PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE DIRECTED AGAINST CIVILIANS IN SMALL ETHNIC ENCLAVES DURING WAR IN IRAQ (2003–2009)

Stephen C. Poulson

ABSTRACT

This study investigates patterns of violence employed by insurgents killing civilians living in small ethnic enclaves located in Ninewa Province, Iraq from 2003 to 2009. The ethnic minorities in these communities include: (1) Yazidis in Sinjar District, (2) Chaldo-Assyrian Christians in the Ninewa Plains and, (3) the Turkmen enclave of Tal Afar. To date, there has been little investigation into violence directed toward small ethnic enclaves during civil war, though some have suggested that ethnic enclaves might insulate civilians from violence (Kaufmann, 1996). Using fatality data from the Iraq Body Count, this study compares the patterns of insurgent violence directed toward these enclave communities to co-ethnic and mixed-ethnic communities. The experiences of the enclaves were varied — some were largely insulated from attacks — but when attacked, the average number killed was greater and more indiscriminate as compared to communities with significant Arab populations. One possible

explanation for these differences is that insurgents did not regard these citizens as being "convertible," which caused them to employ violence in a more indiscriminate manner. When insurgents did act to secure control of enclave communities, they used indiscriminate forms of violence against civilians, as compared to more selective forms of violence employed when controlling co-ethnic communities.

INTRODUCTION

This study investigates how the types of violent attacks employed against citizens in small ethnic enclaves in Iraq compared to those employed in nearby communities where civilians shared the same ethnicity as insurgents. It compares the types of violence and the intensity of attacks directed toward civilians in Iraqi enclave communities. To date, the experience of those who live in small ethnic enclaves and avowedly neutral with respect to a conflict has not been examined. This study addresses this oversight by exploring the experiences of three ethnic enclave communities in Ninewa Province, Iraq: (1) the Yazidis, (2) the Chaldo-Assyrian Christians, and (3) the Turkmens.

Each of these enclave communities has experienced periods of past persecution within Iraq, but they were not among the primary groups contesting for power after the deposal of Saddam Hussein in 2003. In general, these were places where civilians were initially disinclined toward siding with any of the warring factions. As such, they offer an interesting case for testing how differences in ethnicity may have affected the violence directed toward them by insurgents. For example, Kaufmann (1996) has suggested that the insularity of ethnic enclaves — because they offer little support for warring factions and would require considerable resources to control — might actually make them relatively safe when compared to other communities. Conversely, perhaps ethnic and religious difference — the fact that these civilians are unlikely to be converted into supporting a warring faction — could mean that violence, when directed toward them, is particularly indiscriminate (Goodwin, 2006). As such, the orienting questions of this study are: (1) Did the relatively high concentration of ethnic minorities

within an enclave insulate them from the conflict? Or, (2) Did differences in ethnicity and religion – perhaps the low prospects for convertibility as supporters of insurgency – cause these civilians to experience more indiscriminate forms of violence from outside warring factions? (3) And if insurgents do act to control an enclave, do they use the same types of violence when they attempt to control co-ethnic communities?

The strategy of this inquiry is to first provide a brief review of recent perspectives associated with the micro-dynamics of contention in civil war as related to "on the ground" violence deployed against civilians. Second, a descriptive account of the three enclave communities and their relationship to insurgent actors operating in Ninewa Province is offered. The chapter then provides a quantitative analysis using *Iraq Body Count* (IBC) fatality data that compare the rates and patterns of violence deployed against enclaves to co-ethnic and mixed-ethnic communities. The conclusion offers an argument that control of territory (Kalyvas, 2006) combined with relational perspectives (Tilly, 2005) – in this case Goodwin's (2006) theory of categorical terrorism – provide insights into understanding the patterns of insurgent violence observed in Ninewa Province, Iraq.

MICRO-LEVEL DYNAMICS OF CONTENTION: SECURITY CONCERNS, CONTROL OF TERRITORY AND RELATIONAL APPROACHES TO CONFLICT

Overall, civil wars vary considerably in their form and intensity (Balcells & Kalyvas, 2014), but always involve armed conflict among groups designed to gain and hold territory. This fact causes considerable violence and coercion to be directed toward civilians living in contested areas (Downes, 2011; Humphreys & Weinstein, 2006; Slim, 2008). Ethnic conflict as associated with civil war has long been debated. Fearon and Laitin (2003) found that ethnic diversity within nation states was not associated with a greater likelihood of civil war, but more recent investigations into the ethnic power configurations have found they are associated with why some ethnic groups rebel and others do not (Cederman, Wimmer, & Min, 2010; Wimmer, 2012). Micro-level inquiries associated with ethnicity and civil war have included whether "ethnic cleavage" is always indicative of "ethnic war" (Kalyvas & Kocher, 2007), the process of ethnic defection (Kalyvas, 2008), how political opportunism fuels ethnic violence (de Figueiredo & Weingast,

1999), who decides to fight (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2008), and whether co-ethnic forces are better at fighting insurgency (Lyall, 2010).

Much early theorizing about group dynamics associated with conflict followed "rational choice" perspectives (Hardin, 1997) in which "security" concerns affected the decision to join groups and security dilemmas (Posen, 1993) affected the decision to engage in violence against a group. Micro-level inquiries of civil war violence have applied security dilemmas to account for individual decision-making undertaken during war. As Buzan (2008) noted, "The individual represents the irreducible basic unit to which the concept of security can be applied" (p. 50). The most recent formations of this perspective assume, for example, that insurgents actively use violence and security to "manipulate and encourage support" among civilians (Wood, 2010, p. 601). Still, one criticism of security-oriented studies is that they often tend to be "static" accounts of conflict that do not capture the endogenous nature of civil conflict (Balcells, 2010; Kalyvas, 2008).

Related to security perspectives is the idea that control of territory can affect conflict dynamics. In particular, Kalyvas (2006) investigated how the level of control exercised by groups affected their decision (and ability) to use certain types of violence. He found that the prospects for gaining control over territory, or maintaining control over territory, often moti-vated the use of *selective* forms of violence in an attempt to reward civilian supporters and punish dissenters. Also, that as a group gains control of territory they use more selective forms of violence because they have access to informants and can attempt to "sort out" those working against them. Conversely, as a group loses control of territory, the declining availability of information increases the use of *indiscriminate* forms of violence. Similarly, others have postulated that the use of indiscriminate violence by government forces is often a calculation that it will "drain the sea" of possi-ble supporters for insurgency (Valentino, Huth, & Balch-Lindsay, 2004).

This chapter explores whether security perspectives that assume a primary motive of warring groups is to hold and expand territory helps explain the patterns of violence employed against civilians in ethnic enclaves. In this respect, small ethnic enclaves in Iraq, when viewed as a security dilemma or a rational choice problem, were places that offer low prospects for gaining control of territory because support for insurgency is so low. Also, these were not centers of active resistance against the insurgency so they offered little threat to insurgents. From this perspective, Kaufmann (1996) argued that moving overmatched ethnic groups into "defensible ethnic enclaves" could insulate these communities from civil conflicts. More recently, Steele (2009) found that when threatened civilians move to similar destinations this

clustering strengthens (even creates) enclave communities that, "can have a perverse effect: even though living in an enclave may reduce an individual household's likelihood of suffering violence, the community may be more endangered as it is perceived to be affiliated with one armed group or another" (p. 427). An important distinction concerning the enclave communities in this study as compared to the Colombians studied by Steele (2009) is that her groups did not cluster by ethnicity, but rather by their association with a specific armed group. The groups in this study are clustered by ethnicity but are not associated with an armed group. Both these facts likely increased the motive of Iraqi civilians to stay in their enclave communities because they expected these locations would be safer than other communities in Iraq.

Charles Tilly often provided evocative descriptions of what violence designed to control territory "looks like" on the ground. For example, Tilly's (1985) characterization of both war making and state making as "organized crime" neatly captured dynamics associated with the "double-edged sword" of protection that militias extended to civilians as they acted to control territory. In fact, assuring protection (for a price) to some and punishing others was directly observable in the various "protection rackets" – ransom, kidnapping, public execution, public policing, etc. – different militias commonly used in Iraq as they consolidated control over territory (Partlow, 2007; Rosen, 2004). Tilly (2005) later argued that understanding the motives for violence employed by any social actor (e.g., a militia, the state) was best approached by investigating the specific *relations between groups.*

To a great extent, Tilly's (2005) "relational approach" presaged the increase in focus on the relational (or configurational) variables associated with group dynamics during war. A few recent examples include focus on how shifting alliances (Goodwin, 2006; Wood, 2008), shifting ethnic identities (Kalyvas, 2008), the different types of war (Balcells & Kalyvas, 2014), the strength of the warring factions (Eck & Hultman, 2007; Wood, 2010), political rivalries (Balcells, 2010), and the distribution of state resources and power (Wimmer, Cedermen, & Min, 2009) all affect the micro-dynamics of contention during civil conflict. For example, Wood (2008) proposed a model that uses social-structural variables (e.g., political mobilization, militarization of local authority, polarization of social identities, the transformation of gender roles) that affect conflict dynamics. Balcells (2010) investigated how the severity of violence employed by groups early in a conflict – often associated with political competition – affected the severity of violence employed later in a conflict. Maney, McCarthy, and Yukich (2012) developed a "contention"-oriented approach that operationalized

many relational variables (e.g., the symbolic significance of targets) associated with violence in Northern Ireland.

One broad conceptualization of a dynamic associated with the relational approach is Goodwin's (2006) theory of categorical terrorism which assumes a calculation made by combatants when using indiscriminate violence is whether the targeted civilians are regarded as convertible. Those considered less convertible are expected to face a greater likelihood of being targeted by indiscriminate forms of terror. Ethnic distinction — if associated with low prospects for convertibility — would increase the likelihood that indiscriminate violence is used against a group. The descriptive account below, and the propositions that follow, are designed to investigate whether the previous security dilemmas associated with control of territory (Kalyvas, 2006; Kaufmann, 1996), combined with the relational variable of "convertibility" (Goodwin, 2006), explain the patterns of violence that were used against civilians in small Iraqi enclaves.

LOCATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF IRAQI ENCLAVE COMMUNITIES IN NINEWA PROVINCE

All of the enclave communities in this study are located in Ninewa Province, Iraq. This is perhaps the most ethnically diverse province in Iraq. It is in the north-west and shares a border with Syria and is near the Kurdish Autonomous Region which is formally a part of Iraq but governed independently by the Kurdish Regional Government. Anbar Province, dominated by Sunni Arabs, is directly south. During the period investigated, Kurdish factions were actively trying to expand their sphere of influence in Ninewa Province by extending resources to the Christian and Yazidi religious minorities in the region. Remarkably, given this outreach, there was a significant backlash against Kurdish-backed political groups by these small ethnic groups throughout this period (Human Rights Watch, 2009). At this time, within these communities, there were a few nascent political parties that desired some level of limited autonomy and were disinclined to seek membership in the Kurdish autonomous region.[1]

There has been no census in Iraq since 1986 and the ongoing dislocation of people has made attempts to estimate population groups difficult. Currently, the World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples (WDMIP) reports the following population ranges from credible sources ("Iraq Overview," n.d.). The Yazidi population in Iraq is usually estimated

at about 400,000–500,000 thousand, but sometimes as low as half that number. Combined, all Christian and Chaldo-Assyrian groups are usually estimated at between 800,000 and 1.2 million. The Turkmen population has been estimated to be as low as 1.2 million, but advocates sometimes claim the number is as high as 3 million (Sirkeci, 2005). Roughly, the highest reported numbers would represent about 10% of the entire Iraqi population and the lowest about 5%. But, these groups are concentrated in Ninewa Province and might represent 30% of the estimated 3 million people living in the province. Kurds and Arabs represent the other significant ethnic groups in the region. Arabs are likely a plurality, but less than a majority. Kurds are the second most populous group.

All of the enclave communities are within 60 miles of the contested city of Mosul, the capital of the province. The ethnicity of the city is mixed, with a city center of mainly Sunni Arabs and suburbs consisting mostly of Kurds. There are small Turkmen, Yazidi, and Assyrian communities in Mosul too. The city was occupied by American forces throughout the period studied, but its size made it difficult to completely control. There was generally a stand-off from 2004 to 2009 with American and Kurdish forces eventually controlling the Eastern sections of the city and insurgents (Sunni Arabs and al-Qaeda fighters) controlling the Western part of the city. Mosul, unlike most other major cities in Iraq, was never brought under control by forces associated with the central government (Fig. 1).[2]

The Yazidis

Most Yazidis in Iraq live in the Sinjar District of Ninewa Province clustered in small rural villages at the base of the Sinjar mountain range. Many Yazidis speak Arabic, but the predominant language is Kurmanji, closely associated with Kurdish languages. Still, religious practice has often placed the Yazidis into conflict with Kurdish groups. For example, during the mid-19th century the dominant Kurdish tribes attempted to forcefully convert the Yazidis to Sunni Islam (Fuccaro, 1997). Further, the Sinjar Yazidis have long been isolated — geographically and culturally — from the Sunni Kurdish groups now dominant in the Kurdish Autonomous Region (Maisel, 2008).

Currently, the Yazidis are recognized as a distinct ethnic group by the Iraqi constitution, but Kurdish political parties often claim the Yazidis are ethnic Kurds to bolster their representation in the Ninewa region. During the period studied, some Kurdish political parties were actively trying
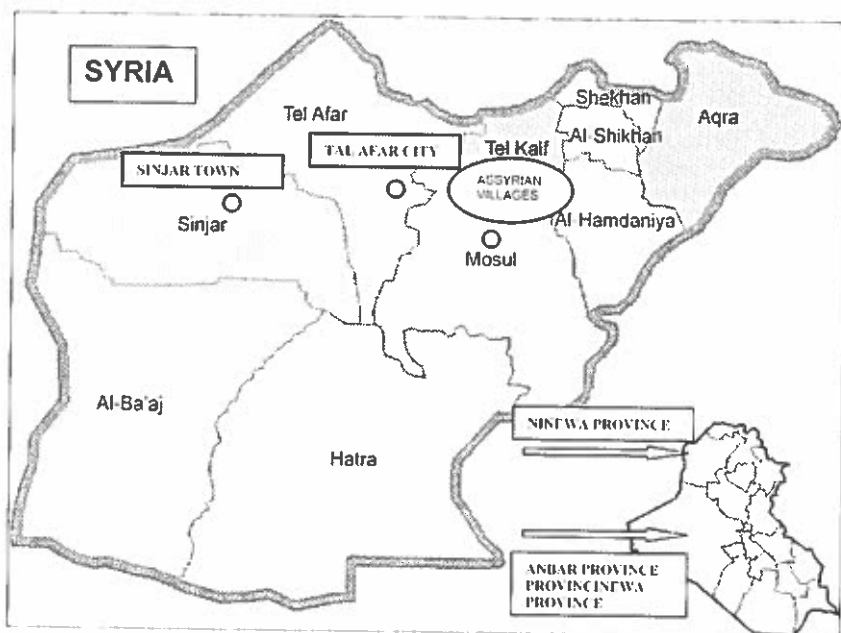
Fig. 1. Districts and Enclave Communities in Ninewa Province, Iraq. *Source:* This image has been adapted from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ninevehdistricts. jpg and is published under a Creative Commons Share-alike License.

to cultivate allies in the region by providing patronage to Yazidi leaders. At the same time, most Yazidis clearly resented the "heavy-handed" tactics being used by the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) in the region. Practically, Sinjar is proximate to Arab-dominated communities which made an open alliance with the KDP less tenable. Generally, even those who accepted patronage from the KDP remained wary of being dominated by Kurdish political factions (Maisel, 2008).

The specific beliefs and practices associated with the Yazidi faith are eclectic. The religion is monotheistic and an extraordinary amalgam of many faiths that were sometimes dominant in the region. This includes pre-Islamic faiths such as Zoroastrianism. The community is "closed" – it does not allow for conversion and ex-communicates those who marry outside the faith. There is a strong clerical class and rigid caste system, often associated with tribe, in many communities (Maisel, 2008). Some Sunni Arab factions in Iraq have long regarded the Yazidi community as both apostates and heretics and labeled them as "devil worshippers." This is a community that

has long been captive to the shifting political tides of the region. For example, they were subject to Saddam Hussein's "Arabization" policies and formally declared as "Arabs" despite the cultural-linguistic connections with the Kurds. Yazidi communities are considered among the poorest in Iraq with the highest rates of illiteracy (Fuccaro, 1997). In all, the community remained largely "caught in-between" the more dominant ethno-religious factions following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003.

The Chaldo-Assyrians of the Ninewa Plain

The Assyrian Christian communities in this study include a series of small rural villages (e.g., Bakhdida, Nimrud, Tel Esqof, Alqosh, Karamlesh, Bashiqa, Batnaya, and Tel Keppe) located just North and East of Mosul. These villages range in size from about 5,000 to 40,000 inhabitants. One of the larger villages, Tel Keppe (Arabic: Tel Kaif), is only 8 miles north of the restive city of Mosul. The Assyrians claim to be the original inhabitants of the region who converted to Christianity in the century after the faith was founded. They are a Semitic group that speaks an Aramaic language that may have been introduced into the region in 1200 BC. Unlike the Yazidi community, the various Christian communities largely have upper middle class status within Iraqi society. Still, Assyrian communities were often marginalized during the Baathist period of governance (Youash, 2008).

Activists have sometimes claimed the entire Christian community in Iraq to be as high as 8–12% of the total population when including Assyrians (Chaldeans among them), Mandaeans, and Armenians (Youash, 2008). Others have estimated the population is about half that size (WDMIP). Of these, the Assyrians in the Ninewa Plain probably represent around 1–2% of the total population of Iraq. Reports of violence directed toward Christians in Iraqi cities grew steadily as security deteriorated and factional fighting between Sunni and Shia factions increased. Several thousand Assyrians fled the city of Mosul in December 2009 following an escalation in attacks against Assyrian churches. Notably, many moved into the enclave communities that are the subject of this study (Hastings, 2009).

The Turkmen

The Iraqi Turkmen of Tal Afar are located about 30 miles west of Mosul. Tal Afar's population previous to the conflict was usually estimated at

about 200,000 people. The Turkmen community is divided by religious affiliation, with perhaps 25–35% Shi'a Muslim and 65–75% Sunni Muslim. But, in Tal Afar, Shi'a Turkmen appear to be more predominant. Turkmen are distinguished by their language, which is associated with other Turkish languages, but distinct from that spoken in Turkey, the Azerbaijan or Turkmenistan. When the Turkmen arrived in Iraq is not authoritatively known. Indeed, it is possible that the general designation of "Turkmen" in Iraq might include people whose specific lineages could be quite diverse. For example, the Ottoman Empire once controlled large swaths of Iraq and some Turkish migration was likely associated with this period of conquest, but some believe that Turkic peoples were in north Iraq previous to this period of conquest (Sirkeci, 2005).

Turkmen nationalist groups often claimed they might be as many as 8–12% of the population. Likewise, that Turkmen are the "third largest" ethnic group in Iraq (behind the Arabs and the Kurds). Probably, the numbers of Turkmens in Iraq have been exaggerated by these factions. For example, there were attempts by Turkmen groups to claim that Kirkuk – an important small city in an oil-rich region of Iraq – was a predominantly Turkmen city. But following city elections in 2005 it appeared that Turkmen were about 18% of the Kirkuk population (Ferris & Stoltz, 2008a, 2008b). There are Turkmen grievances against the Kurds – particularly as it relates to control of Kirkuk. At the same time, Turkmen communities were particularly targeted during the Baathist Arabization campaign – it was common for entire Turkmen villages to be disbanded during this period (Sirkeci, 2005). While Tal Afar retained its Turkmen identity, much of its governing apparatus was placed in the hands of Sunni Arabs. Many Turkmen are co-religionist with Sunni Arabs – and many speak Arabic – but also have a recent history of contentious relations with Arab factions within Iraq too.

INSURGENT FORCES IN NINEWA PROVINCE AND ANBAR PROVINCE

Shortly after the deposal of Saddam Hussein, an increasing number of Arab communities in the region became disenfranchised with the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) that was closely associated with American military and political interests. Later, after national elections in 2005, they became wary of the Shi'a political factions that dominated the national government. In late 2004, many Arab Sunni communities became increasingly

controlled by a coalition of insurgent Sunni Arab factions. This coalition included: (1) former Baath party members, many of whom had been disbanded from the Iraqi armed forces and excluded from the new national government; (2) regional Sunni Arab tribal leaders who were concerned about their waning influence in national politics, and (3) outside Arab supporters – most directly or loosely associated with al-Qaeda in Iraq – who entered the region from neighboring Arab countries (Felter & Fishman, 2007).

One crossing point for outside supporters of the insurgency was through the mountains between Syria and Ninewa and Anbar Province. Indeed, the Sinjar District – where the Yazidi communities in this study are located – was considered particularly porous (Felter & Fishman, 2007). In Ninewa Province, Mosul quickly became the most important major city that was contested by Arab insurgents. As discussed below, the ethnic enclave of Tal Afar – in direct contrast to the other ethnic enclaves in this study – often became occupied by Arab insurgents during this period as well.

Much of the Arab insurgency was based in Anbar Province, just south of Ninewa Province. Both regions have traditional Sunni tribes who were, previous to the deposal of Saddam Hussein, the beneficiaries of regional Baathists politics. Notably, the shifting allegiances of these local tribes had direct impact on the ongoing civil conflict. Most often, outside Arab groups concentrated their efforts in regions with predominately Sunni Arab communities where they expected to find greater support. And many of the Sunni tribes did form alliances with al-Qaeda in Iraq and former Baathists. In fact, much of the tribal leadership had called upon regional Sunnis to boycott national and regional elections in 2005 and moved into open resistance to the national government afterwards (Ucko, 2008).

The interaction between these groups was complex – these tribes are sometimes rivals too – but the tribes had the strongest social and political connections to local communities. Increasingly, as the tactics of al-Qaeda in Iraq became more coercive in relations with its tribal "partners," some tribes began to form an alliance designed to drive the al-Qaeda factions from their communities. As the American military leadership became aware of these disputes they increasingly formed an alliance with these tribal groups in late 2006. In popular accounts this coalition, in which the American military provided support for local tribes to police their communities, was characterized as the "Anbar Awakening" (McCary, 2009).

INCUMBENT FORCES IN NINEWA PROVINCE
AND ANBAR PROVINCE

The forces characterized as incumbent in this study were primarily the US armed forces along with an increasing number of Iraqi national army conscripts trained by US military after 2004. Most CPA allies (e.g., Great Britain) were stationed in Baghdad and in Southern Iraq. Theoretically, the US armed forces, in cooperation with the Iraq national government and its nascent army, were acting as an extension of Iraqi national authority following the 2005 elections. The Kurdish regional militia (Peshmerga) aided American forces in Mosul after 2004 and in Sinjar after 2007. They have more recently been active in Tal Afar and the Christian enclaves beginning in 2014 (after the period this study explores). They were rarely deployed to the Sunni Arab regions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research hypotheses are designed to test if security and relational perspectives help explain the patterns of violence deployed against small ethnic enclaves in Iraq.

H1. Ethnic enclaves will experience less insurgent violence, in terms of the number of attacks against civilians, when compared to other areas.

This proposition is designed to explore Kaufmann's (1996) assertion that defensible enclave communities might experience little violence. This security perspective predicts insurgents would judge the resources needed to control civilians in ethnic enclaves were "too high" and cause them to largely bypass these communities because they do not represent a significant security risk.

H2. Ethnic enclaves, when attacked, will experience more indiscriminate acts of violence when compared to co-ethnic and mixed-ethnic communities.

This proposition is designed to explore the theory of categorical terrorism (Goodwin, 2006). In effect, from a security perspective these are not communities that should often be attacked (H1) – but given the low prospect for convertibility it may be that the violence directed toward these communities, even if it is not frequent, will be more indiscriminate in

nature because of the low prospects for the convertibility of civilians. Indeed, Goodwin (2006) assumes that terrorism can occur in civil war for reasons unrelated to gaining territorial control. For example, it may be used to increase insurgent solidarity.

> **H3.** Ethnic enclaves will experience more civilian fatalities per attack when compared to other areas.

This proposition is directly related to H2 and designed to account for the possibility that even a relatively low number of indiscriminate attacks against ethnic enclaves could cause considerable civilian fatalities if particularly destructive in nature. This pattern would broadly indicate that violence associated with categorical terrorism – while perhaps not as frequently deployed by insurgents as that associated with control – might often be particularly destructive.

> **H4.** If insurgents act to control an ethnic enclave they will deploy more forms of indiscriminate violence as compared to when they act to control co-ethnic communities.

The previous propositions assume that the composition of enclave communities will prevent insurgent forces from acting to control them. Proposition H4 is designed to account for incidences when the previous is not proven true. In the past, particularly as associated with Kalyvas (2006), increasing levels of control were associated with an increase in the use of selective violence against civilians. Not studied is whether the use of selective violence is employed when the community targeted for control is a small ethnic enclave.

METHODS

While the previous descriptive account of the ethnic enclaves in Ninewa help provide context, this study also depends upon a remarkable data source, the IBC, which made it possible to employ a quantitative analysis that investigated the intensity of attacks and the type of attacks that were used against communities in Iraq.

Iraq Body Count Fatality Data

IBC data are compiled by volunteers mostly from news sources, but also from NGOs, Iraqi morgues, and hospitals. As the founders of the IBC

have noted, this data collection technique undercounts the total number of civilians who have been killed in Iraq. Nonetheless, by pooling the media coverage of violent attacks — and describing weaponry associated with the attacks — the IBC is remarkably detailed with respect to what ongoing conflict "looks like" in Iraq. The death count is ongoing, and at this writing includes over 40,000 attacks events associated with the deaths of roughly 162,000–181,000 Iraqi civilians. The range in the fatality count is due to differing reports concerning the number of people killed during an attack.

It is likely that some types of violence captured by the IBC are very accurate. For example, suicide bombings designed to kill many people are probably almost entirely accounted for in the database. Comparably, the counts are less authoritative for more intimate forms of violence undertaken in the smallest and most isolated communities where reportage is less common. Still, the relatively high number of cases captured by the IBC insures that the changes in the violence civilians experience are generally indicative of that endured during the conflict. The data associated with Tal Afar appear quite good beginning in 2005 when media began to routinely cover events in the city, but events in 2004 appear not well documented. The Yazidi and Assyrian communities appear to be well covered. Mosul and Fallujah were also well covered. Probably, the least authoritative data are associated with the very small co-ethnic Arab communities in Ninewa Province. These small communities, and those of the Yazidis and Assyrians, were aggregated.

Media data have long been used in the study of conflicts and social scientists are well versed in the liabilities and benefits of this type of data (Danzger, 1975). Generally, size, intensity, and duration of conflict events increase the validity of data gathered from media reports (Snyder & Kelly, 1977). The Iraq war — when compared to other civil wars — has been well covered by multiple media sources for the duration of the conflict. Obviously, though, fatality counts collected during ongoing conflicts are imperfect. Given this reality, the IBC database appears to an excellent, but far from perfect accounting of daily violence in Iraq.[3]

The Unit of Analysis: Attacks Killing Civilians

This study uses IBC data for the years 2003–2009. During this period, for the entire country, this accounted for 21,952 incidences of both *insurgent and incumbent* attacks that killed as many as 103,793 Iraqi civilians including police. This analysis uses only *insurgent* attacks in Ninewa Province against civilians ($n = 1,349$). Of these attacks, 91% ($n = 1227$) included

data that made it possible to characterize attacks as using *selective or indiscriminate* violence. During this period, the database accounted for a total of 4,145 civilians killed in Ninewa Province.

For the most part, the unit of analysis in the IBC should be characterized as an attack or event that causes civilian fatalities. The range in number killed in an attack is from 1 to 525 in this study. Mostly, this is information culled from media reports of violence, including but not limited to shootings, acts of torture, and bombings. At the same time, the nature of civil war sometimes makes delineating specific attacks problematic. For example, in Iraq it is common to sometimes find bodies after they have been shot (or tortured and killed). These bodies sometimes appear to be associated with one event (or attack), but this is not always definitively knowable. Indeed, if bodies were moved it can be hard to pinpoint exactly where the killing took place. In some cases, the IBC includes summary reports from morgues and hospitals in the data as one case (or event) even when it is likely several events caused these deaths. The IBC founders are aware of this inconsistency, but decided to include these summary reports to account for, as best they can, all the reported civilian fatalities in the conflict ("About the IBC," n.d.). Most summary reports were excluded from this data analysis.

Sometimes, there are also difficulties associated with "equivalency" concerning the unit of analysis. In effect, given the appalling variety of ways in which people are killed in Iraq, the attacks vary considerably even when classified as the same "type" of attack. And the media reports themselves are variable too. In fact, sometimes multiple forms of attack (being found shot and tortured) are specified in the same data field. To some extent, the aggregating of the type of attacks into "selective and indiscriminate" violence (see below) mitigates the previous concern, but this causes a corresponding loss of detail. In this study being tortured, stabbed to death, and executed were all considered selective forms of violence (see below).

Another equivalency problem is when the IBC may classify an event as a singular attack when it involves multiple weaponry in what could be considered separate attacks. For example, the tactic of using indiscriminate bombing followed by firing weapons against first responders is usually characterized in the IBC data as one event or attack. One version of this classification problem was encountered in this study as it relates to an extraordinary bombing attack against the Yazidi community described below. This attack was coded as one event involving four bombs at different locations. Within the context of the entire IBC data, an attack of this nature is uncommon. In this case I did consider re-coding this particular

attack to treat each bomb as a distinct event. Ultimately, I decided to not add cases to the original IBC data for a few reasons. Among these was that the intention of this bombing was clear: it was largely meant to be construed as a singular "event" (or attack) directed toward the Yazidi community.

Defining Ethnic Enclaves

Currently, clusters of ethnic groups within a larger urban setting are most closely associated with the study of enclave communities. But the first studies of ethnic enclaves were more often of small ethnic communities surrounded by a different ethnic group (Massey, Hodson, & Sekulić, 1999). This study uses this concept of an ethnic enclave. Importantly, this is not a study of how small enclaves of Yazidis, Chaldo-Assyrians, and Turkmens living in larger urban areas of Iraq were affected during the Iraq civil war. Unfortunately, the IBC data are not fine-grained enough to explore violence within these communities, but there is considerable circumstantial evidence that these communities became widely persecuted as the civil war in Iraq became more enduring (Ferris & Stoltz, 2008b).

Independent Variable: Control of a Community

In looking at H4, this study compares the specific experience of two communities – Fallujah and Tal Afar – as it relates to the following periods of control: (1) *actively contested control*, (2) *predominately insurgent control* and, (3) *predominately incumbent control*. The levels of control, defined below, were identified by doing a Lexis-Nexis database search for articles that reported on troop movements. Tal Afar and Fallujah were well covered in the media and a comprehensive picture of the changing levels of control was established. The three levels of control below are modified versions of those developed by Kalyvas (2006).

Actively Contested Control includes periods during campaigns by incumbents and insurgents that were designed to contest for control of territory. The most prolonged of these episodes was during "the surge" of American troops in 2007. This also included conditions when incumbent forces routinely "passed through" and patrolled the perimeters of towns and cities – the use of roadblocks and checkpoints was common – but did not reside in

these communities even as insurgents began acting to increase their level of control within these localities.

Predominately Insurgent Control includes periods when insurgent control over territory was largely secure but also incomplete. Generally, insurgent forces could operate openly in most areas of a community with only sporadic challenges by incumbent forces. Sometimes, incumbent forces might visit the community for brief periods of time (e.g., for an election) – those were coded as "actively contested" periods – but often left the community quickly afterwards.

Predominately Incumbent Control includes periods when American and Iraqi forces maintained secure but incomplete control of a region. In this case, it was incumbents who could mostly operate openly and had greater control of a region and insurgents who might make sporadic visits. During this period, incumbent forces often resided within or near these communities.

Dependent Variable: Civilian Fatalities

Deciding who is a "civilian" and a "combatant" in a civil war is difficult. Indeed, one reason civil war is so lethal is that it often "blurs the line" between citizens acting to protect themselves and those more ideologically committed to the state or insurgent factions. In this respect, the IBC considers the Iraqi police as civilians, as are members of local militias (e.g., the Anbar Tribes), when they are not involved in an ongoing military campaign and had been given national authority to police their communities.

I personally believe the IBC guidelines for categorizing civilians is appropriate, but because police and citizen militias are armed and often considered to be actively fighting insurgency many studies of civilian death in civil war exclude these groups – or to analyze them separately. So, policing groups were likewise excluded from this study. Another reason for eliminating the attacks on police, tribal militias, and tribal military leaders was variation in attacks on these groups in different areas. For example, nearly all the attacks in Ninewa ($n = 763$) took place in Tal Afar and Mosul. Overall, attacks against police ($n = 773$) eliminated from analysis accounted for more than one-third of all the attacks ($n = 2,121$) in the region. In Fallujah – a place where the police and tribal militias were often closely associated with the conflict – the elimination of attacks against these groups ($n = 187$) represented more than half of the total attacks ($n = 351$). Notably, I conducted a summary analysis (not shown) that found some difference associated with insurgent attacks on police as compared

with other civilians. For example, attacks against police spiked considerably compared to other civilians in some communities during highly contentious periods. But, the overall patterns of selective and indiscriminate violence used by insurgents against civilians were not significantly different when attacks against police and militias were included in statistical tests used below.

Dependent Variable: Types of Attacks Used against Civilians

Violent attacks were organized into two categories labeled *selective* and *indiscriminate*. All acts of bombing – suicide bombing, truck bombings, roadside bombing, improvised explosive devices, and other land bombings – were characterized as indiscriminate acts of violence. Selective acts of violence include shooting deaths, assassinations, beheadings, stabbings, and other highly personal forms of assault (e.g., torture).

Measures

This study measured the violence directed toward civilians using two analysis of variance (ANOVA) that: (1) compared the different types of attacks that killed civilians, and (2) compared the number of civilians killed per violent attack. This essentially treated *attacks of indiscriminate and selective violence* directed toward different communities as the dependent variable. The second ANOVA assumed that the average number of civilian fatalities per attack would help indicate whether the violence directed toward enclave communities were more indiscriminate in nature. At the same time, population density, changes in tactics, the availability of lethal resources at certain times, etc., might also account for higher fatality rates in attacks in different regions.

The fatality rates (in Table 1) are estimates and not authoritative. These were calculated from population ranges reported by the Brookings Institute (Ferris & Stoltz, 2008a) and the WDMIP website. Tal Afar was estimated at 200,000, Mosul at 1.8 million, all Assyrian villages in the study at 200,000, and all Yazidi villages at 500,000. The population estimate for the village of Qahtaniya was 2,000 as estimated in a Human Rights Watch (2009) report. Estimates for all of the co-ethnic communities in Ninewa Province appear to be unavailable.

Table 1. Civilian Fatalities Reported by the IBC from Insurgent Attacks in Communities in Ninewa Province, Iraq (2003–2009).

	Number of Attacks	Percent of Attacks	Civilian Fatalities	Percent of Fatalities	Fatality Rate (Approx.)
Mosul (mixed ethnic)	1,198	88.8	2,646	63.8	1 in 700
Tal Afar (Turkmen)	70	5.2	681	16.4	1 in 293
Ninewa Province (co-ethnic)	58	4.3	179	4.3	
Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	12	.9	69	1.7	1 in 2,900
Yazidi Villages	11	.8	570	13.7	1 in 880
(Qahtaniya Village)					(1 in 5)
Total	1,349	100	4,145	100	

Notes: The fatality rates are for comparative purposes and not authoritative as the IBC undercounts fatalities. Population estimates were reported by the World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples and Brookings Institute. Tal Afar was estimated at 200,000, Mosul at 1.8 million, all Assyrian villages in the study at 200,000, and all Yazidi villages at 500,000. The estimate for Qahtaniya was 2,000 as reported by Human Rights Watch (2009).

FINDINGS

The IBC data reflect that country-wide there was generally a steady increase in lethal violence from 2003 through 2007 with all communities experiencing a dramatic increase in violence in 2006. Violence was also high in 2007 – a period that coincided with the "surge" of American troops – but dropped significantly in 2008 as incumbent forces established greater control over regions in Iraq. Overall, as Iraq experienced increasing levels of control by incumbent forces in 2008 there was considerably less violence. Fig. 2 indicates overall trends for all civilian fatalities in Iraq – including police – resulting from both insurgent and incumbent violence from March, 2003 to 2009. The capital of Baghdad, the largest city in Iraq with a population often estimated at 6 million, was by far the most violent location. During this period (2003–2009), the IBC database accounts for 103,793 civilian fatalities with 60,292 of these occurring in Baghdad. As noted previously, the IBC does not capture all civilian fatalities.

In Ninewa Province most insurgent violence occurred in the cities of Mosul and Tal Afar. Table 1 represents the acts of insurgent violence reported by the IBC that killed civilians in all cities and towns in Ninewa Province from March 2003 to December 2009. Table 2 represents the percentage of attacks killing civilians in these communities that were selective
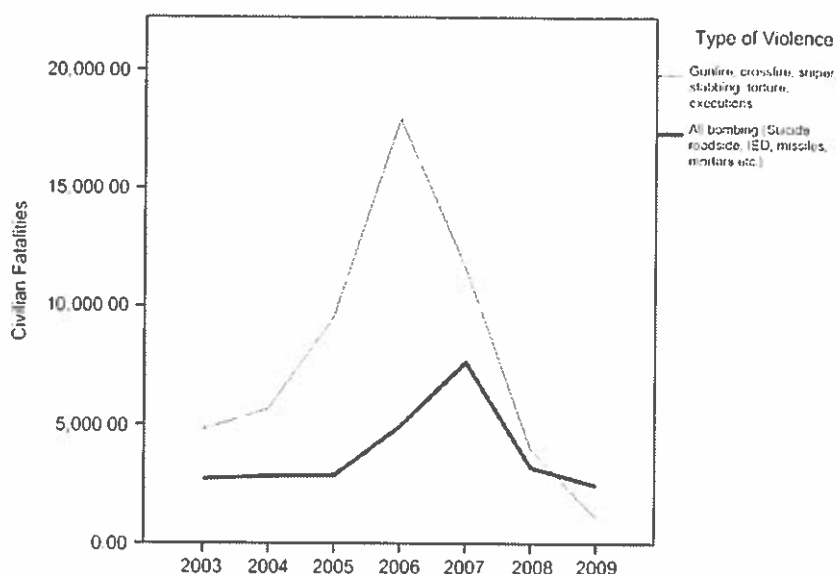
Fig. 2.   Civilian Fatalities in Iraq Reported by IBC (2003–2009). *Note*: Includes all victims of insurgent and incumbent violence (purposeful and collateral) and victims killed from unknown sources.

Table 2.   Types of Insurgent Violent Attacks Reported by IBC in Communities in Ninewa Province (2003–2009).

	Type of Violence		Total
	Selective Violence	Indiscriminate Violence	
Mosul (mixed ethnic)	926 (85%)	159 (15%)	1,085
Tal Afar (Turkmen)	21 (33%)	43 (67%)	64
Ninewa Province (co-ethnic)	40 (73%)	15 (27%)	55
Sinjar (Yazidi)	3 (27%)	8 (73%)	11
Chaldo-Assyrian	7 (58%)	5 (42%)	12
Total	997 (100%)	230 (100%)	1,227

or indiscriminate in nature. Fig. 3 represents the trends in the use of indiscriminate and selective violence over time.

The ANOVAs and Tukey Post hoc comparisons of the communities indicate a few interesting patterns. The first investigated if communities
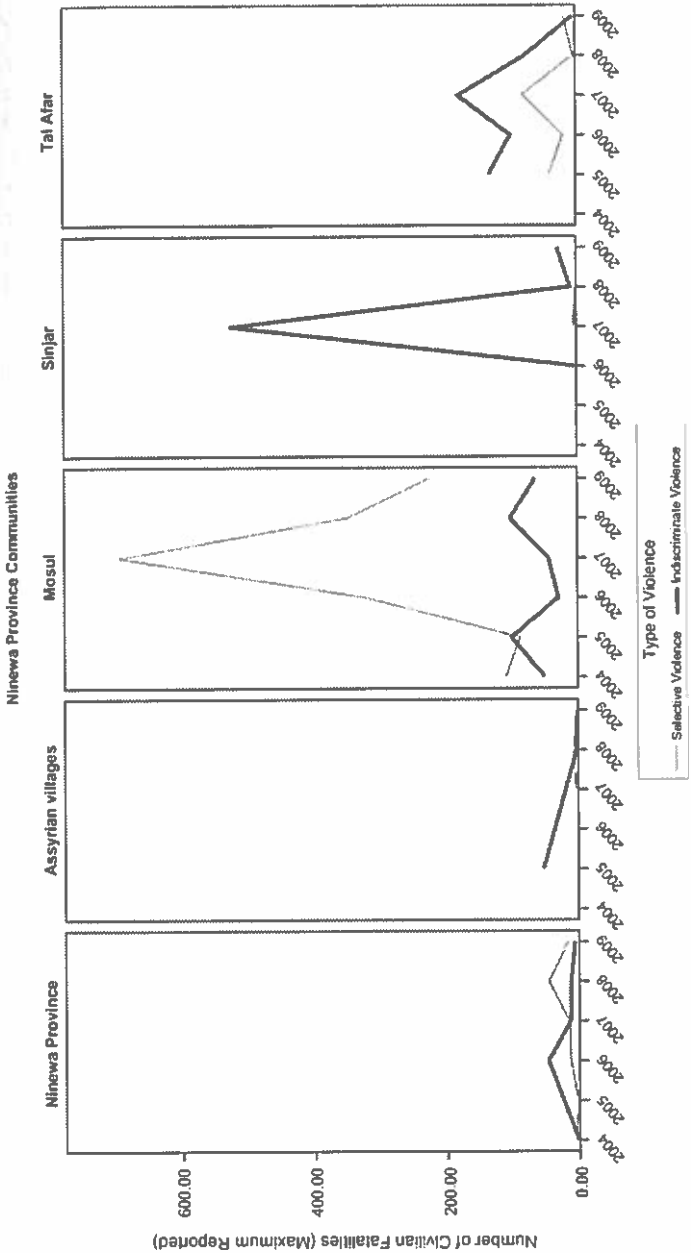
Fig. 3. Civilians Killed by Insurgent Violence in Different Ninewa Province Communities.

experienced different patterns of violence by *comparing the attacks of indiscriminate violence directed toward different communities* using a dummy variable (selective $= 0$ and indiscriminate violence $= 1$). Generally, two enclave communities had relatively low rates of violence directed toward them in terms of the *number of attacks* that killed civilians (Tables 3 and 4). But, one of these attacks was extraordinarily brutal – a coordinated bombing attack that killed as many as 525 Yazidis. This one attack accounts for most civilian fatalities among the Yazidis. The second ANOVA (Tables 4 and 5) compared the severity of attacks in each of these communities. In this case, the enclave communities had higher numbers killed per attack than co-ethnic communities and Mosul. Indeed, Mosul sustained the highest rates of violent acts committed that killed civilians. It was, day in and day out, a deadly place to live – but the overall death rate within the community was probably lower than two of the enclave communities because the violent acts were more often forms of selective violence that inflicted fewer casualties than more indiscriminate bombings. If the extraordinary attack against the Yazidis involving multiple bombs is treated as four distinct attacks (see discussion of the unit of analysis) the average killed per attack against the community would have dropped from 52 to 38 – still the highest of any community studied (Table 6).

Overall, living in enclave communities affected the types of violence civilians experienced. The relatively low numbers of insurgent attacks on

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Insurgent Indiscriminate Attacks in Different Ninewa Communities (2003–2009).

	N	Percentage of Attacks Using Indiscriminate Violence	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower bound	Upper bound		
Ninewa (co-ethnic)	55	.27	.44947	.06061	.1512	.3942	.00	1.00
Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	12	.42	.51887	.14391	.1480	.7751	.00	1.00
Mosul (mixed ethnic)	1085	.15	.35381	.01074	.1255	.1676	.00	1.00
Sinjar	11	.73	.46710	.14084	.4135	1.0411	.00	1.00
Tal Afar	64	.67	.47324	.05916	.5537	.7901	.00	1.00
Total	1228	.19	.39096	.01116	.1662	.2100	.00	1.00

Table 4. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Comparison (ANOVA) of Insurgent Indiscriminate Attacks Used against Civilians in Different Ninewa Communities.

(I) Location	(J) Location	Mean Difference (I − J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Ninewa (co-ethnic)	Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	−.18881	.11366	.459	−.4993	.1217
	Mosul	.12618	.05094	.097	−.0130	.2653
	Sinjar	−.45455*	.12173	.002	−.7871	−.1220
	Tal Afar	−.39915*	.06777	.000	−.5843	−.2140
Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	Ninewa Province	.18881	.11366	.459	−.1217	.4993
	Mosul	.31499*	.10283	.019	.0341	.5959
	Sinjar	−.26573	.15099	.398	−.6782	.1467
	Tal Afar	−.21034	.11212	.331	−.5166	.0960
Mosul	Ninewa Province	−.12618	.05094	.097	−.2653	.0130
	Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	−.31499*	.10283	.019	−.5959	−.0341
	Sinjar	−.58073*	.11169	.000	−.8858	−.2756
	Tal Afar	−.52533*	.04741	.000	−.6548	−.3958
Sinjar	Ninewa Province	.45455*	.12173	.002	.1220	.7871
	Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	.26573	.15099	.398	−.1467	.6782
	Mosul	.58073*	.11169	.000	.2756	.8858
	Tal Afar	.05540	.12030	.991	−.2732	.3840
Tal Afar	Ninewa Province	.39915*	.06777	.000	.2140	.5843
	Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	.21034	.11212	.331	−.0960	.5166
	Mosul	.52533*	.04741	.000	.3958	.6548
	Sinjar	−.05540	.12030	.991	−.3840	.2732

*Mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

the Chaldo-Assyrian communities ($n = 12$) and Yazidi communities ($n = 11$) made the strength of statistical measures weak, but there was a clear picture concerning the types of attacks these communities most often experienced. While not often attacked, it was more likely that indiscriminate forms of

Table 5. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Comparison (ANOVA) of Severity of Attacks against Civilians in Different Ninewa Communities.

(I) Location	(J) Location	Mean Difference (I - J)	Std. Error	Sig.	90% Confidence Interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Ninewa Province (co-ethnic)	Chaldo-Assyrian	-2.58046	4.66977	.581	-10.2668	5.1059
	Mosul	.84831	1.97972	.668	2.4103	4.1069
	Sinjar	-48.73197*	4.84245	.000	-56.7026	40.7614
	Tal Afar	-6.64236*	2.61453	.011	-10.9458	-2.3389
Chaldo-Assyrian Villages	Ninewa Province	2.58046	4.66977	.581	-5.1059	10.2668
	Mosul	3.42877	4.27194	.422	3.6028	10.4603
	Sinjar	-46.15152*	6.14650	.000	-56.2686	-36.0344
	Tal Afar	-4.06190	4.60064	.377	-11.6345	3.5107
Mosul	Ninewa Province	-.84831	1.97972	.668	4.1069	2.4103
	Chaldo-Assyrian	-3.42877	4.27194	.422	-10.4603	3.6028
	Sinjar	-49.58029*	4.46005	.000	-56.9215	-42.2391
	Tal Afar	-7.49067*	1.81064	.000	-10.4710	-4.5104
Sinjar	Ninewa Province	48.73197*	4.84245	.000	40.7614	56.7026
	Chaldo-Assyrian	46.15152*	6.14650	.000	36.0344	56.2686
	Mosul	49.58029*	4.46005	.000	42.2391	56.9215
	Tal Afar	42.08961*	4.77582	.000	34.2287	49.9506
Tal Afar	Ninewa Province	6.64236*	2.61453	.011	2.3389	10.9458
	Chaldo-Assyrian	4.06190	4.60064	.377	-3.5107	11.6345
	Mosul	7.49067*	1.81064	.000	4.5104	10.4710
	Sinjar	-42.08961*	4.77582	.000	49.9506	-34.2287

*Mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

violence would be used when compared to attacks on communities with Arab majorities and the mixed-ethnic community of Mosul.

With respect to predictions that there would be low levels of violent attacks (H1) and fewer civilian fatalities (H2) in enclave communities the record is clearly mixed. For example, the Chaldo-Assyrian Christian communities in this study experienced few attacks and few civilian casualties from 2003 to 2009 even though they were often the most proximate to ongoing fighting in Mosul. Importantly, Tal Afar — unlike the other enclave

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of the Number of Civilians Killed during Insurgent Attacks in Ninewa Communities (2003–2009).

	N	Mean Killed per Attack	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower bound	Upper bound		
Ninewa Province	58	3.0862	5.37468	.70573	1.6730	4.4994	1.00	38.00
Chaldo-Assyrian	12	5.6667	13.41867	3.87364	−2.8591	14.1925	1.00	48.00
Mosul	1,198	2.2379	3.16455	.09143	2.0585	2.4173	1.00	51.00
Sinjar	11	51.8182	157.04064	47.34954	−53.6832	157.3195	1.00	525.00
Tal Afar	70	9.7286	20.56303	2.45775	4.8255	14.6317	1.00	152.00
Total	1,349	3.0979	15.44496	.42051	2.2729	3.9228	1.00	525.00

communities in this study — was often a community central to efforts by the insurgency to establish areas of control in Ninewa Province. Its rates of civilian death were among the highest in the province. The specific experience of civilians in each enclave community is described below.

The Turkmen Enclave: Using Indiscriminate Violence to Control a Small City

Tal Afar was the only enclave community insurgents occupied during the period studied and the violence directed toward civilians was routine and severe. One compelling reason to occupy Tal Afar is that it is on a major road about 30 miles from Mosul. Importantly, it is also possible that unlike the other enclaves Arab insurgents might have initially regarded some of the Sunni Turkmen tribes as co-religionist. To some extent, there is an indication that insurgents used previous grievances among Sunni Turkmen toward the Shi'a tribes to divide city allegiances. An excellent journalistic account by Packer (2006) indicates aspects of this dynamic, but also that over time, as the violence became more indiscriminate, all the Turkish tribesman — both Sunni and Shi'a — lobbied hard for American forces to "drive out" insurgents in a "Fallujah-styled" assault. This dynamic would support Kalyvas' (2006) contention that previous grievances can become motivating factors for violence during civil war.

Often, Tal Afar and Fallujah were compared to each other in press accounts because they are roughly the same size and were occupied by same insurgent coalition at roughly the same time period. This provides an opportunity to compare the types of violence that insurgents used in their attempts to secure a co-ethnic community as compared to an ethnic enclave (H4). Table 7 provides a crosstab of the types of violence used during different periods of control for both communities from 2004 to 2009. The violence used in Fallujah during periods of insurgent control shows that more selective violence was employed. Overall, the use of more selective violence – shootings, torture, stabbings, and executions – is an indication that these civilians were probably more specifically targeted by insurgents. Importantly, this process still caused the number of civilian fatalities ($n = 573$) in the co-ethnic community of Fallujah to be comparable to that in Tal Afar ($n = 616$). Notably, if police and citizen militias are considered civilians (not shown) the number killed in Fallujah ($n = 1,010$) is greater than that in Tal Afar ($n = 829$).

As control of the Fallujah became contested – as tribal allegiances shifted during "the surge" and "Anbar Awakening" (see above) – insurgent groups responded by using more indiscriminate forms of bombing. Indeed, as Sunni tribal leaders began cooperating with incumbent forces there was a related shift from insurgents using greater selective violence toward using more indiscriminate forms of violence. When Fallujah became largely controlled by American and Iraqi forces in 2008, insurgent violence decreased but used higher proportions of indiscriminate violence.

Compared to Tal Afar – where the support for the insurgency among ethnic Turkmen was shallower – a different pattern of violence is observable. In this case, insurgents primarily used forms of indiscriminate violence during all the periods of control. Perhaps ethnicity made sorting civilians difficult. Or, perhaps insurgents were not interested in finding ethnic Turkmen who might support them. Both of these could account for the differences in the severity of attacks against civilians (mean killed) in Tal Afar when compared to Fallujah. In this case, it appears insurgents quickly resorted to terror as a means of controlling the city. Fig. 4 compares the number of civilians killed by selective and indiscriminate attacks in these two cities over time. Fig. 5 indicates the rates of selective and indiscriminate attacks in these two communities over time.

The use of indiscriminate violence in Tal Afar and selective violence in Fallujah during periods of insurgent control largely supports proposition H4 that predicted insurgents would use different types of violence when they acted to control co-ethnic and enclave communities. Overall,

Table 7. Patterns and Severity of Selective and Indiscriminate Attacks during Different Periods of Control in Fallujah and Tal Afar.

|		Incumbent Control			Insurgent Control			Actively Contested			Total		
		Mean killed	Number of fatalities	Number of attacks	Mean killed	Number of fatalities	Number of attacks	Mean killed	Number of fatalities	Number of attacks	Mean killed	Number of fatalities	Number of attacks
Fallujah	Selective attacks	1.88	15 (23%)	8 (27%)	3.83	157 (76%)	41 (65%)	3.78	189 (62%)	50 (70%)	3.65	361 (63%)	99 (60%)
	Indiscriminate attacks	2.27	50 (77%)	22 (73%)	2.18	48 (24%)	22 (35%)	5.43	114 (38%)	21 (30%)	3.26	212 (37%)	65 (40%)
	Total	2.17	65 (100%)	30 (100%)	3.25	205 (100%)	63 (100%)	4.27	303 (100%)	71 (100%)	3.49	573 (100%)	164 (100%)
Tal Afar	Selective attacks	5.00	20 (19%)	4 (24%)	4.75	19 (19%)	4 (27%)	9.54	124 (30%)	13 (38%)	7.76	163 (26%)	21 (32%)
	Indiscriminate attacks	6.85	89 (81%)	13 (76%)	7.27	80 (81%)	11 (73%)	13.57	285 (70%)	21 (62%)	10.09	454 (74%)	45 (68%)
	Total	6.41	109 (100%)	17 (100%)	6.60	99 (100%)	15 (100%)	12.03	409 (100%)	34 (100%)	9.35	617 (100%)	66 (100%)
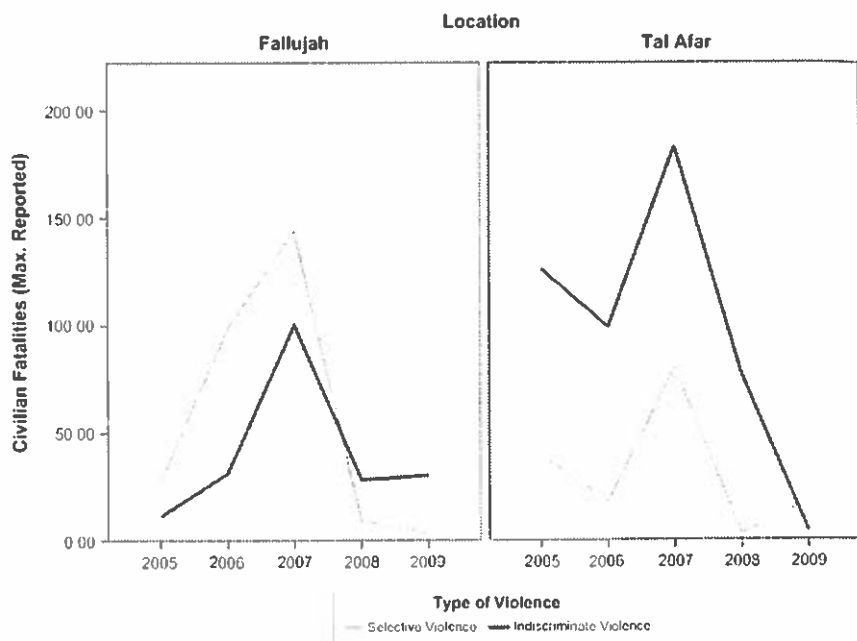
Fig. 4. Civilian Fatalities from Insurgent Violence in Fallujah and Tal Afar Reported by the IBC.

deploying indiscriminate violence as a means of holding territory runs counter to the patterns predicted by Kalyvas (2006) in which control was associated with the use of selective violence. Notably, the commander of the American forces, Col. McMaster, generally used this same characterization when describing the community he encountered at Tal Aar during an interview on *Sixty Minutes*. He stated: "*They fired mortars indiscriminately* into playgrounds, into school yards, across the marketplace to kill innocent civilians. What they really wanted to do was incite fear" (Logan, 2006).

The Christian Communities of the Ninewa Plain: "Islands" of Stability

The experience of the Chaldo-Assyrian communities located on the Ninewa Plain during the period studied provided the one exemplary fit concerning the prediction that living in an enclave might minimize the violence directed toward civilians from outsiders. These areas experienced relatively few acts
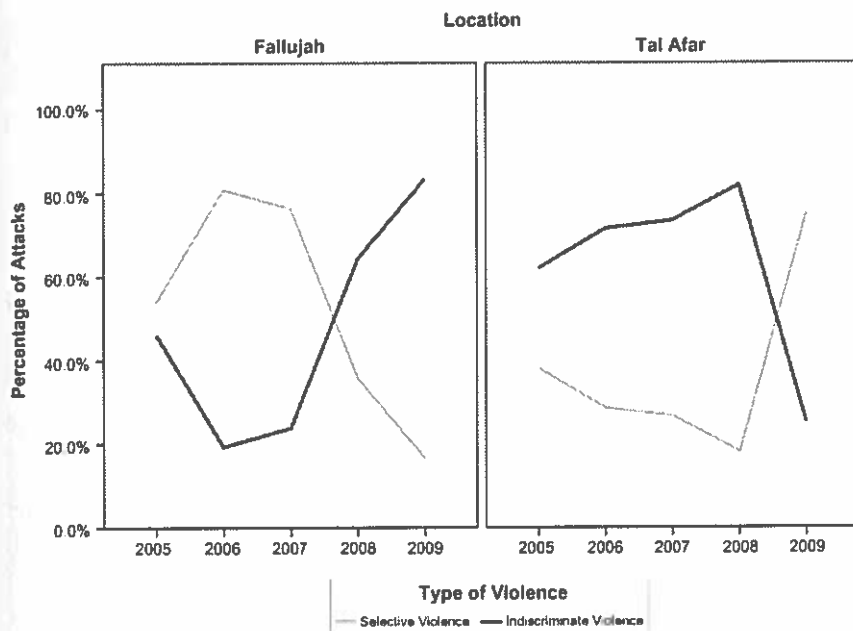
Fig. 5. Percentage of Insurgent Attacks Killing Civilians in Fallujah and Tal Afar as Reported by IBC.

of violence even though they are the most proximate to Mosul. But, when violence did occur it was more often indiscriminate in nature when compared to the more highly contested city of Mosul. During the period studied, there were 69 civilian deaths in these small Christian communities, with a majority of these fatalities occurring during one coordinated bombing attack that killed 48 civilians. Importantly, the overall rates of civilian death in these Christian communities were quite low comparably as well. Indeed, and unlike the enclave community of Tal Afar, these communities were relative islands of tranquility.

The previous is notable given the increasing persecution of the Chaldo-Assyrian communities in Mosul in 2009. The fact that these small communities are close to Mosul is evidence that spatial orientation to a larger conflict is not always indicative of the level of violence a community might experience. In this respect, there appears to have been "strength in numbers" with respect to the concentration of Christians in these small northern communities. In fact, many of these communities actively welcomed tens of thousands

of displaced Iraqi Christians fleeing from other regions of the country when they were being targeted by insurgent factions (Human Rights Watch, 2009).

The Yazidis of Sinjar: Extraordinary Indiscriminate Violence

Perhaps the best way to characterize the experience of the Yazidi communities is that they were, like the Chaldo-Assyrian communities, relative "islands" of stability until this calm was punctuated by an act of extraordinary brutality. On the one hand, the attacks against this community during the period studied were relatively low ($n = 11$). Indeed, both the *types and rates of violent acts* directed toward the community look similar to those directed toward the Chaldo-Assyrian communities. But in contrast to the prediction that the death rate would also be low, the death rate was *extraordinarily high* because of one coordinated bombing attack in 2007 that killed between 300 and 525 civilians. In the same attacks at least 700 were reported to be injured. A Human Rights Watch Report (2009) indicated at least 400 homes were destroyed. The small Yazidi village of Qahtaniya – hardest hit by the bombings – has the highest civilian fatality rates of any community in Iraq that I have investigated to date (Table 2). On the one hand, security perspectives would largely predict that small Yazidi ethnic enclaves might, somewhat counter-intuitively, experience relatively few acts of violence. In effect, given the other areas of contention in Ninewa Province during the period studied – particularly in Mosul – insurgents might decide not to dedicate resources to kill people in the Yazidi-controlled villages. For a time, this appears to have been the case. Indeed, it was later discovered that some Arab planners of the insurgency often hid in the relatively tranquil community of Sinjar previous to the 2007 bombing (DeYoung, 2008), probably because the community was considered insular and an unlikely place for where they would seek refuge.

Notably, this bombing took place in the summer of 2007 during a "surge" of American troops that was causing insurgents to lose control of communities in the Ninewa region. These ongoing setbacks associated with control of other Ninewa communities may have contributed to the decision by insurgents to engage in an extraordinary act of violence against the Yazidis. This bombing attack appears unrelated to trying to control Yazidi territory. Indeed, from a security-oriented perspective the bombing was a predictable setback in that Kurdish militias quickly used it as a pretext to police the region. Rather, the bombing was likely a demonstration that

al-Qaeda in Iraq retained the ability to harm citizens they regarded as apostates and "devil worshippers." In this respect, the indiscriminate violence was likely employed because the Yazidi were not considered convertible (Goodwin, 2006).

CONCLUSION AND POSTSCRIPT

While there were some consistencies in the violence that enclave communities experienced during this period of conflict in Iraq, perhaps it is the differences that provide the best insights into how security and relational perspectives can be used to describe the patterns of violence observed in Ninewa Province. Mostly, ethnicity is associated with the fact that the proportion of indiscriminate attacks – even if these acts were few in number – was greater in ethnic enclaves as compared to co-ethnic and mixed-ethnic communities. At the same time, the prediction that ethnic enclaves might experience *relatively few attacks* did prove to be the case in the Christian and Yazidi communities. But the important caveat to this finding is that if the severity of the violence is measured in terms of the overall civilian death rate – as opposed to the number of attacks against civilians – then some Yazidi enclaves, while experiencing few attacks, still experienced extraordinary high civilian fatalities.

And then there is the experience of Tal Afar where, unlike the other enclaves, insurgents devoted considerable time, resources, and men to controlling the community. But unlike the co-ethnic community of Fallujah where they also established periods of control, insurgents in Tal Afar primarily employed acts of indiscriminate violence. Generally, security-oriented approaches, and particularly the "logic of violence" outlined in Kalyvas' (2006) influential study, assume that groups would not establish control over territory by using indiscriminate terror. Mostly, the tactic makes it less likely, because it creates no civilian support, to hold this territory over time. Comparably, when the same insurgents acted to secure a Fallujah, a city of similar size with a majority Sunni Arab (co-ethnic) population, they used much more selective forms of violence against civilians.

What is to be made these differing experiences? The fact that some ethnic enclaves were insulated from "everyday" violence does offer evidence that their insularity did, at least for a time, provide some protection from outside attacks. This was particularly the case in the most cohesive of these communities where there were not significant divisions associated with

religion and tribe. Overall, this pattern would largely support security perspectives (Kaufmann, 1996) wherein the prospects for success when controlling territory are calculations that insurgents make when they deploy violence. At the same time, this did not prevent insurgents from attacking enclave communities in manners that were largely intended as spectacle. In the case of the Yazidis of Iraq, the extraordinary bombing attack against them was not a calculation designed to gain territory. These were spectacular acts perhaps designed to bolster the supporters of the insurgency – to demonstrate al-Qaeda in Iraq still had the capacity to harm people they regarded as "devil worshippers" – after they had experienced a series of defeats in the region.

Perhaps most notable is that when insurgents did act to control an enclave community they employed far more indiscriminate forms of violence as compared to that used in co-ethnic communities. Importantly, the overall civilian fatalities in co-ethnic communities is considerable too, but the higher incidences of selective violence in Fallujah was likely designed to "sort" supporters from dissenters. In ethnic enclaves the violence was not as frequent, but more indiscriminate and more severe. In this respect, control of ethnic enclaves was not gained by offering the "double edge sword of protection" (Tilly, 1985) – but rather by employing violence designed primarily to terrorize (Tilly, 2005). Largely, this pattern would lend support to Tilly's (2005) assertion that terrorism in war is best understood as relational. In this case, the lower prospects of convertibility probably made the resort to indiscriminate terrorism more likely (Goodwin, 2006).

I would argue that Tilly's (2005) arguments for a "relational approach" to the study of terrorism are broadly compatible with explaining the uses of both indiscriminate and selective violence against ethnic enclaves in Iraq. At the same time, this perspective can still encompass the changing dynamics that security dilemma perspectives have often tried to capture. In effect, the use of both indiscriminate and selective violence is likely related to the relationship between actors – whether one regards the other as convertible for example (Goodwin, 2006) – but this relationship takes place within the context of changing security dynamics on the ground (Kalyvas, 2006).

Perhaps even the small differences in the relationship between groups can cause insurgents to shift their focus from security-related concerns and cause them to act differently toward different communities. In this respect, the fact that the Yazidis were particularly reviled and not considered convertible, that the Turkmen enclave of Tal Afar had rivalries between the

Sunni and Shi'a tribes that could be exploited, and that the Christian enclaves were particularly cohesive, might all be the specific relational variables that help explain both sometimes similar, and often differing patterns of violence directed toward these communities.

Scholars of civil war routinely note the endogenous and dynamic nature of these conflicts – that conditions on the ground can change rapidly and dramatically. In this respect, an important final note is that this study captured the period of 2003–2009 and conditions in Iraq have since changed. In 2009, there were indications that country-wide violence associated with insurgency was on the wane. Notwithstanding the fact that Mosul was probably the most problematic city in terms of ongoing violence, the other communities in Ninewa Province appeared increasingly stable. But in the summer of 2014, nearly all communities in Ninewa Province came under increasing insurgent control during a dramatic campaign directed by the Islamic State (IS) into the region. The IS militants are ostensibly different from al-Qaeda in Iraq – there are often rivalries between the leadership of these two groups – but their supporters come from the same disaffected groups. During the 2014 campaign, Tal Afar was quickly occupied by these forces. And, for the first time, Mosul became mostly controlled by insurgent actors too. There was also the first concerted effort – one eventually repelled – to establish control over the Christian enclaves.

Unlike the time period in this study, IS forces did eventually act to control several Yazidi communities during this campaign. The assault against the Yazidis appears to have been, even by the standards of civil war, extraordinarily brutal (Otten, 2016). During this campaign, thousands of Yazidi women were captured and trafficked into sex slavery among IS fighters in the region (Callimachi, 2015) while many young men appear to have been summarily killed, an indication that gender dynamics also pattern the types of violence directed toward civilians during war (Wood, 2006).

Mostly, it appears that when the IS acted to control ethnic enclaves it was in the absence of any attempt to cultivate alliances among the civilians that live there. Rather, these forces summarily killed the civilians they encountered or drove them away. This has caused many to characterize this violence as genocidal (Otten, 2016). One possible dynamic associated with the formation of small ethnic enclaves in Iraq was that these groups may have come together, over long periods of time, as a strategy related to self-preservation during past periods of persecution. And perhaps this tactic works, as it did for the Assyrian enclaves in this study, for some period of time, until conflict dynamics change and diminish the protection

that an enclave community can provide to citizens. These changes could be related to the control groups have over territory, shifting allegiances, or the introduction of other variables that increase volatility (symbolic events, new tactics, and weaponry). In many respects, this seems to characterize the experience of the Yazidi community in Iraq which were largely safe until there insurgents opted for a spectacular attack against a symbolic enemy in the face of ongoing losses of territory. In this regard, these small enclaves may offer largely paradoxical experiences as it relates to the safety of civilians. In effect, the insularity and numbers of civilians in an enclave may often protect them for a time — but during periods of war this massing of small ethnic groups can also make the violence directed toward them, if they are targeted, extraordinarily deadly and indiscriminate.

NOTES

1. More recently, following an offensive campaign by the Islamic State (IS) in the summer of 2014, many of these small ethnic groups have increasingly aligned themselves with Kurdish fighters in the region.
2. During the summer of 2014, the city became largely controlled by Islamic State (IS) insurgents.
3. Notably, other studies using the data have appeared in well-regarded medical journals such as *The New England Journal of Medicine* (Hicks et al., 2011).

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