



Trends of Radicalisation

Iraq/3.2 Research Report

July 2021

D.Rad Research Teams



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Reference: D.RAD 3.2

This research was conducted under the Horizon 2020 project 'De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate' (959198).

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List of Abbreviations

HHRO: Hammurabi Human Rights Organization.

GDF: Gross Domestic Product.

ALQ: Al- Qaeda Organization.

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham

ISIL: Islamic State of Iraq and Levant.

ISI: Islamic State in Iraq.

USIP: United State Institute of Peace.

GIZ: German Agency for International Cooperation.

GTI: Global Terrorism Index

About the Project

D.Rad is a comparative study of radicalisation and polarisation in Europe and beyond. It aims to identify the actors, networks and wider social contexts driving radicalisation, particularly among young people in urban and peri-urban areas. D.Rad conceptualises this through the I-GAP spectrum (injustice-grievance-alienation-polarisation) with the goal of moving towards the measurable evaluation of de-radicalisation programmes. Our intention is to identify the building blocks of radicalisation, which include the person's sense of being victimised, of being thwarted or lacking agency in established legal and political structures and coming under the influence of "us vs them" identity formulations.

D.Rad benefits from an exceptional breadth of backgrounds. The project spans national contexts including the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Finland, Slovenia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Georgia, Austria and several minority nationalisms. It bridges academic disciplines ranging from political science and cultural studies to social psychology and artificial intelligence. Dissemination methods include D.Rad labs, D.Rad hubs, policy papers, academic workshops, visual outputs and digital galleries. As such, D.Rad establishes a rigorous foundation in order to test practical interventions geared to prevention, inclusion and de-radicalisation.

With the possibility of capturing the trajectories of 17 nations and several minority nations, the project will provide a unique evidence base for the comparative analysis of law and policy as nation states adapt to new security challenges. The process of mapping these varieties and their link to national contexts will be crucial in uncovering the strengths and weaknesses in existing interventions. Furthermore, D.Rad accounts for the problem that processes of radicalisation often occur in circumstances that escape the control and scrutiny of traditional national frameworks of justice. The participation of AI professionals in modelling, analysing and devising solutions to online radicalisation will be central to the project's aims.

Executive Summary/Abstract

Iraq is one of the countries most exposed to instability and lack of security, due to many reasons which are the fragility and weakness of the state that leads to many hot spots of extremism and terrorism. These foci exist in ethnically or religiously homogeneous and heterogeneous societies, which we will discuss in this report. Moreover, the difference in the geography of these regions is one of the reasons.

The importance of the report about Iraq lies in the fact that this country is one of the first ranks in extremism and terrorism, so it must be highlighted and promised as a model in the study, especially it is rich in natural resources, while it was possible to invest these resources to build a new modern state instead of being submerged in extremism and terrorism.

Despite the multiplicity and abundance of hotbeds of extremism and terrorism in Iraq, the report will try to explain examples of them, according to the type and the trends of extremism. There is separatist extremism in Kirkuk governorate, which is one of the disputed areas between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq where the latter seeks secession and independence from Iraq. Likewise, there is the jihadist (religious) violence stemming from sectarian fanaticism in Anbar, which has made this vast province a hot spot for (discriminatory) ethnic and religious extremism. The report will also deal with another example of a region whose demographic composition and geography have imposed to be a hot spot where is located in a spot of land that the majorities disputed over it, at a time that historically belonged to indigenous minorities, whither it is inhabited mostly by non-Muslim societies, such as Christians of Assyrian origins, Yazidis and others, and they have faced extremism. Religiously, they were exposed to large-scale terrorist acts, which is the Nineveh Plain region.

The report also shows that diversity, difference as well as ethnic, religious and sectarian pluralism, which instead of being a factor of wealth and power in society or the state, has become a factor of weakness. It has been exploited for extremism and terrorism and to threaten coexistence, civil peace and diversity, and as we mentioned, all is due to the fragility of the state in addition to the overlapping of political decision-making forces in the state issues.

The report will try to identify the objective and subjective factors that have made these areas hot spots, and to know the challenges and obstacles that surround them in order to overcome this. The report also seeks to know the factors that help (facilitating) the spread of the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism in these areas along with the extent of their role in the growth and permanence of extremism.

The writing of the report will depend on the descriptive historical approach, whereby a return to the recent history of some phenomena of extremism and terrorism, determined

by their dates and times, and a start to understanding their causes and consequences. It will also adopt the investigative approach by standing on the views of the parties supporting or rejecting this phenomenon in its three levels (micro, meso, and macro). The report will also use the analytical method to explain the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism in Iraq. It will benefit from the available office studies regarding this phenomenon, as it is necessary to use sober studies issued by international research centers and reports of international, local and national organizations in addition to the academic studies that analyse this phenomenon. Furthermore, it is imperative to follow up on the events of extremism and terrorism through neutral and reputable media, as well as make use of the reports of Iraqi official institutions.

Hotspots of Radicalization

Overview of Selected Hotspots

There are many hot spots for extremism in Iraq, and all of them almost cover the entire area of Iraq. They are present in the north, south, center, east and west. Rather, even in areas where the state was betting that they were far from extremism, as they are areas with a Shiite majority, such as the province of Dhi Qar and Basra located in southern Iraq. The actual power is under Shiites control, who control important political decisions, and even that the first executive position (the Prime Minister) is exclusively for the Shiite community, as they represent the majority of the Iraqi people where the parliamentary elections results push one of their representatives to rule in Iraq. This is what happened since 2003 until now. There is a high probability that dramatic events will take place in Iraq that will spark from southern Iraq and specifically Dhi Qar province, due to the poor economic conditions and unemployment, because the people there consider those who bet on them in power are not worthy of that. We believe that these areas will be covered in future reports but under different headings.

In this report, we chose three regions, and we will mention the reasons for choosing them later. Kirkuk, which is one of the disputed areas between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq, the Nineveh Plain within the Nineveh Governorate in northern Iraq, which suffered from extremism a lot after the terrorist occupation of ISIS in 2014 and Anbar, which represents the largest area and also suffered from extremism and terrorism as well as the violence of the security forces. We will take an overview of these regions.

Kirkuk: Separatist Extremism Case Model (Kurdish Flag):

It is an Iraqi governorate located 250 km northeast of the capital Baghdad, 83 km south of Erbil governorate, 97 km west of Sulaymaniyah, and 116 km northeast of Tikrit. The capital of Kirkuk governorate bears the same name as Kirkuk, and it is old, as is located on the overlook of the ancient Assyrian city of Arapkhah (Arafah), which is estimated to be 5000 years old¹.

Its population, according to the statistical summary of the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2018, is (1597876) people, its area is (10359) square kilometers and includes 4 districts and 16 sub-districts. It is an urban governorate where the proportion of the urban population is 74% and the rural population is 26%². It is thus the fifth Iraqi province in terms of population. The districts of Kirkuk governorate are Makhmour, Daquq, Hawija and Kirkuk³. The population of Kirkuk governorate represents a mixture of Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, Assyrians and other nationalities⁴. Kirkuk governorate is distinguished by its huge oil reserves, and it is estimated that it produces

¹ Al-Mareefa: Kirkuk, [online] Available at: <https://m.marefa.org> [Accessed April 16, 2021].

² Ministry of Planning, 2018. The Central Bureau of Statistics (CSO), the Kirkuk Statistical Summary 2018. [online] Available at: <https://cosit.gov.iq>, [Accessed April 16, 2021].

³ Al-Mareefa: Kirkuk districts, [online] Available at: <https://m.marefa.org>, [Accessed April 16, 2021].

⁴ Al-Jazeera, 2021. Kirkuk is a disputed Iraqi province. [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.net> [Accessed April 16, 2021].

40% of the total Iraqi oil and 70% of the natural gas produced by Iraq in general⁵. Because of its geographical location and its economic wealth, this province has been since early in the modern history of Iraq a region of conflict and tension between Baghdad and Erbil which continued as well during and after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. More than that, it was placed under Article (140) of the Constitution of Iraq of 2005, within the so-called disputed areas between the central authority in Baghdad and the Kurdistan region of Iraq⁶.

Attempts to raise Kurdish flags in Kirkuk province have often caused crises among the components living in this province. One of the Kurds had previously burned the Iraqi flag, which was provocative to the audience standing watching this process, and a member of the security forces present at the scene prevented this Kurdish man and he was expelled, and this security man's behavior was well received by the attendees,⁷ and this is an expression of people's rejection (on the micro level) of this conduct and behavior by some Kurdish members, the incident can be viewed on the video link in the margin No. (1). What is even more provocative than this behavior when one of the members of the Kurdistan workers' Party (which is not from the Iraqi Kurdish parties) but from the Turkish Kurdish parties tore the Iraqi flag, and raised the flag of his party (non-Iraqi) inside the city of Kirkuk (the governorate center), which the Arab Council condemned this incident referring to the overlooking of the (Kurdish) security authorities in Kirkuk governorate the actions carried out by this foreign party on Iraqi lands and called on the federal government to put an end to these unofficial organizations and hold the parties supporting them accountable.⁸ This is an expression at the miso level.

There were also problems between the federal government and some Kurdish forces regarding raising the flag of the Kurdistan region on the Kirkuk governorate building and government buildings (it is the governorate that has not been decided whether it is one of the areas of the Kurdistan region or not, and these crises occurred in the years (2017-2019).⁹ There was a situation at the level of (miso), where Kirkuk Governor Najm al-Din Karim insisted on raising the Kurdish flag in Kirkuk alongside the Iraqi flag in 2017.¹⁰

Further, there was support from the Kurdistan Democratic Party, which is led by the President of the Kurdistan Region (Masoud Barzani) at that time for the decision of the Kirkuk Provincial Council to raise the flag of the Kurdistan Region,¹¹ which is an example of the (miso) level as well, and even this position came in response to the decision of the Iraqi parliament, which was taken on 4/1 /2017 by refusing to raise the Kurdish flag over government buildings in Kirkuk, and

⁵ Ibid. accessed on 4/ 16/ 2021.

⁶ Ibid. accessed on 4/ 16/ 2021.

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com> 9/28/2017 accessed date 6/17/2021

⁸ The Arab Council in Kirkuk condemns the tearing of the Iraqi flag by the PKK members <https://baghdadtoday.news> 6/22/2020 accessed date 6/17/2021

⁹ Kirkuk decides to raise the flag of Kurdistan in its official institutions www.kurdistan24.net 3/28/2017 accessed date 6/18/2021. Three-dimensional images of Kirkuk and the Kurdish flag have become an accusation arab.majalla.com 1/27/2019 accessed date 6/18/2021

¹⁰ Ibid <https://www.kurdistan24.net>

¹¹ Kirkuk refuses to lower the flag of Kurdistan and opposes the Iraqi parliament <https://www.al-ain.com> 4/2/2017 accessed date 6/18/2021

it is possible to count this position of the Iraqi parliament at the level of (macro).¹² The federal government, through its speaker (Saad Al-Hadithi), also denounced this behavior, saying that this is contrary to the text of the constitution and contrary to political norms and administrative dealing,¹³ and this government position is considered at the macro level as well. The government was headed by Haider al-Abadi and the problem of raising the flag of the Kurdistan region was one of the main reasons that led to military clashes between government forces and the forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government in October 2017, when the federal forces entered the Kirkuk governorate and raised the Iraqi federal flag on the governorate building. The entry of the federal forces caused an escape of large numbers of Kurds in the province of Kirkuk to the provinces of Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, which are within the Kurdistan region.¹⁴ The same problem of flag was repeated in 2019 and the (PUK) party was behind it this time,¹⁵ which is one of the two main parties in the Kurdistan region of Iraq and even the current President of the Republic (Barham Salih) and those who preceded him (Fouad Masum) and (Jalal Talabani) all belong to this party, and this party's position is expressed at the level of (miso). At the same time, the federal government, through its president (Adel Abdul-Mahdi), rejected that as an unconstitutional act,¹⁶ and this can be considered at the level of (macro).

At the (miso) level, the United Nations mission in Baghdad expressed its concern about this step and considered it "the prerogative of the central government and no flag should be raised in the province other than the Iraqi flag" and warned against any unilateral step that might endanger harmony and peaceful coexistence in this city of ethnic and religious diversity.¹⁷

These actions by the Kurds, especially the political forces, are separatist motives, based mainly on their previous sense of injustice for not granting them their national and cultural rights, and also through the feeling of the Kurds that the Arabs hate their nationalism (Kurdish).

But now, after they have achieved great gains and become influential in the internal and external Iraqi political decision, the feeling of alienation in a predominantly Arab homeland has become the motive for secession, which can lead to extremist violence, as it almost happened in 2017, as we mentioned.

As well as the polarization that made the Kurds think in terms of (they and we), the Arabs who are (they) and the Kurds (we).

¹² The Iraqi parliament lowers the flag of Kurdistan from the buildings of Kirkuk www.alhurra.com 4/1/2017 accessed date 6/18/2021

¹³ Raising the flag of Kurdistan on government buildings in Kirkuk www.alhurra.com 3/20/2017 accessed date 6/18/2021

¹⁴ Iraqi forces entered the Kirkuk governorate building without resistance www.dw.com 10/6/2017 accessed date 6/18/2021

¹⁵ Kurdistan flag raises crisis in Kirkuk www.alhurra.com 1/19/2019 accessed date 6/20/2021

¹⁶ Raising the flag of Kurdistan in Kirkuk creates a crisis in Iraq www.alarabiya.net 1/9/2019 accessed date 6/18/2021

¹⁷ Raising the flag of Iraqi Kurdistan on government buildings in Kirkuk www.alhurra.com 3/28/2017 accessed date 6/18/2021

Anbar: Extremist (political) violence case model

An Iraqi governorate located in the west of Iraq, and it has the largest area among the provinces of Iraq, as it constitutes the equivalent of a third of the area of Iraq, with an area of 138,500 square kilometers. It is bordered from the north by the governorates of Salah al-Din and Nineveh, Syria to the northwest, Jordan to the west, the capital, Baghdad, to the east, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the south besides the governorates of Karbala, Najaf and Babylon from the southeast¹⁸. The population of Anbar is about one million and six hundred thousand people, according to the estimates of the Iraqi Ministry of Planning for the year 2013¹⁹. Its residents are Sunni Arabs, and it consists of eight districts which are Al-Qaim, Rawa, Anah, Heet, Al-Rutba, Fallujah and Ramadi, which is the center of the governorate²⁰. The nature of Anbar's land is desert, but it is rich in mineral natural resources such as gold, phosphates, iron, uranium, sulfur and silver, as well as about (53) trillion cubic feet of natural gas²¹. There are estimates of the presence of huge quantities of oil in Anbar²². Anbar is also distinguished by its water resources, in addition to the Euphrates River, which runs for a distance of 450 km from the northwest to the southeast in the governorate, and it embraces four large water bodies: Lake Habbaniyah, Haditha Dam Lake, Lake Tharthar and Lake Razaza²³.

As mentioned, Anbar region is one of the hottest spots for extremism after 2003 for the reasons mentioned, which led to severe extremist violence, whether jihadist or political. We will mention here the violence of political extremism.

It happened that prominent officials in the Iraqi government and state were accused of terrorism cases, and they are representatives of Anbar Province, such as the Deputy Minister and Minister of Finance (Rafa Al-Issawi) and the representative in the Iraqi parliament (Ahmed Al-Alwani), and they were preceded in that by the Vice President of the Republic (Tariq Al-Hashemi), whose supporters are from Anbar province as well. The latter fled to Turkey after being accused of terrorism on 12/19/2011²⁴ and sought refuge in the Kurdistan Region, and then later to Turkey, and a death sentence was issued against him, and an Interpol arrest warrant was issued against him at the request of the Iraqi government, but in 2016 Interpol removed Al-Hashemi's name permanently from its red list wanted for arrest. The Interpol Monitoring Committee said that it made sure that the information provided by the Iraqi authorities to arrest Al-Hashemi showed

¹⁸ Al-Mareefa, 2021. Anbar Governorate, [online] Available at <https://www.m.marefa.org> , [Accessed April 17,2021].

¹⁹ Alsumaria , 2021. Ministry of planning: the population of Anbar is more than one million and 600 thousand people, not three million. [online] Available at: <https://www.alsumaria.tv>, [Accessed April 17,2021].

²⁰ Al-Sooq Al-Maftooh, 2021. The division of Anbar province in Iraq, [online} available at: <https://www.read.opensooq.com>, [Accessed April 17, 2021].

²¹ Al-Jazeera, 2021. Al-Anbar Governorate, [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazeera>, [Accessed April 17, 2021].

²² Al-Arab, 2021. Iraq announces that it has the largest oil reserves in the world, [online] Available at: <https://www.alarab.co.uk>, [Accessed April 17,2021].

²³ Investpromo, 2021. Anbar Governorate, available at: <https://www.invest.prome.gov.iq> accessed on 4/17/2021.

²⁴ <https://www.marefa.org> Tariq Al-Hashemi, accessed date 6/19/2021.

strong doubts about its authenticity, which prompted it to remove his name and that information permanently from its files.²⁵ But after these accusations, al-Hashemi announced his resignation from the position of President of the Republic on December 30, 2013, in denunciation of the policies of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and in response to the aggression that Anbar was subjected to and in solidarity with it, according to what was mentioned in the resignation note he submitted at the time to Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.²⁶ This announcement is within the (micro) level, and at this level also, writer and political analyst Widad Fakher says, that a judicial body was formed after 2003 and it is the one that selects and appoints the courts, and it is "an independent body, and it is known that the traditions of the Iraqi judiciary are long-standing, and it is not reasonable that all the judiciary is politicized."²⁷

While others, such as Abu Ali, see that the ruling is politicized, and we put a question mark on the issue, Muhammad Attia also believes that "the trial and sentencing of al-Hashemi is just a play." Another (Khaled) says, "We do not know who governs us, and I am with the sentence against al-Hashemi, but this is the case with all politicians in Iraq." Atheer expresses a different opinion when he says, "This sentence is a million percent fair."²⁸ The judgments issued by the Iraqi Criminal Court on 9/9/2012, 10/30/2012, and 11/1/2012 can be counted as condemning Tariq Al-Hashemi by hanging (3 times)²⁹ as the situation at the level of (mezo).

As for the (micro) level, it is what the President of the Republic at that time (Jalal Talabani) expressed that his deputy (Tariq Al-Hashemi), who is facing an arrest warrant, is "present in his hospitality" and that his appearance before the judiciary "anywhere is linked to the course of justice, investigation and trial." The statement continued by Al-Talabni by emphasizing "the importance of adhering to the constitutional framework that grants the judiciary alone the right to decide on such a case, and away from any interference, pressure or skepticism."³⁰

As for the case of Rafi' al-Issawi, Minister of Finance in the government of Nuri al-Maliki, its main motives were political. On 3/1/2013, he announced his resignation from the Iraqi government in front of a crowd of demonstrators in the city of Ramadi in Anbar Governorate, western Iraq, addressing the demonstrators in Anbar who are protesting against the government's policies, Al-Issawi said, "I have come today to announce my resignation from this government before you. Now seventy days have passed and this government has not met the people's demands." He added, "I am not honored to be part of a sectarian government and I have decided to stay with

²⁵ Tariq Al-Hashemi: I am ready to surrender myself to the Iraqi judiciary...and these are my conditions <https://www.aljazeera.net> 6/17/2020 accessed date 6/19/2021

²⁶ Tariq al-Hashemi accuses the Syrian government of "killing thousands of Iraqis" <http://www.rudaw.net> 4/3/2021 accessed date 6/19/2021

²⁷ Tariq Al-Hashemi: From Vice President to death row <https://www.dw.com> 9/14/2012 accessed date 6/19/2021.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Tariq Al-Hashemi, the fugitive vice president <https://www.islamist.movements.com> 3/24/2021, accessed date 19/6/2021

³⁰ Tariq Al-Hashemi in the hospitality of the President and his trial is linked to the course of justice <https://www.france24.com> 4/24/2011 accessed date 6/19/2021

the people."³¹ Thousands of protesters had organized sit-ins in several Iraqi cities, accusing Shiite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of marginalizing the Sunnis and demanding the release of prisoners in addition to the abolition of anti-terrorism laws,³² and this is an expression of the micro-level, and Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki accused him of issues of financial and administrative corruption,³³ which led to his escape and disappearance, and he was sentenced in absentia (seven years),³⁴ but he returned to Iraq in June 2020 and surrendered himself to the judicial authorities, which in turn dropped the charges against him, including the charge of terrorism for lack of evidence, and released him on bail. This position of the Iraqi judiciary is at the level (mezo).

As for the (macro) level, it can be expressed in the tough stance of former Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, and called on the Iraqi judiciary to stay away from politicization and not to submit to any political pressure on the al-Issawi case,³⁵ and hinted to this that his release falls within the political deals,³⁶ while the governments that followed the government of Nouri al-Maliki did not pursue her political allies, and this is an expression on the level of (macro)

This phenomenon is an expression of the marginalization that Sunni political leaders feel, and a feeling of injustice to their public, as well as an expression of alienation, as the Sunni public has become a stranger in the homeland they ruled for hundreds of years, and that there are those who kidnapped their homeland from them.

The Nineveh Plain

It is a geographical area belonging to the Nineveh Governorate in northern Iraq, and the plain is located to the north and east of the city of Mosul. The region includes three districts: Al-Hamdaniya (Bakhdeda), Tilkaif and Al-Sheikhan. The plain is considered the historical home of the Christians of Iraq, and there is an intense Christian presence in addition to the presence of Yazidis, Shabaks, Turkmen and Arabs³⁷. The Chaldean Assyrians who speak the Syriac-Aramaic language (the language of Christ) are concentrated in this region in particular, and there are the main traditional Iraqi churches, which are the Syriac Catholic Church, the Syriac Orthodox Church, the Chaldean Church of Babylon which is a Catholic church, the ancient Church of the

³¹ Finance Minister Rafie Al-Issawi announces his resignation from the Maliki government during the Ramadi demonstration <https://www.france.24.com> 3/4/2013 May accessed date 6/19/2021

³² Ibid, accessed dated 6/19/2021

³³ Seven years imprisonment for former Iraqi Finance Minister Rafie Al-Issawi <https://m.al.sharq.com> 6/4/2017 accessed date 6/19/2021

³⁴ The release of former Iraqi Finance Minister Rafie Al-Issawi due to insufficient evidence <https://www.arabic.rt.com> 6/30/2020 accessed date 6/19/2021

³⁵ Al-Maliki comments on the case of Rafie Al-Issawi: We reject political deals <https://www.rudaw.net> 6/17/2020 accessed date 6/19/2021

³⁶ Ibid accessed date 6/16/2021

³⁷ Al-Mareefa, 2021 d. The Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at: <https://www.m.marefa.org> , [Accessed April 16,2021].

East and the Assyrian Church of the East³⁸. The Nineveh Plain has turned into a gathering point for Iraqi Christians after they fled the hot spots in Baghdad, southern and central Iraq, because it is the only region in Iraq with a Christian majority³⁹. The Nineveh Plain is considered one of the disputed areas according to Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution of 2005. Recent years have also witnessed calls from some politicians to establish autonomy or a governorate for minorities in this region, especially after the increase in attacks on them in other Iraqi cities⁴⁰. The Nineveh Plain is a cultivation area, previously characterized by its agricultural industries. The area of the plain is estimated at about (50,000) square kilometers⁴¹.

Method and reasons for choosing hot spots

As we mentioned earlier, there are many hot spots in Iraq, and most of them are likely to explode at any time, but we chose these hot spots due to the difference in their objective and subjective factors, meaning that their factors and causes are not the same, for each of them has its own factors and circumstances. For example, the factors that led to extremism in Kirkuk are different from the ones related to Anbar or the Nineveh Plain, and so is the case with the others. Kirkuk is one of the disputed areas between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq, and its residents are not from one component or group, which held many nationalities and sectarian sects where the motive of extremism there is separatist. . Whereas Anbar is composed of one component and group, the Sunni Arabs, and there are no other nationalities and sects there and the motive of extremism is political and sectarian. As for the Nineveh Plain, it differs from the previous two (Kirkuk and Al-Anbar), it has an Assyrian historical extent, and it embraces two ancient Assyrian capitals (the city of Nimrud "Kaleh" and Khorsabad). These are historical areas for Iraqi Christians, where a majority of Christians live alongside the Yazidis, Shabaks, Turkmen and Arabs, and these, apart from the Arabs, represent minorities in Iraq. This region is facing a complex conflict, one of which is between the local government in Mosul and the Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan. It was administered by Mosul while security control was over it by the Kurdistan region of Iraq from 2003 until its occupation by ISIS on August 7, 2014. It is also still one of the disputed areas between Baghdad and Erbil. Terrorism has been practiced against Christians and Yazidis in this region by extremist terrorist organizations (ISIS) because they are not Muslims. Turkmen and Shiite Shabak also faced atonement and violence from ISIS during its occupation of the region in August 2014.

³⁸ Warda, W., 2013. International Protection of Minorities, The State of International Protection of Iraqi Christians as a Model, Master Thesis, University of Baghdad, College of Political Sciences, Baghdad, 2013,p. 203

³⁹ Al-Mareefa, 2021 d. The Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at: <https://www.m.marefa.org> , [Accessed April 16,2021].

⁴⁰ Al-Mareefa, 2021 d. The Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at: <https://www.m.marefa.org> , [Accessed April 16,2021].

⁴¹ Sky News, 2021. The Nineveh Plain ... the last Christian city in Iraq is empty of its residents. [online] Available at: <https://www.skynewsarabic> [Accessed April 16,2021].

Kirkuk

After seeing the hot spots in Iraq, we decided to choose Kirkuk, because it has certain privacy, as it is one of the disputed areas between the federal government and the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government, which has the ambition to secede from Iraq, and tries to include it to the Kurdistan Region when the opportunity arises in various ways before declaring secession. The oil in this area increases the ambitions to include it, especially if we know that Kirkuk is rich in oil, its quality and the ease of its production. The production capacity of Kirkuk oil reaches one million barrels per day, and its oil reserves are thirteen billion barrels, that is, 12% of Iraq's oil reserves and the Kirkuk oil field is the oldest Iraqi field, and its production capacity ranks the second largest in the world after the Ghawar field In Saudi Arabia and its volume ranks the fifth in the world⁴².

Therefore, we see that the federal government and the regional government did not reach an agreement on resolving the issue of Kirkuk to either of them, despite the passage of (16) years since the issuing of the Iraqi constitution, which established Article (140) to resolve the dispute between the two governments about the disputed areas including Kirkuk. Moreover, there is a dispute over oil revenues, where the Iraqi government accuses the Kurdistan Regional Government of not handing over the financial returns of the oil exported from Kirkuk, which is supposed to be deposited in the treasury of the federal government, and this is also one of the reasons for the tense relationship, which has been described as bad, between Baghdad and Erbil⁴³. The demographics of Kirkuk governorate make it one of the hot spots for explosions and separatist extremism. It is inhabited by Arabs, Turkmen and Kurds in close proportions, in addition to the Christian Assyrians and a number of other minorities⁴⁴.

What is fueling the separatist violence is the mutual accusations between Arabs and Turkmen on the one hand, and the Kurds on the other hand, about the demographic change attempts of each one in Kirkuk. Arabs and Turkmen accuse the Kurds of introducing Kurds from outside Kirkuk in order for the demographic change to be in their favor, and the Kurds previously accused the previous regime of its attempts to bring Arabs into Kirkuk so that it would have an Arab majority⁴⁵. Also the determination of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government to hold the referendum in the Kurdistan region on September 25, 2017 is among the indications of separatist violence and extremism, and despite the Kurdish people voting on secession, it did not succeed, and it had negative repercussions that almost reached armed confrontations between federal government forces and Kurdish forces in Kirkuk. And we will deal with that in the next

⁴²BBC, 2021. Kirkuk oil and its eternal fire, [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.com>, [Accessed April 17,2021].

⁴³ Anadolu Agency, 2021. Barzani: We will jointly export Kirkuk oil with Baghdad, [online] Available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr> [Accessed April 17,2021].

⁴⁴ Aljazeera, 2021. Kirkuk Governorate, [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazzrra.net>, [Accessed April 17,2021].

⁴⁵ Iraqi Women Sieague, 2021. Population census in Kirkuk ... Conflicting positions heralds a new crisis among the national components, [online] Available at: <https://www.iraqiwomensieague.com>, [Accessed April 17,2021].

paragraph.⁴⁶ The North Oil Company in Iraq, and during the writing this report, announced that two wells of oil in the field (Bay Hassan) in Kirkuk had been subjected to a terrorist act by detonating two explosive devices for these wells on Saturday, 4/17/2021⁴⁷. This confirms our assessment that this region is likely to be a hot spot for extremism and terrorism.

Anbar

Events after 2003 have proven that Anbar is one of the most dangerous terrorist outposts, and it is still the candidate to be the most dangerous as well, for geographical, ideological and political reasons. Geography is one of the important factors that drive the emergence of extremism or work to create conditions supporting its existence due to its employment by extremist groups without the state being able to confront it⁴⁸. Therefore, the geography of Anbar Province was one of the main reasons or factors for it to be a dangerous outpost for extremism and terrorism. As we mentioned earlier, the area of Anbar is greater than a third of the total area of Iraq, and it has borders with three countries and six Iraqi Sunni and Shiite provinces, among these provinces is the capital, Baghdad. Also, as we mentioned, the number of inhabitants of this area, is not commensurate with its large area. There is irregular and unbalanced spread of the population of this western region of Iraq compared to its area. This was considered one of the factors that negatively affected Iraqi national security in its social, political, economic, military and security extents⁴⁹. Also, the desert nature of this region and the existence of Wadi Houran(Houran valley) there, which has rough terrain and extends to the borders with Syria and Jordan, helped make this region a safe haven for terrorist groups because it is easy to hide there⁵⁰.

Therefore, ISIS was able to fully control the Wadi Houran region for the period from 2014 to 2017, and the Iraqi security forces were unable to confront them due to the ruggedness of the area and its geography⁵¹. There has been strategic employment of soft areas due to the geographical factor in Anbar by terrorist groups through:⁵²

⁴⁶ BBC, 2017. Referendum for the Kurdistan region: More than 92% supported secession from Iraq, [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.com>, [Accessed April 17,2021].

⁴⁷ RT, 2021. Exploding two oil wells with two explosive devices in northern Iraq, published on 4/17/2021, [online] available at: <https://arabic.rt.com> , [Accessed April 17,2021].

⁴⁸ Khalil,S. and Hamid, A., 2019. Facing Extremism, Entrances - Strategies - Operations Environment, Al-Nahrain Center for Strategic Studies, 1st Edition, Baghdad, 2019, p.99.

⁴⁹ Khalil,S. and Hamid, A., 2019. Facing Extremism, Entrances - Strategies - Operations Environment, Al-Nahrain Center for Strategic Studies, 1st Edition, Baghdad, 2019, p.99.

⁵⁰ Alaraby, 2017.Wadi Houran ... the focus of "ISIS" in the Iraqi Anbar desert, published on 07/15/2017, [online] Available at: <https://alaraby.co.uk> , [Accessed April 20,2021].

⁵¹ Alalam TV, 2020.What is the American mystery in the Wadi Houran secret base, published on 1/25/2020, [online] Available at: <https://www.alalamtv.net.news>, [Accessed April 20,2021]. See also: Alhurra Iraq TV, 2017. Iraqi forces prepare for the battle of Wadi Horan, published on 11/27/2017, [online] Available at: <https://alhurrairaq.com>, [Accessed April 20,2021].

⁵² Khalil,S. and Hamid, A., 2019. Facing Extremism, Entrances - Strategies - Operations Environment, Al-Nahrain Center for Strategic Studies, 1st Edition, Baghdad, 2019, pp.100-101.

A - The area of education and intellectual recruitment

This region is considered the outpost of extremist activities intellectually, as extremist groups work to employ isolated areas of the population to rehabilitate their personnel without being any danger to them there, and these areas are often associated with a lack of population presence and weak movement in them, which makes them a safe haven for extremist groups. The existence of this region in isolation from state control opens the way for terrorist groups to spread, which also functions to weaken it strategically by controlling it, thus securing their presence in it and in a way that works to be mobile schools that spread extremist ideology.

B- Training area

It is the logistical support center for extremist groups, as the intellectually prepared personnel are transferred to it so they form the military groups later, and then it is more like a phase of transition between the ideological and operational curve. The border areas are often the vital centers of this region, as they are difficult to be monitored by the state and its intelligence presence is weak, especially if the state does not use modern technologies to monitor them.

C - The area of implementation

This area was the operations field targeted by armed terrorist groups. Areas of successful strategic implementation increase extremists' confidence in their ideas.

Moreover, Anbar governorate has borders with three Arab countries, namely Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia, which also helped make this province a passage and an entrance for extremist elements, especially Saudi Arabia, which is the home of extremist groups, as well as Syria, which after the events of 2011, became a hot spot for extremism, terrorism and societal strife. It is important to recall here that there are similarities between the residents of Anbar Governorate, especially in the border places and their counterparts on the Syrian side. One of the other reasons that made this region (Anbar) a hot spot is the rejection of the vast majority of its inhabitants to the US occupation in 2003, as they saw it as contradictory and inconsistent with their religious beliefs based on the occupation of the lands of a Muslim country by non-Muslim forces. Consequently, the resistance against the American forces was violent in these areas, and at a minimum, most of these areas and their cities were safe havens for extremist groups, especially during the first years of the US invasion of Iraq. Likewise, the political reasons represented by the feeling of the residents of this region that the Sunnis had lost power in Iraq for the first time in the history of Iraq, and indeed in the history of the Islamic state, as well as their feeling of marginalization by the authority. Therefore, it was one of the hot spots in the conflict with the federal government, and the demonstrations that erupted in 2013 are the only evidence of that where tens of victims were killed in the demonstration squares by the security forces⁵³.

⁵³ Reuters, 2012. Large Sunni demonstrations against the government in Iraq, published 12/28/2012, [online] Available at: <https://reuters.com>, [Accessed April 20, 2021].

The Nineveh Plain: the desecration of churches and cemeteries, the breaking of crosses and the burning of manuscripts and religious books

There are several reasons for choosing the Nineveh Plain region as one of the hot spots and candidates for extremism and terrorism, as its population is a mixture of diverse minorities, as we mentioned previously. It is also one of the disputed areas that have not yet been decided between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government. In addition, the Nineveh Plain would be a candidate to occupy a strategic position if Iraq entered into the Chinese Belt and Road Project. So, this region is likely to be a hot spot for more than one reason.

Regarding minorities, the Christian Assyrians have formed the majority in this region throughout history, and they are the remainder of the Assyrian race from the Assyrian and Babylonian civilizations in Iraq. The Assyrians and the rest of the Christian components of Chaldeans and Syriacs are estimated at about one and a half million people before the US invasion of Iraq. The latest estimates indicate that their current numbers do not exceed (250) thousand people, due to security conditions and immigration⁵⁴.

As for the Shabaks, they are a cultural and social formation that includes a mixture of Kurdish and Persian races, and they have their own Kurdish dialect that is almost a language. Their number according to the 1977 census indicated about (60) thousand citizens, while modern estimates indicate that they are currently (200) thousand Person⁵⁵. After ISIS was expelled from the Nineveh Plains in 2017, which had previously occupied in 2014, the Shabak component returned as a military and security forces supported by the central authority, especially after the (Kurdish) Peshmerga forces withdrew from those areas. All the other components feel injustice and marginalization in light of the security and military domination of the Shabak people, and specifically Shiites of them, who have a military brigade carrying the number (30) of the (hashed Al-Shaabe). The current sensitivity is between the Christians and the Shabak. The Christians feel that the Shabak, due to their military and economic strength, are moving intensively from the villages to the center of the sub-districts and districts, specifically Hamdania and Bartella, which is predominantly Christian. This displacement aims to erase the Christian identity. On the other hand, the Shabak complain about the absence of health and educational services and road networks in their villages in addition to the lack of financial resources allocated to their areas which push them to migrate towards centers that enjoy services, and they do not mean any form of demographic change⁵⁶.

This conflict between the Christians and the Shabak may one day lead to extremism between components that are originally minorities in the country. Indeed, the town of Bartella, located in

⁵⁴ Mahmoud, R., 2019. An Administrative and Political Conflict over the Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at:

<https://www.independentarabia.com/node>, Published on 5/31/2019, [Accessed April 21, 2021]

⁵⁵ Mahmoud, R., 2019. An Administrative and Political Conflict over the Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at:

<https://www.independentarabia.com/node>, Published on 5/31/2019, [Accessed April 21, 2021]

⁵⁶ Mahmoud, R., 2019. An Administrative and Political Conflict over the Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at:

<https://www.independentarabia.com/node>, Published on 5/31/2019, [Accessed April 21, 2021].

this plain and the Christians represent the majority of the population, witnessed riots on Christmas 25 December 2009, as a result of passing a mourning procession that the Shiite Shabak Muslims used to practice during the days of Ashura which is usually done annually on the main street of Bartella. They change its path to the streets and alleys that include the churches, where Christians used to perform Christmas prayers. Therefore, guards in charge of protecting the churches prevented them from passing along that path, and in an angry reaction, a number of processions tore apart Christmas decorations that the Christians had placed near churches. So, the matter would develop into riots and the tearing up of banners and pictures of religious symbols and shootout in front of the churches which led to injuries between the two parties and material damage. Since that incident, a visible and hidden conflict and tension have surfaced between the Christians and the Shabak in the Nineveh Plain⁵⁷.

The second reason for choosing the Nineveh Plain as one of the hot spots of extremism is the conflict between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government, as it is one of the disputed areas, and every party tries to include this region in its influence. The Christians and Yazidis are uncomfortable with the Kurdistan Regional Government's behavior regarding the seizure of their lands and the harassment they are subjected to, as well as the Yazidis' resentment of their being considered Kurds for political reasons⁵⁸.

Likewise, the Christians and Yazidis have lost confidence in the Kurdistan Regional Government, after the withdrawal of the Peshmerga forces from the Nineveh Plain after the terrorist organization ISIS entered it and left them vulnerable to the brutality of this organization that committed genocidal crimes against Christians and Yazidis. But what eased the problems of the Christians and Yazidis with the Kurdistan Regional Government, as we mentioned, were the problems they faced with militia forces.

There is another reason that makes this region a hot spot, which is likely to be of strategic importance in the Chinese project (Belt and Road), as China's trade passes to Syria and Turkey and then to Europe through this plain, so the Iraqi forces began to develop plans and projects for the sake of control over this region⁵⁹.

The Kurds seek to add this region to the Kurdistan region, in order to control this road and its trade, because it is a means of compression on the federal government to not become free in controlling over it, in addition to its financial returns. On the other hand, forces, who some accuse of being affiliated to Iran, are surveying and exploring what is known as the "Sabaya Road" linked to the historical narration of the(Taf) incident in Karbala (the killing of Imam Hussein) and the

⁵⁷HHRO (Hammurabi Human Rights Organization), 2009. Annual Report on the Status of Christians' Rights in Iraq for the year 2009, [online] Available at <https://www.hhro.org> , [Accessed on May 12, 2021].

⁵⁸ Qalian, Y., 2017. The Nineveh Plain and the Future of Minorities in Iraq, FIKRA FORUM, [online] Available at: www.washingtoninstitute.org, [Accessed April 21, 2021].

⁵⁹ Salem, Z., 2021. Sabaya Road ... a project that raises fears of demographic change in the new Arab West Mosul, Published on January 5,2021, [online] Available at: <https://www.alaraby.com.uk>, [Accessed April 21,2021].

events that followed between Iraq and the Levant⁶⁰. This is what the Sunni Arabs reject, as well as Christians and Yazidis because they see it as a demographic change in their regions and monasteries, which are very old and pre-Islamic⁶¹.

As previously mentioned, the Nineveh Plain area, which includes three important districts of the nine districts of Mosul, which are Al-Hamdaniyah District (Qarah Qosh), Tal Kaif District, and Al-Sheikhan District. The Nineveh Plain area is one of the historical areas of the Iraqi Christians, including the Assyrians, the Syriacs, the Chaldeans and the Yazidis. Other Iraqi minorities such as the Shabak, the Turkmen, the Kaka'i and the Arabs also lived in it. But the majority of the population of this region are non-Muslims. Since the seventies of the last century, this region has been a target of the previous regime to implement extremist policies, through the application of policies to change the identity of the population in it, which were later called Arabization policies by changing the composition of the population (demographic change), changing their religious and ethnic privacy, erasing their local languages, and working to assimilate and melt them into Arab nationalism. After 2003, this area became a target for terrorist extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. During the years 2003-2013, this terrorist organization launched terrorist attacks against Christians in the towns of Qaraqosh, Bartella, Telekif and Telesqof with car bombs and explosive devices, killing dozens of civilians. Terrorist groups also targeted Shiite Shabak in this area. Shiite towns were also subjected to car bomb attacks, the most important of which were explosions in Khazna town with booby-trapped tanks, which caused widespread destruction in the town, killing and wounding dozens of people.

But the dangerous violations that were bloodier and more horrific are the ones that the region was subjected to, which were committed by extremist and terrorist groups carried out by (ISIS), when they invaded the region on August 7, 2014, and outlawed its people, as they killed, raped, kidnapped and enslaved hundreds of people, and completely displaced the entire population. It was not satisfied with that, as it desecrated and burned churches and broke crosses, monuments and religious symbols, as well as burning rare ancient religious and cultural books and manuscripts, because most churches housed libraries containing hundreds of old books and manuscripts dating back to past centuries, which are considered ancient humanist and religious Christian heritage. ISIS gangs have also desecrated cemeteries and exhumed graves, especially the shrines of priests and Christian clergy and others, and did the same with the shrines and religious monuments of the Yazidis, the Kakai and the Shiite Shabak.

On the Meso level, Iraqi political parties and national civil society organizations have condemned what ISIS has done against non-Muslim groups, especially the Assyrian Christians, Chaldean Syriacs and Armenians, for the violations and the systematic ethnic and religious cleansing practices. On the other hand, Muslim youths in the Nineveh Plain expressed their dissatisfaction with the barbaric acts done by ISIS towards the Christian citizens by volunteering to remove the

⁶⁰ Salem, Z., 2021. Sabaya Road ... a project that raises fears of demographic change in the new Arab West Mosul, Published on January 5,2021, [online] Available at: <https://www.alaraby.com.uk>, [Accessed April 21,2021].

⁶¹ Salem, Z., 2021. Sabaya Road ... a project that raises fears of demographic change in the new Arab West Mosul, Published on January 5,2021, [online] Available at: <https://www.alaraby.com.uk>, [Accessed April 21,2021].

rubble and clean the Church of the Virgin Mary in the Tal Kaif District (Nineveh Plain), (this is at the micro-level). As for the macro level, the Iraqi Council of Ministers considered what happened to Christians, Yazidis and other minorities in Nineveh as a process of genocide. Also at the macro level, the Iraqi parliament had issued a decision on January 26, 2017, to consider the Nineveh Plain (a disaster area), due to the destruction of infrastructure and public and private property in the region, during the control of (ISIS) over the region.

Micro-Meso-Macro Levels of Radicalization

There are many factors that lead to extremism, especially in light of the existence of the fragile state, the more weak and fragile the state increases, the more factors leading to extremism and terrorism, and this is what unfortunately applied to Iraq, as it ranked (13) in 2014 in the list of the most fragile countries in the world⁶², and in a study published under the title: Classifying Iraq (the worst) and the most dangerous country in the world on August 17, 2018. Where the Anki website, which is a comprehensive source for continental and global classifications, indicated that Iraq is the most dangerous country, and the capital Baghdad was also considered the third worst city to live in. As mentioned by this (Canadian) website, which relies on data from United Nations agencies and other documented organizations in its rankings, Iraq ranks first in the Global Terrorism Index and also ranks fifth in the worst countries for the Global Peace Index. The rankings also indicated that Iraq is ranked (6) in the world in the worst political and livelihood unstable countries, although it is in the first square of the richest countries in the world. It is burdened with debt and its people suffer from unemployment. The rankings also showed that Iraq has a road network that is considered the fifth-worst and most dangerous road network in the world, despite the huge budgets that the country enjoys⁶³. These factors, along with the spread of the phenomenon of financial and administrative corruption, which are common factors throughout Iraq, are sufficient to make all of its regions hot spots of extremism and terrorism. However, we will discuss the factors in detail for the previously selected hot spots of extremism.

Kirkuk

Kirkuk is a microcosm of the most important unresolved issues in Iraq in post-Saddam and they are regional conflicts, the division of oil, gas resources and the regional power over Baghdad. It will be difficult to determine the final status of the city, that is, whether it should be included within the Kurdistan region or not until political, legal and constitutional disputes over these issues are resolved. Meanwhile, residents (especially minorities of Arabs and Turkmen) are struggling with insufficient security, unresolved property disputes, unequal services and other troubling matters that exacerbate ethnic tensions. Furthermore, the leaders in both Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, and Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan region have sometimes shown signs that they are

⁶² Alou, S.,2018. The Fragile State, Iraq Model,[online] Available at: <https://m.ahewar.org>, [Accessed April 21,2021].

⁶³ Mawazin, 2019, Iraq was ranked as the worst and most dangerous country in the world, [online] Available at: <https://www.mawazin.net> [Accessed April 21,2021].

considering the advantages of taking the city by force before the other side does. So, disputes over this city, if left unresolved, could lead to violence⁶⁴.

Kirkuk is likely to be a compound focus of extremism, and in light of what we have mentioned, it is a hot spot of separatist extremism, as the Kurds seek to add it to their region and then seek to separate from Iraq. It is also a candidate hot spot for religious extremism, and this is what happened after ISIS took control of Hawija district for a period of three years 2014-2016, which is inhabited by Sunni Arabs.

With regard to separatist violence, according to people's point of view (at the micro level), and from time to time ethnic problems occur. In May 2011, an armed group informed hotels in Kirkuk to not receive arrivals from central and southern Iraq, but the Kurdish security services denied this act and any of their relation to it. In contrary, a member of Kirkuk governorate from the Arab component (Muhammad Nassif al-Jubouri) accused people carrying weapons with permission from the parties in Kirkuk and are behind the bombings and acts of violence that took place there.⁶⁵ Meaning that Arabs, whether residents of the governorate or those coming to it from other governorates have nothing to do with violence, and he tried to accuse the Kurdish parties and their security personnel in trying to empty the city of the Arabs. On the other hand, the director of the security of the Kurdistan Democratic Party in Kirkuk (Hallo Najat) denied any such behavior, and pointed out the need to put an end to the problem of "attacks by Arab citizens of central and southern Iraq, who sought refuge in Kirkuk to escape from their areas."⁶⁶

As for the (miso level) and on the tense situation in Kirkuk according to the conflicting opinions and positions of the components of this province, and after targeting a group of Turkmen, the Turkmen Front sees through its president (Arshad al-Salihi) that the Turkmen refuse to add Kirkuk to the Kurdistan region. He warned of the Kurdistan Regional Government's attempts to empty Kirkuk of the Turkmen component, after he indicated, "It is inconceivable that within seven days ten Turkmen doctors and well-to-do are targeted with assassinations, kidnappings and threats." He added, "These criminal acts are targeting the Turkmen component."⁶⁷

Regarding the same issue, the Kurdish parties represented by (the Kurdistan Alliance) deny this, through their deputy in the Iraqi parliament, Khaled Shawani, who indicated that the security services revealed dangerous and important information about the parties behind the terrorist operations in the governorate, indicating that these parties aim through the kidnapping and targeting of Kirkuk components to finance their terrorist operations because they lost funding, and they bargained for money with the kidnapped families⁶⁸.

⁶⁴ Hanaue, L. and Miller, L., 2012. Rand, Settlement in Kirkuk. Lessons Learned from Settlements of Ethnic and Regional Conflicts, [online] Available at: <http://www.rand.org>, [Accessed April 22, 2021]

⁶⁵ Aljazeera, 2014, Attempts to empty Kirkuk from the Arabs, [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.net>, [Accessed April 22, 2021].

⁶⁷ Alwatan Voice, 2011, Turkmen refuse to add Kirkuk to Kurdistan and attempts to empty it from them, [online] Available at: <https://www.alwatanvoice.com>, [Accessed April 24, 2021].

⁶⁸ Alwatan Voice, 2011, Turkmen refuse to add Kirkuk to Kurdistan and attempts to empty it from them, [online] Available at: <https://www.alwatanvoice.com>, [Accessed April 24, 2021].

Political elites who wish to maintain their positions have an incentive to take increasingly militant nationalist positions to encircle the more extreme rivals and marginalize moderates as unqualified to defend their sectarian interests. This ethnic bidding process points to ethnic developments and obstructs settlement solutions, as the two influential Kurdish parties in Kirkuk (the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the National Democratic Union) are doing⁶⁹.

As for the (macro) level, Opinions are also conflicting and contradictory, regarding Kirkuk, and these opinions keep matters tense and may lead to violent extremism. For example, the former president of Iraq, Jalal Talabani, believes that Kirkuk is the "Arab holy city," meaning that the Kurds consider Kirkuk to be Kurdish, just as the Arabs see that Jerusalem is Arab, and there is no dispute about that. The former president of the Kurdistan region and the strong leader of the Kurds also believe that Kirkuk is a symbol of the suffering of the Kurdish people⁷⁰.

These two views of officials who held the highest positions in the Iraqi state, one of them as president of the republic for two terms and the other as president of the Kurdistan region for a long time, prejudice the Kurdishness of Kirkuk, which is rejected by the federal government and other governments in Kirkuk (Arabs, Turkmen, Assyrians, Christians and others).

From the other side and at the (macro level), we also cite here the comment of the Official Spokesman for the Cabinet (Saad Al-Hadithi), during the term of prime minister (Haider al-Abadi), when he commented on Kirkuk Provincial Council decision to raise the flag of the Kurdistan region of Iraq next to the flag of Iraq over government buildings in the governorate, which was boycotted by Arabs and Turkmen, where he said, "The constitutional texts and the provincials law do not give authority to any local government to choose the flag that it raises over government buildings and facilities." He added, "This matter is contrary to the text of the constitution and contradicts political norms and administrative dealings."⁷¹

In another opinion, and on the (macro level) as well, and on a topic related to the referendum of the Kurdistan region, which was previously referred to in this report, and according to what was stated by a federal government spokesman (Saad Al-Hadithi), that the federal government rejected this referendum altogether.⁷²

⁶⁹ Hanaue, L. and Miller,L. , 2012. Rand Corporation. Settlement in Kirkuk. Lessons Learned from Settlements of Ethnic and Regional Conflicts, [online] Available at: <http://www.rand.org>, [Accessed April 22, 2021].

⁷⁰ Hanaue, L. and Miller,L. , 2012. Rand Corporation. Settlement in Kirkuk. Lessons Learned from Settlements of Ethnic and Regional Conflicts, [online] Available at: <http://www.rand.org>, [Accessed April 22, 2021].

⁷¹ Alhurra, 2017. Raise the flag of Iraqi Kurdistan on government buildings in Kirkuk, [online] Available at: <https://www.alhurra.com>, [Accessed April 24, 2021].

⁷² Arabic Sputnik News, 2017. Conditions of the Iraqi government to converse with the Kurdistan region, [online] Available at: <https://arabic.sputniknews.com>, [Accessed April 27, 2021].

The Federal Court rejected the results of this referendum and ruled that it is unconstitutional⁷³. The Iraqi parliament also rejected this referendum, while the Kurdistan Regional Parliament supported and approved it⁷⁴.

Likewise, Kirkuk is a candidate hot spot for political and religious extremist violence, especially in Hawija district within the Kirkuk governorate, which is inhabited by Sunni Arabs and is located southwest of Kirkuk. The Hawija district, as we mentioned, was previously occupied by the terrorist organization ISIS in 2014 and liberated in 2016. One of the main reasons for this occupation was the weakness of this region and its fragility as a result of government policies that suppressed demonstrations by force of arms in 2013 during the rule of Prime Minister (Nuri al-Maliki)⁷⁵. Because of these government policies, the region has become weak to be controlled by ISIS, and people also resent these government policies, so we think that this judiciary has become safe haven for ISIS. At the micro level, we see that the young Muhammad Khalil fled from Hawija in Kirkuk, which was one of the main strongholds of ISIS in Iraq before the Iraqi forces liberated it in October 2016, where he says, "The preacher of the mosque confirmed that the heads of the apostates are an application of Islamic law."⁷⁶ The statistics of the Sunni Endowment Department in Kirkuk indicated that (11) employees of the endowment staff in Hawija (all of them mosque preachers) were dismissed after the security committee proved that they carry extremist ideas.⁷⁷

The other example is what Ahmad al-Yasiri (31 years old) expresses remorse for those days when he was an extremist, and at the same time blames his father for being drawn into extremist religious thought, says, he is currently working as an engineer in the city of Kirkuk: "Extremism of all kinds destroys souls." And he recounts: "When I was six years old, I started reading religious books by radical clerics, and over time, I became militant. I thought that Islam was the only true religion." After reading about some of the electronic websites, he turned from an extremist person to a non-religious person while his father was an extremist.⁷⁸

As for (the miso level) and with regard to the tense situation in Hawija, the Al-Ubaid tribe, the largest there, which expressed through its sheikh (Abd al-Rahman Munshad al-Assi) that the Iraqi government headed by (Nuri al-Maliki) is responsible for what happened from the storming

⁷³SWI, 2017. The Iraqi Federal Court rules that the Kurdistan referendum is "unconstitutional" [online] Available at: <https://www.swissinfo.ch> , [Accessed April 27,2021].

⁷⁴ DW, 2017. The Iraqi Parliament votes to stop financial transactions with Kurdistan, [online] Available at: <https://www.dw.com>, [Accessed April27, 2021]. And also look: DW, 2017. The Parliament of Iraqi Kurdistan approves the holding of the independence referendum, [ONLINE] Available at: [https:// http://www.dw.com](https://http://www.dw.com), [Accessed April27, 2021].

⁷⁵ Anadolu Agency, 2013. Hawija of Iraq "a massacre" written by Arab newspapers and carried by Al-Maliki, [online] Available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr>, [Accessed April 27, 2021].

⁷⁶ Radio Sawa, 2017. In Kirkuk ... A test to detect extremism among mosque imams, [online] Available at: <https://www.radiosawa.com> [Accessed April 22, 2021].

⁷⁷ Radio Sawa, 2017. In Kirkuk ... A test to detect extremism among mosque imams, [online] Available at: <https://www.radiosawa.com> [Accessed April 22, 2021].

⁷⁸Irfaa Sawtak, 2017. Iraqi: I changed from an extremist to a non-religious person [online] Available at: <https://www.irfaasawatak.com>, [Accessed April 22, 2021].

of the sit-in square that resulted in killing and wounding tens of protesters against (al-Maliki), on April 23, 2013. This sheikh said, "The prime minister is the only one who bears a historical responsibility that will chase him forever."⁷⁹

On this level too(the miso), the UNICEF mission in Iraq announced that it received reliable information about eight children who were killed during the Hawija events.⁸⁰ The Secretary-General of the United Nations also sent his representative to Iraq (Martin Kobler) and to the Kirkuk governorate to discuss the Hawija events, and he condemned the army's intervention in the region.⁸¹

As for the (macro level), a parliamentary commission of investigation in Iraq accused this intrusion and considered it a crime by all standards. The committee's report added that the Iraqi parliament must condemn the Hawija crime and that the victims' families must file cases to the judiciary, and it called for a detailed investigation with the security leaders in the country, including the acting defense minister (Saadoun al-Dulaimi) and the Dijla Operations Command and others.⁸² The Supreme Judicial Council in Iraq also formed a committee to investigate the Hawija events.⁸³

Anbar

Anbar is a permanent candidate for hot spots of extremism and terrorism, due to factors and causes, some of which have already been mentioned. Violence and extremism began there, since the US forces entered Iraq in 2003, under several names including resistance to the American occupation. This resistance sheltered in the shade of terrorist organizations, such as the Wahhabi Al-Qaeda organization and its various branches up to the terrorist organization ISIS, whose sleeper cells are still in several areas of Iraq, including Anbar, with its vast and divergent regions.

Here, it must be pointed out that the Anbari community was refusing the entry of the American forces into Iraq considering them occupying powers for their homeland. This community also rejected the authority that is considered the work of the occupier and that this power is the agent of the foreign occupier, so the people of Anbar resisted the occupier and fought the government forces and terrorist organizations exploited that, as was mentioned. However, their position changed after they discover the ugliness of the crimes committed by the terrorist organizations,

⁷⁹ Anadolu Agency, 2013. The sheikh of the Kirkuk clan. The Hawija events will pursue al-Maliki forever, [online] Available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr> , [Accessed April 27, 2021].

⁸⁰ Alhurra, 2013. The Supreme Judicial forms Committee to investigate the events of Hawija, [online] Available at: <https://www.alhurra.com> , [Accessed May 13, 2021].

⁸¹ Albayan, 2013, 54 dead in the Hawija massacre in Kirkuk, [online] Available at: <https://www.albayan.ae>, [Accessed April 28, 2021].

⁸² Aljazeera, 2013. An investigation committee: the Hawija events are a crime by all standards. [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.net> [Accessed April 28,2021].

⁸³ Aljazeera, 2013. An investigation committee: the Hawija events are a crime by all standards. [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.net> [Accessed April 28,2021].

the harm caused to them and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people and families from their areas. The time shift since the US occupation so far can be described as follows:

At the beginning of the occupation, there was an almost general rejection and resistance to this occupation from (2003-2007), then the position gradually changed, but it was divided between supporters and opponents of acts of violence and extremism in all its forms (2007-2017) until the position changed to a semi-total rejectionist after achieving victory over ISIS in 2017. And this change that took place is, as we mentioned, due to the ugliness of the terrorist acts committed by the terrorist organizations, as well as the harm and devastation that befell the people of Anbar.⁸⁴

On the (micro level), (Nazem Al-Jukhaifi), the Haditha tribal fighter in Anbar, says: "We need to set things right," adding, "Whoever pledges allegiance to ISIS and has his hands stained with the blood of innocent people should not remain at large." He indicated that the tribal forces would help to arrest ISIS members "to be tried for their crimes," and disclosed that ISIS forced many residents to pledge allegiance to it under threat and intimidation, so the Anbar tribes must make sure that they are not involved in acts of violence before they can regain their status.⁸⁵ (Nafaa Yaqoub) confirms this threat and intimidation by the terrorist organization ISIS, who fled with his young son so that he (his son) would not be recruited by this organization. And (Nafaa Yaqoub) is among the (65,000) people who fled western Anbar in 2017 to escape from ISIS that was forcibly recruiting children under (eleven) years old. He explains that he spent all his money (5,000 dollars) to get rid of the hell of ISIS.⁸⁶

As for (the miso level), we took the opinion of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Jaifi, one of the notables of the Haditha city in Anbar and the head of the Free Euphrates Force, who stresses the need to eliminate all forms of corruption within the security establishment in Anbar province and he said, "We as tribesmen stand in support of the efforts to impose stability. It is our responsibility and we must join hands to bear the burden in sustainable partnership with the security forces." According to him also, there was a strong popular rejection of the terrorists who joined ISIS and went on to say that "these are wanted by the judiciary and the tribes are continuing to assist the police and the army in their pursuit and arrest."⁸⁷ And (Karim al-Karbouli), a member of the Anbar Provincial Council, that the governorate's tribes agree to support and preserve the unity of the societal fabric, and said, "There is a written covenant document signed two years ago by most of the tribes of Anbar and that was supported by our local government and the country's parliament." He explained that this document stipulates the rejection of terrorism and the non-harm to the country's unity and peaceful coexistence. He also stressed that "it is not acceptable to forgive the families of ISIS members who supported and favored their sons," adding that they would be under the law. He continued by saying that the families acquitted their members who

⁸⁴ Researchers analysis of this report through the course of events.

⁸⁵ Diyaruna, 2017. Anbar clans unite their efforts to restore the rule of law, [online] Available at: <https://diyaruna.com> [Accessed April 28, 2021].

⁸⁶ NRC, 2017. Thousands flee Anbar ahead of the military operation on the last strongholds of the Islamic State / ISIS in Iraq, [online] Available at: <https://www.nrc.com> [Accessed April 28, 2021].

⁸⁷ Diyaruna, 2017. Anbar clans unite their efforts to restore the rule of law, [online] Available at: <https://diyaruna.com> [Accessed April 28, 2021].

joined ISIS will not be subjected to any legal proceedings or reprisals.⁸⁸ From these conversations, we can see that many of the people of Anbar Province either joined the terrorist organization ISIS or were supported this organization.

As for the governor of Anbar, Ahmad Khalaf al-Dulaimi, says: "The terrorist groups have not left anybody who did not be considered as disbeliever because their battle is with humanity and civilization."⁸⁹

As for (the macro level) with regard to the government position: the situation differs from one government to another, the worst of which was in dealing with events in Anbar during the term of (Nuri al-Maliki) (2006-2014). Al-Maliki adopted, on more than one occasion, sharp sectarian rhetoric when referring to the Sunnis opposed to his government, and he often referred to the Sunni protest movement (including the Ramadi camp) as being inherently linked to al-Qaeda. In the absence of objective evidence to support these statements, it appeared that Al Qaeda was increasingly used as a political tool.⁹⁰ But the matter changed after the Maliki's term and the relationship became better between the federal government and the people of Anbar province, and the tension eased, especially during the term of (Haider al-Abadi 2014-2018) and despite the occupation of Anbar by ISIS from 2014 to 2016, and the relationship is good so far as well as the opinion on the level of (macro) which was expressed by the President of the Iraqi Parliament (Mahmoud al-Halbousi), who is from the people of this province when he explained that Anbar, which stood in the face of terrorism, was keen on the unity and safety of Iraq, and pointed out that all Iraqis have been afflicted with the scourge of terrorism and by standing up as one were able to defeat this extremist organization.⁹¹

The Nineveh Plain

as we mentioned earlier, this region inhabited by minorities in general, we will try to get acquainted with the opinions and positions on the three levels as well (micro, miso, and macro), especially since it was subjected to extremist violence by the terrorist organization ISIS that occupied it in 2014 which is within the big Nineveh areas. Even after its liberation in 2016, but it is still a hot spot for extremism, in addition to the threats of ISIS and its sleeper cells, there are also partisan, political, sectarian and factional tensions and rivalries. There is the Hashed Al-Shabak within the Hashed Al-Shabee (the militia), which the minorities look at it as suspicious in the region and has an armed brigade bearing the number (30). There is also the Christian "Babylon" militia that is part of the Hashed Al-Shabee as well, and the Christian religious authority is in conflict with this militia. This militia accuses the leader of the Christian community in Iraq,

⁸⁸ Diyaruna, 2017. Anbar clans unite their efforts to restore the rule of law, [online] Available at: <https://diyaruna.com> [Accessed April 28, 2021].

⁸⁹ Alnoor News, 2014. [online] Available at: <https://www.alnoornews.net> [Accessed April 28, 2021].

⁹⁰ Lister, Ch, 2014. Al-Maliki's attack on Anbar crossed all red lines, [online] Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu>, [Accessed April 28, 2021].

⁹¹ IQ News, 2021. Al-Halbousi: Anbar, which stood against terrorism, is keen on the unity and safety of Iraq, [online] Available at: <https://www.igirag>, published April 10, 2021, [Accessed April 28, 2021].

the Patriarch (Saco), of being supported by the United States and Israel, while the Chaldean Church attacks the Christian militias from time to time.⁹²

In addition to what we have previously mentioned about the dispute between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government regarding the ownership of this region.

On the (micro level), we seek the opinion of Istifu Jamil Habash and Natiq Qaryaqoz, the Iraqi Christians from the Nineveh Plains region. Both of them deserted after ISIS took control of their hometowns, but after the liberation, Qaryaqoz returned to his hometown (Telsqof), while Istifu believes that the conditions for return have not yet been met. He added, "ISIS members systematically destroyed our areas so that we would not return to them, and some residents of neighboring villages who belonged to the organization they were the reason for what happened to us, but they did not receive their legal penalty yet."⁹³

Bashar Warda, the Archbishop of the Chaldean Catholic Church, told the Al-Sharq al-Awsat newspaper that "the presence of five different armed factions in the Nineveh Plain gives the Christian citizen an impression of insecurity. In the event that any disagreement erupts among these factions, it will turn into an armed conflict that burns the areas of Christian presence in Nineveh," adding that "this presence gives the impression of a non-state, as the militias are the permanent node in the political process anywhere in the world." Warda also added that "the Shabak component that includes most of these groups seeks in all ways to expand at the expense of the Christian presence in legal and illegal ways," explaining that "there is a systematic demographic change process that starts with purchasing Christian homes at double prices and distributing lands in the region to other components ", all the way to targeting Christians, to push them to emigrate and leave the region." ⁹⁴

As for Khaled Yousha, a merchant from the Nineveh Plains, who fled to Erbil, he says that "the checkpoints of the Hashed Al-Shaabe factions directly extort Christians by imposing" (royalties) on every car that crosses into the area, indicating that "the greatest hope is for a visit of Pope to Iraq has the effect of changing the situation in the region, and stopping the process of targeting Christians that will lead to the end of their existence forever."⁹⁵

In a different opinion, a member of parliament who represents the Shabak component (Qusay Abbas) denies that there is any demographic change in the region, and said that "the Nineveh Plain region is the original home of the Shabak component and they have no home other than in Iraq". Noting that "some Christian brothers from time to time accuse the Shabak component of

⁹² Salem, Z , 2020 b. The Nineveh Plain without its inhabitants: partisan and militia fighting, [online] Available at: <https://www.alaraby.com.uk>, [Accessed April 23, 2021].

⁹³ Amin, M., 2017. A Story of Christians from the Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at: <https://www.irfaasawtak.com>, [Accessed April 29, 2021].

⁹⁴ Al-Sharq al Awsat Newspaper, 2021. Demographic Change, Obsessed by Nineveh Residents, Issue 15440, [online] published March 7, 2021, article available at: <https://www.aawsat.com> on 3/6/2021, [Accessed April 30, 2021].

⁹⁵ Al-Sharq al Awsat Newspaper, 2021. Demographic Change, Obsessed by Nineveh Residents, Issue 15440, [online] published March 7, 2021, article available at: <https://www.aawsat.com> on 3/6/2021, [Accessed April 30, 2021].

expanding at their expense, and this is not true, as the Shabak are partners with the rest of the components and their presence is historical in the region." He added that the Hashed Al-Shabee Forces in the region are not tasked with demographic change, but rather work to provide security and safety for citizens of all affiliations, and include in their ranks elements from all components, including the Christian Hashed Forces and Babylonian forces.⁹⁶

As for the (miso) level, Mrs. Pascal Warda, the head of the Hammurabi Human Rights Organization and a former Minister of Immigration and Displacement, demanded in her lecture on 11/25-26/2014 at the United Nations Conference on the Protection of Minorities in the United Nations Hall in Geneva that the Nineveh Plain region to become a protected area internationally and in Iraq, with the participation of international forces to protect minorities, not only from the evil of ISIS, but also from the reckless actions of those in charge of the security services that withdrew, whether the army is in Mosul or the militants in the Nineveh Plain who have demonstrated the lack of patriotism and responsibility, as well as the weakness of the professionalism of those security services. The United Nations must support Iraqi minorities, such as Christians and Yazidis, in achieving their security in their historical areas, through their active participation with international and local forces, to make the region from Nineveh Plains into Sinjar an autonomous region or a new governorate based on the constitutional possibility available in the constitution.⁹⁷

As for (the macro level), Patriarch Cardinal Louis Raphael Sacco called, Patriarch of the Chaldeans in Iraq and the world, in a letter sent to Muslims on the occasion of the (Islamic) Eid al-Adha, in which he called for the elimination of all extremist thought and those who incite hatred and violence. "We, the Iraqi Eastern Christians, are an authentic and essential component in Iraq. We would like to remain partners with you and work as one team for the advancement of our country and the good of our people," adding, "We are certain that all Muslims do not acknowledge the actions of ISIS and there are some good and blessed of them, calling on Muslims to declare loudly their innocence and condemnation of violent religious extremism because it distorts their religion."⁹⁸ Likewise, at the (macro) level, the Iraqi armed forces represent the position of the government because they are the ones in charge of the security file in the Nineveh Plains, and this is what was expressed by the former Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Al-Sharq al Awsat Newspaper, 2021. Demographic Change, Obsessed by Nineveh Residents, Issue 15440, [online] published March 7, 2021, article available at: <https://www.aawsat.com> on 3/6/2021, [Accessed April 30, 2021].

⁹⁷ HHRO, 2014. Protection: The main reason for the lack of protection is the political parties, Hammurabi Human Rights Organization, [online] Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org>, [Accessed April 30, 2021].

⁹⁸ Abouna, 2014. Patriarch Sako calls on Muslims to explicitly condemn religious extremism, [online] available at: <https://abouna.org> [Accessed April 30, 2021].

⁹⁹ Anadolu Agency, 2019. Abdul Mahdi: The only armed forces in charge of the security of the Nineveh Plain, [online] Available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr>. [Accessed April 30, 2021].

The Facilitating Factors

There are many facilitating factors that contribute to creating an environment that facilitates acts of violence in the chosen hot spots. Here, we do not wish to delve into the direct causal relationships driving violence that involve the personal experiences of individuals, social, economic and psychological factors. Rather, we will focus on the factors that create an environment that makes acts of violence possible or attractive.

Kirkuk

There are many facilitating factors that contribute to creating an environment that facilitates violence in Kirkuk, including:

- 1- The continuing political tensions over its belonging either to the federal government or the Kurdistan region, as well as the weak state control represented by its federal government over it. In addition to the raging local competition and struggle for power in the administration of Kirkuk between the Arab, Kurdish and Turkmen political blocs in the provincial council besides interactions and polarizations that take place in each electoral cycle to elect the governor and heads of government departments in the province.
- 2- The political parties, tribes and clans, whether Kurdish, Arab, or Turkmen in Kirkuk possess weapons and materiel, in addition to the ease movement of weapons and extremist groups due to the spread of corruption in state institutions and law enforcement agencies. This reduces the possibility of imposing security and encourages acts of violence such as bombings, kidnappings as well as killing and liquidation of political opponents with the possibility of impunity.
- 3- Poor local governance in Kirkuk governorate and misuse of power as a result of political, racial and ethnic polarization between the political blocs to control state institutions and the existence of partisan and national quotas in administration, which led to poor governance, mismanagement of resources and economic opportunities, and an imbalance in balanced participation in public life.
- 4- The weak role of civil society institutions in Kirkuk in promoting the national approach, and the effect of national, ethnic and religious polarization on them.
- 5- Conflict exists between the Arab and Kurdish residents on the one hand, and the Arabs and Turkmen on the other hand, over the ownership of unresolved lands, unequal services and other troubling matters that exacerbate ethnic tensions.¹⁰⁰
- 6- Hunting the opportunities for leaders in both Baghdad and Erbil (the capital of the Kurdistan region) to take control of the city by force before the other side does.¹⁰¹
- 7- Failure to settle the issue of Kirkuk complicates security arrangements and impedes the provision of services, and the stalemate in the status of Kirkuk has consequences for

¹⁰⁰ Hanaue, L. and Miller,L. , 2012. Rand, Settlement in Kirkuk. Lessons Learned from Settlements of Ethnic and Regional Conflicts, [online] Available at: <http://www.rand.org>, [Accessed April 22, 2021]

¹⁰¹ Hanaue, L. and Miller,L. , 2012. Rand, Settlement in Kirkuk. Lessons Learned from Settlements of Ethnic and Regional Conflicts, [online] Available at: <http://www.rand.org>, [Accessed April 22, 2021]

destabilizing Iraq because it repeatedly impedes progress on major political issues at the national level.¹⁰²

Anbar

Among the factors facilitating the growth of terrorism and extremism in Anbar are the following:

- 1- The existence of an environment in Anbar opposing the government in Baghdad helps to develop opportunities for extremism, and it can be a good haven for terrorists and extremists. This environment can be exploited and invested to achieve goals other than the goals of the population. Especially in light of the population's feeling of political blockage and loss of confidence in the government, because the majority in Anbar considers the current political system to be discredited and that there are few possibilities for its ability to improve conditions in the country, and they do not believe that it can address the problems through peaceful action. This provides channels for the masses to be exposed to the messages of extremist organizations and increases their ability to recruit residents to serve their goals.
- 2- The residents of Anbar rejected the new regime after 2003, and the majority did not vote in favor of the current Iraqi constitution. Moreover, the population, especially the youth, became involved in the resistance factions of the American occupation, and this provided an experience for the residents of this province to practice violence and extremism.
- 3- Most of the people of Anbar consider the governments that succeeded to rule the country after 2003 as "corrupt governments" because they failed in the social and economic sphere, as a result of the failure to provide adequate economic opportunities for citizens and could not prove their ability or desire (or both) to control the spread of corruption and mismanagement in addition to the lack of the ability to establish good governance besides the inability to meet the population's needs for basic services such as electricity, drinking water, agriculture and others.
- 4- what lead to an increase in opportunities for entry of terrorist groups to establish training camps there which facilitate the access of terrorist groups to contact and recruit the population, as well as to smuggle and bring weapons and explosives across borders, is the large area of Anbar, as mentioned previously along with the existence of long borders of this governorate with Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia with the presence of valleys, plateaus and vast desert that are difficult for government control as well as the weakness of the security authorities' ability to control borders and impose security in remote border areas.

The nature of the demographic structure in Anbar, which consists of Arab clans and tribes, dominated by tribal fanaticism and clan norms that adopt a culture of power, reprisal and revenge in addition to the acquisition of weapons and materiel. This cultural structure constitutes a helpful ground for violence to flourish in it.

¹⁰² Kane.S, 2010, PEACEBRIEF31, Finding common Ground: Kirkuk as a Special Governorate, [online] Available at: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/PB%2031%20Finding%20Common%20Ground%20Kirkuk%20as%20a%20Special%20Governorate_AR. , [Accessed May 10, 2021].

The Nineveh Plain

The factors facilitating extremism in the Nineveh Plain can be summarized as follows:

- 1- The multi-religious demographics, sects, ethnicities and cultures in this region as well as the existence of a disparity in influence and power among the societal components led to an imbalance of power in the Nineveh Plain as a result of the presence of minorities that cannot be protected except by the presence of a strong state capable of enforcing the law. These components are Christians, Yazidis and Kakae. In addition to the presence of groups that possess power and influence, such as the Arabs, Turkmen, and Shabaks which derive their source of power from their armed tribal composition with support and government influence from Baghdad. This pushed the Christians, since 2014, to form forces linked to the Hashed Al-Shabee, such as the Babylon Brigades and the Nineveh Plain Units NPU, as well as church guards affiliated with the Kurdish Peshmerga. In return, the Shabaks possess a force of their own, represented by a military brigade named (Brigade 30). The presence of these formations in a specific region such as the Nineveh Plain and the association of each formation under political auspices constitute a danger in the event of political quarrels and tensions among the different blocs that may lead to armed clashes.
- 2- Weak state control in this region as a result of the interference of authorities between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq, as this region is administratively administered by the Nineveh government, but large parts of it are managed by the security of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government, and this overlap constitutes a weakness and an easy source to extremism and violence in the region.
- 3- The presence of bases and camps for different political loyalties military units, and the arrival of supplies and weapons to groups from Mosul, Baghdad and the others from Erbil may increase tension in the region and prompt the situation to explode at any moment.
- 4- The existence of this region within the disputed areas between the Kurds in the north and the Arabs in the south, that is, among the majorities at a time when the land returns to the minorities who inhabit it, and each party's endeavor to impose its will over it, this in itself creates an environment ready for the influence of terrorism and extremism.

Motivational Factors

Kirkuk

Among the main factors motivating extremism in Kirkuk, in short, are:

- 1- The disagreements of the main societal components in Kirkuk, the Arabs, the Kurds, and the Turkmen on property and resources and how are distributed.
- 2- The existence of mutual accusations between Arabs and Kurds of implementing policies promoting ethnic-national fundamentalism. There are accusations from the Kurds that the previous regime, during the period of the Ba'ath Party, changed the demographics of the governorate by sending Arab

families to Kirkuk, called Arabization operations,¹⁰³ while the Arabs accuse the Kurds, during their administration of Kirkuk and controlling it after 2014, made changes to turn the scales in their favor in terms of increasing the percentage of Kurds living in it, and it was called the Kurdification policy.

3- The use of linguistic and ethnic exclusion policies and promoting ethnic and national polarizations, whether from Arabs, Turkmen or Kurds.

Anbar

There are many factors that played a role in motivating people to engage in extremist and violent activities, including:

- 1- Deprivation, marginalization and political exclusion associated with poor services, widespread corruption, low level of security and weak justice programs create a good ground that can be invested by terrorist groups to pass their plans and programs. Residents of Anbar, who are from the Sunni community, feel excluded and marginalized, and that they have been subjected to arbitrary practices by the authorities in Baghdad, and that the government has failed to respect their demands and ensure respect for basic political rights and civil liberties. When protests erupted in this region in 2013 demanding an end to political deprivation, critics claim that former Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, who served from 2006-2014, brutally suppressed them.¹⁰⁴ In response, many Sunni elites demanded the establishment of autonomy for Sunnis. Depriving the Sunnis motivated joining ISIS, or at least consent to its existence.¹⁰⁵
- 2- People of Anbar felt disappointed and injustice during the era of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who succeeded al-Maliki in 2014, and served until late 2018. The Sunnis were optimistic at first, but many citizens were soon disappointed with what they saw as approaching Iran instead of moving away from it. The following words of a Sunni Member of Parliament summarize his feelings about this in 2017: "Today we have become displaced, we have become completely marginalized and it is getting worse every day ... that we have a corrupt government controlled by a foreign power, on the account of the Sunnis." These words reflect the disappointment that has spread widely in the Sunni community.¹⁰⁶ This contributed to creating great polarization among those affiliating to the government in Baghdad, whom the people of Anbar accuse of the pro-Iranian Shiite

¹⁰³ Ranj A, 2017. The Clash Over Kirkuk: Why the Real Crisis is in Baghdad not in Erbil, [online] available at <https://www.brookings.edu/ar/opinions/>, [Accessed May 10,2021]

¹⁰⁴ Wainscot, A. 2019. Engaging the Post ISIS Iraqi Religious Landscape for Peace and Reconciliation. USIP, Report, p.8 ,[online] Available at: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/pw_154-engaging_the_post-isis_iraqi_religious_landscape_for_peace_and_reconciliation-pw.pdf, [Accessed April 28,2021]

¹⁰⁵ Wainscot, A. 2019. Engaging the Post ISIS Iraqi Religious Landscape for Peace and Reconciliation. USIP, Report, p.8 ,[online] Available at: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/pw_154-engaging_the_post-isis_iraqi_religious_landscape_for_peace_and_reconciliation-pw.pdf, [Accessed April 28,2021]

¹⁰⁶ Wainscot, A. 2019. Engaging the Post ISIS Iraqi Religious Landscape for Peace and Reconciliation. USIP, Report, p.8 ,[online] Available at: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/pw_154-engaging_the_post-isis_iraqi_religious_landscape_for_peace_and_reconciliation-pw.pdf, [Accessed April 28,2021].

sect. In return, accusations were made against them that they were Baathists (supporters of the former regime) from leaders in the government.

The Nineveh Plain

The most important motivating factors in the Nineveh Plain are:

- 1- Feeling unfairness, injustice, discrimination and unfair dealings for long periods, as the minorities that live in the Nineveh Plain, especially the non-Muslim minorities, such as Christians and Yazidis, suffer from complex and chronic injustice, because they are numerical minorities on the one hand, and different from the majority by religion and ethnicity on the other hand. The non-Muslim minorities in the Nineveh Plains face challenges and problems in laws as well as in politics. Constitutionally, Islam is the official state religion, and in light of it, minor children are Islamized if one of the parents converts to Islam.¹⁰⁷ And since non-Muslim minorities do not have a law of their own that regulates their personal status, so that the Islamic provisions apply to them regarding to the provisions of inheritance and the way of dividing the estate, the transfer of inheritance funds, child custody and wills, etc. At a time when the provisions of the will and inheritance, the method of dividing the inheritance and the transfer of inheritance funds, differ, for example, in the ecclesiastical laws for Christians from their counterparts in the personal status law. The issue of a Muslim inheriting from a non-Muslim and not the opposite is permissible, which is considered contrary to the constitution and the provisions of Article 14 concerning the equality of Iraqis in the law without discrimination due to religion, race, sect, belief, opinion, nationality, or origin and color.¹⁰⁸ What exacerbates the existing tensions in this regard is the requirement that children born to a Muslim father or Muslim mother be registered as Muslims, regardless of whether they were born as a result of rape.¹⁰⁹
- 2- In addition to the existence of unfair laws against minorities, there are other unfair policies that contribute to minorities' feeling of alienation within the homeland or resorting to immigration, related to weakness in the enforcement of laws that protect their security and property. There are cases of kidnapping and killing against them in light of the perpetrators' impunity,¹¹⁰ as well as the abuse of their property and land by influential people, gangs and mafias without adequate protection from the state,¹¹¹ in addition to lack constitutional recognition of some minorities in the Nineveh Plain region, such as Shabak and Kaka'is, moreover, educational systems and curricula

¹⁰⁷ Warda, W. 2015. A vision in Article 26 of the Unified Card Law and the violation of the rights of non-Muslim Iraqi minorities. Hammurabi Human Rights Organization, [online] available at: www.hhro.org. [Accessed April 21, 2021].

¹⁰⁸ Maati, M. 2012. Rights of Christian's Component in the Iraqi Legislation: Legal and remedy analytics study , Dar Al Mashriq of culture, Iraq, Duhok, pp.30-31.

¹⁰⁹ Warda, W. 2015. A vision in Article 26 of the Unified Card Law and the violation of the rights of non-Muslim Iraqi minorities. Hammurabi Human Rights Organization, [online] available at: www.hhro.org, [Accessed April 21, 2021].

¹¹⁰ HHRO (Hammurabi Human Rights Organization), 2011. Report on human rights situation of minorities in Iraq 2011, [online] available at: <https://www.hhro.org>, p26, [Accessed April 28, 2021].

¹¹¹ HHRO (Hammurabi Human Rights Organization), 2014. Report on human rights situation in Iraq 2014, [online] Available at: <https://www.hhro.org> p.63 [Accessed April 28, 2021].

do not include an adequate definition of them and marginalize their national role and national rights.

- 3- The minorities who historically reside in these areas feel insecure, just like the Christians, as they were and are still subject to processes of marginalization, cutting of lands and demographic change. Their displacement from their historical areas in this region by ISIS terrorism in 2014 led to a significant decrease in their numbers, weakening their level of political representation, and this reality deepened with the growing religious effect on political work and the feeling of Christians and non-Muslim minorities such as the Yazidis that they are outside citizenship system. After the liberation of their areas in 2017, from the grip of ISIS after their exposure to the killings, rape, captivity and desecration of churches and cemeteries, their conditions still have not returned to normal According to an unnamed Christian cleric, the "Daily Telegraph" newspaper says, "The Christians who have lived in the Nineveh Plain for thousands of years, say that their culture and civilization is facing extinction at the hands of the militias supported by Iran."¹¹²

The same applies to the Yazidis, as they were subjected to a bloody campaign by ISIS. Tens of thousands of them were victims of murder, kidnapping, forced disappearance, displacement and exile, and despite the liberation of their areas from the control of terrorist organizations, many of them still live in the Kurdistan region of Iraq as internally displaced persons or refugees in Europe, Australia, Canada and the United States of America.

The Shiite Shabak also were subjected to displacement and attacks from ISIS, but they were able to powerfully return to their areas, and they received support from Baghdad and joined the influential political parties and blocs there, which gained them influence and power in the Nineveh Plain. Thus, the Shiite Turkmen and Kakaiis were all subjected to forced displacement and violations. The involvement of Sunni residents of the region in terrorist organizations, and their participation in acts of aggression against the people of their areas, who are different from them in religion or sect, may motivate the victims to take revenge and retaliate, and thus the violence in the region continues.

Conclusion

The report sheds light on three of the most important hot spots of extremism in Iraq, which are Kirkuk and Anbar governorates and the Nineveh Plain region which is located within the administrative boundaries of the Nineveh Governorate. The first contains a mixture of residents, whose ethnicities and doctrines differ where there is a dispute between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq over its ownership along with the desire of the Kurds seeking to add it to their current region and then secession and independence that resulted in separatist extremism. In addition to that, it also emerged as one of the centers of jihadist (religious extremism) when the terrorist organization ISIS occupied Hawija district in 2014,

¹¹² Al Khatab, F.2020. Ethnic and Religious Minorities in The Iraqi Political Equation, Aljazeera Center for studies, [online] Available at: <https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/article/4691>, accessed on April 28, 2021.

inhabited by Sunni Arabs, and ISIS was expelled from there in 2016. Thus, Kirkuk governorate is the hot spot of two trends of extremism and terrorism, separatism and jihadist-religious.

The report also chose Anbar Governorate, which is the largest governorate in Iraq as it occupies a third of the area of Iraq for being the most dangerous terrorist outpost in Iraq and is still a candidate for that. This province is inhabited by Sunni Arabs, who rejected the US occupation in 2003, and under the title of resistance to the occupier, it gradually became subject to terrorism, and the scene continued but this time against the government in Baghdad even after the American withdrawal in 2011. It is still a hot spot for extremism and terrorism, as most of its residents are opponents to the ruling method in Iraq, despite the government's approval of personalities from them and their participation in government.

The report identified the Nineveh Plain region as one of the hot spots of extremism and terrorism, where extremism was practiced against the religious minorities exist there, especially against the Yazidis and Christians. Churches and temples were desecrated, and graves swept away and desecrated. They were subjected to murder, rape of women, captivity and other acts of cruelty and atrocities, when the terrorist organization ISIS occupied this area in 2014, from which it was expelled in 2016. Its people are still today, and despite the return of more than 50% of its population, fear the return of terrorist groups to it. Tensions and disputes have also emerged recently between minorities themselves in this region, exemplified by the disputes between Christians and Shabak. Most of its main causes are cultural and civil rather than religious, centered on the massive encroachment of Shabaks from rural, non-urban areas to urban Christian areas, and the pursuit of owning land and property there, which aroused and still raises the anxiety and resentment of Christians as this is a demographic change in their areas, wherefore, the loss of their cultural and ethnic identity in the areas of their historical presence, in light of the Shabaks currently possessing military forces in the region and receiving support from the federal government along with the influential forces in the Iraqi political arena.

The report also identified the reasons and factors that led these areas to be hot spots of extremism and terrorism, and they are political, economic, religious, geographic and other factors. The report also identifies the opinion of individuals, political forces and representatives of higher institutions in the country about the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism that took place in these areas, some were supporters and others opponents of these phenomena, where some consider it extremism and the other does not.

As for the result we reached in the spread of the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism in Iraq, it is attributed to the failure of political forces in running the state after the American occupation of Iraq in 2003. And if the state administration improves and its resources are invested in the required and correct manner and the elimination of financial and administrative corruption outposts, the more space shrinks in front of hot spots of extremism and terrorism in Iraq.

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Annex: I-GAP Coding

Kirkuk

Injustice Coding

Q1. To what extent the hotspot is a response to injustice?	4
Comments to Q1	The Kurd feels the others are standing against their aspirations , because the think they were treated unfairly by the governments ruled Iraq.
Q2. To what extent was the actor motivated by a real or perceived systemic bias or prejudice which leads to consistently unfair treatment?	5
Comments to Q2	Because the actor feel that is not wanted in this country and also their sense that the laws and policies are designed to keep them marginalized.
Q3. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of redistribution?	1
Comments to Q3	The redistribution is not related to the sense of injustice of the actor, while the balance of resources currently is going for the sake of the actor.
Q4. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of recognition?	5
Comments to Q4	The sense of the actor of issue of recognition is rooted historically , and also this sense is continued although there is a recognition of there rights in the constitution.
Q5. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of representation?	1
Comments to Q5	The representation is not at all the matter of the sense of injustice . But the National and ethical sense of the actor that motives them.

Grievance Coding

Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	2
Comments to Q1	There specific demand is to have kurdish independence
Q2. How extensive and diverse is the list of grievances?	5
Comments to Q2	The actor feel that there is a long record of distinct wrongs.
Q3. How personal is the grievance?	5
Comments to Q3	because the grievance is far of personal issues while the sense of the society of deprivement of the rights is the real cause of grievance
Q4. How formalized is the demand to address the grievance?	2
Comments to Q4	The actor submitted its appeal to some specific entities like some international entities .
Q5. How realistic are the prospects to address the grievance?	3
Comments to Q5	The grievance based in prejudice and bigotry, but is rational solvable.

Alienation Coding

Q1. How specific and central is the sense of alienation?	4
Comments to Q1	The actor feel that there is discrimination against him ethnically and nationally for long term, and feels that he is strange in the wider social milieu. .
Q2. How voluntary is the process of alienation?	2

Comments to Q2	the perceive of alienation of the actor is a result of its voluntary will of independence and establishing state for the Kurd
Q3. How complete is the alienation?	4
Comments to Q3	Because of the existence of a social reference (Kurdish parties) that encourage separatist extremism.
Q4. How entrenched is the alienation?	4
Comments to Q4	the alienation is not a result of recent events , but is rooted for long- term, as a result of educating and a long awareness of the Kurdish political parties
Q5. How reversible is the sense of alienation?	4
Comments to Q5	The actor is not so interested to mitigate the feeling of alienation or to re- integrate in the whole Iraqi society

Polarisation Coding

Q1. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized?	5
Comments to Q1	The the demand of separation is about a collective demand
Q2. How high is the perceived level of the polarization?	5
Comments to Q2	There is conviction of the actor that can not find accord between his values and the values of another camp.
Q3. To what extent do the actor's opinions radically contrast with the institutions (political, religious, cultural) and policies that are currently in place?	5
Comments to Q3	The attitudes of the actor are not acceptable by the institutions

Q4. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized as compared with the social sphere?	5
Comments to Q4	The actor consider the political polarization reflect the social sphere .
Q5. Did the actor consider their radical positions to have a clear outlet on the institutional, cultural, or political spectrum prior to the hotspot?	4
Comments to Q5	The separatist demands of the actor affect on the institutions

Anbar

Injustice Coding

Q1. To what extent the hotspot is a response to injustice?	4
Comments to Q1	There is feelings that they are persecuted by the others and they faced hate activation.
Q2. To what extent was the actor motivated by a real or perceived systemic bias or prejudice which leads to consistently unfair treatment?	5
Comments to Q2	The actor feels ignore and marginalization
Q3. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of redistribution?	1
Comments to Q3	The redistribution is not related to the injustice in Anbar.
Q4. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of recognition?	3
Comments to Q4	Although there is a kind of recognition, but there is shortage in participation which is a symbolic participation in the public life

Q5. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of representation?	4
Comments to Q5	There is lack of representation in the decision making.

Grievance Coding

Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	5
Comments to Q1	The sense of grievance of the actor is rooted in specific wrongs, to prove that, the government prevent them to conduct demonstrations.
Q2. How extensive and diverse is the list of grievances?	5
Comments to Q2	There are diverse grievances against the actor since 2003.
Q3. How personal is the grievance?	5
Comments to Q3	Yes, there were threatening people and accusing them that the providing save heaven to the terrorists.
Q4. How formalized is the demand to address the grievance?	4
Comments to Q4	The actor submitted appeals to a particular entity, like the UN and to some specific and well-known religious leaders.
Q5. How realistic are the prospects to address the grievance?	3
Comments to Q5	Part of the grievance is based on prejudice and bigotry.

Alienation Coding

Q1. How specific and central is the sense of alienation?	5
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Comments to Q1	The alienation is not personal. But is linked with a general and imprecise of collective and social alienation.
Q2. How voluntary is the process of alienation?	5
Comments to Q2	The decision is involuntary because it was a kind of reaction to the exercises of the government against them
Q3. How complete is the alienation?	5
Comments to Q3	Yes , because the actor feels isolated from the whole social society of Iraq and also some senior religious leaders contributed to create the hot spot.
Q4. How entrenched is the alienation?	3
Comments to Q4	The sense is a result of recent events, because they loss the power since 2003.
Q5. How reversible is the sense of alienation?	2
Comments to Q5	Yes, the actor is interesting to mitigate the feeling of alienation , especially when the prime minister Al Maliki gave up the power

Polarisation Coding

Q1. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized?	5
Comments to Q1	The actor is acting as socio-culture group, and consider himself is the defender of Sunni's sect.
Q2. How high is the perceived level of the polarization?	3
Comments to Q2	It was a big polarization until Maliki(x- prime minister) left the power, 2014. But after that the level of pillarization became less.

Q3. To what extent do the actor's opinions radically contrast with the institutions (political, religious, cultural) and policies that are currently in place?	3
Comments to Q3	The actor consider themselves indirectly denounces the political leaders in many specific issues but not in the all.
Q4. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized as compared with the social sphere?	2
Comments to Q4	The polarization in the political field is more than the social field because the politician are looking forward to their political interests not for the real needs of society.
Q5. Did the actor consider their radical positions to have a clear outlet on the institutional, cultural, or political spectrum prior to the hotspot?	3
Comments to Q5	They harbor deep enmity vis-à-vis all political forces represented in Parliament

The Nineveh Plain

Injustice Coding

Q1. To what extent the hotspot is a response to injustice?	1
Comments to Q1	The actor had a more centralized sense of injustice, and the perpetrator did not engage in extremis
Q2. To what extent was the actor motivated by a real or perceived systemic bias or prejudice which leads to consistently unfair treatment?	5
Comments to Q2	Injustice stems from a terrorist group (ISIS) through an extremist jihadist approach

Q3. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of redistribution?	1
Comments to Q3	The feeling of injustice has absolutely not related with the distribution of resources
Q4. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of recognition?	4
Comments to Q4	The feeling of injustice of the actor is rooted due to lack of political, legal, social or symbolic recognition of the individual or his reference group.
Q5. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of representation?	1
Comments to Q5	Representation in the public life of the actor is little motive

Grievance Coding

Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	1
Comments to Q1	the grievance is rooted due to specific wrongs , by the previous governments , and although the actor faced specific wrongs , he didn't involved in extremism exercises
Q2. How extensive and diverse is the list of grievances?	4
Comments to Q2	Although the motives of grievances is a result of a long record of distinct wrong, but the area where the actor live became a hot spot because one event, that occupied by ISIS 2014 and his terrible violations against the people there
Q3. How personal is the grievance?	5
Comments to Q3	The grievance are very far from the personal life and it affect all the society , especially the non- Muslim minorities , and they were the targets because their religions.

Q4. How formalized is the demand to address the grievance?	3
Comments to Q4	Because the actor appeals to the government, parliament and international institutions to put an end to the injustice against him
Q5. How realistic are the prospects to address the grievance?	5
Comments to Q5	The feelings of injustice is coherent and cannot be rationally resolved with terrorist groups (ISIS).
Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	1

Alienation Coding

Q1. How specific and central is the sense of alienation?	3
Comments to Q1	In principle, the feeling of general social alienation is not strong, but after the violations committed by ISIS, and the inability of the state to protect the actor this feeling increased.
Q2. How voluntary is the process of alienation?	5
Comments to Q2	The feeling of alienation is unwanted, but it imposed by terrorist groups (ISIS).
Q3. How complete is the alienation?	3
Comments to Q3	The feeling of alienation is not holistic
Q4. How entrenched is the alienation?	3
Comments to Q4	A feeling of extreme alienation occurred after ISIS occupied the areas of the actor in 2014. There was also a feeling of alienation before that but not as severe due to the ongoing indoctrination of other religions (Muslims).

Q5. How reversible is the sense of alienation?	2
Comments to Q5	Because the actor has the desire to integrate or reintegrate with non-extremist groups or with the wider Iraqi society.

Polarisation Coding

Q1. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized?	5
Comments to Q1	The actor see themselves as acting as part of a socio-cultural group.
Q2. How high is the perceived level of the polarization?	3
Comments to Q2	Because the actor can agree with the other camp, and coexistence with him with the exception of terrorist groups
Q3. To what extent do the actor's opinions radically contrast with the institutions (political, religious, cultural) and policies that are currently in place?	3
Comments to Q3	The views of the actor with the institutions (political, religious and cultural) and existing policies do not radically contradict but rather take a middle position on them.
Q4. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized as compared with the social sphere?	5
Comments to Q4	The actor considers the political sphere as a reflection of social reality, and each one represents his social and religious environment
Q5. Did the actor consider their radical positions to have a clear outlet on the institutional, cultural, or political spectrum prior to the hotspot?	4

Comments to Q5

The positions are almost close to each other, unless the weak performance of the political forces that represent the actor