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Jihadi Rebel Governance:

A Comparative Case Study

Diploma Thesis

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Declaration of Authorship

I hereby declare that I have written the following diploma thesis on the topic of "*Jihadi Rebel Governance: A Comparative Case Study*" only by myself. All sources used in this thesis are cited in the text and listed in bibliography.

Olomouc, 27.04.2023 _____

Bc. Michaela Kouřilová

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List of Abbreviations

AI	Amnesty International
ANSA	Armed Non-state Actor
AQ	al-Qaeda
AQAP	al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
AQIM	al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
BH	Boko Haram
CJTF	Civilian Joint Task Force
HNC	Hadramawt National Council
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IS	Islamic State
ISWAP	Islamic State West Africa Province
JAS	People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
STC	Southern Transnational Council
UN OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of governance, i.e. "*the ability to make and enforce rules and to deliver services*" (Fukuyama, 2013, p. 350), has been traditionally associated with the state as a unitary actor possessing exclusive sovereignty over its territory and inhabitants. Nevertheless, globalization, the rise of inter-state conflicts and the phenomenon of failed states have proven the state-centric understandings "*inadequate for comprehending the diverse ways in which governance appears in the contemporary period*" (Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly, 2015, p. 286). Lea & Stenson (2007) identify range of actors involved in governance who vary as to whether they come from above or from below in regards to the state level, as well as whether they work *with* or *against* the state (Lea & Stenson, 2007, p. 10). First, state can delegate some of its powers on international or domestic actors, who then compensate for its weaknesses. In this case, those actors do not question the legitimacy of the state; they work *with* the state. On the other hand, the authority of state (or several states) can be contested by non-state actors, who want to replace its role throughout or in parts of its territory (or across territories of several states) (Lea & Stenson, 2007, pp. 18-20). This type of governance *against* the state is referred to in academic sphere as rebel governance, militant governance or governance by armed non-state actors[1]. The rebel governance literature has grown rapidly since 2000s, gaining recognition as a distinct area for inquiry (Kasfir, 2015, p. 42; Teiner, 2022, p. 748).

In recent years, governance by a particular type of armed non-state actor has received much attention. Predominantly in connection with the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (IS), authors began to focus specifically on jihadi rebel governance. Research on this phenomenon often highlights jihadi groups´ ideological and extremist specificities. Jihadi rebel governance is understood by some authors as uniform across cases and fundamentally distinctive from governance by other types of rebel groups (e.g. Lia, 2015). However, others do not agree with this perception and emphasize rather that "*jihadists' governance initiatives have the same diversity, as other rebels' attempts*" (Donker, 2022, p. 141) and that they are not an exception from the pressures that generally shape rebel governance patterns (Kasfir, Mampilly & McCant, 2016; Suleiman, 2020). As

[1] In International Relations, the term armed non-state actors (ANSAs) includes wide range of groupings, which differ in many characteristics. Typical examples of ANSAs are rebels/insurgents, militias, warlords, terrorist organizations or organized crime groups (Williams, 2008, p. 8; Schneckener, 2009, pp. 15-16.) As most authors have focused on governance provided by insurgent organizations, the term rebel governance came to be used most frequently (Arjona, 2008). However, Kasfir, Frerks & Terpstra (2017) emphasize the diversity of ANSAs involved in governance.

such, to understand jihadi governance "*beyond surface-level similarities between different actors belonging to the same ideological family, one has to go beyond mere ideology per se*" (Carenzi, 2022) and focus on these groups not only as jihadi, but also as insurgent in general. This underscores the importance of addressing variations in jihadi rebel governance and factors that influence its character.

Given the relative lack of studies comparing rebel governance of different jihadi groups and comparative studies of groups with similar ideologies in general (Pfeifer &Schwab, 2022, p.7), this thesis seeks to contribute to the academic debate by presenting a comprehensive and systematic comparison of rebel governance models of selected jihadi groups, while relying on broader rebel governance literature.

The aim of this study is twofold:

1. By applying Marta Furlan´s (2020) multidimensional typology of rebel governance on selected cases, the thesis describes how the groups govern and presents both cases in comparative perspective, which allows to see the similarities and differences in respective dimensions.

RQ1: *What are the similarities and differences in rebel governance of selected jihadi groups?*

2. By testing the hypotheses formulated on the basis of the rebel governance literature, the thesis finds out whether the theoretical assumptions regarding factors influencing the form of rebel governance correspond with the actual character of rebel governance of selected groups in the given dimensions, thus trying to understand which factors influence similarities and differences in the governance of selected groups.

RQ2: *What are the factors behind these similarities and differences?*

In line with the above mentioned research objectives this thesis is divided into four main parts. Firstly, the key terms are conceptualized, including rebel governance, jihadi rebel group and jihadi rebel governance, while research overview concerning the last of the concepts is also presented.

Then, methodological and analytical frameworks are addressed. Within the analytical framework, Furlan´s (2020) typology is introduced in detail. The individual dimensions of rebel governance and what forms they can take are described. Subsequently,

hypotheses are formulated based on the rebel governance literature. First of all, three main groups of factors influencing the form of rebel governance are taken into account in accordance with the book by Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly (2015). Two basic factors are then determined within each of these three clusters, while taking into account other key academic writings (e.g. Mampilly, 2011; Arjona, 2016; Weinstein, 2007 etc.) as well as additional studies dealing with rebel governance. Consequently, hypotheses are formulated on the basis of these factors and their theoretical influence on rebel governance in a given dimension of Furlan's typology is proposed.

In the next part, Furlan´s (2020) multidimensional typology guides the structure of the text with the aim to describe the governance of selected groups. The result of this chapter is a comparative overview of groups´ governance across individual dimensions.

Finally, the thesis tests the hypotheses formulated in theoretical part. The sub-chapters are divided accordingly to the proposed factors influencing the character of rebel governance. Each sub-chapter includes a summary presenting the validity or invalidity of the hypothesis on the examined cases.

1) Conceptualization

1.1. Rebel Governance

Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly (2015) conceptualize rebel governance as "*the set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war*" (p. 3). Huang (2016) then defines rebel governance as "*a political strategy of rebellion in which rebels forge and manage relations with civilians – across civil wars*" (p. 9). In a similar vein, Worrall (2017) understands rebel governance as "*an attempt to create forms of order which enable the rebels to govern and meet their own objectives in a manner which is relatively stable and which ensures the continuing authority of the rebel group*" (p. 725). All three aforementioned definition of rebel governance are general enough to include a spectrum of different ways of exercising authority by any rebel group. Rather than comparing the performance of rebels against global ideals of twenty-first century governance, it encompasses also informal governance systems that are not institutionalized or bureaucratic (Reno, 2015, p. 267). In addition, it allows for a wide range of "*rebel end goals, from secession to state capture and/or the imposition of revolutionary ideology*" (Worrall, 2017, p. 711).

1.2. Jihadi Rebel Group

Before moving on to the concept of jihadi rebel governance, it is necessary to clarify what constitute a jihadi rebel group. After 2001, the term *jihadism*[2] began to be closely associated with the global jihad represented by al-Qaeda (AQ) (Aae, 2018, p. 78). The most common classification of jihadists has been through the lens of who constitutes their key enemy. The overwhelming majority in the modern jihadi movement emerging in the late 1970s were religious nationalists/revolutionary jihadists whose fundamental goal was to overthrow the "apostate" secular Muslim rulers or to expel non-Muslim invaders from

[2] The term *jihadism* is connected with the word *jihad*, more specifically "jihad by sword", which emphasizes the use of violence by invoking the Islamic concept of "holy war" (Hegghammer, 2014, p. 247). Originally, jihad by sword was understood as a collective duty that could be activated only if outside enemies threatened or invaded Muslim lands, and "*carried out by legitimate representatives of the Muslim community*" (Hamid & Dar, 2016). The current notion of jihad in the eyes of modern militant Islamist groups is rather a permanent individual obligation incumbent upon all Muslims. Jihadism thus justifies militancy to achieve a particular political goal (Sedgwic, 2015, p. 39). Muslims of various persuasions have engaged in jihad (Hamid & Dar, 2016), however the adjective *jihadi* is practically never used in reference to Shi´a militants such as Lebanese *Hezbollah* or nationalist groups such as Palestinian *Hamas* (Hegghammer, 2014, p. 247). These groups are more often referred to as "radical Islamist groups" or "Islamist militant groups", while the designation "jihadi groups" is reserved for globally oriented and transnationalized groups (for more see Gerges, 2005).

their home countries – the so called "near enemy" (Gerges, 2005, p. 9). The last decade of the twentieth century then gave birth to a new breed of global jihadists represented by AQ (Gerges, 2005, pp. 29-31), which started to focus on non-Muslims targets – the "far enemy". They have advanced the idea that the Western (predominantly the US) military and economic support for corrupt dictators is what has enabled these regimes to stay in power and what prevents the creation of IS (Byman & Williams, 2015). The globalization of jihad is linked to the idea of pan-Islamic identity or "macro-nationalism" based on "*the view that all Muslims are one people and face an outside threat from non-Muslims*" (Hegghammer, 2010). Nowadays, many authors point out that the near vs. far enemy dichotomy is no longer useful. Hegghammer (2009) argues that the process of ideological hybridization led to the blending of the enemy hierarchies. The hybridization occurred in connection with the process of transnacionalization, as both AQ and the later emerged IS expanded and established local branches around the world (Matesan, 2022, p. 14).

The transnational nature of jihadi insurgencies is understood as key feature that sets jihadi groups apart from many other rebel groups (Kalyvas, 2018, p. 42). Svensson & Nilson (2022) define transnational jihadism as "*the immediate or future aim of a non-state group to establish a caliphate across internationally recognized borders, using violence".* They operationalize this term as including "*non-state actors explicitly associated with the two main trans-national jihadist networks, IS and al-Qaeda*" (p. 3). These transnational jihadi groups are considered to be "*representative of 'global jihadism', subtly ideologically distinct to the more 'nationalistic' version of the [jihadi] movement, represented by groups such as the Taliban*" (El-Badawy, Comeford & Welby, 2017, p. 15). Nevertheless, while global connections have influenced the diffusion of ideas and strategies (Hansen, 2019, p. 6), it would be hard to view global jihadism as a "*cohesive, strategically-oriented militant movement*" (Aae, 2018, p. 86). There are ties of varying degrees, as some groups may be only nominally associated with AQ or IS (Krause, 2022, p. 24). Many authors suggest that the motivation behind the alliances come rather from strategic considerations than ideological ones (Hegghammer, 2009). Moreover, in some cases this strategic choice does not have to be permanent. Some groups merge or cut ties as convenient (Wright et al., 2016, p. 6). The term "glocal jihad" has been used in connection with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) as a group that has deep roots in local historical and political context and whose agenda has been inseparably tied to the local conflict, but whose affiliation brought with it practices of global rhetoric and tactical imitation of AQ (Marret, 2008, p. 549; Bencherif, 2021).

Jihadi rebel groups are not "*merely ´terrorist groups´ or ´networks´*". They are at large insurgencies, which may use terrorism as a tactic, but whose primary goal is fighting local or regional conflicts, in which they participate also as political actors. "*The political nature of jihadist projects encompasses not just their stated demands for the overthrow of existing states and the remaking of local and global orders but also their political modes of day-to-day operation*", which also includes the rebel governance (Thurston, 2020, pp. 2-3).

1.3. Jihadi Rebel Governance – Research Overview

Although jihadi groups have become key actors in armed conflicts following the end of the Cold War (Kalyvas, 2018, p. 42) and jihadi insurgents have repeatedly announced the formation of "Islamic states" or "Emirates" in many parts of the Muslim world over the past three decades, Lia (2016) points out the growth and proliferation of jihadi groups in the aftermath of the so called Arab spring, while highlighting the "*gradual transformation of many jihadi movements … from terrorist underground groups to socially embedded insurgent groups*" as the weakening of the Arab countries and the subsequent political instability "*presented opportunities to practice jihadism as territorial actors*" (p. 6).

This phenomenon has been addressed by a number of scholars, who started formulating various concepts. Building on the David Rapoport's four waves of terrorism thesis, Honig & Yahel (2019) argue that contemporary fifth wave of terrorism consists of the so called "terrorist semi-states" (predominantly militant Islamist and Salafi-jihadi rebel groups), which hold control over parts of weak state´s territory, while providing wide array of governance activities, and at the same time conducting terrorist attacks against third-party states (p. 1210). In this context, Pinos (2020) uses the term "terrorist parastate" and Revkin (2018) writes about "state-building terrorist groups", which are able to control territory and govern civilians through the creation of institution that provide public goods and security (p. 116). Lia (2015) then operates with the term "jihadi proto-state". He defines proto-states as sharing at least four distinct characteristics: they are intensely ideological and internationalist project, they are aggressive vis-a-vis neighbouring states and the international community, and they devote significant resources to "*effective, if harsh, governance*" (pp. 35-36).[3] Although all the aforementioned authors emphasize

[3] Different jihadi groups can be included under each of the above mentioned concepts. Lia´s (2015) definition encompasses only those jihadi groups, which announced the formation of "Islamic states" or "Emirates" (p. 32). However, not all jihadi insurgents make announcements about the formation of an Islamic political entity. This fact is stressed also by Honing and Yahel (2019), whose terrorist semi-state then refers only to organizations that maintain permanent control over a defined territory (p. 1225). Finally, Revkin´s (2018)

governance as crucial aspects of their respective concepts, none of them deals with it in detail. Most importantly, none reflects the variation in jihadi groups´ governing initiatives.

Other previous studies dealing with the governance of jihadi groups, whether directly or indirectly, can be divided into three groups. Macro-level studies focus on identifying the fundamental distinctions between IS and AQ as two global jihadi organizations representing rival factions of jihadi stream. Although there is an ideological proximity between AQ and IS and both share the ultimate goal of establishing Islamic polity and governing under a strict interpretation of *shari´a*, their strategic outlooks differ (Hafez, 2020, p. 42). The split is characterised as a competition between IS´s territorialized vs. AQ deterritorialized approach (Raineri & Martini, 2017) and IS´s puritanist/extremist vs. AQ´s pragmatist/ populist approach (Hafez, 2020; Skretting, 2022). Tensions along these lines have been captured in the global jihadi current long before the split in the visions of the leading figures, who clash over the primacy of religious-theological purity and military-strategic effectiveness. Lia (2011) writes about the division between the so called doctrinarians or ideologues and strategists (p. 69). Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the founder of the group that later grew into IS, was an example of the doctrinarian school within jihadi movement, which argue that "*doctrinal purity consistent with the movement's theological pretences is more important than political machinations*". Strategist, on the other hand, "*aim to build broad constituencies and are often willing to sacrifice ideological homogeneity in order to build such coalitions*" (Moghadam & Fishman, 2011, p. 12). Nevertheless, these macro level studies "*tend to leave the impression that there exist a predefined set of doctrines that diffuses from the global level into the local conflict theatres*" (Cold-Ravnkilde & Ba, 2022, p. 2). Although jihadism is understood by some authors as a transnational social movement (e.g. Aslan, 2009; Drevon, 2017), excessive focus on ideological doctrine may lead to unwanted determinism (Thurston, 2020, p. 3). AQ franchises and IS affiliations were largely created rather through renaming, reorganizing or fragmentation of pre-existing Islamist militant groups (Lia, 2016, p. 78).

The second cluster includes case-studies of individual jihadi groups. Many authors focus on the unprecedented governance project of IS[4] and governing practices of other jihadi groups operating in Syria[5]. Other researches centre on Afghani Taliban[6], jihadi

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emphasis on the creation of governance institutions goes against the definitions of rebel governance proposed above, as groups that rule in informal ways are then excluded (p. 116).

[4] E.g. al-Tamimi, 2015; Lia, 2017; Ingram, 2021; Bamber-Zryd, 2022

[5] E.g. Carenzi, 2022; Drevon & Haenni, 2021; Bamber & Svensson, 2022; Berti, 2023

[6] E.g. Jackson & Amiri, 2019; Jackson & Weigand, 2019; Terpstra, 2020

groups in Sahel, including Mali[7] and Nigeria[8], or Al-Shabaab[9] in the Horn of Africa. Attention has been paid also to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) [10], which operates in Yemen. Most of these studies focus only on specific aspects of rebel governance separately, such as relations with pre-existing forms of authority, e.g. tribes and clans (e.g. Lia, 2017; Skjelderup, 2020; al-Dawsari, 2018; Phillips, 2010); particular governing policies, such as justice, security, education etc. (e.g. Marchal, 2018); or territoriality (e.g. Raineri & Martini, 2017).

The last group encompass recent comparative studies, including Donker´s (2022) article focusing on jihadi groups in Syria and Rupeshinge, Naghizadeh and Cohen´s (2021) paper dealing with jihadi governance in Sahel. Concerning the former, Donker (2022) argues that the character of jihadi governance is affected by group´s decisions on "*how to position a jihadist identity in relation to local and national identities*" (p. 141) and "*how to balance popular representation and religious authority as a source of legitimation for governance decisions"* (p. 153). His study differentiate between IS as a representation of pure jihadi identity and the embodiment of the Islamic state; *Ahrar al-Sham* as a localized group, which had "*no problem with incorporating local initiatives*"; and *Al-Nusra Front*[11], which he describes "*as representation of a global jihad coming to aid a nationalist uprising*", and which co-opted initiatives that aligned with a jihadi collective identity (p. 153). Donker thus captures the various "*shades of jihad*" (see Atwood, Khalifa & Drevon, 2022), while differentiating between more locally oriented/revolutionary and global/transnational jihadi groups. Regarding the latter study, building on existing rebel governance literature, Rupeshinge, Naghizadeh and Cohen (2021) identify five broad types of explanations of the variation in jihadi governance: macro-level context of state weakness; the role of the state and rival armed non-state groups; ideology; the organisation and its leaders; and local politics and conflicts. Although they do present a comprehensive overview of jihadi groups´ governance in Sahel, they do not systematically examine the effect of these factors on selected cases (p. 26; NUPI, 2021). Both of the comparative studies mentioned above point out that there is a lack of research of jihadi governance and what is more, it "*tends to focus either on one hegemonic group or to emphasize their ideological, extremist specificities*" (Donker, 2022, p. 141).

[7] E.g. Skretting, 2022; Bøås, 2014; Bøås & Strazzari, 2020; Cold-Ravnkilde & Ba, 2022; Baldaro & Diall, 2020
[8] E.g. Ladbury et al., 2016; Akinola, 2017; Hassan, 2022; Omenma, Abada & Omenma, 2020
[9] E.g. Doboš, 2016; Hansen, 2013; Skjelderup, 2020; Marchal, 2018; Ahmad 2021
[10] E.g. Zimmerman, 2015; Kendall, 2018a, 2018b; al-Dawsari, 2018; Phillips, 2010
[11] Currently *Hayat Tahrir al-Sham*.

Nevertheless, what may be considered an important specific feature of the jihadi rebel governance initiatives is their short-livedness. Since they are designated as terrorist groups, they are prone to trigger a strong counterinsurgency campaign or even international intervention. However, jihadi groups are characterized as resilient organizations, which "*can withstand serious losses, survive periods of decline, and then reclaim power"*. Ahmad (2021) deals with the "boom-bust cycle" in jihadi long-term approach (Ahmad, 2021, p. 1), while Doboš and Riegl (2021) use the term liquid territoriality to describe the "*ability of an actor to act as a territorial entity inside the power vacuum while being incapable of holding the territory in direct confrontation with (domestic or external) state power"* . This liquid territoriality enables jihadi groups to achieve a degree of flexibility, allowing them to de- and re-territorialise if needed (p. 156). In line with the cyclical nature of jihadi insurgencies, Bamber-Zryd (2022) emphasises the necessity to apply a historical approach in analysing the governance models of jihadi groups, as they might be constructed of a number of governance cycles (p. 1318). The experience of previous governance cycle should enable rebels to learn and potentially take up different governance approach, which may lead to even more effective rule. Thus, the governing strategy of jihadi group does not necessarily remain static (Pfeifer & Schwab, 2023, p. 9).

2) Methodological and Analytical Framework

2.1. Methodological Framework

This thesis is conceived as a comparative qualitative research. Specifically, it represents a comparative case study, which entails the examination of two or more cases, and thus enables across-case analysis. A comparative study has explanatory research character and as such, it is a tool for linking theory generalizing causal relationships with empirical data (Karlas, 2019, p. 65). In other words, it "*aims to infer causal relationships between factors by systematically comparing instances of a phenomenon, namely cases, conceived as different configurations of variables or factors*" (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 20). This study does not seek to generalize but rather focuses on cases within time and space to conclude whether the theory is applicable in reality or not (Levy, 2008, pp. 3-4). In line with the definition of comparative case study as "*the systematic comparison of two or more data points (cases) obtained through use of the case study method*" (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999, p. 372), this thesis firstly examines each jihadi group separately based on the Furlan´s (2020) multidimensional typology. Afterwards, it uses comparative approach to examine the formulated hypotheses and their validity across selected cases.

2.1.1. Case Selection

An important step in selecting a suitable case is to define sufficient thematic focus and timeframe (Kořan, 2008, p. 31). The aim of this thesis is to compare the rebel governance of transnational jihadi groups, that is, those *"explicitly associated with the two main trans-national jihadist networks, IS and al-Qaeda*" (Svensson & Nilson, 2022, p. 3). The selection of the cases is bounded by Kasfir´s (2015) three conditions that rebels have to fulfil in order to be able to engage in rebel governance: rebel group must have control over some territory, however it may fluctuate temporally and spatially; the territory has to be inhabited by civilians; and the group has to commit an initial act of violence to became a rebel group (Kasfir, 2015, pp. 24-25). In addition, the group has to exist long enough and sufficient information about its operation must be available, as this thesis relies on secondary resources. This criterion may lead to selection bias, as groups that are more successful and receive more attention are preferred. However, many authors highlight the effect of duration of the war on rebel governance, while proposing that the longer the conflict lasts, the more likely the rebel group is to set up a system of governance (Arjona, 2016, p. 48).

It would be convenient to choose one group affiliated with IS and one with AQ. Regarding groups affiliated with IS, in accordance with a study by Doboš and Riegl (2021), who examine the territorial presence of IS affiliates, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) best fulfils all the above-mentioned conditions[12]. ISWAP can be seen to a certain extent as a continuation of Boko Haram (BH). Although it represents a splinter group that distanced itself from BH, ISWAP´s commanders were part of BH at the time the group controlled territory and made its pledge to IS (ICG, 2019, pp. 20-22). In addition, in following years, ISWAP "*absorbed or eclipsed much of Boko Haram* [JAS][13]" (Chesnutt & Zimmerman, 2022). For this reason, it is possible to examine the rebel governance of BH and subsequently ISWAP in a cyclical manner. If BH/ISWAP is chosen as a representative of IS-affiliated groups; the selection of an al Qaeda-affiliated group should be guided by the condition that the group has been operating as an insurgency for a similar period of time and in a different environment. It would be beneficial to choose different geographical areas with different political and social systems, as jihadi rebel groups are presumed to be political actors in their respective local conflicts. In this regard, AQAP is the most suitable choice, as it meets Kasfir's conditions, its length of operation as active insurgency is similar to BH/ISWAP, sufficient amount of literature about its operation does exist and it does operate in different political and social setting. In addition, both selected groups are considered jihadi-proto states by Lia (2015) and both can also be defined as Honig and Yahel's (2019) terrorist-semi state.

The timeframe then varies with each case. As mentioned above, jihadi rebel governance is characterized by cyclical nature. Therefore, the thesis addresses different periods within the long-term functioning of both groups, while concentrating on those phases during which the groups had sufficient control over the territory and were thus able to govern. This allows for within case comparison as well, although it not the primary goal of this thesis.

2.1.2. Data Collection and Limits of the Research

[12] IS-Somalia, IS-Philippines and IS-Yemen are incapable of sustained territorial control; IS Sinai controls some cities, however increasingly depopulating; although IS-Libya managed to control territory between 2014-2015 and IS-Khorasan as well as IS-Greater Sahara have somewhat effective territorial control over remote territories, the amount of literature focusing on these cases is not sufficient enough (Doboš & Riegl, 2021).

[13] Although some studies do not make this distinction (e.g. Apard (Ed.) 2020; Maza, Koldas & Aksit 2020a, 2020b etc.), this thesis uses the name Boko Haram to refer to the original group before the split in 2016, then it differentiates between ISWAP and JAS, i.e. the other faction under the leadership of Abubakr Shekau (more details below) (More on the issue of factionalism within BH in Warner & Lizzo, 2021).

The thesis is based mainly on secondary sources. These are primarily English-language scientific books, edited volumes, book chapters, articles in academic journals and other studies, which were available in open source format or acquired through professional databases made accessible by the University (e.g. ProQuest, EBSCO). In addition, reports by governmental and non-governmental organizations such as the International Crisis Group (ICG) or Amnesty International (AI) and articles by news agencies are crucial source of on-the-ground information.

The main limitation of the research is related to the data collection. The difficult availability of primary sources and the fact that the research suffers from the lack of field work are at least partly compensated by the effort to triangulate, i.e. drawing data from different sources and comparing them with each other in order to ensure maximum validity. Secondly, because the author of this thesis does not have knowledge of another language, secondary as well as primary sources in French or Arabic or Hausa are then overlooked.

2.2. Analytical Framework

2.2.1. Multidimensional Typology of Rebel Governance

Multidimensional typology created by Marta Furlan (2020) is used as a framework for comparing different dimensions of rebel governance of selected cases. This typology represents a single such analytical framework, which draws on previous scholarly research[14] (Furlan, 2020, p. 490). However, it must be noted that there are limitations of this typology. As it includes those dimensions, in which the variation between groups is most common, some key aspects of the governance, which could add a new insight to the comparison, may be neglected. Yet, it ultimately offers a rich perspective on the different spheres and important factors of insurgent governance. Moreover, when considered appropriate, the typology has been adjusted or extended by additional rebel governance literature.

Range of Governance Functions

First, it is necessary to establish, which governance functions are provided by the rebel group. Furlan (2020) emphasises that each rebel group can intervene in different aspect of

[14] The typology builds on key works in rebel governance literature such as Weinstein (2007); Mampilly (2011); Arjona (2016); Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly (2015); Mampilly & Steward (2021) and others.

local life. The scope of governance functions insurgents engage in is therefore not fixed (p. 481). Most common governance functions include:

Provision of Security

When rebels gain control of a distinct territory and population, the provision of security is a crucial first step as rebels aim to obtain monopoly over the use of force and achieve credibility as an authority (Furlan, 2020, p. 481). "*In order to effectively control the territory, the actor must be able to provide security for the population as well as against external actors*" (Doboš, 2016, p. 941). Van Baalen (2020) defines security governance as "*the creation of institutions and practices that serve to control and regulate the use of force in rebel-held areas"*. He further distinguishes whether the rebel security governance is protective (protect civilians and their property from crime and other threats) or repressive (enforcing unpopular and brutal rules) (p. 10).

Provision of Justice

Another common governance function is justice. The provision of their own form of dispute resolution allows rebel groups "*to create order – which benefits not only civilians but combatants as well*", as it boosts their credibility as governing authority (Furlan, 2020, p. 482).

Taxation

Taxation is an important act of governance, which reinforces the image of the group as legitimate ruler. Routinised taxation "*contributes to normalising the group's rule in the eyes of the ruled population*" (Furlan, 2020, p. 482). Taxes may include anything from protection money payments to fees for the transportation of people and goods or operating a business. Collection of taxes may be done through formal or informal mechanisms. Moreover, it can be more accountable, as rebels may set fixed fees, which allow civilians to know how much and when they are expected to pay; or rebels can behave more exploitative, imposing different amounts as willing (van Baalen, 2020, p. 11).

Provision/Regulation of Public Goods and Services

Provision of public goods and other services may include activities such as distribution of food, provision of potable water, healthcare, education or electricity, construction of roads, regulation of trade or agriculture etc. This kind of governance function is particularly challenging as it requires a greater amount of financial resources and number of personnel.

Service provision arguably demonstrates a more ambitious governance role. However, even if the insurgent group is not able to extend its governance effort to this level, there might be sign of its willingness to do so on smaller scale (Furlan, 2020, pp. 482-483).

Moreover, rebel group may also regulate the access to aid and essential services, which are provided by another actor, such as NGOs. This "*enhances the armed group's self-image and legitimacy in the eyes of the population … [as] It allows the armed group to act as the governing authority, taking key decisions about what benefits individuals or the community can access*" (Bahiss, Jackson, Mayhew & Weigand, 2022, p. 40).

Regulation of Behaviour

Finally, many rebel groups engage in the regulation of behaviour, e.g. "*sanction/subsidy of certain businesses, the prohibition of sale of certain products, the imposition/prohibition of certain religious practices, the regulation of inter-gender relations, the regulation of women's freedom in the public sphere, the regulation of the dress code*" etc. (Furlan, 2020, p. 484).

For each following dimension of the typology, Furlan identifies two opposite instances[15]:

Inclusivity

Inclusivity indicates the extent to which the above mentioned governance practices, norms, and rules apply to the entire community or only to part of it. **Universality** occurs when "*security and justice are provided to all the people living in the territory where the group rules and law is enforced without discriminations; taxes are imposed on everyone; goods and services are provided to the community in its entirety; the same obligations, prohibitions, and restrictions on behaviour apply to every individual*". On the other hand, **discrimination** is observed when these governance functions and rules concern only part of the community on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion or other aspect (Furlan, 2020, p. 490).

Generation of compliance

While in some cases rebels generate compliance with their rule solely through **coercive measures**, it is common for them to rely on non-coercive practices, which aim to **persuade**

[15] This dichotomy may represent a limit of the chosen framework, since in practice, the governance activities of rebel groups can be placed rather on a scale between these two poles. This limitation is taken into account and the framework is thus adjusted accordingly.

civilians to comply, as well (Furlan, 2020, p. 492). Coercive compliance is characterized by the use of force or threat of force. Groups may employ arbitrary and unpredictable violent practices against civilians. Some even resort to such actions such as "*mass kidnappings, raids and forced recruitment*" (Furlan, 2020, p. 492). The term "*rule of the gun*" is used by Reno (2015) in connection with this type of violent rule of National Patriotic Front of Liberia (p. 272).

Compliance based on positive incentives is then closely linked to the concept of rebel legitimacy, either "pragmatic/material or performance based" or "moral/symbolic" legitimacy (Gawthorpe, 2017, p. 841; also Terpstra, 2020, p. 1147; Carenzi, 2022; Mampilly, 2015, p. 80). "Pragmatic" legitimacy is connected with the ability of a group to create order and provide security and other services to meet the expectations of the civilian population. During wartime, the maintenance of public order and provision of security are important incentives to civilian population seeking protection from violence. If the rules are predictable, even if they are harsh, they provide a degree of stability to a rebel-controlled territory allowing civilians to "normalize" their life under rebel rule. The provision of services can then substantially improve the quality of life within the conflict zone (Arjona, 2016, pp. 26-28; Mampilly, 2011, pp. 63-64). As such, rebels can rely on these pragmatic incentives to generate compliance.

"Moral" legitimacy then refers to an ideational commitment based on *"narratives, communal myth-symbol complexes, belief systems, traditions, and cultures*" (Gawthorpe, 2017, p. 841). Insurgents often formulate their worldviews strategically in order to foster identification between the rebel authority and its targeted constituency. They may invoke shared communal identities such as ethnic groups or religious denominations; highlight socio-economic inequalities; promote their ideology; or present their project as a "divinely-inspired mission" (Hoffmann, 2015, pp. 158-161; Furlan, 2020, p. 492) They may create a narrative of "us versus them" by presenting – the other side – whether the incumbent, different segments of society, other rebel groups or even external actors – as enemies that need to be encountered (Frerks &Terpstra, 2017, p. 285). The claims must however resonate with the audience´s values and beliefs, collective memory or emotions. Concerning jihadi group in particular, insights from authors exploring the transnationalization of local jihadi groups are valuable as they stress that jihadism itself *"has a very narrow social and political base*" (Svensson & Nilsson, 2022, p. 4) and that "*the content of jihadist ideology is … translated, negotiated and hence defined, by …"* jihadi entrepreneurs, who creatively draw on and recombine existing historical grievances

of particular referent group and thus blend into long term historical conflicts (Cold-Ravnkilde & Ba, 2022, p. 2).These methods of persuasion are observable from the group's rhetoric and various tools of propaganda. In accordance with the classic carrots-and-sticks model, rebel often provide both negative and positive incentives to generate compliance with their rule.

Other Actors

Rebels do not create their modes of governance in an empty vacuum. As an insurgency/civil war has often its roots in political, social or economic problems a country is facing (Schneckener, 2009, p. 6), the phenomenon of state fragility and the emergence of the ungoverned space are often highlighted (Rotberg, 2003, pp. 2-10). However, in reality, "*many of so called ungoverned spaces are simply differently governed*" (Clunan & Trinkunas, 2010, p. 17). Where the formal state appears to be weak, other alternate forms of governance by non-state actors, including local tribal, ethnic, or religious authorities or private organizations, may exist. Thus, insurgents establish their governance in what can be called *"spaces of contested governance"* (Clark & Mansour, 2013, p. 2). Rebels must decide how to engage with these alternate forms of authority and other social, political and economic actors operating in conquered territory such as international aid organizations, NGO personnel, private personal networks and other insurgent groups (Mampilly, 2011, pp. 72-73). On one hand, they may **include** them in their governance, while collaborating only on a specified tasks or a wider array of issues (Mampilly & Steward, 2021, p. 19). On the other hand, other actors may be **excluded** and the group is the sole ruler (Furlan, 2020, p. 493).

Civilians

Under rebel rule civilians may be treated as **subjects** to whom rules apply without them having the possibility to intervene in their making, or rebel group can accepts mechanisms of **participation** by which civilians express their demands and have a say in governance (Furlan, 2020, p. 491). It can be presumed that no jihadi group would allow civilians to participate in democratic processes, as they strictly oppose democracy as a political system (Lahoud, 2010). Thus this dimension is not included within the framework.

Institutions and Personnel

This dimension refers to how the rebel group decides to behave with respect to the structures and practices established by the state or local authority as the former ruler. The group decides either to **maintain** these pre-existing institutions, adapting them to some limited extent to their guiding principles, ideology, and norms; or they introduce **innovation**. Institutions encompass all formal or informal structures and practices, which concern the above mentioned governance functions – security system, judicial system, taxation system, systems of service provision (health, education etc.) and societal rules (Furlan, 2020, p. 494; Mampilly & Steward, 2021, p. 16).

Bureaucratisation

The structures, rules and practices that rebels establish can be **informal/ad hoc** or **formal/bureaucratic**. Bureaucratisation "*refers to the formalization… in terms of record keeping, decision-making, and division of labor… groups are bureaucratic when they rule by means of 'established procedures or practices that enable them to perform certain tasks routinely' and when they have 'bureaucratic procedures for decision making, a developed division of labor with positions for various functions, explicit criteria for membership, and rules governing subunits'*" (Staggenborg, 1998 as cited in Furlan, 2020, p. 495).

Executive style

Finally, the last dimension is connected to the organizational structure of the group. We can assume that this structure is also reflected in the way in which decisions regarding governance are made, implemented and enforced. **Hierarchical executive style** occurs when there is a pyramidal structure and decisions are taken by an entity that sits at the top and imposes its authority on the lower levels. In the opposite case, the group is **non-hierarchical**, constituted by many networks and characterised by multiple chains of command (Furlan, 2020, p. 496).

Range of Governance Functions	
Provision of Security	
Provision of Justice	
Taxation	
Provision/Regulation of Public Goods and Services	
Regulation of Behaviour	
Inclusivity	
Universality	Discrimination
Generation of Compliance	
Coercion	Persuasion
Other actors	
Inclusion	Exclusion
Institutions and Personnel	
Maintenance	Innovation
Bureaucratisation	
Formality	Informality
Executive Style	
Hierarchical	Non- Hierarchical

Table 1: Dimensions of Rebel Governance. Source: Furlan, 2020 – adjusted by the author.

2.2.2. Factors Behind the Variation in Rebel Governance

Growing academic literature on rebel governance offer several explanations for the diversity of governance of various rebel groups. Building on these studies, three main sets of factors can be observed: rebel attributes; the pre-conflict history of local state and society and civilian responses, and war-time contextual factors (Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly, 2015, pp. 286-300; cf. Arjona, 2008, 2015, 2016; Mampilly, 2011; Mampilly & Steward, 2021). Mampilly (2011) stresses that the variation in rebel governance cannot be explained by using only a single variable but requires analysis of multiple variables and concurrent processes (p. 16). The most common variables included in the studies of the above mentioned authors have been chosen and are described below:

1) **Rebels´ Attributes**

Goals and Ideology

Rebel groups are defined as organizations that "*oppose existing government militarily and have political goals*" (Jo, Dvir & Isidori, 2016, p. 76). Since Al-Qaida, IS and their affiliates are all being classified as Salafi-jihadi groups, this variable may be considered

constant across cases. Salafi-jihadism[16] is understood as a global religious ideology (Moghadam, 2008), which believes in the absolute reconstruction of the international order and/or the nation-state and which seeks to restore "*the authentic and pure Islam… of the golden era… of the first three generations of Islam*" through violent means. Salafi-jihadists consider the *Qur'an* and the *Hadith* to be the only legitimate sources of religious conduct and reasoning (Maher, 2016, p. 7).

According to Kalyvas (2015a), jihadi rebel groups can be understood as revolutionary armed groups, whose political goal is "*not just to gain power but self-consciously to transform society in a deep and radical way, by profoundly rearranging social and political relations*" (p. 43). Mampilly & Steward (2021) thus propose that revolutionary groups are likely to innovate pre-war political and social institutions (p. 27). The influence of their goals and ideology should be visible in all areas – political, legal, economic and social – as they should be based on Islamic scripture. The authors also assume that the revolutionary ideology determines the inclusiveness of rebel governance. While some revolutionary rebels are more inclined to commitments to inclusion and participation of civilians, such as left-wing insurgencies; other revolutionary ideologies, such as jihadism, lead to more exclusionary forms of governance, as "*the transformation… entails the elimination of certain groups…"* (Mampilly & Steward, 2021, p. 28).

H1: The governance of revolutionary groups/Salafi-jihadi groups is characterized by innovation of institutions and discrimination.

The academic literature on jihadism then provides more detailed insights into the groups' ideological stands. The extent of inclusivity of jihadi governance is affected by sectarian tendencies (Mendelejis, 2020) as well as by the application of the "*Islamic concept of takfīr; i.e. the act of declaring a Muslim an infidel, to justify the killing of other Muslims"*[17] (Stenersen, 2020, p. 782). Stenersen (2020) sees jihadi groups as moving along

[16] *Salafism* refers to a puritanic school within Sunni Islam that began to take shape during the 18th and 19th centuries. At the time, Muslim territories were coming under the domination of Western powers. Confronted with the subsequent rapid modernization and Western education, some responded by proclaiming a return to the original Islam as preached by the Prophet Muhammad (Saeed, 2013, p. 30). The aim of the Salafis is therefore to restore Islam to its original and true form by cleaning it of non-Islamic elements. Maher (2016) suggests that Salafis can be divided according to their stance on the method of the change – including quietism, activism and violence; and their attitude towards the state or international order – which they can advise on, challenge or reject. Salafi-Jihadists are then only those, who are violent–rejectionists (pp. 9-11).
[17] Debates revolving around the interpretation of *takfir* are common not only among contemporary jihadi groups, but also within individual groups themselves, including ISIS, which has gone through its own internal debate on this issue (for more on this topic see Bunzel, 2019).

a spectrum on the "takfirism scale". She notes that groups become more *takfiri* as more categories of Muslims are added to their list of legal targets. The scale runs from integration at one end, to separation on the other. The author also stresses that "*takfiri behaviour may… be an expression of ideology as well as local conflict dynamics*" (p. 782). In this regard, Moaswes (2020) considers the practical implementation of *takfir* to be a modern political tactic, which "*further the objective of groups seeking to create entirely new political communities by countering extant hegemonic ideas of a political and religious community*" represented locally by traditional structures of hegemony and globally by state-centric notions of political hegemony.

Although ideology is thought to drive the objectives of an insurgency, in some cases, it has proven malleable to more pragmatic considerations needed to achieve the organization's goals (Keister & Stanchev, 2014, pp. 14-15). As mentioned above, the tensions between ideologists and strategists are common feature within jihadi groups. As Ingram (2021) states, these tension were present also within IS itself as it "*was constantly grappling with tensions between ideological forces within the group compelling it to operate in ways that ultimately clashed with the practical needs of engaging in an insurgency that relies on winning the support of the local population*" (p. 56). As such, it is necessary to analyze other variables in order to explain the varying governance models of jihadi groups.

Rebel Funding

Studies dealing with the so called "rebel resource curse" (e.g. Weinstein, 2007; Reno, 2015; Sarkar and Sarkar, 2017; Marks, 2019 etc.) propose that insurgencies constructed around "economic endowments", such as revenues from natural resources or other illegal activity or external financial and material support, are less beholden to civilians and thus less concerned with civilian welfare. On the contrary, resource-scarce insurgencies have to rely on "social endowments", .i.e. common interests or identities based on ethnic, religious, or ideological ties or shared believes and norms, and develop strategies to mobilize population and convince locals of the long-term payoffs of collaboration (Weinstein, 2007, pp. 7-16, 45-50).

The funding of rebel group can be thus divided into "extractive resources" (e.g. regularly on profits from the extraction, sale or trade of natural resources such as diamonds, minerals, metals, etc.; illicit activities such as narcotics trading; external financial aid (also from other rebel movements); criminal activities such as kidnapping,

looting, and robbery as a form of financing), which are thought to encourage opportunism and violent behaviour toward civilians, because "*... with less need to bargain with local civilians, rebels are more likely to fulfill any remaining need for local resources – food, shelter, and supplies – through coercion rather than through a systematic fostering of an implicit social contract with the population*" (Huang & Sullivan, 2021, p, 796); and "collaborative resources" (e.g. taxes imposed on commodities, businesses, trade and services such as road checkpoints; or contributions), which contribute to a greater embeddedness of a group, which is then more likely to omit lower levels of indiscriminate violence (Netjes & van Veen, 2021, p. 37). Although, insurgencies often adopt multiple funding strategies simultaneously, it can be observed on which they are most reliant. Based on the above mentioned "mutual dependence argument" (Huang & Sullivan, 2021, p. 796), the following hypothesis can be formulated:

> H2: Rebel groups that rely mostly on extractive resources are likely to pay less attention to the needs of civilian population, thus providing fewer governance functions. They are also more likely to generate compliance through coercion rather than persuasion.

Nevertheless, this assumption is at odds with the "capacity argument", which holds that weak insurgents are less capable of "*providing potential supporters with sufficient material incentives to compel voluntary collaboration*" and therefore they are more likely to choose ideological persuasion or coercion as an "*inexpensive alternative*" to overcome the collective action problem. As they became stronger, they should perceive a declining benefit to the use of violence against civilians and instead provide positive incentives such as public services (Wood, 2010, p. 604). *"Studies often use ´rebel capacity´, ´rebel capability´ and ´rebel strength´ interchangeably*" (Loyle et al., 2022, p. 11). Although rebel capacity is comprised of various dimensions, the above mentioned capacity argument concerning rebel governance relies rather only on the economic dimension of rebel capacity, i.e. the material resources a rebel group can mobilize toward its activities (Loyle et al., 2022, p. 13). Nevertheless, the measurement of the overall economic capacity of selected jihadi group is beyond the scope of this study. For this reason, a hypothesis regarding the influence of overall rebel capacity on rebel governance is not formulated.

2) Pre-conflict History of Local State and Society

"*As rebels construct their preferred ...* [governance] *arrangements, they encounter preexisting political orders and the collective actions of civilians*". Their governance models thus represent "*a combination of the initial preferences of rebel leaders and the interaction of insurgent organizations with a variety of other social and political actors active during the conflict itself"* (Mampilly & Steward, 2021, p. 17).

Penetration of State Into Society

Mampilly (2011) distinguishes whether an insurgency breaks out in a state with high or low penetration into society. He views penetration in a sense of "*how and to what degree … community was integrated ... into the preconflict state through the expansion of the government bureaucracy*" (pp. 70-71). Building on the so called rentier state theory (e.g. Beblawi, 1987), he differentiates between the merchant state, whose bureaucratic apparatus penetrated deep into society due to the system of taxation; and rentier state, in which the government lacks a functional state bureaucracy and tends to be autonomous from the people. Disengaged government therefore "*produces an apolitical population, disconnected from the local machinations of the presumably ineffective public bureaucracy*" (Mampilly, 2011, p. 71). State power penetrates a society through a variety of bureaucratic structures, including those concerned with public services, such as health care, education, maintenance of law and order; or regulation of agriculture, business and industry etc. (Binsbergen, Reyntjens & Hesseling, 1986, p. 375). Structures of territorial (regional, provincial, district, village, etc) administration are then *"the outreaches of the state apparatus to the peripheries*" (Coleman, 1977, p. 10).

Mampilly (2011) proposes that "*the design of rebel governance systems is the least likely to depart from preexisting patterns and institutions when the preconflict society is characterized by a high degree of state penetration"* (p. 73). Rebel groups may thus incorporate government structures and practices, i.e. the bureaucratic framework, into their governance, thereby improving their own governance provision. This can be done either fully or only in certain areas/sectors. As such, there may be a clear link between the groups´ governance and that of pre-existing political regime.

H3: If the pre-conflict political regime penetrated into society in terms of bureaucratic structures, rebels are more likely to incorporate pre-existing structures and practices into their governance. They are thus less likely to innovate and their governance model is more likely to be bureaucratic.

Non-state Governing Authorities and Civilian Agency

Mampilly (2011) points out that the ineffective bureaucracy of rentier state opens up the path to alternate forms of governance by non-state actors (p. 71) Arjona (2016) considers the quality of the pre-existing institutions, including informal structures led by traditional or religious figures, local organizations or other authorities – to be a crucial factor in how interventionist a rebel group will be. She proposes that in communities, where pre-existing institutions are neither legitimate nor efficient, insurgents opt for *rebelocracy*, i.e. they intervene broadly regulating many aspects of local life: providing mechanisms to adjudicate disputes, establishing rules of conduct in economic or social sphere, providing basic services like education and health etc. They do so, because their rule is more likely to be welcomed by the population due to its dissatisfaction with existing authorities. On the contrary, in communities, where pre-existing institutions are legitimate and efficient, armed groups settle for *aliocracy*, i.e. "the rule of others" as most civilian affairs are in the hands of traditional leaders, religious figures or even state officials or other actors and rebels intervene minimally, limiting their engagement to maintaining a monopoly over violence and extracting resources from the population. *Aliocracy* occurs because civilians are likely to resist as they value their form of governance and have a high capacity for collective action (pp. 26-29, 42-50). Many authors stress the civilian agency in interactions with rebel groups as they may initiate protests or even violently reject rebel governance (e.g. Weinstein, 2007; Mampilly, 2011; Arjona, 2016; Svensson & Finnbogason, 2021).

H4: In societies, where pre-existing non-state governing authorities are efficient and legitimate, rebel governance is less interventionist, i.e. other actors are likely to be included in some way in governance arrangements and rebels are more likely to maintain to some degree the pre-existing structures and practices.

3) Wartime Contextual Factors

Governance structures and practices may be constantly transformed over the course of a war by a variety of conflict produced dynamics.

Conflict Intensity and Firmness of Territorial Control

Conflict intensity is a crucial factor in relation to establishment of rebel governance. If the conflict intensity is low, rebels are more likely to devote resources to governance activities (Mampilly, 2011, pp. 81-82; Kasfir, 2015, p. 34). Mampilly (2011) stresses the importance of periods of peace achieved through either a stalemate or a ceasefire as they have positive

effects on rebels´ engagement in governance. On the other hand, high levels of fighting lead to less focus on governance and fewer resources being devoted for it. "*During periods of active warfare, rebel leaders naturally prioritize military needs over civilian administration. Conversely, governance efforts are likely to become more sustained during times when military conflict is diminished*" (p. 82).

Lower conflict intensity is directly connected to the firmness of territorial control. The level of territorial control is in itself a factor influencing the variation of rebel governance. Kalyvas (2015b) proposes that rebels become more coercive as their territorial control decreases (p. 120). Moreover, rebel groups with low or limited degree of rebel territorial control are likely to have fewer incentives to invest in governance as their authority is at risk of being eroded (Netjes & van Veen, 2021, p. 37). Conversely, a high degree of rebel territorial control suggests more permanent authority (Kalyvas, 2015b, p. 120).

The shifting nature of the battlefield is influenced by the actions of the incumbent state. In line with enemy-centric counterinsurgency strategy, the state usually focuses on combating rebel forces through military means. Either through a direct fight between the armed forces and the rebel fighters or through the deployment of militias, that are funded, supplied and directed by the state (Jones, 2017, pp. 186-189). If the group is perceived as a global security threat, a direct intervention by international forces may multiply incumbent state combat capacity (Mampilly, 2011, pp. 59-60).

Concerning the counterinsurgency strategy, it can include variety of direct and indirect tools to undermine the capacity of rebel group to provide governance (Mampilly, 2011, p. 59). Besides the enemy-centric strategy, other non-mutually exclusive counterinsurgency strategies of the state can be identified. First, the population-centric strategy focuses "*on winning the hearts and minds – and ultimately the security – of the local population*". Punishment strategy/ authoritarian approach then aims to decrease civilian morale in rebel controlled areas by causing severe shortages of goods and services thought the imposition of restrictions on the movement of people and goods; or by exposing large portions of the population to indiscriminate violence to force it into cooperation (Jones, 2017, pp. 186-189). While some studies imply the connection between repressive state actions and the increase in mobilization of jihadi insurgencies (e.g. Rupesinghe, Naghizadeh & Cohen, 2021; Thurston, 2020), Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly (2015) emphasise that "*the ways in which the incumbent state shapes the governance practices of groups with which it engages in battle needs to be further theorized*" (p. 291).

Due to this fact, this thesis will not deal with the effect of various state actions on rebel governance.

H5: The higher the conflict intensity and subsequently the lower the firmness of territorial control, the more likely the rebels are to behave coercively and provide fewer governance functions.

Competition: Rival Actors

The rebel group may face not only the incumbent state, but also other armed non-state actors, be it independently emerging or splinter groups. Although some groups may not see each other as rivals and even form a cooperative models of rebel governance (Berti, 2023), it is more common for insurgent groups to compete over limited pool of resources that are necessary for their survival (Metelits, 2009, p. 674). Many studies argue that competition among multiple non-state actors raises the level of violence these actors inflict on civilians (Metelis, 2009; Arjona, 2016; Nemeth, 2014; Farrell, 2020). "*They do this to acquire more immediate access to resources and to prevent rival groups from establishing political authority over civilian communities"* (Metelits, 2009, p. 674).

H6: In an environment where multiple ANSAs operate, rebel groups are likely to rely predominantly on coercion as a mean of generation of compliance.

On the other hand, the concept of outbidding emphasizes the mutual influence that groups have on each other. It entails rebel group´s effort to differentiate themselves from one another in order to gain greater share of support. Some authors point out that a group may distinguish itself through the provision of security and other public goods and services, or through "*ideological outbidding*", as it may became more moderate or radical in comparison with other groups (Hafez, 2017, p. 5; Akcinaroglu & Tokdemir, 2018, p. 368). Nevertheless, in line with the predominant theoretical assumption within the academic literature the above mentioned hypothesis has been formulated.

Factors Influencing Rebel Group´s Governance		Expected Effect on Rebel Governance Model
Rebel Attributes	**Rebels´ Goals and Ideology**	**Institutions** Constant: Revolutionary group (Salafi-jihadi group) → Innovation **Inclusivity** Constant: Revolutionary group (Salafi-jihadi group) → Discrimination
	Rebel Funding: **Extractive Resources (e.g. sell of natural resources, smuggling/illicit activity) vs. Collaborative Resources (e.g. taxation, civilian contribution)**	**Generation of Compliance** ↑ Extractive Resources → ↑ Coercion **Extent of Governance Functions** ↑ Extractive Resources → ↓ Extent of Governance Functions
Pre-conflict Factors and Civilian Responses	**Pre-existing Political Regime and Its Penetration Into Society**	**Institutions** ↑ State Penetration → ↓ Innovation **Bureaucratization** ↑ State Penetration → ↑ Bureaucratization
	Pre-existing Non-state Governing Authorities and Their Legitimacy and Efficiency	**Institutions** ↑ Legitimacy and Efficiency → ↓ Innovation **Other Actors** ↑ Legitimacy and Efficiency → ↑ Inclusion
Wartime Contextual Factors	**Conflict Intensity and Firmness of Territorial Control:** **Actions of Incumbent State / International Intervening Force**	**Generation of Compliance** ↑ Conflict Intensity + ↓ Firmness of Territorial Control → ↑ Coercion **Extent of Governance Functions** ↑ Conflict Intensity + ↓ Firmness of Territorial Control → ↓ Extent of Governance Functions
	Competition: Rival Actors	**Generation of Compliance** ↑ Competition → ↑ Coercion

Table 2: Factors Influencing the Dimensions of Rebel Governance. Created by the author.

3) Rebel Governance Dimensions of Selected Jihadi Groups

3.1. Boko Haram

3.1.1. Context

Thurston (2018) distinguishes five stages of BH´s development. The author considers the decades from 1970s to the 1990s to represent the "prehistory" of the jihadi group, as at those times northern Nigeria experienced first major waves of religiously-inspired violence[18] (p. 2).

The second phase covers the years from 2002 to 2009, i.e. from the founding of BH[19] as an isolationist religious sect, to its decisive turn to violence in 2009, when the conflict between gradually more militant BH and Nigerian government culminated into violent clashes, which were followed by the execution of the group´s founder Mohammad Yusuf (Hütte, Steinberg & Weber, 2015, pp. 87-89).

During the period spanning 2010 to mid-2014, BH re-emerged under the command of one of Yusuf's former lieutenants, Abubakar Shekau, as a clandestine network, which launched a terrorist campaign largely destabilizing north-eastern Nigeria. The group focused predominantly on Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. However, attacks took place also in large cities across Nigeria, including Abuja. Activities with a major impact on civilian welfare became BH's modus operandi, be it suicide bombings or terrorist attacks using improvised explosive devices (IEDs), as well as assassinations and kidnappings (Hansen, 2019, pp. 110-117). Following its forced withdrawal from urban centres to remote locations in the Sambisa forest, BH changed its operational practices and started to behave more like a rural insurgency. In mid-2013 its raids on villages and towns became more frequent (ICG, 2014, p. 17; International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2022).

A fourth phase, from July 2014 to March 2015, represents the first governance cycle of BH, as it controlled territory in north-eastern Nigeria. At the time, BH's operations gained regional scope due to repeated attacks along border areas with neighbouring Niger, Chad and Cameroon (Campbell & Harwood, 2018). Moreover, greater international attention began to be paid to the group, especially in connection with the

[18] Many scholars argue that there are parallels between the Maitatsine uprising of 1980s and the BH insurgency, as the radical religious movement of the past might have prepared the ground for its creation (e.g. Adesoji, 2011; Aghedo, 2017).

[19] The name *Boko Haram* itself was given to the group by outsiders. In its early days, BH was referred to also as *Yusufiyya* or *Nigerian Taliban* (Agbiboa, 2015). Although Shekau later adopted an official Arabic name for the group *Jamā'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lādda'awatih wal-Jihad* (JAS, eng. People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad), it remained to be referred to as BH (Thurston, 2018, p. 17).

kidnapping of schoolgirls from Chibok. During this period, BH made its pledge to IS, becoming an accepted affiliate (ISWAP) (ICG, 2019, p. 1). Some analysts suggest that BH's pledge was an act of desperation, as it was losing its territorial control, comparing the decision to al-Shabbab affiliation to al-Qaida in 2012, when it also faced strong counter-offensive (Thurston, 2018, p. 272; Hansen, 2019, p. 124). Others consider it to be a strategic choice stemming from BH´s utilization of "*territorialized strategy to jihad*" represented by IS (Raineri & Martini, 2017, p. 441; Pieri & Zenn, 2016, p. 68).

A fifth phase then began in 2015, when BH lost its territorial control. A year later, aggravated longstanding personality clashes and doctrinal differences within the organization led to its fragmentation into two separate groups[20] – one still led by Shekau, which returned to using the official Arabic name of the group under the abbreviation JAS; and another led by former BH commander Abu Musab al-Barnawi (son of Mohammed Yusuf), which retained the name ISWAP, as it gained official recognition from IS (Kassim, 2018, p. 3).

Despite President Bulhari´s announcement in December 2015 that "*Nigeria has technically won the war"* against BH, the two factions continued their operations (BBC, 2015). JAS focused its activities around the Sambisa Forest and along the border with Cameroon, while ISWAP established its stronghold around Lake Chad area. The groups coexisted along each other with only minor incidents of direct clashes, but very intense verbal confrontation in propaganda material. However, the dispute culminated in May 2021, when ISWAP´s storming of the Sambisa forest led to Shekau´s death. ISWAP has quickly become more successful than JAS, which not only lost its leader but also faced greater pressure from the Nigerian army, preventing it from growing (ICG, 2022a, p. 4). Since 2018 there have been reports about the creation of a "*jihadi proto-state in Lake Chad Basin*" (Foucher, 2020a; also ICG, 2019; Samuel, 2019; Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Thus, taking into account the developments following the publication of Thurston´s book, additional sixth phase, comprising of the second governance cycle by ISWAP, can be included.

3.1.2. Boko Haram – JAS, 2014-2015

Territorial Control

[20] A third faction, called Ansaru, separated from Boko Haram already in 2012.

BH exercised some degree of control over rural parts of Borno state prior to 2014, however during the summer of that year; it showed a more systematic quest for territorial control. In July 2014, BH began to capture and occupy many major towns in the north-east (AI, 2015, p. 29).

By August 2014, Shekau announced the establishment of a "*state among the states of Islam*" with its capital in the town of Gwoza (Thurston, 2018, p. 225). During the fall, the territory under control extended across most of Borno, northern Adamawa and into eastern Yobe states. Although the group failed to capture Borno´s regional capital Maiduguri, it took over major towns including Mubi, Gwoza, Chibok, Dikwa, Gambaru, Baga and Bama, which is the second largest city in Borno (Higazi, 2020, p. 201). Some sources suggest that at the beginning of 2015, BH controlled an area of approximately 20 000 square miles[21] (Abdallah, 2015; Pieri & Zenn, 2016, p. 67). However, it is necessary to point out that the pattern of territorial control was varying, as some places were being constantly occupied for almost a year, while others for only a few months or weeks, sometimes repeatedly lost and taken over again depending on the shifts on the battlefield (Higazi, 2020, p. 201; see Figure 1). In general, BH´s territory consisted mostly of rural areas, anchored around mid-sized towns (Thurston, 2018, p. 226). Nevertheless, according to AI (2015) sources, thousands of civilians were at some point living under its control (p. 29). Jones et al. (2017) estimate that the number reached 1.3 million people during autumn of 2014 (p. 125).

Yet, mid-February 2015, the group found itself under increasing pressure from the Nigerian military and its regional allies, who launched a counter-offensive forcing it to withdraw to the periphery of Borno By the end of March 2015, Nigeria announced that it had recaptured most of the territory BH´s territorial control thus lasted less than a year (ICG, 2019, p. 1).

[21] Jones et al. (2017) estimate that BH controlled 18 000 square kilometres during autumn of 2014 (p. 125).

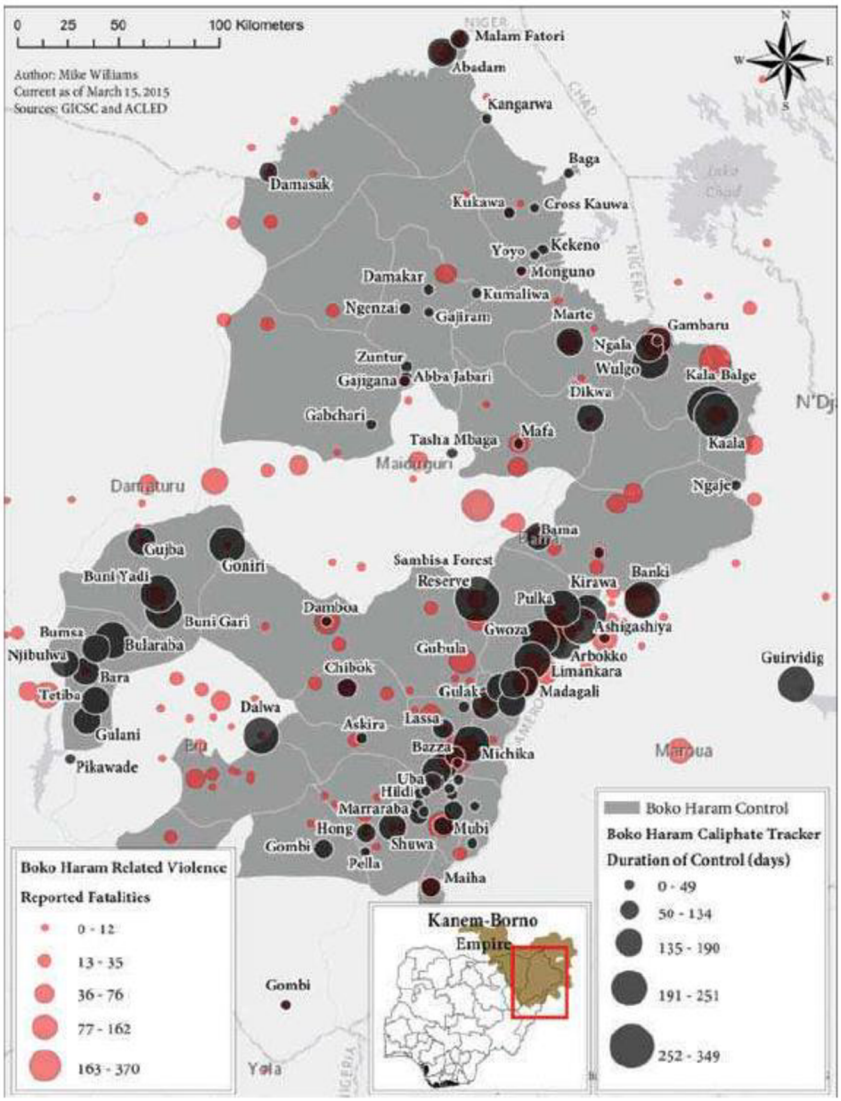

Figure 1: Boko Haram´s territorial presence in March, 2015. Source: Pieri & Zenn, 2016

Range of Governance Functions

What is crucial to point out in regard to BH´s governance in general, it differed by location. While in some places the group cared little about civilians in terms of ruling, in others it provided certain governance functions (Omenma, Hendricks & Ajaebili, 2020, p. 12). The description below includes a summary of the approaches that make up the governance model of BH.

Provision of Security

Concerning the provision of security, the group managed to set up a security network manning roadblocks and controlling the adjacent area. People were told that their town is now part of the Islamic state and they are not allowed to "*travel to Nigeria*". BH fighters patrolled out-of-town areas and controlled people by searching for fresh Nigerian bank

notes, as the ones used in their self-declared Islamic state were rather old and tattered; or they required the travellers to identify the local BH officials to prove that they belong to the town or village. In some cases, travel between towns required special permission. The purpose of the security network was to protect the group itself from external actors, for instance intruders or spies. The protection of civilians was not the goal. On the contrary, people lived in insecurity and were often victims of BH´s violent behaviour (Higazi, 2020, p. 202).

Provision o Justice

BH imposed rudimentary *shari´a*. The provision of justice comprised mostly of imposition of *hudud* punishments (corporal penalties mentioned in the *Qur'an*) for breaking the rules regarding the regulation of behaviour (Thurston, 2018, p. 226). According to some sources, judges were installed in some towns (AI, 2015, p. 16), while in others BH´s commanders settled the cases and disputes themselves (Omenma, Hendricks & Ajaebili, 2020, p. 12).

Taxation

According to available information, BH did not levy taxes on the local population[22] (Campbell, 2014, p. 3).

Provision/Regulation of Public Goods and Services

The group attempted to hand out food and other essentials to civilians, which were often acquired through looting during raids on towns and villages outside of group´s control[23] (Samuel, 2022, p. 17), or in other instances, women, who were less likely to be checked by the military, were sent at night to other towns to obtain supplies (Higazi, 2020, p. 202). Nevertheless, the handouts were often inadequate (AI, 2015, p. 17). Due to the high intensity of the conflict, farming and pastoral activities reduced across all Borno state leading to widespread food insecurity (Kah, 2017). As part of the application of *shari´a* rules, it was obligatory to conduct all transactions directly between producer and consumer. Resell of goods was thus forbidden. There were also places, where BH´s fighters did not engage with civilians at all and rather looted, destroyed and burned down shops and markets (AI, 2015, p. 15, 30, 39).

[22] Some sources suggest that BH did impose taxes (e.g. Hansen, 2019, p. 120). This disagreement between authors likely stems from the above mentioned fact that BH´s rule was not uniform across controlled territory. However, the predominant opinion within the academic literature seems to be that BH did not engage in taxation in general.

[23] The biggest raid arguably happened in October 2014, when BH looted the town of Mubi in Adawama sate. Mubi has been a commercial hub in north-east Nigeria with one of the largest cattle markets (Samuel, 2022, p. 17).

BH did not attempt to provide any services, such as healthcare or public utilities, for civilians. What they strived for, however, was to prevent children from receiving secular education (AI, 2015, p. 11). Instead, intensive religious indoctrination of all school age girls and boys was implemented (Ladbury et al., 2016, p. 5).

Regulation of Behaviour

Religious rules were imposed as the group aimed to "purify" the territory. Among the most common obligations was the prohibition to sell or consume cigarettes or other drugs. Men were forced to grow their beards and hair and to wear trousers not touching the ground, whereas women were obligated to wear *niqab*, i.e. covering themselves including their faces, in public. In some places, females were also prohibited from leaving their houses without permissible reason (AI, 2015, pp. 15-16; Higazi, 2020, p. 202). Daily prayers were mandatory and separate for males and females. Moreover, *Quranic* classes, lasting for two hours each day, had to be attended not only by children but also adults (Higazi, 2020, p. 203; Thurston, 2018, p. 227).

Inclusivity

Before 2010, BH focused its violence primarily on security and political targets, however, the number of its civilian targets expanded over time, to become a very broad category encompassing virtually anyone, who disagreed with the group's religious and political beliefs (Pérouse de Montclos, 2014, p. 137).

Those, who the group considered to be unbelievers and thus legitimate targets, include all individuals connected with secular Nigerian government, such as politicians, local government officials, civil servants, teachers and health workers. These individuals were often killed and their houses were looted (AI, 2015, p. 40).

BH also deliberately targeted civilians in towns that had set up a Civilian Join Task Force (CJTF), a government-supported militia, often not distinguishing between actual members of the vigilante group and other men from the communities with the presence of CJTF. In towns that did not form a CJTF, BH took control without killing large numbers of civilians. Although BH targeted mainly military-age men, several cases of killing women and children occurred (AI, 2015, p. 43, 54; Stoddard, 2019, p. 9).

BH targeted both Muslims and Christians[24]. From 2010 onwards, BH destroyed

[24] Pérouse de Montclos (2014) stresses that Yusuf himself did not advocate for killing Christians. This choice of targeting emerged in later phase of BH development and was motivated rather by the group´s intention to

churches and seminaries and killed or abducted many Christians. During its attacks on schools, Christian students have been singled out and either directly executed or, in some cases, forced to join the group and convert (Cook, 2013; Thurston, 2018, p. 227; HRW, 2014, p. 16). However, as the data analysed by Campbell & Harwood (2018) show, the shift of BH´s focus on the wider Muslim community around 2013 is evident. By 2015, mosques made up the majority of religious attack sites. From the ideological perspective, BH's interpretation of *takfir* broadened. Shekau believed that all people residing outside of BH´s territory, who do not strictly distance themselves from Nigerian state and are not actively fighting against BH´s enemies, or those who fled the Islamic state, can be labelled infidels and thus targeted, whether killed or enslaved (Kassim, 2018, pp. 30-31). This explains the increased number of attacks on mosques, markets or other public places and internally displaced person´s (IDP) camps (ICG, 2022a, p. 8).

Generation of Compliance

Coercion

BH began as a movement with considerable popularity. Nigerians were joining its ranks voluntarily. However, by 2014, BH´s broad popularity had already waned. As such, the group has increasingly relied on forced recruitment to fill its ranks. From 2013 onwards, BH abducted many civilians in several raids, forcing men and boys to join the group and executing those who refused (Apard, 2020, p. 183; Maza, Koldas & Aksit, 2020a, p. 6). Botha, Ewi, Salifu, & Abdile (2017) estimate that 40 percent of BH fighters represented conscripted members (p. 51). BH abducted not only potential fighters, but also those with specific skills, such as medics or engineers, who were sometimes released after they provided requested services (AI, 2015, p. 31). In addition, abductions of women and girl, often during raids, became frequent. The females were detained in camps and town under control and afterwards either forced into marriage or in some cases even used as suicide bombers (HRW, 2014, pp. 21-36; Campbell, 2020). Moreover, children were forced to participate not only in battles, but also in executions (AI, 2015, p. 24).

In terms of coercive behaviour in captured towns, restrictions on movement were imposed; however, they differed depending on particular location. In some places, BH imprisoned people in buildings under armed guard; in others, civilians were able to remain in their houses and move freely around the town. Greater restrictions were put on the

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attract international audience and to claim to be part of global jihadi movement defending Muslims against "Crusaders" (p. 139).

movement between the cities and villages, as described above (AI, 2015, p. 26, 32). Although BH mostly attempted to force people from fleeing the controlled areas, they escaped in high numbers (International Organization for Migration, 2015).

BH´s rule was overall coercive, as it used violence or the threat of violence to discourage civilians from cooperating with Nigerian security forces and carried out harsh punishments for not following its rules, including public floggings and executions (AI, 2015, p. 29, 31; Akinola, 2017, p. 71). Cases of amputation of thieves' hands and public stoning for adultery were also recorded (Higazi, 2020, pp. 202-203; AI, 2015, pp. 16-17). BH also released videos of beheadings of captives (Alamba & Faul, 2014; Abrak & Payne, 2015).

Persuasion

BH relied predominantly on coercion during the period of its rule; however, some limited forms of persuasion can be traced. Although the group offered virtually no pragmatic stimulus to populations under its control[25], some benefits were provided to its members (Ladbury et al., 2016, p. 2; Maza, Koldas & Aksit, 2020a, p. 6), including monthly payments or promise of a bride (Pieri & Zenn, 2016, p. 80). According to Botha, Ewi, Salifu, & Abdile (2017) opportunistic reasons rank as the second highest factor for joining BH, at 28 percent (p. 51).

Regarding the narratives the group tried to build its legitimacy on; during its early years, BH took advantage of widespread poverty, government inefficiency and corruption to grow its support base. It labelled the Nigerian state as a colonial construct, lacking Islamic legitimacy, while portraying itself as a viable alternative that would revive the legacy of Islamic governance of the historic caliphates[26]. (Pérouse de Montclos, 2014). Although its actions did not match the propaganda, BH tried to frame itself as a defender of Islam and Muslims (Stoddard, 2019, p. 9). Many Nigerians supported BH even after it

[25] In contrast, prior to 2009, the support for the group was strongly based also on pragmatic incentives, especially micro-financing schemes and other forms of distribution of welfare and provision of jobs to unemployed youth (Pérouse de Montclos, 2020, pp. 174-175; Pieri & Zenn, 2016, pp. 73-74).

[26] Specifically, BH referred to the Sokoto Caliphate and the Kanem-Borno Empire. Pieri & Zenn (2016) point out the paradox, that while BH drew its legitimacy primarily from the Sokoto Caliphate, it wanted to implement this style of caliphate within the borders of former Kanem-Borno Empire, which was concentrated in the Kanuri ethnic group heartland, encompassing present day north-eastern Nigeria, western Chad, north-western Cameroon, and south-eastern Niger (pp. 68-69). BH was tightly connected to the Kanuri ethnic group, this narrative thus allowed to recruit in this area more easily (Asfura-Heim & McQuaid, 2015, p. 40). As majority of BH´s members was Kanuri, including the leadership, it created some internal tension. However, as it was not solely a Kanuri movement, it also had to appeal to Muslims from outside of the Kanuri ethnic. In this context, Islam transcends ethnicity. Similarly, the use of Hausa language was more common then Kanuri in propaganda material (Barkindo, 2018, pp. 61-63).

turned violent, as long as the attacks were aimed at political and traditional elites and institutions. However, its popularity declined after BH started targeting the wider Muslim community (Pieri & Zenn, 2016, pp. 73-74).

The idea of caliphate itself constituted a tool of mobilization efforts (Omenma, Hendricks & Ajaebili, 2020, p. 9). BH resorted to such actions, which Mampilly (2015) describes as symbolic governance. These included hoisting the flag of the newly established Islamic state in captured territories (Raineri & Martini, 2017, p. 438); renaming villages and towns, for instance Mubi became *Madinatul Islam* (City of Islam), or Gwoza turned into *Darul Hikma* (House of Wisdom) (Omenma, Abada & Omenma, 2020, p. 384); and forcing people to destroy their identity cards (Raineri & Martini, 2017, p. 438). The group presented its new territory as "*a haven for embattled Muslims*" (Thurston, 2018, p. 228).

The use of online propaganda by BH is thought to be aimed rather at external audience, such as media or other jihadi groups, among which it wanted to enhance its legitimacy (Omenma, Hendricks & Ajaebili, 2020, p. 14) Different channels were used by the group to target people living in northern Nigeria, e.g. radio broadcast (Pérouse de Montclos, 2020, pp. 174-175). Concerning the online propaganda from the BH´s Islamic state, most videos featured battlefield successes, seized military equipment or refutation of government´s claims. They did not contain any propaganda related to governance activities (Zenn, 2017; Thurston, 2018, p. 227).

Other Actors

BH opposed any other authority present on Nigerian territory. When it comes to religious figures, in line with the decades-long conflict between Salafis and Sufis in Nigeria, BH denounced the Sufi brotherhood as a deviant sect (Pérouse de Montclos, 2014, p. 137; Thurston, 2016, p. 13). BH targeted several Sufi leaders, for instance Shaykh Dahiru Bauchi, a prominent scholar of the Tijani Sufi order, who was known for preaching against the group (Murdock, 2014; Brigaglia, 2014). Besides Sufis, other Islamic scholars and clerics were targeted, including Nigerian Salafis, who criticized BH´s hard-line ideology or whom the group saw as competitors for local audience (Campbell, 2017).

In regard to other traditional structures of authority, BH targeted northern religious and cultural elites. According to the group, the hereditary rules (heirs to pre-colonial Muslim authorities, including the Sultan of Sokoto, the *Shehu* of Borno, and the *Emir* of Kano); were to blame for the poor situation in the north, as they did not follow the Islamic

system of government, but instead accepted secularism, democracy, and Western education, which made them unfit to lead Nigeria's Muslims (Zenn, 2014a). BH has thus called for their titles to be reduced to the non-religious ones (Barkindo, 2018, p. 70). For example, in December 2014 video, Shekau referred to the emir of Kano as the "King of Kano", refusing to grant him the Islamic status (Pieri & Zenn, 2016, p. 75). In addition, in May 2014, BH killed the Emir of Gwoza, the future capital of its Islamic state (Thurston, 2016, p. 12).

Concerning traditional chief and other local leaders, they were stripped of their leadership and in some places even killed. BH selected its own members to replace the *amir* of Gwoza, Bama and Dikwa (Zenn, 2014a). Elsewhere, the newly appointed leaders were locals (AI, 2015, p. 15). For instance in Lemu village, BH selected an *amir* from local inhabitants and forced him into this role (Higazi, 2020, p. 203).

As BH opposed the West in general, attacks on NGOs were common, including attacks against polio inoculation workers and beheadings of three South Korean doctors in 2013. After the declaration of state emergency in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states in 14 May 2013, the presence of aid workers as well as the cases of attacks dropped (Cook, 2013).

Institution and Personnel

BH aimed to destroy "*all vestiges of secular or traditional rule*" within areas under its control (Campbell, 2014, p. 3). The group disrupted the functioning of Nigerian state in the North and engaged in systemic destruction of public infrastructure, including schools, mosques, churches, prisons, hospitals, and markets (UN OHCHR, 2015, p. 10). Concerning the intended "innovation" in the sense of the creation of Islamic state based on *shari´a*, it is important to mention that most northern states had implemented some aspects of *shari´a* already at the turn of the millennium (Thurston, 2016, p. 10). However, BH viewed the move as "*limited application*"[27]. Although, the group wants to change the political system and completely transform the public and political life in accordance with

[27] There is no universal Islamic law. Its form depends on a given interpretation and differs depending on a region or culture. As for other radical groups, BH´s innovation consists rather in hardening the interpretation. Islam regulates all human behaviour, it concerns many areas of life from criminal law to civil law to the "personal" components of life; e.g. the way of dressing or personal hygiene. Nevertheless, in Islam, there are 5 categories of deeds, including obligatory (*fard, wagib*), recommended (*mustahabb, mandub*), neutral (*mubah*), disapproved (*makruh*) and forbidden (*haram*). Radical groups try to limit the neutral ones and move the recommended and disapproved ones, which would be enforced rather by societal pressure or carried out because of personal convictions, to the extreme ends of obligatory or forbidden deeds, which are enforced and punished by the Islamic authority (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2015).

Salafi ideals, it never presented clear proposals about the form of the desired Islamic polity (Hütte, Steinberg & Weber, 2015, pp. 88-89).

Bureaucratisation

Regarding the period of BH´s rule[28], the group did not attempt to establish sufficient government and administrative institutions (Thurston, 2016, p. 21). No separate units, instructed with sectoral responsibilities, were established. It made no effort to institutionalize Islamic courts and schools (Thurston, 2018, p. 227). The top-level structures already established served rather for the purpose of conducting combat. The actual governance structures that were put in place appeared to have rather informal and local character. As mentioned above, BH replaced local elites and traditional chiefs with newly appointed *amirs*. *Amir* and his men were then responsible for governing. BH reportedly let the leaders to govern according to their textual Salafi interpretation of *shari´a* (Zenn, 2014a). As part of the process, locals were assembled and a common set of rules communicated in leaflets, both in Kanuri and Hausa (AI, 2015, p. 15; Ladbury et al., 2016, p. 6). In addition, judges were sometimes appointed, yet the governance systems and structures imposed went little beyond this (Ladbury et al., 2016, p. 6).

Executive Style

According to available information, there were both hierarchical and decentralized elements in BH´s organizational structure. On one hand, the group had officially a pyramidal command structure, including the overall commander (*imam*, i.e. Shekau), who headed the council of elders called *shura.* Together they oversaw the organization and made decisions regarding strategic plans (Zenn, 2021, p. 621). The commanders were called *qāʾid,* sub-commander *munzir* and at the lowest level were *amirs* (AI, 2015, p. 15; Higazi, 2020, p. 203). Nevertheless, the line of command within this structure apparently did not work in practice. Many sources suggest that BH operated in cells organized on a geographical basis. As mentioned above, local leaders in each district, town or village could work relatively independently, even if they were in contact with commanders higher up the hierarchy (Ladbury et al., 2016, p. 4; Higazi, 2020, p. 201). This fact would help to

[28] Prior to 2009, under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf, BH created what Tanchum (2012) named as "*miniature state within the state*" (p. 79). Yusuf reportedly started to set up a parallel political organisation, including Supreme Council (*shura*), specialised departments (*laginas*), and various leaders (*amirs*) posted to Local Government Areas; and organised his followers into distinct roles, such as soldiers, recruiters or errand boys (Ladbury et al., 2016, p. 5).

explain why the pattern of governance attempted by BH seemed to differ by location (Omenma, Hendricks & Ajaebili, 2020, p. 12).

Importantly, over the years, relations between BH´s commanders fluctuated due to ideological and personal differences and the balance of power within the organization. These disagreements resulted in the creation of ISWAP[29] (Curiel, Walther & O´Clery, 2020).

3.1.3. Boko Haram– ISWAP, 2018 – present

Territorial Control

In August 2016, al-Barnawi replaced Shekau as the governor (*wali*) of the Western Africa Province (ICG, 2022a, p. 9). Under al-Barnawi, ISWAP relocated its operational hub to the shores of Lake Chad. ISWAP´s territorial control has evolved since 2016. As of 2018, information about the spread of its influence beyond the core territory on the banks of Lake Chad started to emerge. ISWAP began operating in wider zones in rural parts of the northern Borno (see Figure 2). Although it has not permanently controlled territory, it has projected its domination through patrols (ICG, 2019, p. 13; Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Further expansion occurred following Shekau´s death in May 2021. Since then, ISWAP has penetrated into new areas in Nigeria's north-east that used to be under Shekau's control (ICG, 2022a, p. 11). Furthermore, ISWAP has expanded into Alagarno forest and islands and shores of the southern part of Lake Chad (see Figure 3), from where it began conducting attacks on Nigerian and Cameroonian militaries (ICG, 2022a, p. 4; Centre For Preventive Action, 2023). Regarding the character of the territory under control, rural areas are ISWAP´s main domain. Nevertheless, the group was also able to temporarily occupy large urban centres, such as Baga in 2018 and 2019 (ICG, 2019, p. 12; Foucher, 2020a).

It is difficult to estimate how many civilians are governed by ISWAP. According to ICG (2022a), the available numbers vary from 800 000 to over 3 million, depending on the definition of what exactly constitutes territory under ISWAP´s control (p. 11). This ambiguity stems from the fact that ISWAP represents a semi-territorial group (Hansen, 2019, pp. 124-126). It focuses more on consolidating and extending its influence and

[29] Different positions of the commanders, who later became leading figures in ISWAP, were visible even when they were still officially part of BH. For example, the comparison of speeches following the January 2015 attack on the town of Baga, which reached enormous proportions in terms of civilian casualties and destruction, shows that al-Barnawi, BH´s spokesman at the time, tried to suggest that BH had only fought the CJTF and that those who did not oppose the group were forgiven and given safety and security. On the contrary, Shekau stated: "*We* [Boko Haram] *are those that fought the people of Baga, killing them thoroughly. Just as He commanded us in his book. We will not stop ever*" (as cited in Stoddard, 2019, p. 9).

networks, rather than trying to establish undisputed territorial control over larger areas. As such, it controls territory, when possible, retreat, when necessary, and then return to govern once again (ICG, 2019, p. 13).

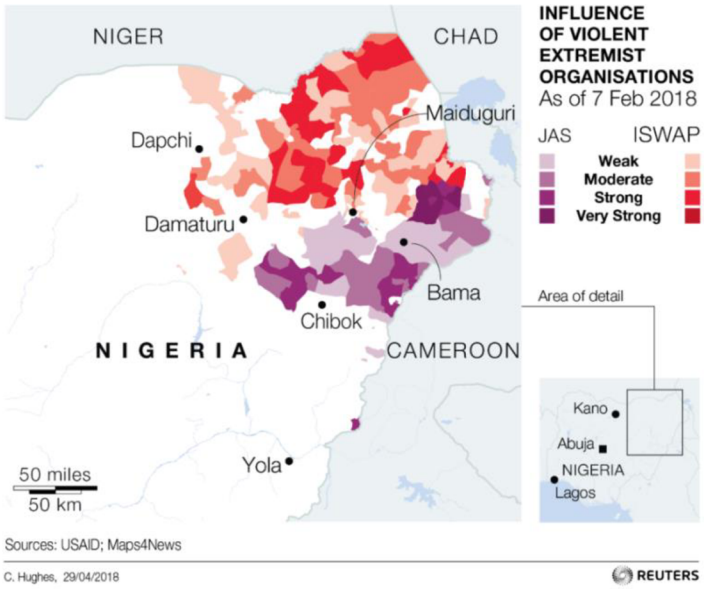

Figure 2: Territorial presence of ISWAP and JAS in February 2018. Source: ICG, 2019

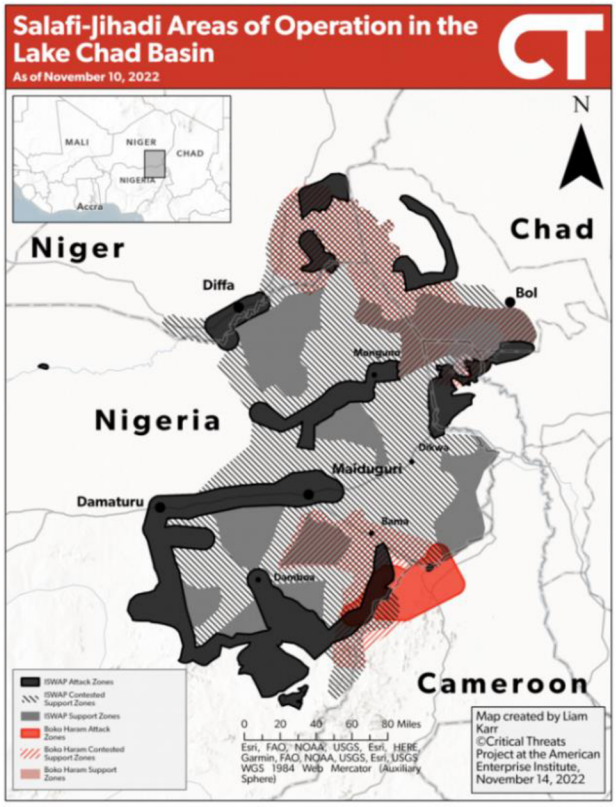

Figure 3: Territorial presence of ISWAP, remaining fragments of JAS around Sambisa Forest and Bakura group around Lake Chad in November 2022. Source: Karr, 2022

Range of Governance Functions

The following information regarding ISWAP's governance model mainly concerns the Lake Chad area, where its territorial control has been the most firm.

Provision of Security

The system that ISWAP has put in place has been described by locals as more predictable and less exploitative in comparison to the way the Nigerian state and military have run affairs in the area (ICG, 2019, p. 17). ISWAP has created a sense of security within territories under its influence. It protects people from external as well as internal threats. Regarding the former, it has set up checkpoints to stop and search, conducted patrols (ICG, 2022a, p. 11) and built network of informers to alert them in case of an attack by Nigerian military or JAS (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Besides external enemies, ISWAP has also dealt with regular criminal actors. Civilians told ICG (2019) that crime had significantly decreased under ISWAP´s rule, particularly cases of banditry and cattle theft (p. 16). In addition, ISWAP reportedly punishes its own members, who have committed unauthorised abuses on civilians, and compensates the victims of those abuses (ICG, 2022a, pp. 10-11). ISWAP´s provision of security contained not only protective, but also repressive component. The group announced the creation of religious police through its propaganda video, in which it claimed that its purpose was to "*protect Muslims from anything that might corrupt them"* and to guide them "*toward goodness and the truth*" (as cited in Singh & Dass, 2022).

Provision of Justice

The provision of justice is connected with the maintenance of security, as it involves handing out punishments for criminals. The group has also reportedly operated prisons (ICG, 2022a, p. 11). In addition, ISWAP has established courts resolving disputes between locals. Typically, the cases revolve around allocation of grazing lands or confiscation of stray cattle, which could be reclaimed by herders for a fee (ICG, 2019, p. 16). The justice system has operated on the bases of the group´s own interpretation of *shari´a*. Although the punishments are harsh, it can be said they are much milder compared to the "*draconian system*" prevailing during the territorial rule of BH (ICG, 2019, p. 17). Besides sentences in form of physical violence (death sentence, amputations etc.), fines for various offences are determined by a judge to be paid (Samuel, 2022, p. 18).

Taxation

ISWAP imposes taxes in exchange for protection and other services (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Although the tax system does not appear to be uniform, people consider the amounts to be reasonable and point out that there is "*no multiple taxation*". ISWAP's tax collectors were described as "*scrupulous in their calculations and unlikely to abuse contributors*" (ICG, 2019, p. 17). The group collects cash and material levies related to regulation of local economy, which centres on fishing, farming, pastoralism and trade of agricultural by-products[30] (Abdullahi, 2022, p. 16; Foucher, 2020b, p. 6). All fishermen are required to purchase a fishing permit. The monitoring is thorough. They cannot enter or exit the waters without encountering ISWAP fighters. Additionally, ISWAP taxes also exports of processed fish from the islands (Samuel, 2022, p. 3, 15). Specific taxes are then imposed on livestock, including tax on cattle sale and grazing permits (Abdullahi, 2022, p. 16) Finally, farmers have to hand over between 10 to 30 % of their produce, the rate differs by area (ICG, 2019, p. 17). In addition more general *zakat* tax, a payment made by Muslims annually on certain kinds of property and used for charitable purposes, is imposed (Abdullahi, 2022, p. 16). Through taxation, ISWAP obtains resources not only for the overall functioning of the group in terms of payments for fighters and military expenses, but also for the provision of other services to civilians.

Provision/Regulation of Public Goods and Services

ISWAP has built an economically conducive environment for both, the group itself and for locals. It can be said that it runs a parallel economy (Abdullahi, 2022, p. 16). In light of Nigerian military´s blockage and Niger authorities ban on transportation of goods across borders, ISWAP has worked to secure trade routes (Varin, 2020, p. 151). Access to markets is vital, as products from ISWAP´s territory, including farm produce, such as red pepper or rice, and livestock can be sold there and conversely, other necessary commodities, such as fuel and medicine, can be purchased and smuggled in the opposite direction (Samuel, 2019; Abdullahi, 2022, p. 16). The supply system has become more organized with time. ISWAP has reportedly set up an efficient network consisting of different teams in various locations, which are tasked with delivering goods along trade routes from urban centres outside of the conflict zone. The supply chains are diversified in order to avoid overreliance on one trade route (Samuel, 2022, pp. 10-15). With control over safe routes, ISWAP has also encouraged traders to sell product within its territory. Although ISWAP members sometimes seized the goods already at roadblocks, they often

[30] Between 80 % and 90 % of the population relies on agricultural pursuits (Samuel, 2022, p. 3).

paid compensation (ICG, 2019, p. 18). In addition, ISWAP fosters income-generation opportunities, for example by providing interest-free loans (Maza, Koldas & Aksit, 2020b, p. 5; Abdullahi, 2022, p. 16), distributing seeds and fertilizers to farmers, or directly employing fishermen and farmers (Samuel, 2019). In some areas, the group even put a cap on prices of products, so that basic food items are available to all (ICG, 2019, p. 18).

Concerning public services, ISWAP has been able to provide basic health care. As mentioned above, the group procures medicine, either through purchases or in raids on health centres. ISWAP´s ranks reportedly include a number of medical specialists, both militants and captures, who serve not only the combatants, but also local civilians (ICG, 2019, p. 17). There are reports of the provision of medical care to expectant mothers and others in need (Samuel, 2019). In addition, some public infrastructure was built. For both health and religious reasons, ISWAP engaged in a program of latrine construction in some of the areas it controls. It also digs wells to supply civilians with potable water (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018; Samuel, 2019; ICG, 2019, p. 17). In relation to other services, ISWAP has tried to provide Islamic education. It has implemented "*a new curriculum based on jihadi literature"* (Dahiru, 2022) and its preachers lectured both children and adults (Singh & Dass, 2022). The group has engaged in *da'wa* (missionary) activities, including taking care of the less privileged, families of fighters killed in battle, widows, the elderly, and other vulnerable people (Samuel, 2022, p. 19, Omenma, Abada & Omenma, 2020, p. 389).

Regulation of Behaviour

As mentioned above, the group has established religious police to enforce compliance with the rules, which are similar to those imposed by BH. For example the prohibition of smoking and drug use, compulsory attendance of prayers, or long beards for men (ICG, 2019, p. 17).

Inclusivity

According to Warner & Lizzo (2021) around 76 % of all ISWAP´s attacks are directed on the Nigerian military (p. 12). Similarly to BH, ISWAP considers the secular political leaders and members of the CJTF to be legitimate targets (Kassim, 2018, pp. 27-30). In addition, Christians are also victims of ISWAP´s violence (ICG, 2022a, p. 10). Cases that attracted most media attention include the execution of 11 Christians on Christmas Day in

2019[31] (BBC, 2019); and the kidnapping of Dapchi schoolgirls in 2018, who were eventually released except for the only Christian girl (Zenn, 2021, p. 633). Kidnappings of Christians for ransom are common (Mahmood & Ani, 2018, p. 25). Nevertheless, although ISWAP´s propaganda threatened Christians, attacks again Christian and churches did not represent a high percentage of all attacks (Warner & Lizzo, 2021, p .12).

Concerning wider Muslim population, ISWAP´s interpretation of *takfir* is more limited in comparison to BH. As mentioned above, the group has engaged in "*complex socialization process*" with communities within the territories under its influence (Stoddard, 2019, p. 10). Moreover, its position on the status of those Muslims, who live in government-controlled areas, differs. They are not viewed as infidels as long as they do not actively support the Nigerian army or CJTF. This does not apply to those, who initially lived within ISWAP´s territory and later fled (Kassim, 2018, pp. 30-31; ICG, 2019, p. 20).

Generation of Compliance

Coercion

ISWAP has abstained from forced marriages, forced recruitment in general or restrictions on people's movement[32] (ICG, 2022a, p. 10). The group tends to avoid unnecessary violence on civilians. As one herder interviewed by Carten & Kigimi (2018) stated "*if you are a herder, driver or trader, they [ISWAP] won't touch you - just follow their rules and regulations governing the territory"*. However, those who do not obey the rules are harshly punished. ISWAP does not "*eschew violence per se but offer a predictable set of rules on how to get by as civilians*". Violations of the rules are then followed by punishments (Stoddard, 2023, p. 10). The sentences range from the amputation of hands of alleged thieves, brutal beatings or flogging to executions of adulterers, suspected supporters of government or simply those, who refuse to pay taxes (ICG, 2022a, p. 10; Mahmood & Ani, 2018, p. 27; Samuel, 2022, p. 10). It is known that ISWAP has resorted to kidnappings, yet rather for pragmatic reasons such as extracting ransom or swapping prisoners (ICG, 2019, p. 20).

Persuasion

[31] This attack was championed by the IS propaganda as a symbol of revenge for the assassination of its leader Abubakr al-Baghdadi by the US military, thus promoting ISWAP´s position as an external province (BBC, 2019).

[32] For example, when ISWAP temporality occupied the town of Baga in December 2018, its fighters reportedly told local residents that they would not be targeted and that they were free to leave the town if they wanted to (Stoddard, 2019, p. 11). Similarly, when ISWAP captured villages around Sambisa forest after Shekau´s death, it gave locals the option to stay or leave (UNDP, 2022).

Building on the actual efforts to provide services and create a stable and secure environment, which were described above, ISWAP has invested considerable energy into creation of an exaggerated image of protector and provider in its propaganda material (Stoddard, 2019, p. 12). For instance, it posted videos, showing well-functioning agriculture production, well-stocked markets or abundant crops (ICG, 2019, p. 18); or photos documenting its distribution of food and clothes to the poor during *Ramadan* (Sahara Reporters, 2021). Besides the appeal of economic prosperity, the idea of living in the Islamic state under *shari´a*, in contrast to "injustice and inequality" under Nigerian government, is emphasized. The group is portraying itself as a well-organised structure with a strategy to implement justice system, without emphasizing the above mentioned severe punishments (Kassim, 2018, pp. 30-31).

The group encourages people living beyond the controlled areas to resettle in ISWAP´s territories. ISWAP members are being sent to IDP camps to persuade people to move. Videos produced by ISWAP have reportedly been distributed there (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Regarding another example, after capturing the Sambisa forest, ISWAP offered protection to herders, who deserted the area due to harsh treatment by JAS (ICG, 2022a, p. 11). ISWAP is building its support base also through local imams, who in their sermons present ISWAP as a "credible and legitimate" alternative to the government (France24, 2019). ISWAP is certainly working to cultivate that impression, relying predominantly on incentives connected with pragmatic legitimacy (ICG, 2022a, p. 11).

Other Actors

Similarly to BH, ISWAP opposes the secular Nigerian government and thus targets those associated with the state, e.g. local officials, chiefs and vigilantes (ICG, 2019, p. 11). However, no cases of attacks on religious and traditional hereditary rulers have been recorded (Warner & Lizzo, 2021, p. 12).

ISWAP´s approach towards NGOs is rather mixed. On one hand, it tolerates humanitarian workers operating in areas, where it wields influence. For example, it allowed some NGO staff to conduct polio vaccinations. On the other hand, it does not allow them access to its core areas. In addition, seizures of humanitarian aid and raids on health centres have taken place (ICG, 2019, p. 17). ISWAP also abducted and killed humanitarian workers (Samuel, 2022, p. 16)

Within ISWAP´s operational environment, various cells of JAS are present. Following Shekau´s dead in 2021, ISWAP called on JAS members remaining in the

Sambisa forest to join its ranks. Although, propaganda videos containing footages of former Shekau´s fighters swearing allegiance to ISWAP were to be seen, some factions of JAS remained in opposition (ICG, 2022a, p. 4).

Institution and Personnel

In contrast to BH, ISWAP´s strategy does not include complete destruction of government-built social infrastructure. Less than 2% of its attacks were aimed at businesses, schools and general government institutions (Warner & Lizzo, 2021, p. 12). Nevertheless, when it comes to its own governance practices, as already mentioned above, the group strives for innovation, including its own form of justice, police force or education (Dahiru, 2022).

Bureaucratisation

Available sources suggest that ISWAP is well-organized with clear division of labour, including groups focused on a particular activity such as food supply, religious policing, *da'wa* activities, recruitment, weapons procurement or other logistics (Mahmood & Ani, 2018, p. 16; Hansen, 2019, p. 125). However, ISWAP´s governance practices remain flexible and mostly informal, e.g. the above mentioned ununified taxation system. This corresponds with the semi-territorial presence of the group, as the structures could be easily re-established in case of territorial fluctuation (Stoddard, 2019, p. 11).

Executive Style

There were some temporal changes in ISWAP's leadership. In March 2019, it was announced that al-Barnawi had been replaced by Abu Abdallah al-Barnawi (unrelated, known as *Ba Idrissa*)[33] (ICG, 2019, 21; Zenn, 2019). However, prior to the attack on Shekau in Sambisa forest in March 2021, Abu Musab al-Barnawi re-emerged as the group's leader. Although there have been several reports in previous years about Abu Musab al-Barnawi´s death, it has not been confirmed (ICG, 2022a, pp. 5-7). These shifts inform about the continued existence of tensions among high-ranking commanders. This was likely the reason why the group announced its restructuring in 2021, encompassing its division into geographical sub-units (ICG, 2022a, p. 8). ISWAP´s territory across Nigerian Borno state was reportedly parted into four segments, including Lake Chad, Sambisa,

[33] There were speculations about a reason for his removal, including his young age or close ties with Maman Nur (ICG, 2022a, pp. 5-7). Nur was second in command of ISWAP but he was executed in 2018 because of internal disputes within the group (ICG, 2019, p. 21).

Timbuktu and Tumbuma, with their own *sub-walis* and "*governing structure*" (details are not available). Above the regional units, at the top of the hierarchy is the *wali*, i.e. al-Barnawi, who heads the *shura* council. All four *sub-walis* are supposed to report to the *wali* and each sub-unit has two representatives at the *shura* council (Samuel, 2021). Although there are no specific information about the functioning of the command structure in practice, research by Curiel, Walther & O´Clery (2020) focusing on group´s mobility patterns suggests that ISWAP is made up of number of cells, similarly to BH (p. 10).

Concerning the influence of IS on ISWAP´s decision-making, most sources suggest that it has provided guidance related to theological issues (including application of *takfir*), operational principles (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018) and overall functioning of the organization in terms of improvement of the quality of training of recruits, military skills as well as religious indoctrination, and administration of the territory (ICG, 2022a, p. 12). Some thus conclude that the governance strategy implemented by ISWAP has been largely based on IS guidance (Foucher, 2020b, p. 6), nevertheless, daily activities are thought to be managed by ISWAP´s leaders themselves (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). It is worth noting that IS takes advantage of ISWAP for its propaganda purposes. ISWAP´s videos are released through IS media channels (Kassim, 2018, p. 26).

3.2. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

3.2.1. Context

AQAP was officially formed in January 2009 through the merger of AQ branches in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Knoll (2017) distinguishes four phases of AQAP´s development. The first phase includes the creation of both AQ branches, which have their roots in early mid-1990s, as militants, who fought in Afghanistan war, were returning back to their home countries (al-Dawsari, 2018, p. 7).

The second phase encompasses period leading to the unification of both groups and initial period of AQAP´s functioning. Following the 2003 Riyadh bomb attacks, the Saudi-branch became under consistent pressure from security services, which drove many of its members into Yemen. This relocation corresponded with the escape of key operatives of the Yemeni–branch from prison in February 2006, which allowed AQ in Yemen, whose leadership was also frequently targeted in the aftermath of 9/11, to consolidate, and incorporate the Saudi operatives into its structure (Rollins, 2011, p. 14). In line with AQ

broader strategy, in the first years of its existence, unified AQAP focused predominantly on targets of Western nature, both inside Yemen and in the home territories of "far enemies" [34] (Harris, 2010, pp. 1-5). In mid-2010, AQAP broadened its target range, launching attacks against Yemeni military and government. The group established a strong presence in several governorates across Yemen, mainly Abyan, Ma'rib and Shabwa. Within its operational area, AQAP exercised control over pockets of territory making them its safe heavens, predominately within mountainous terrain of al-Bayda governorate (Zimmerman, 2012, pp. 2-5).

Within the third phase, the first governance cycle of AQAP occurred. In 2011, the group took advantage of the political instability created by the Arab Spring events and shifted its focus to local struggle, attempting to hold swathes of Yemeni territory. AQAP transformed into a rebel group able to gain full territorial control, which lasted roughly from March 2011 to June 2012. AQAP was pushed into its previous safe heavens, when the Yemeni armed forces supported by tribal militias and with the assistance of US drone strikes conducted a successful offensive stripping AQAP of its territorial gains (Green, 2019, pp. 23-24). The group remained active throughout 2013 and 2014. It launched a campaign of targeted assassinations of government and military officials (Zimmerman, 2012, p. 6) as well as tribal militia leaders, conducted series of bombings (some indiscriminate), and attacks against army positions (Cook, 2019, p. 11). While demonstrating its continued capabilities, AQAP also engaged in various propaganda efforts (e.g. leaflets, speeches, graffiti) to maintain its public profile (Green 2019, p. 34).

The fourth phase started, when another window of opportunity emerged in connection with the Houthi offensive[35]. Following the capture of Sana´a, the Houthi forces expanded southwards. AQAP exploited the unstable security environment and by April 2015 seized the port town of al-Mukalla. This marked the beginning of its second governance cycle (Green, 2019, p. 35). Its territorial control was terminated in April 2016, when the Saudi-led coalition offensive resulted in the retake of the city as well as other occupied areas.

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[34] Considering the period before 2009, the Yemeni-branch conducted a number of attacks. For example, 2007 suicide attack leading to the death of 8 Spanish tourists or an attack against the US embassy in Sana´a in 2008. The united AQAP continued this pattern with the 2009 bomb attacks killing 4 South Korean tourists or 2010 attack on British embassy in Sana´a (Cook, 2019, p. 11). AQAP then attempted to carry out at least two terrorist attack on the US, including the failed 2009 "Christmas day terrorist attack" with the intent to blow up a US airliner as it approached Detroit and failed 2010 effort to mail bombs hidden in computer printer directly from Sana´a to synagogue in Chicago (Bakr, 2010).

[35] Houthi movement is a rebel group from northern Yemen, which launched a military campaign against the government that pulled the country into a civil war, lasting to this day.

During the following years, AQAP has stayed operational, carrying out a series of assassinations, similar to the period of 2013-2014 and engaging in the fight against the Houthis, which became its main priority (Carboni & Sulz, 2020; Farrukh, 2017). AQAP has continued to project its influence mainly within Abyan and Shabwa governorates. There were also reports of its episodic control over parts of the city of Taiz (Middle East Eye, 2017). Nevertheless, it has not managed to engage in governance to the same extent as in the previous years (Farrukh & Nocita, 2018).

3.2.2. AQAP – Ansar al-Shari´ah, 2011-2012

Territorial Control

Captured in March 2011, the town of Ja'ar in the south of Abyan governorate represented the first territorial gain of AQAP. After two months, the group seized the provincial capital Zinjibar and the surrounding areas, which put AQAP in control of the main road leading to the port city of Aden and connecting the governorates of Abyan and Shabwa (Zimmerman, 2012, p. 4). Within these two provinces, AQAP gradually gained control over number of towns and districts, including cities such as Azzan, Shuqra and al-Kawd. By mid-2011, it controlled majority of towns and villages in Abyan. The group maintained full control over these territories for little over a year, while declaring them Islamic emirates (Green, 2019, p. 28; Cigar, 2014, p. 37). Although it attempted to acquire other territories, such as the city of Lawdar or Rada´, which is located in the al-Bayda governorate, it withdrew after a few weeks (Cook, 2019, pp. 17-18).

Concerning the nature of the controlled territory, the group focused predominantly on urban areas, however, high number of people fled the major towns, including Zinjibar and al-Kawd (AI, 2012, p. 4) AQAP´s stronghold was established in the city of Ja´ar, which it renamed the *Emirate of Waqar*. While the group operated on larger territory within the governorates, most information is available from the cities of Ja´ar, Zinjibar and Azzan (Swift, 2012, p. 4; Simcox, 2012).

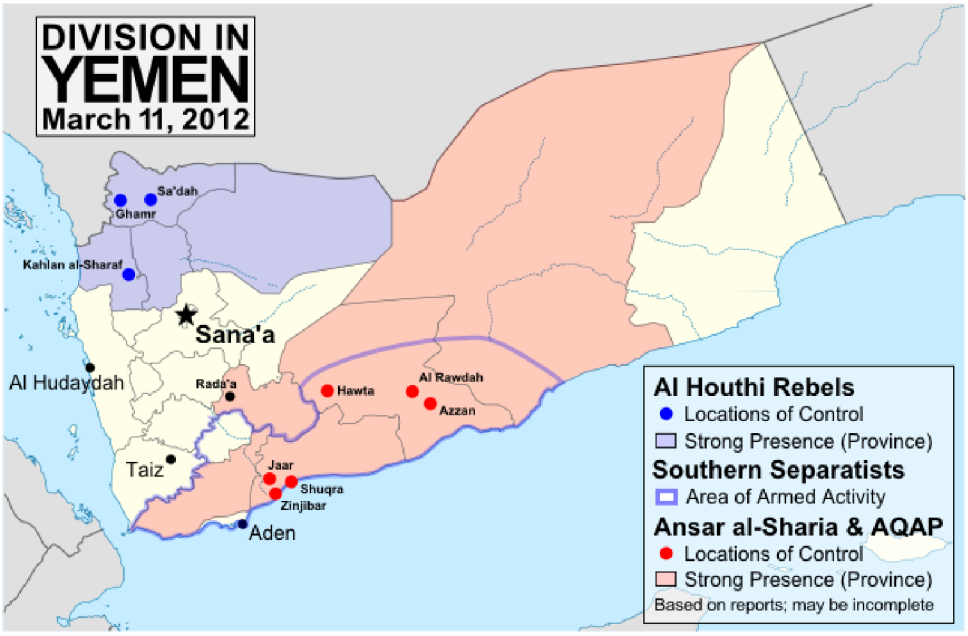

Figure 4: Territorial presence of AQAP in March 2012. Source: Political Geography Now, 2012

Range of Governance Functions

Provision of Security

AQAP´s security provision included both protective and repressive functions. By running the local police stations the group managed to establish a certain level of security in realms of regular criminal activities. The previously high crime rate dropped dramatically (al-Shishani 2011, p. 7; Simcox, 2012). This slump, however, stemmed largely from the nature of the harsh punishments (described below). Furthermore, the local police created by the group, which was called *Commission for the Prevention of Vice and the Promotion of Virtue*, functioned also as religious police (AI, 2012, p. 21).

Provision o Justice

The group introduced *shari´a* based justice system, which dealt with wide range of cases; including all kinds of criminal offences, tribal disputes as well as financial and family disputes. In Ja´ar, the system comprised of judicial committee, to which the group appointed six judges (AI, 2012, p. 14). Similar systems were established elsewhere, for example, in Azzan, the city's old police station was transformed into a *shari´a* court (Abdul-Ahad, 2012). According to the testimonies of locals, the rulings were appealing to parts of population due to their swiftness and lack of corruption in comparison with the previous legal system (Green, 2019, p. 19; Swift, 2012, p. 4). There was also an instance of a tribe putting its trust in the AQAP jurisprudence in connection with a murder within the tribe. This represented an unusual case, as Yemeni tribes usually tend to prefer their tribal

law (Simcox, 2012). The *Jadani* tribe in question was said to do so because of their respect for the courts' adherence to *shari´a* and in order to deter a spiral of revenge killings (Cook, Haid & Trauthig, 2020, p. 5; Gordon, 2012, p. 9).

Taxation

The group did not collect taxes as it considered the practice to be against its religious beliefs. It only allowed the distribution of *zakat* to the poor (Cook, 2019, p. 16; Abdul-Ahad, 2012).

Provision/Regulation of Public Goods and Services

AQAP provided basic goods and services to the population. It distributed food, gas and fresh water (al-Shishani, 2011, p. 7), which were brought by their trucks even to remote villages and Bedouin settlements (Abdul-Ahad, 2012). They also took care of the collection of garbage, which contrasted with the situation in IDP camps, where the government did not deal with this issue. It also focused on more complex infrastructure projects, including digging, restoration or construction of water mains, installation of sewage pipes or reconstruction of damaged streets (Horton, 2017, p. 18). Furthermore, electrical lines were distributed across the town of Ja´ar and surrounding villages and telephone lines were connected as well (Simcox, 2012). These public programs were provided for free (Abdul-Ahad, 2012).

In terms of education, the group tried to guarantee that there were enough teachers in local schools. However, at the same time, it prevented teachers from teaching some subjects and instead implemented religiously-based rules regulating the character of education (Cigar, 2014, p. 38). Moreover, AQAP established *da`wa* centre with the purpose of indoctrinating the locals (Swift, 2012, p. 5). Basic healthcare was also provided, however, according to some sources, not to all residents. For instance, Al-Razi hospital in Abyan was said to treat only injured AQAP members (Simcox, 2012).

Regulation of Behaviour

In the beginning, the group did not enforce the rules regulating behaviour. Instead, it rather tried to persuade locals to embrace the rule willingly. However, once it consolidated its power, AQAP reverted to harsh punishments for disobeying them (Simcox, 2012; Green, 2013). This approach was evident, for example, in case of regulation of *qat*, a stimulant drug widely used by locals. Firstly, the group only ordered that the market for *qat* had to be moved outside of main cities, while it allowed people to continue using it.

Nevertheless, it eventually banned it completely (Abdul-Ahad, 2012). Besides *qat*, other vices, such as smoking or drinking alcohol, were also prohibited (Simcox, 2012). The group put ban on music in public areas. In case of the city of Azzan, AQAP disrupted a wedding party and destroyed musical instruments being used there (Cigar, 2014, p. 38). Attendance of prayers was compulsory (AI, 2012, p. 20). Women were advised to stay home and to be accompanied by a male relative when in public (Cook, 2019, p. 15). Women were allowed to work, yet, a strict separation of sexes had to be followed (AI, 2012, p. 23). In addition, television and magazines were banned, while the group disseminated pamphlets warning against "*usury in trade and money exchange*" (Cook, 2019, p. 16).

Inclusivity

AQAP focused its violence solely on government targets, reducing Muslim collateral damage as much as possible (Simcox, 2012). It aimed to create a status of affability between them and civilians in governorates under its control (al-Shishani, 2011, p. 7). Concerning a specific target group, AQAP sought to eliminate any deviance from what it considered pure Islam, including Sufism and other forms of "*traditional folk religion*". Common practices, such as worshiping of saints and their tombs, using of talismans, curses, incantations and fortune telling, were viewed as "sorcery" (Cigar, 2014, p. 38). A number of shrines and tombs across Abyan villages were destroyed by the *Commission for the Prevention of Vice and the Promotion of Virtue* (AI, 2012, p. 21). Apart sectarian lines, there is no other evident pattern of targeting.

Generation of compliance

Coercion

Despite the initial moderate approach, AQAP gradually reverted to using violence in the form of the implementation of harsh punishment (Simcox, 2012; Green, 2019, p. 28). Public executions, including beheadings of accused murderers, spies or "sorcerers" were carried out. There was even a case of crucifixion of one of the suspected spies, who was displayed in public for several days for warning (AI, 2012, pp. 16-18). AQAP also publicly amputated hands of thieves. In one instance, the chopped limbs were paraded around the city (Cook, Haid & Trauthig, 2020, p. 5). Minor offences, such as possession of alcohol or drugs, were met with floggings (AI, 2012, p. 13).

Persuasion

In personal communication with leaders of other AQ branches, the leader of AQAP at that time, Nasir al-Wuhayshi, summarized the approach of his group as trying to "win hearts and minds" by providing governance and public goods. As he stated: "*these necessities will have a great effect on people, and will make them sympathize with us and feel that their fate is tied to ours*" (as cited in Green, 2019, pp. 33-34). Interviews with other lower level AQAP commanders confirmed this approach, as one of them noted that the group openly proclaimed its presence only when it possessed sufficient "*administrative staff and financial resources to be able to provide services to the people*" (Cook, 2019, p. 14). Economic inducement played an important role also in AQAP´s recruitment. The strategy was twofold. Firstly, it tried to attract young men individually by offering them salaries reportedly up to 200 dollars per month (ICG, 2017, p. 17), while nearly half of Yemen's population survives on less than two dollars per day. Secondly, AQAP struck a deal with some tribal elders, who provided recruits in exchange for construction projects, such as new wells or irrigation systems, or simply the provision of food (Swift, 2012, p. 3).

When AQAP achieved its first territorial gain and seized the town of Ja´ar that the area is under the control of *Ansar al-Sharia*[36] (Zimmerman, 2012, p. 5; Green, 2019, p. 27). This rebranding to *Ansar al-Sharia*[37] (eng. Supporters of Islamic Law) was part of an information campaign with the aim to lose the negative connotations associated with AQ brand and thus gain local support (Swift, 2012). Through this name, the group put emphasis on its devotion to Islam and expressed its desire to establish Islamic state (Zelin, 2012). AQAP tried to attract people to *shari´a*-based governance, highlighting its religious credentials (Swift, 2012). As one field commander in Ja´ar stated: "*The state has fallen here … We have tried secular rule and we have tried Socialist rule. Now we need to try Islamic rule because we have no hope but through the Koran and the Prophet's teachings"* (as cited in Cook, 2019, p. 14).

AQAP tried to present itself as part of the Arab Spring in Yemen and as an alternative to then-president Saleh´s regime, while trying to capitalize on dissatisfaction stemming from deeply rooted grievances connected with political, tribal and economic concerns (al-Shishani, 2011, p. 7). This emphasis on national struggle was evident in the

[36] Initially, there were debates about the nature of the relation between AQAP and *Ansar al-Sharia*. Eventually, an agreement was reached that these two constitute the same entity. *Ansar al-Sharia* was added on the list of terrorist organization as an alias for AQAP by the UN (UN Security Council Committee, 2012) as well as by the US (US State Department, 2012).

[37] The adoption of the name *Ansar al-Sharia* became common among jihadi groups. The naming trend started in Yemen and continued in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt (Zelin, 2012).

May 2012 suicide attack on Yemeni soldiers, when AQAP proclaimed the attack to be a revenge on behalf of the Arab Spring protests´ "*demonstrators and all Muslims who tasted the scourge of the Yemeni central security forces"* (as cited in Swift, 2012, p. 2). As part of the propaganda efforts, Jalal Al-Marqashi, AQAP's commander of the Abyan governorate, stated "*we are doing our best to ensure that the vulnerable people, whom the military and its mercenaries are using as human shields, are not hurt*" (as cited in Simcox, 2012). Similar defamation was directed at the US. AQAP set up loudspeakers in public areas, through which it denounced the US and its allies. It even compensated families, which had lost their homes to US drone and airstrikes (ICG, 2017, p. 11).

Concerning the proclaimed Islamic emirate itself, the group projected some aspects of symbolic governance. It hoisted flags in public (Abdul-Ahad, 2012) or put graffiti of the flags and its symbols on the walls inside public buildings and, as one local teacher testified, pressured the educators to use "*in official documents… papers with Ansar al-Shari'a's letterhead … marked 'the governorate of Abyan, the emirate of Waqar, the Islamic Education Office' and with the logo of the black flag [of Ansar al-Shari'a]…"* (AI, 2012, p. 23).

However, what they put the most emphasis on was the promotion of their governance activities through various media, including a bimonthly magazine determined for local audiences called *Sada al-Malahim* (eng. The Echo of Battles) and English language magazine named *Inspire* aimed at Westerners (Council on Foreign Relation, 2015). The audio propaganda was then distributed through the *Madad News Agency* media wing (Simcox, 2012). The video series called *Eyes on the Events*, contained all kinds of scenes where public goods and services were provided (Zelin, 2012), as well as footages of the implementation of justice, including confessions of accused spies or the execution of the above mentioned harsh punishments (AI, 2012, pp. 16-18). In June 2012 video, the group self-evaluated their governing of Abyan and Shabwa as follows: "*The Sharia was implemented, security prevailed, people were safe on their properties, honors and blood, the virtue was established and the vice was removed, crime disappeared, and blackmail ended, also the aid reached to the villages of the people, and the services reached to many villages and taxes were cancelled and even the fees for services like water, electricity, municipality and others were cancelled"* (as cited in Green, 2019, p. 19). In addition, AQAP reportedly allowed Western journalist to visit its territory, where they were provided a restricted tour across the controlled areas (Abdul-Ahad, 2012; Frontline, 2012).

Other actors

Concerning other forms of authority, tribes represent the main non-state entity with governance power. During the period of the territorial control, AQAP adopted a "supra-tribal" strategy. Although it tried to receive local support and convened regular meetings with community leaders, it essentially aimed to replace tribal structure with religiously inspired system, thus suppressing the tribal authority. It wanted to replace the "*reality of chaotic tribal disputes*" with more ordered and stable system based on Islamic law (Green, 2019, p. 27). The group exploited the tribal divisions and by empowering weaker leaders it established "*networks of dependency"* (Swift, 2012, p. 3). Nevertheless, as the group's territorial gains expanded, leaders of neighbouring tribes began to see AQAP as a direct challenge to their supremacy. Moreover, many tribes were worried about becoming a target of US airstrikes due to AQAP presence in their areas. This led to the creation of Popular (Resistance) Committees, militias composed of tribesmen, which played an important role in the push-back of the group from the captured territories (Cigar, 2014, p. 39; AI, 2012, p. 12). As AQAP came under pressure, it increasingly started to target pro-government tribesmen (Horton, 2017, p. 18). It is important to point out that until tribal militias supported the Yemeni military offensive they had not been regularly targeted by AQAP (Zimmerman, 2012, p. 9).

Institution and Personnel

AQAP´s governance system was predominately based on innovation. Considering the legal system as the primary aspect of jihadi rule, although Yemeni constitution declares Islam to be the state religion and its legal system is based on *shari´a* (Office of International Religious Freedom, 2022), during its rule over Abyan and Shabwa AQAP gradually strived to impose its interpretation of Islamic law, testing "*how far it could go*" (Horton, 2017 p. 18). AQAP´s version of *shari´a* replaced also the long-established tribal law (Cook, Haid & Trauthig, 2020, p. 5). In addition, AQAP´ prohibition of the sale and consumption of *qat* was not only contrary to the tribal traditions, as many tribal religious authorities commonly permitted the usage of the narcotic, but it also disrupted economic practices, as the trade in *qat* was an essential part of the local economy (Horton, 2016). Education system was also influenced by AQAP ideological beliefs. As the group itself stated, it implemented a *"system of regulations aimed at developing the educational process in [Abyan's] schools and purifying it of existing religious violations"* (as cited in AI, 2012, p. 23). These

regulation included sex segregation[38] or changes in the curriculum, as for example the subject of national education required for the official Yemeni final exam was cancelled and instead a subject called "jihad" was added (AI, 2012, pp. 23-24).

However, aspects of maintenance manifested to a certain extent in case of personnel. After taking over a town, the group either kept the local public institution personnel (e.g. teachers), or recruited locals (e.g. police force). AQAP needed to fill abandoned government positions as many people had fled (Cook, Haid & Trauthig, 2020, p. 5). However, only these bureaucratic positions were open to locals, the executive and judiciary were reserved for AQAP members. When it comes to religious figures, the group firstly only advised local imams, yet over time, AQAP took control over the mosques (AI, 2012, p. 20).

Bureaucratisation

AQAP set up governing bodies with clear division of labour. AI (2012) sources suggest that the governance structure included judicial committee, an educational committee, a coordination committee and a policing committee (p. 13). There are also known appointments of individuals to various functions, for instance to the position of a judge or "*Islamic education co-ordinator*" (AI, 2012, p. 23; Simcox, 2012). A certain degree of bureaucratization is evident from the fact that judicial processes evincing common formal requirements, such as examination of evidence, witness testimonies or confessions, even if forced, took place (AI, 2012, pp. 14-19). There are bureaucratic elements within the organization in general, as it consists of functional units, which deal with specific fields, for instance media or proselytization (Knoll, 2017, pp. 3-4). The group also seeks to strengthen internal cohesion through promotion opportunities. Furthermore, it emphasizes not only military training, but also general education of its members, for instance in areas of "*sharia law, politics or art of command and administration*" (Koontz, 2015).

Executive style

AQAP can be described as a hierarchical but at the same time decentralized organization. While the chain of command exists, the group works in cells throughout the country (Koontz, 2015). AQAP is headed by an *amir*, i.e. al-Wuhayshi in the period in question,

[38] The group also tried to ban female teachers from teaching boys. Nevertheless, following the protests of parents, on the basis that this rule would had meant that most boys would receive no education at all, because most education staff were women, AQAP allowed women teachers for pupils up to nine years old (AI, 2012, pp. 23-24).

who is in charge of decision making together with the *shura* council. The group´s broader leadership consists of senior commanders, who are in charge of various committees (ICG, 2017, p. 6). Mid-level leadership has also a formalized structure headed by governorate commanders (Knoll, 2017, pp. 3-4). As mentioned above, Jalal Al-Marqashi was appointed as the commander of the Abyan province (Cigar, 2014, p. 39; Simcox, 2012). Below governorate commanders are the district commanders, who are referred to as "*city governors*" and are responsible for certain types of operations in a particular district. In regards to Abyan, at least five district commanders were active, specifically for the areas of Zinjibar, Khanfir, Lawder, Mudia and Mahfad. On this mid-level, AQAP has a top-down decision making process for planning and executing operations (Koontz, 2015). The nature of membership at lower and mid-levels of the group is largely local (al-Shishani, 2011, p. 7), however during the period of 2011-2012 the AQAP ranks included also a small number of foreign fighters, predominantly Somalis (Horton, 2017, p. 18).

In comparison with other AQ branches, AQAP had one of the closest relationships with AQ core, due to personal connections between Bin Laden and al-Wuhayshi. However, AQ core did not agree with AQAP´s activities during the Arab Spring. According to personal correspondence, Bin Laden repeatedly warned AQAP against the premature establishment of any Islamic polity. He argued that a more appropriate strategy is the exhaustion of the enemy. Nevertheless, this advice was not taken into account and AQAP decision making was not affected by AQ core (Knoll, 2017, pp. 6-7).

3.2.3. AQAP – Sons of Hadramawt/Sons of Abyan, 2015-2016

Territorial Control

After being pushed out of its strongholds in Abyan and Shabwa, AQAP expanded its operational reach to other parts of Yemen (Michaels & Ayyash, 2013, p. 14). Houthis´ rapid incursion into southern Yemen in 2014 and 2015 pushed AQAP more towards the east, specifically to the Hadramawt governorate (Horton, 2015). Within this province, particularly in the southern coastal part, it again managed to control and hold territory. In early April 2015, AQAP seized a strategic port city of al-Mukalla, the capital of Hadramawt governorate and Yemen´s fifth largest city with a population of over 300 000 (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 21). The group gradually extended the controlled territories across large swathes of southern Hadramawt. AQAP held full control over the territory for a whole year until United Arab Emirates (UAE)-backed pro-government forces drove the group out (Green, 2019, p. 36).

Towards the end of 2015 and especially in the first months of 2016, the group expanded to its previously held areas in Abyan and Shabwa governorates, including cities such as Zinjibar, Ja´ar, Azzan and Shaqra (Zimmerman, 2016). However, domination over those towns was not firm and did not last long. For example, while its presence in Zinjibar was more extensive, it withdrew from Ja´ar after only a few days (Cook, 2019, p. 17). The extent of territorial control at its peak can be seen in Figure 5 and Figure 6.

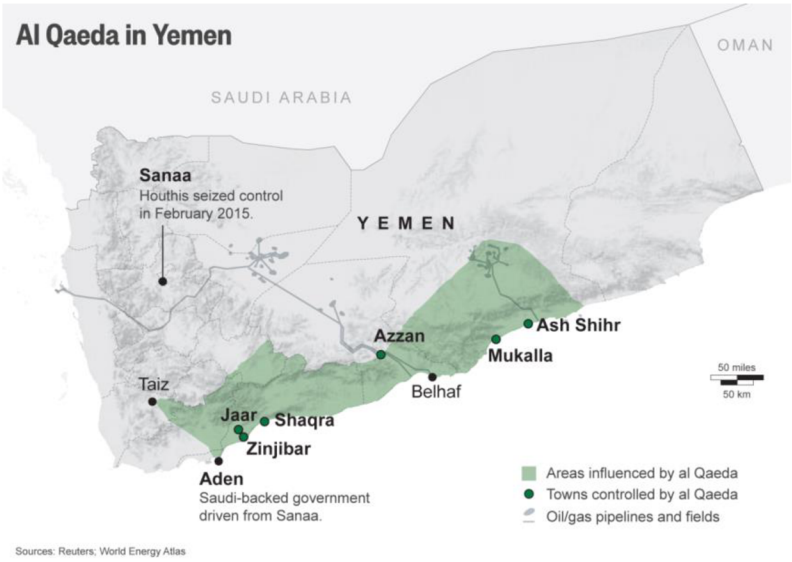

Figure 5: Territorial presence of AQAP at the beginning of 2016. Source: Bayoumy, Browning & Ghobari, 2016

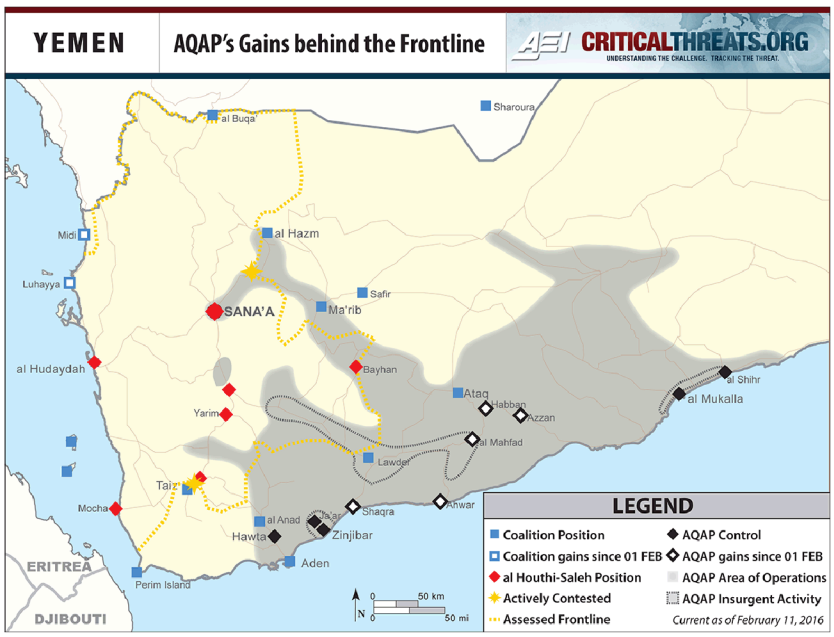

Figure 6: Territorial presence of AQAP in February 2016. Source: Zimmerman, 2016

Range of Governance Functions

Since the city of al-Mukalla was the centre of control during this governance cycle, most of the information below comes from this town and surrounding areas.

Provision of Security

AQAP´s approach mirrored the period of 2011-2012 in terms of protective security function. It again formed a police force consisting of local members under the same name, *Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice*, which comprised functions of both, regular police force conducting patrols around the city and protecting schools, banks or local public buildings (Green, 2019, p. 37), and religious police enforcing some of the rules regulating behaviour (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 21). In comparison to the war-torn western part of Yemen, where the conflict´s frontlines were located, AQAP´s territory exhibited a degree of stability (Kendall, 2018a, p. 27). Thus, the Hadramawt governorate attracted thousands of IDPs looking for shelter (Horton, 2015).

Provision o Justice

The group established a justice system, which, although based on *shari´a*, abstained from its rigorous application and was adjusted to local traditions and environment (Svensson & Finnbogason, 2021, p. 587; Cook, 2019, p. 21).

Taxation

Similarly to the previous governance cycle, AQAP abolished taxes for citizens [39] (Bayoumy, Browning & Ghobari, 2016). Nevertheless, the group took advantage of the fact that it controlled the port of al-Mukalla. Due to the Saudi naval blockade concentrated on the western coast of the country, AQAP essentially gained monopoly over naval imports and thus revenues from tariffs imposed on goods and oil coming into the port. In addition, the group imposed "*windfall taxes*" on local companies, proclaiming the aim of improving services for locals (Kendall, 2018b, p. 7; Al-Batati, 2016).

Provision/Regulation of Public Goods and Services

Compared to the period of 2011-2012, the range of goods and services provided was even greater. Besides the community projects, such as distribution of electricity, water and sewage infrastructure and reconstruction of roads and schools (Kendall, 2018b, p. 7), the group even stocked hospitals with medical supplies and organized community events

[39] The group even announced it would repay government workers´ payroll taxes, however, it is not known whether they did so, as this statement was part of propaganda video (Bayoumy, Browning & Ghobari, 2016).

(Svensson & Finnbogason, 2021, p. 587). AQAP put a lot of emphasis on paying the public employees their salaries, for instance hospital workers and cleaners, thus keeping the public services properly functioning, especially in comparison with the rest of the country (Cook, 2019, p. 21; Middle East Eye, 2015; Knoll, 2017, p. 10). It also dealt with disaster relief in response to cyclone Chapala (Horton, 2016).

Regulation of Behaviour

During its rule in al-Mukalla, AQAP´s approach was much softer, as it did not enforce the most oppressive rules, and was thus in stark contrast with the previous governance cycle (Horton, 2017, p. 20). The group did not ban smoking; it allowed music and television; it did not force people to pray or did not extensively interfere with dress norms (Svensson & Finnbogason, 2021, p. 587; Cook, 2019, p. 21). Although the unpopular ban on *qat* was in place, this rule was not strictly enforced (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 21).

Inclusivity

In terms of inclusivity, AQAP stance did not differ much from the period of the previous governance cycle. It continued to focus its attacks on Yemeni government and military officials as well as those who it considered apostates and "sorcerers", while also damaging number of Sufi religious sites in al-Mukalla in 2015 and 2016 (Cook, 2019, p. 17). Yet, during this time, AQAP's primary effort became the fight against the Houthis. The group labelled Houthis, Zaydi Shi´a, as "*heretics, taking orders from Iran, who must be stopped*" (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 19). In the process of combating Houthis, AQAP tried to carry out its operations carefully in term of collateral damages (Farrukh, 2017).

Generation of Compliance

Coercion

AQAP was even more committed to prioritizing gradualism within the territories it controlled in Hadramawt, attempting to refrain from the implementation of harsh punishments. As al-Wuhayshi wrote in personal correspondence to AQIM: "*You have to take a gradual approach with [the local population] when it comes to their religious practices ... you have to be kind... try to avoid enforcing Islamic punishments as much as possible, unless you are forced to do so*" (as cited in al-Dawsari, 2018, p. 13) It resorted to the application of harsh punishments only towards the very end of its rule (Trew, 2018). AQAP´s propaganda then contained examples of carrying out these punishments, yet they

were not as publicized, representing only 3 % of the group´s Twitter posts during 2016 and related largely to such offences as spying (Kendall, 2018a, p. 28). One example was the case of the execution of two Saudi men accused of providing information that led to the death of the group's *amir*, al-Wuhayshi. The group hung their bodies from a bridge as a warning (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 21; Mukhashaf, 2015).

Persuasion

AQAP continued to prioritize the approach of addressing local public issues, including security, electricity, or sanitation etc. (Green, 2019, p. 33). The recruitment strategy was dominated by the offer of economic prospects, such as house or stipends, sometimes reaching thousands of dollars. (Cook, 2019, p. 12). The group´s activities were supported by a robust propaganda campaign conducted through its own media formats described above as well as social media. Concerning AQAP´s Twitter account, the group published mainly accomplishments in public development, which composed 56 % of tweets in 2016 (Cook, 2019, p. 22). In response to the critique by IS, AQAP also released a full length movie called *Hurras al-Shari'ah* (eng. The Guardians of Islamic Law), which reaffirmed AQAP's commitment to global jihad and which was not only posted online but also streamed publicly in town under AQAP´s control (Kendall, 2018a, p. 28).

This time, AQAP did not hoist its black flags, the group tried to engage with the population by emphasizing its connection to the local environment rather than Islam. It used practical as well as symbolic strategies. Firstly, the group started referring to itself as *Abna' Hadramawt* (eng. Sons of Hadramawt) in order to express its local identity (Horton, 2015). As one AQAP member stated: "*We are not hobbled by any alienation from society; we are [society's] sons and part of the social fabric of our tribal and popular environment ... We are rooted in the land... we are not outsiders"* (as cited in Green, 2019, p. 37). Similar rebranding occurred in control areas in Abyan, where AQAP operated as Sons of Abyan (Cook, 2019, p. 17). AQAP embedded itself into "*the tribal social fabric*". It nurtured kinship ties through marriage and recruitment. It communicated with local audiences in a way that resonated with tribal identity, using traditional poetry and religious hymns or highlighted "*glorious history and courage of various tribes"* (Kendall, 2018a, p. 28). The group also framed contemporary jihad as a continuation of tribal fight for independence against the Brits in 1960s (Kendall, 2018b, p. 7). In addition, when members of certain tribes were accidentally killed, AQAP published formal apologies and attempted to negotiate blood money payments (Cook, 2019, p. 12).

Furthermore, as the Houthis´ incursion led to the broad mobilization of Sunnis, AQAP began to present this conflict as sectarian, even though religion was not a primary factor and the original disputes were essentially political in nature (Kendall, 2018a, p. 28). Within this conflict, AQAP wanted to be perceived as a defender of Sunni Yemen (Farrukh, 2017). It also emphasised its military experience and provision of expertise to local tribesmen in the fight against the Houthis (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 20). As one AQAP official stated: "*We are as one with the [Sunni] tribes like never before. We are not al-Qaeda now. Together we are the Sunni army*" (as cited in ICG, 2017, p. 14).

The subsequent Saudi-led coalition and US drone strikes gave AQAP additional opportunities to present itself as a protector of the people. For example, after Saudi Arabia was blacklisted by the United Nations, as its operations in Yemen *had led to the death and suffering of children*" (AI, 2016), AQAP issued "*a statement promising not to target women or children, not even those of its enemies*". In addition, AQAP organized a "*Festival of Martyrs of the American Bombing*", during which local schoolboys competed in drawing the best anti-US and anti-drone posters (Kendall, 2018a, p. 28). Even its withdrawal from al-Mukalla was presented as a strategic step in order not to let the buildings get destroyed and avoid civilian suffering (Horton, 2017, p. 20).

Other Actors

AQAP reflected on its previous relations with tribal leaders during 2011-2012. Al-Wuhayshi wrote to AQIM that "*local tribes were AQAP's most formidable enemies and the greatest obstacle to ...*" its maintenance of control. As such, in order to be able to project long-term influence, AQAP needed to successfully engage with Yemeni tribal leaders (Horton, 2017, p. 19). In the following years, AQAP therefore focused on building pragmatic coalitions with tribes. It extended its influence with tribal leaders sympathetic to its cause and also managed to secure working relationships with those less inclined to its goals by bribing them with money and weapons (Kendall, 2018a, p. 27). While it still targeted those who could not be co-opted or bought off, the group´s approach was predominately collaborative (Horton, 2016). Furthermore, as the Houthis advanced through tribal territories towards the south, the threatened Yemeni Sunni tribes tended to accept the presence of AQAP forces as their interest of the fight against Houthis intersected (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 19). "*To the tribes struggling against the Houthis, AQAP is a problem to face tomorrow, while the Houthis – whom they see as outsiders from the north seeking to grab power and rule them – are an existential threat today*" (al-Dawsari, 2018,

p. 28). AQAP was thus able to join the tribal and Yemeni government forces in a broad anti-Houthi coalition[40] (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 19; al-Dawsari, 2018, p. 27).

Regarding its rule in al-Mukalla, before the seizure of the city, AQAP spent several months co-opting local elites. Instead of replacing local authorities with AQAP members, it struck a power-sharing deal. A structure called *Hadramawt National Council* (HNC, or Hadrami People's Council or Hadrami Domestic Council) was formed. According to available sources, the HNC was composed of 15 unelected Salafi-leaning civil and tribal leaders responsive to AQAP demands (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 21; Green, 2019, p. 37; ICG, 2017, p. 11). AQAP controlled strategic sectors such as security and dispute resolution (Cook, Haid & Trauthigm, 2020, p. 6), while "everyday governance" was managed by HNC (Svensson & Finnbogason, 2021, p. 586; Horton, 2015). This governance by proxy was replicated in other towns held by AQAP (Al-Batati, 2015).

Institution and Personnel

During the second governance cycle, AQAP displayed greater tendencies to maintain aspects of previous systems. Since it created civil institutions consisting of local elites, including some of the dignitaries, who had served on the pre-existing local Council, as well as tribal leaders, it is evident that the group tried to function rather through customary practices (Farrukh, 2017). Although the group operated courts based on *shari'a* and established religious police, as it refrained from harsh punishments, the justice system did not fundamentally deviate from the previous one (Svensson & Finnbogason, 2021, p. 587). Government officials and other staff were allowed to keep their positions. Administration continued to function in the same format. As one of the members of Yemeni Parliament stated after his visit to, at the time, already freed al-Mukalla: "*Life looked normal. Nothing seemed alarming."* (as cited in al-Dawsari, 2018, p. 13).

Bureaucratisation

In this later period, AQAP´s governance practices were not only organized in a much better way, but also better resourced and systematic (Green, 2019, p. 20). The group provided the installed civilian institution with a budged reportedly reaching $4 million to

[40] AQAP´s relation with tribes and Yemeni armed forces has been ambivalent. They have been able to cooperate in terms of combating the Houthis, however, the Yemeni army seeks to deprive AQAP of territorial control in general (Carboni & Sulz, 2020).

run the administration, pay salaries of public workers and ensure the provision of goods and services (Cook, 2019, p. 21).

Executive style

Even though the group did not establish a direct rule, it did have influence on the form of the governance, and not only in the areas of justice a security. Although the HNC was supposedly an independent entity, AQAP held decision-making power. HNC was thought to be rather an administrative element implementing the group's decisions (Kendall, 2018a, p. 27; Green, 2019, p. 37; ICG, 2017, p. 9). This "*invisible hand strategy*" (Horton, 2017, p. 19) allowed AQAP to "*share the glory when things went well but also the blame if they went badly*" (Kendall, 2018a, p. 27).

The impact of the decision-making on the highest level of AQAP´s structure on particular governance strategies can be deduced from the leadership change occurring during the second governance cycle. AQAP´s *amir* al-Wuhayshi, who later preferred the softer approach to governance, was killed by US air strike and succeeded by Qassim al-Raymi, previous deputy leader and military commander (Council on Foreign Relations, 2015). This leadership switch is thought to have caused the hardening of AQAP´s attitude towards execution of punishments (Al-Ganad, Johnsen & al-Kartheri, 2021).

As for the development of AQAP´s relations with AQ central, after the death of bin Laden, the position of AQAP within the network was considerably elevated, as al-Wuhayshi was named deputy leader for all of AQ. However, following his assassination, the attention of AQ central shifted more towards Syria rather than Yemen. The decision-making process thus seems to be autonomous from AQ central (Knoll, 2017, p. 7).

3.3. Summary of Rebel Governance Models of Selected Groups

BH provided minimal governance functions. It discriminated against a large part of the local population, interpreting the concept of *takfir* very broadly. It relied significantly on coercion as a mean of generation of compliance. It did not include other actors into its governance arrangement. It strived for innovation, while not establishing its own bureaucratic governance structures. And it provided great autonomy to its members on lower level of the organizational hierarchy.

ISWAP, on the other hand, has provided extensive governance functions. It has limited its violence activities against broader Muslim population, while still choosing targets of sectarian nature. It has relied on persuasion, especially in form of pragmatic

incentives, while still resorting to coercion as a mean of generation of compliance, although to lesser extent. It has strived for innovation. It has not included other actors into its governance. It has not established formal bureaucratic structures and its executive style has been characterized by decentralization, as it is thought to be operating in cells.

During its first governance cycle, AQAP provided extensive governance functions. Its governance model was discriminative along sectarian lines. It relied on both, persuasion and coercion, as means of generation of compliance. It strived largely for innovation in terms of institutions; however it kept the personnel of pre-existing system. It did not include other actors in its governance. It expressed a certain level of bureaucratization and its implementation of governance was done through hierarchical organizational structure.

AQAP´s second governance cycle was also characterized by provision of numerous governance functions. The group´s discriminative behaviour continued to be along sectarian lines. It put greater emphasis on persuasion as a mean of generation of compliance, limiting its usage of coercion as much as possible. It did not impose extensive innovation; on the contrary, it tried to govern in line with local traditions and customs. It included other actors into its governance initiative, which had rather formal character, as governance institutions were established. The executive style of its governance was hierarchical.

	Boko Haram 2014-2015	**ISWAP 2018- present**	**AQAP – Ansar al-Sharia 2011-2012**	**AQAP – Sons of Hadramawt 2015-2016**
Range of Governance Functions	Low	Extensive	Extensive	Extensive
Provision of Security	X (only repressive aspects)	✓ (protective, repressive)	✓ (protective, repressive)	✓ (predominantly protective)
Provision of Justice	✓ (informal, sporadic)	✓ (informal, extensive)	✓ (formal, extensive)	✓ (formal, extensive)
Taxation	X	✓ (extensive – civilians and business)	X	✓ (extensive – only business)
Provision/Regulation of Public Goods and Services	✓ (low)	✓ (extensive)	✓ (extensive)	✓ (extensive)
Regulation of Behaviour	✓ (extensive)	✓ (extensive)	✓ (extensive)	✓ (low)
Inclusivity	Discrimination (extensive)	Discrimination (low)	Discrimination (low)	Discrimination (low)
Generation of Compliance	Coercion	Coercion, Persuasion (pragmatic)	Coercion, Persuasion (pragmatic, symbolic – Islam)	Persuasion (pragmatic, symbolic – local identity)
Other Actors	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Inclusion
Institutions and Personnel	Innovation	Innovation	Innovation, Maintenance	Maintenance
Bureaucratization	Informality	Informality	Formality	Formality
Executive Style	Non- Hierarchical	Non- Hierarchical	Hierarchical	Hierarchical

Table 3: Dimensions of Rebel Governance of Selected Groups. Created by the author.

4) Factors Influencing the Variation in Rebel Governance Dimensions

4.1.Rebels´ Attributes

4.1.1. Goals and Ideology

H1: The governance of revolutionary groups/Salafi-jihadi groups is characterized by innovation of institutions and discrimination.

As mentioned in the theoretical part of the thesis, rebel governance literature considers Salafi-jihadi groups to be revolutionary groups, which are expected to strive for innovation and exhibit discriminatory tendencies with regard to the nature of membership of their desired Islamic polity.

Thurston (2016) notes that in terms of ideology BH resembles other Salafi-jihadi groups around the world (p. 9). The name *Boko Haram* itself refers to the ideological components of Salafism. It is usually loosely translated into the English language as *Western education is forbidden*. The word *Haram* is an Islamic legal term denoting a prohibited act. While the word *Boko* is often translated to English as a "book", Thurston points out that the original meaning of the word in Hausa is rather close to "fraud" (2018, pp. 14-15) and refers to broader "*social and political ills that allegedly result from Western domination of Nigerian state and society*"[41] (2016, p. 5). Like other Salafi-jihadists, BH aimed to restore the legacy of the "*pious predecessors*", referring to the historical Islamic states in the region. BH´s stated goal was the recreation of the Caliphate in northern Nigeria (Thurston, 2016, p. 9). While BH was undoubtedly shaped by local history and dynamics, it also established connection to global jihadi network, initially through unofficial ties with AQIM and later by an official pledge of allegiance to IS. AQIM´s influence was thought to be seen in BH´s adoption of new tactics, including suicide attacks, and greater focus on Nigerian Christians, who had not been among its primary targets before 2010. Shekau nevertheless reportedly rejected additional AQIM´s advice and guidance, which led to friction between BH members and the creation of a splinter group called Ansaru in 2012[42]. Similarly, after BH´s pledge to IS in 2015, Shekau was said to

[41] Not only to the Western education system imposed on Nigerians during the period of British colonial administration, which functioned for a long time as mean of spreading Western values and Christianity and thereby representing a potential threat to the preservation of Islam in Nigeria (Thurston, 2018, p. 15).
[42] Compared to BH, Ansaru, formally *Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan* (eng. Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa), has adopted more global focus, becoming an unofficial "*Nigeria's*

disregard IS´s theological guidance, as he reportedly made the pledge only under the pressure of other BH commanders (Campbell, 2018; Zenn, 2021, p. 636). Subsequently, ISWAP emerged as a splinter group headed by al-Barnawi. ISWAP came to criticize Shekau for his authoritarianism and extremism as well as ideological and strategic failings[43], as he drove BH to "*the ´abyss´ with decisions that weakened his soldiers, emptied ´the areas of his control´ of farmers, and raised the ´specter of hunger and famine´*" (Stoddard, 2023, p. 9). Although the ideological disagreements, which led to ISWAP´s separation, had been present within the organization for a long time, ISWAP´s ideological stance is thought to be further influenced by IS (p. 9). According to Ingram (2021), the adoption of IS´s method for establishing an Islamic state is a requirement, which should be fulfilled by the aspiring provinces to be formally accepted by IS (p. 7).

"AQAP has a *globally and locally focused Salafi-jihadist agenda*" (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018). Firstly, in line with AQ central approach, the group has targeted the "far enemy", whether through the unsuccessful attacks on the US, kidnappings of foreign tourists, targeting foreign embassies or encouraging lone wolf attacks[44] (Cook, 2019, p. 13). Second, AQAP has sought to create "*a jihadist emirate in Yemen*" (Knoll, 2017, p. 9). These two objectives mirror the diversity within AQAP. According to Swift (2012), although still unified by Salafi-jihadi ideology, AQAP consists of distinct factions. Ideological purists, who "*tend to view jihad as an ethical rather than political struggle*", together with small number of foreign fighters "*favor high profile assassination and provocation operations intended for global audiences*". On the other hand, political pragmatists as well as Yemeni indigenous Salafis aim to establish Islamic state "*village by village, district by district*" (Swift, 2012 pp. 5-6). While BH started as local insurgency and became transnacionalized over time, AQAP originally represented a more globally focused organization, whose localization process was accelerated only after the Arab Spring and even more so after the beginning of the Yemeni civil war, when it became increasingly integrated into Yemen's political struggles (al- Dawsari, 2018, p. 14;

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al-Qaeda franchise" (ICG, 2014, pp. 26-29; Zenn, 2013). The group disapproved of BH´s violence against ordinary Muslims and its operations consisted predominantly of kidnappings of foreigners for ransom and attacks on Nigerian Christians and security forces (Campbell, 2014). Ansaru was active between 2012 and 2014, but reappeared in 2020 (Zenn & Weiss, 2021).

[43] ISWAP criticized Shekau's leadership style. It described it as dictatorial due to Shekau´s refusal to take advice and his eagerness to kill those who challenged his authority, and inefficient in terms of military command as well as the misappropriation of group´s spoils (ICG, 2019, p. 8).

[44] Militants associated with AQAP were also behind the attack on the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in January 2015. In part, this strike marked an attempt by AQAP to assert its global leadership credentials amid IS's rise (Green, 2019, p. 36).

Matesan, 2022, p. 14). Following the assassination of several AQAP leaders by US strikes, local Yemeni figures have stepped into leadership roles. The character of the group also altered with higher number of Yemenis joining its ranks. These members "*do not see themselves primarily as waging a global jihadist struggle … Instead, they see themselves more as Yemenis concerned about issues that matter to their communities*" (al-Dawsari, 2018, p. 14).

Considering the extent of discrimination, as proposed in the theoretical part, the inclusivity of jihadi rebel governance is influenced by individual group´s sectarian and takfiri behaviour. While both groups´ targets were sectarian in nature, including Christians and Sufis in case of BH and ISWAP and Sufis and Zaydi Shi´a (Houthis) in case of AQAP, the groups differ in their takfiri behaviour. The interpretation of takfir represented one of the main points of friction between Shekau and future ISWAP leadership. Shekau extended the application of takfir to all Muslims, who do not embrace and actively support BH. His idea of membership of the Islamic community was thus highly exclusivist (Stoddard, 2019, p. 8). On the other hand, while ISWAP leaders have been in agreement with Shekau that politicians, government official, soldiers of the Nigerian Army, and the members of the CJTF are legitimate targets, they have argued that "*takfir cannot be declared on Muslims who do not view these actors as infidels except after clarifying the matter with the Muslims regarding the actions of unbelief as stated in the sharia and not until the doubts have been removed and the matter explained to the Muslims"* (Kassim, 2018, pp. 27-30). On the takfirism scale presented by Stenersen (2020), BH is located closely to the end of separation, while ISWAP and AQAP are closer to the inclusivity end.

Results

While goals and ideology of the groups clearly define, who is considered to be part of the desired polity, and the groups strive for innovation in general, they differ in their extent of discrimination as well as their practical implementation of governance, as some are more willing to compromise and maintain aspects of pre-existing order, at least in short-term. The theoretical arguments proposed by rebel governance literature concerning the influence of goals and ideology do not represent a sufficient explanation of jihadi rebel group´s governance behaviour.

	Goals and Ideology	Institutions and Personnel	Inclusivity	Result
BH – 2014-2015	Revolutionary group (Salafi-jihadi group)	Innovation	Discrimination (extensive)	✓
ISWAP – 2018-present		Innovation	Discrimination (low)	✓
AQAP – 2011-2012		Innovation, Maintenance	Discrimination (low)	X
AQAP – 2015-2016		Maintenance	Discrimination (low)	X

Table 4: Rebel´s Goals and Ideology and Rebel Governance. Created by the author.

4.1.2. Rebel Funding

> H2: Rebel groups that rely mostly on extractive resources are likely to pay less attention to the needs of civilian population, thus providing fewer governance functions. They are also more likely to generate compliance through coercion rather than persuasion.

Between 2010 and 2013, BH robbed hundreds of banks, causing damage of approximately $6 million (Comolli, 2015, p. 82). Although the number of bank robberies slowly decreased after the state of emergency was declared across northern states in 2013, they continued to represent a substantial source of BH´s income (Maza, Koldas & Aksit, 2020b, p. 6). High amounts of ransom were paid to the group for the release of kidnapped dignitaries (e.g. former Nigerian petroleum minister or wife of Cameroon's deputy prime minister) or foreign nationals (Zenn, 2014b, p. 8). Abductions of local elders and business owners generated smaller payments, yet as they became a frequent strategy, they overall provided an important source of financing (Maza, Koldas & Aksit, 2020b, p. 5). Another reported form of generating revenue, permissible by porous borders of the Lake Chad region, was illicit trafficking. The contraband concerned mostly arms, stolen cattle (Zenn, 2014b, p. 8) and narcotics (UN, 2015). Since 2013, BH relied heavily on armed robberies, predominately in form of raids on towns and villages, where it looted markets, shops and house of civilians (AI, 2015, p. 14). Extortion was another method of financing. BH forced business owners, politicians and other citizens to "donate" finances under the threat of violence. The amount of money earned through extortion is hard to estimate (Comolli, 2015, p. 82). As already mentioned in previous part of the thesis, ISWAP created an economically prosperous environment, from which it has benefited financially. Its revenues have stemmed from taxation of civilians as well as trade and people´s livelihoods; direct participation in economic activities, such as agricultural production and fishery; and subsequent trade in dried pepper, rice or smoked fish (Barkindo, 2023, p. 14; Samuel, 2022, pp. 15-18). Control of fishery and taxation reportedly make up the largest

share of ISWAP´s budget (Samuel, 2022, p. 19; Abdullahi, 2022, p. 16) According to some sources, ISWAP has also been linked to transnational trafficking activities. Barkido (2023) suggests that the group was doing so only by charging fees to local traders as well as smugglers and transport drivers of illegal goods across borders (p. 14). Samuel (2022) notes that ISWAP has also carried out kidnappings for ransom, however, no addition information, clarifying how often the group resorted to this activity and what kind of income they derived from it, is available (p. 16). The external funding from IS is thought to be crucial source of income during the initial years of ISWAP´s existence (ICG, 2022a, p. 10). Analysts however suggest that from 2018 onwards, as IS was being defeated and thus losing its own sources of revenue, external support dropped sharply (Barkindo, 2023, p. 14).

After 2011, AQAP´s finances came predominately from kidnappings. Between 2011 and 2013 AQAP received between $20-30 million from hostage ransom payments for foreign nationals (Knoll, 2017, p. 10; Counter Extremism Project, 2017). Additionally, the group utilized its financing through donations from fake charities and "*like-minded supporters*", either Yemeni or Saudi nationals (Counter Extremism Project, 2017; Reuters, 2016). AQAP also engaged in armed robberies (Swift, 2012, p. 4; Knoll, 2017, p. 10). This strategy gained importance in 2015, as AQAP seized approximately $100 million from the al-Mukalla branch of the Central Bank of Yemen (Horton, 2018). During its second governance cycle, the group largely benefited from local revenue and taxation opportunities (Green, 2019, p. 37). The management of the al-Mukalla port is taught to be its most profitable source of income. According to some sources, taxes imposed on goods and oil earned the group approximately 2 million dollars per day (Bayoumy, Browning & Ghobari, 2016). Others estimate that the amount earned was rather around 700 000 dollars per day (Trew, 2018). Besides imports, the group also carried out smuggling operations along Yemen's porous eastern borders (Kendall, 2018a, p. 28). In addition, AQAP extorted companies, including $1.4 million from national oil company (Bayoumy, Browning & Ghobari, 2016) as well as sums of money from private companies (Knoll, 2017, p. 10). In 2016, Yemeni company Al Omgy Exchange was blacklisted by the US Department of the Treasury for reportedly helping AQAP disperse funding throughout Yemen and receive deposits, including extortion payments from Yemeni businesses (Knoll, 2017, p. 10; Reuters, 2016).

Results

BH financed its activities exclusively through extractive resources, i.e. bank robberies, kidnapping for ransom, illicit trafficking, looting and extortion. Since its governance model was significantly coercive and included minimal governance functions, the theoretical argument holds.

Although ISWAP has resorted to kidnappings and received external support in the past, its funding consists predominantly of collaborative resources, i.e. taxation, trade and production. The hypothesis may seem inconclusive, as ISWAP´s rule has been characterized by the provision of extensive governance functions, but also reliance on both, persuasion and coercion. Nevertheless, taking into account the within case comparison, while ISWAP has resorted to violence against civilians, it has behaved significantly less coercively than BH. The increase of collaborative resources between both governance cycles was met with lower degree of coercive behaviour and wider scope of governance functions. Therefore, the theoretical argument holds.

AQAP´s revenues prior to 2015 were derived exclusively from extractive resources, i.e. kidnappings, phony charities, external support and armed robberies. Since the group resorted to both means of generation of compliance and at the same time provided wide range of governance functions, the "*mutual dependence*" argument cannot be confirmed. In this context, Florea's (2020) critique of the "rebel resource curse" hightlights rather the factor of goals and ideology as an explanation of AQAP's efforts to provide a wide range of governance functions, while relying on extractive resources. The author stresses that revenues acquired through any type of resources "*can help offset the costs of establishing and maintaining political institutions needed for the long-term viability of an insurgency, especially of one with a strong ideological profile*" (p. 1014).

Although AQAP also resorted to bank robberies and other illicit activities during its second governance cycle; taxes imposed on commodities, businesses and trade became its primary strategy of financing. While it relied predominantly on collaborative resources, its governance model was characterized by wide range of governance functions and reliance on persuasion as a mean of generation of compliance. The theoretical argument thus holds. Concerning within case comparison of AQAP first and second governance cycle, the decline in the usage of extractive resources was met with decline in coercive behaviour, which also supports the proposed argument. Nevertheless, as AQAP provided broad scope of governance functions during both cycles, while relying each time on different type of resources, the hypothesis can be regarded as **inconclusive**.

	Predominant Type of Resources	Generation of Compliance	Range of Governance Functions	Result
BH – 2014-2015	Extractive	Coercion	Low	✓
ISWAP – 2018-present	Collaborative	Coercion, Persuasion	Extensive	✓
AQAP – 2011-2012	Extractive	Coercion, Persuasion	Extensive	X
AQAP – 2015-2016	Collaborative	Persuasion	Extensive	✓

Table 5: Rebel Funding and Rebel Governance. Created by the author.

4.2.Pre-conflict Factors

4.2.1. State Penetration

H3: If the pre-conflict political regime penetrated into society in terms of bureaucratic structures, rebels are more likely to incorporate pre-existing structures and practices into their governance. They are thus less likely to innovate and their governance model is more likely to be bureaucratic.

Since both, Nigeria and Yemen, gained independence, political turmoil has been present in these former colonies. Over the past two decades, both countries have been ranked among the weakest states according to the *Fragile State Index*. For last four years, Yemen has even occupied the first place. However, in 2009, when AQAP was formed and BH turned to violence, the rating of these two countries was similar, with Nigeria occupying the 15th place and Yemen occupying the18th place. This situation prevailed up to 2011, when Nigeria was ranked 14th and Yemen 13th. Since 2011, Yemen's rating has fallen sharply in connection with the Arab Spring events and the civil war. As for the *Public Services Indicator*[45], in 2011 Yemen was rated 8.6, while Nigeria 9.0 (Fragile State Index, 2023).

Although some forms of bureaucratic structures, including those on local level, were created in both countries, their functioning was disrupted by high level of corruption and systems of patronage. Following the historical and cultural sensitivities, there has been a tendency towards decentralization in Nigeria. The country is composed of 36 states and 774 local government areas (LGAs). Each state and LGA has its own public bureaucracy, which is formally in charge of the provision of essential services (Asaju & Ayeni, 2021, pp. 84-85; Page & Wando, 2022). However, in practice, the local administration is dependent on the resources redistributed by central government (Magrin & Pérouse de Montclos et al., 2018, pp. 87-90). Within the context of unified Yemen, greater efforts were put to centralization. However, under the pressures, especially from the southern part of the country, reforms leading to a certain degree of decentralization took place at the turn

[45] "*The Public Services Indicator refers to the presence of basic state functions that serve the people. On the one hand, this may include the provision of essential services, such as health, education, water and sanitation, transport infrastracture, electricity and power, and internet and connectivity.*" (Fragile State Index, 2023).

of the millennium. Firstly, the country was divided into governorates, which were subdivided into districts. Subsequently, a law was passed, which laid foundation for the creation of local councils – essentially municipalities, which came to be responsible for the day-to-day provision of basic public services (Baron, Cummings, Salmon & al-Madhaji, 2016, p. 4). Nevertheless, these reforms "*did little to change the balance of power"*. Although, the local councils were allowed to exercise some form of self-governance and raise funds through limited local taxation, these local authorities remained reliant on central allocations for more than 90 % of their budget (Rogers, 2020, pp. 6-7).

The economic systems of both countries rely on the rentier state model. The redistribution of revenues collected by central authorities is ineffective, as most of the resources remain in the hands of local leaders, who are often unelected contradictory to the law. Public jobs are then distributed to supporters rather than filled on the basis of merit. In Nigeria, nepotism based on tribal or religious connections or family patronage and "*political godfatherism*" have played an important role in the creation of an elite class, which sees the public services as "*a theatre for sharing the national cake among the …"* various group within the heterogeneous country (Amuwo, 2008, pp. 46-48). In Yemen, a similar patronage system was adopted by central government, as it sought to marginalize those in opposition and on the contrary to co-opt and favour those, through whom it could project its power to the peripheries (Saif, 2013, p. 138, Zimmerman, 2012, p. 3). Under these systems of clientelistic redistribution and without a tangible presence of the state in many rural areas, people have little or no attachment to the state itself (Mbowou, 2017, p. 150).

Results

Both states show more or less the same, low rate of penetration and provision of public services. In case of BH, the theoretical argument holds. While the group operated in a country characterized by low penetration, it aimed for innovation and its governance had an informal character. ISWAP then created its stronghold in the rural areas of Lake Chad, where the bureaucratic structures and government presence has been historically even more limited, as they are located far from population centres and civil servants often refuse to be posted there (Magrin & Pérouse de Montclos et. al., 2018, p. 78; Varin, 2020, pp. 151-152). Concerning ISWAP´s governance cycle, the theoretical argument also holds, as its governance has been characterized by innovation and informality. In terms of AQAP, its tendency to maintain some degree of pre-existing system and achieved formality during

both governance cycles does not correspond with the low level of penetration of Yemeni state.

While operating in similarly low penetrated countries, the groups fundamentally differed in the way they approached the bureaucratic structures that were available. BH adopted a strategy of targeting public facilities (schools, health centres etc.), and ISWAP subsequently operated in an already disrupted environment. AQAP, on the other hand, sought to use the available public infrastructure in order to improve its own provision of governance. The hypothesis thus **cannot be considered valid.**

	Penetration of Pre-existing Regime	Institutions and Personnel	Bureaucratization	Result
BH – 2014-2015	Low	Innovation	Informality	✓
ISWAP – 2018-present		Innovation	Informality	✓
AQAP – 2011-2012	Low	Innovation, Maintenance	Formality	X
AQAP – 2015-2016		Maintenance	Formality	X

Table 6: Penetration of Pre-existing Regime and Rebel Governance. Created by the author.

4.2.2. Non-state Governing Authorities and Civilian Agency

> H4: In societies, where pre-existing non-state governing authorities are efficient and legitimate, rebel governance is less interventionist, i.e. other actors are likely to be included in some way in governance arrangements and rebels are more likely to maintain to some degree the pre-existing structures and practices.

Traditional structures of governance in Nigeria are based on hierarchical chieftaincy system. Concerning the Borno state, the *emir* or *Shehu* of Borno is at top of the hierarchy. The lower level is governed by the district heads, i.e. nobles known as *Hakimai*. Each district manages several villages, while village affairs are then handled by the village head (Olowu & Erero, 1995, p. 8). This system has its roots in the pre-colonial period, as the emirate of Borno was part of the Sokoto caliphate existing between 1804 and 1903. Under the subsequent indirect British rule "*the emirates formed an indigenous layer of the colonial bureaucracy*". They were responsible for the collection of revenue and administration of justice (Ochonu, 2010). In the first two decades of independent Nigeria, traditional rules maintained their position, however, over the following years their official authority largely diminished. The creation of LGAs in 1976 stripped the traditional chiefs of their privilege to provide justice and collect taxes. While the 1979 Constitution referred to the consultative power of the traditional authorities, under the 1999 Constitution "*no longer even mentioned their existence*" (Magrin & Pérouse de Montclos et al., 2018, p. 95).

As the functions previously performed by *emirs* and district heads were transferred to the state and local governments, these traditional rulers have lost all of their official powers. Nowadays, traditional rulers wield mostly symbolic authority, drawn from their historically held influence over social and political affairs (Asfura-Heim & McQuaid, 2015, pp. 50-51). In addition, the state highly limits their actions. The governors of respective states are responsible for the appointment and removal of *emirs*, who also rely on regional governments for their funding. In practice, *emirs* have an unofficial role of intermediary in communication between the government and citizens, especially during elections (Ochonu, 2010; France24, 2020). Many of the traditional rulers maintain close ties with the government, however these relationships with regime, which is widely perceived as corrupt, has diminished their legitimacy in the eyes of substantial part of the population. Concerning their role as religious leaders, while they remain somewhat influential, the "*fragmentation of sacred authority in Northern Nigeria*" (Thurston 2016, p. 12) has contributed to the decline of their influence as they currently "*compete with a number of reformist and fundamentalist alternatives"* (Asfura-Heim & McQuaid, 2015, pp. 50-51). According to survey dealing with the role of traditional leaders in modern Africa, only 20 % of Nigerians would turn to them or traditional courts to "*resolve violent conflict between different groups*" (Logan, 2008, pp. 11-12). Thus, while some traditional rulers maintain a degree of legitimacy, they have largely lost their practical influence (Asfura-Heim & McQuaid, 2015, p. 49).

Yemen is often described as one of the most tribal countries in the Middle East (ACAPS, 2020, p. 2). Tribes represent an important pillar of Yemeni societal structure (al-Dawsari, 2012, p. 5). They have a long and diverse history of self-governance. Every tribe is made up of a complex network of families and communities bounded together by shared customs, traditions and kinship (Horton, 2011). Tribal structure consists of several layers, including a clan or *halb*, which refers to a group of households with common ancestors; a village, which represents a "*territorial and contractual unit*" not based on family ties; tribal section composed of several villages; tribe itself; and tribal confederation, which is an alliance of several tribes (ACAPS, 2020, p. 8). Villages, towns or neighbourhoods are managed by an elder, called *aqil*, who is responsible for the provision of public services on lower level (ACAPS, 2020, p. 17). The whole tribe is then headed by *skeikh,* who is often described as a "*first among equals*" (ACAPS, 2020, p. 2) as the tribal structure is not pyramidal and his "*legitimacy and authority depend on his ability to provide for his constituents*" (al-Dawsari, 2018, p. 20). Although elders and sheiks are mostly selected

from a particular family lineage, they can be replaced, when not fulfilling their obligations (Horton, 2011). Yemeni tribes are heterogeneous with varying degrees of influence and size. Concerning southern Yemeni regions, they are generally considered "less tribal" than the northern part of the country due to historical developments; including British rule of southern Yemen, which began in 1839 and gradually took more direct nature, thus decreasing the importance of local sheikhdoms, as well as the socialist rule spanning from 1967 to 1990, which also tried to diminish the influence of tribalism (Mugahed, 2022). The united Yemen, however, promoted the "*re-tribalisation of southern society*" by creating the above mentioned patronage network, incorporating traditional tribal roles and structures into the formal, institutional structure of the state itself (ACAPS, 2020, p. 4). While some sheiks were discredited for not fulfilling their responsibilities as local benefactors and mediators due to their connections with the corrupt government (Swift, 2012, p. 3), tribal networks generally remain "*one of the more effective and accessible social support systems in the country*" (ACAPS, 2020, p. 4). 90 % of conflicts are thought to be resolved by tribal law and as tribes represent a highly armed group with common interests, they are the primary mobilization network in case of emergence of an external threat (al-Dawsari, 2012, p. 5).

Results

While the pre-existing governing authorities in Nigeria are characterized by lower level of legitimacy and similarly hold no practical governance power, the pre-existing governing authorities in Yemen are in great importance, providing security as well as basic governance functions. Concerning the Nigerian case, the theoretical argument holds, as both jihadi groups were striving for innovation and did not include other actors in their governance models. On the contrary, the theory cannot be confirmed in case of AQAP´s first governance cycle. While Yemeni tribes are considered to be legitimate and efficient structures, the group did not incorporate these actors into its governance. In addition, although it demonstrated tendencies to maintain, these were rather connected with keeping the government personnel. However, during its second governance cycle, AQAP changed its strategy to inclusion of local actors into its rule. Its approach was thus in line with the proposed theoretical argument.

The differences between Nigerian and Yemeni pre-existing governing authorities practically manifest in their relation to jihadi rebel group as an external threat. The traditional rulers in Nigeria had no mobilization power and no resistance emerged within

the framework of the traditional governance structures, yet rather through community efforts supported by the security forces, i.e. CJTF. On the other hand, Yemeni tribes were essential in AQAP´s expulsion from occupied territories. In connection with the negative result of the proposed hypothesis in case of AQAP´s first governance cycle, it is worth pointing out that AQAP had some presence in coastal areas of Abyan even before the Arab Spring. AQ had closed ties with AQAP´s predecessors in Yemen, including the Islamic Jihad in Yemen and the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army, which were active in this region (Knoll, 2017, p. 12). Thus, the group did not initially encounter strong native resistance in these areas (Gordon, 2012, p. 7). Yet, when it expanded its territorial presence to the broader regions, local tribes mobilized against the group, forming the already mentioned Popular (Resistance) Committees (McGregor, 2011). AQAP´s strategy change in Hadramawt is thus thought to be a reaction to its unsuccessful experience (Green, 2019, p. 36). Taking into account this development, the hypothesis can be **possibly regarded as valid, although not directly proven in all governance cycles.**

	Efficiency and Legitimacy of Alternate Governing Authorities	Institutions and Personnel	Other actors	Result
BH – 2014-2015	Low	Innovation	Exclusion	✓
ISWAP – 2018-present		Innovation	Exclusion	✓
AQAP – 2011-2012	High	Innovation, Maintenance	Exclusion	X
AQAP – 2015-2016		Maintenance	Inclusion	✓

Table 7: Efficiency and Legitimacy of Alternate Governing Authorities and Rebel Governance. Created by the author.

4.3.War-time Contextual Factors

4.3.1. Conflict Intensity and Firmness of Territorial Control: Actions of Incumbent State/ International Intervening Force

H5: The higher the conflict intensity and subsequently the lower the firmness of territorial control, the more likely the rebels are to behave coercively and provide fewer governance functions.

Nigerian state responded to BH´s violence primarily with military force. Since 2011 the Nigerian army has been increasing the number of troops deployed in the northern part of the country (Hütte, Steinberg & Weber, 2015, p. 94). State of emergency was declared across northern states in 2012 and 2013. The military offensives included the *Operation restore order I, II* and *III*, which eventually achieved relative progress, as BH was forced to withdraw from areas around Maiduguri and find refuge in its base in Sambisa forest.

However, the situation continued to worsen with BH´s frequent attacks. The counter-insurgency measures continued with the *Operation Boyona*, later renamed *Operation Zaman Lafiya*, which lasted till 2015. The efforts of Nigerian army, which often lacked sufficient resources, were supported by the above mentioned CJTF since 2013 (Osakwe & Audu, 2017, pp. 3-4). In addition, there was a coordinated regional response to BH. In April 2012, the Lake Chad countries formed the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) solely with the aim to counter the BH crisis[46]. In March 2014, the countries agreed on the establishment of MNJTF´s headquarters in Baga (Albert, 2017, p. 123). During 2014, BH started to gain territorial control. This failure of the *Operation Zaman Lafiya* was predominately due to low morale of Nigerian soldiers and exacerbated by poor logistic support (Osakwe & Audu, 2017, p. 4). Interviewed locals stated that they repeatedly asked Nigerian soldiers to secure their villages from expected attacks, but the army reportedly refused, complaining about the lack of support from the command in Maiduguri (AI, 2015, p. 3). However, BH did not have operational freedom across Borno state. During 2014, MNJTF was gradually strengthened by the deployment of additional troops to affected areas. Cross-border operations by the Nigerien and Cameroonian military attempting to pursuit BH fighters were taking place and the group´s positions were being shelled. As mentioned above, BH exercised control over some villages and towns only for a short period of time, sometimes repeatedly as the militaries recaptured and subsequently lost the territories (ICG, 2020, p. 3). The decisive offensive by the Nigerian army came at the beginning of 2015. The *Operation Lafiya Dole* conducted in cooperation with MJTF as well as South African private military company *STTEP* led to BH´s withdrawal from most occupied territories (Ewa, 2018, p. 37).

ISWAP´s operational area has also not been completely secure. Although the Nigerian armed forces paid initially more attention to the JAS faction in Sambisa forest and the MNJTF achieved only limited results due to the preoccupation of Lake Chad countries with other internal security issues; their focus gradually turned to Lake Chad region, where they intensified military operations to counter ISWAP (ICG, 2022a, pp. 13-14). Most importantly, Nigerian military increased its airpower to strike ISWAP targets and improved the coordination between air and ground forces. This was largely due to investments in weaponry and aircraft. Additionally, new generation of generals with combat experience in Borno was appointed (ICG, 2022a, pp. 2-3). The MNJTF received

[46] First MNJTF was established between the countries in 1994 in order to secure border regions from activities of bandits (Albert, 2017, p. 123).

financial support from the European Union via the African Union as well as military expertise from the United Kingdom, the US and France. Western support has been also essential in terms of intelligence and surveillance (Zabala, 2023). In addition, the counter-insurgents adopted a better defensive position as they regrouped the troops in "super camps", thus preventing large-scale attacks on garrison towns. However, ISWAP has adapted its strategy to the increased pressure of Nigerian army in terms of both, operations related to combat as well as governance and territorial control. As mentioned above, ISWAP´s territorial control can be described as semi-territorial, as it simply moves away during offensives, only to return as soon as troops have left (ICG, 2022a, pp. 12-13; Hansen, 2019).

Concerning both governance cycles of AQAP, there was little or no resistance from the Yemeni armed forces (ICG, 2017, p. 10). Yemeni armed forces have never been cohesive, as commanders treated their units as "*personal fiefdoms*", chain of command was weak and the army was often divided along tribal lines (Horton, 2017, p. 17). The situation worsened during the events of the Arab Spring, as the loyalty of Yemeni forces split to different actors involved in the struggle for central power. The focus on the "*political battle in Sana'a*" and other regime strongholds drew military units away from their posts across the country. The security vacuum in the southern and central Yemen enabled AQAP to take over territory (Zimmerman, 2012, p. 3). Local residents from Abyani cities stated that AQAP captured the towns with only a handful of fighters, as the security forces abandoned their positions or barely resisted (ICG, 2017, p. 10). Yemeni troops were deployed to fight AQAP, only when the group directly threatened the city of Aden. However, this operation was strictly defensive with the aim to prevent the insurgents from entering the city, rather than offensive attempting to defeat them (Zimmerman, 2012, p. 8). Although AQAP was under Yemeni and US airstrikes, the former were largely ineffective, while the latter targeted particularly AQAP's leadership directly involved with planning attacks on the US, rather than focusing on mid-level insurgency leadership (Zimmerman, 2012, p. 10). The decisive offensive *Operation Golden Swords* was not conducted until May 2012, when the political situation calmed down and the new president was installed. The Yemeni forces together with the tribal militias then terminated AQAP´s high level of operational freedom lasting for over a year, pushing the group out of most of the occupied territories (Horton, 2017, p. 18).

After its consolidation, the internationally recognized Yemeni government launched an offensive against AQAP. However, its efforts were disturbed by the outbreak

of the civil war at the turn of 2014 and 2015. As Houthis progressed southwards in 2015, the Yemeni government fled to Aden, where it tried to consolidate its forces, reducing once again military presence in central and eastern Yemen (Green, 2019, pp. 33-35). The remains of Yemeni armed forced deployed in al-Mukalla did not resist AQAP´s takeover (ICG, 2017, p. 10). The only resistance the group dealt with was in the northern part of Hadramawt, where some of Yemeni military units blocked their advance, but generally avoided conflict with AQAP (Horton, 2016; Riedel, 2015). During the following year, AQAP did not face any fighting force on the ground. The Saudi-led coalition, which began its operations in March 2015, focused solely on combating the Houthis. Coalition´s primarily goal has been to reinstate President Hadi´s government (ICG, 2017, p. 15). Yet, AQAP was under US drone strikes, which increased during 2015, when they killed a number of AQAP´s top leaders, including al-Wuhayshi (Green, 2019, pp. 38-39). Only after the Houthi forces were repulsed from Aden, the UAE forces together other allies gradually retook the Abyan and Hadramawt governorates and in April 2016 reclaimed al-Mukalla without almost any resistance (ICG, 2017, p. 15).

Results

While the Nigerian government's efforts to counter BH and ISWAP were more or less constant, AQAP enjoyed high operational freedom during both governance cycles, as the Yemeni army was preoccupied with internal challenges and the later established Saudi-led coalition´s primary aim was to counter the Houthis.

In case of BH, the theoretical argument holds, as the group relied on coercion as a mean of generation of compliance and provided minimal governance functions in an environment of high conflict intensity. On the contrary, ISWAP´s less coercive approach and greater scope of governance functions is inconsistent with the proposed effect of high conflict intensity. The group focused more on the control of population rather than territory (Stoddard, 2023, p. 5). ISWAP´s semi-territorial presence and extensive provision of governance functions supports rather the recent studies, which relaxes the assumption that territorial control is necessary precondition of rebel governance (e.g. Worrall, 2017; Waterman, 2022).

Even though AQAP provided extensive governance functions during it first governance cycle, it resorted to both coercion and persuasion, while not being challenged by the security forces. However, in comparison with BH and ISWAP, its generation of compliance can be considered as based on lower level of coercion. As such, the theoretical

argument might hold. AQAP´s approach during the second governance cycle, characterized by persuasion and wide array of governance functions, is then in line with the proposed argument. However, taking into account both cases of Nigerian and Yemeni jihadi rebel groups, the hypothesis **is inconclusive.**

	Conflict Intensity/ Firmness of Territorial Control	Generation of Compliance	Range of Governance Functions	Result
BH – 2014-2015	High/Low	Coercion	Low	✓
ISWAP – 2018-present	High/Low	Coercion, Persuasion	Extensive	X
AQAP – 2011-2012	Low/High	Coercion, Persuasion	Extensive	✓
AQAP – 2015-2016	Low/High	Persuasion	Extensive	✓

Table 8: Conflict Intensity/Firmness of Territorial Control and Rebel Governance. Created by the author.

4.3.2. Competition: Rival Actors

H6: In an environment where multiple ANSAs operate, rebel groups are likely to rely predominantly on coercion as a mean of generation of compliance.

Within the vast territory of the Nigerian state, various ANSAs have participated in conflicts in several locations[47]. As for the north-eastern part of Nigeria, BH was not the only ANSA operating in the area, although it was the primary one (ICG, 2022b, p. 3). First, various bandit groups have taken advantage of the porous borders of the Lake Chad area. Taking into account that BH generated its revenue from the same pool of resources and by conducting similar activities as the bandits, including cattle-rustling, looting and kidnappings, its operational environment may be considered competitive (Ojo, Oyewole & Aina, 2023, p. 2; Barnett, Rufa'i & Abdulaziz, 2022, p. 53). Nevertheless, there is information about BH´s cooperation with local bandit groups or at least the recruitment of individual bandits (Pieri & Zenn, 2016, p. 80). ANSAs that can be considered BH´s direct rivals in terms of control of population and territory are various vigilante groups, encompassing those formed by citizen volunteers as well as state-sponsored groups (ICG, 2022b, p. 11). As already mentioned within this thesis, the CJTF was an essential force during the offensive against BH in Maiduguri in 2013. Besides CJTF, other vigilante groups and hunters associations joined the fight against BH. These groups aim to defend certain territories, within which their task is often to "*maintain law and order, curb crime*

[47] These include Biafra secessionists in the South-East, militant groups in Niger Delta, Fulani militias engaging in herder-farmer clashes in the North Central zone and some southern states, and bandit group in the North-West (ICG, 2022b, p. 3).

and enforce norms" (ICG, 2022b, p. 1) and thus function as an authority, at least in matter of security. Another ANSA, which initially emerged in opposition to BH, is Ansaru. This splinter group contested BH´s ideological and operational principals. Nevertheless, it cannot be considered BH´s direct rival, as it operated in north-west rather than the north-east of Nigeria. In addition, many sources suggest that the groups continued to maintain some ties with one another, and even that some of Ansaru´s fighters reintegrated into BH prior to 2015 (Campbell, 2014).

Concerning the operational environment of ISWAP, after the second splintering of BH, ISWAP and JAS became direct rivals. Although each group established its own zone of influence in parts of Borno state, sporadic clashes of their members occurred (Karr, 2022) and both groups engaged in a campaign to win over former BH fighters as well as new recruits by disseminating various materials, including textbooks, guidance literature, audio sermons and videos on social media, with the aim to discredit each other's ideological stances (Kassim, 2018, p. 24; ICG, 2019, p. 8). Physical infighting between jihadi groups in northern Nigeria became common after the battle in Sambisa forest and Shekau´s death in 2021. Without its leader, JAS fragmented into number of various units. Although some members of JAS joined ISWAP´s ranks[48], other fragments remained in opposition (ICG, 2022a, pp. 1-2). ISWAP launched repeated attacks on smaller pro-JAS groups operating mainly in the Mandara Mountains along the border between Nigeria and Cameroon (ICG, 2022a, p. 6). However, its most visible competitor has been the Bakura faction, which started to conduct separate operations in neighbouring area of Nigeria, Niger and Chad, i.e. in close proximity to ISWAP strongholds, already in 2016 (ICG, 2022a, p. 9; UNDP, 2022, pp. 20-21). While functioning as an autonomous group, Bakura was reportedly loosely connected to JAS. Some sources suggest that the leader of the group, former BH commander Ibrahim Bakura Doron, was appointed to the position of *amir* for Lake Chad by Shekau in 2016 (Amadou & Foucher, 2022, p. 4), other considered the 2019 "*greeting*" in form of video correspondence between Shekau and the Bakura group to be the official start of their cooperation (Zenn, 2020). In any case, Bakura group has relied on BH´s approach to insurgency, as it has conducted "*raids on the local population for loot, ransom and captives*". Since 2021, Bakura group has absorbed many JAS fighters from Sambisa forest and engaged in frequent clashes with ISWAP (ICG, 2022a, p. 7). Additionally, the number of bandit groups in northern Nigeria increased

[48] Some also surrendered to Nigerian authorities or relocated to the north-west, where they established new units or joined the existing bandit groups (ICG, 2022b, p. 6; Barnett, Rufa'i & Abdulaziz, 2022, p. 56).

significantly over last few years. As the bandit groups gained more power, some of the leaders started to operate as warlords, controlling villages in the countryside and adopting "*a softer approach of 'social banditry' in which they deliver some basic goods and services to the communities …* [which] *willingly pay levies and accept bandits' demands*" (Barnett, Rufa'i & Abdulaziz, 2022, p. 52). While the bandits have been concentrated in the north-west (Ojo, Oyewole & Aina, 2023, p. 2) and ISWAP has operated rather in the north-east, these two parts of Nigeria are "*neither geographically nor socially isolated*" (Barnett, Rufa'i & Abdulaziz, 2022, p. 50). Although ISWAP has not yet conducted large-scale activities in the north-west, it carried out at least two attacks in those territories and there have been indicators in ISWAP´s rhetoric pointing to the group´s desire to develop a presence "*all the way to the north west*" (ICG, 2022a, pp. 6-7). In terms of potential cooperation between jihadi groups and north-western bandit groups, although many bandits express grievances against the state and some groups are based on ethnic dimension, religion does not represent a salient factor for the bandits. While some short-term cooperation, related to mutual material support or sharing of expertise, between JAS and the bandit groups occurred, ISWAP's relationship with them is additionally burdened by the incompatibility of the modes of operandi of these different actors. ISWAP´s hearts and minds approach does not correspond with the opportunistic behaviour of the bandits (Barnett, Rufa'i and Abdulaziz, 2022, p. 50). In addition, after being inactive since 2014 as a separate group, Ansaru re-emerged in north-west in 2020. While some members of Ansaru had previously joined BH and later integrated also into ISWAP, those, who have remained loyal to their (unofficial) affiliation to AQ (rather AQIM) and who currently "*continue to grow and expand in northwest Nigeria*", might become direct rivals of ISWAP in long-term, as indicated by the developments between IS and AQ affiliates in other locations (Zenn & Weiss, 2021, p. 53). Lastly, as a reaction to growing insecurity in the region, the number of vigilante groups has risen as well (ICG, 2022b, p. 1).

In regards to unified Yemen, ANSAs have been present on its territory for a long-time, especially since the 1994 civil war. After the Arab Spring events and the subsequent gradual weakening of the Yemeni government, these ANSAs became more active and started gaining power. This was predominantly the case of the Houthi movement, known as *Ansar Allah,* in the north, which has functioned as political as well as militant organization. Since 2004, it has waged an armed insurgency against the central

government. After 2011, Houthis engaged in armed clashes predominantly with other local (northern) ANSAs in form of *al-Islah*[49]-affiliated tribal militias and Salafi groupings. However at that time, their activities were concentrated in the northern governorates, including Saada, al-Jawf, Amran and Hajja (Winter, 2013). Concerning the southern governorates of Abyan and Shabwa, where AQAP operated, this territory, along with other southern governorates, was the subject of interest of the Southern movement, known also as *al-Hirak*. This civil society initiative was established in 2007 as a structurally loose union of southern secessionists (Dahlgren, 2018, p. 17). The political demands of southern secessionists have been for a long time expressed by a wide range of movements, which differed in their desire for complete independence or autonomy. Some movements originated in the colonial period, others emerged in recent decades. They were also fragmented along geographical lines and due to historical rivalries. Although the southern secessionists frequently organized protests and marches, there did not have strong armed wing such as the Houthi movement at the time of AQAP first governance cycle. Moreover, "*none of them has advanced any social, economic, or other programme beyond the call for separation",* i.e. they did not show any effort to control territory and population (al-Hamdani & Lackner, 2020, pp. 8-9). AQAP´s operational environment in Abyan and Shabwa can be thus considered less competitive in terms of presence of other ANSAs. As already mentioned, the tribal militias – Popular (Resistance) Committees – were the only ANSA that opposed AQAP in the very late phase of its territorial control.

The period of AQAP´s second governance cycle corresponds with the time of the outbreak of Yemeni civil war, after which the state authority collapsed completely. Following the Houthis´ conquest of Sana´a, the "*struggle for the South*" has began and various ANSAs engaged in it. Houthis, who represent a rebel group aiming to control territory and to govern the population, can be considered AQAP´s rival. However, this rivalry was concentrated rather in south-western governorates, including Abyan and Shabwa, not in Hadramawt (Kendall, 2021, pp. 89-90). The role of Southern movement gained also on importance. Nevertheless, not until 2017 did the fragments of the movement unite under the auspices of the Southern Transnational Council (STC), which has dominated the national and international discourse on southern secessionism (al-Hamdani & Lackner, 2020, pp. 8-9). Although the STC established a shadow government, the

[49] *al-Islah* or the Yemeni Congregation for Reform is an Islamist political party, founded in 1990, which has been one of the main ruling actors for decades. It is closely associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and supported by various Salafi elements and tribes, especially in the northern and middle parts of the country (Orkaby, 2021; Omer, 2020).

situation on the ground is managed rather by locals, who took over power, as was the case during AQAP´s second governing cycle (Dahlgren, 2018, p. 22). The southern movement thus did not represent direct rival of AQAP in the period in question. However local tribes – some supporting the southern causes, some being pro-Hadi or connected to *al-Islah*, coalition forces or other patrons[50] – or also criminal gangs, filled the vacuum after the demise of state authority and acted as competitors to AQAP (Green, 2019, p. 19). As far as the situation in Hadramawt, where AQAP had its stronghold in al-Mukalla, is concerned, the pro-secessionist tribes[51] organized themselves into tribal councils governing as separate units on the ground. In 2013, the Hadramawt Tribal Confederacy (HTC, or Hadramawt Tribal Alliance) was established and claimed to "*represent all tribes and sections of the governorate"* (ACAPS, 2020, pp. 13-14). HTC even attempted to retake al-Mukalla from AQAP by force in 2015, however, its members were prevented from entering the town, as this anti-government organization engaged in clashes with the Yemeni army based outside of the city. HTC later tried to negotiate AQAP´s withdrawal, but to no avail (Zimmermann, 2015, p. 21). In the later period of Yemeni civil war, HTC cooperated with the coalition forces in their fight against AQAP (ACAPS, 2020, pp. 13-14). In addition, after the expansion of the Houthis to the south was halted, new ANSAs emerged. These are mainly organizations created by UAE, whose purpose has been to provide security in southern governorates. Security Belt Forces are concentrated in Abyan and other south-western governorates; Elite Forces then operate in Hadramawt and Shabwa. The groups are led by Yemeni Salafis[52] and paid directly by the UAE[53]. These forces represented direct rival to AQAP in later phase of its territorial control. Elite Forces cooperated with the coalition forces that retook al-Mukalla from AQAP (al-Hamdani & Lackner, 2020, p. 10; ICG, 2017, pp. 21-22). Nevertheless, it has to be mentioned that the situation on the Yemeni battlefield is highly complex. While the "*matrix of anti-Houthi, separatist, and Salafi*

[50] For more detail description of warring parties in the "*multitude of small wars*" across Yemeni territory see Salisbury (2016).

[51] Hadramawt governorate had a greater degree of autonomy for a long time, due to its distance from the centre of power. It is therefore not surprising that the Hadramis dominate the main bodies of the STC (Dahlgren, 2018, p. 22).

[52] Salafi groups have been present for a long time in Yemen, however, prior to the war most of them were non-political and non-violent. This changed with the Houthi incursion into the southern regions. Initially, the growth of Salafi militias was supporting "*AQAP's narrative of a Sunni defence against the Huthi takeover*" and blurred the lines between its members and Salafi groups in areas where they have been fighting alongside each other (ICG, 2017, pp. 21-22).

[53] UAE support for Salafi groups is amplified by their desire to „*suppress or marginalise Islah because of that party's links to the Muslim Brotherhood, which it bans domestically*" (ICG, 2017, p. 22). In addition, the Security Belt Forces later became an important military wing of the STC (for more on the development after 2016 see al-Hamdani & Lackner, 2020, p. 11).

militias" is mostly in opposition to AQAP and its ideology, the pressure from the Houthis has in some instances pushed these actors into cooperation[54] (Horton, 2016). Finally, an IS province was created in Yemen in November 2014 (Horton, 2015). Islamic State in Yemen (IS-Y) formally announced that its seven local branches operate in ten governorates across Yemen, including Abyan, Shabwa and Hadramawt (ICG, 2017, p. 18). While AQAP faced IS-Y directly in Hadramawt during its control of al-Mukalla, engaging in minor clashes (Horton, 2015), their relations were described at that time rather as "*jihadi cold-war*" within Yemen, which turned highly violent from July 2018 and then slowly calmed down again after February 2020 (Carboni & Sulz, 2020). However, IS-Y certainly represented AQAP's rival in the examined period. IS-Y benefited from a number of defections from AQAP. AQAP tried to minimize IS-Y´s influence criticizing its extremism and brutality in form of indiscriminate violence and attacks on mosques, while representing itself as more moderate force, which is sensitive to local norms (ICG, 2017, p. 18; Kendall, 2018a, p. 29). AQAP´s operational environment during second governance cycle was thus highly competitive with various ANSAs being present.

Results

Although to a different extent, the operational environment of both groups and during both governance cycles can be considered competitive. In case of BH, the proposed argument holds. As it was opposed by various vigilante groups, BH relied mostly on coercion as a mean of generation of compliance. Moreover, as mentioned above, BH´s targeting pattern changed after 2013, as it started to focus on the wider Muslim community and its interpretation of takfir broadened. Some consider this change to be a reaction to the substantial resentment against the group, manifested in the creation of CJTF (Kassim, 2018, pp. 30-31). While ISWAP operated in a contested environment and the competition of multiple jihadi groups led to high levels of violence in northern Nigeria, its strategy did not include emphasis on coercion. It rather tried to differentiate itself precisely in opposition to the BH/JAS´s violent behaviour. The hypothesis is thus inconclusive. In this case, we can rather observe the process of outbidding mentioned in the theoretical part. As the splinter group presents itself as being less radical and providing security, in contrast to

[54] In addition, in line with its softer approach during the second governance cycle, AQAP tried to establish positive relations with southern secessionist, trying to represent the southern struggle against the north in sectarian, Sunni- Shia, rivalry, thus uniting their causes with the southerners. al-Wuhayshi, even proclaimed support for southern independence and southern tribes, saying that independence is "*your right, guaranteed by your religion*" (al-Dawsari, 2018, pp. 21-22).

the extremist and violent rival.

Although tribes represent an important ANSA, AQAP operated in less contested environment during its first governance cycle. The Popular (Resistance) Committees opposed its presence rather in the later phase of territorial control. On the contrary, the outbreak of Yemeni civil war created a highly contested environment for AQAP, as various ANSAs, such as Houthis, Salafi groups, IS-Y, Popular Resistance Committees and other tribal militias affiliated to wide range of actors, emerged. In this case, the concept of outbidding could also be used to compare the approach of AQAP and IS-Y, however, as described above AQAP's adoption of less radical approach was caused by number of factors, including the legitimacy and efficiency of pre-existing governing authorities. The hypothesis thus **cannot be considered valid.**

	Rival Actors	Generation of Compliance	Result
BH – 2014-2015	Yes (high competition)	Coercion	✓
ISWAP – 2018-present	Yes (high competition)	Coercion, Persuasion	X
AQAP – 2011-2012	Yes (low competition)	Coercion, Persuasion	X
AQAP – 2015-2016	Yes (high competition)	Persuasion	X

Table 9: Rival Actors and Rebel Governance. Created by the author.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this thesis was to present a comprehensive comparison of rebel governance models of selected jihadi groups, while relying on broader rebel governance literature.

In the first part, key concepts were defined, including rebel governance and jihadi rebel group, and research overview concerning jihadi rebel governance was provided. While many authors have focused on different aspects of governance behaviour of various jihadi groups around the world, many have also emphasised jihadi groups´ ideological exceptionalism. Distinction has been made between IS´s and AQ´s governance approach, as they represent two global jihadi hegemons. However, there has been relative lack of studies comparing rebel governance of other jihadi groups. Given that comparative studies of groups with similar ideologies are generally less common (Pfeifer & Schwab, 2023, p.7), this thesis aimed to contribute to the academic literature by providing a comparative case study of two jihadi rebel groups.

In line with the proposed definition of jihadi rebel group and the transnational nature of jihadi insurgencies, as wells as Kasfir´s (2015) conditions of rebel governance, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) was chosen as representative of IS-affiliated group and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) served as an example of AQ-affiliated group. The thesis have taken into account also the cyclical nature of jihadi rebel governance highlighted by Bamber-Zryd (2022), thus examining two governance cycles of each group, i.e. Boko Haram´s (BH) governance during the period of 2014-2015 (as ISWAP leaders were part of BH at the time) followed by ISWAP´s governance cycle lasting from 2018, and AQAP´s first governance cycle in the period of 2011-2012 and second during 2015-2016.

The first research question was answered by applying Marta Furlan´s (2020) multidimensional typology of rebel governance on selected cases. In accordance with the comparative case study method, the governance cycles of both groups were initially analyzed separately. Then, a summary of similarities and differences of their governance models was provided. For a greater clarity, Table 3 containing an overview of the character of the rebel governance of selected jihadi groups in individual dimensions during each cycle was produced in sub-chapter 3.3. To summarize the answer to the first research question:

RQ1: *What are the similarities and differences in rebel governance of selected jihadi groups?*

Firstly, each group changed the character of its governance model between the governance cycles. Within case comparison between BH's and ISWAP´s governance cycle highlights the differences in the extent of provision of governance functions, the extent of discrimination and the extent of reliance on coercion. Within case comparison between AQAP´s governance cycles then allows to see the differences in group's emphasis on either persuasion or coercion, including punishments in line with *shar´ia*; inclusion of other actors into the governance arrangement; and the emphasis either on innovation or maintenance of pre-existing systems. Concerning the across case comparison, differences can be found in all analyzed dimensions, i.e. the range of governance functions, inclusivity, generation of compliance, inclusion of other actors, innovation or maintenance of institutions and personnel, bureaucratization and executive style. This supports the argument that jihadi rebel governance cannot be considered uniform across cases and that the jihadi governance evolves over time.

The second research question was answered in the next part of the thesis. The aim of this part was to test the hypotheses formulated on the basis of the rebel governance literature and thus try to understand which factors influence the similarities and differences in the governance models of selected groups. While the validity of none of the proposed hypotheses was confirmed across cases, individual factors may be beneficial in explaining some of the similarities and differences between governance cycles of one group as well as between individual governance cycles across selected groups. To answer the second research question:

RQ2: *What are the factors behind these similarities and differences?*

According to the above mentioned, goals and ideology affect the inclusivity of jihadi rebel governance, as it is influenced by groups´ sectarian and takfiri behaviour. However, these factors do not represent a sufficient explanation of jihadi rebel group´s governance behaviour in general, as selected groups´ governance models differed in other dimensions. The proposed effect of the type of resources predominant in rebel funding was not confirmed in case of AQAP's first governance cycle, but was proven in the rest of the analyzed governance cycles of BH, ISWAP and AQAP´s second term. In addition, the within case comparison suggests some explanatory power of this factor as in both cases the decrease in reliance on extractive resources led to decrease in reliance on coercion as a mean of generation of compliance, and in case of BH and ISWAP also to greater extent of governance functions. Concerning the impact of pre-existing regime penetration, the

validity of the hypothesis was not proven in any of the cases. While the Nigerian as well as Yemeni state did not penetrate deep into society in terms of bureaucratic structures, the groups differed in their approach to innovation and maintenance of pre-existing system as well as their extent of bureaucratization. The proposed effect of the legitimacy and efficiency of pre-existing non-state governing authorities was confirmed in all cases, except for AQAP´s first governance cycle. However, the process of resistance to jihadi groups described above and AQAP´s change in strategy after the experienced failure, in sense of antagonizing the pre-existing authorities due to the low emphasis on maintenance of their pre-existing system of governance, supports the explanatory power of this factor. The effect of conflict intensity and firmness of territorial control in connection with the counter-offensive operations of the government or external intervening force was found to be salient in case of BH´s as well as both AQAP´s governance cycles, yet it did not correspond with the governance model of ISWAP. The case of ISWAP suggests that the firmness of territorial control is not a precondition to the provision of wide range of governance functions as well as that the high conflict intensity does not lead to group´s coercive behaviour. Concerning the competition between multiple ANSAs, both groups operated in competitive environment during both governance cycles (while the level of the competition differed across cases), however the models of governance of ISWAP and AQAP during both terms did not correspond with the proposed argument. The case of BH was an exception, as it relied significantly on coercion as a mean of generation of compliance, while operating in rival environment.

The factor of the legitimacy and efficiency of pre-existing governing authorities has arguably the most explanatory power in relation to group´s tendencies to maintain some aspects of pre-existing governance system and include these authorities into their governance arrangement. It is followed by the factors of conflict intensity and rebel funding, whose effects on the nature of rebel governance dimensions were proven in at least three out of four governance cycles, which allowed to explain some of the variations, as described above. Lastly, the effects of state penetration into society as well as the presence of other ANSAs were not proven.

Analyzed Factor	Explanatory Power of the Analyzed Factor
Rebels' Goals and Ideology	Proven in all four governance cycles in relation to the extent of inclusivity of governance models, yet insufficient in case of other rebel governance dimensions.
Rebel Funding	Proven in three out of four governance cycles.
Pre-existing Political Regime and Its Penetration Into Society	Proven in none of the cases.
Pre-existing Non-state Governing Authorities and Their Legitimacy and Efficiency	Proven in three out of four governance cycles. Possible to prove in all governance cycles.
Conflict Intensity and Firmness of Territorial Control: Actions of Incumbent State / International Intervening Force	Proven in three out of four governance cycles.
Competition: Rival Actors	Proven only in case of one governance cycle.

Table 10: The Explanatory Power of Analyzed Factors. Created by the author.

The overall goal of this thesis was fulfilled, as it provided a comparison of rebel governance models of BH/ISWAP and AQAP, while relying on broader rebel governance literature. However, concerning the second research question, although some of the similarities and differences were explained using the proposed hypotheses, this research objective deserves a more detailed elaboration. From the aforementioned summary of the analysis, the limitation of the work, with regard to the selection of a small sample of cases, is evident. Although it was not the aim of this work, generalization of the results is not possible. Future research that would include a larger sample of cases or would be quantitative in nature could thus provide more sophisticated and solid analysis of the hypotheses formulated in the rebel governance literature.

In addition, although the evaluation of individual dimensions of rebel governance and the factors influencing the form of these dimensions was based on defined concepts, it was difficult to operationalize and evaluate them due to the insufficiency of available data. The thesis relied on secondary sources, which in some instances did not contain the desired detailed information. The unavailability of data and their considerable inconsistency, mainly in case of BH, as some aspects of its functioning are the subject of "heated" academic debate (see Higazi, Kendhammer, Mohammed, Pérouse de Montclos & Thurston (2018) vs. Zenn (2018)), complicated the research itself, as it was necessary to assess the sources with high degree of alertness. In order to obtain the most accurate information, an emphasis was put on the triangulation of data.

Finally, even though the Furlan´s typology was partially modified for the needs of the thesis, as the evaluation of some dimensions of rebel governance was adjusted to the form of a scale extending from one pole of the typology to the other; the assessment was

not grasped flawlessly and based rather on a subjective evaluation of the literature used. Nevertheless, this typology was chosen because it represents a single such analytical framework, which draws on previous scholarly research. This limitation highlights the fact that the field of rebel governance is still an under-researched area.

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Abstrakt

Cílem této diplomové práce je přispět do oblasti výzkumu povstaleckého vládnutí, a to aplikací teoretických poznatků této akademické sub-disciplíny na konkrétní případy džihádistických povstaleckých skupin. Na džihádistické povstalecké skupiny je často nahlíženo s důrazem na jejich ideologická a extremistická specifika. Mnozí autoři se nicméně domnívají, že se tyto skupiny výrazně neliší od klasických povstaleckých skupin minulosti. Vládnutí džihádistických povstaleckých skupin by tudíž nemělo být imunní vůči tlakům, které formují povstalecké vládnutí obecně. Tato práce je koncipována jako komparativní případová studie dvou džihádistických povstaleckých skupin - Boko Haram/Islámský stát v provincii Západní Afrika a Al-Káida na Arabském poloostrově, jejichž modely vládnutí jsou zkoumány skrze aplikaci multidimenzionální typologie povstaleckého vládnutí Marty Furlan (2020). Za účelem porozumění nalezeným podobnostem a rozdílům v daných dimenzích vládnutí vybraných skupin jsou následně na obou případech zkoumány nejvýznamnější faktory ovlivňující podobu povstaleckého vládnutí. Jedná se o faktory představené v knize *Rebel Governance in Civil War* autorů Arjony, Kasfira a Mampillyho (2015), které jsou doplněny o další relevantní literaturu z oblasti povstaleckého vládnutí.

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the field of rebel governance by applying the theoretical knowledge of this academic sub-discipline specifically to the cases of jihadi rebel groups. While jihadi rebel groups are often referred to with the emphasis on their ideological and extremist specificities, many researchers suggest that they are not exceptionally different from past rebel movements. As such, the jihadi rebel governance should not be immune to the pressures that shape rebel governance in general. This thesis is conceived as a comparative case study of two jihadi rebel groups - Boko Haram/Islamic State in West Africa Province and Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, whose rebel governance models are examined by applying Marta Furlan´s (2020) multidimensional typology of rebel governance. In order to understand the found similarities and differences in the given dimensions of rebel governance, the most significant factors influencing the shape of rebel governance, as presented by Arjona, Kasfir and Mampilly (2015) in their edited book *Rebel Governance in Civil War* and complemented by additional relevant rebel governance literature, are then examined in both cases.