

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the role that political ideologies plays in determining the target of insurgency movements. In order to understand how these groups operate, I use Janowitz's military establishment to apply it on the three main revolutionary ideologies of the 20th century, Khomeinism, Marxism/Leninism and Fanonian. Based on these analyses, I hypothesize the three main targets by ideology based on the clarity of the indoctrination and on the level of bureaucracy entailed in the revolutionary texts. I then proceed to compare these theories to three case studies, the Hezbollah, the FARC and finally the PKK. I try to offer an explanation on why religious insurgencies target most of their attacks towards rival factions or why nationalist left-wing groups are mostly focused on attacking security forces. I argue that a well-structured hierarchy, a reliance on the civil society and a clear definition of the political and military targets are quintessential to prevent civilian casualties. But contrarily to most papers on the topic, I find that a strict military discipline has the reversed result that expected. For instance, the FARC and the PKK have such a strict internal code of discipline that it led the members to desert the organizations by thousands and have civilians as their first targets. On the other side, the Hezbollah, with its proximity with the civilian sphere, shows a looser disciplinary code but is the one sticking the most to its ideological targets, rival and security targets.