkey, unlike many other Ottoman governments, had not incurred huge debts to the West, but rather to Germany, which was unable to collect due to its defeat in World War I (Zurcher 2004, 165). In 1923, Turkey gained international recognition as an independent republic. Mustafa Kemal declared their firm commitment to modernity and equality and their strong opposition to maintaining traditional hierarchy. The center of power within the country shifted from Istanbul to Ankara (Ahmad 2003, 85). A rival party rose up against Kemal among the conservatives, called the Progressive Republican Party (PRP). The Kurdish rebellion in 1925 gave Kemal’s Republican People’s Party (RPP)

the ability to dissolve this challenge to their authority and institute new reforms that established the autocracy (Ahmad 2003, 86). Executions of people involved in assassination attempts against Kemal quickly cemented his unopposed rule (Ahmad 2003, 87).

Mustafa Kemal, later given the name Atatürk, was determined to eradicate Islam from the governmental system in Turkey. Seeing the secular governments in the West, he worked to emulate those in order to modernize the Turkish state (Stone 2010, 156). In 1928, the article in the Turkish constitution that declared Islam as the official state religion was removed (Ahmad 2003, 87). The languages used within the state were changed from the Ottoman Arab-Persian alphabet and replaced with Latin and Turkish (Stone 2010, 157). These reforms brought a cultural end to the imperial and Ottoman past, however the single-party system and external economic dependency were significant features of the early Turkish state (Findley 2010, 248). The momentum toward secularism, including the changes in language, clothes, calendars and more, created close similarities between Turkey and Europe. While the ethnic composition of the Ottoman Anatolia was a divisive factor, the fall of the empire allowed most of the ethnic conflicts to resolve themselves from domestic into foreign policy issues. The suppressions of the Kurdish rebellion serve as an example of this conflict shift, as will be seen in present day Turkey. While Islam was impossible to completely suppress, the secular Turkish leaders used slogans to create a national consciousness of Turks, secular and religious alike (Findley 2010, 257).

In 1930, Atatürk decided to implement the multi-party system again, feeling secure enough in his grasp of power. He asked a friend, Fethi Bey, to establish the Free Republic Party to act as loyal opponents to the RPP, but his plan backfired when the party gained widespread popularity (Ahmad 2003, 87). Bey, who had no aspirations to usurp Atatürk, dissolved his party. Shortly after, a Dervish sheikh in the town of Menemen called for a return to traditional Islamic law, gaining the support of the masses that were suffering the effects of the 1930 global economic depression, finding comfort in the familiarity of religious symbols and customs. A misstep taken by Atatürk's party was the failure to fully explain their reforms to the Turkish people and show their intentions to bring prosperity to the nation. The outcome of the discussions following the events in Menemen was the Six Arrows, which were six guiding principles that were subsequently enshrined into the constitution in 1937. These six principles included republicanism, nationalism/patriotism, populism, statism, secularism, and reformism (Ahmad 2003, 88). Everyone who lived in the state could claim Turkish identity, which proved to be cornerstone of creating the national identity. Secular governance varied in terms of interpretation, with some taking a liberal position of equality while others saw it as a need to suppress Islam (Ahmad 2003, 89). Atatürk's policies also impacted Turkey's foreign relations. While he kept friendly relations with the Soviets, Atatürk strove to keep Turkey completely independent from Western colonialism or allow the Soviet Union to treat the Turkish state with condescension (Ahmad 2003, 90). He continued to maintain Turkey's neutral stance

and equal standing on the world stage until his death on November 10, 1938 (Ahmad 2003, 92). During World War II, Turkey's neutrality stance guided its entrance into treaties. While allied with Britain and France, Turkey included a provision in their treaty stating it would be exempt from supporting them if they went to war with the Soviet Union. Near the end of the war, Turkey shifted from its neutral stance to cut supplies from Germany and joined the Allied Side and the United Nations. Eventually in 1947, Turkey became the recipient of U.S. aid through the Marshall Plan and sought entrance into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Findley 2010, 265).

After Atatürk's death, Ismet İnönü became the second president of Turkey in a succession that proved essential to keeping order within the nation. The successful transition of power proved promising for the young nation's stability and his commitment to keeping Turkey out of World War II helped maintain internal order and avoided foreign entanglement (Howard 2001, 109). His presidency ended in the 1950 elections when the new Democrat Party took power, bringing an end to the single-party era in Turkey (Findley 2010, 266). Contributing factors to the population's desire for change in leadership revolved around policy choices implemented by İnönü during World War II. With the National Defense Law, İnönü gave his government expansive control over the economy, along with the authority to force peasants to work with low wages on public works projects. The size of the military grew to over a million soldiers, mainly from the peasantry. High taxes were also imposed, especially on the non-Muslim population to finance these expansions

in military and production (Findley 2010, 267). These actions alienated the Turkish population, both Muslim and non-Muslim, leading to the formation of the Democrat Party. The Democrats proposed creating a “little America” in Turkey, a vision that attracted those who wished for democracy over authoritarianism (Ahmad 2003, 107). Under the Menderes presidency in the late 1950’s, the Turkish government began losing control over the economy and was forced to receive increased loans from the U.S., the International Monetary Fund, and the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (Howard 2001, 125). Turkey became increasingly pro-Western, with President Menderes placing Turkish soldiers into a U.N. force in the Korean War (Findley 2010, 309).

A defining moment in Turkish politics occurred in 1960 when a military coup d’etat run by Turkish military officers removed Menderes from power. The populations of Istanbul and Ankara were happy about this change, while the Anatolian rural population was less pleased due to the perception that the revolt occurred on behalf of the RPP, Atatürk’s former party. However, the officers, who called themselves the National Unity Committee (NUC) declared nonpartisan goals in their re-establishment of the government (Howard 2001, 134). The NUC set a precedent that should the civilian government lose its effectiveness, the military should intervene but only temporarily and that ultimately civilian rule should be restored (Findley 2010, 310). This held true for the subsequent military coups in 1971 and 1980 (Findley 2010, 306). The Second Republic, built by the military and university professors who were charged with drawing up a new constitution,

included provisions to prevent a complete monopoly of power by one party, as had happened with the Democratic Party and the RPP. A senate was established along with the provisions that all legislation would have to pass in both chambers of government. An independent court was created to strike down unconstitutional laws and the media was given full autonomy. Proportional representation and a bill of civil liberties were also introduced into the constitution. The military was given a constitutional role as an advisor on security matters (Zurcher 2004, 245).

Inönü's RPP won elections again in 1961 but were ultimately unable to keep legitimacy among the Turkish people as instability marked his government was unable to maintain stability and cooperate with the rising Justice Party (JP). In 1963, Inönü resigned and President Gürsel invited the head of the Justice party to help create a new government with elements of the RPP and JP (Howard 2001, 138). However, this government only lasted for slightly over a year as the entire nation was concerned with the Cyprus issue, in which Turkey became embroiled in Cyprus' bid for independence from Britain (Ahmad 2003, 129). The JP won the elections in 1965, gaining an absolute majority of seats in the assembly and winning former Democratic Party supporters. During the years that President Süleyman Demirel was in office, Turkey enjoyed good economic growth but his domestic policies came under attack from labor unions and the religious Right (Ahmad 2003, 131). Even members of his own party were alienated by the skewed economic growth, especially the artisan middle class since they did not benefit as much as the elite (Howard 2001, 139). By the early 1970's, however, the economy began to

deteriorate due to lack of planning and structure. The voting public became increasingly divided, with small political parties vying for positions in parliament representing various increasingly extremist groups on the left and right (Howard 2001, 143). After the coup of 1971, martial law was imposed on the public and violent groups were suppressed by the military. Demirel resigned and the Turkish military took control, although without a clear plan as to how to lift Turkey out of its difficult economic circumstances (Howard 2001, 147). The Cyprus issue continued to spiral out of control and ultimately it forced Turkey to increase its defense budget by 50 percent and damaged Turkey's relationship with Europe and the United States. The U.S. cut off military aid and the Turkish government shut down U.S. military bases in Turkey, except for the Incirlik base's NATO operations (Howard 2001, 151). Even when the Cyprus crisis was resolved, subsequent Turkish governments continued to be composed of unstable coalitions. The Arab-Israeli war in 1973 brought another economic hit to Turkey due to rising import and petroleum costs (Howard 2001, 152).

The 1970s brought increasing civil unrest from the marginalized groups who were the targets of a military crackdown for their opposition. The violent campaigns against these groups led to public order collapsing and creating an environment nearing civil war in 1980. Leftist and right wing parties began clashing in gun battles and with bombing in public places. Sunni and Shi'a groups became involved in these conflicts as well, although both were largely affiliated with the left. Their occasional clashes killed several people in the late 1970s (Howard 2001, 153). The

Second Republic failed soon after in 1980 and the violent encounters between Muslim sects continued, along with the begging of Kurdish separatism in the southeast. 2,500 people died in the last couple years of the Second republic and more continued to die after 1980 (Howard 2001, 154). In 1980, a third military coup occurred and brought about the dissolution of parliament and a suspension of the constitution. General Kenan Evren, leader of the military coup, renewed efforts to revise Turkey's political structure thoroughly before handing off power to civilian rule. The Council of Europe and the European Community halted aid to Turkey. NATO pushed for the Turkish nation to return to democratic rule (Howard 2001, 159). The new military regime hurried to restore law and order in the nation, shutting down all union activity and establishing a curfew. Thousands were arrested for suspicion of involvement in terrorist organizations and after the first few months of the coup, political violence decreased dramatically (Howard 2001, 161). The new constitution placed more power into the hands of the president and National Security Council, along with limiting freedom of the press and freedom of trade unions. Infringements on civil liberties followed as well, citing the national interest, public order, and national security. In the referendum to approve the constitution, the compulsory vote turned out the "yes" result, although the Kurdish population had a relatively high number of "no" votes (Zurcher 2004, 281). New parties continued to form during the 1980's, but if they resembled old parties too closely or were directed by former party leaders they were shut down. Three parties received permission to participate in the 1983 elections: The Nationalist Democracy

Party, the Populist Party, and the Motherland Party headed by Turgut Özal. The Motherland party won the first post-coup parliament elections (Howard 2001, 165).

Economic disparities widened during Özal's rule, with the state continuing to take control of expanding the economy. However, despite rising economic growth in the major urban areas, Turkey was denied full membership into the European Economic Community (Howard 2001, 167). The trend during this time period involves liberalized economics, but not political liberalization (Howard 2001, 168). The question of state secularism continued to rise to the forefront, notably with the issue of whether wearing the *hijab* or Muslim headscarf was permissible in public. While there was no danger of a significant movement to establish an Islamic state in Turkey, Islamic fundamentalists occasionally carried out random acts of violence during the 1980s. Only 7 percent of the Turkish population was in favor of sharia law as the basis of the legal system. Unlike other nations Turkey lacked a charismatic spiritual leader to mobilize such a movement (Howard 2001, 170). By the late 1980s, economic inflation rose past 80 percent, which had a significant detrimental impact on support for Özal. The Motherland Party lost several large cities in the 1989 elections, but Özal won the presidency (Howard 2001, 172). With Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Turkey was thrown in the middle of the regional instability and received a flow of Iraq-Kurdish refugees, which exacerbating the Kurdish insurgency situation (Howard 2001, 157). After Özal's sudden death in 1993, Süleyman Demirel succeeded him as the ninth president, leaving his party without a leader (Zurcher 2004, 294). The True Path (TP) party selected Minister of

Economy Tansu Ciller, a female economics professor, as the new party leader (Howard 2001, 175). Like her predecessors, Ciller was unable to effectively oppose Demirel or the military leaders. The TP party lost in the polls in 1995, following months of guerilla violence from the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK) who had received arms from Iraqi Kurds in Northern Iraq (Ahmad 2003, 164). In 1994, the Welfare Party, an Islamist group, won municipal elections in six Turkish cities, including Ankara and Istanbul (Zurcher 2004, 296) and continued to win elections in 1994 (Zurcher 2004, 298). Necmettin Erbakan, head of the Welfare party, tried to gain coalition partners and found one with Ciller of the TP, which brought the Welfare Party into power in 1996 (Howard 2001, 177). Erbakan tried to place Islamists into lower level government positions, law enforcement, and the military, which aroused some fears as to the new segment of the population that was placed into power as supporters of the Welfare Party (Howard 2001, 178). Erbakan's increasing infringements on the secular nature of the Turkish government led to his resignation in 1997 and in 1998, the constitutional court banned the Welfare Party and Erbakan from participating in politics for five years, and eventually for life. The Islamists reorganized as the Virtue Party and soon claimed 140 seats in Parliament (Zurcher 2004, 301). A massive earthquake struck Turkey in 1999, which shook the population's confidence in the Turkish government because of its inability to bring effective disaster relief to the millions of victims. During this time, Turkey continued its efforts to join the European community as part of the EU but would have to meet certain criteria such as protection of minorities to be considered. In

2001, an economic crisis brings another shock to the nation. Kemal Dervis, a World Bank official, was put in charge of the economy and brought additional reforms to push Turkey into being more economically competitive in the global market. The Virtue Party was dissolved, again due to charges of promoting Islamic fundamentalism. A moderate leader from the VP, Tayyip Erdogan, created the Justice and Development Party (AK), stating that the members were secular Muslim democrats (Ahmad 2003, 209). In 2003, Erdogan was elected to parliament and eventually became the prime minister (Ahmad 2003, 210). In the last decade, Turkish politics have been characterized by struggles similar to those experienced in the previous century. Secularist and Islamist political parties continue to vie for power. In 2007, secularist supporters protested against Prime Minister Erdogan from running for president due to his Islamist ties. The AK Party won the parliamentary elections and Abdullah Gul was elected president. A couple months later, Turkey ordered a series of air strikes on the Kurdish PKK fights in Iraq, though a couple years later the government increased Kurdish language rights and reduced military presence in the Kurdish southeast. In 2014, Erdogan ascended to the president in the first direct popular presidential elections. A year later, a two-year long ceasefire between Turkey and the PKK came to an end as the Syrian civil war exacerbated tensions in the region. President Erdogan has come under increasing criticism due to his Islamist-leaning policies and marginalization of minority groups. As will be seen in the analysis of the independent variable, there

seems to be a relationship between his increasingly sectarian attitude and the escalating violence in the country (BBC 2016).

The Sects in Lebanon

The ethnic composition of Turkey is similar to that of Lebanon and Iraq, comprised of various Muslim sects, a small number of Christian orders, and a significant Kurdish population. While the Turkish people are predominately Muslim, the state differs from Lebanon and Iraq in that secularism is the reigning ideology for governance. Starting with Atatürk, the government has been consistent in limiting religious affiliation in Turkish politics, at least until now. Erdogan's government has shown its preference of Islamic based ideology, specifically Sunni Islam. In Turkey, the Sunni is the predominant sect, while the Shi'a, the Alevi, and the Kurds are in the minority. All but the Sunni are significant minorities, however the Alevis and Shi'a have suffered some marginalization, especially at the hands of Erdogan. The Kurds have also experienced marginalization, but they also have resisted in the form of insurgencies throughout the last few decades through the PKK party. Mounting terrorist attacks have occurred in concurrence, as stated before, with the long-lived Syrian civil war. The exacerbating situations in Iraq with the rise of ISIL have also contributed to Kurdish unrest in Turkey. The aforementioned minority sects will be briefly examined here along with any disparities and grievances suffered in their recent history.

The Shi'a and Alevi

As in most of the Middle Eastern region, the Shi'a are usually the minority among the Muslim population and often are marginalized by the Sunni or other majorities. In Turkey, while not suffering the same type of oppression and persecution as in Lebanon or Iraq, the Shi'a have encountered their share of difficulties navigating the political system. While not strictly Shi'a Muslims, the Alevi are a variant of Shi'a and comprise approximately 20 percent of the population. They vary in their identification of themselves, saying they are "enlightened Muslims" or "true Muslims" and sometimes claim a different ethnicity to the Turkish population (Kose 2013, 591). Typically, Alevi are considered a sect within Islam associated with Anatolia, Sufism and Shiism, and influences from Christianity and Shamanism (Kocan and Oncu 2004, 473). However, most Alevi Muslims spoke Turkish and were of Turkish origin. Therefore, they did not face the same challenges that the Kurdish population experienced when integrating into the new Turkish nationalist identity (Kose 2013, 592).

During the formative years of the republic, some Alevi tribes joined with Kurdish uprisings due to discontent about the nationalist policies brought on by the early unity movement. Furthermore, some of the Alevi population identifies as Kurdish in ethnicity. A main grievance among the Alevi at this time, which has continued on, was their disagreement with having secularism as the centerpiece of the Turkish state structure, fearing for their ability to practice their religion freely (Kose 2013, 593). In the late 1930's, the Turkish government wanted to bring the

Dersim region of Eastern Anatolia, which was predominately Alevi, under central rule. The Alevi tribes refused to pay taxes and provide military service. However, the Turkish government quickly quelled their uprising through a massacre (Sarionder 2009, 84). This violent suppression of their religion is the most significant grievance suffered by the Alevis and was part of a systematic attempt to homogenize the Turkish society.

While economic disparities between the Alevis and other groups are not necessarily marked by sectarianism, the secular Turkish state consistently showed preference for the Sunni population, especially through the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Liaras 2009, 4). The education curriculum in the state does not include Alevi beliefs and the right-wing governments attempted to integrate the Alevis into the Sunni Islam (Liaras 2009, 5). Both the secular and Islamist influenced governments are threatening to the Alevis in regards to their ability to continue practicing their faith undisturbed. Sunni Muslims see the Alevis as deviating from the faith, while the Alevis see the strong Sunni presence as a threat to true secular rule (Kocan and Oncu 2004, 476). Throughout the 1980s, the Alevis' fears were confirmed when the government constructed mosques in Alevi village and placed Sunni imams in the mosques. The Sivas event in 1993, which involved violent encounters between Alevi festival goers and opposing radicals, strengthened the Alevi motivation to become politically active. Now, the Alevis pushed for a restoration of the Kemalist ideology, recognizing that the principle of secularism would best protect them from infringement on their beliefs (Sarionder 2009, 86).

The Alevis are currently strong proponents of Kemalism and have found allies among the Sunni who are also dedicated to seeing the state untouched by religious leanings. They have clashed numerous times with Erdogan, as his anti-secularist tendencies are on opposition to Kemalism (Sarionder 2009, 87).

The Kurds

The Kurdish population, much like in Iraq, had strong grievances against their governing entities for failure to recognize their autonomous standing. Throughout its history, the PKK instigated much of the violence experienced in the Turkish state, through guerilla warfare and other terrorist attacks. Today, the Syrian Civil War and the renewed quest for a separate Kurdish state have exacerbated tensions between the Turkish republic and the Kurdish population. While not persecuted for their religious beliefs, the Kurds experienced attempts to suppress their search for independence and as with the Alevis, they were opposed to policies meant to homogenize the population.

After the Armenian genocide that was carried out during the later years of the Ottoman Empire and during the First World War, the Kurds became more aware of the size of their population. Their revolt against the early Ankara government strengthened the early Turkish government's resolve against religion in political life. Comprising about a fifth of the population, Kurdish activists formed the Freedom Society in 1923 and tried to unite the Kurds across tribal lines, as they had been divided by the new national boundaries imposed after the fall of the Ottomans. The Alevi Kurds who had previously experienced discrimination from the

Sunni rulers were in support of a secular Turkish republic (Findley 2010, 251). Though many Kurdish leaders were initially supportive of Atatürk, he still retaliated for the revolt by declaring political use of religion as treason. Martial law was established in eastern Anatolia and the government banned organizations that stirred up disorder. Many Kurdish people were executed and over twenty thousand were forced to migrate into the west of Turkey. Kurdish guerilla warfare persisted and a total of eighteen more revolts occurred in Turkey between 1924 and 1938 but were suppressed by the government (Findley 2010, 252). During the following decades of the Turkish republic, Kurdish migrants continued to flow into the cities and many, especially in the city of Izmir live in segregated, impoverished communities. In Turkey, these communities are disparate from the rest of the Turkish community in that they are viewed as a distinct ethnic community, often in a negative light. They are often subject to stereotypes and various labels among the residents of Izmir (Saracoglu 2010, 5). Low socioeconomic status continues to be a problem for the majority of the Kurdish migrants living in western Turkish cities, with limited employment, housing, and education (Saracoglu 2010, 109). These disparities were not completely unique to Kurdish migrants, but a larger portion of the Kurdish suffered from these inequalities as well as separation in social terms (Saracoglu 2010, 117). Often the Kurds were said to have “invaded” major Turkish cities, the PKK and its affiliates are known as “separatists,” and migrants are said to be “disrupters of urban life” (Saracoglu 2010, 133). Although certain members of radical left circles in Turkey demanded that the grievances of the Kurds be

addressed, the majority felt that the ethnic Kurdish identity should be blended into class solidarity (Zurcher 2004, 256). During the 1980s the “Kurdish problem” dominated the Turkish government’s time. After the 1980 military coup, the crackdown on expressions of Kurdish identity increased and the use of the Kurdish language, even in private conversation, was outlawed under the justification that it was “weakening national sentiments.” Some leaders from the PKK fled the country, but others continued to focus on mobilizing the poor, marginalized youth in Kurdish communities. Guerilla activities commenced in 1984, with periods of intense warfare surrounding Kurdish New Year. Starting in 1986, the Turkish government began arming villagers to counter PKK attacks (Zurcher 2004, 316). This and other efforts by the Turkish army failed to effectively counter the Kurdish guerilla attacks, mainly due to lack of equipment for counter guerilla warfare and poor coordination between intelligence, the army, and law enforcement. Not all Kurds supported the PKK and its violent tactics but it continued to grow in notoriety and after 1988, it ceased terrorist activities against village sin the southeast (Zurcher 2004, 317). In 1989, the PKK allied with other urban guerilla groups and strengthened its ability to target major Turkish cities and returned to using terrorism in 1993. By 1996, thousands of refugees from villages suffering attacks by the extremists fled to major cities (Zurcher 2014, 318). In 1998, however, increasing political and military actions against the PKK led to the arrest of their leader. The PKK changed its name to the Kurdish Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK) in 2002 (Zurcher 2004, 322). The now outlawed PKK, however, resumed its

insurgency after continued grievances against the Turkish governments. Peace talks have yet to resolve the conflict and since 1984, more than 40,000 people have died, predominately of Kurdish origin. President Erdogan has declared his intention to finish off the PKK once and for all, saying that unless they surrender there could be no resolution (Reuters 2016).

Analysis of Sectarian Violence in Turkey

Unlike the situations in Lebanon and Iraq, Turkey has not been marred by continuous sectarian clashes. Though violence exists and defines much of Turkey's history, this violence stems primarily from political differences and the Kurdish quest for independence. The sectarian element seen in the violence in Iraq and Lebanon is largely absent in Turkey. Most of the competition for Turkish political power has come in the form of political parties and elections. As has been seen in the history of the country, Turkish regimes have fluctuated between authoritarian and democratic. Since Atatürk, however, even when the government was ousted by military coups, it continued to maintain order between the populations within Turkey. The government and the military quickly suppressed sectarian based movements, with the exception of the PKK. Additionally, Turkey avoided colonial based rule again largely due to Atatürk's efforts to avoid foreign entanglements and strongly resisting colonial rule similar to those seen in Iraq and Lebanon. His strong push for secularism and Turkish nationalism eased some of the problems experienced in other Middle Eastern regions.

When the Republic of Turkey was established, the Lausanne Treaty only recognized three minority groups: the Greeks, the Armenians, and the Jews. All other inhabitants were identified as Muslim or non-Muslim Turkish citizens. This definition of the community ensured that citizens would identify with the national Turkish identity over any other affiliations, including religious (Tasch 2010, 338). Here is where the significant difference between Turkey and Iran and Lebanon lies. In Iraq and Lebanon, political parties and party affiliations were based on sectarian ties. In Iraq, the establishment of the post-Saddam regime deliberately excluded Sunni members of the Ba'ath party and continued to marginalize the Kurds. The direct enshrinement of sectarian loyalties in Lebanon essentially guaranteed tensions between the different religious groups. The rallying cry for the populations within these nations revolved around their differences rather than one national identity. In Turkey, Atatürk and his six guiding principles created a regime that highly valued secularism and republicanism, both aspects lacking in Iraq and Lebanon. His system was not perfectly democratic, although it did provide universal suffrage, including women and minorities, but was less bent towards complete dictatorship than seen in other Middle Eastern nations. The military helped correct the Turkish government whenever they began to stray from the tenets of Kemalism. The constitutional reforms following the military coups helped fix problems with the execution of the Six Arrows as well, especially with the constitutional court outlawing parties and policies that threatened secularism.

The secularist system has not been infallible, however, as Sunni Islam is still the preferred religion in both official and unofficial ways. The government allowed for elective classes on Sunni Islam in primary schools during 1940, but after 1980 these classes became mandatory even for non-Muslim or non-Sunni citizens. Though Sunni Islam is not used to mobilize the population base to the extent it is in Iraq and Lebanon, non-Sunni Turkish citizens have long held grievances at being marginalized (Tasch 2010, 340). The Kurds have especially suffered from violent suppression of their struggles to be allowed to express their ethnic heritage. Their support from the Iraqi Kurds has fueled their military strength and strengthened their resolve to push back against the Turkish government. The presidency of Erdogan and his increasingly sectarian rhetoric have only exacerbated this situation. The AKP party has partitioned a couple major cities in Turkey along sectarian lines, a move that will only worsen the growing divides of the past decade (Letsch 2013).

Perhaps with the exception of the Kurds, a key aspect of the relative peace between sectarian groups in Turkey is the ability to air grievances in ways other than violent conflict. After the advent of the multi-party system, the Turkish people have been able to assemble, with some limitations, according to their political preferences. The competition between groups of people was instead centered on differing ideals and different interpretations of Kemalism and the constitution, rather than on focusing on which sectarian group would hold power. A concerted effort to keep Turkey out of the realm of international interference also undoubtedly

contributed to the sects being free from being mobilized into proxy wars. Again, the Kurdish population seems the exception to the rules and this could be attributed to the lack of legitimate ways for them to fully integrate into society. Only now, with Syria and its civil war affecting the struggles with the Kurds, is Turkey experiencing outbreaks of unprecedented violence due to regional fighting. The terrorist attacks from the Kurds are generally concentrated in eastern Anatolia rather than widespread in the major cities. Unfortunately, should Erdogan's sectarian efforts persist, the sectarian violence between the various groups might spread to Sunni-Shi'a as well.

Conclusion

As the cases of Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey have shown, sectarian violence is an extremely complex issue. Sectarianism has differing elements wherever it appears and similar conditions can have vastly different effects. As discussed in the literature, sectarian identities include a shared ideology that is not inherently violent. However, sectarianism requires religious or ethnic identities to be utilized as rhetoric to influence political loyalties. In the Middle East, leaders have used sectarian identities to fuel political movements that often resort to violence, which was the case in Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey. However, as has been seen in the cases presented here, sectarian violence involves significantly more than simple rallying cries catering to a population's different loyalties. Religious and ethnic differences exist worldwide, thus the question I explored in this paper inquired into what caused these varying loyalties to turn violent. This question was focused on the Middle Eastern region, as its sectarian conditions are quite unique given the Sunni-Shi'a divide, its long history of colonialism, and the subsequent grievances among the Middle Eastern population. Ultimately, the conclusion I arrived to after examining the cases of Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey, was that while there are many observable relationships between independent factors and sectarian violence, it is quite difficult to determine which factor caused the fatal spark that led to an outbreak in violent conflict. Rather, many factors must be in place to create conducive conditions to the execution of a terrorist act or the start of a civil war.

Contribution of Case Studies on Sectarian Literature

The three theories prevalent in literature on sectarianism—the primordial, instrumental, and modernization theories—are observable in the cases presented in this paper. I found little support for the primordial theory, which states that ancient ethnic hatreds lead to violence between groups. Though animosity has existed between the Sunni, the Shi'a, the Kurds, Christians, and others for hundreds of years in the Middle East, these divides alone are not cited as the reason behind the centuries of violence between these groups. While old rivalries were definitely present between sectarian groups in the countries I examined, these hatreds alone did not drive the groups into violence. The civil war in Lebanon contained elements of economic grievances, disenfranchised populations, and sectarian regimes in addition to religious differences. Foreign intervention in Iraq played a notable role in the Sunni-Shi'a divide that followed the 2003 U.S. invasion. In Turkey, the Syrian civil war and oppression of Kurdish villages also contributed to the rise in extremist attacks seen in recent decades. However, while not the primary cause of conflict, sectarian divides can be utilized in a leader's rhetoric to mobilize followers and exclude others from the political process.

The instrumental model states that external forces expose inequalities with appeals to ethnic loyalties in order to mobilize support and gain power and resources. In my research, I found support for this theory as an explanation of what drives sectarian violence. Leaders and political parties in all three countries I examined actively used sectarian identities to grow their support. These actors

stirred up “ancient hatreds” by pinning modern grievances onto other groups and worked diligently to create the narrative that granting any power to other sects meant to the lessening of one’s own group. This was seen during the Lebanese Civil War, with the Maronite leaders using sectarian rhetoric to garner support for a Christian Republic. Saddam Hussein used extreme measures of sectarian marginalization and anti-Shi’a and Kurdish rhetoric to secure Sunni supremacy in Iraq.

The modernization theory argues that the pressures of modernization introduce new tensions into sectarian relations, often due to urbanization, economic growth or decline, and other changes in the status quo. The three cases in this paper lent some support for this theory, although more research should be on the effects of modernity on the prevalence of violence. The migration of Kurds into Turkish urban areas led to difficulties in ethnic relations within major cities. The struggle to introduce democracy into the Iraq state caused tensions between the formerly suppressed Sunni and the newly reduced Shi’a. However, more research should be conducted on non-political factors such as urbanization into the worsening of sectarian conditions, both in the Middle East and around the world.

Throughout the cases of Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey, the various disparities and grievances identified in the literature such as inequality and discrimination were found to occur, both at the hands of the government and society. The ruling powers used nationalism to obtain loyalty and used discrimination to keep the power within their own sect, something very evident in Lebanon and Iraq, where

sectarianism became enshrined in their constitutions. The marginalized sects, often the Shi'a and the Kurds, experienced higher levels of poverty and disenfranchisement. In these cases, a clear relationship exists between the presence of significant disparities and the rise of grievances and animosity between groups. These initial tensions are shown through peaceful protests and heightened social tensions. In Turkey, differing political stances and objectives led to the clash of political parties and the dissolution and formation of parties based on Leftist or Rightist loyalties. When there was a threat to the stability of the secular nature of the state, however, the government was normally ousted by the military and sectarian relations were pacified, at least for a time. However, in Iraq and Lebanon, there were limited avenues for the public airing of grievances and little hope for a resolution. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein's murderous regime created an existential threat for the Shi'a and Kurdish populations. In Lebanon, the non-Maronite populations felt similar hopelessness at being locked in a system built for Christian Maronite domination. Thus, the existential threats created as a result of disparities and grievances led to an escalating ethnic security dilemma within these countries. Furthermore, in Iraq and Lebanon the regimes suffered from insufficient resources and support to effectively curb violence on their territories. The weakened regime during and after the Lebanese civil war left it unable to provide services for its population and protect them from foreign incursions. The dissolved army in Iraq left a gaping power vacuum and many young, unemployed, militarily trained men who often had no other recourse than to join the armed insurgency. The resultant battles

between the insurgents and the government's security forces unleashed a new wave of violence on Iraq. After the Sunni awakening, Nouri al-Maliki refused to integrate the men who had served in a U.S. supported assault on the insurgents. This repetition of what occurred in 2003 could have been crucial in supporting the subsequent rise of the ISIL. In Turkey, while the governments were not always fully democratic and often very authoritarian, their military held the ability to maintain strong control over the violence in the state. The relationship shown in Turkey between a capable government and a low level of sectarian violence lends support to one of the hypotheses I explored in this paper.

Analysis of Independent Variables

The use of a comparative study for this paper proved very beneficial, as it allowed me to investigate cases in depth and conduct careful analysis on the variables throughout the country's history. Since each country has a varied history, individual analysis helped identify the significant differences and conditions that each country encountered during violent outbreaks. The study yielded some interesting insights into the problem of sectarian violence in the Middle East, as well as raising questions for further research into this area of political violence. Focusing on the Middle East alone was also beneficial, as it allowed for some control on the independent variables due to the countries' similar sectarian identities, regional conflicts, and external actor interventions.

The choice of using four independent variables in this study was useful, although perhaps a bit too broad for the scope of this paper. In future work, it may

be possible to focus on one significant variable, such as external intervention, and its relationship on the dependent variable on sectarian violence. Regardless, focusing on four allowed me to recognize the complexity to any type of sectarian conflict.

The first, that of disparities, was probably the least helpful to individually analyze in this study. When analyzing these cases, I looked at examples of disparities and identified whether they took the form of economic disadvantages or political disenfranchisement. While this proved useful in understanding the differences between groups, I found that disparities had little effect on my analysis of the dependent variable in each case. Economic and social disadvantages seemed widespread between classes as well as sects, thus it is difficult to conclude that disparities were the unique factor in driving violence. Perhaps a better approach to the study of disparities would be to investigate whether these inequalities are officially mandated, as they were in Lebanon prior to the civil war, or socially imposed, as occurred in Turkey with the Kurds.

The second variable of escalating grievances proved slightly more useful, as I had to identify which inequalities created enough distress to incite action against a marginalizing entity. In Iraq, the systematic repression of the Shi'a and Kurds by Saddam Hussein led to strong grievances against the government. When the Shi'a came to power with U.S. assistance, they retaliated strongly against the Sunni. In response, the Sunni aired their grievances by boycotting elections, leading to further disenfranchisement. In Turkey, the Kurds and Shi'a aired grievances that

although the Turkish government promoted secular rule, Sunni Islam was still the preferred norm. However, the limitations here again are that grievances are not unique to sectarian conflict. While grievances are used in rhetoric and fuel discontent among a populace, it is not likely to be the sole reason a country decides to go to war within itself. In future research, I would like to investigate whether insurgent leaders cite specific grievances to mobilize mass support or to drive others to commit violence.

The third variable of regime strength was the most informative of the variables I investigated. I was able to observe that during periods of ineffective rule, violence became more rampant in these states. The lack of government and military in Iraq during the transitional government after 2003 allowed for the birth of a new insurgency. The weak, deeply divided Lebanese government was unable to quell conflict within its borders for over fifteen years of civil war. Turkey, though individual governments were weaker than others, had a strong enough military to quell most sectarian violence within its borders. The powerful figure of Atatürk had a unifying effect on much of the country as well, providing some semblance of legitimacy, a factor that all three countries' governments lacked. Further research into this factor should also focus on a regime's ability to not only control violence, but also to ensure equal representation for its population. It was outside the scope of this study to include this research, but I believe it would be very beneficial in helping to understand what aspects of governance are most important to maintain law and order.

The variable of foreign intervention is probably the most complex factor I encountered in this study. In all three countries, foreign intervention played a vital role in the shaping of their political systems. This factor alone could warrant an entire research project, as one must not only focus on the effect of the intervention but also on the background and interests of the intervening country. In Iraq, the U.S. 2003 invasion was a defining moment as it signaled the end of Saddam Hussein's extremely sectarian rule and the advent of a new Shi'a dominance. The Syrian Civil War has also contributed to the sectarian unrest within its borders. In Lebanon, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had significant effects on its sectarian situation. The PLO and Israeli incursions onto its territory exacerbated conditions that fueled the civil war. Syrian control over the Lebanese government following the civil war ensured that Syrian interests would be prioritized. In Turkey, Atatürk strove to keep foreign interests away from his new republic. While neighboring states sunk into chaos, burdened by colonial rule, Turkey flourished during its early years as it maintained its independence. After allying with the West, Turkey began to feel some effects of foreign entanglements, including receiving aid and other loans from the U.S. Today, it faces increasing regional conflicts that might require its intervention, namely the problem of ISIL. More attention is needed on the relationship between foreign intervention and rising sectarian violence. The literature on sectarianism began focusing on this, especially after the collapse of Iraq, but more examples from across the world definitely merit further work.

Hypotheses

The following are the three hypotheses I expected to see when I began undertaking this project:

H1) Grievances and existential threats between sectarian groups are the tipping point for sectarian violence erupting.

H2) Countries with governments without strong legitimacy or control over the use of force will experience a greater degree of sectarian violence than a government with a strong monopoly of violence.

H3) Foreign intervention in the areas of governance increases the likelihood that a country will experience higher levels of sectarian violence.

I found little support for the first hypothesis. As has already been discussed, grievances alone are not enough to tip the balance between peaceful protests and armed retaliation. While existential threats are essential in creating the atmosphere needed to spark violence, there must be other factors present to actually cause people to take up arms and fight against rival groups. The other independent variables must also be present, along with the ability to organize, knowledge of warfare, and perhaps a charismatic leader to mobilize the marginalized population. These last three factors are variables that should be investigated more fully.

My research confirmed that there is a relationship between a government's strength and legitimacy on the degree of sectarian violence within a country. As was evidenced in the case studies, the weaker governments seemed to have more

prolonged, frequent levels of violence that the stronger ones. Even across time periods within an individual state, the levels of violence varied based on leadership. Under Saddam Hussein, violence was rampant. But after the collapse of his regime and the establishment of a weakened, coalitional authority, civil war erupted between the sectarian groups in Iraq. However, a difficulty with this hypothesis is presented in Turkey. While sectarian violence is not prevalent, other types of violence between political parties or class disputes continues to be waged. A strong, secular government therefore does not seem to be the sole factor necessary to keep a nation peaceful. Therefore, further investigation is needed to determine what other aspects of governance are needed to create law and order.

Analysis on Case Studies

Each case study revealed different insights related to the research question of what drives sectarianism to turn violent. All three were selected for their various experiences with sectarian violence and for their position on the continuum of conflict introduced in the methodology section of this paper. Lebanon rests on the high end of the continuum, based on the length of their civil war and their subsequent unrest this past decade. Iraq falls closely with Lebanon, although slightly lower due to a shorter civil war. Turkey, though not necessarily a conflict-free country, lies on the lower end of the sectarian violence continuum. Each had their own limitations and advantages, but overall I believe all three offered valuable illustrations of the independent variables on sectarian violence.

Lebanon offered a long, rich history as the sectarian state *par excellence*. From the very beginning, sectarian loyalties were clearly established through the government established during colonial times. Their confessional system ensured that party loyalties would be based sectarian loyalties. Thus, sectarian divides were clearly enshrined in society, making it easier for me to observe what problems stemmed from religious or ethnic divides. The guaranteed Maronite advantage definitely contributed to feelings of marginalization in that no avenues short of restructuring the government would alleviate the population's grievances. A limitation to this case, however, was the extreme complexity of Lebanese internal politics combined with the effect of external conflicts such as the Israeli-Palestinian issue. It was difficult to isolate the independent variables here in order to determine the significant of their effects on driving sectarian violence. However, Lebanon served well to highlight an ineffective sectarian regime and the impact of regional conflicts on the balance of sectarian politics.

The case study of Iraq primarily focuses on two time periods, the first being Saddam Hussein's regime and the second being the post U.S. invasion government. Saddam's rule marked a government that enshrined sectarianism through oppressive, authoritarian rule rather than a colonially established government. While colonialism definitely had its impact on Iraq, Saddam played a major role in imposing Sunni dominance on the state by carrying out massacres of rival groups. The role of the U.S. invasion interrupted his activities and completely reversed the roles of sectarian power in Iraq. With the Ba'ath party dissolved and its members

ostracized, the newly marginalized Sunni found themselves unable to work with the new system and power structures. The new Coalitional Provisional Authority enshrined sectarianism into the new government, which proved disastrous for the security situation in the country. After the U.S. withdrawal and the beginning of new regional conflicts involving Syria and ISIL, Iraq quickly spiraled into renewed warfare. While the sectarian nature of this state was not as well defined as the case of Lebanon, Iraq's case offered valuable insights into the effect of foreign intervention and an illegitimate authoritarian regime on sectarian violence.

The case of Turkey served to illustrate a country within the same regional context that has not experienced the same level of sectarian conflict as Lebanon and Iraq. Though its borders were shaped during the same time period as the two other cases, Turkey resisted colonial powers with enough force to secure its independence relatively quickly. Avoiding foreign entanglements, at least for a time, limited outside influence on its sectarian relations. The development and interaction of political parties within Turkey provided important insights into the ability of the Turkish people to fight for their interests in a heated, yet often non-violent political manner. Once the multi-party system was established, which was fairly early in Turkey's modern history, it established an official avenue for airing grievances. Though still flawed, the Turkey's focus on secular governance was very distinct from the other cases of Lebanon and Iraq. The strong military presence, though sometimes subject to corruption and the imposition of martial law, helped ensure that one sect did not acquire supremacy over another by ousting governments that

violated the constitution. Again, as with the other two studies, the influence of foreign entities and regional conflicts complicate the sectarian situation. The strong regime, lack of foreign intervention, and limited grievances indicate a negative relationship with the dependent variable—low levels of sectarian violence.

However, due to the complexity of Turkish history and the lack of complete control over the variables in these case studies, it is not possible to definitively say that the variables caused the low levels of sectarian conflict. Nevertheless, Turkey does serve to support the hypotheses and perhaps by widening the scope of the research to the entire world, I could observe other countries with a similar dedication to secularism and resisting foreign intervention to determine if a pattern exists.

Additional Findings

In completing the case studies for this paper, I determined three overarching conclusions about sectarian violence. First, religious and ethnic identities and the differences they generate between groups actually play a very insignificant role in sectarian politics compared to economic and political disparities. When beginning my work on this question, I expected to see more importance attached to religious beliefs and ethnic ties in determining one's political affiliations. Though Islam, Christianity, and other beliefs definitely play important roles in the life of an individual, in my research on Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey I found little support for the notion that these individual beliefs spur a person to violence. Rather, they are initially mobilized through grievances stemming mainly from socioeconomic inequalities. Second, I found that foreign intervention can quickly grow from its

initial purpose and that its impact is often felt for years after the intervening force withdraws. Western colonialism in the Middle East played a significant role in creating modern state borders. This sometimes divided people among ethnic lines or forcibly tried to establish nations comprised of vastly different sects, as was the case in Lebanon and Iraq. Foreign intervention after the colonial era, often based on economic interest of Western powers, exacerbated sectarian conditions either through ignorance of sectarian relations or their desire to see an ally sect in power, as was the case with Maronite Christians in Lebanon and the Shi'a Muslims in Iraq. Finally, I found that regimes built upon sectarian loyalties seem doomed to instability. Since religion and ethnicity are so strongly tied to one's identity, basing a political system on sectarian identities forces people to side with the party that most closely resembles them and their families or tribes. Instead of discussing political issues or choosing leaders who best represent their interests, people are obligated to support their sect's champion. Since changing sects is extremely difficult, the sectarian constituencies are locked in conflict with each other permanently.

Limitations and Future Research

Some limitations have already been discussed but I will reiterate the most significant limits here. First, as I only completed three case studies, my findings cannot be applied across the entire world or even the entire Middle Eastern region. Though I believe my case selection provides a thorough glimpse into sectarianism in the Middle East, it could definitely be strengthened through the completion of more

case studies of the region. To be applicable to the entire world, however, I would need to complete case studies of significantly more countries and perhaps complete a quantitative analysis of all instances of sectarian violence worldwide. Second, since the Sunni-Shi'a divide is unique to the Islamic areas of the world, I would likely find different driving factors present in other instances of intra-religious sectarian divides, such as the Catholic-Protestant split. My findings from this paper may not be applicable to other conflicts not involving Sunni, Shi'a, or other Middle Eastern issues. Finally, though I tried to provide as thorough an investigation of each case study's history, there are undoubtedly facts that I overlooked that could have proved pivotal to the outbreak of sectarian violence. Each case in itself could warrant an entire study dedicated to determining the causes of varying periods of intensity in sectarian violence within its borders.

Many suggestions for future research have already been stated in the previous discussion, but there are three more areas that I believe warrant further investigation. First, given vital U.S. interests in the Middle East, additional research should be conducted on the differences between Middle Eastern sectarianism and sectarianism elsewhere. As stated before, the Sunni-Shi'a divide is a hugely broad topic in itself. If the United States better understands the religious and ethnic identities present in the region, it would hopefully prevent another bungling similar to the Iraq catastrophe. Second, further investigation is needed on the question of religion in politics. While impartial governance seems to be widely accepted as necessary for legitimate rule, there remains a question as to whether all

religion should be absent from official governmental institutions. In terms of policy, there should be more research completed on how to effectively secularize a government, while still preserving the ability of the population to practice their religion in a harmonious manner without any sect becoming advantaged. Finally, another interest aspect of research that could provide valuable lessons is the question on how much influence a single leader can have on creating or decreasing sectarian violence. Figures such as Saddam Hussein and Atatürk played crucial roles in determining the sectarian atmosphere within their nations. Since strong rhetoric and narratives are important elements in rallying support among sects, it would be interesting to further explore the impact of a charismatic leader on exacerbating sectarian tensions. This could potentially aid with the understanding of what types of leaders would be more successful in diffusing warring sects.

Final Thoughts

In conclusion, the issue of sectarian violence proved much more complex than I ever anticipated. Though I believe this thesis provides a good overall picture of sectarian relations in the Middle East, there is significant room for more thorough investigations. Ultimately, this thesis confirms the idea that much larger processes are at work in the arena of sectarian conflicts than religious and ethnic differences. The competition for power and survival, both basic human instincts, seem to be in the forefront of a group's decision to take up arms against another. My hope is that one day there will be a greater number of peaceful avenues in the Middle East for voicing grievances and fighting for representation than currently exist.

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