

The Sinjar Records: A Case Study of the Origins and Motivations of Al Qaeda in Iraq Recruits

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Abstract: *The following paper uses the Sinjar records as a case study to test foreign fighter recruitment models based on greed, grievances, and identity. Grass roots versus top-down recruiting models are tested as well as the significance of Al Qaeda in Iraq. The paper concludes that the identity model is most valid in this case study with grievance-based motivations playing a small role in recruitment. The Sinjar Records allow for the possibility of grass roots recruitment but do not support it directly. Finally, the influence of Al Qaeda in Iraq has been overemphasized.*

Introduction:

In October 2007, U.S. forces captured a collection of documents on foreign fighters in Iraq kept by an Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) cell in the town of Sinjar, along Iraq's northern border with Syria.¹ What came to be known as the Sinjar Records contained biographical information on approximately 595 male foreign fighters recruited from August 2006 through August 2007 and included such information as names, telephone numbers, monetary contributions to Al Qaeda in Iraq, and how the fighter was recruited.² The records were translated into English and released with analysis by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point in 2008. These records provide a unique insight into the origin of a large number of Al Qaeda recruits and the recruitment methods of an Al Qaeda cell.

Using the data provided by the Sinjar Records, this paper will seek to answer the following research questions regarding Al Qaeda in Iraq recruitment from 2006-2007:

- Did recruitment models based on greed, grievance, or ideology match AQI recruitment?
- What nations contributed most to AQI recruitment?
- How were AQI foreign fighters recruited?
- Do AQI members join on their own or in groups?
- Was there a common profile for an AQI recruit?
- Was there a relationship between AQI recruitment and violence within Iraq?

¹ Siamak K. Kordestani, "The Roots of Militant Jihad: A Socioeconomic Analysis of Al-Qaeda Foreign Fighter Hometowns" (Georgetown University, 2010), 2.

² Joseph Felter, and Brian Fishman, *Al-Qa'ida's Foreign Fighters in Iraq a First Look at the Sinjar Records* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point 2007), 7.

Answering these questions will hopefully provide better understanding of how Al Qaeda in Iraq functioned as an organization.

Al Qaeda in Iraq

Al Qaeda is not a singular entity but a conglomeration of cells. The Sinjar Records were created by the cell, Al Qaeda in Iraq. Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), also known as Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, is a predominately Sunni Al Qaeda cell created by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.³ Although its origins are not completely clear, it is generally thought that Zarqawi was in Iraq as a leader of the Partisans of Islam in 2001, and swore allegiance to Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda in 2004.⁴ The marriage between Zarqawi and Al Qaeda was one of convenience; Zarqawi and bin Laden had a strained relationship because of Zarqawi's disdain for the Saudi Arabian government and controversial tactics that alienated AQI from the native Sunni population in Iraq and encouraged Sunni-Shia violence.⁵ For example, in Zarqawi deliberately targeted Shia cultural sites and institutions in an attempt to incite conflict between the two religious groups.⁶ Zarqawi's vision for these actions was to provoke a civil war between the Iraqi Sunnis and Shia's and create the opportunity for AQI to emerge as a defender of Sunni Islam within Iraq.⁷

When Zarqawi died in an US air strike on June 7, 2006, AQI splintered into several smaller organizations, such as the Islamic Army of Iraq and the 1920 Revolution Brigades.⁸

After Zarqawi's death, the frequency of AQI attacks decreased with an emphasis on fewer,

³ Greg and Julia Jeffrey Bruno, "Profile: Al-Qaeda in Iraq (A.K.A. Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia)", Council on Foreign Relations <http://www.cfr.org/iraq/profile-al-qaeda-iraq-k-al-qaeda-mesopotamia/p14811> (accessed 15 April 2011).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Brian Fishman, "After Zarqawi: The Dilemmas and Future of Al Qaeda in Iraq," *The Washington Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2006). 21.

⁶ Ibid. 10.

⁷ Kenneth Katzman, *Al Qaeda in Iraq: Assessment and Outside Links* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008). 23.

⁸ Bruno.

“periodic spectacular terrorist attacks.”⁹ Despite its organizational difficulties, General David Petraeus declared Al Qaeda in Iraq “probably public enemy number one” in an April 2007 press conference.¹⁰ Later in July 2007, Brigadier General Bergner estimated that 80-90% of suicide bombings in Iraq were caused by AQI.¹¹

Zarqawi established the identity of AQI as that of a “Gharib,” or “stranger,” organization within Iraq.¹² Zarqawi idealized the identity of being an outsider in Iraq because it “embraces and expropriates isolation from the majority so that, instead of being a source of despair and weakness, seclusion promotes unity and strength. The gharib identity informed Zarqawi’s activities until his death.”¹³ The result of this ideology was an Al Qaeda cell composed largely of foreign fighters that was closely knit, highly motivated, but isolated from the native Iraqi Sunni community.¹⁴ Following Zarqawi’s death, AQI increased integration with native Iraqis, in part to increase funding.¹⁵ The size and composition of AQI in terms of nationality has varied over time and experts have failed to agree on estimates:

As early as October 2003, U.S. officials estimated that as many as 3,000 might be non-Iraqi, although, suggesting uncertainty in the estimate, Gen. Abizaid said on January 29 2004, that the number of foreign fighters in Iraq was ‘low’ and “in the hundreds.” A September 2005 study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies estimated that there were about 3,000 non-Iraqi fighters in Iraq - about 10% of the estimated total size of the insurgency. The State Department report on terrorism for 2007 (Country Reports on Terrorism: 2007, released April 30, 2008) says AQ-I has a “membership” estimated at 5,000 - 10,000, making it the largest Sunni extremist group in Iraq.¹⁶

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ “Dod News Briefing with Gen. Petraeus from the Pentagon,” 26, April, 2007 2007.

¹¹ Bruno.

¹² Fishman. 21-23.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2009). 29.

¹⁶ Katzman. 16.

The rate at which foreign fighters into Iraq is also a point of contention. In July 2007, the US military estimated the flow to be 60-80 foreign fighters entering Iraq per month, “primarily through the Iraq-Syria border.”¹⁷

The nationalities of foreign fighters are difficult to determine and estimates as to their origin are varied. Prior studies of general Al Qaeda in Iraq recruitment in the Middle East and North Africa were performed first by Reuvan Paz, in March 2005, and second by Anthony Cordesman and Nawaf Obaid, in September 2005. Paz investigated the nationality of foreign fighters in Iraq by using radical Islamist websites to derive the nations of birth of 154 insurgents killed in Iraq.¹⁸ His findings concluded that a majority (61%) of insurgents in Iraq were Saudi Arabian.¹⁹ Paz’s methods were questionable however, as he did not use a random sample of insurgents killed and failed to provide the websites he used to track their nationalities. Following the publication of Paz’s study, Anthony Cordesman and Nawaf Obaid published a study in September of 2005 that showed vastly different demographics of the insurgent population in Iraq. Based on secret intelligence Saudi sources, their data showed a more even distribution of foreign fighters across Algeria (20.00%), Syria (18.33%), Yemen (16.67%), Sudan (15.00%), and Egypt (13.33%). Saudi Arabia was fifth in total foreign fighter contribution (11.67%).²⁰ The validity of the study is in serious doubt. It is thought to be a reaction by the Saudi government to Paz in order to shift blame away from Saudi Arabia. Motives aside, it is impossible to replicate the study because the data is not publicly available. 2008 estimates of Al

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Reuvan Paz, "Arab Volunteers Killed in Iraq: An Analysis," *PRISM Occasional Papers* 3, no. 1 (2005). 1-2.

¹⁹ Ibid. 2.

²⁰ Awaf Obaid, and Anthony Cordesman, *Saudi Militants in Iraq: Assessment and Kingdom's Response* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2005). 5.

Qaeda in Iraq are based on the data provided by the Sinjar Records, with estimates of about 40% of foreign fighters originating from Saudi Arabia and 20% originating from Libya.²¹

Literature Review:

Theories of Recruitment

There are three general schools of thought on the recruitment of foreign fighters: recruitment through greed; recruitment through grievance; and recruitment through identity. To clarify, these schools differ on what issue is most important in recruitment; they do not argue that other incentives for recruitment are irrelevant. A key supporter of the greed school of thought is Mark Lichbach, of the University of Maryland, who contends that the prospects of economic gain entice recruits to join insurgent cells.²² Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler of the University of Oxford support a model that incorporates both greed and grievance as inseparable incentives for recruitment.²³ Grievances in this case mean the economic or social harms caused by another party such as a state government. Recruitment through identity uses constructions of social and religious identity to call recruits to arms to defend a valued ideology. David Malet of Colorado State University is one of many authors who support this theory.²⁴

Greed

The greed school of thought argues that recruits join Al Qaeda for personal economic benefit. This model is most often applied to domestic insurgents because they are generally in the greatest position to gain from involvement in insurgent activity. Mark Lichbach uses the analogy of peasants rebellion against an elite ruling class to examine what causes everyday men

²¹ Katzman. 16.

²² Mark I. Lichbach, "What Makes Rational Peasants Revolutionary?," *World Politics* 46, no. 3 (1994).

²³ P. and A. Hoeffler Collier, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004).

²⁴ David Malet, "The More Irregular the Service: Transnational Identity Communities and the Foreign Fighter," *Conference Papers – American Political Science Association* (2007).

(peasants) to rebel against societal systems that benefit others (elites). Why do foreign fighters risk their lives to participate in rebellion? He writes that:

Peasants are unconcerned with broad purposes, philosophical systems, political theories, and revolutionary organizations... Peasant actions are correspondingly designed to satisfy material self-interests. Thus, peasants will join a dissident group or participate in collective dissent because of particularistic benefits.²⁵

Essentially, individuals are not motivated by religious, political, or social ideas. Instead they are motivated by specific material self-interests tied to their actions. Therefore, peasants are induced to join rebellious organizations by specific material incentives. If we apply this theory to Al Qaeda in Iraq, AQI recruits joined for the material benefits they received from the organization, such as wages. Furthermore, dissident organizations such as Al Qaeda must “provide selective incentives over the long haul. This means, quite simply, that entrepreneurs offer activists the opportunity to turn their activism into a career.”²⁶ If the greed model is a valid model for Al Qaeda in Iraq recruitment, then it should be expected that AQI members were being provided material incentives to work for the organization and that there were career opportunities within the organization. It would also be expected that recruitment was most successful in countries with a low per capita GDP and high unemployment, as recruits from these countries would have more material incentive to leave their country and join Al Qaeda.

If the greed theory were true, it would be expected that most Al Qaeda recruits were from the lower classes of impoverished countries, and that they joined Al Qaeda for financial security. This would not explain the motivations of wealthy or even middle-class recruits. It also struggles to explain the incentives of suicide bombers for whom material incentives had little personal application. It is possible, however, that economic incentives for the families of suicide bombers justified their personal sacrifice according to this model. In 2002 for example, Saddam

²⁵ Lichbach. 389.

²⁶ Ibid. 408.

Hussein offered \$25,000 to the families of Iraqi suicide bombers who died in attacks in Israel.²⁷

The key to economic incentives is that sufficient funds must be available to pay for suicide bombers. With the number and frequency of suicide attacks in Iraq from 2006-2007, it is difficult to imagine Al Qaeda in Iraq providing large payments to suicide bombers, especially given the financial structure of the Sinjar Cell of AQI. Previous analysis of the Sinjar Records by Jacob Shapiro in 2008 reveals that 71.3% of the cell's income was donations from recruits.²⁸ Shapiro's findings are presented below:

Sinjar Cell Fundraising (US Dollars) ²⁹				
Document Number	Incoming Fighter Funds	Internal transfers	Local Donations/ Loot	Total Income
658021				
657988	\$52,790	\$22,000	\$735	\$75,525
657676	\$26,341		\$14,113	\$40,454
657680	\$3468	\$2000		\$5,468
657731	\$16,104	\$657	\$1,100	\$16,761
657695	\$2,220			\$3,320
Total	\$100,923	\$24,657	\$15,948	\$141,529
Percent of Total	71.3%	17.4%	11.3%	100%

This information shows that in the case of Al Qaeda in Iraq, the greed theory does not apply to suicide bombers. The organization was too dependent upon donations from recruits to provide reliable, significant, financial incentives to suicide bombers. Furthermore, the largest donors to AQI were suicide bombers.³⁰ If suicide bombers were acting out of the desire for financial compensation for their families, then it would be illogical to donate large sums to AQI when the money could be left with their families instead. The greed model is far more likely to apply to foreign fighters who are not suicide bombers but conventional insurgents, as they would

²⁷ John Esterbrook, "Salaries for Suicide Bombers: Iraq Pays \$25,000 to Families of 'Martyrs'," *CBS News World*, 3 April, 2002 2002.

²⁸ Brian Fishman, ed, *Bombers, Bank Accounts, & Bleedout: Al-Qa'ida's Road in and out of Iraq* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point 2008); Jacob Shapiro, in *Bombers, Bank Accounts, & Bleedout Al-Qa'ida's Road in and Out of Iraq*, ed. Brian Fishman (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2008). 73-74.

²⁹ Fishman, *Bombers, Bank Accounts, & Bleedout: Al-Qa'ida's Road in and out of Iraq*. 74.

³⁰ Ibid. 73-74.

require salaries, weapons, food, and lodging to be deployed within Iraq.³¹ While the greed theory could definitely explain why some poor recruits join Al Qaeda, it does not offer a complete explanation for all of Al Qaeda's recruitment.

Economic and Social Grievances

The grievance school of thought argues that unmet social and economic expectations among possible recruits increase the allure of joining a revolutionary organization such as an insurgent or terrorist group.³² Unmet expectations have two effects. First, they lower the cost of rebellion because recruits give up less to participate in rebellion.³³ Second, unmet expectations create unity in anger among the lower class against elites in power.³⁴ Collier and Hoeffler found no significant relationship between grievances regarding "inequality, political rights, ethnic polarization, and religious fractionalization," and rebellion, meaning that grievance incentives for joining an insurgent or terrorist group are almost always economic.³⁵

Grievances are difficult to measure in absolute terms. For example, Marc Sageman points out "it is not poverty that causes terrorism, even though terrorists claim to carry out their acts on behalf of their poor brethren – it is instead vicarious poverty. Terrorists justify their acts in terms of justice and fairness on behalf of the less fortunate – not from their own destitution."³⁶ The measurement of vicarious poverty is difficult, but if this were a valid model for AQI recruitment, then it would be expected that most recruits come from countries with high levels of poverty, unemployment, and corrupt governments. It would not be surprising if the majority of recruits were of the middle or even upper classes.

³¹ Matthew Levitt, "Foreign Fighters and Their Economic Impact: A Case Study of Syria and Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 3, no. 3 (2009).

³² Collier.

³³ Ibid. 19.

³⁴ Ibid. 2-3.

³⁵ Ibid. 5.

³⁶ Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

The difficulty in applying the grievance school of thought to AQI is that grievances in Iraq applied most directly to domestic insurgents and not international foreign fighters. The US invasion of Iraq created specific and quantifiable economic and social grievances within Iraq. The actions of domestic insurgent groups have direct affects against the organizations that are deemed responsible for economic grievances. In the case of Iraq, examples are the US armed forces and the Iraqi government. Foreign fighters from outside of Iraq have less of a claim to grievances, making it difficult to rectify this model with estimates that most suicide attacks within Iraq were the work of foreign fighters.³⁷ For grievances to be felt by an international base there must be a common identity among foreign fighters. This subject is addressed by the next theory, the identity school of thought.

Identity:

The identity school of thought argues that conceptions of identity determine the recruitment of foreign fighters to international terrorist organizations. More specifically, David Malet argues that the “successful recruitment of foreign fighters depends on appeals to preserve a transnational community to which the recruit is closely tied.”³⁸ The transnational concept of identity is key because it binds the cause of recruits across national borders, something that the greed and grievance models struggle to do. Malet further explains that it is not just the concept of identity that is important, but there must be a clear threat to this identity that will rally recruits:

If the conflict is concerned not merely with which individual will control the mechanisms of power, but is waged over the structures of society, such as ideology or religion, its output is more likely to lead to internationalization, as outside parties see the opportunity to advance their own agenda.³⁹

³⁷ *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*.

³⁸ Malet. 48.

³⁹ Ibid. 29.

According to Malet, the conflict of identity must transcend national structures to social or religious ideologies. The most effective of these ideologies as a recruitment tool is religion.⁴⁰

If this model is valid, Al Qaeda in Iraq must have a universal ideology that resonates in transnational communities in order to draw recruits, Jihadi Salafism. Jihadi Salafism is a radical form of Salafism, a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam that preaches a return to traditional Islamic values and the establishment of a regional caliphate in the Middle East.⁴¹ Jihadi Salafis “see the war in Iraq as more than the mere expulsion of occupation forces, but also as an opportunity to establish a genuine Islamic state based on the model of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions.”⁴² Beyond Iraq, “the jihadi salafis, especially Al Qaeda in Iraq, has [sic] visions of a regional jihad to overthrow existing regimes in the area, including Jordan and Saudi Arabia.”⁴³ Jihadi Salafis have a universalist approach to Islam, “they do not recognize borders between Muslims. An invasion of Iraq is an invasion against Muslims all over the world.”⁴⁴ Jihadi Salafis see the creation of an Islamic state in Iraq as a stepping-stone to a new caliphate in the Middle East.⁴⁵ Finally, many of the Jihadi Salafi leaders are humiliated from being driven out of Afghanistan by US forces and see the creation of an Islamic state in Iraq as redemption for their losses.⁴⁶ Zarqawi, the founder of AQI was a particularly strong follower of Jihadi Salafism and AQI uses networks of Salafi communities to recruit internationally.⁴⁷

Domenico Tosini provides an in-depth study of AQI recruit motivation in “Al-Qaeda’s Strategic Gamble: The Sociology of Suicide Bombings in Iraq.” Tosini concludes that there are

⁴⁰ Ibid. 3.

⁴¹ Mohammed Hafez, "Suicide Terrorism in Iraq: A Preliminary Assessment of the Quantitative Data and Documentary Evidence," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 6 (2006). 37-41.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid. 7.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 20.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 596.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 597.

three common motivating factors for AQI recruits: emotional elements such as “anger, outrage, and humiliation;” individual egoistic interests such as the desire to be idolized after death; and ideological convictions.⁴⁸

There is a great deal of overlap between the grievance and ideological school of thought. Humiliation, alienation, and revenge are all indicators of grievance-based motivations. For the purpose of this paper, grievance-based motivations will be limited to those that are not tied to the ideology of Jihadi Salafism. This is because identification with grievances associated with Jihadi Salafism requires identification with the ideology as a precondition. Therefore, because those grievances are dependent upon ideology, they are considered indicators of ideological motivation.

Proving that foreign fighters act out of ideological motivation is difficult, especially in the case of the Sinjar Records because recruit motivation was not catalogued. The motivations of suicide bombers are particularly difficult to divine, as “of all the suicide attacks in Iraq up to February 2007, 75% were unclaimed.”⁴⁹ However, if recruits joined in the absence of economic incentives necessary for the greed and grievance models, then it would strongly imply that ideology was the primary motivation of AQI foreign fighters.

Do recruits join individually or in groups?

Beyond motivation, the Sinjar Records can be used to evaluate whether Al Qaeda recruitment is top-down or bottom-up. In his book, *Leaderless Jihad*, Marc Sageman theorizes that “the global Islamist terrorist social movement forms through the spontaneous self-organization of informal ‘bunches of guys.’”⁵⁰ The “bunches of guys” are formed out of personal

⁴⁸ Domenico Tosini, "Al-Qaeda's Strategic Gamble: The Sociology of Suicide Bombings in Iraq," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 35, no. 2 (2010). 596.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 597.

⁵⁰ Sageman. 596.

relationships among friends, kin, and neighbors.⁵¹ Because recruits organize themselves as units, the role of leadership within Al Qaeda is limited and unnecessary as a whole.

Bruce Hoffman disagrees with Sageman, arguing that leadership within Al Qaeda is still important and central to the organization's recruitment and strategy.⁵² Hoffman argues that even though recruits may self-organize, they are still dependent upon Al Qaeda leadership for training, organization, and orders.⁵³ As a secondary objective, this paper will test if recruits from the same area join AQI at the same time. If recruits do not join AQI in groups, then Sageman's theory is not valid in this case. If they do join in groups, then there is the possibility that Sageman's theory is valid.

Data and Analysis:

The Sinjar Records were kept and recorded by Al Qaeda in Iraq to keep track of financial donations and keep a basic record of Al Qaeda members. The records were translated into English and released with analysis from the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point in 2008. The following is an example of a non-translated and translated Al Qaeda recruit profile:⁵⁴

⁵¹ Ibid. 278.

⁵² Bruce Hoffman, "The Myth of Grass-Roots Terrorism: Why Osama Bin Laden Still Matters," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008. 280-282.

⁵³ Ibid. 69.

⁵⁴ Felter. 7.

Figure 1: Sample Record in Original Arabic



استمارة شخصية

شؤون المجاهدين

الاسم	تركى بن عبدالمزیز بن إبراهيم
الكنية	أبو الوليد
المكان	الحزيرة - حي الموندي
الهاتف	أخوه 0502029449 المنزل 4256145
الموالتد	4-10 - 1406 هـ
المنسقى	يعقوب
المهنة في بلد	
المحل	مقاتل
الأمانات	جواز - 500 ريال - ساعة
تاريخ الدخول	3- شوال - 1427 هـ
طريق الدخول	أبو حمد
التوزيع	أبو خالد
وصفها الآخر	1-
	2-
	3-
	4-
	5-

Figure 2: Translated Sample Record

Document Number: NMEC-2007-657689
Type of Translation: Full
Date Completed: 15 September 2007

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[The Mujahidin Shura Council]

Personal Information Form

Name:	Turky Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Ibrahim
Alias:	Abu-al-Walid
Address:	Saudi Arabia, al-Sunaydi neighborhood
Phone Numbers:	home 4256145 His brother: 0502029449
Date of Birth:	22 DEC 1985
Coordinator:	Ya'qub
Occupation in Homeland:	
Duty:	fighter
Items Entrusted:	Passport - 500 Riyal and a watch
Date of Entry :	25 OCT 2006
Route of Entry:	Abu-Hamad
Assigned to:	Abu-Hamad
Last Will and Testament:	
1-	
2-	
3-	
4-	
5-	

Border Administrative Official
Shahin

Taken from page 7 of *Al-Qa'ida's Foreign Fighters in Iraq A First Look at the Sinjar Records* by Joseph Felter and Brian Fishman.

The Sinjar Records provide 595 profiles of foreign fighters.⁵⁵ While not a random sample, these records provide the largest single data set on Al Qaeda recruitment by a single Al Qaeda cell. Each translated profile contains a number of the following variables:

- Name
- Alias
- Previous Address
- Telephone number
- Birth date
- Arrival date (to the cell in Syria)
- Personal monetary contribution
- Valuables in possession
- Coordinator name
- How the insurgent met the coordinator

⁵⁵ Ibid.

- The route taken to Syria from their point of origin
- Their contact in Syria
- Physical description of the contact
- How well the contact treated them
- How much money they brought with them
- How much money was taken from them
- How the money was taken
- The names of other mujahedeen supporters they know and their phone numbers
- Their intended line of work (fighter, suicide bomber, other)
- Previous occupation
- A dated signature

As can be seen from the above sample, not every category is completed by every applicant. This is due to inconsistencies in the format of forms, and simply because recruits did not fill in all of the information.⁵⁶

Deficiencies of the Sinjar Records:

The Sinjar Records are not a random sample of the population and are only one case study of data that happened to be captured.⁵⁷ Profiles were not uniform, not always completed, and often completed incorrectly.⁵⁸ The Sinjar cell of Al Qaeda in Iraq is not necessarily representative of all Al Qaeda cells or even all cells within AQI. The Sinjar Records do not include Iraqis as recruits. Furthermore, Iraqis do not need to pass through Syria in order to enter their own country. This is concerning for this case study because recruits with most incentives from greed or grievance are be Iraqis and they are excluded from this study by virtue of case choice. The records are skewed geographically in that recruits from Kuwait and many from Saudi Arabia would be inclined to go directly into Iraq.⁵⁹ Finally, the dating of events is inaccurate because some recruits documented their arrival using Roman dating while others used Hijra (Islamic calendar) dating. This creates a slight inaccuracy in the category of arrival

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Clinton Watts, "Beyond Iraq & Afghanistan: What Foreign Fighter Data Reveals About the Future of Terrorism. Data & Discussion, Appendix A.," *Small Wars Journal* (2008). 2.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

times.⁶⁰ There is also a deficiency in data about the recruits other than what is provided within the records. For example, there is no reliable way to confirm whether a recruit who volunteered for a martyr operation actually completed his mission or if his family received payments as a result of his actions. These concerns should be taken into account while evaluating the Sinjar Records and it should be remembered that results from this dataset are tentative in their implications.

Analysis of the Sinjar Records:

Nationality of Foreign Fighters

Of the 595 records, 244 (41%) were Saudi Arabian, 112 (18.8%) were Libyan, 49 were Syrian (8.2%), 48 were from Yemen (8.1%), 43 were Algerian (7.2%), 36 were Moroccan (6.1%), 33 were Tunisian (5.5%) and 11 were Jordanian (1.9%) (First look at Sinjar Records, 8). The remaining foreign fighters were individuals from Belgium, Kuwait, Oman, England, and France and constitute 2.5% of foreign fighters (Sinjar Records). All foreign fighters were male. The results are displayed in the table below:

National Percent Contribution to Total Number of Foreign Fighters		
Country of Origin	Count	Percent
Saudi Arabia	244	41.0%
Libya	112	18.8%
Syria	49	8.2%
Yemen	48	8.1%
Algeria	43	7.2%
Morocco	36	6.1%
Tunisia	33	5.5%
Jordan	11	1.9%
Other	19	2.5%
Total	595	100.0%

⁶⁰ Ibid.

If the number of foreign fighters of each nationality is divided by the total population of their respective countries and multiplied by 1 million, then the contribution per 1 million citizens is produced. National populations were taken from the World Bank Development Indicators for the year 2007.⁶¹ This number functions as a per capita “AQI recruitment GDP.” The results are displayed in the table below:

Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens	
Country	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Libya	18.16
Saudi Arabia	10.07
Tunisia	3.23
Syria	2.44
Yemen	2.16
Jordan	1.94
Algeria	1.27
Morocco	1.15
Egypt	0.05

This table differs slightly from previous findings by Fishman and Felter because different sources of state populations were used. The mean of the 2006 and 2007 population totals provided by the World Bank are used here.

As seen in the above table, even though Saudi Arabia is the largest absolute foreign fighter contributor by far, Libya’s per capita foreign fighter contribution rate is nearly than twice that of Saudi Arabia. Aside from Libya and Saudi Arabia, there are no significant contributors on a foreign fighter per million citizens basis.

Foreign Fighter City of Origin:

Beyond nationality, the Sinjar Records also provide the city of origin of foreign fighters. The following chart shows the total contributions of the top ten contributing cities:

⁶¹ World Bank Development Indicators, in the World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator> (accessed 14 March, 2011).

Foreign Fighter Contribution by City		
City	Country	Total Foreign Fighter Contribution
Darnah	Libya	53
Riyadh	Saudi Arabia	51
Mecca	Saudi Arabia	43
Benghazi	Libya	20
Al Jawf	Saudi Arabia	17
Casablanca	Morocco	17
Jeddah	Saudi Arabia	15
Sana'a	Yemen	13
Dyr al-Zawr	Syria	12
Medina	Saudi Arabia	12

But total contributions can be misleading, as some of the smaller contributors may be more efficient at producing out foreign fighters. The rate of production can be measured by dividing the number of foreign fighters from a town by its population then multiplying by one million. The following table shows the rate of foreign fighters per million citizens for cities that contributed at least ten foreign fighters.⁶²

⁶² Fishman, *Bombers, Bank Accounts, & Bleedout: Al-Qa'ida's Road in and out of Iraq*. 37-41.

Rate of Foreign Fighter Contribution			
City	Country	Number of Fighters	Fighters Per Million Citizens
Darnah	Libya	53	663
Al Jawf	Saudi Arabia	16	44
Taif	Saudi Arabia	11	20
Benghazi	Libya	20	20
Sana'a	Yemen	14	15
Dayr al-Zawr (region)	Syria	11	11
Riyadh	Saudi Arabia	51	9
Mecca	Saudi Arabia	44	8
Medina	Saudi Arabia	11	7
Casablanca	Morocco	17	6
Jeddah	Saudi Arabia	15	5

All data provided by Joseph Felter and Brian Fishman in Pages 37-41 of "Bombers, Bank Accounts, and Bleedout: Al Qa'ida's Road in and Out of Iraq."

The above data shows that Darnah, Libya, is foreign fighter per citizen by far the most active contributor to AQI, contributing at a rate more than ten times greater than the next highest city, Al Jawf. Libya is also home to the third most prolific city, Benghazi. Saudi Arabia is home to six of the eleven largest contributing cities and the second most prolific, Al Jawf. Sana'a, Yemen and Casablanca, Morocco are the only countries on the list that are not in Libya or Saudi Arabia.

Age of Foreign Fighters:

The mean birth year of all foreign fighter recruits was 1982. The mean age of foreign fighters was 24-25 years old and the median age was 21-22 years old.⁶³ The age distribution of

⁶³ Ibid.

foreign fighters was heavily skewed towards youth, meaning that most of the foreign fighters were in their early twenties.

Occupation of Foreign Fighters in their Country of Origin:

The plurality of the 156 fighters who provided a previous occupation identified themselves as students (42.6%).⁶⁴ This is not surprising given the youth of the group as a whole. The remaining majority of respondents was divided among a wide range of jobs from laborers, to teachers, to doctors. No other previous occupation was statistically significant however.⁶⁵

Foreign Fighter Position within Al Qaeda

The records also provide the function that the recruits will perform within Al Qaeda. These jobs can be divided into three categories: suicide bombers (martyrs), soldiers (fighters), or other necessary jobs that keep the organization functioning (other). The following table displays the percent of foreign fighters that chose each of the three occupations by country:⁶⁶

Chosen Occupation by Country			
Country	Suicide bombers	Fighters	Other
Saudi Arabia	47.6% (70)	50.3% (74)	2.0% (3)
Libya	85.0% (51)	13.3% (8)	1.6% (1)
Morocco	91.6% (22)	8.3% (2)	0
Syria	65.5% (19)	31.0% (9)	3.1% (1)
Algeria	10.7% (5)	82.3% (28)	2.9% (1)
Yemen	45.9% (17)	54.1% (20)	0
Tunisia	41.7% (10)	58.3% (14)	0

Chosen occupation is the position recruits elected themselves to serve.

The above information shows that recruit motivations may vary widely by country. Saudi Arabian recruits were about equally likely to become fighters or martyrs, but Libyan and Moroccan recruits dramatically favored martyrdom. Recruits from Yemen and Tunisia slightly favored work as fighters while Algerians favored it intensely. Diversification in the chosen

⁶⁴ Ibid. 42.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 44.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

occupation of fighters may indicate that there is no international recruitment model and that recruitment motivations vary by state. This data does not support any of the three models being tested.

Foreign Fighter Recruitment Methods:

A very limited number of recruits (152) commented on the method through which they were introduced to Al Qaeda. Previous work on the records by Felter and Fishman has shown that 52 (33.5%) recruits were introduced through a “brother” (a member of Al Qaeda). 45 (29%) were introduced through a friend. The next most common methods of recruitment are through a relative or neighbor. The following chart provided by Felter and Fishman shows the count of recruitment methods:⁶⁷

Recruitment Methods	
Method of Introduction	Percentage of Records
Through a “brother” (Al Qaeda Member)	33.5% (52)
Through a friend	29.0% (45)
Through a relative	7.1% (11)
Through a neighbor	5.8% (9)
Through the Internet	3.9% (6)
Through work	3.9% (6)
A new acquaintance	3.3% (5)
Through school	2.6% (4)
Mecca (the Hajj)	2.0% (3)
Through a mosque	2.0% (3)
Other	(8)

75.4% of recruitment is done through personal connections between Al Qaeda members, friends, relatives, or neighbors. This shows a surprisingly high dependency on personal networking as a recruitment method. While this information does not directly support any of the schools of thought, it has interesting implications for the identity recruitment model. Supporters of the identity model would assume that most recruitment takes place through school or mosques as

⁶⁷ Ibid. 56.

these institutions are well suited to instilling radical ideologies. However, the fact that these areas are not the primary centers of recruitment does not mean that the ideology school of thought is wrong. Successful interpersonal networking implies that these individuals share common experiences, friendship, and worldviews. A common ideology among recruits is plausible.

Economic Indicators:

In order to evaluate whether greed or grievances are primary motivating factors for AQI foreign fighters, the total foreign fighter contribution and per capita contribution of states will be tested against World Bank indicators for GDP and GDP per capita in addition to the following World Bank economic indicators for employment: the employment to population ratio of males ages 15 and older, the total employment to population ratio of persons 15 and older, the male and total population ratios of persons ages 15-24, the age dependency ratio of both the young and old as a percent of the working-age population, and the labor participation rate of males and total population aged 15 and older. These indicators will test to see if unemployment, especially among young men, serves as a motivation for AQI recruits. Because the time period for the Sinjar Records is between August 2006 and August 2007, taking the mean value of the 2006 and 2007 indicators created appropriate World Bank Indicators.⁶⁸ For the purpose of this test and all other tests, only Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, and Tunisia will be included because they are the only states to provide at least thirty foreign fighters.

⁶⁸ World Bank Development Indicators.

GDP vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment (2006-2007)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
GDP (constant 2000 US\$)	Pearson Correlation	.912*	.321
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.483
	N	7	7
GDP (current US\$)	Pearson Correlation	.901*	.300
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.514
	N	7	7
GDP growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	-.357	.262
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.432	.571
	N	7	7
GDP per capita (constant 2000 US\$)	Pearson Correlation	.928*	.820*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.024
	N	7	7
GDP per capita (current US\$)	Pearson Correlation	.950*	.779*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.039
	N	7	7
GDP per capita growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	-.409	.124
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.362	.792
	N	7	7
GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)	Pearson Correlation	.936*	.750*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.052
	N	7	7
GDP per person employed (constant 1990 PPP \$)	Pearson Correlation	.537	-.213
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.214	.647
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Economic Indicators vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment (2006-2007)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Employment to population ratio, 15+, male (%)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.562 .189 7	.402 .371 7
Employment to population ratio, 15+, total (%)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.604 .151 7	.422 .345 7
Employment to population ratio, ages 15-24, male (%)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.047 .920 7	.005 .991 7
Employment to population ratio, ages 15-24, total (%)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.301 .511 7	-.236 .611 7
Age dependency ratio (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.072 .878 7	-.215 .643 7
Age dependency ratio, old (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.520 .232 7	-.274 .552 7
Age dependency ratio, young (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.003 .996 7	-.163 .727 7
Labor participation rate, male (% of male population ages 15+)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.389 .389 7	.179 .701 7
Labor participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15+)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.373 .409 7	.169 .718 7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data presented above shows a strong positive correlation between the number of foreign fighters contributed and GDP, a strong positive correlation between the per capita contribution of foreign fighters and GDP per capita, and a weak positive correlation between the employment to population ratio of persons 15 and older as a percent of the total population. The strong positive correlation between GDP and foreign fighters contributed was skewed because Saudi Arabia had by far the highest GDP, GDP per capita, and foreign fighter contribution. Therefore, all analysis of GDP in terms of total recruitment is limited in its application. However, the strong positive correlation between GDP per capita and foreign fighter

contribution per capita means that as a state's GDP per capita increases, so does the number of foreign fighters per million citizens. This is counterintuitive to the greed theory because this means that states with greater economic opportunity provide more foreign fighters. This conclusion is limited however, because wealth is concentrated in an elite few in Saudi Arabia as well as all of the other countries tested. The weak positive correlation between foreign fighter contribution and the employment to population ratio of men aged 15 and older also disputes the greed model. Countries with greater male employment were higher contributors of foreign fighters per capita. There was no significant correlation between any economic grievances and foreign fighter recruitment.

What if economic grievances are not immediate, but build over years? The following tables test the same economic indicators of grievances in the time periods of 2001-2007 and 1996-1997. The 2001-2007 timeline provides the averages of these indicators over those six years in order to provide a long-term perspective on these grievances. The 1996-1997 table tests grievances ten years before foreign fighters enlisted in Al Qaeda to see if economic grievances during youth correlate to enlistment in AQI in the future. If the median age of the foreign fighters is 21-22, most of the fighters will be 11-12 years old at the time.

Foreign Fighter Recruitment vs. Economic Indicators (2001-2007)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Employment to population ratio, 15+, total (%)	Pearson Correlation	-.760	-.087
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	.852
	N	7	7
Employment to population ratio, ages 15-24, male (%)	Pearson Correlation	.107	.042
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.820	.929
	N	7	7
Employment to population ratio, ages 15-24, total (%)	Pearson Correlation	-.795	-.325
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	.477
	N	7	7
Age dependency ratio (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation	-.090	-.284
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.848	.537
	N	7	7
Age dependency ratio, old (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation	-.530	-.335
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.221	.463
	N	7	7
Age dependency ratio, young (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation	-.020	-.223
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.965	.631
	N	7	7
Labor participation rate, male (% of male population ages 15+)	Pearson Correlation	-.893	-.308
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.501
	N	7	7
Labor participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15+)	Pearson Correlation	-.846	-.268
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	.561
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows a very weak negative correlation between economic grievances and foreign fighter recruitment per capita. Correlations between total recruitment and economic indicators will be ignored because they are drastically skewed towards Saudi Arabia. Long-term grievances could play a slight factor in recruitment, but they are not a primary motivating factor.

Foreign Fighter Recruitment vs. Economic Indicators (1996-1997)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Employment to population ratio, 15+, male (%)	Pearson Correlation	.570	.419
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.181	.350
	N	7	7
Employment to population ratio, 15+, total (%)	Pearson Correlation	.753	.530
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.051	.221
	N	7	7
Employment to population ratio, ages 15-24, male (%)	Pearson Correlation	.003	-.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.995	.976
	N	7	7
Employment to population ratio, ages 15-24, total (%)	Pearson Correlation	-.281	-.199
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.542	.669
	N	7	7
Age dependency ratio (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation	-.117	-.365
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.802	.420
	N	7	7
Age dependency ratio, old (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation	-.598	-.482
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.156	.274
	N	7	7
Age dependency ratio, young (% of working-age population)	Pearson Correlation	-.043	-.291
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.927	.527
	N	7	7
Labor participation rate, male (% of male population ages 15+)	Pearson Correlation	.163	-.259
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.728	.574
	N	7	7
Labor participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15+)	Pearson Correlation	.317	-.097
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.489	.836
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The weak correlation between the employment to population ratio of men ages 15 and older to foreign fighters per million citizens again disputes the greed theory as increased economic opportunity corresponds with increased foreign fighter contribution per capita. The weak negative correlation between the age dependency ratio of the old and foreign fighter contribution per capita appears to be an anomaly because there was no corresponding relationship between foreign fighter contribution and the age dependency ratio of the young. There was no significant correlation between state foreign fighter contribution and other economic indicators.

Foreign Fighter Contributions:

Recruits sometimes brought contributions for Al Qaeda in Iraq with them. These contributions ranged anywhere from an mp3 player or watch to thousands of dollars. The following table shows the mean contribution for foreign fighters from each country of origin adjusted to U.S. dollars. Material contributions, though valuable, are not included because it is impossible to determine their worth from the information available:

Foreign Fighter Contributions by Country in US\$			
Country	Total Contribution	Mean Contribution	Mean Contribution among Contributors
Algeria	\$1,867.00	\$45.54	\$311.17
Libya	\$3,140.00	\$28.29	\$130.83
Morocco	\$2,469.00	\$68.58	\$224.45
Saudi Arabia	\$59,545.00	\$250.19	\$875.66
Syria	\$701.00	\$15.24	\$63.73
Tunisia	\$10,311.00	\$312.45	\$1,288.88
Yemen	\$2,980.00	\$66.22	\$298.00

The above table shows that the largest contributors on average are from Tunisia and Saudi Arabia. These two countries also provided the greatest absolute contributions by far.

Economic Significance of Foreign Fighter Contributions:

The following table shows mean contribution AQI fighters that made donations as a percent of annual GDP per capita for the year 2007.⁶⁹ This data shows the relative impact of these contributions in the context of international economic disparity. As a point of reference, the equivalent amount of the contribution in US dollars is provided using the annual US GDP per capita of \$45,989.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ibid. 45.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Fighter Donations as % of Annual GDP per Capita				
Country	Mean Contribution Of Contributors	GDP per capita (current US\$)	Mean Contribution as Percent of annual GDP per Capita	Contribution Adjusted To US GDP per Capita
Algeria	\$311.17	\$3,762.06	8.27%	\$3,801.79
Libya	\$130.83	\$10,491.65	1.25%	\$569.84
Morocco	\$224.45	\$2,234.41	10.05%	\$4,239.92
Saudi Arabia	\$875.66	\$15,454.11	5.67%	\$3,237.72
Syria	\$63.73	\$1,861.92	3.42%	\$1,728.99
Tunisia	\$1,288.88	\$3,270.25	39.41%	\$18,112.93
Yemen	\$298.00	\$927.18	32.14%	\$15,425.93

It is important to remember that GDP per capita measurements are inflated, especially in Middle Eastern and North African countries because of unequal distributions of wealth in society. In reality, the significance of donations was probably far greater than estimated in the above table. Surprisingly, the two greatest sources of AQI recruits, Saudi Arabia and Libya, gave relatively little in comparison to Tunisia and Yemen.

Is there a difference between worth of donations between fighters and suicide bombers? The following table shows the mean contributions of suicide bombers and fighters who made contributions to AQI and their value as a percent of annual GDP per capita.

Suicide Bomber vs. Fighter Contribution				
Country	Mean Contribution Suicide Bomber	Ratio of Mean Contribution among Suicide Bombers to GDP per Capita	Mean Fighter Contribution	Ratio of Mean Contribution among Fighters to GDP Per Capita
Algeria	\$51.40	1.37%	\$23.39	0.62%
Libya	\$42.10	0.40%	\$27.38	0.26%
Morocco	\$87.57	3.92%	\$0.00	0.00%
Saudi Arabia	\$326.43	2.11%	\$281.51	1.82%
Syria	\$7.50	0.40%	\$44.44	2.39%
Tunisia	\$934.44	28.57%	\$89.00	2.72%
Yemen	\$98.82	10.66%	\$47.37	5.11%

In every instance except Algeria, the mean contributions of suicide bombers were greater than the mean contributions of foreign fighters. This strongly calls into question the greed school of thought, because if suicide bombers were acting out of economic incentive, they would be trading their life for financial security for whomever they leave behind. If they were contributing more on average to AQI than fighters, then something else is motivating them other than economic incentives.

Corruption as a form of grievance:

Corruption and nepotism provide cause for grievances against national governments that perhaps encourage foreign fighters to leave their homes and take up arms. Is it possible that ineffective government corresponds with high per capita foreign fighter contribution? The following tables show the correlation between foreign fighter per capita recruitment and the 2007 Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International, and the 2006-2007 Freedom House scores (scores represent the mean score for the years 2006 and 2007):⁷¹

⁷¹ "Freedom in the World Comparative and Historical Data", Freedom House <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=439> (accessed April 24 2011). AND "Corruption Perceptions Index," ed. Transparency International (Transparency International, 20006-2007).

Corruption Perceptions Index Scores	
Algeria	3
Libya	2.5
Morocco	3.5
Saudi Arabia	3.4
Syria	2.4
Tunisia	4.2
Yemen	2.5

Corruption Perceptions Index vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Corruption Perceptions Index	Pearson Correlation	.026	-.231
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.955	.618
	N	7	7

Freedom House Scores		
Country	Political Rights	Civil Liberties
Algeria	6	5
Libya	7	7
Morocco	5	4
Saudi Arabia	7	6
Syria	7	6.5
Tunisia	6	5
Yemen	5	5

Freedom House Scores vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Political Rights	Pearson Correlation	.580	.636
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.173	.125
	N	7	7
Civil Liberties	Pearson Correlation	.464	.745
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.294	.055
	N	7	7

The above table shows that there is no significant correlation between foreign fighters per million citizens and the Corruption Perceptions Index. There is a moderate positive correlation between foreign fighter contribution and political rights and civil liberties. As violations against civil liberties and political rights increased, so did foreign fighter contributions per capita. This conclusion is only tentative because Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen all had terrible corruption scores. If there is a threshold amount of corruption necessary to create sufficient grievances to drive recruits to turn to AQI, then it is quite possible that these states were already above the threshold. Further testing is necessary to determine the relationship between grievances pertaining to corruption and governance and foreign fighter recruitment. The following tables test the World Bank's Worldwide governance indicators against foreign fighter recruitment.⁷²

⁷² World Bank Development Indicators.

Governance Indicators vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment (2006-2007)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Control of Corruption: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.177	-.247
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.704	.594
	N	7	7
Control of Corruption: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.206	-.240
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.657	.604
	N	7	7
Government Effectiveness: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.044	-.266
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.926	.564
	N	7	7
Government Effectiveness: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.098	-.242
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.835	.601
	N	7	7
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.142	.595
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.762	.159
	N	7	7
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.093	.623
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.842	.135
	N	7	7
Regulatory Quality: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.179	-.277
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.700	.548
	N	7	7
Regulatory Quality: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.229	-.229
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.622	.621
	N	7	7
Rule of Law: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.328	-.038
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.473	.936
	N	7	7
Rule of Law: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.315	-.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.491	.889
	N	7	7
Voice and Accountability: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	-.525	-.765
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.227	.045
	N	7	7
Voice and Accountability: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	-.517	-.717
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.234	.070
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data shows a moderate correlation between political stability and absence of violence and foreign fighter recruitment and a strong correlation between voice and accountability and foreign fighter recruitment. The moderately strong relationship between political stability and absence of violence and foreign fighter per capita recruitment supports the grievance model. The

strong correlation between voice and accountability (citizen participation in government and government accountability) also supports the grievance model. However, the validity of the grievance model to Al Qaeda in Iraq recruitment is limited because Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen all had terrible corruption scores. It is possible that corruption and bad governance is a precondition to Al Qaeda recruitment, but low scores in all states indicate that grievances alone were not responsible for AQI recruitment.

The following tables will examine indicators of corruption and bad governance over the same time periods previously used to evaluate economic indicators:

Governance Indicators vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment 2002-2007 (No data available for the year 2001)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Control of Corruption: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.195	-.220
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.676	.635
	N	7	7
Control of Corruption: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.200	-.242
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.666	.601
	N	7	7
Government Effectiveness: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	-.031	-.268
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.948	.562
	N	7	7
Government Effectiveness: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.024	-.273
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.959	.554
	N	7	7
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.164	.484
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.726	.271
	N	7	7
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.115	.501
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.806	.252
	N	7	7
Regulatory Quality: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.195	-.392
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.675	.385
	N	7	7
Regulatory Quality: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.251	-.289
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.587	.530
	N	7	7
Rule of Law: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.307	-.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.504	.916
	N	7	7
Rule of Law: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.296	-.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.520	.898
	N	7	7
Voice and Accountability: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	-.558	-.785
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.193	.037
	N	7	7
Voice and Accountability: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	-.583	-.754
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.170	.050
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Governance Indicators vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment 1996 (1997 Unavailable)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Control of Corruption: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	-.597	-.647
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.157	.116
	N	7	7
Control of Corruption: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	^a	^a
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.
	N	0	0
Government Effectiveness: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	-.453	-.636
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.308	.125
	N	7	7
Government Effectiveness: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	^a	^a
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.
	N	0	0
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.100	-.139
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.831	.766
	N	7	7
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	-.011	-.232
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.981	.617
	N	7	7
Regulatory Quality: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	-.201	-.629
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.666	.130
	N	7	7
Regulatory Quality: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	^a	^a
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.
	N	0	0
Rule of Law: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	.344	-.177
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.450	.704
	N	7	7
Rule of Law: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	.320	-.191
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.484	.682
	N	7	7
Voice and Accountability: Estimate	Pearson Correlation	-.572	-.693
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	.084
	N	7	7
Voice and Accountability: Percentile Rank	Pearson Correlation	-.566	-.667
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.185	.102
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above tables show nearly identical relationships between foreign fighter recruitment per capita and political stability and absence of violence and voice and accountability. The grievance model is limitedly supported by this data.

Demographic Indicators:

Perhaps grievances linked to rapid urbanization and population growth are partially responsible as motivations for foreign fighters. The following table tests foreign fighter contribution per capita against the World Bank Indicators: annual population growth (%), crude birth rate per 1,000 people, the percent of the population ages 0-14%, the percent of the population ages 15-64%, the percent of the population in urban areas (defined as agglomeration of more than 1 million people), the percent of the urban population in a state's largest city, urban population as a percent of total state population, and annual urban population growth.

Cumulatively, these factors will determine if urbanization or population growth rates and their consequences provide grievances upon which foreign fighters act. The following tables provide data for the time periods 2006-2007, 2001-2007, and 1996-1997.

Demographic Indicators vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment (2006-2007)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Population, total	Pearson Correlation	-.088	-.641
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.851	.121
	N	7	7
Population growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	.358	.213
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.431	.647
	N	7	7
Population in largest city	Pearson Correlation	.558	-.161
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.193	.731
	N	7	7
Birth rate, crude (per 1,000 people)	Pearson Correlation	-.003	-.071
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.996	.880
	N	7	7
Population ages 0-14 (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.072	-.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.878	.808
	N	7	7
Population ages 15-64 (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.039	.201
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.933	.666
	N	7	7
Population in the largest city (% of urban population)	Pearson Correlation	.228	.208
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.622	.654
	N	7	7
Population in urban agglomerations of more than 1 million (% of total population)	Pearson Correlation	.716	.269
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.110	.607
	N	6	6
Urban population (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.650	.646
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.114	.117
	N	7	7
Urban population growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	.063	-.134
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.894	.775
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Demographic Indicators vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment (2002-2007, 2001 unavailable)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Population, total	Pearson Correlation	-.103	-.641
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.827	.121
	N	7	7
Population growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	.272	.160
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.554	.732
	N	7	7
Population in largest city	Pearson Correlation	.538	-.160
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.213	.732
	N	7	7
Birth rate, crude (per 1,000 people)	Pearson Correlation	.057	-.051
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.904	.913
	N	7	7
Population ages 0-14 (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.053	-.178
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.910	.702
	N	7	7
Population ages 15-64 (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.061	.285
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.897	.536
	N	7	7
Population in the largest city (% of urban population)	Pearson Correlation	.228	.247
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.623	.593
	N	7	7
Population in urban agglomerations of more than 1 million (% of total population)	Pearson Correlation	.722	.325
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.067	.476
	N	7	7
Urban population (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.647	.656
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.116	.110
	N	7	7
Urban population growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	-.018	-.189
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.970	.686
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Demographic Indicators vs. Foreign Fighter Recruitment (1996-1997)

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighters Per Million Citizens
Population, total	Pearson Correlation	-.134	-.634
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.774	.126
	N	7	7
Population growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	.245	.050
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.596	.916
	N	7	7
Population in largest city	Pearson Correlation	.458	-.158
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.301	.735
	N	7	7
Birth rate, crude (per 1,000 people)	Pearson Correlation	.095	-.153
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.840	.744
	N	7	7
Population ages 0-14 (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.037	-.239
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.938	.605
	N	7	7
Population ages 15-64 (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.095	.380
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.839	.400
	N	7	7
Population in the largest city (% of urban population)	Pearson Correlation	.193	.358
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.679	.431
	N	7	7
Population in urban agglomerations of more than 1 million (% of total population)	Pearson Correlation	.718	.381
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.069	.399
	N	7	7
Urban population (% of total)	Pearson Correlation	.656	.688
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.109	.087
	N	7	7
Urban population growth (annual %)	Pearson Correlation	-.115	-.307
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.807	.503
	N	7	7

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The only significant relationships between demographic indicators of grievances and foreign fighter recruitment are a negative correlation between total population size recruitment, and urban population as a percent of the total population and recruitment. These factors in the absence of other indicators provide no insight into AQI recruitment and may be coincidental. Otherwise, there are no significant relationships between foreign fighter contributions per million citizens and any of the World Bank demographic indicators. This evidence strongly suggests that demographic factors play a minimal role in the recruitment of AQI members and further discredits the grievance model of recruitment.

More research is needed below the state level to determine the effects grievances have on foreign fighter recruitment. Previous analysis of the Sinjar Records at the city-level by Siamak Kordestani of Georgetown concluded that economic and demographic indicators had minimal effects upon AQI recruitment and that instead, recruiting was a result of social interactions and networks.⁷³ This further supports the above conclusion that although grievances play a role in recruitment, they are not the primary motivational force.

The Effects of Al Qaeda in Iraq

Arrival times can also be used to determine the approximate effect of Al Qaeda within Iraq. If it is assumed that recruits fulfilled their roles as fighters and suicide bombers within Iraq, then spikes in recruitment should be followed by spikes in violence within Iraq. Violence will be measured in two ways: American troop casualties within Iraq (provided by iCasualty and UMDIC), and Iraqi civilian casualties within Iraq (provided by Iraq Body Count), and suicide bombings in Iraq (provided by Iraq Body Count and NCTC). If Al Qaeda uses the recruits to primarily attack U.S. troops within Iraq, then it would be expected that spike in recruitment will be followed by spikes in U.S. casualties. iCasualties is limited in its application because it does

⁷³ Kordestani. 32.

not recognize suicide bombings as a specific troop casualty, therefore troop deaths related to suicide bombings could be lost in the midst of other types of casualties.⁷⁴ Iraq Body Count is limited in its application because of its irregular coding.⁷⁵ Some events are coded insufficiently to be of use while others attribute the deaths of civilians to non-insurgent groups such as US forces. At other times, events are chronicled in the incorrect month. These incidences were removed or resolved as best as possible and only incidents with clear links to insurgents or terrorists remained. To compensate for the inadequacies of those two datasets, the National Counterterrorism Center's Worldwide Incident Tracking System (WITS) was used to find all suicide bombings in Iraq from August 2006 to August 2008 and the Department of Defense's casualty reports were used to identify US combat casualties.⁷⁶ Hopefully, at least one of the three datasets will provide sufficient data to determine the relationship between AQI recruitment and incidences of violence in Iraq. If recruits are used to primarily attack civilians, then spikes in civilian deaths will follow spikes in recruitment. If both civilian and US military personnel are targets, then casualties among civilians and soldiers should rise with increases in AQI recruitment. The following table shows the correlation between changes in AQI recruitment levels and US casualties in Iraq, civilian casualties within Iraq, and the frequency of attacks on civilians within Iraq. Categories labeled as percent are the percent difference between recruitment levels in the current month and the previous month as a percent of the previous month. Civilian incidents are defined as attacks on civilians while suicide attacks are defined by the act of suicide with no target requirements:

⁷⁴"Operation Iraqi Freedom", Iraq Coalition Casualty Count <http://icasualties.org/Iraq/IraqiDeaths.aspx>.

⁷⁵ "Iraq Body Count", Iraq Body Count <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/> (accessed 18 April 2011).

⁷⁶ "Worldwide Incidents Tracking System," (National Counterterrorism Center, 2011). AND "Military Casualty Information," ed. Department of Defense (2011).

Correlation Between Changes in Foreign Fighter Recruitment Levels and Levels of Violence in Iraq

		Foreign Fighter Count	Foreign Fighter Percent increase
iCasualties.org	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.030 .924 13	-.245 .444 12
US Casualties Percent Increase	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.474 .119 12	-.334 .289 12
US Combat Deaths (DoD)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.013 .967 13	-.111 .732 12
US Combat Deaths % Increase (DoD)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.420 .174 12	-.213 .506 12
Civilian Incidents (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.165 .590 13	-.021 .949 12
Civilian Incidents Percent Increase (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.009 .977 12	-.037 .909 12
Civilian Casualties (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.456 .117 13	.214 .505 12
Civilian Casualties Percent Increase (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.180 .576 12	.178 .581 12
Suicide Attacks (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.201 .511 13	-.360 .250 12
Suicide Attacks Percent Increase (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.346 .270 12	-.113 .727 12
Suicide Casualties (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.117 .703 13	-.411 .184 12
Suicide Casualties Percent Increase (IBC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.035 .913 12	-.251 .431 12
Suicide Bombings in Iraq (NCTC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.370 .213 13	-.230 .472 12
Suicide Bombings Percent Change by Month (NCTC)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.213 .507 12	.116 .719 12

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

These tests show a weak negative correlation between total foreign fighter recruitment by month and US soldier deaths, meaning that as foreign fighter recruitment rose, US casualties dropped. This most likely indicates that US soldiers were not the targets of AQI attacks. At the same time, a weak positive correlation between total recruitment and civilian deaths means that as recruitment rose, so did civilian casualties. Finally, and most puzzling, there was a very weak correlation between total recruitment and suicide bombings in Iraq, meaning that as recruitment rose, suicide bombings actually decreased. This could mean that suicide bombings became more effective as fewer bombings produced greater casualties or that AQI in Iraq was not the primary organization behind suicide bombings in Iraq. This data does not support the assessment in 2007 that Al Qaeda in Iraq was responsible for 80-90% of suicide bombings in the country.⁷⁷

This test is not realistic however; as it assumes that foreign fighter recruits are deployed in the same month that they arrive. AQI most likely has a training period before deployment that would nullify the results of the previous correlation test. Therefore, increases in foreign fighters recruited will be compared to increases in violence with staggered gaps between arrival and deployment. The following table lists these gaps as Month1, Month2, Month x , etc. The number after month means that changes in recruitment levels will be compared to changes in violence x months after the recruits arrive. For example, if there is a spike in recruitment in August 2006, and the set is Month 2, then changes in recruitment levels will be compared to changes in the level of violence in October 2006. The following tables show the correlation between AQI recruitment and violence in Iraq taking into account possible gaps between arrival and deployment:

⁷⁷ Bruno.

Correlation Between Foreign Fighter Recruitment Levels and Levels of Violence in Iraq with Delays for Training

		US Casualties in Iraq iCasualties.org	US Combat Deaths (Dod)	Civilian Incidents (IBC)	Civilian Casualties (IBC)	Suicide Attacks (IBC)	Suicide Casualties (IBC)	Suicide Bombings in Iraq (NCTC)
Foreign Fighter Count	Pearson Correlation	-.030	-.013	.165	.456	-.201	-.117	-.370
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.924	.967	.590	.117	.511	.703	.213
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month1	Pearson Correlation	-.076	-.244	-.346	-.268	-.192	.189	-.184
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.805	.421	.247	.377	.529	.537	.547
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 2	Pearson Correlation	-.419	-.475	-.125	-.269	-.391	-.154	-.409
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.154	.101	.684	.374	.187	.615	.165
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 3	Pearson Correlation	-.322	-.335	-.569	-.409	-.245	-.033	-.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.283	.264	.043	.166	.420	.914	.712
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 4	Pearson Correlation	-.352	-.291	-.223	-.198	-.217	-.331	.086
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.238	.336	.465	.516	.477	.270	.779
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 5	Pearson Correlation	-.269	-.165	-.274	-.242	.386	-.172	.248
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.373	.591	.364	.425	.193	.573	.414
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 6	Pearson Correlation	.106	.216	.181	.252	-.063	-.137	-.220
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.730	.479	.554	.407	.839	.656	.470
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 7	Pearson Correlation	.184	.236	-.051	.109	.055	.149	.187
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.548	.437	.869	.723	.858	.627	.541
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 8	Pearson Correlation	.102	.144	.194	.252	.408	-.042	.266
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.740	.639	.526	.405	.167	.892	.379
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 9	Pearson Correlation	.039	-.027	.005	.028	-.042	.576	-.102
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.901	.930	.986	.927	.891	.039	.739
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 10	Pearson Correlation	.065	-.079	.001	-.007	-.293	.024	-.293
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.833	.797	.997	.982	.331	.937	.331
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Month 11	Pearson Correlation	-.123	-.252	-.187	-.366	-.092	-.231	-.166
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.689	.407	.541	.218	.764	.447	.589
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13

Month 12	Pearson Correlation	-.379	-.412	-.245	-.585	-.434	-.425	-.557
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.201	.161	.420	.036	.139	.148	.048
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation Between Foreign Fighter Recruitment Levels and Levels of Violence in Iraq with Delays for Training

		US Casualties Percent Increase (iCasualties)	US Combat Deaths % Change (DoD)	Civilian Incidents Percent Increase (IBC)	Civilian Casualties Percent Increase (IBC)	Suicide Attacks Percent Increase (IBC)	Suicide Casualties Percent Increase (IBC)	Suicide Bombings Percent Change by Month (NCTC)
Foreign Fighter Percent increase	Pearson Correlation	-.334	-.213	-.037	.178	-.113	-.251	.116
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.289	.506	.909	.581	.727	.431	.719
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 1 %	Pearson Correlation	.067	.019	-.342	-.141	.427	.784	.637
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.837	.953	.276	.663	.166	.003	.026
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 2 %	Pearson Correlation	-.037	-.021	.465	.125	-.034	-.058	-.023
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.910	.949	.128	.699	.916	.857	.943
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 3 %	Pearson Correlation	.484	.563	.006	.102	.162	-.079	-.160
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.111	.057	.984	.753	.615	.808	.619
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 4 %	Pearson Correlation	.389	.470	.568	.675	-.340	-.195	-.164
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.211	.123	.054	.016	.280	.543	.610
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 5 %	Pearson Correlation	-.204	-.183	-.353	-.445	.422	.069	.530
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.525	.569	.260	.147	.171	.832	.076
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 6 %	Pearson Correlation	-.092	-.105	.423	.343	-.141	.142	-.430
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.776	.746	.171	.275	.661	.660	.163
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 7 %	Pearson Correlation	.133	-.063	-.422	-.324	-.390	.081	-.150
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.680	.845	.172	.305	.210	.801	.641
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 8 %	Pearson Correlation	-.126	-.097	.135	-.077	.349	-.386	.165
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.697	.765	.676	.811	.266	.215	.608
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 9 %	Pearson Correlation	-.277	-.162	-.029	-.132	-.050	-.060	-.097
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.383	.614	.928	.683	.878	.854	.765
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 10 %	Pearson Correlation	-.074	-.122	-.004	.073	-.371	-.279	-.382
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.819	.706	.990	.821	.236	.380	.220
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12

Month 11 %	Pearson Correlation	-.214	-.267	-.248	-.040	.466	.826	.583
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.504	.402	.436	.901	.127	.001	.046
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Month 12 %	Pearson Correlation	.377	.655	-.036	-.147	.029	-.152	-.109
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.227	.021	.911	.648	.929	.636	.736
	N	12	12	12	12	12	12	12

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

While there are moderate correlations between foreign fighter recruitment and a multitude of variables, the sheer number of weak correlations across a wide timeframe makes it difficult to draw conclusions. A time gap of three months did seem to produce weak negative correlations between foreign fighter recruitment and US casualties in Iraq, attacks on civilians, and suicide attacks. This could mean that recruits were most deployed and most active in their first two months in Iraq but the correlations were so scattered and weak that this conclusion is purely speculative. This information tentatively indicates that too much significance has been given to the role of AQI within Iraq and perhaps AQI did not pose as great a threat as attributed. However, this assertion is dependent upon many assumptions. First, this assumes that the Sinjar cell was typical of all AQI cells. It is possible that AQI recruitment in other cells was more influential in affecting violence levels in Iraq. Second, the used datasets only took into account the number of suicide attacks within Iraq and not the number of suicide bombers. It is possible that AQI used multiple suicide bombers per attack meaning that these indicators underestimated the level of AQI influence. This would agree with previous assessments that since the death of Zarqawi, AQI has resorted towards fewer, but larger, suicide attacks.⁷⁸

Bunches of Guys Theory:

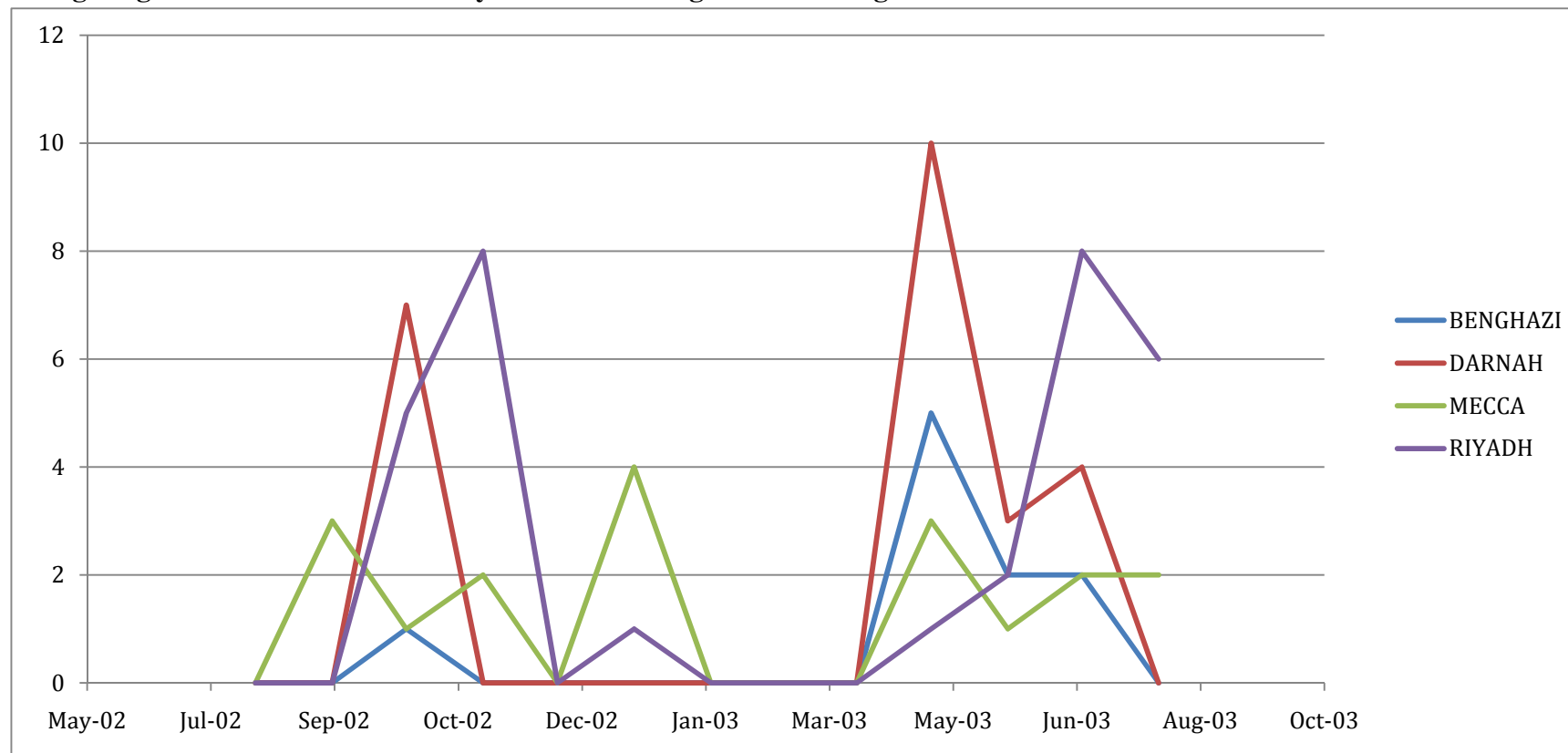
Did the AQI recruits of the Sinjar Records join as individuals or in groups? This question can be answered by observing the fluctuations in the arrival of foreign fighters from their hometowns. If they join as part of a group, it would be expected that recruitment levels are dynamic, rising and falling as large parties depart over time. If recruits join individually, then it would be expected that the recruitment levels of each town are more stable with individuals joining as they please. In order to better observe fluctuations in the arrival foreign fighters, cities

⁷⁸ *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq.*

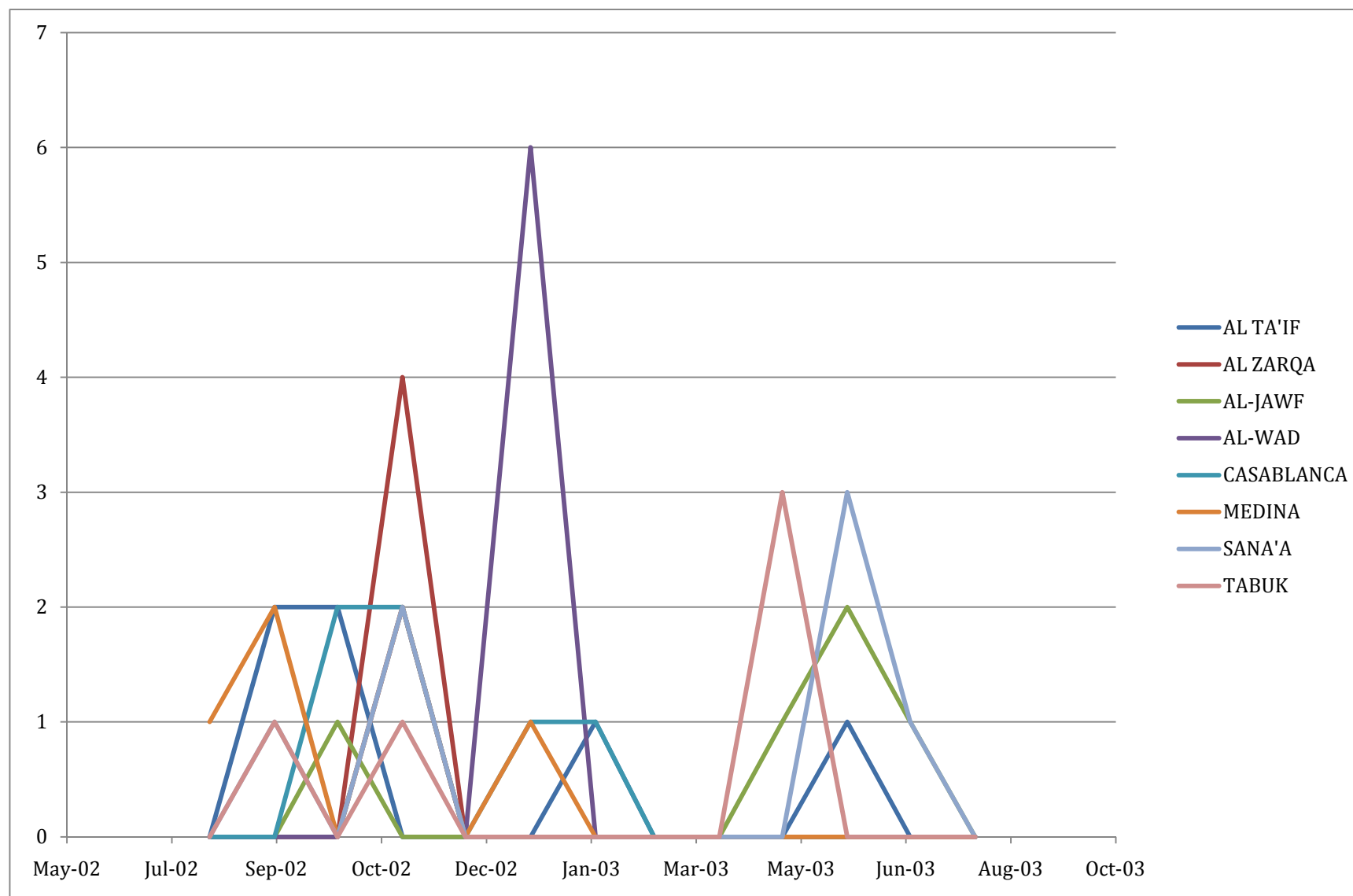
have been grouped into two groups: large contributors, cities that contributed at least 10 foreign fighters total; and small contributors, cities that contributed less than 10 foreign fighters total.

The following graphs show the arrival of AQI recruits over time from large contributor cities and small contributing cities:

Foreign Fighter Recruitment Count by Month For Large Contributing Cities



Foreign Fighter Recruitment Count by Month For Small Contributing Cities



As can be seen from the previous graphs, recruitment by city is inconsistent with many spikes and lulls. This supports Sageman's argument that recruited terrorists seldom act individually but in groups. Further investigation into some of the individuals recorded in the Sinjar Records provides further evidence:

There is evidence, however, that many of the fighters signed up in groups to travel to Iraq. Of the 203 fighters that recorded their date of arrival in Iraq, 46.5 percent (94) arrived on the same day as another person from their hometown. This strongly suggests that fighters travel in groups and may even have been recruited simultaneously. One of the larger groups began their journey in Darnah, Libya and arrived in Iraq on May 9, 2007. Abu • 'Abbas, Abu al • Walid, Abu Bakar, Asad Allah, and Abu • 'Abd al • Kabir all were istishhadi—martyrdom seekers... It is not clear if the five men traveled together from Darnah or in separate groups, but all five went to Egypt and then to Syria. If they were not already traveling together, the five probably were placed together as a group once in Syria.⁷⁹

Evidence from the Sinjar Records clearly allows for the possibility that Sageman's grass-roots model of recruitment is valid. This evidence does not conclusively prove that either Sageman or Hoffman is correct, however. Hoffman would argue that group recruitment could be a logistical strategy to maximize resources by sending recruits in groups. Just because foreign fighters travel in groups does not mean that they organized themselves without help from Al Qaeda leadership.

Conclusion:

There are multiple conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis of the Sinjar Records:

What is the typical AQI recruit?

There is no typical AQI recruit. However, based on the findings of the Sinjar Records, the most common recruits were either Saudi Arabian or Libyan. They are young, ages 21-22. They were most likely students before joining Al Qaeda and most likely traveled together to

⁷⁹ Fishman, *Bombers, Bank Accounts, & Bleedout: Al-Qa'ida's Road in and out of Iraq*.

reach Iraq. These are general assumptions however, and they should be taken with a grain of salt. The variety of data within the Sinjar Records shows that there is no typical AQI recruit.

Recruitment Models:

In the case of the Sinjar Records, it appears that recruits joining Al Qaeda in Iraq from August 2006 to August 2007 best fit the identity model of recruitment because of the absence of support for the greed and grievance based models of recruitment.

The greed model relies upon economic opportunity for recruits. This model is undermined by the dependency of the AQI cell upon donations and the fact that suicide bombers on average donated more to AQI than fighters. The financial situation of the AQI cell does not allow for large amounts of funds to be spent compensating suicide bombers for their deeds and the fact that suicide bombers make significantly greater contributions to AQI shows their independence from economic motivations. Otherwise, they would donate less money and leave it behind for their loved ones.

The grievance model relies upon recruits acting in vengeance against economic and/or social grievances. These grievances were represented through World Bank indicators for unemployment and corruption. Indicators for urbanization and population growth were also tested as these can lead grievances from overcrowding, homelessness, starvation, etc. These indicators only showed weak correlation to national recruitment levels, meaning that while the grievance model is certainly valid for some Al Qaeda recruitment, it is unable to account for the motivations of the majority of recruits.

The identity model is the most logical fit for the Sinjar Records because of the absence of support for the other two models, the strong ideological pull of the Jihadi Salafi Al Qaeda in Iraq, and the willingness of suicide bombers to surrender significant monetary contributions to

AQI. This model is not perfect however, and further research should be done to observe the saliency of these models at the national and sub-national levels in states that been shown to contribute foreign fighters to AQI.

What is the Significance of AQI?

Comparative analysis of the Sinjar Records and measurements of violence in Iraq tentatively suggest that there is no correlation between AQI recruitments levels and violence in Iraq. However, the datasets used to measure violence in Iraq are limited and this research should be expanded before drawing sharp conclusions about the effects of AQI recruitment on violence.

Do AQI members join on their own or in groups?

Statistical and anecdotal analysis of the Sinjar Records allows for the possibility that Marc Sageman's "bunches of guys" theory is valid. Recruitment at the town level was dynamic with sharp spikes and lulls that indicated the movement of groups, not individuals. Further investigation provided by Fishman and Felter confirms that recruits act together. However, the fact that recruits travel in groups does not mean that they self-organized or acted separately from Al Qaeda leadership.

Looking to the Future:

The Sinjar Records provide a useful case study of Al Qaeda in Iraq recruitment over a short period. They are limited in their application and are not generalizable to Al Qaeda as a whole or even Al Qaeda in Iraq for that matter. More data on Al Qaeda and terrorist organizations as a whole is needed to further investigate recruitment models.

Policy Implications:

If the lessons from Sinjar Records can be applied to Al Qaeda recruitment as a whole, then the United States should be captious in its dealings with Middle Eastern and North African

Muslim countries. The minimal roles that greed and grievance-based motivations play in foreign fighter recruitment means that US goals to bring democracy and economic prosperity to the Middle East are misplaced. Instead, US strategy needs to focus on neutralizing the threats of radical fundamentalist Islamic sects such as Jihadi Salafism. How to address the threat of ideas is the subject of debate, but the need to develop a strategy to counteract the influence of radical Islam in the Middle East is clear.

Recent developments in Libya should be particularly concerning to the United States. As of April 25, 2011, Darnah, Libya is in the rebel occupied territory of Libya and Benghazi has become a battlefield.⁸⁰ Darnah was the largest contributor of foreign fighters both in total and as per capita. Benghazi was also a large contributor. US support for the rebels could end up enabling future members of Al Qaeda to attack the United States in the future, while refusing to support the rebels could make the United States a higher priority target for Libyan Al Qaeda recruits. The War on Terror has become a minefield and the United States must be careful where, when, and how it chooses to engage Al Qaeda in the future.

⁸⁰ "Libya in Maps", BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12680846> (accessed April 25 2011).

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