From De-Ba'athification to Daesh:
Analyzing the Consequences of U.S. Policy in Iraq

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Introduction

On 20 March 2003, defying the United Nations and several of its allies[1], the Bush administration launched Operation Iraqi Freedom. The invasion of Iraq and the subsequent overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime were not only met with international criticism but also with many unforeseen challenges. While the Bush administration claimed the war was pre-emptive and aimed at eliminating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, it soon became evident that Saddam Hussein's regime had not been in the possession of such weapons. Today, the widely accepted explanation is that the decision to overthrow the Ba'athist regime in Iraq was "a product of the political biases, misguided priorities, intentional deceptions and grand strategies of President George W. Bush and prominent 'neoconservatives', 'unilateralists', and 'Vulcans' on his national security team."[2] By April 2003, U.S. forces moved into Baghdad, successfully putting an end to the twenty-four year rule of Saddam Hussein. Immediately afterwards, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), a U.S.-led transitional government, was granted executive, legislative and judicial authority over Iraq. On April 21st, the CPA came under the authority of Jay Garner, a military officer who took part in the 1991 Gulf War.[3] Because Garner failed to deal with the post-war chaos[4], he was replaced a few weeks later by Paul Bremer, an antiterrorism expert who had neither military experience nor any experience with Middle Eastern affairs.[5] The decision to

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[1] For example: Opposition to the Iraq War was expressed by France, Germany, Russia, and China (all United Nations Security Council members); Turkey, the European Parliament, and the Arab League (with the exception of Kuwait). See: Micah L. Sifry and Christopher Cerf, *The Iraq War Reader: History, Documents and Opinions* (New York: Touchstone, 2003), 502.

[2] Frank P. Harvey, *Explaining the Iraq War: Counterfactual Theory, Logic and Evidence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1.

[3] Pfiffner, James P, "US Blunders in Iraq: De-Ba'athification and Disbanding the Army" *Intelligence and National Security* 25, no. 1 (2010), 76.

[4] Immediately after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, there was widespread looting and violence in Iraq. This will be elaborated on later in this thesis.

[5] Rick Fawn and Raymond Hinnebusch, *The Iraq War: Causes and Consequences* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 9.

appoint Bremer is characteristic for the overall handling of the immediate aftermath of Saddam Hussein's overthrow by the U.S. government: decision-making was often conducted by people with little to no experience with Iraq or Middle Eastern affairs.

Bremer soon made two decisions that would have far-reaching consequences.[6] On the 16th of May, Bremer ordered CPA Order 1: the banning of all senior members of Iraq's ruling party, the Ba'ath party, from serving in the government, as well as the removal of the top three layers of officials of all government ministries, even if they were not members of the Ba'ath party.[7] Several days later, going against the advice of the army and the professional planners, Bremer issued CPA Order 2, which entailed the disbanding of the Iraqi army.[8] The Ministries of Defense, Information, and State for Military Affairs, the Iraqi Intelligence Service, the National Security Bureau, the Directorate of National Security, the Special Security Organization, the Army, the Air Force, the Navy, the Air Defense Force, the Republican Guard, the Special Republican Guard, the Directorate of Military Intelligence, the Al Quds Force and the Emergency Forces, along with thirteen other paramilitaries and other military organizations, ceased to exist.[9] This rapid and sudden destruction of a large part of Iraqi society and civilian infrastructure left the country in a state of chaos that would continue for a long time to come.

Eleven years later, in early 2014, the sudden and rapid emergence of Daesh[10] took many by surprise. This Iraqi Sunni terrorist group was successfully fighting the Iraqi army and

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[6] Pfiffner, "US Blunders in Iraq", 78.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., 80.

[9] Coalition Provisional Authority. "CPA Order 2: Dissolution of Entities". 23 August 2003.

[10] The self-proclaimed Islamic State is known by several names in English, including ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria), ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant), and IS (Islamic State). In Arabic, the group wants to be referred to by its full name: الدولة الإسلامية في العراق والشام, 'al-dowla al-islaamiyya fii-il-i'raaq wa-ash-shaam', which translates to Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (Guthrie). However, a widely used acronym in Arabic is Daesh (داعش). In order to understand why this thesis refers to the group as Daesh, a brief linguistic analysis is appropriate. Daesh themselves find the use of this name problematic: the abbreviation, as a result of how it sounds, now means "tyrannical, despotic fundamentalists who claim to be Islamic and claim to be a state" (Guthrie). Moreover, Daesh do not

conquering large amounts of Iraqi territory in the process. However, Daesh had been active in Iraq since 2004 under the name "Al Qaeda in Iraq" and later "Islamic State in Iraq", and was well able to benefit from the instability that arose after the U.S. invasion and occupation. Concern arose especially when Daesh seized control over Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, in June 2014, and declared the establishment of a caliphate in Iraq and Syria. While many analysts agreed that the emergence of Daesh could be attributed to the instability that arose in Iraq as a result of the 2003 U.S. invasion, analyses of Daesh's emergence rarely go into specifics. This thesis will seek to make a contribution to the existing literature by exploring whether or not the de-Ba'athification policy implemented in Iraq in 2003 led to the emergence of Daesh in early 2014, by answering the following research question: *How did the de-Ba'athification policy as implemented by the United States after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein lead to the emergence of Daesh in early 2014?*

State of the field

Considering that the subject matter is relatively new, it is not surprising that there is little academic literature on the nature of the emergence of Daesh. Most literature seems to bypass the origins of Daesh and focus instead on policy proposals, discourse analyses, or military analyses.[11] Nevertheless, there are several broad lines of reasoning to be identified in current academic discourse. In some cases, the emergence of Daesh is attributed to a more general feeling of

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appreciate the name because acronyms are unusual in Arabic: "They want to be addressed as exactly what they claim to be, by people so in awe of them that they use the pompous, long and delusional name created by the group, not some funny-sounding made-up word" (Guthrie). According to Guthrie, the name Daesh is rightly understood as being a challenge to the legitimacy of Daesh; "a dismissal of their aspirations to define Islamic practice, to be 'a state for all Muslims' and – crucially – as a refusal to acknowledge and address them as such" (Guthrie). For this reason, this thesis will refer to the group as Daesh.

[11] See e.g. Ingram, "An Analysis of Islamic State's Dabiq Magazine" Australian Journal of Political Science 51, no. 3 (2016), 458-477; Richard A. Clarke and Emilian Papadopoulos, "Terrorism in Perspective": A Review for the Next American President", ANNALS 668, no. 1 (2016), 8-18

discontent among Muslims: unhappy with some of the Western-imposed regimes in the Middle East, groups such as Daesh now seek to overthrow existing regimes and establish new states.[12] Another prevalent explanation, particularly popular among right-wing media and politicians and stemming from Daesh's strong propagation of Islamic ideals, attributes the emergence of Daesh to religious rather than political reasons.[13] Other subjects regarding academic literature on Daesh deal with its use of social media in order to recruit people.[14] It is also interesting to look at how members of Daesh themselves explain their emergence, by looking at their propaganda magazine *Dabiq*. They primarily stress religious reasons, mainly that the establishment of a caliphate has been something that has "occupied the hearts of the mujahidin since the revival of jihad this century."[15] Perhaps the most significant explanation is their statement that the war waged against Islamic terrorism over the past decades has left almost no safe haven for the mujahidin, and as such, "the ideal land for hijrah was a place where they could operate without the threat of a powerful police state."[16] In other words, political circumstances in Iraq and Syria are considered by Daesh to have allowed them to establish their "Islamic State," by using states with weak central authority as a base for jihad.[17]

As this literary analysis demonstrates, there is a gap in the academic literature where it concerns the connection between U.S.-implemented policies after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the emergence of Daesh in early 2014. In fact, little attention is being paid to historical analyses in general – while Sykes-Picot is sometimes referred to as a cause for Iraq's domestic instability, in particular because Daesh regularly refers to it, such explanations rarely go into

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[12] Clarke and Papadopoulos, "Terrorism in Perspective", 10.
[13] See e.g. David Paul, "Is ISIS A Religious Group? Of Course It Is", *The Huffington Post,* 22 February 2015.
[14] See e.g. Ingram, "An Analysis of Islamic State's Dabiq Magazine", 458-477.
[15] "The Return of Khilafah", *Dabiq 1,* Al Hayat Media Center, 28 June 2014, 35.
[16] Ibid., 36. N.b.: Hijrah translates to "migration", and usually implies migrating for religious reasons.
[17] Ibid., 38.

specifics. Moreover, despite several mentions of it[18], there is a lack of any well-grounded, in-depth historical analysis of the relation between de-Ba'athification and the rise of Daesh. This is what makes this thesis particularly relevant: a better understanding of the result of the de-Ba'athification policy is crucial in order to understand the current state of affairs in Iraq.

Pattern of organization

The first chapter of this thesis will consist largely of background information necessary in order to understand the de-Ba'athification policy. First, it will provide a very brief history of Iraq, from its time as part of the Ottoman Empire to the Ba'athist coups that eventually led to the establishment of Saddam Hussein's regime. Then, it will discuss the Ba'ath party's rule of Iraq and how government worked under the Ba'ath party, in order to better understand the effect of the de-Ba'athification policy. Over the years, Saddam Hussein had established a minority regime where every government official was a member of the same Ba'ath party. In a state where enemies had been largely eliminated, where control had been consolidated on every level by one figure and one party, what happens when the entire state structure which was built around the Ba'ath party is suddenly taken away? Answering such questions allows for a better understanding of the disastrous consequences of the de-Ba'athification policy. Finally, this chapter will discuss the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the decision-making process that led to the war, and how it was conducted. As such, the main purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with historical context in order to develop a better understanding of the events that this thesis focuses on.

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[18] See e.g. John Bew and Shiraz Maher, "Blowback", New Statesman (June 2014), 20-26; Zachary Laub, "Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria", Council on Foreign Relations, June 2014.

The second chapter will focus entirely on explaining the de-Ba'athification policy, by providing a detailed overview of both CPA orders that are referred to as de-Ba'athification: the disbanding of the Iraqi army and the removal of Ba'ath officials from government. In order to address how and why this policy was implemented, it will provide analyses of the decision-making process. Then, it will focus on the CPA orders that led to the process of de-Ba'athification, and demonstrate how this policy was executed. This chapter will therefore serve a more explanatory rather than analytical function.

After providing the context necessary to frame and explore the main argument of this thesis, the third and fourth chapters will both be dedicated to exploring different aspects to de-Ba'athification in order to demonstrate how de-Ba'athification has facilitated, indirectly or directly, the emergence of Daesh.

The third chapter will demonstrate how de-Ba'athification has allowed for the creation of an environment that made it possible for Daesh to emerge from and to develop into a successful and powerful non-state actor. This chapter will focus primarily on assessing the effects of CPA Order 1, the de-Ba'athification of the Iraqi state and the removal of all Ba'ath officials from power. It will provide a brief overview of the history of Daesh in order to demonstrate how Daesh filled the vacuum left by the de-Ba'athification of Iraq. This chapter will highlight how the consequences of de-Ba'athification played out on different levels, primarily by analyzing its direct and indirect effects on the Iraqi state structure and political system, and subsequently assess how these consequences contributed to the emergence of Daesh. Through discussing Iraqi state collapse and providing a theoretical framework for state survival, this chapter will demonstrate how de-Ba'athification essentially facilitated Iraqi state collapse, contributing to the emergence of violent

extremist groups such as Daesh. In order to further reinforce this chapter's argument, this chapter will then provide a case study focusing on Iraq's political system post-2003 and assess how this system has contributed to creating an environment from which Daesh could emerge.

The fourth chapter will focus on the direct and indirect effects of CPA Order 2, the disbanding of the Iraqi military. The approach of this chapter is two-fold: first, it will assess how de-Ba'athification has contributed to creating the insurgents of Daesh, by looking at the involvement of former Ba'ath members in Daesh leadership. Second, it will analyze the indirect effects of CPA Order 2 by looking at how the disbanding of the Iraqi army has facilitated the emergence of Daesh. Finally, by using the fall of Mosul as a case study, this chapter will emphasize how de-Ba'athification on the military level contributed to the emergence of Daesh.

Theoretical framework

To a large extent, this thesis deals with the question of state survival and state collapse. Explaining the emergence of Daesh through de-Ba'athification requires an accurate assessment of the effects of de-Ba'athification on the Iraqi state and political system. In order to adequately analyze the effects of de-Ba'athification on the Iraqi state, certain sections of this thesis will make use of a theory developed by Professor William Zartman on state survival and state collapse. While it is not explicitly mentioned in every section, this framework for state survival still connects to nearly every aspect of the main argument of this thesis.

Assessing the pillars of state survival is necessary in order to demonstrate how de-Ba'athification facilitated the collapse of the Iraqi state, which in turn made possible the emergence

of Daesh. Viewing the research question of this thesis through the lens of this framework not only allows it to measure the effects of de-Ba'athification on the Iraqi state, but also contributes to a well-grounded analysis of the consequences of de-Ba'athification and their relation to Daesh. In order to create a clear and consistent connection between this theoretical framework and the subject matter and case studies, this theory will be explained in the relevant chapters themselves rather than in the introduction of this thesis.[19]

Methodology

In order to provide a coherent and well-structured answer to the research question, this thesis will employ a qualitative approach, consisting of the collecting and interpreting of secondary data and academic literature. It will include analyses of government documents, such as the CPA orders discussed earlier, in order to provide an accurate representation of historical events. Moreover, in order to analyze decision-making processes, this thesis will refer to interviews and statements provided by government officials who were involved in these processes. It will engage both in theoretical framing of the argument, as well as the use of case studies and discourse analyses.

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[19] For a detailed discussion of this theory, see: Chapter 3.1.

Chapter 1 – Ottomans and Ba'athists: Historical context of Iraq

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with a brief historical overview of Iraq and an assessment of the Ba'ath party's rule over Iraq, in order to provide a solid basis from which to analyze the effects of de-Ba'athification on Iraq.

1.1 A brief history of Iraq

The Ottoman Empire

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the territory of the Iraqi state as we know it today was slowly and sporadically incorporated into the Ottoman Empire as the three Ottoman provinces of Baghdad, Basra and Mosul, modern Iraq's largest cities.[20] Under Ottoman rule for nearly four centuries, the Iraqi vilayets, like many others in the Empire, enjoyed "relative administrative, economic and fiscal autonomy."[21] Due to inadequate communication methods and the geographic inaccessibility of much of the land, the central government's authority did not reach far outside its capital and administrative control was largely exercised by locals until at least the mid-19th century.[22] Therefore, until the British mandate was established in 1920, Iraqi and Kurdish tribes managed to successfully resist penetration of the central Ottoman government.[23] The three vilayets had little to do with each other: "At least until the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Basra looked towards the Gulf and India, Baghdad was an important staging point on the land

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[20] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 8.
[21] Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship* (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1987), 2.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.

route between Syria and Iran, and Mosul tended to have closer ties with Anatolia and Aleppo than with Baghdad."[24] In other words, although the three vilayets were formally part of the Ottoman Empire, the state system had not penetrated the region equally, government authority was not present everywhere, and the vilayets that would later be united under the banner of a single state now barely formed a coherent economic or geopolitical unit among themselves.

In the mid-19th century, the Ottoman Empire underwent a period of reform known as the Tanzimat, which greatly transformed its administrative structure.[25] In an attempt to counter separatist sentiments and increasing European penetration, these reforms sought to establish a greater sense of Ottoman citizenship and increase the central governments' authority over its empire.[26] The three Iraqi vilayets were gradually "drawn into what was becoming an increasingly homogenous imperial system."[27] These attempts coincided with increased European commercial interest in the region: the British were especially interested in Iraq, where oil was discovered around the 1870's.[28] Simultaneously, in the late 19th century Arab intellectuals increasingly felt that the Arabs' political and cultural aspirations would be better off if the Arabs were separated from the Ottoman Empire and established their own autonomous states.[29]

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[24] Ibid.
[25] William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (New York: The Perseus Book Group, 2012), 76.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958,* 9.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.; Courtney Hunt, *The History of Iraq* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2005), 58.

The British Mandate era

In 1914, as part of the Mesopotamian Campaign, the British consolidated control over the area that would later become the Iraqi nation-state. The discovery of oil in Iraq in the 1870s was an important reason for British interest in Iraq, but not the only one: its strategic location as a shorter trade route to its most important colony, India, played a large role too.[30] During the First World War, as the Ottoman Empire weakened, the French and British both sought to secure their interests in the region. France became alarmed by Britain's increasing military influence in the region, and negotiators from both states drew up a secret agreement in May 1916, in which they divided up the Arab Middle East.[31] This Sykes-Picot Agreement granted France a large zone of direct control, ranging from the Syrian coast to southern Lebanon into Anatolia.[32] Britain's interests were also secured: it was allowed to exercise direct control over the southern part of Mesopotamia, and was granted exclusive indirect control over an area ranging from Gaza to Kirkuk.[33] Rather than taking into account the needs of the region's inhabitants, this agreement focused solely on serving the interests of the European expansionist powers.[34]

For Iraq, this had several implications. First, it now had a population that was vastly diverse in terms of religion – the majority of Iraqis are Shia Muslims, Sunni Muslims account for approximately 30% of the population – as well as ethnic and tribal lines: in particular Iraq's Kurds, who account for 10-15% of the population, have been struggling for autonomy from the start.[35] There is nothing inherently problematic about different religious and ethnic backgrounds living

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[30] Ibid.
[31] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East,* 149.
[32] Ibid., 150.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 149.
[35] "The World Factbook", Central Intelligence Agency, accessed 6 March, 2017.

together in one nation, but the problematic aspect of Sykes-Picot is that it failed to take into account the needs and wishes of the region's inhabitants and disturbed family and economic networks. Moreover, understanding how Iraq was created is important to know in order to understand the ethnic and sectarian tensions that arose after 2003. Furthermore, because these states were artificially created, identity is often incongruent with with state boundaries.[36] "Constructed in 1920 out of three provinces of the Ottoman Empire that had never shared a common history as a political community, the Iraqi state encompassed a large number of communities that looked with suspicion upon the others and often had greater affinities with peoples beyond the newly drawn borders of Iraq itself."[37] As a result of this artificiality, Arab regimes often suffer legitimacy deficits and Arab states tend to lack secure national identities.[38] Understanding how Iraq and other Middle-Eastern states were formed is crucial to understanding some of the long-lasting problems that the region faces. The dividing up of a region according to the interests of Western powers who paid no attention to the interests of the indigenous people is a decision that still sparks resentment today. Moreover, the fact that the region was vastly diverse in terms of religious, tribal, and ethnic identities made it prone to divide-and-rule tactics of both foreign and domestic powers. For Daesh, the Sykes-Picot agreement is a popular topic: for example, they see it as one of their goals to "drive the last nail in the coffin of the Sykes-Picot conspiracy."[39] Furthermore, they see the agreement as symbolic for the "fragmentation imposed upon Muslims" and rather, seek to "bring Muslims together under one banner" in order to re-divide the world based on creed rather than race, nation

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[36] Raymond Hinnebusch, "The Politics of Identity in Middle East International Relations", in *International Relations of the Middle East,* ed. Louise Fawcett, 148.

[37] Charles Tripp, "The Foreign Policy of Iraq", in *The Foreign Policy of Middle East States*, ed. Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, 174.

[38] Raymond Hinnebusch, "Introduction: An Analytical Framework", in *The Foreign Policy of Middle East States,* ed. Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, 7.

[39] "Remaining and Expanding", *Dabiq 5*, Al Hayat Media Center, October 2014, 33.

or tribe.[40] In other words, even though Sykes-Picot celebrated its 100th anniversary last year, its legacy remains subject to controversy and discussion.

At the Conference of San Remo in April 1920, a year after World War I officially came to an end, the League of Nations decided on the fate of the region formerly part of the Ottoman Empire – whose dissolution had been inaugurated by the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920.[41] Until the newly found mandates were able to govern themselves, they would be under control of European states.[42] The British were granted full control over the area that would become Iraq. In 1921, at the Conference of Cairo, the Kingdom of Iraq was created. The three vilayets that had never formed a coherent whole, suddenly formed a nation-state. The Iraqi monarchy would maintain a firm grip on Iraq until the coup d'état of 1958.[43] After almost a decade of turmoil, in 1968 the Ba'ath party's coup was the start to its thirty-five year domination over Iraq.[44] Saddam Hussein played a crucial role in this coup and in the formation of the newly established regime. As vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, Saddam Hussein was a key figure in shaping the regime's policies and by the early 1970's had emerged as the real force behind the regime.[45]

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[40] S. J. Prince, "ISIS Releases Statement on 100th Anniversary of Sykes-Picot", Heavy.com.
[41] Hunt, *The History of Iraq*, 61.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 304.
[44] Joseph Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party: Inside an Authoritarian Regime* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 16.
[45] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 425-426.

Iraq from 1979-2003

In 1979, Saddam Hussein officially became the president of Iraq. Despite the many upheavals Iraq experienced during the Ba'ath party's thirty-five-year rule, Saddam Hussein managed to maintain a stable regime with a firm grip on Iraq. In 1980, Iraq invaded Iran, the start to a gruesome war which would last eight years and eventually ended in stalemate. A mere two years later, in 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. The U.S. was quick to counter this threat to its strategic interests in the region by launching a military operation, successfully forcing Iraqi troops out of Kuwait by 1991. Afterwards, the United Nations imposed sanctions on Iraq, intended both as a punishment for its behavior towards Kuwait and as a means to enforce Iraqi compliance with UN demands.[46] As a result, Iraq experienced a near-total exclusion from the world economy between 1990 and 2003: the sanctions had a crippling effect on both the Iraqi people and the economy, to such an extent that even a United Nations investigation team labeled them as "near-apocalyptic", and proclaimed that life in Iraq had been reduced to a "pre-industrial stage".[47] The sanctions would not be lifted until the overthrow of the Ba'ath regime in 2003. However, the sanctions did not affect the Ba'ath party leadership – in fact, there were widespread allegations of corruption and fraud with the UN's Oil-for-Food Program, which from 1995 onwards allowed Iraq to sell its oil in exchange for humanitarian goods. The program allowed the Ba'ath regime to profit at the expense of the Iraqi people, and investigators claimed that Shia and Kurdish Iraqis received hardly any aid at all.[48] Despite all of these challenges, Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath party held a firm

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[46] Mustafa Koc, Carey Jernigan and Rupen Das, "Food Security and Food Sovereignty in Iraq", *Food, Culture & Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 10.2 (2007), 317.

[47] Reem Bahdi, "Iraq, Sanctions and Security: A Critique", *Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy* 9, no. 237 (2002), 238; Koc, Jernigan and Das, "Food Security", 317

[48] Hunt, *The History of Iraq*, 104.

grip on Iraq, and managed to exercise exclusive control over public life in the economic, social and political domains.[49]

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[49] Laith Kubba, "The Awakening of Civil Society", *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 3 (2000), 86.

1.2 The Ba'ath party's influence on Iraq

The second part of this chapter will seek to demonstrate and analyze how the Ba'ath party governed Iraq. This is crucial in order to understand the effects of the de-Ba'athification policy. The following pages will thus be dedicated to explaining the nature and durability of the regime, assessing how the Ba'ath party ruled Iraq, and demonstrating its effect and influence on society.

The Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party has socialist roots but focused heavily on promoting Arab nationalist ideology.[50] Its motto is "Unity, Liberty, Socialism": three concepts which the regime propagated more than it actually implemented them. Unity refers to the concept of Arab unity, an ideology that focused not on the nation-state but rather on Arab identity and the unity of all Arab states – something that stems from the aforementioned lack of national identity.[51] Similarly, liberty referred to liberation from Western imperial powers – both concepts were heavily propagated by Saddam Hussein.[52] Socialism was more an idea than a policy for the Ba'ath party: although it believed in socialism "as a means for the total and radical liberation of the Arab individual", the party implemented hardly any socialist policies, particularly not in the economic realm.[53] For example, the Ba'ath party ensured that all economic decrees were geared primarily to strengthen the control of the regime.[54] Aside from its self-proclaimed ideological interests, the Ba'ath party was heavily entrenched in every aspect of daily life in Iraq.

Despite the turbulent path the Iraqi Ba'ath regime followed – from its eight-year war with Iran, its invasion of Kuwait, its recurrent conflicts with the Iraqi Kurds, a major uprising in 1991,

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[50] Hunt, *The History of Iraq*, 77.
[51] Hinnebusch, "The Politics of Identity", 151.
[52] Hunt, *The History of Iraq*, 77
[53] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party*, 10.
[54] Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 205.

to thirteen years of UN-imposed sanctions, the regime's grip on society was strong enough for it to survive.[55] Sassoon attributes the regime survival mostly to how the Ba'ath party "systematically penetrated every stratum of society and built an impressive political machine more powerful than any other group in Iraq, which drew large numbers of people into its sphere of influence."[56] Through the use of extreme violence and terror against its citizens, the Ba'ath regime created a parallel system of rewards for its supporters and continuously stressed the importance and necessity of universal support and loyalty.[57] Moreover, what explains the regime's durability, Sassoon argues, was the centralization of power, Saddam Hussein's dominating personality, and the apparatus of repression that the party developed in Iraq.[58] The regime was ruthless and unrelenting towards those whose loyalties were suspect: countless people were sentenced to prison or hanged in public executions, seeking to remind Iraqis who dared oppose the regime of the fate that awaited them.[59] For example, several weeks after taking office as president, Saddam Hussein gathered fellow Ba'ath party members and accused them of collaborating with the Syrian regime against Iraq's regime. His unfounded accusations were an important step in consolidating control over the party by instilling fear among its members. One by one, he called out the names of several dozens of party members, all of whom he accused of disloyalty, before they were taken away and imprisoned or executed. Afterwards, behind closed doors, he ordered the execution of another several hundred party members and military officials.[60] This infamous incident demonstrates not only how ruthless and intimidating the regime's tactics were in order to consolidate power, but

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[55] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party*, 6; 275.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 6.
[58] Ibid., 8.
[59] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 425.
[60] Efraim Karsh and Inari Rautsi, *Saddam Hussein: A Political Biography* (New York: Grove Press, 1991), 5.

also how crucial loyalty to Saddam Hussein was. "His modes of control were more intrusive, sophisticated, and extensive than the resistance (…) could overcome."[61]

Nevertheless, fear and the threat of violence were not the only factors facilitating compliance: The Ba'ath party's ideology appealed to many people, and the power and benefits that working for the Ba'ath party entailed convinced many people from varying socioeconomic backgrounds to become part of the Ba'athist system.[62] While the Ba'ath party applied a great deal of pressure upon its citizens to join the party, many joined voluntarily, either for ideological reasons or because they wanted to reap the benefits of being a Ba'athist.[63] As such, another key factor in explaining the regime's success lie in its "ability to attract large numbers of supporters and make them feel vested in the system."[64] As mentioned previously, loyalty to Saddam Hussein was of the utmost importance. The Ba'ath party regime thus relied heavily upon tribal, family, and kin associations.[65] Some sources[66] even suggest that Saddam Hussein abolished the use of last names in order to conceal how many of the regime's key figures had the same surname – al-Majid al-Tikriti – as Saddam Hussein himself. Because of this heavy reliance on family and tribal associations, Sassoon argues that the Ba'ath regime was both a single-party and a personalist regime: "Benefits were distributed to a larger proportion of citizens than is usual in personalist regimes, but, unlike a one-party system, the regime was dominated largely by a single familial, clan, ethnic, or regional group."[67] Similarly, Tripp ascribes great importance to the social networks of kinship that Saddam Hussein reinforced during his rule. Using these social networks as channels

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[61] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party*, 226.
[62] Ibid., 8.
[63] Ibid., 8.
[64] Ibid., 8.
[65] Ibid., 11.
[66] See e.g.: Dilip Hiro, *Neighbors, Not Friends: Iraq and Iran After the Gulf Wars* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Jon E. Lewis, *The Mammoth Book of Covert Ops* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2004).
[67] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party,* 276.

of reward and punishment has been so effective that many individuals, far removed from any obvious tribal identity, sought to affiliate themselves with certain tribal groups in order to benefit from the protection and security it entailed.[68] Moreover, the Ba'ath regime used the accumulated oil wealth to sustain a relatively generous distributive state welfare system, stimulating social and economic advancement for Iraq's middle class, including groups that had thus far only existed on the margins of society, such as the urban poor and the rural migrants.[69]

The Ba'ath party's recruitment of new members, its creation and fusion of new branches of government in order to enhance efficiency, and its encouragement of competition among branches and members made its structure resemble that of a large cooperation.[70] Everyone in the party hierarchy was under constant pressure to perform, and the party made sure to know all there was to know about each of its affiliates.[71] The regime was constantly weary of subversion, resulting in an obsession with the centralization of power.[72] Moreover, because officials were mistrusting of even their own employees, the bureaucracy was entrenched with layers of supervision, ensuring that the Ba'ath party was involved in everything and that nothing could escape its control.[73]

Sassoon provides several examples[74] that demonstrate the Ba'ath party's influence on every day life: from its monitoring of all mosques and all individuals affiliated with religious institutions; the controlling of students' activities both in Iraq and abroad in order to increase Ba'ath influence on education and academics, to the Ba'ath party's domination over labor unions and professional organizations – the Ba'ath party was overwhelmingly present and dominant in all

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[68] Tripp, *A history of Iraq*, 283.
[69] Farouk-Sluglett and Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958*, 230.
[70] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party,* 12.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.*,* 235.
[73] Ibid.
[74] For further reading, see: Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party,* 236-273.

civil activities.[75] A report by the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq identifies three ways in which the Ba'ath regime successfully incorporated and controlled civil society.[76] First, preexisting organizations were contained and controlled through policies of invitation and intimidation; loyalty and submission were rewarded, and punishment awaited those who hesitated or refused to comply.[77] For example, the Ba'ath party's main competitor, the Iraqi Communist Party, was gradually co-opted in the early 1970's: what started off with the monitoring of meetings and pressuring and threatening of members, eventually led to widespread imprisonment and execution of its members, until the Ba'ath party no longer felt threatened by the ICP.[78] Second, the Ba'ath party created many new organizations and assigned a high ranking office, the Office of Popular Organizations, to supervise these organizations.[79] Finally, all groups and parties who failed to abide by the aforementioned criteria were banned.[80] "The development of an independent civil society was thwarted in favor of supporting organizations closely linked to and monitored by the government."[81] Any organization threatening the status quo was forced out under the pretext of threatening national security or violating the law.[82] Through these policies, the Ba'ath party managed to entrench itself in every sector of civil society and gained exclusive control over all activities in this domain.

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[75] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party*, 259-273.
[76] NCCI, "Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective" (April 2011), 10.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Farouk-Sluglett and Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958*, 229; Tripp, *A history of Iraq*, 208-218.
[79] NCCI, "Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective" (April 2011), 10.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.

Conclusion

Despite – or perhaps because of – its extensive bureaucracy and many layers of supervision, the Ba'ath party maintained a well-functioning state system that managed to survive many crises. The regime's willingness to use tactics of fear and violence in order to keep the population under control; its commitment to eliminating opposition; its successful recruitment of party members from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds; its ability to exploit the resourcefulness and talent of educated Iraqis in maintaining Iraq's structures all contributed to keeping the regime stable through many years of turmoil.[83] Naturally, the sanctions did have severe effects on Iraq: although by late 2000 the UN eased sanctions and the Iraqi economy had begun to recover and the infrastructure was improving, by the time Saddam Hussein was overthrown in 2003, Iraq's industry was damaged and its army less strong than it had claimed to be.[84] However, this does not mean that the Ba'ath party's hold over Iraq had weakened: after all, it needed a military invasion and a legal and formal banning of the party to be broken down. It is therefore doubtful that the regime would have disintegrated were it not for the 2003 invasion: Saddam Hussein held firm control over all enclaves of power, and all opposition groups had either been weakened, infiltrated or eliminated.[85]

Through its bureaucracy and ideology, the Ba'ath party had entrenched itself so deeply into society that it had become crucial for stability and impossible to avoid or ignore. Iraqi citizens, regardless of age or socioeconomic status, had no other choice but to adapt to the regime's imposed structures of reward and punishment.[86] Because the Ba'ath party's state institutions managed to

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[83] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party,* 279.
[84] Ibid., 281.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid., 284.

reshape society and break organized resistance, there was no functioning civil society.[87] Any institution capable of shielding society from the power of the sate had been broken, co-opted or reconstructed.[88] "In its consolidation of power, the party managed to weave a network of control across the whole spectrum of Iraqi life. (…) From cradle to grave, it is hard to find any aspect of state or society in which the party did not wield some influence."[89]

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[87] Toby Dodge, "War and Resistance in Iraq: From Regime Change to Collapsed State", in *The Iraq War: Causes and Consequences*, ed. Rick Fawn and Raymond Hinnebusch (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 211.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party,* 9; 273.

Chapter 2 – The CPA and the de-Ba'athification Orders

"If this place succeeds, it will be in spite of what we did, not because of it."

– Anonymous CPA official stationed in Baghdad [90]

Following up on the previous chapter highlighting the Ba'ath party's influence on Iraq, this chapter will demonstrate how the U.S. sought to erase this influence, and will briefly discuss some of the major consequences of this decision. It will discuss the role of the CPA, explain in detail the two orders that together are known as de-Ba'athification, and demonstrate the decision-making process surrounding these orders and how they were executed.

As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq and its aftermath were met with many unforeseen challenges. During its fourteen-month occupation of Iraq, the U.S. made many mistakes in managing the chaotic post-war situation that had erupted. Many of these issues stemmed from a lack of planning – as a State Department official stated: "We went in not with a plan but with a theory."[91] From many analyses of the decision-making process appears that there simply was no plan to manage Iraq after Saddam Hussein was removed from power, which in turns explains the problems the U.S. faced after the invasion.[92] In an article focused on explaining why the stabilization of Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein was so poorly executed, David highlights some of the most grievous mistakes made:

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[90] Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 101.
[91] Charles-Philippe David, "How Not to do Post-invasion: Lessons learned from US decision making in Iraq (2002-2008)", *Defense & Security Analysis* 26, no. 1 (2010), 35.
[92] Ibid.

The failure to restore order immediately after the fall of the regime and to control widespread, often spectacular, acts of pillaging; the lack of interpreters and troops on the ground; the decision to dismantle the Iraqi army, the Ba'ath party and the Iraqi government; the inexperienced personnel on the ground; the Administration's corruption and inefficiency; the abuses; the torture; the failure to maintain public services; and the lack of a credible political alternative to replace Saddam Hussein. All illustrate the extent of mismanagement in the post-Hussein period.[93]

The Coalition Provisional Authority

The Coalition Provisional Authority, or CPA, was established two months before the invasion in January 2003, and was tasked with governing Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein until a new, democratically elected government would take place. The CPA was headed by Lieutenant Paul Bremer, who arrived in Iraq two months after the invasion, tasked to rebuild Iraq and manage the post-war chaos. As the Ba'ath regime collapsed, widespread looting and violence occurred across Iraq. Like most U.S. officials sent to Iraq, Bremer did not speak Arabic nor had any experience with Middle-Eastern affairs or post-war reconstruction.[94] Many mistakes were made under Bremer's leadership – Washington's refusal to read reports written by officials on the ground in Baghdad, failing to send in extra troops when needed, sending in officials with no experience, refusing to listen to the Iraqi population: all of these factors contributed to the unsuccessful 'rebuilding' of Iraq. The first two orders that Bremer issued, however, were to have the most grievous and long-lasting consequences.

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[93] Ibid.
[94] Pfiffner, "U.S. Blunders in Iraq", 77.
N.b.: From the early 1970's onwards, Bremer worked as a diplomat for the Foreign Service and the State Department until the mid-1980's. Afterwards, Bremer held various positions in the private sector, primarily at consulting firms. He also served as Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorism.

CPA Orders 1 and 2

On the 16th of May, Bremer issued CPA Order 1: the disestablishment of the Ba'ath party. This order officially removed the party's leadership from positions of authority and responsibility in society, and eliminated the party's infrastructure.[95] The reason for this decision, the CPA states, was to ensure that once a new Iraqi government would take place, it would not be threatened by "Ba'athist elements returning to power and that those in positions of authority in the future are acceptable to the people of Iraq."[96] The order stated that government officials would be removed from their positions, banned from future employment in the public sector, and that senior party members would be evaluated for criminal conduct.[97] The order demanded a thorough investigation into party members: individuals from the top three layers of management in every government ministry or other government institutions, such as universities and hospitals, were to be interviewed for possible affiliation with the Ba'ath party and subject to investigation for criminal conduct.[98] Finally, the order prohibited the display of "the image or likeness of Saddam Hussein" in public spaces or government buildings, and offered rewards for information leading to the capture of senior Ba'ath party members.[99]

A week later, on the 23rd of May, Bremer signed CPA order 2: the dissolution of entities, also known as the disbanding of the Iraqi army. The order was incredibly thorough: it dismissed any person employed by a "Dissolved Entity", effective immediately.[100] Except for senior party members, members of the dissolved entities were to receive a termination payment, and pensions

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[95] Coalition Provisional Authority. "CPA Order 1: De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society". 16 May 2003.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Coalition Provisional Authority. "CPA Order 2: Dissolution of Entities". 23 May 2003.

being paid by a dissolved entity would continue to be paid.[101] The dissolved entities include nearly all government institutions, military and paramilitary organizations, and several other organizations, such as: The Ministries of Defense, Information, and State for Military Affairs; the Intelligence Service and National Security Bureau; the Army, Air Force, Navy, Air Defense Force and other regular military services; the Republican Guard; the Presidential Secretariat; the National Assembly; the Revolutionary Command Council; the Revolutionary, Special and National Security Courts, and many others.[102] In other words, CPA Order 2 ordered the dismissal of thousands of Iraqis from paid employment – estimates range between 50000 and 100000.[103] This long list of organizations highlights how vast and all-encompassing the de-Ba'athification order was, especially in light of the previous chapter which highlighted how crucial Ba'ath party structure was to maintaining stability in Iraq.

Execution of orders

In order to execute these policies, the CPA established the de-Ba'athification council. This council, which was tasked with overseeing the de-Ba'athification, was headed by an Iraqi exile named Ahmed Chalabi. Chalabi, who had not been to Iraq since 1958 and was considered by many in the State Department to be corrupt and untrustworthy, had been instrumental in the Bush

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[101] Ibid.

[102] Other dissolved entities include: The Directorate of National Security; the Special Security Organization; Murafaqin (Companions) and Himaya al Khasa (Special Guard), bodyguards to Saddam Hussein; the Special Republican Guard; the Directorate of Military Intelligence; the Al Quds Force; Emergency Forces; Presidential Diwan; the Youth Organization; the National Olympic Committee; and several paramilitary organizations (Saddam Fedayeen, Ba'ath Party Militia, Friends of Saddam, Saddam's Lion Cubs).

[103] Benjamin Isakhan, "The De-Ba'athification of post-2003 Iraq: Purging the Past for Political Power", in *The Legacy of Iraq*, ed. Benjamin Isakhan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 22.

administration's decision to invade Iraq.[104] However, while the Bush administration was under the impression that as an Iraqi, Chalabi knew what was going on inside Iraq, Chalabi was in it primarily for personal gain: he wanted to be Iraq's new leader once Saddam Hussein had been removed. It is not surprising that the intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction that he provided to the administration turned out to be false.[105] Moreover, Chalabi had convinced the administration that the Iraqi people were ready for regime change and would welcome the Americans as liberators and heroes, and that as Iraq's new leader, he would even be willing to make peace with Israel.[106] The Bush administration, desperately seeking for Iraqis to tell them what they wanted to hear and find ways to legitimize their invasion, was ready to give Chalabi the power he was after.

As head of the de-Ba'athification council, Chalabi used his position in order to eliminate political rivals. According to one general, Chalabi's hatred for the Ba'ath party and his own desire to play a powerful role in post-war Iraq made him the "worst possible choice".[107] In implementing the CPA's order, Chalabi even went beyond what the order had stipulated, by excluding far more Ba'ath officials than the order itself had prescribed.[108] The appointment of Chalabi as head of the de-Ba'athification council is characteristic for many of the decisions made by the CPA: underqualified people were often put in charge and there was little supervision. CIA Director Tenet, who was left out of the de-Ba'athification decision-making process, blames the CPA for most of these mistakes. "The CPA was not being staffed with people with the requisite skills to enable our success. Many possessed the right political credentials but were unschooled in the

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[104] Stephen Zunes, "The United States: Belligerent Hegemon" in *The Iraq War: Causes and Consequences*, ed. Rick Fawn and Raymond Hinnebusch (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 30.
[105] John Dizard, "How Ahmed Chalabi conned the neocons", Salon, 5 May 2004.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Pfiffner, "U.S. Blunders in Iraq", 80.
[108] Isakhan, "The De-Ba'athification of Post-2003 Iraq", 22.

complicated ways of the Middle East."[109] Moreover, most CPA employees had never worked abroad, and even senior decision-makers had no particular interest in the Middle East or understanding of Iraqi society, and some ended up committing abuses or fraud, such as over-billing, contracting scams, and misappropriating funds from the U.S. treasury.[110] Hardly any experienced staff members from the State Department were allowed to accompany Bremer to Baghdad.[111] This lack of experience generated misperceptions and miscalculations about how to manage the post-war chaos, and eventually contributed to the disastrous outcome.[112]

The decision-making process

Bremer executed both de-Ba'athification orders despite objections by other officials, who favored a less rigorous order.[113] Jay Garner, Bremer's predecessor and senior CIA staff member in Iraq, stated that the de-Ba'athification was "so deep that we weren't able to get the government running as efficiently and fast as we should have."[114] CPA order 1 caused people from a whole range of different government branches to suddenly find themselves unemployed – from doctors and engineers to elementary school librarians.[115] Order 2, the disbanding of the military and other government institutions, rendered unemployed nearly half a million armed and militarily trained men –further fueling the insurgency that the U.S. were trying to combat. It is not surprising that citizens who suddenly no longer had a means to support their family, turned to demonstrations and violent insurgency. Prior to the issuing of this order, Colonel Paul Hughes stated that some Iraqi

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[109] George Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm*: *My Years at the CIA* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 423.
[110] David, "How Not to do Post-invasion", 41.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] *No End in Sight*, directed by Charles Ferguson (2007, Dallas: Magnolia Pictures), DVD.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

military divisions had even offered their help in managing the post-war chaos, but these offers were ignored by Bremer.[116] In other words, Bremer refused to consider to what extent the Iraqi army could still be of use in managing the post-war situation. David attributes the mistakes made by Bremer to what he refers to as the "single worst decision" of President Bush: putting the Pentagon in charge of post-war management rather than the State Department, which had been given that job in similar situations in the past.[117]

As previously stated, the decisions for both CPA order 1 and 2 were made against the judgment of Garner and the military leadership, and without consultation with other senior government officials, such as the CIA Director or the National Security Advisor.[118] Even Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was unaware: "The concept was that we would defeat the army, but the institutions would hold, everything from ministries to police forces."[119] President Bush and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld both deny to have constructed it. Based on the available evidence, then, it is likely to conclude that de-Ba'athification had been designed by "Bremer in consultation with a handful of leading neo-conservatives who were determined to oust the quasi-socialist Ba'athist state and to demonstrate not only their military might, but also that their model of free market democracy was the ultimate form of human governance."[120] Considering how much knowledge and expertise was left out of the decision-making process, it is not surprising that the U.S. was met with so many challenges after the invasion. The series of mistakes committed during the decision-making process demonstrate how "the U.S. distinguished itself more by its blindness

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[116] Ibid.
[117] David, "How Not to do Post-invasion", 34.
For example, the State Department was concerned with the occupation and reconstruction of Japan (1945-1952), and more recently, tasked with rebuilding Afghanistan after the U.S. invasion of 2001.
[118] Pfiffner, "U.S. Blunders in Iraq", 85.
[119] Dodge, "War and Resistance in Iraq", 212.
[120] Isakhan, "The De-Ba'athification of Post-2003 Iraq", 22.

and incompetence than its shrewdness and strategic vision."[121] In fact, due to this problematic decision-making process, the U.S. often acted against its own interest, the most prominent example being the fueling of the insurgency after issuing the de-Ba'athification orders.

What is perhaps most striking about the decision-making process and the execution of the de-Ba'athification policy is that it could have been otherwise. There was no lack of information, and plenty of warnings and predictions were issued to alert the decision-makers, both from within and outside of the U.S. government.[122] In April 2002, over a hundred experts from several federal agencies and more than 240 Iraqi leaders assembled for the "Future of Iraq Project", and together produced a 2000-page report on what would need to be done to stabilize Iraq.[123] For example, the group warned against a total de-Ba'athification that does not allow for reintegration of Ba'athists into society, and suggested that "it is not possible to equate Ba'ath party membership with criminalization."[124] There was elaborate discussion on whether or not to ban the Ba'ath party: some jurists stated that it would be merely symbolic since people joined the Ba'ath party for practical rather than ideological reasons; others insisted that there was nothing inherently offensive about the Ba'ath party's ideology, and that it would be more successful to question or dismiss certain high-ranking officials, rather than all party members.[125] The Future of Iraq Project also discussed alternatives to the de-Ba'athification policy such as forced resigning and then reapplying of Ba'ath officials in certain positions, allowing some former Ba'ath members to reintegrate into society whilst not doing away with their knowledge and expertise.[126] Moreover, while some working groups endorsed de-Ba'athification, they did stress that such a policy should not "consist

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[121] David, "How Not to do Post-invasion", 31.
[122] Ibid., 32.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Future of Iraq Project: Transitional Justice Working Group. "First session". 9 and 10 July, 2002.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.

of the total abolition of the current administration, since, in addition to its role of social control, that structure does provide a framework for social order."[127] The Democratic Principles and Procedures Working Group warned that a failure to reintegrate former Ba'athists into society, most notably members of the Iraqi army, could destabilize Iraq.[128] Their recommendations were ignored by the Pentagon.

This is just one example[129] of many attempts to inform policy-makers of the obstacles and difficulties that the U.S. would face after invading Iraq.[130] However, like most of these cases, the information either did not make its way to the decision-makers, or failed to set off alarm bells.[131] Some reports were deliberately ignored – even those by respected think-tanks and the U.S. War College, which concluded that "the threat posed by the Hussein regime was negligible compared with the problems that would ensue from its fall."[132] Many of the mistakes made after the invasion can thus be attributed not to a lack of knowledge, but rather, to the faulty decision-making process: "The hasty consensus among the decision-makers, the inadequate discussion of available options, the lack of structured debate, the recommendations too frequently left unchallenged, and the President's scant engagement with, and interest in, the situation."[133] There was an abundance of information, but a lack of planning and willingness to take this information into account. Altogether, Bremer and the CPA failed to understand the importance of new leadership in Iraq; the lack of room for Iraqi participation in the transition process; the failure to reach out to the discontented Sunni representatives; and the failure to develop a strategy in order to counter the

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[127] Future of Iraq Project: Democratic Principles and Procedures Working Group. "Final Report on The Transition to Democracy in Iraq". November 2002.
[128] Ibid.
[129] For an elaborate list of examples, see: David, "How Not to do Post-invasion", 33-34.
[130] Ibid., 33.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid., 36.

insurgency.[134] As a 2005 report by the RAND Corporation noted: "Post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction were addressed only very generally, largely because of the prevailing view that the task would not be difficult."[135]

After demonstrating the many mistakes that have been made, it begs the question of why the U.S. would go into such a costly and dangerous war without a plan for the post-war situation, and without paying careful attention to the decision-making process. It is therefore interesting to take a brief look at David's analysis of the decision-making process, which states that the decision-makers had:

> (1) A collective sense of invulnerability; (2) overestimated their ability to control events; (3) tended to have a very high opinion of themselves and to believe in their own moral superiority; (4) adopted a biased interpretation of the facts and filtered out any that did not match their view of reality; (5) had a stereotypical view of Saddam Hussein's regime; (6) constantly justified their decisions, to the point of self-censorship; (7) practiced "bolstering", i.e. focusing on some facts at the expense of others; and (8) exerted pressure for conformity.[136]

Moreover, in the case of the CPA, only good news was given credence and disclosed, and bad news was simply ignored, which greatly contributed to worsening the situation in Iraq.[137]

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[134] Larry Diamond, *Squandered Victory: The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq* (London: MacMillan Publishers, 2006), 299.
[135] Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (Westminster: Penguin Group, 2006), 111.
[136] David, "How Not to do Post-invasion", 44.
[137] Ibid.

Conclusion

When analyzing the decision-making process regarding the de-Ba'athification policy and the subsequent execution of these orders, it is not surprising that the CPA's de-Ba'athification caused great problems for Iraq and the U.S. occupation of it. De-Ba'athification resulted in insufficient security to carry on daily life and undermined the necessary infrastructure for social and economic activity.[138] Moreover, it alienated hundreds of thousands of Iraqis who could now no longer support themselves or their families, effectively creating insurgents, many of whom had weapons or had been trained to use them.[139]

Based on the available evidence, this chapter has demonstrated that the mistakes that were made can be blamed not on a lack of available information, but on a decision-making process which wilfully ignored information and warnings and excluded both U.S. and Iraqi officials with knowledge and experience regarding Iraq. By putting unqualified and corrupt officials like Bremer and Chalabi in charge of important decisions, the U.S. seemed to have been setting Iraq up for failure. Moreover, Iraqis were denied the opportunity to rebuild their own country – they were excluded from the decision-making process and, by disbanding the army and other government and military institutions, from rebuilding the country and managing the post-war chaos. As the following chapters will demonstrate, the poor design, execution, and implementation of the de-Ba'athification orders were to have long-lasting consequences that severely destabilized Iraq and prevented the successful rebuilding of the Iraqi state.

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[138] Pfiffner, "U.S. Blunders in Iraq", 76.
[139] Ibid.

Chapter 3 – Sectarianism and State Collapse:

Setting the Stage for Daesh

The previous two chapters have provided important background information from which to further analyze the relationship between de-Ba'athification and Daesh, which is what the following two chapters will be dedicated to. Both chapters will focus on these orders separately: Chapter 3 will be dedicated to assessing the impact of CPA Order 1, the de-Ba'athification of the Iraqi state, while Chapter 4 will analyze the effects of CPA Order 2, the disbanding of the Iraqi army, on Iraqi society. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how the de-Ba'athification of the Iraqi state has created an environment from which Daesh could emerge.

Daesh: Filling the vacuum of de-Ba'athification

Knowing and understanding the history of Daesh is important in order to understand how its emergence relates to de-Ba'athification and the subsequent state collapse Iraq experienced. Daesh was founded in 2004 by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi under the name of *Al-Qaeda fi bilad al-rafidayn:* Al-Qaeda in the land of the two rivers, also known as Al Qaeda in Iraq.[140] It entered the security vacuum left by the U.S. invasion of Iraq, took advantage of an increased sense of Sunni alienation from the Shia-dominated government, and soon became a significant actor in the insurgency against the U.S. army.[141] A report by the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism

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[140] "The Historical Roots and Stages in the Development of ISIS". The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center. 26 November 2014, 23.
[141] Ibid., 2.

Information Center divides the establishment and emergence of Daesh in Iraq into four separate stages:

1. Stage One (2004-2006): A new branch of Al-Qaeda in Iraq is established by Al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian who joined the insurgents fighting the U.S. army after its occupation of Iraq in 2003. In 2004, Al-Zarqawi's organization declared its allegiance to Osama bin Laden and becomes the first branch of Al Qaeda to be established beyond the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Zarqawi's main objectives were to harm U.S. forces and Shia Iraqis, target efforts at reconstructing Iraq by attacking aid workers and contractors, discourage Iraqi cooperation with the U.S. by attacking government infrastructure and personnel, and draw the U.S. into a sectarian war by focusing specifically on Shia targets. Al-Zarqawi's strategy was criticized by Osama bin Laden: his tactics caused many civilian casualties, and Bin Laden feared that this would result in decreased support for Al-Qaeda throughout the region. Al-Zarqawi's ideology differed from that of Al-Qaeda, in particular for his exceptional hostility towards the Shia population of Iraq, and Al-Zarqawi's relations with the leadership of Al-Qaeda began to deteriorate. This first stage ended when Al-Zarqawi was killed in 2006 in a targeted American airstrike.[142]

2. Stage Two (2006-2011): In October 2006, an umbrella network for jihadi organizations is established, known as the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). This new organization was a collaboration of Al-Qaeda in Iraq with several other Sunni jihadist organizations, intended to reestablish Al-Qaeda's power after the death of Al-Zarqawi. The ISI was active mainly in western Iraq, where the majority of Iraq's Sunni's live. Aside from

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[142] Ibid., 20-24.

attacking U.S. forces and the Shia population, it began to establish a Sunni-led civilian administration as an alternative to the central Shia government. The power of the ISI declined between 2008 and 2011 when the U.S. launched a military campaign against it in 2007, known as "the surge". The U.S. established "awakening councils" (also known as *sahwa*), groups of Sunni tribesmen who assisted them in their fight against ISI and received large financial compensation for it. However, when the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq began to approach in 2011, the amount of aid the councils received began to decrease and the security situation deteriorated. At the same time, the Shia central government became increasingly sectarian. This prepared the ground for those Sunni tribes to later join Daesh in their campaign against the Iraqi regime.[143]

3. Stage Three (2012-June 2014): After the U.S. army withdrew from Iraq in December 2011, it left (another) military-security vacuum which allowed ISI to regain strength and renew its campaign against the Iraqi government and the Shia population, successfully encouraging a civil war between the Sunni and Shia populations of Iraq. Simultaneously, ISI established its presence in Syria, where the anti-regime protests rapidly transformed into a civil war. In April 2013, after the unrest in Syria had allowed ISI to expand there, ISI changed its name to "Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham". In January 2014, Daesh managed to defeat the Iraqi army in Fallujah and Ramadi. Several months later, in June, Daesh seized control of Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul.[144]

4. Stage Four (as of June 2014): Daesh begins making large military achievements, such as the takeover of Mosul. Public disagreements between al-Nusra, Daesh and al-Qaeda continue, and eventually Daesh publicly distanced itself from the Al-Qaeda leadership

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[143] Ibid., 25-28.
[144] Ibid., 28-31.

and Al-Nusra. In September 2014, the United States and its allies launched a campaign against Daesh.[145]

As can clearly be seen from the above stages, Daesh acted upon security and political vacuums that resulted from the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Important factors in the rapid emergence of Daesh are improper governance and increased sectarianism and Sunni alienation as a result of de-Ba'athification, all of which will be expanded upon in this chapter. The next sections will focus specifically on the political domain, by discussing Iraqi state collapse, and the subsequent improper rebuilding of the Iraqi state. More specifically, it will now turn to discussing the collapse of the Iraqi state, how this collapse was caused by de-Ba'athification, and how it, in turn, facilitated the above explained rise of Daesh.

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[145] Ibid., 31-33.

3.1 – State survival and state collapse:

Framing the consequences of de-Ba'athification

The failings of the Iraqi state's security and post-war political system became especially apparent when Daesh managed to seize control of Iraq's second largest city, Mosul, in June 2014. How was it possible for an insurgent group to completely overtake state control in such a large city? This crisis has its roots in the failing of Iraq's post-war political system. This subchapter will demonstrate how Daesh's ability to seize control of Mosul and other major Iraqi cities is illustrative of "a wider comparative dynamic of violence brought on by a reduction in state power and social alienation caused by discriminatory political, economic and social systems."[146] The power vacuum from which Daesh could emerge as a strong alternative to the central government was primarily the result of state collapse facilitated by de-Ba'athification.

State collapse is the breakdown of good governance, law, and order.[147] According to William Zartman, professor at Johns Hopkins University, a state relies on three key elements for survival. First, it must be able to control coercion across its territory.[148] In order to achieve this, a state must impose order upon its citizens and maintain a monopoly on the use of force, through developing coercive institutions such as the military and the police.[149] "Without the state to act as a central authority, general lawlessness is likely to prevail, as individuals are freed from the threat of coercion and institutional restraint."[150] Chapter 1 demonstrated the Ba'ath party's control over Iraq, and how it kept its population under central authority through a system of punishment and

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[146] Toby Dodge and Becca Wasser, "The Criris of the Iraqi State", *Adelphi Series* 54, no. 447-448 (2014), 13.
[147] William Zartman, "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse", in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, ed. William Zartman (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 7.
[148] Ibid., 1.
[149] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 15.
[150] Ibid.

reward and the threat of violence. By removing all central government and military and coercive authority, de-Ba'athification eradicated this system overnight, encouraging lawlessness, looting, and violence.

Second, a state must be able to deliver the basic goods and services that citizens need in their daily lives and facilitate the infrastructure necessary to do so.[151] This is the state's infrastructural power, a concept introduced by historical sociologist Michael Mann, who defined it as the state's "institutional capacity (…) to penetrate its territories and logistically implement decisions."[152] Infrastructural power is important in granting the state legitimacy: it allows the state to provide its citizens with basic needs such as electricity, sewage networks and clean water, and to establish government institutions and communications and transportation networks that allow it to deliver these services.[153] By disbanding nearly all government institutions, the de-Ba'athification orders destroyed the Iraqi state's infrastructural power and made citizens turn to informal channels in order to obtain the support that the state used to provide them with.[154] This process simultaneously simultaneously further eroded state authority and legitimacy.[155] To an extent, this helps explain the emergence of Daesh: in many cases, they were able to act upon the vacuum left by the state and provide citizens with such services. After seizing control over new territory, Daesh's first priority was often to restore basic services such as water and electricity, and provide citizens with food and security.[156] Furthermore, state collapse often goes hand-in-hand with a (re-)emergence of secondary identity traits.[157] "During times of insecurity, individuals will

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[151] Ibid.
[152] Michael Mann, *States, War, and Capitalism: Studies in Political Sociology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 113.
[153] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 16.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Mara Revkin and William McCants, "Experts weigh in: Is ISIS good at governing?" Markaz, The Brookings Institution, 20 November 2015.
[157] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 16.

often align with the political or religious grouping that provides them with the greatest chance of survival."[158] This not only allowed Daesh to exploit ethnic and sectarian tensions, but it also helps explain why the violent insurgency in Iraq quickly turned sectarian. Daesh not only utilized these sectarian identity traits, but also provided citizens with a sense of security that the government could not provide them with: "Local residents in (…) Mosul and other cities say that Daesh is acting like a rudimentary functioning state and providing security."[159] For example, citizens in Mosul reported that Daesh was handing out food and ensuring pensions of veterans be paid out, after the government had failed to do so for years.[160] As such, the state's failure to provide its citizens with basic goods and services has both encouraged citizens to seek security elsewhere and strengthened notions of sectarian identity traits, further contributing to an environment that allowed for the emergence of a violent sectarian organization like Daesh.

The final pillar of state survival is a unified national identity, and the state's ability to develop an ideology that binds the population together and to the state.[161] "The ideology of a state seeks to separate itself from, amalgamate and then rise above tribal, religious, ethnic and class identities that it competes with for the loyalty of the population."[162] Once a state collapses, a central point of identity is removed, and politics, economics, and identity "quickly become localized without a national identity to act as a force for social cohesion."[163] Nevertheless, this pillar of state survival is arguably less important than the ones previously discussed. Chapter 1 has demonstrated that it is questionable whether the Ba'ath party's ideology was actually popular among the

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[158] Ibid.
[159] Fawaz Gerges, *ISIS: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 41.
[160] Ana van Es, "Het kalifaat is verwoest, maar uit de puinhopen herrijst een nieuwe IS-achtige groep", *De Volkskrant*, 2 July 2017.
[161] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 16.
[162] Ibid., 17.
[163] Ibid.

population and that citizens most likely joined the party for the practical benefits it provided them with. Although it was not ideological in nature, Ba'ath party membership still unified the population to an extent: By providing benefits to its members, the party brought the population together under the banner of a single ideology and in turn, brought the population closer to the state by infiltrating their daily lives. As such, the example of Iraq demonstrates that a state does not necessarily need a unified national identity in order to survive. The Ba'ath party's ideology was therefore not a particularly essential component to the Iraqi state's power and as such, the consequences of disbanding the Ba'ath party were practical rather than ideological. It appears the increased sectarianism in the Iraqi insurgency and Iraqi politics was primarily a result of the security vacuum left by de-Ba'athification rather than the disappearance of state ideology – after all, if secondary identity traits had been completely removed by a dominant state ideology, the insurgency would not have turned sectarian so quickly.

3.2 – Case study:

How Iraq's political system facilitated the insurgency

The Iraqi political system post-2003

After CPA Order 1 was issued, and all Ba'ath members were removed from senior positions in government and most government institutions disbanded, Bremer established the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). This council was to be the new government of Iraq and consisted largely of exiled Iraqi politicians.[164] The new government was supposed to be a more accurate representation of the diversity of the Iraqi population: while Saddam Hussein was a Sunni Muslim, as were most government officials, the majority of the Iraqi population is Shia, who often faced discrimination under Saddam Hussein's rule.[165] In an attempt to accurately represent different religious groups within Iraqi society, the IGC included more Shias than Sunnis, as well as representatives of Iraq's Kurdish and Assyrian Christian minorities. In June 2004, both the IGC and the CPA were dissolved and power was transferred to the new Iraqi interim government. A year later, in 2005, the interim government was replaced by the Iraqi Transitional Government, which was tasked with drafting a new constitution for Iraq. In December 2005, the first elections were held in Iraq since the overthrow of the Ba'ath regime, and in May 2006, the first permanent government of Iraq was established under the leadership of Nouri al-Maliki. In what was generally considered an attempt to improve sectarian tensions in Iraq by promoting inclusivity, the U.S. established a system of government known as muhasasa.

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[164] Cherish M. Zinn, "Consequences of Iraqi de-Ba'athification", *Cornell International Affairs Review* 11, no. 2 (2016), 4.
[165] Fanar Haddad, "Shia-Centric State Building and Sunni Rejection in Post 2003 Iraq", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2016: 18.

Muhasasa: How sectarianism was launched into Iraqi politics

Since the formation of the IGC, Iraqi politics have been organized around a system referred to as *muhasasa* (meaning inclusivity, or the sharing of quotas). The muhasasa system, introduced to Iraqi politics by the U.S., involves the equal distribution of cabinet seats among representatives of Iraq's different religious and ethnic communities.[166] "Cabinet posts, along with the positions of prime minister and president, are allocated in line with a sectarian formula that also takes into account the number of seats each party wins in the election."[167] However, the muhasasa system was counterproductive: it only emphasized differences between groups and encouraged politicians to act upon those differences in order to maximize their own political gain. While this system was intended to distribute power equally among different groups in society, it essentially encouraged the political use of sectarian discourse and led to the marginalization of minorities. "This intensification of identity politics led to a vicious cycle of polarization between Sunnis and Shias."[168] During elections, the system allowed for overly sectarian rhetoric to dominate the elections and the process of government formation.[169] The muhasasa system and the increased sectarianism that accompanied it further divided the Iraqi population into ethnic and religiously affiliated groups, a tactic that was used by many political parties to increase support and mobilization.[170] Furthermore, the muhasasa system has fueled Sunni alienation: in a 2014 poll, 66% of Sunni respondents considered the Iraqi government to be illegitimate and its decisions wrong, as compared to 31% of the Shia respondents.[171] The muhasasa system has thus been an important factor in contributing to the the marginalization of Iraq's Sunni minority and their

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[166] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 27.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, 13.
[169] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 27.
[170] Ibid., 27-28.
[171] Ibid.

exclusion from politics, and it has therefore contributed to creating circumstances that encouraged the rise of a violent insurgency.

The emergence of violent extremism in Iraq, including the rise of Daesh and their ability to seize control of several Iraqi cities, can be attributed to an extent to the failings of Iraq's postwar system. By failing to adequately fill the power vacuum left by the de-Ba'athification of Iraq, and subsequently failing to rebuild the Iraqi state and political system and instead imposing a flawed system of government which encouraged sectarianism and Sunni alienation, the U.S.'s de-Ba'athification policy has created a violent and unstable environment that allowed for sectarian violence and terrorism to emerge from.

Iraq under Maliki: 2006-2014

Under Maliki's leadership, sectarian tensions in Iraq increased and the alienation of the Sunni community continued. It is not a coincidence that, also in 2006, sectarian violence in Iraq sparked to such a high level that some referred to it as a "civil war". Maliki's government severely undermined all three previously discussed conditions for state survival. First, he weakened the state's ability to achieve a necessary level of coercion, by failing to impose order upon the population or establish a monopoly on the use of force.[172] If anything, Maliki's improper rebuilding of the military and his appointing of officials loyal to him rather than those who were competent has greatly attributed to the eventual Iraqi state collapse. This condition will be discussed at length in Chapter 4.

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[172] Ibid., 14.

Perhaps the condition most severely damaged by Maliki's rule is the state's ability to deliver goods and services. For example, many areas in Iraq still faced electricity and water shortages as a result of the U.S. invasion, and many roads had never been rebuilt.[173] The root cause of Maliki's failure to improve these conditions is corruption. By 2006, corruption had reached such a high level that it directly obstructed both the state's infrastructural power and its ability to continue reconstruction efforts.[174] A 2011 United Nations estimate claimed that only 26% of the Iraqi population was covered by the public sewage networks, and approximately one-third of the population lacked electrical supply.[175] This large-scale corruption not only undermined the state's ability to improve the delivery of goods and services to its citizens, but also created a deep sense of alienation from the state and maintained "the widespread perception that the state is being governed only to the benefit of a small kleptocracy."[176]

The government's failure to provide basic goods and services to its citizens is not inherently a sectarian problem. However, the combination of these two problems – increased sectarianism as a result of the muhasasa system and the lack of many basic infrastructural needs – laid the groundwork for greater sectarian tensions over the distribution of resources, goods, and services.[177] Because the state failed to provide its citizens with services necessary for survival, parts of the Iraqi population had to find other solutions to maintain security and be provided with such services.[178] This lack of the provision of basic goods and services, combined with overall sectarian tensions, allowed religious and political groups to step in where the state had failed.

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[173] Raad Alkadiri, "Rage Comes to Baghdad: Will Iraq's Recent Protests Lead to Revolt?" in *The New Arab Revolt,* Council on Foreign Relations, n.p.

[174] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 24; Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) Reports, "Quarterly Report and Semiannual Report to the United States Congress", 30 January 2012, 8-9.

[175] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 25.

[176] Ibid., 26.

[177] Ibid.

[178] Ibid.

"These entrepreneurial groups justified their actions in sectarian terms, and gained political support by exploiting the population's needs, providing political, coercive, and economic leadership."[179]

Sunni alienation

The third condition for state survival, developing an ideology that can bind the people together and to the state, was also undermined by Maliki's rule. By the time Maliki came to power, as a result of years of little to no governance, the Iraqi population was already heavily divided along sectarian lines, and ethnic and religious violence was widespread. Maliki did little to mend the nation's growing sectarian rift, "eventually overcompensating for his lack of experience (…) by turning towards increased authoritarianism."[180] Weary of losing power, Maliki centered all power around himself, appointing people loyal to him to the highest offices and cracking down on any attempts at opposition. Because of Maliki's poor leadership and use of divisive rhetoric, the new Iraqi government had difficulties eliminating the insurgency that had begun as a result of the U.S. invasion. Maliki's authoritarian policies and the Iraqi military's incompetence[181] prevented the insurgency in Sunni-majority areas from being countered, providing these groups with opportunities to regroup and spread.[182] Rather than strengthening and securing Iraq, Maliki's authoritarian and sectarian politics have alienated both the Kurdish and Sunni minorities. From having Sunni politicians arrested to the violent crackdown of Sunni protests, Maliki sought to eliminate Sunni participation in Iraqi politics as much as possible.[183] He frequently ordered the

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[179] Ibid.
[180] Zinn, "Consequences of Iraqi de-Ba'athification", 7.
[181] The incompetence of the Iraqi military will be further explored in Chapter 4.
[182] Omar Al-Nidawi, "How Maliki Lost Iraq". *Foreign Affairs,* 18 June 2014.
[183] See, for example: Dominic Evans, "Maliki's Basra crackdown poses risk for U.S.", *Reuters.com,* 30 March 2008; Suadad al-Salhy, "Iraq raid on Sunni protest sparks clashes, 44 killed", *Retuers.com,* 23 April 2013; Stephanie McCrummen, "Protesters say Maliki is using special security forces to shut down demonstrations in Iraq", *The*

arrest of Sunni government officials and was widely perceived, both domestically and by U.S. officials, to be unwilling to halt Shia militias targeting Iraqi Sunnis.[184] Maliki encouraged feelings of disenfranchisement among Sunni Iraqis, and ignored their attempts to participate in politics. He privileged Shia Iraqis at the expense of other groups within Iraqi society, and many Sunni Iraqis felt that they were being discriminated against.[185] There are many accounts of the Iraqi army going into Sunni neighborhoods after a violent incident and indiscriminately arresting individuals.[186] Rafi al-Issawi, a Sunni politician who acted as finance minister and deputy prime minister under Maliki, stated that Maliki had "thousands of Sunnis" arrested after U.S. withdrawal from Iraq in 2011: "They come to any district with a car bombing, for example. They're collecting 200, 300 people and they stay in prison for years without a trial."[187]

Another example of Maliki alienating the Sunni community whilst simultaneously deteriorating the security situation in Iraq has to do with the "awakening councils" also known as *sahwa*. As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, these councils consisted of Sunni fighters and Islamist resistance groups and were founded by the U.S. in 2007 in an attempt to counter insurgent activity, in particular by ISI.[188] However, Maliki had grown weary of arming the Sunnis, as it could grant them too much political and military power.[189] He therefore sought to disintegrate the sahwa, first by putting them under control of the Iraqi authorities in 2010, and later by incorporating them into the Iraqi security sector.[190] Once incorporated into government

Washington Post, 4 March 2011; Jack Healy, "Arrest Order for Sunni Leader in Iraq Opens New Rift", *The New York Times*, 19 December 2011.
[184] Andrew North, "Iraq plan 'fails to impress'", *BBC News*, 3 October 2006.
[185] Priyanka Boghani, "In Their Own Words: Sunnis on Their Treatment in Maliki's Iraq", *PBS Frontline*, 28 October 2014.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, 104.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid., 106.

institutions, sahwa members were offered low-rank and low-paid government jobs, further harming the relationship between the Shia government and its Sunni citizens.[191]

The estrangement and isolation of Iraq's Sunni community became especially apparent during Maliki's last term from 2010 to 2014, when corruption continued to increase and Maliki continued blatantly arresting and imprisoning Sunni politicians, including his own vice-president.[192] During Maliki's last term, there were frequent Sunni protests across the north-west of Iraq, the traditionally Sunni-dominated area. In December 2012, widespread protests began in Fallujah and soon spread to other Sunni-dominated cities after the Sunni finance minister's home had been raided and his bodyguards arrested. The protests focused mainly on Maliki's sectarianism, corruption, poor treatment of prisoners and overall poor government functioning. Iraqi security forces responded harshly, resulting in even more sectarian violence. Both the strong sense of Sunni estrangement and the lack of state power allowed Daesh to capitalize on sectarian identity traits, allowing them in 2014 to gain control of those areas where the protests occurred and where the government crackdown was harsh.

The profound sense of alienation experienced by Iraq's Sunni's, facilitated by the muhasasa system and Maliki's rule, has been a major driving force behind the emergence of Daesh. "Sunni Iraqis felt increasingly excluded from Iraqi politics, cut off from the benefits of oil wealth, and discriminated against by the Iraqi security forces."[193] The Iraqi state was weakened by Maliki's attempts to monopolize power; his failure to fight corruption or provide social services to the population, his exclusionary policies and cultivation of sectarian identities.[194]

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[191] Ibid.
[192] Jomana Karadsheh, "Arrest warrant issued for Iraqi vice president", *CNN*, 19 December 2011.
[193] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 29.
[194] Ibid., 30.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that de-Ba'athification has allowed for the creation of an environment from which Daesh could emerge. It has shown how a multitude of factors have contributed to creating this environment, and has highlighted the connection between these different factors. It has demonstrated how de-Ba'athification has facilitated Iraqi state collapse, by removing all elements necessary for survival that had previously been present under Ba'ath party rule. The new Iraqi government did not meet any of the standards required for state survival: the weakness of the Iraqi army prevented it from being able to control its territory; corruption under Maliki's government resulted in the state's failure to deliver basic goods and services such as water, electricity, sewage networks and infrastructure to Iraqi citizens; and Maliki's sectarianism prevented the state from developing a uniting ideology and instead, alienated the Sunni Muslims, who now had to turn elsewhere to seek the security that a state usually offers. The history of Daesh has demonstrated how Daesh acted upon these security and institutional vacuums in order to expand. Improper governance, increased sectarianism and the marginalization of Iraq's Sunni community, the lack of any security apparatus or functioning state institutions: all of these factors came forth from de-Ba'athification and resulted in an ideal breeding ground for creating an insurgency and a possibility for groups like Daesh to step in where the government was failing. What is interesting to note here is that while Al Qaeda in Iraq, Daesh's predecessor, was originally composed of people from many different nationalities, the share of Iraqis within AQI increased over time.[195] The increased rate of Iraqis can thus be explained through a combination of the security vacuum that had emerged in Iraq and the increased sense of Sunni alienation.

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[195] Truls Hallberg Tønnessen, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam? The relationship between al-Qaida in Iraq and the Islamic State", *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9, no. 4 (2015), n.p.

This chapter has furthermore demonstrated the connection between de-Ba'athification and the creation of a breeding ground for Daesh by looking at the case study of Iraq's political system, which changed Iraq's political landscape and facilitated state collapse. The muhasasa system has fueled sectarianism across the political spectrum and increased Sunni alienation. By failing to adequately fill the power vacuum left by de-Ba'athification and instead introducing a system which fueled sectarianism, the U.S.'s de-Ba'athification policy has resulted in a violent and unstable environment from which Daesh could emerge. Maliki's authoritarian and sectarian rule was a direct result of the muhasasa system, and contributed to the emergence of Daesh by both failing to properly rebuild the Iraqi state and by increasing the distance between the Shia government and the Sunni population. This increased sense of Sunni alienation stemmed mostly from their exclusion from Iraqi politics; the sectarian rhetoric used by Maliki; the arrests of and attacks on Sunni government representatives; the violent crackdown of Sunni protests; and Maliki's failure to act against Shia militias targeting Sunni Muslims. This not only contributed to creating a breeding ground for Daesh, but also encouraged some Sunni Iraqis to join Daesh in their fight against Maliki's government. In other words, de-Ba'athification has facilitated Iraqi state collapse which created an environment for insurgency; and the failure of Iraq's post-war political system has further contributed to this environment, eventually allowing Daesh to seize control of large parts of Iraqi territory.

Chapter 4 – Military consequences of de-Ba'athification

This chapter focuses on how de-Ba'athification, on a direct and indirect military level, has contributed to creating the insurgents themselves and allowed them to gain control over large parts of Iraqi territory. The approach of this chapter is two-fold: it analyzes the direct effects of de-Ba'athification in order to assess how it has created insurgents, and addresses the indirect effects of CPA Order 2 by looking at how the disbanding of the Iraqi army has facilitated the emergence of Daesh. Finally, it will use the fall of Mosul in 2014 as a case study to further demonstrate the connection between de-Ba'athification and the emergence of Daesh.

Disbanding the entire Iraqi military as well as other government institutions only intensified the insurgency that had begun as a result of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. While the insurgency thus originally came forth from the lawlessness as a result of the U.S. invasion, both the previous and current chapter demonstrate the crucial role de-Ba'athification has played in fueling the insurgency. In particular the CPA's decision to disband the Iraqi army *before* establishing a sufficient replacement of the Ba'ath party's military and without including former Iraqi soldiers or civil servants contributed to the insurgency and created a security vacuum. Today, many senior U.S. officials state the disbanding of the army was unnecessary and counterproductive. By dismissing between 50000 and 100000 militarily trained men, the CPA not only pushed them toward the insurgency, but also made it harder to combat the insurgency. As a U.S. Army vice chief of staff said: "We began to slowly put together a security force, but it took far too much time and that gave the insurgency an ability to start to rise."[196] In other words, CPA

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[196] Mark Thompson, "How Disbanding the Iraqi Army Fueled ISIS", *Time Magazine*, 28 May 2015.

Order 2 worsened the security situation in Iraq, fueled the insurgency and, specifically, contributed to creating the insurgents, by disbanding the Iraqi military and several other government institutions.

4.1 – Connections between Ba'athists and Daesh

In order to assess how de-Ba'athification has contributed directly to Daesh by creating the insurgents, this section will look at former Ba'ath officials who became members of Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and Daesh. While it is difficult to prove and trace individuals on a large scale, and little academic research has been conducted into the subject matter, there are several sources claiming there is a strong connection between former Ba'ath members and membership of AQI and Daesh after de-Ba'athification. Tønnessen, who wrote a paper in which he takes a closer look at the relationship between AQI and Daesh leadership, notes that "the top leadership of IS seems to have been populated by former Iraqi officers who were removed from their positions when the Iraqi army was disbanded in 2003."[197] Multiple other sources, which will be discussed later in this chapter, confirm this claim. In fact, it appears that the two most common patterns in identifying the post-2010 leadership of Daesh is their backgrounds as either former Ba'ath officers or officials or former inmates of U.S.-led prisons in Iraq.[198] Interesting to note here is that these prisons can be considered yet another contribution of the U.S. to the insurgency it helped create and simultaneously sought to counter. During the occupation of Iraq, U.S. armed forces tended to conduct mass sweeps of Sunni-dominated areas in their search for Ba'athists in hiding,

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[197] Tønnessen, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam?", n.p.
[198] Ibid.

indiscriminately arresting any men of military age.[199] Aside from contributing to Sunni alienation and a general mistrust against U.S. forces, these actions also contributed more directly to the emergence of Daesh. An interview with a senior commander in Daesh named Abu Ahmed tells the story of how much of the Daesh leadership met in a U.S.-led prison named Camp Bucca. While some prisoners had been detained for legitimate reasons, among them were also young men who had been taken from their towns by U.S. forces for no reason and, while in Camp Bucca, radicalized and joined the large jihadist network that had been established there.[200] Among Camp Bucca's detainees was Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, current leader of Daesh, as well as several other individuals, some of them former Ba'athists, who would later acquire prominent positions among the Daesh leadership.[201]

Ba'ath involvement in the Iraqi insurgency

The involvement of Ba'athists in the Iraqi insurgency can be seen going back all the way to AQI's predecessor Tawhid wal-Jihad, which was also lead by Al-Zarqawi. Much of this involvement relates to the "Return to Faith Campaign" (al-hamla al-imaniyya), an initiative launched by Saddam Hussein in the 1990's which sought to promote a more Islamist agenda in an attempt to counter the increasing Salafi trend in Iraq.[202] During this period, the regime became increasingly Islamic and religion began to play a larger role within the Ba'ath party itself.[203] While the campaign was intended to counter Salafi sentiments, it was not entirely successful in doing so,

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[199] Patrick Cockburn, *Iraq: The West Shakes Up The Middle East* (London: Independent Print Limited, 2016), 111.
[200] Martin Chulov, "ISIS: The Inside Story", *The Guardian*, 11 December 2014.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Tønnessen, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam", n.p.
[203] Ibid.

and Salafism became increasingly popular especially within the military.[204] Primary sources from AQI suggest that several of their Iraqi founding fathers were part of this underground Salafist group in the military, and were allegedly persecuted by Saddam Hussein's regime for their involvement.[205] However, the Salafist trend in the Iraqi army mostly inspired officers of AQI, and not of Daesh: "An important difference (…) is that while the former officers of AQI left or were dismissed from the Iraqi army prior to the invasion of 2003, the former officers of IS seem to have remained in their positions until the old Iraqi army was dissolved following the invasion."[206]

In other words, while AQI's officers came forth largely from the Salafist trend in the Iraqi army, this was not the case for Daesh officers who were still in the Iraqi army prior to de-Ba'athification. As such, it can be assumed that they joined Daesh as a result of de-Ba'athification: not only had de-Ba'athification resulted in unemployment for Ba'ath officers, it had also encouraged Sunni alienation and facilitated state collapse from which Daesh benefited greatly. Moreover, it should be noted that few if any of the Daesh leadership belonged to this Salafist community, which further reinforces the argument that Ba'athists joined Daesh for strategic and practical reasons relating to de-Ba'athification rather than ideological ones.[207] An important role in the formation of Daesh was played by Abu Bakr al-Iraqi, a former colonel in the Iraqi Revolutionary Guard and former Ba'athist, who in 2010 promoted several other former Ba'athists to leadership positions within Daesh and reorganized Daesh along a Ba'athist model.[208] In a report citing uncovered documents in Syria, the German magazine *Der Spiegel* noted that Bakr drafted

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[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Ibid.

up the blueprint for the Islamic Intelligence State, a "precise plan for (…) a caliphate run by an organization that resembled East Germany's notorious Stasi domestic intelligence agency."[209] Several accounts of former Daesh members also reinforce the notion that Daesh leadership is occupied by former Ba'athists. "Even with the influx of thousands of foreign fighters, almost all of the leaders of the Islamic State are former Iraqi officers, according to Iraqis, Syrians, and analysts who study the group."[210] The Ba'athists have been able to help Daesh develop into a well-organized organization, due to their organizational and military experience and the smuggling networks they developed as a result of the sanctions against Iraq.[211]

In particular after the issuing of CPA Order 2, several sources report a "marriage of convenience" between Ba'athists and members of AQI and later Daesh.[212] Senior researcher at Human Rights Watch and journalist Letta Tayler stated that "Ba'athists got muscle from ISIS, and ISIS got local legitimacy through the Ba'athists."[213] Important to note here is that this cooperation was not ideological in nature. The ideologies of the Ba'ath party and AQI and Daesh had little in common, and therefore their cooperation was merely strategic in nature: "Tactical cooperation is conceivable given their common goal of destabilizing and removing the new U.S.-installed regime in Iraq."[214] Ba'athists loyal to the regime took the lead in resisting the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq which they perceived as unjust, and ideology played a less important role than their common goal of destabilizing the U.S. occupation.[215] In an interview in 2005, director of the Iraqi National

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[209] Mark Perry, "Fighting Saddam All Over Again", *Politico*, 28 April 2015.
[210] Liz Sly, "The Hidden Hand Behind the Islamic State's Militants? Saddam Hussein's", *The Washington Post,* 4 April 2015.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Tønnessen, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam?", n.p.
[213] Shane Harris, "The Re-Ba'athification of Iraq", *Foreign Policy*, 21 August 2014.
[214] Tønnessen, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam?", n.p.
[215] Mohammed Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2007), 47.

Intelligence Agency Muhammad Abdullah al-Shahwani stated that he strongly believed that former Ba'athists are a dominant force in the Iraqi insurgency, citing their organizational and military skills as the primary reason for the Ba'ath party members' important role in the insurgency.[216] Aside from the previously cited tactical and strategic reasons for Ba'athists to join Daesh, it would also make little sense for them to join Daesh for ideological reasons, considering that the ideologies of Daesh and the Ba'ath party have little in common. Former Ba'athists who adhered to the Ba'ath party's ideology would have been better off with insurgent groups that do propagate this ideology, such as the Men of the Army of the al-Naqshbandia Order (commonly abbreviated as JRTN), whose ideology is a mixture of Ba'athism and pan-Arabism, or the General Military Council for Iraqi Revolutionaries (GMCIR), a Ba'athist militant group.[217] There were thus were many alternatives to Daesh for Ba'athists who wanted to join the insurgency out of ideological convictions. As such, it makes little sense to assume that Ba'athists joined Daesh or AQI for ideological reasons, and rather reinforces the previously made argument that a lack of state security and Sunni alienation as a result of de-Ba'athification and the mass dismissal of Ba'athists are the main drivers behind the emergence of Daesh.

Iraq analyst Sajad Jiyad stated that Daesh "would not exist without former Ba'athists".[218] The table below demonstrates direct evidence of Ba'ath involvement in Daesh that reinforces this statement. It is based on several sources and shows current well-known Daesh leadership, whether or not they were Ba'ath party members, and what positions they held in both the Ba'ath party and Daesh.

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[216] Ibid., 49.
[217] Tønnessen, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam?", n.p.
[218] Davide Mastracci, "How the 'catastrophic' American decision to disband Saddam's military helped fuel the rise of ISIL", *National Post*, 23 May 2015.

Name	Nationality	Former Ba'ath	Position in Ba'ath	Position in Daesh
Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi	Iraqi		n/a	Current leader
Abu Omar al-Baghdadi	Iraqi	X	Officer in the Iraqi army	Former leader; Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's predecessor
Abu Muslim al-Turkmani	Iraqi	X	Colonel in military intelligence, Republican Guard	Al-Baghdadi's deputy until his death in 2015
Abu Muhammad al-Adnani	Syrian		n/a	Senior leadership
Abu Bakr al-Iraqi	Iraqi	X	Army colonel	Al-Baghdadi's closest advisor until his death in 2014
Abu Ali al-Anbari	Iraqi	X	Major general in the Iraqi army	Al-Baghdadi's deputy in Syria
Muhammad al-Nada al-Juburi	Iraqi	X	unknown	unknown

Abu Ayman al-Iraqi	Iraqi	X	Colonel in air force intelligence	Senior leadership, possible military council member
Abu Ahmad al-Alwani	Iraqi	X	Soldier in Iraqi army	Member of military council
Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Bilawi	Iraqi		n/a	Head of military council
Abu Suleyman	Unknown		n/a	Minister of war
Abu Faysal al-Zayidi	Iraqi	X	unknown	unknown
Abu Wahib	Iraqi		n/a	Senior military commander

Table 1.1: Correlation between Daesh leadership and Ba'ath membership 2010-2015.[219]

[219] Charles Lister, "Profiling the Islamic State", Brookings Doha Center Analysis Paper, 1 December 2014, n.p., Tønnessen, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam?", n.p.; Sly, "The Hidden Hand Behind the Islamic State's Militants", n.p.

This table has been compiled from multiple sources as well as independent research. The names listed above are the most prominent and well-known leadership of Daesh in Iraq. Because this thesis focuses solely on Daesh in Iraq, I have excluded those individuals who work exclusively in Syria. (For further reading into Daesh leadership in Syria, see: Charles Lister, "Profiling the Islamic State", Brookings Doha Center Analysis Paper, 1 December 2014.) The table contains those members most well-known for their role in Daesh and whose legitimacy and background has been confirmed by multiple sources.

The data in this table demonstrate that there were relationships existing prior to de-Ba'athification on a military level among the current leadership of Daesh. It also shows that the majority of Daesh leadership are former Ba'ath members. As such, this table demonstrates direct evidence of the relationship between de-Ba'athification and the emergence of Daesh. Combined with what this section has previously established, namely that Ba'ath members joined Daesh for strategic reasons, that a former Ba'athist created the blueprint for Daesh's structure and organization and appointed Ba'athists to leadership positions, and that de-Ba'athification encouraged Sunni alienation and state collapse allowing Daesh to become a powerful player in Iraq, the direct connection between Daesh and Ba'ath party members further reinforces the connection between de-Ba'athification and Daesh. In fact, it provides direct evidence of this chapter's main argument, namely that de-Ba'athification has fueled the insurgency by creating the insurgents. If it were not for de-Ba'athification, Ba'athists would not have lost their jobs, the Sunni community would not have felt alienated, the Iraqi state would not have collapsed and a subsequent security vacuum would not have been created.

4.2 – Indirect effects of military de-Ba'athification

CPA Order 2 also had indirect consequences that fueled the insurgency and facilitated the emergence of Daesh. As discussed in Chapter 3, Maliki's sectarian and divisive rule severely undermined all conditions necessary for state survival. One condition in particular will be discussed in this chapter because it relates to CPA Order 2, the disbanding of the Iraqi army: the state's ability to control coercion across its territory and maintain a monopoly on the use of force.

After having disbanded the Iraqi army in 2003, the CPA sought to reestablish the state's coercive capacity and hastily rebuilt the Iraqi army. However, the haste with which the army was rebuilt has resulted in a weak and divided military force.[220] Like many other Iraqi institutions, the military was plagued by corruption. For example, in late 2014 it was revealed that the Iraqi army had been paying salaries of at least fifty thousand 'ghost' soldiers – meaning they paid the salaries of people who were not actually in military service.[221] Moreover, by directly interfering in the armed forces, Maliki broke their coherence and gained personal influence over the chain of command.[222] "Following his appointment as prime minister in 2006, he worked to successfully 'coup-proof' the army, binding its senior commanders and paramilitary units to him personally, and subverting the formal chain of command."[223] In an attempt to prevent subversion, coup-proofing discourages cooperation between different elements in the military because it encourages them to compete.[224] For example, Maliki appointed officers who were loyal to him but otherwise

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[220] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 22.
[221] Loveday Morris, "Investigation Finds 50,000 Ghost Soldiers in Iraqi Army, Prime Minister Says", *The Washington Post*, 30 November 2014.
[222] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 23.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Yasir Abbas and Dan Trombly, "Inside the Collapse of the Iraqi Army's 2nd Division", *War on the Rocks*, 1 July 2014.

incompetent or accused of crimes against the population.[225] Furthermore, Maliki exploited the fact that there was little political oversight over the army in order to strengthen his control over the armed forces.[226] Maliki brought the Office of the Commander in Chief, an organization established by American advisors as a coordinating forum, under personal control and used it for his own political gain, by appointing allies to key positions and issuing orders directly to its officers, undermining the army's chain of command.[227] Corruption in the form of bribery also plagued Iraq's army structure, as a former Captain in the Iraqi army stated: "You don't earn a commanding position; you buy it."[228] Moreover, Maliki acquired direct control of the army by establishing a central office which he used to appoint one general for every province, who had command and control of all armed forces in that province.[229] By dismissing competent Sunni officers and replacing them with less competent Shia commanders who were loyal to him, Maliki established Shia dominance over Sunni communities, weakened the army and further angered the Sunni community.[230] Furthermore, Maliki was frequently accused of turning the national army and the security services into Shia-led militias.[231] A wide range of government officials, from members of parliament to ministers or local councilors, enjoyed the protection of vast amounts of security forces.[232] Maliki himself enjoyed the protection of a battalion of eight hundred men, as did several vice presidents, and the President's personal protection consisted of six thousand Kurdish fighters.[233] The military's corruption also alienated the local population: local citizens were

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[225] Al Nidawi, "How Maliki Lost Iraq", n.p.
[226] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 23.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Abbas and Trombly, "Inside the Collapse", n.p.
[229] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 23-24.
[230] Zinn, "Consequences of Iraqi de-Ba'athification", 8.
[231] Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, 116.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.

frequently detained without sufficient reason, and could often only be released through paying bribes.[234]

Both the great sense of Sunni alienation and anger, as well as Maliki's deliberate weakening of the Iraqi state and military, have contributed to the emergence of Daesh on multiple levels. By putting the army under his personal rule and appointing incompetent officers, Maliki has therefore also undermined the first condition for state survival: the state's ability to control coercion across its territory and maintain a monopoly on the use of force. This becomes especially apparent when taking a closer look at the fall of Mosul in 2014.

4.3 – Case study: The fall of Mosul

On 10 June 2014, Daesh took control of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city. Approximately 30,000 Iraqi forces were unable to defeat some 1500 Daesh fighters.[235] Daesh's ability to defeat the Iraqi army highlights both the weakness of the Iraqi army and the strength of Daesh, which can be largely ascribed to the aforementioned former Ba'athists who influenced Daesh's organizational and military capacity. Moreover, as the then governor of the Nineveh province Atheel al-Nujaif explained, it is especially telling that this happened in Mosul rather than elsewhere in Iraq: the atmosphere in Mosul at the time was particularly beneficial for a group like Daesh. "People were under the heavy pressure of the army and the regime. They didn't like the army and needed someone to protect them from the army. Also, the police and the army resorted to sectarian attitudes when doing their duties."[236] As such, this confirms what the previous sections have

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[234] Abbas and Trombly, "Inside the Collapse", n.p.
[235] Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2017), n.p.
[236] Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, 195.

established, namely that this environment has been created by policies that came forth from de-Ba'athification. "In some areas (…) it took extended guerrilla operations and urban warfare to keep out government forces, but in Mosul, Tikrit and other recent ISIL offensives, retreat was voluntary and disorganized rather than forced by heavy fighting."[237] The Iraqi army experienced a total and sudden collapse in Mosul: most soldiers retreated retreated in disarray, with many reporting that their positions had collapsed without shots having been fired.[238] Bearing in mind how Maliki weakened and divided the Iraqi army, the collapse of the Iraqi army in Mosul and the rapid emergence of Daesh afterwards seems a logical consequence of Maliki's actions. Years of corruption and improper leadership had resulted in an army that was undermanned, under-equipped, and undertrained.[239] Military personnel were often ill-prepared for battle: some had never even been to a firing range.[240] Furthermore, soldiers were treated very poorly, which helps further explain why Daesh experienced little resistance when seizing control of Mosul.[241] For example, high-ranking officers in Mosul were tasked with budgeting food purchases for their soldiers, but most officers instead kept this money to themselves, and soldiers had to buy and prepare their own food from civilian markets.[242] Such practices reduced Iraqi soldiers' willingness to fight, as one Iraqi officer explained: "Corruption takes more than soldiers' food rations. It takes their dignity and self-respect as well."[243] Moreover, the problem of 'ghost' soldiers also contributed to a low morale among Iraqi soldiers, for it made them aware that desertion will not necessarily take away their income. Due to this lack of motivation, soldiers were often unwilling

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[237] Abbas and Trombly, "Inside the Collapse", n.p.
[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 23.
[242] Abbas and Trombly, "Inside the Collapse", n.p.; Dodge and Wasser, "The Crisis of the Iraqi State", 23-24.
[243] Abbas and Trombly, "Inside the Collapse", n.p.

to fight and had little faith in the military's ability to protect them and their families from possible sectarian retaliation.[244]

However, aside from the poor training and equipment and general lack of morale among soldiers, another prevalent consequence of de-Ba'athification can be seen in Mosul: the sectarianism in the security forces. Widespread acts of brutality, killings, and torture were reported by citizens with regards to the the operational commander of the Nineveh province[245], Lt. Gen. Mahdi Gharawi.[246] Gharawi's troops had been accused of carrying out arbitrary arrests, the killing and torture of prisoners, and the use of excessive force.[247] Moreover, Gharawi had reportedly sold Sunni prisoners to Shia militias, and had been accused by the U.S. of using his police brigades as a front for a Shia militia that was responsible for the murder of hundreds of Sunnis.[248] Maliki, a close ally of Gharawi, resisted U.S. attempts to have Gharawi arrested or removed from his position.[249] This serves as another example of the damage that Maliki has done by using the military for his personal and political gain, and the far-reaching consequences of the increased sectarianism as a result of the muhasasa system. All of the above mentioned factors combined allowed Mosul to become a Daesh stronghold and have highlighted the weakness and division within the Iraqi army, and the alienation of local populations by the increased sectarianism in the armed forces.

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[244] Ibid.
[245] The Nineveh province is a province in northern Iraq, where the city of Mosul is located.
[246] Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, 127.
[247] Ibid.
[248] Ibid.
[249] Ibid.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how de-Ba'athification on the military level has contributed to the emergence of Daesh on several different levels. It has first established a direct connection between de-Ba'athification and the emergence of Daesh by demonstrating how former Ba'athists make up the vast majority of current Daesh leadership and how they utilized their organizational and military skills to make Daesh a strong, well-functioning organization capable of controlling large parts of Iraqi territory. The disbanding of the Iraqi military encouraged former Ba'athists to join the insurgency not only because it facilitated state collapse and left them unemployed, but also because Maliki's subsequent sectarian influence on the military fueled Sunni alienation and resistance to his government. This chapter has also demonstrated that former Ba'athists joined Daesh for practical and strategic reasons rather than ideological ones, further reinforcing the argument that de-Ba'athification has created the insurgents of Daesh. The fact that Daesh encountered little resistance when seizing control of Mosul then highlights both the weakness of the Iraqi army and the strength of Daesh. All three subchapters stress how de-Ba'athification took on many different forms and how intertwined these different forms are: how the strength of Daesh came forth from de-Ba'athification and how the Iraqi military's weakness is a result of military de-Ba'athification as well. The fall of Mosul demonstrated how the Iraqi military not only lacked proper organizational capacity, but also suffered from a low morale among its soldiers because of widespread corruption and poor treatment and training of military personnel. Both the weakness of the Iraqi army and the fall of Mosul are indirect consequences of the de-Ba'athification of Iraq because the haste with which the military was rebuilt resulted in its inherent weakness, and the complete disbanding of the army post-invasion allowed groups like AQI and Daesh to flourish. This can also be related back to the political consequences of de-Ba'athification as discussed in

Chapter 3 because the muhasasa system introduced sectarianism into every aspect of Iraqi politics, allowing Maliki to divide the Iraqi army along sectarian lines as well.

As such, it can be concluded that the CPA's rigorous disbanding of the Iraqi army and refusal to include former Ba'athists or former soldiers[250] has created the insurgents of Daesh, by rendering them unemployed and seeking revenge, and simultaneously made it harder for the U.S. army to combat the insurgency. By indirectly encouraging former Ba'athists to join the insurgency, CPA Order 2 has allowed Daesh to develop into a well-organized non-state actor, exemplified by its takeover of Mosul. The haste with which the CPA has rebuilt the Iraqi army has made it inherently weak, and has allowed Maliki to turn it into a corrupt, sectarian army used for personal political gain, thereby further weakening it and allowing Daesh to become a powerful actor in the Iraqi state.

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[250] As was discussed in Chapter 2.

Conclusion

The connection between de-Ba'athification and Daesh is not as simple as the title of this thesis may have it seem. As I have sought to demonstrate throughout this thesis, there are many steps that need to be taken in between that connect de-Ba'athification to Daesh. Both direct and indirect factors contributing to the emergence of Daesh have consistently emerged and reinforced each other over longer periods of time and on multiple different levels.

This thesis has established the main driving forces behind Daesh and demonstrated how they relate to de-Ba'athification. State collapse and a lack of state security, corruption, mass dismissal of Ba'athists, increased sectarianism as a result of the muhasasa system and a lack of the state's institutional capacity, sectarianism in the security forces: all of these factors are a result of de-Ba'athification and can be directly or indirectly linked to the emergence of Daesh. While the insurgency originally began as a result of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, this thesis has sought to emphasize the crucial role de-Ba'athification has played both in fueling and supporting the intensity and duration of the insurgency.

Every chapter of this thesis has made a valuable contribution to answering the research question: *How did the de-Ba'athification policy as implemented by the United States after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein lead to the emergence of Daesh in early 2014?* By assessing the dominance of the Ba'ath party over most aspects of Iraqi society and its crucial role in providing citizens with basic everyday necessities, Chapter 1 provided a framework from which to further analyze the consequences of the de-Ba'athification policy, which destroyed the state's infrastructural capacity. Moreover, this chapter has helped in explaining the significance of secondary identity traits that Daesh acted upon. Chapter 2 provided necessary and detailed

information about the CPA orders that are known as de-Ba'athification. By highlighting how much knowledge and expertise was left out of the decision-making process, it has contributed to creating a better understanding of the disastrous outcomes of the de-Ba'athification policy. Despite the many warnings against the execution of these orders, they were implemented nonetheless.

After providing the context necessary to frame the main argument of this thesis, Chapter 3 focused on how de-Ba'athification contributed to the creation of an environment from which Daesh could emerge. By providing a theoretical framework for state survival and state collapse, this chapter has shown how de-Ba'athification removed all elements necessary for state survival. Moreover, Maliki's corruption and sectarianism, largely a result of the muhasasa system which was implemented by the U.S. after de-Ba'athification, alienated the Sunni community and resulted in a government unable to provide its citizens with basic goods and services, forcing them to turn elsewhere for support. The insurgency that began as a result of the U.S. invasion combined with the collapse of the Iraqi state has intensified notions of secondary identity traits. All of these factors combined created an environment in which Daesh could flourish.

The Future of Iraq Project, a gathering of over 200 Iraqi and U.S. officials providing recommendations on the future of Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, warned against "a total de-Ba'athification that does not allow for the reintegration of Ba'athists into society."[251] Chapter 4 shows the consequences of the CPA's decision to ignore this advice: the majority of Daesh leadership now consists of former Ba'athists who joined the insurgency after their institutions were disbanded. Analyzing their involvement in Daesh demonstrated not only how they played a crucial role in turning Daesh into a powerful non-state actor, but also that their most

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[251] Future of Iraq Project: Transitional Justice Working Group. "First session". 9 and 10 July, 2002.

likely motivations to join Daesh were strategic and practical rather than ideological: there were many alternatives to Daesh for those seeking to join the insurgency out of ideological reasons. Moreover, these Ba'athists motivations were also most likely the result of de-Ba'athification. Not only did CPA Order 1 and 2 leave former Ba'athists unemployed, their involvement in Daesh also has its roots in the collapse of the Iraqi state as was discussed in Chapter 3. As such, military de-Ba'athification both directly and indirectly facilitated the emergence of Daesh. It contributed to the weakness of the Iraqi army, by disbanding it before it could be re-established, excluding former soldiers and allowing sectarianism to infiltrate the military, and to the strength of Daesh, by creating insurgents and leaving Daesh leadership with professional military and organizational skills.

Throughout this thesis I have stressed how these different factors work together: they each have their separate effect on contributing to the emergence of Daesh, but also work together and frequently reinforce each other. Factors discussed in every chapter can therefore be connected to previous chapters. The strength and dominance of the Ba'ath party as discussed in Chapter 1 is connected to the execution of the de-Ba'athification orders in Chapter 2, because it has demonstrated how crucial the Ba'ath party was for stability in Iraq. The weakness of the Iraqi army as discussed in Chapter 4 relates back to political de-Ba'athification as discussed in Chapter 3 which made Iraqi politics increasingly sectarian. Moreover, by disbanding the entire Iraqi government structure, de-Ba'athification allowed for Maliki to exert personal influence over the military, making it increasingly sectarian and creating deep alienation between the state and its citizens. The state collapse caused by de-Ba'athification not only resulted in the state's failure to provide its citizens with basic goods and services, but also further fueled sectarianism. The case study of the fall of Mosul was a case in point where many of these different factors played out

simultaneously. Altogether, Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrate most clearly how de-Ba'athification created Daesh: it has contributed to both creating the environment from which Daesh could emerge, and has directly contributed to creating the insurgents.

It is likely that Daesh can be explained in other ways rather than through de-Ba'athification alone. This is one of the limitations of this thesis: I have focused solely on explaining Daesh through de-Ba'athification not only because it has allowed me to make a valuable contribution to the existing gap in the academic literature, but also because I consider the consequences of de-Ba'athification crucial in understanding the current state of affairs in Iraq. I have specifically sought to highlight the complexity of the many different factors that have contributed to the emergence of Daesh. The "State of the field" section in the Introduction showed that one of the most prevalent explanations for Daesh relates to religion. With this thesis I hope to have shown that for Daesh, religion is merely a means to an end, rather than the primary cause of its existence.

At the time of writing, mid-July 2017, the territory of Daesh's self-proclaimed state in Iraq is rapidly declining. Six days ago, Iraqi prime minister Haider al-Abadi arrived in Mosul to declare its liberation and congratulate Iraq's armed forces on their victory over Daesh.[252] "Their fictitious state has fallen", declared an Iraqi army commander on state television.[253] Over the past year and a half, Daesh has been driven from Fallujah, Ramadi and Mosul, their three most strategically significant strongholds in Iraq. Nevertheless, while Daesh in Iraq may be declining, the circumstances that allowed them to emerge have not changed. This thesis has shown that Daesh is the result of a multitude of different factors that have played out on different levels over longer

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[252] Tim Arango and Michael R. Gordon, "Iraqi Prime Minister Arrives in Mosul to Declare Victory over ISIS", *The New York Times*, 9 July 2017.
[253] Josie Ensor, "'Their fictitious state has fallen': Iraqi army victorious after retaking mosque where ISIL leader Baghdadi declared caliphate", *The Telegraph*, 29 June 2017.

periods of time. It would therefore be too simplistic to assume that Iraq's problems are solved by merely weakening and eliminating Daesh. The legacy of de-Ba'athification, fourteen years after its implementation, still lives on. If the Iraqi government continues to fail to address the social, political, and economic circumstances that allowed Daesh to establish its caliphate in the first place, history will undoubtedly repeat itself in Iraq.

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