Abstract

The master’s thesis Insurgent Governance Systems: The Effectiveness of the Talban and the Islamic State is a qualitative comparative analysis of Islamic Jihadist rebel governance systems in the cases of the Islamic State and the Taliban. Using Mampilly’s framework for effective rebel governance systems, I analyze the various factors, stemming from ‘below’, ‘within’, and ‘above’ that negatively and positively affect an insurgent government, its leadership, and the civilians that dynamically interact with the rebels. This thesis’ aim is three part. First, it aims to show that variations between conventional rebel governments and Islamic Jihadist governance systems do exist. Second, that variation also exists between different Islamic Jihadist rebel governments, and that the challenges and opportunities presented by civilians and international actors are dealt with differently. Third, that the effectiveness of these rebel organizations is dependent on the factors presented by Mampilly, yet is not static as effectiveness of a rebel governance system changes throughout a conflict. This thesis found that significant variation, as well as some similarities, exists between conventional and Islamic Jihadist organizations; through analyzing the two cases presented, we can see variation does exist between the cases analyzed by Mampilly and the two Islamic Jihadist organizations. This variation also exists between the two Islamic Jihadist governance systems themselves. It also found that effectiveness of Islamic Jihadist rebel systems did change throughout conflict. This thesis not only furthers inquiry into the phenomenon of rebel governance, but it also provides a micro-level lens that policy-makers and security/counterinsurgency specialists may seek to utilize when dealing with these organizations.