

ANALYTICAL

The Supply and Demand of Rebel Governance

ADRIAN FLOREA

University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK

AND

ROMAIN MALEJACQ 

Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands

A recent wave of civil conflict scholarship examines rebel governance, the process through which insurgent groups organize local affairs in areas under their control. While current research predominantly focuses on the supply side of rebel governance, the attention given to the demand side has been relatively limited. In this study, we take stock of recent scholarship on the dynamic relationship between rebels and civilians to theoretically explore the supply side of rebel governance and develop a new demand-side typology that captures the key factors influencing civilian preferences regarding the nature of rebel rule. Specifically, we argue that demand for rebel governance is mainly shaped by the interaction between civilians' perceptions of the state and civilian–rebel compatibility, which we define as civilians' perceptions of the compatibility of the rebel group with their own values, ideology, identity, and preferred modes of socio-political organization. To illustrate our main theoretical points, we draw upon insights gleaned from multiple insurgencies. Our study significantly enhances our understanding of how rebel–civilian interactions mold the fabric of political order in civil war environments.

Existe una reciente ola de estudios sobre conflictos civiles que estudia la gobernanza rebelde, es decir, el proceso a través del cual los grupos insurgentes organizan los asuntos locales en las áreas bajo su control. Si bien la investigación actual se centra, de manera predominante, en el lado de la oferta de la gobernanza rebelde, la atención que se ha prestado al lado de la demanda ha sido relativamente limitada. En este estudio, hacemos un balance de los estudios recientes sobre la relación dinámica entre rebeldes y civiles con el fin de estudiar teóricamente el lado de la oferta de la gobernanza rebelde y desarrollar una nueva tipología del lado de la demanda que tenga en cuenta los factores clave que influyen en las preferencias de

The authors contributed equally to this work.

Authors' note. We would like to express our gratitude to Victor Bouemar Dinocheau for fabulous research assistance and thank Giulia Piccolino, Megan Stewart, Niels Terpstra, and James Worrall for their generous feedback on previous drafts. We are also thankful to Morten Bøås, Susan Brewer-Osorio, Tessa Devereaux Evans, Cianne Loyle, Zachariah Mampilly, Makena Micheni, and Sukanya Podder for providing excellent comments. This work was supported by the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, grant number VI.Vidi.201.165.

Florea, Adrian, and Romain Malejacq. (2024) The Supply and Demand of Rebel Governance. *International Studies Review*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viae004>

© The Author(s) (2024). Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the International Studies Association. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted reuse, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

la población civil con respecto a la naturaleza del Gobierno rebelde. En concreto, argumentamos que la demanda de un Gobierno rebelde está formada, principalmente, por la interacción entre las percepciones civiles del Estado y la compatibilidad entre civiles y rebeldes, la cual definimos como las percepciones que tienen los civiles sobre la compatibilidad del grupo rebelde con sus propios valores, ideología e identidad, así como sus formas preferidas de organizaciones sociopolíticas. Con el fin de ilustrar nuestros principales puntos teóricos, partimos de la base de ciertas ideas obtenidas de múltiples insurgencias. Nuestro estudio mejora significativamente nuestra comprensión en materia de cómo las interacciones entre rebeldes y civiles moldean el tejido del orden político en entornos de guerra civil.

Une récente vague de travaux sur les conflits civils examine la gouvernance rebelle, c'est-à-dire le processus par lequel des groupes d'insurgés organisent les affaires locales dans les zones sous leur contrôle. Tandis que les recherches actuelles se concentrent majoritairement sur l'*offre* de gouvernance par les groupes rebelles, l'attention accordée à la *demande* est relativement limitée. Dans cette étude, nous faisons le bilan des travaux récents sur les relations entre rebelles et civils pour explorer, de manière théorique, l'offre de gouvernance par les groupes rebelles et développer une nouvelle typologie de la demande qui capture les facteurs clés influençant les préférences des civils quant à la nature de cette gouvernance. Plus précisément, nous soutenons que la demande de gouvernance rebelle est principalement façonnée par l'interaction entre la manière dont les civils perçoivent l'État et la compatibilité entre civils et rebelles, que nous définissons comme la façon dont les civils perçoivent la compatibilité du groupe rebelle avec leurs propres valeurs, idéologie, identité, et modes de d'organisation socio-politique. Pour illustrer notre approche théorique, nous faisons appel à des exemples provenant de nombreuses insurrections. Notre étude améliore considérablement notre compréhension de la façon dont les interactions entre civils et rebelles façonnent l'ordre politique en situation de guerre civile.

Keywords: civil war, civilian cooperation, civilian resistance, insurgency, rebel governance, rebel strategy

Palabras clave: guerra civil, insurgencia, gobernanza rebelde

Mots clés: guerre civile, insurrection, gouvernance rebelle

Introduction

Civil wars involve dramatic episodes of violence: they take lives, tear apart communities, shatter infrastructure, and leave behind indelible physical and psychological scars. Unsurprisingly, most of the civil war literature focuses on violence, especially that inflicted by rebels. Yet, there is more to rebels' activities than the mere exercise of violence. Whether in El Salvador, Somalia, or Eastern Ukraine, rebels and other armed nonstate actors frequently attempt to govern the civilians under their control.¹ Armed groups such as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in Syria and the Taliban in Afghanistan, for instance, saw COVID-19 as an opportunity to display statelike public health measures (Jackson 2020; Breslawski 2022; Furlan 2023). Despite the pervasiveness of the phenomenon, civil war scholars have only recently become interested in rebel governance. With few exceptions, they have mainly focused on the governors (the rebels) rather than the governed (the population). Current studies typically address the *supply* side of rebel governance—the rebels' incentives to

¹We use *rebel governance* interchangeably with *rebel rule* to describe the *administration* of territory and populations therein by rebel organizations. Hence, while *rebel control* refers to the rebels' acquisition of exclusive power on a given territory, *rebel rule/governance* refers to the actual exercise of that power.

govern the territory they control. By contrast, less attention has been given to the *demand* side—the conditions under which rebel governance emerges as a result of bottom-up civilian demand for it.

In this study, we argue that, despite growing attention to rebel-civilian interactions, civil war scholarship still lacks conceptual, theoretical, and empirical frameworks for understanding *both* the supply and demand side of rebel governance. We fill this important gap, first, by delineating the conditions under which rebels are incentivized to construct parallel structures of governance in the territory that they control and, second, by advancing a typology that identifies structural drivers of civilian demand for rebel rule. We suggest that demand for rebel governance is mainly shaped by the interaction between civilians' perceptions of the state and civilian-rebel compatibility, which we define as civilians' perceptions of the rebel group's compatibility with their own values, ideology, identity, and preferred forms of socio-political organization. We illustrate this typology with examples from various insurgencies.

Our discussion of the supply and demand of rebel governance is relevant for multiple reasons. First, while “there is an analytical preference for the rebel rulers' rather than civilians' perspective” in the rebel governance literature (Pfeifer and Schwab 2023, 3), the organization of local affairs across many civil wars indicates that the nature of insurgent rule is, in fact, shaped by both rebel incentives and civilian preferences (Bulutgil 2020; Kubota 2020). Only a granular approach that accounts for both can fully elucidate the conditions under which rebels replace or complement governments as authority wielders. Second, civil wars are not just military struggles but also authority contests shaped by complex relational, political processes (Stewart 2023) that affect rebels' decisions to embark on governance activities. Looking at supply-side incentives and demand-driven actions affords a more fine-grained understanding of the extent to which civilian agency influences civil war outcomes. Third, rebel strategies toward civilians can be collaborative or predatory; rebel governance can be extensive or limited, inclusive or exclusive (Stewart 2018), highly institutionalized or barely visible. This variability cannot be satisfactorily explained without an analytical template for grasping insurgents' motivations to supply governance as well as local populations' demand for it.

The article proceeds as follows. First, to situate our analysis, we take a glance at the evolution of the rebel governance literature: we identify several clusters of works on insurgent rule, show that the literature suffers from a supply-side bias, and explain why a more comprehensive understanding of rebel governance must account for both supply- and demand-side factors. Second, we discuss four key incentives that push rebels to embark on governance activities (the supply side), despite the costs inherent in the process and the uncertainty regarding their ability to survive politically: extracting resources; outbidding competitors; gaining international legitimacy and support; and strengthening negotiation positions. Thereafter, we identify civilians' perceptions of the state and civilian-rebel compatibility as the two main drivers of demand for insurgent governance (the demand side) and propose a new typology based on these two drivers. We conclude by discussing how demand for rebel governance can be empirically captured and by suggesting several avenues for future rebel governance research.

Rebel Governance in Civil War

Rebel governance entails the establishment of an alternative, nonstate, socio-political order whereby insurgents effectively set up a separate system of rule. Specifically, rebel governance comprises the entire “set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during [civil] war” (Arjona et al. 2015, 2). The emerging consensus is that rebel governance includes three jointly observable insurgent activities: rule-making, rule enforcement,

and the provision of public goods and services (Mampilly 2011). Rebel governance is extensive when insurgents exert a monopoly of violence, set-up mechanisms for dispute adjudication, engage in regularized taxation, and provide the population with social services. In other words, extensive rebel governance is visible when insurgents establish functional coercive, extractive, redistributive, and administrative institutions. Rebel governance is limited when insurgents provide security in the territory under their control but intervene minimally in civilian affairs, typically limiting governance to the taxation of civilians. Empirically, most instances of rebel governance are found between these extremes: insurgents often go beyond the provision of order to intervene in civilian affairs in the areas they control and build “quasi-state institutions” (Albert 2022) but are rarely able to construct comprehensive statelike governance apparatuses.

We identify roughly five clusters in the evolution of the recent but prolific literature on rebel governance.² One cluster has focused on the separatist enclaves (de facto states) that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union—Transnistria in Moldova, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan (Caspersen 2012)—and, more recently, on those born out of conflict in Eastern Ukraine—Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics (Toal 2017). Written primarily from an area-studies lens, these works have offered detailed accounts of the conditions under which separatists in post-Soviet de facto states constructed governance institutions. In this literature, particular emphasis has been placed on factors that help, or inhibit, these separatists’ ability to institutionalize alternative governance systems (Florea 2020) and on how governance institutions might impact the survival of these enclaves (Florea 2017).

A second cluster of works has analyzed how governance practices might enhance rebels’ domestic and international legitimacy. This body of scholarship initially consisted of rich empirical studies focused on patterns of public goods provision. Collectively, these studies have revealed how common rebel governance truly is across time and space, documenting particularly well the governance activities conducted by Latin American (e.g., Wood 2003) or African insurgents (e.g., Lido 2016). Further studies have gone beyond the conventional focus on service provision to look at processes of legitimization through specific dimensions of rebel governance, such as the construction of separate legal systems (Ledwidge 2017; Baczko 2021; Loyle 2021; Termeer 2023), compliance with international law (Jo 2015; Stanton 2016; Fazal and Konaev 2019), symbolic performances (Mampilly 2015; Terpstra and Frerks 2017), diplomatic practices (Coggins 2015; Huang 2016a), or even oil governance (Ahram 2022).

A third cluster has developed theoretical frameworks aimed at explaining the variation in rebel governance activities, focusing primarily on these groups’ organizational features and the environments in which they operate (Weinstein 2007; Mampilly 2011; Arjona et al. 2015). These works have identified structural or proximate drivers of rebel governance; yet, the analyses have been restricted to a few cases with limited generalizability and have tended to pay insufficient attention to governance beyond public goods provision. More recent works have attempted to better integrate theory development with data collection and theory testing, seeking to unpack the relationship between rebel governance and civil war processes and outcomes, such as duration (Florea 2017), civilian displacement (Revkin 2021), post-conflict democratization (Huang 2016b), or post-conflict state building (Cheng 2018).

A fourth, more recent, cluster aims to challenge some of the key assumptions of the rebel governance literature, hence expanding the scope of conditions under which one might observe insurgent rule. Some studies, for instance, have debunked the assumption that territorial control is necessary for rebel governance

²For an alternative classification of the rebel governance scholarship, see Teiner (2022).

to take place (Jackson 2018, 25; O'Connor and Jongerden 2023; Waterman 2023). Drawing on earlier and adjacent literature on twilight institutions (Lund 2006), hybrid political orders (Boege et al. 2009), negotiated statehood (Hagmann and Péclard 2010), and 'governance without a state' (Börzel and Risse 2010; Risse 2011), others have rejected the understanding of governance provision as a zero-sum game between state and rebels, showing the richness and complexity of multi-layered (Kasfir et al. 2017), complementary (Idler and Forest 2015), or parallel (Thakur and Venugopal 2019) forms of rebel governance and state-rebel cooperation (Berti 2023; van Baalen and Terpstra 2023). These studies have specifically pointed out the "need to investigate rebels as *parts and (co)producers* of larger (social and political) orders" in civil war (Pfeifer and Schwab 2023, 3).³

A fifth and last cluster attempts to shift the focus toward the dynamics of rebel-civilian interactions. Here, the assumption is that civilians in conflict zones are not passive by-standers living at the whim of armed groups, but actors that can show social cohesion, display capacity for collective action (Krause 2018; Krause et al. 2023), mobilize, and make their own decisions (Kaplan 2017). These works have unpacked numerous ways in which civilians have agency and respond to insurgent rule—from voluntary support, passive acceptance, and resistance (Arjona 2016), to autonomy (Kaplan 2017) and self-protection (Suarez 2017), to governance outsourcing (Breslawski 2021) and hybrid rebel-civilian arrangements (Hyppä 2023).⁴ Others have turned their attention to the ways in which rebels respond to civilians' exercise of agency (Gowrinathan and Mampilly 2019; van Baalen 2021) and even bargain with them (Jackson 2021). Collectively, this literature investigates how civilian preferences and rebel-civilian interactions shape rebel strategies and general governance outcomes, hence sitting at the nexus of supply and demand factors.⁵

Yet, recent inquiries into civilian agency in violent environments remain overwhelmingly focused on how local populations *react* to insurgent rule, that is, on their ability to resist top-down governance, violently or nonviolently. Limited attention is paid to the conditions under which civilians may proactively issue demands for governance from the bottom up.⁶ Implicit in this literature is the idea that initial rebel governance decisions emerge independently of demands articulated by local populations. Tellingly, these studies (and the rebel governance scholarship more generally) still suffer from a supply-side bias and either assume the pre-existence of a constant (static) civilian *demand* for governance or do not pay enough attention to demand-side factors—in part due to the difficulty of observing demand for rebel governance empirically. Although some of these works do address the governance expectations of local populations, they focus on civilian preferences once rebels have established, or have attempted to establish, territorial control—that is, after they have decided to *supply* governance independently of initial civilian preferences—and do not explicitly capture the conditions under which local populations' demand for insurgent rule is likely to vary. In most of this literature, demand is indirectly addressed through the assumption that pre-existing state penetration increases civilians' governance expectations (primarily about public services). We discuss a wider set of circumstances that can affect this demand in our typology.

The supply-side 'story' provides an incomplete picture of the relational nature of rebel rule. Rebel governance outcomes are the product of dynamic, iterated interactions between insurgents and local populations. The architecture of rebel gov-

³On socio-political orders in civil war, see also Staniland (2012, 2021), Arjona (2014), Péclard and Mechoulam (2015), Malejacq (2016), Baczko and Dorronsoro (2017), Worrall (2017), and Waterman and Worrall (2020). For a governmentality perspective, see Hoffman and Verweijen (2019).

⁴On different forms of civilian responses to rebel rule, see also Barter (2014), Arjona (2017), Masullo (2020, 2021), Revkin and Ahram (2020), and Bamber and Svensson (2023).

⁵On legitimization processes and the *relational* nature of rebel rule, see Duyvesteyn (2017) and the remainder of the "Rebels and Legitimacy" special issue of *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (4–5). See also McWeeney and Cunningham (2019).

⁶For a similar observation, in the context of criminal governance, see Osorio and Brewer-Osorio (2023).

ernance is a relational by-product of both insurgent and civilian preferences. Ultimately, both supply and demand factors determine the breadth and depth of rebel rule. A more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted fabric of rebel rule and of the complex, constantly evolving relationship between rebels and civilians, therefore, requires looking at both supply- and demand-side factors. This is what we seek to accomplish in the next two sections, first by presenting the main incentives for rebels to provide governance, then by mapping the conditions under which civilians are most likely to demand it. We circle back to the necessity of studying both supply- and demand-side factors in the conclusion, where we identify further avenues for rebel governance research.

The Supply Side of Rebel Governance

Establishing alternative structures of local rule is a costly undertaking with uncertain payoffs. First, there are costs of organizing collective action aimed at forging a new governance architecture (Leeson 2014, 158). Rebels have to agree, among many things, on the nature of the institutions they put into place (Furlan 2020; Mampilly and Stewart 2021), the set of rules they enforce, or the range of extraction activities they conduct. Second, there are monitoring and enforcement costs associated with the act of governing itself. These costs are particularly acute when rebels implement unpopular, burdensome measures that may undermine their legitimacy and foster civilian resistance (Stewart 2018). Rebel rulers also frequently need to deal with severe principal-agent problems associated with the supervision of subordinates. Third, there are the direct costs of public goods provision. And fourth, providing governance might constrain rebels' behavior while undermining their war-fighting capabilities.⁷

Given these costs and, often, short-term incentives to become predatory, why would insurgents govern? What incentivizes them to *supply* governance? The burgeoning rebel governance literature is largely dominated by “rationalist, functionalist, and instrumentalist” approaches which typically assume that rebels carefully calculate the costs and benefits of ruling local populations and supply an optimal level of governance—i.e., a level that helps them accrue the largest benefits with the lowest costs (Pfeifer and Schwab 2023, 4). These works tend to consider service provision as a top-down “political strategy” (Huang 2016b, 9) aimed at building the level of government needed to fulfill political objectives and are, therefore, relatively agnostic to civilian preferences. Building on existing studies, we identify four key incentives for rebels to engage in governance, beyond their revolutionary objectives (Stewart 2021)⁸ and sheer desire to “put their ideology in practice” (Arjona 2014, 1362): (1) extracting resources; (2) outbidding rival organizations; (3) gaining international legitimacy and support; and (4) strengthening the group's bargaining position in view of future negotiations.

Extracting Resources

Scholars predominantly adopt a contractualist view of rebel governance. A widely shared assumption is that rebels' ability to extract local resources stems from a tacit social contract they have with civilians (Revkin and Ahram 2020). According to this logic, governance provision bolsters civilian compliance (Levi 1989), local support, and even the organization's legitimacy as ruler of the territory (Schlichte and

⁷The question of whether these constitute real constraints on the rebels remains open. As Loyle et al. (2023, 267) point out, “[r]ebels may enact constraining behaviors without a true commitment to rule following, accountability, or civilian exercise of power.”

⁸According to Stewart (2021, 13–6), rebels who embrace “transformative goals” aimed at fundamentally restructuring pre-existing socio-political orders are more likely to engage in extensive governance practices.

Schneckener 2015). This, in turn, limits civilian resistance while allowing rebels to extract a wide range of material and immaterial resources.⁹

The contractualist logic suggests that compliance, legitimacy, and popular support first and foremost permit the accumulation of tax money (Levi 1989). Following Olson's (1993, 568) "stationary bandit" logic, the rebel ruler "will take only a part of income in taxes, because he will be able to exact a larger total amount of income from his subjects if he leaves them with an incentive to generate income that he can tax." And, "[s]ince [the rebel ruler] takes a part of total production in the form of tax theft, it will also pay him to provide other public goods whenever the provision of these goods increases taxable income sufficiently" (Olson 1993). Essentially, governance serves to expand the overall tax base and, thus, to maximize the revenues needed for military and political purposes. For example, rebel leader Ahmad Shah Massoud, who ruled parts of northeastern Afghanistan during the Soviet–Afghan war of the 1980s, imposed limited taxes on salaries and the commerce of semi-precious gemstones while providing a wide range of services (Malejacq 2019, 135).¹⁰

Following the contractualist logic, gathering information is a key reason for armed actors to invest in legitimization efforts. Noncombatants are much more likely to share information with a ruler that they consider legitimate. In Nepal, for example, Maoist rebels' intelligence activities "became highly effective in rural areas where there was significant sympathy for the Maoists" (Jackson 2019, 1004). At the very least, information constitutes a positive externality of legitimacy. The creation of a peaceful social order also bolsters the monitoring of the local population. "Clear rules that regulate both civilian and combatant behavior," Arjona (2016, 9) points out, "facilitate rebel monitoring of civilian conduct (such as helping the enemy), and also make civilians more likely to voluntarily obey and offer support." In addition, popular institutions "act as valuable monitoring mechanisms, leveraging rebel administrators as intelligence collectors to identify civilians collaborating with the state" (Uribe 2017, 3). These institutions provide noncoercive mechanisms that allow civilians to express their preferences and ultimately improve monitoring (Weinstein 2007, 173).

In the contractualist logic, providing services increases the rebels' legitimacy and popular support (or at least encourages compliance), which facilitates recruitment. Though individuals may have a number of reasons to join an armed group, they are more likely to do so (and less likely to defect) if they consider the group as legitimate. Rebel institutions may also serve as a means of increasing civilian participation. Looking at Hamas before the group won the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections, Levitt (2004, 5) noted: "inside the Palestinian territories, the battery of mosques, schools, orphanages, summer camps, and sports leagues are integral parts of an overarching apparatus. They engage in incitement, recruitment, and logistical and operational support for weapons smuggling, reconnaissance, and suicide bombings."¹¹ One should consider that service provision might also incentivize free-riding behaviors (Wood 2003, 193) and "channel precious resources to help unlikely supporters" (Stewart 2018, 207). In some cases, it might even "disincentiviz[e] potential combatants from joining the rebellion: by providing services to all people regardless of their commitment to the insurgency, civilians have no reason to make costly sacrifices on behalf of the rebel group" (Stewart 2018).

⁹The corollary is that the group's legitimacy might decay if the rebels fail to fulfill the obligations of the social contract (Wickham-Crowley 1987).

¹⁰For a thorough discussion of "why armed groups tax" beyond revenue collection, see Bandula-Irwin et al. (2022).

¹¹On whether or not Hamas' rule should be considered rebel governance, see Ezbidi (2023).

Outbidding Local Competitors

Rebels aiming to establish local dominance often try to outbid their rivals: they attempt to differentiate themselves from other groups operating on the same territory to acquire a greater share of public support at the local level. “Outbidding,” writes Hafez (2020, 607), “is a form of competitive factionalism intended to address the issue of who can best represent the interests of the rebel constituency and achieve its objectives.” Outbidding can be performed through both violent and nonviolent means. The former has been well established in the literature (Young and Dugan 2014; Walter 2017). The latter, relatively understudied, consists in outclassing one’s rivals either by restricting the use of violence (Berlin and Rangazas 2023) or by providing ‘more’ or ‘better’ goods and services (Stewart 2021; Schwab 2023).

Internal rivalry can indeed motivate factions competing for legitimacy and civilian loyalty to govern more efficiently. Some, for instance, interpret Jabhat al Nusra’s intensification of the group’s governance activities in Syria as “a clear reaction to a need to demonstrate an intent to implement Sharia and embed the roots of a new Islamic society and not be entirely outmatched by ISIS” (Lister 2016, 36). Others see the rivalry between Amal and Hezbollah in Lebanon as one primarily “waged in the social field” (Azani 2008, 71). De Bruin et al. (2023) even suggest that, in contested areas, armed nonstate actors that provide any form of benefit to the community might already be able to outcompete their opponents. This strategy may also be used by rebels to demonstrate that they are better providers than the state (Revkin 2021; Asal et al. 2022; Berti 2023). “By providing social services,” writes Grynkewich (2008, 351), “terrorist or guerrilla organizations threaten to supplant the social contract between the population and the state, thereby undermining a key source of state legitimacy.”

We would expect rebels to provide the optimal amount and type of services necessary to outdo their rivals, independently of civilian preferences. All else equal, we should observe relatively high levels of governance in environments of intense intra-rebel competition; in these situations, each group should attempt to provide more and better services than their competitors, thus leading to an escalation process. In turn, in monopolistic environments where a rebel group has gained hegemony, one would likely see lesser governance. Contrary to this logic, however, Metelits (2010, 12) argues that rebels whose ability to extract from the local population is threatened (by a rival faction, for example) are more likely to adopt predatory behavior and, hence, less likely to provide governance, whereas, “[w]hen an insurgent group does not confront competition for resources, it can more efficiently mobilize popular support, collecting resources and recruiting cadres to gain autonomy from the state and potential rivals.”¹² Congruent with this reasoning, Akcinaroglu and Tokdemir (2018) claim that, given the costs of providing governance, armed groups that control territory monopolistically will be more likely to invest in positive reputation in their communities (through the provision of goods and services) because the risks on their investment will be lower.

Gaining International Legitimacy and Support

Most, if not all, rebel groups seek “to attain visibility, credibility, and acceptance on the world stage” (Huang 2016a, 91). Those with long-time horizons—rebels who carve out spaces of exclusive rule (Arjona 2016)—attempt to portray themselves in carefully orchestrated ways in front of states, international organizations, NGOs, and the media. By establishing governance systems, they credibly commit to uphold their end of the social contract, ensure voluntary compliance with their rule, and signal to international audiences their capacity to organize local affairs. Effective

¹²For a similar argument, see also Martin (2021) and Glawion and Le Noan (2023).

rule, especially if consolidated in a nonviolent (Griffiths and Wasser 2019), institutionalized form, helps rebels attract international support (Coggins 2014), hence operating as a propaganda tool (Corradi 2023).

It is unsurprising that many armed groups adopt a wide range of statelike practices—in particular secessionists who aim to achieve independence and must legitimate their claim to the international community. Some, like those in Abkhazia (Georgia) or Northern Cyprus, construct separate branches of government. Others appropriate statelike characteristics through symbolic processes and performative acts (Mampilly 2015; Terpstra and Frerks 2017). The Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP), in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), for instance, adopted a new flag and created a national anthem (Mampilly 2015, 88). Many rebel groups also adopt statelike diplomatic practices like “dispatching representatives, opening offices abroad, lobbying in foreign capitals, and creating foreign affairs departments” (Huang 2016a, 91).

Providing goods and services to the local community, administering justice, or complying with international norms helps rebels project an image of benevolence, leading many rebels to also develop their own forms of public relations operations: during the Soviet–Afghan war, Ahmad Shah Massoud frequently invited journalists, NGO representatives, and foreign government officials to exhibit the extent of his governance efforts (Malejacq 2017) while the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF) received all kinds of international visitors to showcase “the inclusive education and health institutions it had created” (Stewart 2018, 211–2). This is paramount because rebels are engaged in a fierce competition to attract international attention—both with domestic groups and armed groups around the world (Bob 2005). For instance, the international community has supported the development of “good rebel governance” in Syria to the detriment of other, more locally embedded groups (Howe and Mukhopadhyay 2023).¹³ Governance provision can also be undertaken, “not to conform to international expectations but at the behest of foreign backers” (Stewart 2021, 85), in exchange for material and political support—at times leading to window-dressing practices (Glawion and Le Noan 2023). Stein (2022, 133), for instance, highlights how the People’s Protection Units (YPG)/Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) set up seemingly inclusive institutions in the Syrian city of Raqqa at the request of the US government, that, in effect, included “little integration of demands from civilians.”

While local legitimacy (or the perception thereof) can increase the group’s international appeal, external support helps the recipient organization achieve, or consolidate, hegemony over the broader rebel movement. Huang (2016a, 104) notes the existence of “mutually reinforcing feedback effects between domestic political organization and diplomatic activism.” During the 1983–1985 famine in Ethiopia, for instance, the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) carefully maintained its monopoly over the distribution of foreign humanitarian aid in rebel-held territories—through the Relief Society of Tigray (REST), the TPLF’s humanitarian branch—which largely contributed to increasing the group’s domestic and international legitimacy (Matfess 2022). During the 1990s, the Sudan People’s Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) similarly controlled the distribution of international aid, leading many to think that the rebel group was providing the assistance, which ultimately increased its local legitimacy (Mampilly 2011, 154). Another interesting example is provided by the *Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique* (FPRC), which posted security guards at the hospital of Ndélé—a town in northern Central Africa under undisputed rebel control between 2012 and 2020—in an attempt to gain credit for the healthcare provided by an international NGO (Glawion

¹³According to Morkevicus (2013, 401), the ambivalence with which the West has responded to the Arab Spring reveals an underlying tension in Western political thought on rebellion, at times perceived as a destructive and chaotic force, and at other times seen as a regenerative and creative one. This tension, ultimately, calls for the development of a “just rebellion theory” (Morkevicus 2013).

and Le Noan 2023, 27). When external support consists of arms delivery, funding, and training, it can also enhance rebel capabilities, free up existing resources, and thereby lead to increased governance provision (Huang and Sullivan 2021). By contrast, when external support consists of direct military intervention, it can lower the rebels' need for local support and legitimacy, hence resulting in fewer governance activities (Huang and Sullivan 2021).

Strengthening Negotiation Position

Because rebel groups lack official status and accountability mechanisms—few hold free and fair elections (Cunningham et al. 2021)—they cannot credibly commit to a political settlement. Governance provision—especially when involving civilians—signals capacity for commitment. Heger and Jung (2017) argue that rebels who successfully engage in public goods provision display more centralized organizational structures, rely on wider bases of support, and are, therefore, better equipped to deter spoilers from undermining negotiations. Their study shows that, all things equal, rebel service provision increases the probability of peace negotiations taking place while decreasing the likelihood that those negotiations would collapse.

Further, rebels that rule over territory have better leverage at the negotiating table. Governments confronted with territorial challengers cannot ignore the costs that they impose—e.g., loss of face, loss of tax revenues, and inability to exploit mineral resources—and will be more compelled to negotiate with them, especially since “the international community is more likely to formally recognize any facts on the ground as a new status quo” (Asal et al. 2019, 364). Where those challengers successfully engage in state-like practices, they are more likely to be regarded as competitors to be reckoned with. For instance, the Barzani clan's ability to build a state-like organization in the Kurdish-inhabited territories of Northern Iraq made it an unavoidable negotiating partner for the successive regimes that ruled over Iraq, from the British mandate to this day (Asal et al. 2019, 375–7). On the contrary, incumbent governments will not bother engaging with insurgents that display a severe lack of organizational coherence and capacity, as exemplified by the Syrian opposition to the Bashar al-Assad regime (Heger and Jung 2017, 1204).

In contrast to this argument, others contend that service provision lowers the probability of reaching successful negotiated settlements in civil war. Increased legitimacy and civilian support gained through service provision makes it easier for rebels to recruit and remobilize after war, leading to a commitment problem on the rebel side—hence, decreasing the likelihood of achieving a sustainable peace agreement (Walter 2004). Albert (2023) identifies a second mechanism through which rebels' service provision negatively impacts the likelihood of engaging in fruitful peace talks. Because the benefits of service provision increase over time (in terms of civilian support and legitimacy), she argues, rebels have an incentive to resort to “strategic stalling” to buy more time (and, hence, reap more of those benefits) rather than actively trying to reach an agreement. For instance, this is what happened, Albert (2023, 251–2) contends, when Colombian President Andrés Pastrana offered the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) a demilitarized zone in exchange for engaging in peace talks. The FARC used this demilitarized zone to bolster their ranks, launch military operations, and develop service provision, stalling the peace talks four times between 1998 and 2002.

Overall, supply-side arguments have deepened our understanding of the factors that motivate insurgents to construct a governance apparatus in the areas under their control, such as the need to secure resources, compete with other armed non-state rivals, gain legitimacy, or bolster their negotiating position. As a relational process emerging from dynamic, iterated interactions between insurgents and civilians, rebel governance is also demand-driven; yet, little is known about local populations'

Table 1. Civilian demand for rebel governance

		Civilian–rebel compatibility		
		Low	High	
Civilian perceptions of the state	Positive	<i>Scenario 1:</i> functional, inclusive, and legitimate state	<i>No demand</i> (null category)	<i>No demand</i> (null category)
	Negative	<i>Scenario 2:</i> state failure; state collapse	<i>Moderate demand</i> (when civilians lack capacity for collective action) <i>No demand</i> (and even resistance when civilians display capacity for collective action)	<i>High demand</i>
		<i>Scenario 3:</i> state predation; state repression; state discrimination	<i>Moderate demand</i> (under repressive regimes, civilians typically lack capacity for collective action) <i>No demand</i> (when insurgents are seen as more repressive than the state)	<i>High demand</i>
		<i>Scenario 4:</i> low state penetration of society; state ‘flight’	<i>No demand</i> (and resistance, as self-governing civilians almost always display capacity for collective action)	<i>High demand</i> (when civilians reject <i>specific forms of centralized authority</i>)

preferences for rebel rule *before* rebels start providing governance. Hence, we lack coherent answers to a key question: Under which conditions are local populations most likely to *demand* rebel governance? Above, we highlighted the main factors that incentivize rebels to engage in governance provision. In the next section, we tackle this question through the development of our demand-side typology and discuss key drivers that might shape civilian preferences for rebel rule.

A Typology of Civilian Demand for Rebel Governance

Theoretical Framework and Endogeneity

While supply-side explanations for rebel governance identify the main incentives rebels have to engage in the provision of governance, demand-side explanations focus on the factors that drive civilians to support, or at the very least tolerate, insurgent rule. In this section, we propose a new typology (see [Table 1](#)) that enables us to map varying levels of civilian *demand* for rebel governance both cross-sectionally (at given points in time) and temporally (throughout the duration of rebel presence).

We argue that the level of demand for rebel governance is a function of two main drivers that have remained largely ignored in the literature on rebel–civilian interactions: *civilians’ perceptions of the state*, and *civilian–rebel compatibility*, which we understand as civilian perceptions of the compatibility of the rebel group with their own values, ideology, identity, and preferred modes of socio-political organization—that is, how palatable the rebel group is to local populations. We assume these perceptions to be largely driven by civilians’ past and current experiences with the political actors vying for authority and control ([Martin et al. 2022](#)), except for those situa-

tions where civilians have not yet interacted with the rebel group or, in rare cases, the government that operates in their territory.

These perceptions are not static and involve a certain degree of endogeneity. Civilians may harbor specific perceptions on both the state and the rebels prior to the insurgents' involvement in local affairs but these perceptions are constantly molded by how the state and the rebels behave—for instance, if the rebels no longer fulfill the obligations of the implicit social contract (Wickham-Crowley 1987)—and, more specifically, by how rebels position themselves, ideologically and organizationally, should they attempt to acquire or maintain popular support and legitimacy.¹⁴

While we acknowledge the presence of endogeneity, we focus here on a simplified situation, that is, the provision of one encompassing service (rebel governance) by one homogenous set of actors (the rebels) to another (the civilians), at a given time. There is no doubt that neither the state, the rebels, nor the civilians are homogenous entities, and that disparities within these groups might reveal variations in perceptions and preferences, and, hence, affect the degree and nature of rebel governance at the aggregate level. It is also clear that neither rebels nor civilians operate in a vacuum and that the presence of other actors, armed and nonarmed, adds a layer of complexity to their interactions. Finally, we recognize that capturing rebel governance through a mere quantitative measure (*how much* governance) obscures important qualitative variation (*what* kind of governance and by *whom*) and potential negotiations between rebels and civilians regarding not only the degree but also the type of governance provided. We explore some of these complexities when sketching future research agendas in our conclusion.

We also admit that the market metaphor—the conceptualization of rebel governance in terms of *supply* and *demand* factors—may obscure a lot of the complexity inherent in rebel governance processes. Yet, our proposed typology, however imperfect, functions as a heuristic device for unpacking the most important initial conditions affecting rebel–civilian interactions and for tracing their evolution over time. We suggest that, by looking at civilians' constantly evolving perceptions of both the state and the rebels, we are able to capture the most common factors shaping bottom-up civilian preferences for rebel rule.

First, we argue that demand for rebel governance is likely to be driven by civilians' perceptions of the state,¹⁵ which, for the sake of simplicity, we place on a negative–positive continuum. All else equal, demand for rebel governance will be higher when civilians view the state negatively—especially if local populations have historically been dependent on a centralized authority for the provision of public goods and services (Mampilly 2011; Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017)—and lower when civilians see the state positively. We contend that civilians' perceptions of the state are unequivocally positive when the sovereign government is an effective governance provider, that is, when it generally abides by the social contract. Under conditions of a functional, inclusive, and legitimate state, civilians are more likely to embrace positive perceptions of the governing authorities, which are solidified by iterated experiences with state institutions. By contrast, civilian perceptions are likely to be negative when one of these characteristics is absent.

Specifically, we suggest that civilian perceptions of the state are likely to be negative when: (1) there is a partial or complete breakdown of state structures (civilians experience a loss of state triggered by state failure or state collapse); (2) the central government is predatory, repressive, or discriminatory toward certain groups

¹⁴For instance, in northeast Syria, the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) has had to engage in constant negotiation with kinship groups to reconcile its ideology and governance practices with traditional tribal culture (Tank 2021). Another interesting example is provided by the so-called Islamic State (IS), which “courted tribes” and created specific institutions as a way to increase local legitimacy in both Iraq and Syria (Lia 2021, 33).

¹⁵We acknowledge that civilians can represent a heterogenous group. The logic we describe applies to dominant perceptions of the state, for example, perceptions embraced by a majority ethnic or religious group in the area where insurgents operate.

(civilians are mistreated by the state); and, (3) legacies of state formation and state penetration of society encourage populations to escape centralized authority (civilians prefer to remain relatively untouched by the state).

These structural features do not create, by default, uniformly high levels of demand for rebel governance. Second, we argue that demand for rebel governance is likely to be also driven by perceptions of civilian–rebel compatibility.¹⁶ All else equal, civilian demand for rebel governance will be higher (and more extensive) when local populations view rebels as ‘compatible’ and lower when they see them as ‘incompatible.’ In other words, the higher the compatibility, the more civilians might accept to be ‘governed’ through the implementation of a specific socio-political order rather than simply provided with basic goods and services. We subsume under the broad umbrella term of ‘compatibility’ not just shared ideological, ethno-linguistic, or religious features but also rebel organizational characteristics that may resonate with local populations, such as decentralized decision-making or the adoption of inclusive institutions.¹⁷

Compatibility, or ‘fit,’ is best captured on a continuous and dynamic spectrum (Staniland 2021, 28) but, for illustrative purposes, we adopt a static, dichotomous view (‘high’ or ‘low’ compatibility). Compatibility is likely to be high when a rebel group’s objectives, activities, and organizational features broadly align with civilians’ values, ideology, identity, or preferred modes of socio-political organization. Conversely, low compatibility describes a situation where insurgents embrace strategic goals and embark on activities that fundamentally diverge from these. For example, low compatibility occurs when rebels and civilians are ideologically or religiously misaligned, or when rebels overwhelmingly resort to coercion to consolidate their rule (thus reflecting a mismatch between their modes of governing and civilian expectations).

As mentioned above, perceptions of civilian–rebel compatibility are not exogenously determined and fixed. Local populations’ pre-existing congruence with rebels’ claimed identity, objectives, activities, and organizational features can affect initial levels of demand (before, or immediately after, insurgents establish territorial presence) but, ultimately, civilian–rebel compatibility is a dynamic process that evolves with each round of interactions between rebel rulers and civilians. Rebels often reposition themselves, organizationally or even ideologically, in order to win or consolidate popular support and legitimacy (and, hence, change civilian perceptions)—except in rare cases of predatory insurgents that completely disregard the population’s interests, where civilian agency will be extremely limited past the establishment of rebel control. This strategic reorientation, though bounded by the insurgents’ agency, ideological flexibility, and organizational capacities, constantly shapes civilian–rebel compatibility and, consequently, the level of demand for armed nonstate actor governance.

In our typology, we assume that the rebels have the capacity to provide some level of governance, if only in the form of a modicum of security and order through their ability to exert violence—or, at least, that civilians believe that they have the capacity to do so. We also assume that, in their desire for security, order, and welfare, local populations would prefer the institutionalization of a wider range of rebel governance practices that they perceive as compatible with their own values, identities, and modes of organization, unless a different type of local actor, such as a community organization, can undertake governance responsibilities more effectively and more adequately than the rebel group—hence, reflecting a degree of civilians’ capacity for collective action. Therefore, our typology is most helpful for understand-

¹⁶While we acknowledge the heterogeneity of civilian perceptions (and the different effects that these might have), we focus on those that dominate the relationship with the rebels, that is, those perceptions that matter the most to them, for instance, because they are shared by a majority of people within the community or carried out by the most vocal or most powerful groups within society.

¹⁷See Suykens (2015) for a discussion of “identification” between rebels and civilians.

ing civilian demand for a range of governance activities that ensure security, order, and welfare in the form of fair extractive practices and effective redistributive activities.

We also expect civilians' expressions of demand for rebel governance, both in form and degree, to be affected by their capacity for collective action (or lack thereof), especially since fear, in civil war environments, "creates collective action problems in confronting combatants" (Kaplan 2017, 4). By *collective action capacity*, we refer to local populations' ability to articulate and act upon their preferences regarding the nature of political order. As Kaplan (2017) puts it: "[s]ocial cooperation and organization is therefore key to help civilians overcome fear, manage their own communities, and deal with armed group pressure in an enduring manner." Civilians' capacity for collective action is critical in cases of civilian–rebel incompatibility, where local populations do *not* demand rebel governance or even reject rebel rule outright—potentially leading to cases of resistance and/or the creation of counter-orders.¹⁸ In the following section, we explain how civilians' capacity for collective action (or lack thereof) is likely to affect the various outcomes and levels of demand for rebel governance.

Variation in Civilian Demand for Rebel Governance

In this section, we elaborate a new explanatory typology (Elman 2005) that deductively charts out several plausible outcomes (Table 1). We systematically define these outcomes around four scenarios that match the state characteristics defined above. For each scenario (except scenario 1), we explain how these structural features create permissive conditions for high civilian demand for rebel governance, how variation in compatibility affects civilian demand for rebel governance, and provide examples identified through secondary sources. As noted earlier, the demand for rebel governance and its absence are difficult to observe empirically. As such, the examples are simply meant to illustrate how different combinations can affect the levels of demand for rebel governance. We discuss further ways of observing demand for rebel governance in our conclusion.

Scenario 1: Positive Civilian Perceptions of the State

Intuitively, where civilians perceive states as functional, inclusive, and legitimate, there is likely no demand for nonstate governance. Compatibility with rebels matters less when the sovereign government performs its core extractive and redistributive functions in a fair, nondiscriminatory manner. Under these circumstances, the government is likely to benefit from widespread legitimacy and support; thus, armed nonstate challengers are less likely to emerge in the first place. In the rare cases that they do, civilians satisfied with formal state governance are unlikely to express demand for rebel rule. Therefore, positive civilian perceptions of the state produce the 'null' categories of no demand for rebel governance, regardless of civilians' compatibility with potential violent nonstate challengers.

Scenario 2: Negative Civilian Perceptions of the State due to State Failure or State Collapse

The second scenario yielded by our typology maps out how negative civilians' perceptions of the state due to state failure or state collapse combine with their perceptions of (in)compatibility with potential rulers to shape their preferences for armed nonstate actor governance. Demand for rebel governance is likely to be particularly

¹⁸In situations of civil war, "[c]ommunities face challenges to mobilization because they may have few resources to offer selective benefits [and] have difficulty using the law to enforce contracts given state weakness" (Kaplan 2017, 12). This is particularly the case for communities, such as the one Kaplan studies, that "cannot use coercion since they espouse nonviolence" (Kaplan 2017, 12).

elevated in environments of partial or complete breakdown of state structures, that is, in states which are “incapable of projecting power and asserting authority within their own borders” (Rotberg 2002, 128).¹⁹ In these situations, local communities adapt to reduce uncertainty, minimize risk, and mitigate coordination and commitment problems.²⁰ As Menkhaus (2006, 75) notes, those communities “consistently seek to devise arrangements to provide for themselves the core functions that the missing state is supposed to assume, especially basic security.” Any power vacuum will be quickly filled because of both demand for and supply of nonstate authority. People living in areas where the state is virtually absent are likely to offer their loyalty to those who can effectively provide order, adjudicate disputes, enforce contracts, and fulfill redistributive functions. At the community level, governance can be provided by a wide range of violent and nonviolent nonstate actors (including local organizations). Yet, this is highly contingent on communities’ capacity for collective action (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017). Given their advantages in coercion, armed groups are uniquely positioned to subdue other potential authority claimants, fill the authority vacuum, and institutionalize an alternative governance edifice. Faced with a choice between lawlessness and rebel rule, civilians are likely to choose the latter, especially if the rebels can provide credible guarantees that they will be non-predatory.

However, demand for rebel governance in failed or collapsed states will also depend on civilian–rebel compatibility. Somaliland approximates the high-compatibility scenario. After the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in January 1991, the Somali state completely unraveled and fighting raged between clan-based militias. While violence was rampant in the capital of Mogadishu and other parts of the country, the northwest region of Somaliland became relatively peaceful under the rule of the Somali National Movement (SNM), a rebel organization that declared independence for the region. In May 1991, its leaders consulted the elders from the major clans in the area and, following their demands, embarked on constructing parallel governance structures (Bradbury 2008).

Over the past three decades, Somalilanders have progressively put in place a functional state apparatus with a presidency, an elected legislature, ministries, municipalities, a police force, a higher education sector, a central bank, and even a separate currency while building a relatively robust economy and “maintain[ing] a high level of public security” (Menkhaus 2006, 91). Compatibility between the SNM and local populations, coupled with a legacy of extensive civilian dependence on centralized authority, meant that demand for nonstate rule remained particularly high. Despite international nonrecognition of its *de facto* secession, Somaliland has had many diplomatic achievements as well: it has developed relationships with sovereign states in the region and beyond; it has teamed up with foreign intelligence agencies on counterterrorism; and international organizations have long had offices in Hargeisa, Somaliland’s capital (Caspersen 2012, 43).

In situations of state failure or state collapse, where there is little identity, socio-political, or ideological congruence between the locals and the insurgents, we expect demand for nonstate governance to vary depending on civilians’ capacity for

¹⁹According to Rotberg (2002), *state failure* amounts to a situation where authority is contested, often violently, by rival actors. In failed states, the government typically faces armed insurgency, civil unrest, communal discontent, or various forms of regular, organized dissent directed at the state. *State collapse* is a rare and extreme form of state failure where the sovereign government is virtually nonexistent and where violence is pervasive. According to these understandings, Syria (since 2011) would qualify as a failed state while Somalia (since 1991) and Libya (since 2011) would qualify as collapsed states. For critiques and further conceptualizations of state failure and state collapse, see Milliken and Krause (2002), Mazarr (2014), and Woodward (2017).

²⁰In the context of civil war, a *community* represents a group of individuals who share a common identity, interests, or preferences, who display social cohesion, and who exhibit at least a latent capacity for collective action. As the recent literature on civilian agency reveals, community leaders are principal avenues through which local communities articulate their preferences regarding the nature of social order (see, among others, Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017; Krause 2018; Krause et al. 2023).

collective action (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017). Where such capacity is minimal, we may observe moderate demand: the institutionalization of alternative structures of authority by rebels that embrace incompatible values will often be preferred to a situation of internal anarchy. By contrast, where civilians display high capacity for collective action, they may be able to mount resistance to rebel rule if the insurgents' ideological, socio-political, or identity profile markedly differs from the one of local populations, in the hope of eventually ruling themselves (hence, no demand).

Libya's fragmented authority space, whereby a patchwork of rebel organizations have fought viciously among themselves for territorial control (Ahram 2020; Lacher 2020), illustrates the first pattern—no capacity for collective action and moderate demand for rebel governance. After the outbreak of civil war in 2011 and the ensuing state collapse, the northeast region of Derna fell under the control of the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council (DMSC), an Al-Qaeda-affiliated coalition of Islamist groups (Truite 2018; Thurston 2020). In 2018, after bitter fighting, the DMSC was defeated by the Libyan National Army (LNA), a Benghazi-based, largely secular, revolutionary group led by General Khalifa Haftar and supported by Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Russia. Soon after ensuring control of the Derna region, the LNA started implementing its governance apparatus with little opposition from local populations that have historically embraced a hardline Salafist ideology (Truite 2018). Hence, although Derna inhabitants' conservative religious values may not resonate with the LNA's secular and statist orientation, their apparently limited capacity for collective action may lead them to acquiesce to LNA governance provision—as suggested by the absence of coordinated resistance—and, perhaps, even demand it.

The Syrian northwest region of Idlib illustrates the second pattern—some capacity for collective action and no demand for rebel governance. Almost since the onset of civil war in 2011 and the ensuing state failure, the population of Idlib has consistently resisted, through nonviolent means such as demonstrations (Naylor 2016), against attempts by HTS, an al-Qaeda offshoot formerly known as Jabhat al Nusra (2013–2017), to consolidate its rule in an area hotly contested by secular and Islamist militants. These recurrent episodes of nonviolent resistance²¹ from Idlib's inhabitants against HTS rule reveal latent capacity for collective action from a population that finds itself at odds with HTS's rigid Islamist beliefs and inefficient civil administration (Haid 2017; Zelin 2022). Despite the empirical difficulty of directly observing the absence of demand for rebel governance, active resistance against it leads us to infer that the HTS case falls in line with the theoretical expectations produced by our typology.

Scenario 3: Negative Civilian Perceptions of the State due to State Predation, Repression, or Discrimination

Demand for nonstate governance is also likely to be substantial when central governments are predatory, repressive, or highly discriminatory. Predation, repression, or discrimination undermine state legitimacy. Thus, rebel governance will likely be a preferred outcome to insecurity, extortion, violent appropriation, exclusion, or torture under an internationally recognized government. The more extreme the government's predatory, repressive, or discriminatory behavior, "the more the populace becomes 'virgin territory' for those who would become a 'counter-state' or alternative government" (Wickham-Crowley 1987, 478). Faced with extortion, exclusion, or violence perpetrated by, or on behalf of, the government, local populations are likely to call for the presence of an alternative structure of authority to provide at least a modicum of order, goods, and services (Matfess 2022). Under

²¹The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (<https://www.syriahr.com/en/>) has chronicled multiple instances of civilian resistance to HTS rule.

predatory, repressive, or discriminatory regimes, where civilians typically lack capacity for collective action, we expect demand for rebel governance to be elevated. This is not to say that civilians can never develop capacity for collective action under these types of regimes—as, for instance, demonstrated during the Syrian uprising (see, among others, [Pearlman 2021](#)). However, predatory, repressive, or discriminatory regimes tend to make it much more complicated²² and, hence, less likely—at times even limiting civilians' ability to even minimally support and make demands to the rebels.

The demand for rebel governance in situations of state predation, repression, or discrimination is particularly elevated when the insurgents are deemed compatible by local populations. The treatment of the predominantly Hindu, Tamil-speaking populations of Sri Lanka by the central government is a perfect illustration of this pattern. After Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) gained independence in 1948, the government introduced the Ceylon Citizenship Act, which stripped Indian Tamils of citizenship and voting rights. In 1956, a new government launched the Sinhala-Only act promoting the hegemony of Sinhala identity and language. In 1971, a new university admission system required Tamils to score higher than Sinhalese to access higher education ([Hashim 2013](#)). The following year, a new constitution accorded primacy to Buddhism and gave the country a Sinhala name (Sri Lanka). These policies created demand for greater representation of Tamils' interests, leading to the creation of the Tamil New Tigers (TNT)—later rebranded the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)—in 1972. In 1983, the LTTE launched a violent struggle for the creation of a Tamil Eelam state in northeast Sri Lanka.

The LTTE was, at first, a reluctant ruler, and mainly focused on military operations. Only after securing control over larger chunks of territory during the 1990s did the group set up a governance apparatus. Asked about its governance system, an LTTE member (quoted in [Fortin 2017](#), 43) stated: “[T]he ground reality is that, as a consequence of this war, the LTTE has established control over 70% of the area in the northeast. There are huge populations here and we have to administer them and for the purposes of maintaining law and order, or rather social order and cohesion, we need to have certain institutions.” Tamil demand for LTTE governance was quite high ([de Soyza 2011](#)) and was exacerbated by legacies of civilian dependence on centralized authority for the provision of public services. Once the LTTE gained territorial control, they could no longer afford to ignore increasingly disaffected local populations used to the provision of basic services ([Kubota 2017](#)).

However, state predation, repression, or discrimination do not automatically produce high demand for nonstate rule. Low civilian–rebel compatibility might translate into highly discriminatory or repressive rebel behavior. In such situations, demand for rebel governance might be nonexistent. This is also true in cases where opportunistic armed groups driven by short-term material gains adopt predatory behavior, such as looting and resource extraction, hence failing to conform to civilians' expectations. Caught between a rock and hard place, civilians are most likely to favor the least repressive ruler.

Where rebels refrain from engaging in indiscriminate violence, we might observe at least some demand for nonstate governance, despite the incompatibilities that may exist between rebels and civilians. This is because an insurgent authority that provides at least a semblance of order would be preferred to a predatory, repressive, or discriminatory state. The SDF that ruled the predominantly Arab city of Raqqa between 2017 and 2020 provide a good example. Amidst criticism from local populations over their lack of inclusiveness and pro-Kurdish inclinations, the SDF were still tolerated by most Raqqa residents (despite their identity incompatibility). In the words of a Syrian journalist (quoted in [Stein 2022](#), 132), they were “the best of the worst.” [Revkin \(2021\)](#) similarly shows how residents of the Iraqi city

²²On the relationship between repression and dissent, see, for instance, [Lichbach \(1987\)](#).

of Mosul who perceived IS governance as an improvement relative to former state practices—hence showing a degree of endogeneity in civilian–rebel compatibility—were less likely to leave the area than those who did not (and, therefore, more likely to demand rebel rule, regardless of ideological incompatibility).

Conversely, we expect past and present rebel behavior and modes of governing that are perceived even more negatively than state practices to elicit little to no demand for nonstate rule. For instance, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), operating in northern Uganda, the DRC, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan, is infamous for perpetrating atrocious acts of violence against civilians and for creating a pervasive climate of fear (Vinci 2005). Given the militant group's extreme ideology—the group's objective is to create a state based on its leader's interpretation of the biblical ten commandments—and use of violence against the population, we would reasonably expect critical weakening of the implicit social contract between rebels and civilians (Wickham-Crowley 1987) and, thus, demand for LRA rule to be either very limited or nonexistent (or, at the very most, confined to a very small group of dedicated followers).²³

Scenario 4: Negative Civilian Perceptions of the State due to Low State Penetration of Society or State 'Flight'

Historical patterns of state formation and, relatedly, legacies of state penetration of society can also affect the demand for nonstate governance. The Weberian, rational-bureaucratic model of state building may be incongruent with historical preferences and experiences of certain communities, primarily outside the Western world. Embracing an exclusively rational-bureaucratic approach to rebel governance as 'state building' provides a rather myopic perspective of the diversity of local authority arrangements that can emerge in conflict environments. As Scott (2009) notes, in certain regions of the world, nonstatal structures of authority, centered, for example, around families, clans, or religious groups, have historically been regarded as an optimal way to organize political communities. While demand for order is universally valid, demand for *state*-provided or *rebel*-provided order is contingent on the socio-political terrain in which actors operate. For example, demand for either state or rebel authority is likely to be low where communities have historically shunned any form of centralized authority, as has been the case with parts of upland Southeast Asia (Scott 2009) or Central Asia (Murtazashvili 2016). This includes situations where communities have originally settled in areas beyond the state's reach to run away from predatory, repressive, or discriminatory government policies. These communities may defy Weberian ideals of centralized power but that does not mean that they are ungoverned. Rather, they are self-governing populations that make deliberate efforts to stay outside of the encroaching grip of centralized authority and organize local affairs in a bottom-up fashion.²⁴ Centralized state authority can also be at odds with populations who refuse to be bound by a social contract carved by a state whose legitimacy they dispute. For example, the Weberian ideal type of the state as bureaucratic may not be compatible with societies who seek religious structures of rule, no matter how effective secular governments might be, whereas segments of populations may reject religious rule and demand secular forms of authority. As a consequence, resistance to centralized rule and, thereby, low state penetration,²⁵ is deeply embedded in the socio-political fabric of these societies.

²³While the lack of demand for rebel governance is generally difficult to observe empirically, this is particularly the case when civilians' collective action capacity is weak or lacking entirely, as we might expect in this case.

²⁴Here, we restrict our claims to situations of civil war; isolated communities that stay aloof from state rule but are not involved in contention with the state are beyond the scope of our discussion.

²⁵Low state penetration of society describes a state that is unwilling or unable to reach certain segments of society. In the absence of the state, communities often turn to informal practices and institutions for the organization of local affairs (see Murtazashvili 2016).

Communities seeking sanctuary from centralizing authorities may be particularly adverse to authority structures, state and nonstate alike, that infringe on local forms of socio-political organization. When a group whose ideology or identity is perceived as fundamentally incompatible with the community's values attempts to replicate centralized forms of authority, it is likely to be perceived as another form of externally imposed social order by civilians. For example, across remote regions of Afghanistan, relatively autonomous communities have been able to govern themselves without an external, centralizing enforcer (Murtazashvili 2016; Breslawski 2021, 181). Such communities do not simply embrace “state-evading” or “state-distancing” practices (Scott 2009, 128) but, essentially, carve areas of refuge from *any* centralizing power. It is in these environments that we expect minimal civilian demand for rebel governance and active resistance to insurgent rule.

By contrast, where local communities reject a *specific* form of centralized authority (that is, the one offered by the state), civilian demand for rebel governance is likely to be high. Where rebels contemplate governance practices that are consonant with historically determined local preferences, particularly where rebels adopt decentralized governance processes that align with pre-existing local authority structures, civilians may indeed acquiesce to, and even demand, some form of rebel rule. Demand may be particularly high where local communities reject specific, particularly statist, forms of political order but embrace alternative arrangements that resonate with their pre-existing norms, values, and practices, and see the rebels as an emanation of the community (Podder 2017). To some extent, this scenario resembles Hyppä's (2023) *civilocracy*, which refers to civilian-initiated and civilian-led governance in territories controlled by rebel groups. In such a scenario, civilians institute governance processes and remain the main governance providers while loosely cooperating with authority-wielding rebels, particularly when they share with them ideological, ethno-linguistic, or religious compatibilities. For example, Latin American communities that embraced counter-state ideologies, in particular Marxism, have tried to escape state authority and placed their loyalties with anti-state forces. During the 1970s, for instance, civilians residing in the south-central highland department of Ayacucho, Peru began lending their support to Sendero Luminoso/Shining Path activists who saw themselves as the true vanguards of the peasant proletariat and provided much-needed paramedical, farming, and literacy services to locals (Palmer 1986).

The Way Forward

In this article, we discussed the incentives that insurgents have to *supply* governance and proposed a new typology that charted plausible scenarios under which civilian *demand* for rebel governance is likely to vary. According to our typology, civilians' perceptions of the state are a key driver of demand for insurgent rule. Where the government is perceived as strong and representative, most ordinary people will be content with the governance process. Where the state has failed or the government is predatory, repressive, or discriminatory, civilians might seek alternative structures of authority that can enforce security, adjudicate disputes, and provide public goods. Essentially, the state's inability or unwillingness to uphold its end of the social contract is a major determinant of demand for nonstate governance. Such demand can also occur independently of government behavior in environments where societies have traditionally fled centralized authority or state penetration of society has been historically low. The proposed typology also illustrates that demand for rebel governance is not solely shaped by civilians' perceptions of the state but also by civilian–rebel compatibility, which we defined as civilians' perceptions of the compatibility of the rebel group with their own values, ideology, identity, and preferred forms of socio-political organization.

Our typology advanced plausible theoretical scenarios for capturing the variation in demand for rebel governance. Although these scenarios were supported by short illustrative examples, a key question remains: how can demand for rebel governance be observed empirically? A direct way to determine levels of demand would be to observe nonviolent mobilization and collective action at the community level whereby civilians express specific requests regarding the nature of local rule (e.g., popular protests and petitions).²⁶ Violent resistance, on the contrary, might be a strong indicator of rebel–civilian incompatibility, complete rejection of the rebel group, and, hence, lack of civilian demand for rebel governance (or at least of the governance that is provided). Another way to measure demand would be to conduct surveys (supplemented by interviews and focus groups) in rebel-held or disputed areas.²⁷ Surveys, and survey experiments, on population satisfaction with life quality indicators and civilian preferences about where the locus of authority should be located would provide a straightforward metric of the demand for rebel governance.²⁸ Surveys and survey experiments among migrant populations fleeing civil war environments would also offer valuable insights into preferences for nonstate actor rule. A third, more indirect, route to capture civilian preferences would be to gauge demand through interviews with rebel leaders, which might provide valuable information on whether they respond to civilian pressures regarding the organization of local affairs. Similar conclusions could potentially be inferred from tracing evolutions in rebel governance policies and productions, as a potential response to civilian demand—see, for instance, the Taliban production of a code of conduct (*layeha*) in 2006 (Johnson and Dupee 2012). Finally, a fourth, also indirect, possibility would be to look at the frequency, mode, and nature of rebel consultation with local communities and their leaders at different stages of the conflict.

Our analysis suggests several avenues for future research on demand-related aspects of rebel governance.²⁹ One fruitful area for further inquiry would be to examine the variation in rebel reactions to civilian demand for governance. For instance, we observe great variability in how the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) or IS reacted to demand for alternative structures of rule in Syria: while the PYD constructed a complex governance system with institutions for defense, finance, agriculture, trade, or even tourism (Allsopp and van Wilgenburg 2019), IS was much more limited in its governance initiatives. Despite calls for the provision of “needed services in the areas it controls, the Islamic State refuse[d] to adjust its governing strategy and provide inclusive goods” (Stewart 2018, 209). Variation in rebel reactions to civilian demands is also visible *within* armed groups. The LTTE, for instance, was unresponsive to the population’s demand for governance provision until it secured control over the Jaffna peninsula in the early 1990s, at which point it started building some embryonic institutions of self-rule. It became even more responsive to civilian demands and started building a more elaborate governance apparatus after it was driven out of Jaffna and retreated south along with a sizable Tamil population by the end of 1995 (Terpstra and Frerks 2017). This variation awaits thorough analysis. Is rebels’ response to civilian demand for rebel governance contingent on underlying factors such as political objectives, military strategy, ideology, territorial control, pre-war patterns of public goods provision, or resource endowments? More broadly, to what extent is the supply of rebel governance a *direct* function of demand?

Relatedly, the current literature seems to accord too much rationality to rebel decision making and, by extension, to rebel governance. While in some cases the

²⁶For example, van Baalen and Terpstra (2023) record civilian nonviolent actions such as protest marches, strikes, and sit-ins as measures of civilian demand for governance in Côte d’Ivoire’s rebel-ruled areas (2002–2011).

²⁷Osorio and Brewer-Osorio (2023) provide a good example of surveys on civilian demand for criminal governance that could be emulated for cases of rebel governance.

²⁸See, for instance, De Bruin et al.’s (2023) recent work on civilian preferences for armed group governance.

²⁹On future areas of rebel governance research, see also Loyle et al. (2023).

institutionalization of rebel rule may be a calculated outcome that derives from well thought-out cost–benefit analyses, in others, such as during the early stages of the LTTE insurgency, governance may emerge through unpredictable ad-hoc arrangements. Besides, more work needs to be done on how supply and demand factors interact to produce varying types of governance arrangements in wartime situations (Kubota 2020). We have yet to elucidate how supply and demand factors might produce the situations of hybrid, multi-layered, governance discussed earlier, wherein rebel and state governance co-exist and complement each other.

Further, a comprehensive understanding of demand and supply for nonstate governance requires expanding the analytical scope to cover a wider population of nonstate actors. Following the bulk of the literature on rebel governance, here we only looked at armed organizations who control territory (even though that territory may be contested), aim to overthrow a government or create an independent state, and employ violent means to attain their goals. While governance provision is fairly common among these actors, it is not exclusive to them. Warlords (Malejacq 2017), auxiliary forces (Jentsch 2017), and other armed actors outside of civil war—e.g., criminal gangs (Lessing 2021; Osorio and Brewer-Osorio 2023)—also successfully engage in governance, often as a result of civilian demand (Lund 2006; Kasfir et al. 2017; Lessing 2021; Osorio and Brewer-Osorio 2023). Hence, future works should elucidate whether different types of armed nonstate actors may be driven by different kinds of incentives to supply governance and whether civilians respond differently to the type of armed nonstate actors that operate in their territory. For example, locals might react differently to pro-state paramilitary groups or criminal gangs.

The same goes for nonterritorial actors who aim to either overthrow the government, secede, or gain some type of autonomy and employ nonviolent tactics in pursuit of their objectives. For example, in the early 1990s, the League for a Democratic Kosovo (LDK) engaged in a nonviolent self-determination struggle and, under growing civilian demand, built an alternative apparatus of governance. The LDK engaged in tax collection, provided funds for a parallel education system, paid teacher salaries, and even offered social assistance (Hajrizi et al. 2007). Are these practices fundamentally different from those of territorial rebel groups? Are there any situations in which demand for nonterritorial, nonstate rule might be particularly elevated? These are important questions that have, thus far, eluded comprehensive analysis.

Additionally, a fuller picture of supply and demand of rebel governance requires a more extensive view of rebel governance. This would entail looking not just at public goods and taxation but also at the broader range of coercive, extractive, redistributive, and political activities through which insurgents regulate social, economic, and political life to encompass the entire spectrum of rebel activities (Florea 2020). Developing a deeper and more thorough understanding of the interactions between rebel rulers and civilians would also require overcoming the state-centric bias that exists in rebel governance research. Indeed, we know a great deal about the institutionalized aspect of rebel governance practices but much less about the informal processes through which armed nonstate actors consolidate their rule. Future inquiries are needed to elucidate how civilian demand for public goods provision shapes the nature of rebel extraction or how the political architecture set up by insurgents is tailored to produce voluntary compliance with rebel rule, maximize taxation, and optimize public goods provision.

Future work should also disaggregate the homogenous category of *civilians* in the study of rebel–civilian relations. The civilian population exposed to rebel rule is rarely compact and typically comprises diverse sub-groups of individuals who may embrace varying preferences regarding the nature of local authority as well as experience diverse degrees of closeness with the rebels. Relatedly, more attention should be paid to intra-community coordination or dissensus regarding the

nature of civilian–rebel interactions, including through the complex role of kinship groups.³⁰ In other words, furthering our understanding of the complexity of rebel–civilian arrangements will require closer investigation of “who is governed” (Lessing 2021).

In the end, we echo Pfeifer and Schwab’s (2023, 5) call for studying and analyzing “rebel governance in its embeddedness in larger social and normative structures, as well as political and power relations.” A more thorough and dynamic understanding of the supply and demand factors of rebel governance is one step forward in this direction. Further, more comprehensive analyses that encompass both the supply and demand aspects of rebel governance would provide a clearer picture of the complex, constantly evolving relationship between civilians and rebels.

References

- AHRAM, ARIEL. 2020. *War and Conflict in the Middle East and North Africa*. London: Polity.
- . 2022. “When Rebels Govern Oil.” *The Extractive Industries and Society* 12: 1–9.
- AKCINAROGLU, SEDEN, AND EFE TOKDEMIR. 2018. “To Instill Fear or Love: Terrorist Groups and the Strategy of Building Reputation.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35 (4): 355–77.
- ALBERT, KAREN E. 2022. “What is Rebel Governance? Introducing a New Dataset on Rebel Institutions, 1945–2012.” *Journal of Peace Research* 59 (4): 622–30.
- . 2023. “Rebel Institutions and Negotiated Peace.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 40 (3): 239–59.
- ALLSOPP, HARRIET, AND WLADIMIR VAN WILGENBURG. 2019. *The Kurds of Northern Syria: Governance, Diversity, and Conflicts*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- ARJONA, ANA. 2014. “Wartime Institutions: A Research Agenda.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58 (8): 136–89.
- . 2016. *Rebelocracy: Social Order in the Colombian Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2017. “Civilian Cooperation and Non-Cooperation with Non-State Armed Groups: The Centrality of Obedience and Resistance.” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (4–5): 755–78.
- ARJONA, ANA, NELSON KASPIR, AND ZACHARIAH MAMPILLY, eds. 2015. *Rebel Governance in Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- ASAL, VICTOR, SHAWN FLANIGAN, AND ORA SZEKELY. 2022. “Doing Good While Killing: Why Some Insurgent Groups Provide Community Services.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 34 (4): 835–55.
- ASAL, VICTOR, DANIEL GUSTAFSON, AND PETER KRAUSE. 2019. “It Comes with the Territory: Why States Negotiate with Ethno-Political Organizations.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 42 (4): 363–82.
- AZANI, EITAN. 2008. *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God: From Revolution to Institutionalization*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- BACZKO, ADAM. 2021. *La Guerre par le Droit: Les Tribunaux Taliban en Afghanistan*. Paris: CNRS Editions.
- BACZKO, ADAM, AND GILLES DORRONSORO. 2017. “For a Sociological Approach to Civil Wars.” *Revue Française de Science Politique* 67 (2): 309–27.
- BAMBER, MATTHEW, AND ISAK SVENSSON. 2023. “Resisting Radical Rebels: Variations in Islamist Rebel Governance and the Occurrence of Civil Resistance.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 35 (5): 1126–46.
- BANDULA-IRWIN, TANYA, MAX GALLIEN, ASHLEY JACKSON, VANESSA VAN DEN BOOGAARD, AND FLORIAN WEIGAND. 2022. “Beyond Greed: Why Armed Groups Tax.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (online first).
- BARTER, SHANE J. 2014. *Civilian Strategy in Civil War: Insights from Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- BERLIN, MARK, AND STEPHEN RANGAZAS. 2023. “Restrained Insurgents: Why Competition between Armed Groups Doesn’t Always Produce Outbidding.” *Texas National Security Review* 6 (4): 11–36.
- BERTI, BENEDETTA. 2023. “From Cooperation to Competition: Localization, Militarization, and Rebel Co-Governance Arrangements in Syria.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 46 (2): 209–27.
- BOB, CLIFFORD. 2005. *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BOEGE, VOLKER, M. ANNE BROWN, AND KEVIN P. CLEMENTS. 2009. “Hybrid Political Orders, Not Fragile States.” *Peace Review* 21 (1): 13–21.
- BÖRZEL, TANJA A., AND THOMAS RISSE. 2010. “Governance without a State: Can It Work?” *Regulation & Governance* 4 (2): 113–34.

³⁰On rebel governance and kinship groups, see, Tuastad et al. (2021) and the remainder of the “Rebel governance and kinship groups in the Middle East and Africa” special issue of *Third World Thematics* 6 (1–3).

- BRADBURY, MARK. 2008. *Becoming Somaliland*. Oxford: James Currey.
- BRESLAWSKI, JORI. 2021. "Keeping Armed Actors Out: The Protective Effect of Shuras in Afghanistan." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 6 (1): 1–8.
- . 2022. "Armed Groups and Public Health Emergencies: A Cross-Country Look at Armed Group Responses to Covid-19." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 7 (1): 1–12.
- BULUTGIL, ZEYNEP. 2020. "Prewar Domestic Conditions and Civilians in War." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 5 (3): 528–41.
- CASPERSEN, NINA. 2012. *Unrecognized States: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Modern International System*. Malden, MA: Polity.
- CHENG, CHRISTINE. 2018. *Extralegal Groups in Postconflict Liberia: How Trade Makes the States*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- COGGINS, BRIDGET. 2014. *Power Politics and State Formation in the Twentieth Century: Dynamics of Recognition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2015. "Rebel Diplomacy: Theorizing Violent Non-State Actors' Strategic Use of Talk." In *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, edited by Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir and Zachariah Mampilly, 98–118. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- CORRADI, EDOARDO. 2023. "The Propagandistic Use of Rebel Governance: The Case of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq." In *Rebel Governance in the Middle East*, edited by Ibrahim Fraihat and Abdalhadi Alijla, 87–115. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- CUNNINGHAM, KATHLEEN G., REYKO HUANG, AND KATHERINE SAWYER. 2021. "Voting for Militants: Rebel Elections in Civil War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65 (1): 81–107.
- DE BRUIN, ERICA, GABRIELLA LEVY, LIVIA SCHUBIGER, AND MICHAEL WEINTRAUB. 2023. "Norms and Networks: Preferences for Armed Group Governance." *Working paper*.
- DUVESTEYN, ISABELLE. 2017. "Rebels & Legitimacy; An Introduction." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (4–5): 669–85.
- ELMAN, COLIN. 2005. "Explanatory Typologies in Qualitative Studies of International Politics." *International Organization* 59 (2): 293–326.
- EZBIDI, BASEM. 2023. "Not Rebel Governance? Hamas's Rule." In *Rebel Governance in the Middle East*, edited by Ibrahim Fraihat and Abdalhadi Alijla, 281–317. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- FAZAL, TANISHA M., AND MARGARITA KONAIEV. 2019. "Homelands Versus Minelands: Why Do Armed Groups Commit to the Laws of War?" *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4 (2): 149–68.
- FLOREA, ADRIAN. 2017. "De Facto States: Survival and Disappearance (1945–2011)." *International Studies Quarterly* 61 (2): 337–51.
- . 2020. "Rebel Governance in De Facto States." *European Journal of International Relations* 26 (4): 1004–31.
- FORTIN, KATHARINE. 2017. *The Accountability of Armed Groups under Human Rights Law*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- FURLAN, MARTA. 2020. "Understanding Governance by Insurgent Non-State Actors: A Multi-Dimensional Typology." *Civil Wars* 22 (4): 478–511.
- . 2023. "Rebel Governance at the Time of Covid-19: Emergencies as Opportunities for Rebel Rulers." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 46 (8): 1440–63.
- GLAWION, TIM, AND ANNE-CLÉMENCE LE NOAN. 2023. "Rebel Governance or Governance in Rebel Territory? Extraction and Services in Ndélé, Central African Republic." *Small War & Insurgencies* 34 (1): 24–51.
- GOWRINATHAN, NIMMI, AND ZACHARIAH MAMPILLY. 2019. "Resistance and Repression under the Rule of Rebels: Women, Clergy, and Civilian Agency in LTTE Governed Sri Lanka." *Comparative Politics* 52 (1): 1–20.
- GRIFFITHS, RYAN D., AND LOUIS M. WASSER. 2019. "Does Violent Secessionism Work?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63 (5): 1310–36.
- GRYNKEWICH, ALEXUS. 2008. "Welfare as Warfare: How Violent Non-State Groups Use Social Services to Attack the State." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31 (4): 350–70.
- HAFEZ, MOHAMMAD M. 2020. "Fratricidal Rebels: Ideological Extremity and Warring Factionalism in Civil Wars." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32 (3): 604–29.
- HAGMANN, TOBIAS, AND DIDIER PÉCLARD. 2010. "Negotiating Statehood: Dynamics of Power and Domination in Africa." *Development and Change* 41 (4): 539–62.
- HAID, HAID. 2017. *Resisting Hayat Tahrir al-Sham: Syrian Civil Society on the Frontlines*. Leipzig: Adopt a Revolution.
- HAJRIZI, MEHMET, ISMAIL KASTRATI, AND BAJRAM SHATRI. 2007. *Keshilli Qendror për Financim në Kosovë (Central Council for Financing in Kosovo)*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor.
- HASHIM, AHMED S. 2013. *When Counterinsurgency Wins: Sri Lanka's Defeat of the Tamil Tigers*. Philadelphia,

- PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- HEGER, LINDSAY L., AND DANIELLE F. JUNG. 2017. "Negotiating with Rebels: The Effect of Rebel Service Provision on Conflict Negotiations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61 (6): 1203–99.
- HOFFMAN, KASPER, AND JUDITH VERWEIJEN. 2019. "Rebel Rule: A Governmentality Perspective." *African Affairs* 118 (471), 352–74.
- HOWE, KIMBERLY, AND DIPALI MUKHOPADHYAY. 2023. *Good Rebel Governance: Revolutionary Politics and Western Intervention in Syria*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- HUANG, REYKO. 2016a. "Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War." *International Security* 40 (4): 89–126.
- . 2016b. *The Wartime Origins of Democratization: Civil War, Rebel Governance, and Political Regimes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- HUANG, REYKO, AND PATRICIA L. SULLIVAN. 2021. "Arms for Education? External Support and Rebel Social Services." *Journal of Peace Research* 58 (4): 794–808.
- HYPPÄ, TIINA. 2023. "Council in War: Civilocracy, Order and Local Organisation in Daraya during the Syrian War." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 34 (1): 52–80.
- IDLER, ANNETTE, AND JAMES FOREST. 2015. "Behavioral Patterns among (Violent) Non-State Actors: A Study of Complementary Governance." *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development* 4 (1): 1–19.
- JACKSON, ASHLEY. 2018. "Life under the Taliban Shadow Government." *ODI Report*, June.
- . 2020. "For the Taliban, the Pandemic Is a Ladder." *Foreign Policy*, May 6.
- . 2021. *Negotiating Survival: Civilian-Insurgent Relations in Afghanistan*. London: Hurst.
- JACKSON, PAUL. 2019. "Intelligence in a Modern Insurgency: The Case of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal." *Intelligence and National Security* 34 (7): 999–1013.
- JENTZSCH, CORINNA. 2017. "Auxiliary Armed Forces and Innovations in Security Governance in Mozambique's Civil War." *Civil Wars* 19 (3): 325–47.
- JO, HYERAN. 2015. *Compliant Rebels: Rebel Groups and International Law in World Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- JOHNSON, THOMAS H., AND MATTHEW C. DUPEE. 2012. "Analysing the New Taliban Code of Conduct (Layeha): An Assessment of Changing Perspectives and Strategies of the Afghan Taliban." *Central Asian Survey* 31 (1), 77–91.
- KAPLAN, OLIVER. 2017. *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- KASFIR, NELSON, GEORG FRERKS, AND NIELS TERPSTRA. 2017. "Introduction: Armed Groups and Multi-Layered Governance." *Civil Wars* 19 (3), 257–78.
- KRAUSE, JANA. 2018. *Resilient Communities: Non-Violence and Civilian Agency in Communal War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- KRAUSE, JANA, JUAN MASULLO, EMILY PADDON RHOADS, AND JENNIFER WELSH, eds. 2023. *Civilian Protective Agency in Violent Settings: A Comparative Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- KUBOTA, YUICHI. 2017. "Imagined Statehood: Wartime Rebel Governance and Post-War Subnational Identity in Sri Lanka." *World Development* 90: 199–212.
- . 2020. "The Rebel Economy in Civil War: Informality, Civil Networks, and Regulation Strategies." *International Studies Review* 22: 423–40.
- LACHER, WOLFRAM. 2020. *Libya's Fragmentation: Structure and Process in Violent Conflict*. London: Bloomsbury.
- LEDWIDGE, FRANK. 2017. *Rebel Law: Insurgents, Courts and Justice in Modern Conflict*. London: Hurst.
- LEESON, PETER T. 2014. *Anarchy Unbound: Why Self-Governance Works Better Than You Think*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- LESSING, BENJAMIN. 2021. "Conceptualizing Criminal Governance." *Perspectives on Politics* 19 (3): 854–73.
- LEVI, MARGARET. 1989. *Of Rule and Revenue*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- LEVITT, MATTHEW. 2004. " Hamas from Cradle to Grave." *Middle East Quarterly* 11 (1): 1–12.
- LIA, BRYNJAR. 2021. "The Islamic State's Tribal Policies in Syria and Iraq." *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* 6 (1–3): 32–51.
- LICHBACH, MARK I. 1987. "Deterrence or Escalation? The Puzzle of Aggregate Studies of Repression and Dissent." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 31 (2): 266–97.
- LIDO, NICHOLAI H. 2016. *Violent Order: Understanding Rebel Governance through Liberia's Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- LISTER, CHARLES. 2016. *Profiling Jabhat al-Nusra*. Washington, DC: Brookings.
- LOYLE, CYANNE E. 2021. "Rebel Justice during Armed Conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65 (1): 108–34.
- LOYLE, CYANNE E., KATHLEEN GALLAGHER CUNNINGHAM, REYKO HUANG, AND DANIELLE F. JUNG. 2023. "New Directions in Rebel Governance Research." *Perspectives on Politics* 21 (1): 264–76.
- LUND, CHRISTIAN. 2006. "Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa." *Development and Change* 37 (4): 685–705.

- MALEJACQ, ROMAIN. 2016. "Warlords, Intervention, and State Consolidation: A Typology of Political Orders in Weak and Failed States." *Security Studies* 25 (1): 85–110.
- . 2017. "From Rebel to Quasi-State: Governance, Diplomacy and Legitimacy in the Midst of Afghanistan's Wars (1979–2001)." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (4–5), 867–86.
- . 2019. *Warlord Survival: The Delusion of State Building in Afghanistan*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- MAMPILLY, ZACHARIAH C. 2011. *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- . 2015. "Performing the Nation-State: Rebel Governance and Symbolic Processes." In *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, edited by Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir and Zachariah Mampilly, 74–97. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- MAMPILLY, ZACHARIAH, AND MEGAN A. STEWART. 2021. "A Typology of Rebel Political Institutional Arrangements." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65 (1): 15–45.
- MARTIN, PHILIP A. 2021. "Insurgent Armies: Military Obedience and State Formation after Rebel Victory." *International Security* 46 (3): 87–127.
- MARTIN, PHILIP A., GIULIA PICCOLINO, AND JEREMY S. SPEIGHT. 2022. "The Political Legacies of Rebel Rule: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Côte d'Ivoire." *Comparative Political Studies* 55 (9), 1439–70.
- MASULLO, JUAN. 2020. "Civilian Contention in Civil War: How Ideational Factors Shape Community Responses to Armed Groups." *Comparative Political Studies* 54 (10): 1849–84.
- . 2021. "Refusing to Cooperate with Armed Groups: Civilian Agency and Civilian Noncooperation in Armed Conflicts." *International Studies Review* 23 (3): 887–913.
- MATFESS, HILARY. 2022. "Alms, Arms, and the Aftermath: The Legacies of Rebel Provision of Humanitarian Aid in Ethiopia." *African Affairs* 121 (483): 197–220.
- MAZARR, MICHAEL J. 2014. "The Rise and Fall of the Failed-State Paradigm: Requiem for a Decade of Distraction." *Foreign Affairs* 93: 113–21.
- MCWEENEY, MARGARET, AND KATHLEEN CUNNINGHAM. 2019. "Conceptualizing Rebel Legitimacy." <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3441304>, accessed February 16, 2022.
- MENKHAUS, KEN. 2006. "Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Builders, and the Politics of Coping." *International Security* 31 (3): 74–106.
- METELTS, CLAIRE. 2010. *Inside Insurgency: Violence, Civilians, and Revolutionary Group Behavior*. New York: New York University Press.
- MILLIKEN, JENNIFER, AND KEITH KRAUSE. 2002. "State Failure, State Collapse, and State Reconstruction: Concepts, Lessons and Strategies." *Development and Change* 33 (5): 753–74.
- MORKEVICIUS, VALERIE. 2013. "Why We Need a Just Rebellion Theory." *Ethics & International Affairs* 27 (4): 401–11.
- MURTAZASHVILI, JENNIFER B. 2016. *Informal Order and the State in Afghanistan*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- NAYLOR, HUGH. 2016. "Al-Qaeda Affiliate Faces Unusual Backlash from Fed-Up Syrians." *The Washington Post*, April 14.
- O'CONNOR, FRANCIS, AND JOOST JONGERDEN. 2023. "Rebel Governance without Territorial Control: The Experiences of the PKK in 1970s Turkey." *Geoforum* 147: 1–11.
- OLSON, MANCUR. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 567–76.
- OSORIO, JAVIER, AND SUSAN BREWER-OSORIO. 2023. "Demand and Supply of Criminal Governance: Experimental Evidence from Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador." *Working Paper*.
- PALMER, DAVID S. 1986. "Rebellion in Rural Peru: The Origins and Evolution of Sendero Luminoso." *Comparative Politics* 18 (2): 127–46.
- PEARLMAN, WENDY. 2021. "Mobilizing from Scratch: Large-Scale Collective Action without Preexisting Organization in the Syrian Uprising." *Comparative Political Studies* 54 (10): 1695–1721.
- PÉCLARD, DIDIER, AND DELPHINE MECHOULAN. 2015. "Rebel Governance and the Politics of Civil War." *swiss-peace Working Papers* 1: 1–36.
- PFEIFER, HANNA, AND REGINE SCHWAB. 2023. "Politicising the Rebel Governance Paradigm. Critical Appraisal and Expansion of a Research Agenda." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 34 (1): 1–23.
- PODDER, SUKANYA. 2017. "Understanding the Legitimacy of Armed Groups: A Relational Perspective." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (4–5): 686–708.
- REVKIN, MARA R. 2021. "Competitive Governance and Displacement Decisions under Rebel Rule: Evidence from the Islamic State in Iraq." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65 (1): 46–80.
- REVKIN, MARA R., AND ARIEL I. AHAM. 2020. "Perspectives on the Rebel Social Contract: Exit, Voice, and Loyalty in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria." *World Development* 132: 1–9.

- RISSE, THOMAS, ed. 2011. *Governance without a State? Policies and Politics in Areas of Limited Statehood*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- ROTBURG, ROBERT I. 2002. "Failed States in a World of Terror." *Foreign Affairs* 81 (4): 127–40.
- SCHLICHT, KLAUS, AND ULRICH SCHNECKENER. 2015. "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy." *Civil Wars* 17 (4): 409–24.
- SCHWAB, REGINE. 2023. "Competitive Rebel Governance in Syria." In *Rebel Governance in the Middle East*, edited by Ibrahim Fraihat and Abdalhadi Alijla, 117–50. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- SCOTT, JAMES C. 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- DE SOYZA, NIROMI. 2011. *Tamil Tigress: My Story as a Child Soldier in Sri Lanka's Bloody Civil War*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- STANLAND, PAUL. 2012. "States, Insurgents, and Wartime Political Orders." *Perspectives on Politics* 10 (2): 243–64.
- . 2021. *Ordering Violence: Explaining Armed-Group State Relations from Conflict to Cooperation*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- STANTON, JESSICA. 2016. *Violence and Restraint in Civil War: Civilian Targeting in the Shadow of International Law*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- STEIN, ARTHUR. 2022. "It's No Secret: The Overtness of External Support and Rebel–Civilian Interactions in Civil Wars." Doctoral dissertation. Université de Montréal.
- STEWART, MEGAN A. 2018. "Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War." *International Organization* 72 (1): 205–26.
- . 2021. *Governing for Revolution: Social Transformation in Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2023. "Identity, Networks, and Learning in the Study of Rebel Governance." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 34 (1): 305–15.
- SUAREZ, CARLA. 2017. "'Living between Two Lions': Civilian Protection Strategies during Armed Violence in the Eastern Democratic of the Congo." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 12 (3): 54–67.
- SUYKENS, BERT. 2015. "Comparing Rebel Rule through Revolution and Naturalization: Ideologies of Governance in Naxalite and Naga India." In *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, edited by Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir and Zachariah Mampilly, 138–57. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- TANK, PINAR. 2021. "Rebel Governance and Gender in Northeast Syria: Transformative Ideology as a Challenge to Negotiating Power." *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* 6 (1–3): 69–87.
- TEINER, DAVID. 2022. "Rebel Governance: A Vibrant Field of Research." *Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 32 (3): 747–66.
- TERMEER, AGNES. 2023. "Rebel Legal Order, Governance and Legitimacy: Examining the Islamic State and the Taliban Insurgency." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (online first).
- TERPSTRA, NIELS, AND GEORG FRERKS. 2017. "Rebel Governance and Legitimacy: Understanding the Impact of Rebel Legitimation on Civilian Compliance with the LTTE Rule." *Civil Wars* 19 (3): 279–307.
- THAKUR, SHALAKA, AND RAJESH VENUGOPAL. 2019. "Parallel Governance and Political Order in Contested Territory: Evidence from the Indo-Naga Ceasefire." *Asian Security* 15 (3): 285–303.
- THURSTON, ALEXANDER. 2020. *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- TOAL, GERARD. 2017. *Near Abroad: Putin, the West, and the Contest over Ukraine and the Caucasus*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- TRUITTE, KEVIN. 2018. "The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council: A Revolutionary Islamist Coalition in Libya." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12 (5): 4–17.
- TUASTAD, DAG, ERLING LORENTZEN SOGGE, AND BRYNJAR LIA. 2021. "Rebel Governance and Kinship Groups in the Middle East and Africa." *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* 6 (1–3): 1–11.
- URIBE, ANDRES. 2017. "Governance without Control: Insurgent Institutions and Rebel–Civilian Interaction in Contested Zones." *Working Paper*.
- VAN BAALEN, SEBASTIAN. 2021. "Local Elites, Civil Resistance, and the Responsiveness of Rebel Governance in Côte d'Ivoire." *Journal of Peace Research* 58 (5): 930–44.
- VAN BAALEN, SEBASTIAN, AND NIELS TERPSTRA. 2023. "Behind Enemy Lines: State-Insurgent Cooperation on Rebel Governance in Côte d'Ivoire and Sri Lanka." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 34 (1): 221–46.
- VINCI, ANTHONY. 2005. "The Strategic Use of Fear by the Lord's Resistance Army." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 12 (3): 360–81.
- WALTER, BARBARA. 2004. "Does Conflict Beget Conflict? Explaining Recurring Civil War." *Journal of Peace Research* 41 (3): 371–88.
- . 2017. "The Extremist's Advantage in Civil Wars." *International Security* 42 (2): 7–39.

- WATERMAN, ALEX. 2023. "The Shadow of 'The Boys': Rebel Governance without Territorial Control in Assam's ULFA Insurgency." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 34 (1): 279–304.
- WATERMAN, ALEX, AND JAMES WORRALL. 2020. "Spinning Multiple Plates under Fire: The Importance of Ordering Processes in Civil Wars." *Civil Wars* 22 (4): 567–90.
- WEINSTEIN, JEREMY M. 2007. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- WICKHAM-CROWLEY, TIMOTHY. 1987. "The Rise (and Sometimes Fall) of Guerilla Governments in Latin America." *Sociological Review* 2 (3): 473–99.
- WOOD, ELISABETH J. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- WOODWARD, SUSAN L. 2017. *The Ideology of Failed States: Why Intervention Fails*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- WORRALL, JAMES. 2017. "(Re-)Emergent Orders: Understanding the Negotiation(s) of Rebel Governance." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (4–5): 709–33.
- YOUNG, JOSEPH, AND LAURA DUGAN. 2014. "Survival of the Fittest: Why Terrorist Groups Endure." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8 (2): 2–23.
- ZELIN, AARON Y. 2022. *The Age of Political Jihadism: A Study of Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham*. Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.