

CONFLICT RESILIENCE IN IRAQ'S PEACEBUILDING

Shun-Wen WANG

Chinese Culture University

1. Introduction

Building institutions with 'integrity' is important as it requires the population as well as political elites to invest in the system, as what Elkins and Sides refer to as 'state attachment' or, more generally, state legitimacy (MacQueen, 2013:46). However, ensuring short-term security and inclusion is often at the expense of the long-term viability, functionality and legitimacy. Short-term stability sometimes needs to 'trade-off' with elites, warlords or sectarian leaders (Akbarzadeh et.al., 2013: 47). As such, elections, the allocation of resources, governmental arrangements (e.g. federalism), ministerial appointments, even the appointment of senior posts are allocated according to these politicized identities, and leads to further divisions among elites (Akbarzadeh et.al., 2013:48).

Gisselquist (2015) pointed that there are three reasons why some interventions work better than others, including (1) the area of the intervention and the related degree of engagement with domestic state institutions; (2) local contextual factors, in particular windows of opportunity, capacity and the existence of local supporters; and (3) programme design and management (Gisselquist, 2015: 284). While the last one is easier to be calculated through the results, the first two are harder to prove it. These lead to the questions of "top-down" or "bottom up" and the mechanism to achieve it.

Benjamin Isaham thinks the case of Iraq shows 'top-down' governing way is not enough in the process of state from despotism to democracy. In

order to move on, sometimes it needs to set aside the disputes and coordinate with different actors(Isaham, 2014: 160-1). In this aspect, federalism seems to be the best way to share the power and prevent return of totalitarian politics or “strong-man” politics.

As we can see in the recent conflicts after the independence referendum of Kurdish Regional Government(KRG), it demonstrated the doubt from the Arabs that Kurds were using federalism to its independence. Also, how to arrange the benefit from oil-rich provinces causes another problem. It might leads to the contradiction from the Shiite’s central government and the Sunnis-based Basra or Kurds-based Kirkuk(Kane et al., 2012:20-21).

Lack of infrastructure and mechanism is also the problem for building integrity. Local governments always complained on the lack of budget during the CPA period. Central government in Bagdad doesn’t have sufficient ability to manage local affairs, but they still don’t want to give the power to local leaders. According to an interview of the mayor in Tikrit, the mayor complained that many local officials make a report directly to province or Bagdad, not him. Also, because the lack of resources, local government cannot respond to the public’s need(Dobbins et al., 2009:139-140).Not only the institutional problems, this paper considers interests and cognition issues might be much more important in peacebuilding and conflict resilience. “Interests” in this paper means that different actors might have different ideas or needs in the peacebuilding process. Hence, if the conflict resilience processes don’t meet their interests, they will prefer not to cooperate and be a trouble-maker as Sunnis did. The “cognitive” side leads to the roots of peace: how the actors(intervenors, elites and the public) view as the future road to go or to stay in the same country? This is much more important to establish the social contract and make the conflict more resilient.

In the first part, I will introduce ideas from peacebuilding and conflict resilience. Then, I will start from the institutional side, as many scholars think that federalism as a solution to make peace. Since it has also many disadvantages, however, we will continue with the interests and cognitive aspects to ask: If not federalism, then? It will lead to the depth of peace in Iraq. By examining the depth of peace(through some NGOs efforts and the interviews), it will help us to find out if there is a possibility to find the conflict resilience in Iraq’s peacebuilding.

2. Peacebuilding and Conflict Resilience

The goal of peacebuilding is to solve the disputes and lead to a resilient situation. But how? Some scholars view the outcome of peacebuilding as the depth of peace (Barma et. al. 2017:188). The ‘depth of peace’ measures the extent to which a society has developed a degree of resilience to channel conflict and prevent large-scale violence. It captures the ‘peacefulness’ of a society, including the extent to which a society can channel and resolve tensions and conflicts without resorting to violence (Barma et al., 2017:195). The depth of peace has three core dimensions: (1) The absence of violence; (2) Post-conflict recovery; and (3) Conflict resilience. For the conflict resilience, it captures how a society manages conflict through mechanisms that prevent tensions from erupting into violence, or that help to contain violence once it breaks out (Barma et.al., 2017: 196).

It is quite hard to solve the conflict especially when the foreign interveners don’t really understand the situations there, not to mention the intentions of interveners, cheated by the locals etc. Therefore, most interveners choose the institutional side like democracy or elections and not to involve too much in the questions of the depth of peace (Carment et.al., 2010; Gravingholt et.al. 2015).

Some argue that foreign interveners inclined to do easy works like humanitarian help rather than strengthening the capacity of state because the establishment of political mechanisms which are really fit to fragile states is the hardest. They think that strengthening the authority, capacity and legitimacy of the fragile state is at the heart of statebuilding and thus ultimately core to peacebuilding. While circumventing the state may improve the chances that particular initiatives show results, development assistance for peacebuilding ultimately should support – or at the least not undermine – the building of a capable, legitimate and authoritative state (Gisselquist, 2015:293).

Though these two are different from the foreign interveners’ activities, they are similar in pointing out the importance of proper mechanism in peacebuilding and the role of state. However, how to make the conflict more resilient is still the problem.

For the essence of conflict resilience, Carpenter (2012) has sorted into three broad categories: political and social structure, leaders and community organization, and economic and geospatial infrastructure (Carpenter, 2012:187). “Po-

litical and social structure” credit the impact of a community’s internal regime like norms, social institutions and networks and political system. “Leaders and community organization” highlighted the crucial role played by leaders and transformational leadership strategies(trust-building, sense-making , managing conflict) and the related capacity of the community to self-organized in response to threat. Economic and geospatial infrastructure credited regime resilience with external factors(i.e. oil pipelines, airports, univesities) or the structure of transportation and trade network(Carpenter, 2012:188)

In his words, resilience refers to the ability to rebound, maintain, or strengthen functioning during and after a disturbance, or to cope successfully in the face of extreme adversity or risk. It is also a capacity to prevent three structural changes: changes in psychological states, changes in the way groups function, and changes in a larger heterogeneous community(Carpenter, 2012:186). How these changes will happen? Conditions of economic and political instability can produce psychological(cognitive and emotional) changes. Pshychological changes include the development of hostile attitudes, perceptions, and goals toward an ‘other’ group. Once people commit their first evil act, often without much thought, a new logic pushes them on toward more heinous atrocities. (Carpenter, 2012:186)

However, when communities formerly in conflict are forced to live together and feelings of guilt, fear, resentment or anger remain deeply rooted, the risk of tensions flaring up again is significant(Lonergan, 2017: 5). These might need institutional and interpersonal reconciliation. Institutional reconciliation can address structural inequalities, create more inclusive policies, and signal good intentions, but the reconciliation policies must be credible, effective, and implemented in a timely fashion. Interpersonal reconciliation programs can initiate experiences that may in the long term help shift attitudes and reduce tensions between identity groups, but these changes do not take immediate effect(Lonergan, 2017:28). Institutional reconciliation mechanisms may have immediate influence on policies, but if the changes do not improve daily life then the effects are unlikely to last. Likewise, individual positive relationships may build personal goodwill, but if they are not coupled with broader structural change and shifts in attitude then tensions and grievances are likely to persist. (Lonergan, 2017: 28).

Institutional reconciliation is what I will discuss on the federalism, but it also related to the “interests” aspect that I mentioned. If the actors in the

country cannot get the benefits from that, it might break. Interpersonal reconciliation is related with the “cognitive” side in the third part, but the importance might not be much like what Lonergan(2017) said about the broader structural change but the recognition and the second variable of shifts in attitude as he said. Before discussing this part, I start with the institutional reconciliation and its problems.

3. Federalism as a Solution and Its Problems

a. Federalism as a Solution to Resilience

Federalism seemed to be the answer to solve the religious conflicts among Sunni and Shiite or the problems between the Arabs and Kurds after the intervention in Iraq. The second reason for choosing federalism is that the dictator can take over one centralized government and with subnational government will be more responsive (Mingus, 2012:678).

But what kind of federalism can help to build peace? Each actor in the country may worry about their own interests, thus it becomes apparent that tension cannot be dissolved by designing structures. Instead, it requires constant adaptation of a continuously precarious balance. Stabilizing the balance requires ‘safeguards’, safety measures that can provide correction when imbalance emerge. These two necessary conditions of flexibility and safeguards refer to the significance of experimental politics and continual constitutional policy (Benz and Sonnicksen, 2017:19). Also, presence of strong third-party guarantors in the peace process is helpful(Sriram, 2008: 13).

Among the discussions on the structures of federalism, Sriram(2008) proposed that some elements are important, including regional autonomy and federal arrangement, polycommunal ethnic federation, proportional representatives and consensus policies, etc. (Siram, 2008: 19). And these components of federalism leads to simple ideas as “equality” and “guarantee”, or “stability” and “balance”.

As stabilizing the balance and safety measures are the necessary condition of federalism, there might be some weakness between these two. On the balance issue, Iraqis adopted both a parliamentary approach and proportional representation, but they must still come to grips with cultural support for the strongman tradition (Mingus, 2012:680). The political culture has not accus-

tomed on the politics of negotiation, even some revenges from the suppressed people. Therefore, it's quite hard to find the effects of inclusion after the intervention, and the Sunnis felt unsafe to cooperate with the Shiite and the Kurds.

Much worse is the de-Baathification movement led by the CPA Order No.1. This de-Baathification order purged government ministries of their top layer of management, making between 20,000 and 120,000 people unemployed (Dodge, 2013: 1205). This action leads to worry and anger of some Sunnis. For them, choosing violence might be easier since they didn't feel that their life and positions are guaranteed.

Kurd and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) formed a federalist alliance. The result was the 2005 constitution, which prescribes a federal system with two exceptional characteristics: It hollows out the national government through radical devolution to federal regions that can mostly ignore Baghdad on many key matters, including most importantly oil and gas management and revenue sharing. It also provides minimal barriers to prevent the provinces outside of Iraqi Kurdistan from forming new autonomous regions, either standing alone or in conjunction with other provinces, with no limit on their size or number (Kane et.al., 2012:24). Although there was a proposal to adjust the balance of power not just between Baghdad and any future regions but also to bring the Kurdistan region into line with a more centralized state structure. However, it crossed a clear Kurdish red line, prompting the veto threat that killed the amendment process.

As we can see, the value of federalism is to protect the minority and to make stability through balance of powers. However, the problems of federalism in Iraq might have some institutional problems as the Kurds and SCIRI want to protect their own interests in the north and south. We will discuss some different actor's ideas on federalism and find the problems of federalism.

b. Problems of Federalism

The initial idea of federalism might lead to solution of the ethnic or tribal problems, but it is not the ethnic issues that always play the role, rather than the interests and the role of central government. Also, ideology, nationalism, competition between parties and personalities, and the influence of Iraq's neighbors all play a significant role as well; moreover, they cut across ethno-sectarian boundaries(Alkadiri, 2010: 1315). This section will be separated with two parts. In the first part, I will try to explain the divisions come from the

interests of actors, and the second part, I will continue to explain the problems lied in the institutional design of federalism.

i. Interests among elites

As for the issue of federalism, major political parties in Iraq are separated with pros and cons. Kurdish parties, PUK and KDP, and the SCIRI are the major political parties supporting federalism while the Sunnis and the Sadrist supported centralization of power.

The two Kurdish political parties, PUK(led by Jalal Talabani) and KDP(led by Masud Barzani) were confronting with each other during the civil war from 1994 to 1998. Traditionally, KDP is more nationalists inclination and PUK has better relationship with the Iraqi central government. However, for the autonomy of Kurdish regional government, they cooperated in this issue. Some would argue that the Kurds use federalism as a tool to fulfill the independence in the future, since the independence are objected by the neighbor states. Also, they see a centralized Iraq as a potential threat to Kurds which has been proven in the history. So, accepting federalism is a compromising and safe one(Steinberg, 2007: 8). The only one problem lies in the Kirkuk province, which is composed of 65% Kurds and wants to be part of Kurdish region. The Kurds have encourage the Arabs there going back to their hometown and with some success, however, the central government doesn't agree on that and continue conflicting with the Kurds. Now, after the independence referendum, situation between the Kurds and central government becomes more complicated.

SCIRI, which is led by Abdalaziz al-Hakim, is the majority in southern Iraq. Among the nine southern province, they hold the majority in eight. SCIRI support on the federalism because southern provinces have about 50% of Iraq's oil, and they have announced their right of autonomy in 2005(Steinberg, 2007: 11). This proposal was fiercely opposed by its opponents, Dawa Party and the Sadrist. The latter two parties use that as playing cards in the 2009 and 2010 elections and gained the support from the public. Besides, they still worrying that the Kurds will use federalism to the road of independence. Therefore, the position of SCIRI moved to the centralized of Iraq recently (Alkadiri, 2010:1319).

The Sunnis urged for the centralization and the participation of the Sunnis in the government. After the de-Baathification movement, what Sunnis wor-

ried more is both on the federalism and centralized government. Federalism might leads to a separated Iraq and the 20% Sunni population might lose their power, while a centralized government might be controlled by the Shiite, the Sunnis don't have enough confidence on that. But compared with the federalism, centralized and power-sharing government is still the better choice for the Sunnis besides violence rather than federalism(Steinberg, 2007: 13). With U.S. troops' withdraw, Iraq's Sunni-majority provinces worried about an unchecked and autocratic Shia-led government in Baghdad. (Kane et.al., 2012:21) The Sadrists don't agree on the proposal of dividing Iraq into three parts: the Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis. They proposed a strong central government and objected to the intervention of the United States. Sadrists are powerful near Baghdad, and operated their own army, the Mahdi army. They conducted lots of attacks on the Coalition army and the Sunnis (Steinberg, 2007: 14).

ii. Institutional disputes of federalism

The institutional disputes came from the ineffectiveness of the separation of powers. Second, scholars have discussed the relation between federalism and democracy and the clash with the principle of equality of citizens(one man, one vote) when minorities are to be protected by a separation of regional units and by granting special rights to preserve their identity(Benz and Sonnicksen, 2017:6). Third, there is a doubt that whether the political culture is mature enough to practice the federalism.

First of all, there are lots of complains on the ineffectiveness of central government and the separation of power. For example, the governor of Nineveh, Atheel al-Nujaifi said that the people of his province support giving the provinces greater power instead of creating independent regions, but it depended on the attitude and activity from Baghdad(Kane et.al., 2012:25). Local opinion polls show frustration with the central government but no desire for Kurdish-style autonomy(Kane et.al., 2012:27).

But the ineffectiveness of central government leads to dissatisfaction of the federalism. Governors and provincial councils have limited direct budgets, no control over local public sector hiring and no formal say over projects undertaken by federal ministries within their provinces. In many cases, the bulk of the security forces operating in the governorates report directly to the prime minister's office, and access to the minority share of capital investment funds given to provincial councils requires a laborious series of approvals from multiple ministries in Baghdad(Kane et.al., 2012:27). In this sense, better govern-

ment and more effective distribution of resources are the principal goals, rather than the creation of multi-provinces.

The second issue of federalism is the “equality of citizens”. Federalism was confirmed in Iraq’s constitution of 2005. The Article “the Republic of Iraq is a single federal, independent and fully sovereign state¹. Since federalism in Iraq involves only one region(Kurdistan), it describes a negative aspect in implementation of federalism(Alsamee et.al., 2016:3387-8). The problems also lead to the revenue distribution: Can the Kurds control all revenue and taxes collected within its boundaries? How do the Kurds share or can they give up any grants from the federal budget?

Third, does federalism fit Iraq?Some argued that Iraq lack of democratic tradition (Akbarzadeh et.al., 2013:102). The political culture is not mature enough to practice the federalism. The Ottoman administrative advice, the qa’im makam, was the local director, confined to the role of implementing policies and procedures handed down from the “real” power center in Baghdad (Mingus, 2012:680). Offices established under Turkish rule were strengthened in some cases under British rule from 1920 to 1932. After 2003, the United States uproot the paradigm of “strong state, weak society” and use federalism as the only solution to set peace in Iraq, however, without effective governance, the federalism opened the power spaces among groups(Akbarzadeh et.al., 2013:104)

Ex-prime minister al-Maliki has pointedly reacted to interest in decentralization, saying that the country is not ready for federalism in its western, central or southern regions and that differences should be addressed through common action on administrative deficits rather than by “division or secession.”

In this section, we discussed the different standpoints of elites or political parties which supported or objected federalism, and it is obviously that each actor considers on their own interests. If the interests are not fit to them, they might change the position as what the SCIRI did. It is just like the formation of social contract. The formation of social contract is full of politics and calculation. During the post-intervention process, trust among elites has

1 Article 119: “one or more governorates shall have the right to organize a region based on a request to be voted on in a referendum submitted in one of the following two methods: 1. Request by one-third of the council members of each governorate intending to form a region; 2. Request by one-tenth of the voters in each of the governorates intending to form region.

not appeared, even regularized communication is not enough which Benz & Sonnicksen(2017) considered as essential to make federalism and democracy work. Therefore, it's quite hard to find a solution to peace with the mechanism of federalism.

Besides, as mentioned above, federalism in Iraq has three institutional problems: ineffectiveness of central government and distribution of powers, equality of citizens, and the question of western style of federalism. But some scholars don't think the so-called "western style" or the function of federalism is the problem because it helps to establish stability in India, Spain and Canada where conflicts and major collision still exist there(Brancati, 2010:11). As we have discussed on conflict resilience in the first section, internal norms, processes of establishment and external factors play important roles on it. Talking to the problems of federalism, I agree that interests factor is the major concern among elites as we discussed in this section. Then, it is the cognitive factor that caused the compromising mechanism, the federalism, not working well. Some worry deeply on losing power(the Sunnis), and some want to get more power or maintain power through mechanism(the Kurds and SCIRI). These differences on cognition would change the attitudes. In introduction, we have identified that a successful peacebuilding also comes from the local context. Thus, we still need to examine the depth of peace before we jump to the conclusion of road to peace.

4. Depth of Peace and the Road to Peace?

The discussions above on federalism and its problems show that mechanism sometimes is only a tool to help to build peace. But whether peace will get or not is better understood by interests and recognition of the elites and the public as social contract. In the former section, we find that the elites care about their power, and I will discuss the public side in this section.

In order to find the depth of peace, I would use some interviews from other papers and I would use some of the results from the interviews which I asked from those Iraqis who are now in Taiwan. Of course, the representing and the cases are not enough and need more interviews. However, as for the in-depth interviews, "let the stories show" is also important to show the idea and cognition in their minds.

Actually, most of Iraqis would say: they just want to live, and find a sustainable job. However, these jobs are mostly in the government and hard to get. Here comes the vicious circle: no job'participating in violence to survive'continuing violence dampen economic growth'continuing no jobs(Phillips 2005: 203)².

Through the reports and interviews, it is obviously that people think the situation were getting worse and they don't think the interveners come for help but for interests. It is the same as we have discussed in the second section on peacebuilding's problem: state capacity and the role of foreigners are important elements in peacebuilding.

The other question leads to what is the root of conflict. There is a dispute on the sectarian roles. Some focus on the long-term conflicts between Sunnis and Shiites and some not. Therefore, federalism was proposed as a mechanism to solve the cleavage. But it seems that the cleavage is not so big. In a social value poll from 2004 to 2014, the public don't show strong support on sectarian politics(Moaddel, 2014)³.

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- 2 We can see lots of examples. As the reports from Los Angeles Times(2008), *The new school year began recently, but not for Karrar Raad, 12, and his 10-year-old brother, Allawi. They work for car mechanics in adjacent garages that are smaller than a rich lady's closet. Their father is ill and has no job, and the boys have to support eight children and two adults. They earn \$2.70 a day, plus tips.* (Los Angeles Times, 2008)It can also be seen through my interviews: *I was living in Baghdad. We are rich in the past, for example, our government budgets are five times more than yours in Taiwan. However, after 2003, the Americans let us back to the "stone-age". In my opinion, if you take those politicians who have good connection with the Americans out of Iraq, our country will prosper again. Do you know the problems in Iraq? Many people are hired by government, but many of them don't go to work, after a long-term rest, they return and retire.(Arabs) My family is in Sulaymaniyah. They work for the government, but they only get half of the salary comparing to the past. (Arabs, Sulamaniyah) Many Iraqis don't think that the United States came to help us. They came for their own economic interests, even the oil prices are controlled by the US(Kurds)*
- 3 The same results are showed in the interviews. *My father is Shiite and my mother is Sunni, as you can see, there is no problem between Shiite and Sunnis. That's why they could get married. But after 2003, situation changed. We are divided. Now you cannot see such marriage right now.(Arab, Muslim) We didn't care about that before 2003 but after 2004, he started to become sensitive from my opinions; like he might get ups* We can see lots of examples. As the reports from Los Angeles Times(2008), *The new school year began recently, but not for Karrar Raad, 12, and his 10-year-old brother, Allawi. They work for car mechanics in adjacent garages that are smaller than a rich lady's closet. Their father is ill and has no job, and the boys have to support eight children and two adults. They earn \$2.70 a day, plus tips.* (Los Angeles Times, 2008) It can also be seen through my interviews: *I was living in Baghdad. We are rich in the past, for example, our government budgets are five times more than yours in Taiwan. However, after 2003, the Americans let us back to the*

As for the mechanism and federalism, we can also see the different views from interveners and locals. The reports from interveners shows that the problem of Iraq is the governance issue and the design of programs. James Dobbins(2009) thought that there are still many successful results of reconstruction, and he consider problems are lied in the military-civilian coordination and corruption(Dobbins et.al., 2009:328). In the report of SIGIR, Learning from Iraq, shows that US officials blame the failure on coordination, efficiency of reconstruction and Iraqi participation while Iraqi officials focus on the governance issues like efficiency and corruption(SIGIR, 2013). It is also shown in the Chilcot Report, which shows the problem of program design and coordination(Chilcot, 2017: sec.11, p.7)

Finally, though sectarian might not be the issue in the depth of peace, ethnic will be a resource of future conflict. More than 60 percent Arabs(including the Sunnis and Shiites) see themselves as Iraqi(Moaddel, 2014), but not the Kurds. And this will be the problem for the federalism as it is happening right now after the Kurdish referendum⁴.

As above, psychological changes were driven in part by unemployment, internal displacement, and leadership behavior(Carpenter, 2012:192), but sec-

“stone-age”. In my opinion, if you take those politicians who have good connection with the Americans out of Iraq, our country will prosper again. Do you know the problems in Iraq? Many people are hired by government, but many of them don't go to work, after a long-term rest, they return and retire.(Arabs)

My family is in Sulaymaniyah. They work for the government, but they only get half of the salary comparing to the past. (Arabs, Sulamanyah) Many Iraqis don't think that the United States came to help us. They came for their own economic interests, even the oil prices are controlled by the US(Kurds) Shiite, Suuni, Kurds and other minorities lived peacefully in the past. You can find all of them on the same street, but not now, hostilities let us not to live as past. (Kurd, Christian). Religion was never an issue, but after the American came, even you, with a Asian look would be killed if anyone say that you are a Sunni. (Arab, Muslim)

- 4 It also shows in the interview: *I am a Kurd, and I support independence. We are autonomous since 1990s, and I think it is what we deserved. If not now(independent), when is the best time?(Kurd) I think the referendum is unwise. It will leads to conflict.... I admit that we are weak right now, but once we are strong, we will deal with the problem. In my view, the depth of peace is just like before: a strong man comes, and force everyone to live peacefully and regain the prosperity.(Arab) I live in the Kurdish region. For me, independence or not seem not so important. I want freedom and the voices and needs from the public can be heard and solved by the government. (Arab) For those Arabs and Kurds that I contact with, the hardest point to solve is the distribution of interests. Because the central government cannot guarantee the interests of KRG...and if the meaning of peace goes to “everyone accepts the offer from the central government”, do you accept? Is that kind of peace meaningful? (Taiwanese businessman who worked in Iraq for 13 years).*

tarian might not always be the issue. In the research of Carpenter(2012), some extremists group sought community support for sectarian operations but ‘people didn’t allow them to get dominant there’(Carpenter, 2012:196). Local leaders discouraged sectarian attacks. The organization of non-sectarian self-defense groups, different from other militias in their goal to protect neighborhood boundaries rather than drive out residents, and ‘keep out extremists’ rather than carrying out attacks in other places(Carpenter, 2012:197). Besides, longevity of interpersonal relationships, high socioeconomic levels, age of resident, and neighborhood identity were the buffer of violence(Carpenter, 2012:197-199).

Thus, what is the depth of peace in Iraq? I would say that the interests variable is quite important(both elites’ interests on mechanisms which they can earn power and the better life of the citizens). Poverty, joblessness or any other dispute or social ill, it is the perception—or reality—of injustice that fuels support for armed opposition groups.(Strasser, 2016)After al-Maliki quit, expectations for government performance rose and support for armed groups plummeted, even though the new prime minister, Haider al-Abadi, also is a Shia. Among Sunnis, support for armed opposition groups immediately fell to 26 percent from 49 percent, and expectations jumped for how well government would deliver for them.The results suggest that identity politics itself wasn’t the primary driver of support for armed violence(Strasser, 2016).

Interests(power, safety, job, etc.) and cognition(justice, equality, trust, etc.) are the two important variables lead to the depth of peace. However, peaceful reconciliation will be a long, painstaking process, but it can start with mechanisms on protection of rights⁵.

As the USIP Middle East Director Sarhang Hamasaeed said, “If you strike a national peace accord for Iraq in Baghdad, it won’t solve the situation, but if you succeed on the ground in places like Kirkuk, that will increase the chances of a national accord. We have to work from the bottom-up and from the top-down.” (Strasser, 2017b). With the bottom-up methods which include amend-

5 For example, the KRG has passed laws and draft constitutional provisions that protect rights of religious and ethnic minorities, opened what is perhaps Iraq’s first center for treating rape victims, and provided some financial resources to Yazidis, Turkmen and Kurds(Strasser, 2017). The other example is the case in Mahmoudiya and Iraqi peacemaking teams around the city of Tikrit and in other areas. It shows that Iraqis, with time and some support, can solve their own conflicts at a local level. The 2015 peace accord paved the way for markets and businesses to restart, schools and hospitals to reopen and ultimately, the return of more than 380,000 displaced Iraqis (Lindborg, 2017).

ing tribes' laws, urging authorities to pay compensation to victims and to fund reconstruction, and establishing local committees to track the security vetting processes. (Strasser, 2017b)

5. Conclusion

This paper examines the conflict resilience and the peacebuilding first. It also proposed to study the cases with institutional, interests, and cognitive aspects, and considers that interests and cognitive shall be more important in the success of peacebuilding.

Conflict resilience refers to some kind of mechanism which can help to eliminate the violence, and it composed of internal, process and external variables as we discussed in section two. For Iraq, the way to find a resilient peace can still be seen with these three aspect.

The depth of peace lies in the internal aspect is the state capacity. Where governments fail to be responsive, accountable, and just toward citizens, insurgent groups can gain traction. (MercyCorps, 2015:3). When people who feel marginalized begin to believe the government is going to be more responsive, accountable, and fair, support for armed violence and the sectarian groups that perpetuate it decreases. Although sectarianism is not the main source of conflict, it can get benefits when the government fails(MercyCorps, 2015:3).

However, the ethical conflict between the Arabs and the Kurds might be a major conflict in the near future. Because of the independence referendum, the Kurds add fuels of conflicts in the power-sharing mechanism, the federalism, which is already lack of trust and full of elites' interests and calculation. If there is a danger, the conflict here might have internal, process and also external problems, especially the disputes in Kirkuk. That is also why some scholars urged for a majority politics rather than consensus politics in Iraq because if the consensus politics continue, the situation in Iraq will not be stable and will leads to ethical conflicts(Hamad and al-Anani, 2014: 151). It has also been found in the context of interview. The Kurds and Arabs are obviously contradicted in the future of confederation.

For the process variable, it is important to build a stronger cooperative relationship between civil society and government. The Abadi government has a chance to foster the country since the cognition as an Iraqi is rising now. There are also several successful accords in the local areas which are compromised

by both Sunnis and Shiites and helped by the NGOs. But among all, the governance and justice still the foremost importance.

For the external side, donors should commit to multi-year investments in Iraqi civil society. Implementing Partners should facilitate stronger working relationships between youth demonstrators and civil society actors.(Mercy-Corps, 2015:31).

It is not easy to find the depth of peace. Mechanism can adjust according to different regions and areas. The hardest part is to find what the actors view as important value or interests. As this paper proposed, the in-depth interview can do more to understand the views in different sites, and help to find the way of resilient conflict and stop the happening of violence. It still needs more interviewing and analysis in different region.

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