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Council in war: civilocracy, order and local organisation in daraya during the Syrian War

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ABSTRACT
While scholars have focused on rebel governance in Syria and elsewhere, other forms of governance have been neglected. This article explores the local council established in the rebel-held city of Daraya, Syria. It informs the fields of rebel governance and civil resistance, specifically wartime order, during civil wars and proposes that the forms and practices of local governance in Daraya exhibited a type of governance best labelled as 'civilocracy'. In contrast to councils in other opposition-held parts of Syria, the council was established and led by civilians who welcomed rebels to work with them. Based on findings from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with former council members, the article finds that four factors were crucial for this form of governance to emerge and to endure. Key wartime events – a massacre and a siege –, earlier experiences of nonviolent activists, local ties, and the creation of a military office created a space for the maintenance of civil-led order. Daraya offers a fascinating example of how community's norms affected how rebel governance was created and maintained. This research introduces a new concept to explain wartime order and encourages researchers to find causal explanations for the emergence of this particular governance form in other conflicts.

Introduction

Daraya, a rural city southwest of Damascus, Syria's capital, was known for its grapes and wooden furniture before the war.[1] During the war it became known for its secret underground library that served people longing for education.[2] What is less known, but more remarkable, was that rebels were consolidated under civil rule, making Daraya an exceptional case of rebel governance. In 2012, the people established a local council, *majlis mahalli*, which was 'like a future government' in which armed groups were structured under civil governance.[3]

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Hundreds of local councils were formed in opposition-held areas during the early years of the war to provide services and build local governance.[4] Competitive Islamist armed groups did not tolerate them and contested many councils.[5] In Daraya this was not the case, and a system resembling that in democratic states was created amidst civil war. The city's war-time experience is often lauded as the most successful case of civil governance in Syria – by Syrians, including my non-Darayan interlocutors, and researchers alike.[6] Civilians led the council from its inception in 2012 until 2016 when the city was retaken by the regime. In this timeframe rebels controlled the besieged area militarily. How was the local council able to function? Why did the rebel groups not take over as had happened elsewhere in Syria?

This article moves beyond the traditional scholarship of rebel governance, where rebels are the leaders and civilians work in the space they are given,[7] and takes a broader understanding of the concept of rebel governance.[8] *Civilocracy* refers to civil-initiated and -led governance in territory that rebel groups hold. In civilocracy civilians initiate governance and remain the main leaders while cooperating with rebels. They maintain order through governance institutions. The example of Daraya informs the field of wartime order – the rules that guide individual behaviour during wartime making life more predictable[9] – but is a 'negative case'[10]: a situation where rebel groups could have governed but decided not to. It thus illuminates a variety of rebel governance overlooked by earlier research. It also contributes to the scholarship on civil resistance and shows that civilians can have greater agency than simply submitting to rebel rule or denouncing rebels. In these instances, I propose that this form is best labelled *civilocracy*, an additional term within Ana Arjona's typology of rebelocracy and aliocracy, rebels' complete or partial control of governance, respectively.[11]

The empirical evidence shows that establishing the council and sustaining it depended on four factors. Wartime events – the massacre and the siege – brought people together and prevented outsiders from entering, prior experiences of nonviolent activism created an understanding of the need for civil governance, while local ties generated the required trust to work together, and the military office created internal rebel order. Comparing the case of Daraya to other places in Syria indicates that the three first factors paved the way for the military office which was crucial for civilocracy to happen.

Concentrating only on rebels' wartime behaviour does not explain how governance was structured in Daraya. Nor does the city fit under the definition of a peace community, a place where civilians try to stay out of harm's way,[12] because rebel groups with shared values were a central part of the civil-led governance. To find out how civilocracy was established and maintained I interviewed nine former council members from Daraya.[13] Semi-structured interviews, a natural choice for this kind of study,[14] allowed the research participants to recall what they deemed important, although as the

fieldwork progressed, I asked more specific questions about civil-military relations. Many interlocutors had worked in the council since its formation and all of them worked there over several years. I also draw on 30 other interviews with council members and people who used to work with councils elsewhere in Syria. The interlocutors from Daraya were all men, as were most of the other research participants, and indeed council members in general. Most interlocutors were in their 20s when the peaceful protests started.

Former council members have now left Syria,[15] therefore, interviews were conducted in Gaziantep, Istanbul, and online across the globe between June 2021 and February 2022. To find Darayans with different ideas, I had three entry points into the field. The interviews, conducted in Arabic and English, lasted from half an hour to over two hours. All interlocutors agreed to informed consent orally and all interviews were recorded with their approval. For Arabic transliteration a professional proof-reader was used. Data collection and analysis, relying on grounded theory,[16] were intertwined. To ensure that I have interpreted interlocutors' experiences correctly and in accordance with dialogical research design,[17] they had a chance to comment on this research, with a few correcting some information here and there.

Given Daraya's reputation as something different among Syrians, interlocutors might seek to protect that reputation. Many emphasized the successes of the council, although they did mention challenges as well. Several years have already passed and research participants have probably discussed these issues with one another, making their memories more likely to resemble each other. Therefore, I enrich the data with material from the relevant time period (2011–2016), news articles, reports, and the council's own publications. Moreover, temporal distance can allow interlocutors to share their experiences more freely and tell matters they would not have during the siege. Despite the limitations, and to amplify the voices of civilians amid a brutal war,[18] it is these people's stories I want to tell.

The paper begins with a review of what the literatures on rebel governance and civil resistance tell us about civilian participation in governance and introduces the novel concept of *civilocracy* to explain rebel governance by civilians. The article deploys extensive empirical evidence from Daraya and illustrates how civilocracy ensured that the council maintained order while facing severe challenges. After this, the article discusses four explanatory factors for civilocracy *vis-à-vis* other councils in Syria and the literature. The conclusion reflects on the scholarly and policy implications of my findings.

Rebel governance – what room for civilians?

In civil wars, when rebel groups take over areas, civil affairs need to be organized. People staying in those areas require food, water, and other essential services to continue their lives. If earlier governance structures

break down, rebel groups, especially those with long-term goals, create some form of governance. Rebel groups engage with civilians 'to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war'.[19] The scholarship on rebel governance often concentrates on rebel groups, how and why they create governance,[20] tax,[21] judge local people,[22] or engage with civilians.[23] This is natural as governance in rebel-controlled areas is often administered by armed groups.[24] The ways and the extent to which rebels engage with civilians vary. Rebel action can be predatory, based on greed,[25] or it can rely on civilian cooperation, building legitimacy[26] or out of mutual benefit.[27] Rebel groups can seek the support of civilians for their ideology through civilian socialisation processes.[28] While engaging with civilians, rebel groups risk facing resistance; therefore, they need to monitor the population for defection or treason.[29] Civilians can try to manipulate governance for their own motives or exploit their new status for personal benefit. Therefore, rebels need to ensure they control the governance organisations.[30] Nelson Kasfir argues that in all civil wars, civilians are to some extent coerced into participating in rebel governance, but voluntary participation of civilians can happen in cases where rebels respect 'civilian choices within some range of decisions'.[31] Institutional history,[32] wartime conditions, attributes of a rebel group,[33] or local elites' clientelist networks in the society[34] can explain variation in the establishment of governance institutions.

There are also examples of rebel groups who, even though present in an area, do not govern. The groups can be predatory towards natural resources[35] or civilians, or it can be a strategic calculation: not concentrating on governing enables rebels to allocate more resources to fighting. Rebels might also opt out of governing if 'insurgents are few and not well known to civilians'.[36]

Research on civilian agency during civil wars has increased in recent years[37] but it has not analysed cases where civilians rule rebels.[38] There are cases where civilians can transmit norms to fighters[39] or demand better services.[40] In peace communities or zones of peace, which are not related only to modern wars or even only to times of war, civilians denounce fighting parties and create norms to keep violence out of their communities.[41] Civilians can organise to provide basic services that no rebel or state-party provides, as was the case during the Northern Ireland Troubles.[42] Although dialogue with armed actors is essential, establishing peace communities does not require recognition from them.[43] Mostly, civilians try to keep their distance from rebels. Outside of peace communities, when civilians do participate in governance, it is usually the rebels who empower 'community members in local governance'[44] or initiate governance structures.[45] Civilian participation in rebel groups' governance is unusual and when it happens, it tends to puzzle researchers.[46] There are however examples of civilian participation in governance, for example, in Colombia during the civil war[47] and in state-sanctioned juntas[48] and in Mexico among indigenous populations

against organised criminal groups.[49] Areas where civilians can organize and govern themselves might not be strategically[50] or economically important or rebels might simply not have enough resources to govern.[51] Rebels can also encourage civilian participation and democracy in order to mobilise them into the war effort, or if they wish to avoid criticism from civilians on how governance is organised.[52]

Introducing civilocracy

Arjona's categories of rebelocracy and aliocracy describe the broad and narrow levels of rebel engagement in governance. In rebelocracy, rebel groups can be allied with civilians or use existing civil institutions to rule, but they are the *de facto* rulers of military, social, and economic spheres. Pre-existing, high-quality institutions, which are effective and legitimate, are better able to resist rebel groups creating aliocracy.[53] In aliocracy, rebels intervene 'only to maintain their monopoly over the use of violence'. They may intervene and request material contributions, such as money or food, from civilians, but they leave civilians to take care of other matters.[54] Indeed, the types of governance that existed in opposition-held Syria can fit under rebelocracy, for example under ISIS, or aliocracy, such as civil governance in the cities of Aleppo and Saraqeb.

This article introduces a third and new category of governance to explain war-time order: *civilocracy*, civil-initiated and -led governance in areas that rebel groups control. In civilocracy civil participation in governance goes further than in aliocracy. The term civilocracy is based on my interviews with former members of Daraya's local council as their testimonies indicated that neither the term rebelocracy nor aliocracy would sufficiently explain the governance structure present there during the siege. Civilocracy differs from aliocracy in four ways: first, civilians distribute services evenly to all inhabitants, including fighters. Second, instead of rebels intervening, for example through taxation, they cooperate with civilians and function as part of the city. Third, although armed groups have a monopoly over the use of violence, in the Darayan case when it came to fighting the al-Assad regime, hierarchically fighters are under civilian rule and their use of violence towards civilians is restricted. In Daraya the military office was under the local council, resembling the governance of military actors found in democratic countries. Fourth, it was not the rebel groups who created governance institutions, instead civilians led that work from the beginning. Contrary to aliocracy, in civilocracy institutions can be new, even poorly resourced, but still have authority over rebels.[55] Civilocracy can be possible without prior foundations and constructed in the now. However, some kind of *understanding*[56] of the importance of civil structures is needed. Otherwise, civilians would not initiate governance or consolidate rebels

under their governance. Local circumstances – prior experiences of activism, grassroot organisations, or pre-existing institutions – affect how this understanding is gained, but for civilocracy to exist, civilians need to be aware of the need of governance in order-creation to be able to build their *own* governance apart from the rebels.

The conditions of rebel governance[57] also apply for civilocracy – both civilians and armed groups contest state authority. Daraya was controlled militarily by rebel groups which fought the Syrian regime. However, towards the end of the siege only a few percent of the original inhabitants remained due to the horrendous humanitarian conditions. What is new in civilocracy, is that rebel groups are subordinate to civil governance structures.

Cohesive communities, such as the one in besieged Daraya, can create autonomy 'or maintain democratic decision-making power over outcomes *for* the community *within* the community'.[58] In other words, communities create and maintain order. As Arjona puts it: order is 'the set of rules that structure human interaction in a given community during wartime, allowing for that predictability to exist'.[59] It is, in some form or another, necessary for rebel governance.[60] Wartime cooperation[61] and shared values facilitate the establishment of order. 'The same qualities that create strong communities in which members trust one another sufficiently to enter easily in collective action can generate rebel political order'.[62] This works the other way as well: rebels' compliance with civilian preferences, due to a cohesive community, can create civil political order and space for civilocracy. In Daraya civilocracy existed in a multi-layered ecosystem where internal rebel order[63] affected how order was contested and renegotiated. Next, I will show how civil actors managed to govern the city.

Building civilocracy: from the streets to organised structures

Civilocracy, rule by civilians, differs from aliocracy[64] because although armed groups have monopoly over the use of violence, hierarchically they are under civilian rule, in the case of Daraya the military office was under the local council. The council shaped order through nonviolent means,[65] it could determine how the city was governed and violence used: where arms could be carried, how problems between civilians and fighters were solved, food and other relief items shared, and negotiations conducted with the regime. In fact, they created a society resembling democratic societies. The empirical evidence shows that civil-military relations enabling civilocracy did not emerge out of nothing. Four factors affected building and sustaining civilocracy: wartime events – the massacre and the siege – brought people together and prevented outsiders from entering, experiences of nonviolent activism led to the creation of civil governance, local ties generated the trust to work together, and, finally, the military office created internal rebel order.

Civilocracy in Daraya was in place during the siege between the end of 2012 and August 2016 within the shrinking boundaries of the city.

Civil wars are affected by wartime events but also by pre-war social realities. The social landscapes vary across towns and cities.[66] This is the case in Syria as well. Daraya had a history of nonviolent activism before 2011. Men and women from the group Daraya Youth, such as Yehia Shorbaji, ran anti-corruption and cleaning campaigns and sit-ins in the city – not tolerated by the regime even before the uprising – and they continued their activism as protests erupted across Syria.[67] Like people in other locations, Darayans demonstrated peacefully in early 2011 against the al-Assad-regime. These protests were met violently: security forces detained people during demonstrations and raids.[68] Violent responses by the regime led more and more people to take to the streets, and then to take up arms as Syria began its rapid descent into civil war. Concurrently, people in Daraya and other locations organised – often in clandestine and increasingly danger- ous – civil work.[69] Nevertheless, that did not protect Darayans from future violence.

Wartime events: the massacre and siege

On August 24–27, 2012 the Syrian army, allegedly accompanied by fighters from Iran and the Lebanese Hezbollah,[70] entered Daraya and, after shelling and cordoning off the city, neighbourhood by neighbourhood, committed a massacre, killing hundreds of people. Most victims were civilians.[71] Not all of them were active in the revolution – even people keeping a low profile were killed.[72] Estimates of the victims vary from over 300[73] and 500 people[74] to over 700 people.[75] One research participant recollects that there were 'more than thousand dead bodies, I counted them myself'.[76] Thousands of people fled the city,[77] such that two years later the pre-war population of 225,000 had diminished to 7,000–8,000 inhabitants,[78] a tenth of them children.[79] Mainly activists and fighters stayed in Daraya until the end of the siege.[80]

After the massacre there was a brief pause in regime violence, but soon attacks upon the city recommenced.[81] Daraya was besieged in November 2012, thereafter very little food, medicine or other items got through. The main smuggling route ran through neighbouring Moadhamiya. It was open intermittently,[82] but snipers made the road dangerous.[83] Only one food delivery from the United Nations during the almost four-year siege was allowed to enter.[84] According to the local council, the diminishing rebel-held area was targeted with 6,000 barrel bombs[85] and allegedly also with chemical weapons,[86] with violence increasing towards the end.[87] After a deal was negotiated between the council, rebel groups, the regime, and Russia in August 2016,[88] everyone was forcefully evacuated, either to regime-held areas or to Idlib Governorate in the north of Syria.[89]

Experiences of nonviolent activism put to use

Before the siege, civilians started building their own system of governance and rebel groups respected their autonomy, similar to what is found in autonomous communities which avoid participation in conflict and protect themselves against armed actors.[90] As mentioned, some Darayans had earlier experience of nonviolent activism. They suggested creating a local council and advised younger activists in it. The 'older' generation of activists became the 'main guys in the local council'.[91] This experience in nonviolent activism helped make the council exceptional.[92] A history of mobilization is also essential in non-war settings, where people have used their experiences to protect their communities from violence.[93]

During the summer of 2012, before the massacre, people discussed creating alternative structures, ones that had not existed before. More people, intellectuals and older people, joined as it seemed that the regime might indeed fall.[94] Omar Aziz was an exiled Syrian intellectual and became a key thinker behind the idea of local councils when he returned to Syria in 2011. Before the regime arrested him, he met with activists also from Daraya to discuss establishing a council[95] instead of having several oppositional organisations, such as a Local Coordination Committee that organised demonstrations and other peaceful activities.[96]

The brutal massacre in August 2012 brought people together. It was a triggering point which every research participant emphasized. Even people who had not been active in the revolution were targeted and survivors became emboldened to act. People were convinced of the need to have only one council.[97] It was also a turning point in civil-military relations reinforcing the idea that civilians need to communicate with rebels and that the city should be governed by a civil authority. This resembles a balanced pattern of civil-military relations found in peaceful societies but unusual during civil wars.[98]

> I felt it was the right moment — armed action was a reality — it has to be regulated, it has to be under control. — we can't leave the leadership of armed people to armed people themselves.[99]

> Before the massacre, we don't communicate with them [the fighters]. After the massacre we communicated with them.[100]

The massacre had shown the civilians that the fighters could not protect them; civilians blamed the fighters for the massacre and the fighters started to fear the people.[101] Before the massacre, FSA (Free Syrian Army) fighters had retreated from the city after only a short fight.[102] 'After the massacre there was anger from some of the people towards the FSA because they were supposed to protect the city from the regime'.[103] Despite this anger it was understood that armed actors were essential for civil action to continue.

Civilians needed and wanted them for protection, first from raids, arrests, and future massacres by the regime and later from bombing and shelling. To decrease the 'negative sides' of the military work that was now necessary,[104] the council began to observe and educate fighters on human rights.[105] The point was to include the military side in the council from the start 'so that we can then give advice to it so that harm wouldn't happen'.[106] In turn, this atmosphere enabled rebels to participate in governance when they were invited to be part of the council.[107]

After the massacre, regime forces withdrew from the city and only some state-sponsored services remained.[108] Therefore, civil and military work needed to be organised.[109] The local council was established in October 2012.[110] Members were elected for an executive office, *maktab tanfizi*, and sub-offices, such as relief, medical, media, and the military office.[111] The structure followed the vision of a group of mediators, some hailing from Daraya, who had experience from other 'liberated' areas.[112] Because fighters and their family members were part of the society they were included in the council's activities and encouraged to vote in elections.[113] Members of the council resembled the student activists in Aceh, Indonesia, who supported rebels and provided them 'with more sophisticated public relations, served as administrators and teachers, and worked to encourage a degree of popular participation'.[114] The difference was that in Daraya the members worked primarily for the community, not for the fighters.

Local ties between civilians and rebels

In early 2012, before the siege, several FSA affiliated groups were present in Daraya, many of the fighters in their 20s.[115] In March 2013 eight local battalions joined *Liwaʾ Shuhadaʾ al-Islam* (Islamic Martyrs' Brigade) to fight the besieging forces. Part of the Southern Front military coalition, the group received some US military assistance,[116] but arms were scarce throughout the siege.[117] Fighters in *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam* were local. Some non-Darayans, mostly from close by and fleeing mandatory military service, joined other armed groups.[118] An umbrella group, *al-Ittihad al-Islami Ajnad al-Sham* (Islamic Union of as-Sham Soldiers), consisted of fighters from Daraya and nearby Kafr Sousah.[119] Also smaller groups[120] were present.[121] They tended to sometimes change their names[122] and structures, and not all of the research participants remembered the groups' names. This shows that those smaller groups were not well-established and strong enough to initiate rebelocracy thereby creating space for civilocracy.

The siege isolated the city and prevented not only aid but also non-local armed groups from entering. At the start of the siege, a radical Jabhat al-Nusra-affiliated group tried to enter the city. The council organized an

advocacy campaign and people agreed that they did not want al-Nusra to enter and formed a committee to oppose the group. With communal support they could decline al-Nusra's offer to fight the regime.[123]

There is no precise count of Daraya's fighters. In 2014 Amnesty International estimated the number to be around 1,500.[124] In 2016, local newspaper sources in the city suggest around 700 fighters, most in *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam*.[125] One research participant estimated the number being 500 fighters at the start of the siege, increasing to at least 1000 fighters, but decreasing as fighters were killed.[126] Another participant recollected:

> It was not too popular for young men to take up arms. There was a lack of fighters, the fighters were always complaining about it. There were no more than 200 of them.[127]

Apart from short, failed attempts[128] to govern or to provide services, fighters opted out because of their few numbers and scarce resources.[129] They let trusted people, friends, and neighbours govern instead.

Local ties between fighters and civilians were crucial for civilocracy. As elsewhere in Syria,[130] also in Daraya most of the fighters hailed from the city or neighbouring areas.[131] In a small semi-rural city, the fighters, civilians, and council members knew each other.[132] Local fighters' main purpose was to protect civilians from regime violence so that nonviolent activities could continue.[133] The leader of *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam*, Abu Jamal, was a former military officer,[134] but many fighters took to arms after the massacre, wanting to protect their families from similar horrors in the future.[135] Before the uprising most of the fighters were civilians, some left the university, others defected from the Syrian army.[136] Multiplex relations, people having more than one kind of tie with each other,[137] are important when organising, both in war and non-war contexts.[138] They approximate relations and facilitate participation in high-risk work,[139] enabling civil and military resistance.[140] Even though some chose armed rebellion and others decided to proceed through nonviolent means, people did not lose their ties as family members or neighbours during the war; in fact, fighting the regime in the besieged city strengthened the ties.[141] Pre-existing relations with fighters and civilians increase the likelihood that the groups collaborate.[142] Similar to Daraya, in Omagh in Northern Ireland, 'a history of intergroup engagement' and local military encampments paved the way for civil action and helped dampen violence during protests and counterprotests.[143]

The civilian background of the military leaders influenced the relations as well: they were used to solve disagreements by talking.[144] In Daraya, the non-Darayan fighters without prior ties from *al-Ittihad al-Islami* were cooperative and did not intervene in the city's affairs. Two interlocutors mentioned them being 'good people' as the reason for this cooperation.[145] 'There was no violence between the local council and these armed groups, there was a kind

of an agreement between them',[146] although some members faced violence, as we see later. A person working in the media office felt that fighters respected his work and the civil services.[147] A battalion leader in *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam* said that the council was the political leader and fighters should concentrate on fighting.[148] This is reflected also in survey results of civilian attitudes from 2015–2016: respondents did not think that rebels interfered in the council's work.[149]

Although fighters and civilians did not usually change roles,[150] they mixed with each other when fighters were not at the frontline, thus ties between people could deepen during the siege. Officers or leaders of armed groups walked in the city without security escorts.[151] They did not need additional security for themselves, as there was no fear of active resistance. Some civilians taught fighters to read and write, some fighters borrowed books from the library to read at the frontline.[152]

Even though rebel groups in Daraya had various ideologies and mindsets towards civil governance, it is noteworthy, that in the war they were 'on the same side'. They, apart from some individuals,[153] shared the revolutionary[154] aims and sought to overthrow al-Assad-regime,[155] itself a highly political enterprise. Rebels did not need to monitor civilians or coerce them into support,[156] nor were there counterinsurgency campaigns that the rebels had to take cover from.[157] The fighters were not outside rebels who tried to capture the city against the will of the local people, but, as mentioned above, civilians needed them for protection. In 2015, *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam* and the council issued a declaration banning any new military or civil institutions,[158] indicating that there were groups who contested them both. For example, there was a group who was not actively fighting on the frontlines against the regime.[159] The declaration also shows that *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam* and the council were determined to keep the city united against unruly or external groups. These fighters and civilians shared the same norms and values[160] which created order.[161] Sharing revolutionary goals does not, however, mean that the local council would yield under rebel rule.

Military office

The three factors mentioned above meant that Daraya's local council could integrate local armed groups under it: the military office was part of the council's original structure.[162] The office was financed by the council.[163] 'We give them, the fighters a voice in the council so they can tell their grievances'. Often these were related to food, some fighters wanted to be more involved in the library.[164] To some council members the military office was the key difference between the local council and earlier forms of revolutionary organisation,[165] a few even referred to it as the 'defence ministry'.[166] The office had 15 members. Five of them were officers defected from the Syrian

Arab Army, five were civilian commanders, civilians who took to arms and became group leaders, and five were administrative personnel with a civilian background. Some of the FSA members objected the structure of the office, but most of them accepted it. Fighters also held positions in the executive office, which decided food distributions and what to publish on Facebook and coordinated between different offices. Military strategies were left for the fighters to decide.[167] Collaboration between the fighters and the council were transparent: local residents were aware of it.[168]

The only armed group present in the military office was *Shuhada⁾ al-Islam*,[169] the largest group in Daraya. It created internal rebel order[170] by liaising with other armed groups, which were subordinate to it.[171] Some of these groups' fighters were more hostile towards the council, as we will see later.

> They created one battalion [after the military office was established] — and now all the FSA answered to the same command. Still, we had some [other groups besides *Shuhada⁾ al-Islam*] but essentially all groups had to abide by one regulation. It was not like a regular army, but at least it was starting to get more organized.[172]

The military office's task was to coordinate with the local council,[173] and armed groups had regular meetings with the council. The groups would give information about their activities and about inter-group coordination.[174] For the council members, it was easiest to work with *Shuhada⁾ al-Islam*, after all it consisted of locals who supported civil rule. Some other fighters were against the council and military office and wanted to rule because they had weapons. They 'don't like us, they don't deal with us. – But they deal with the *Shuhada⁾ al-Islam*'.[175]

The benefits of the relationship ran in both ways.[176] The fighters could use their relations with the local council to gain legitimacy from the remaining civilians,[177] and the council provided fighters, and their families in Daraya,[178] with relief and medical aid.[179] Because the fighters received services from civilians, they did not need to coerce them into action – indicating the emergence of a stable and predictable civil-military relationship.[180]

Maintaining order

After civilocracy was established, the local council could respond to various challenges. As mentioned above, some fighters were not happy being under civilian rule[181] therefore a functioning dialogue process was crucial for maintaining order. Older FSA fighters from Daraya were less disciplined and not always keen to cooperate with civil governance.[182] A balance of power was maintained through the military office and *Shuhada⁾ al-Islam*. Disagreements did not escalate into successfully challenging the civil leadership of the council. For example, there

is information about violence towards council members by other groups than *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam*.[183] Some members were kidnapped.[184] To circumvent this problem, council members used to work with the fighters with whom cooperation was easier and to use them as intermediaries with the other fighters.[185] Through the council and its sub-offices council members and rebels negotiated and renegotiated order[186] as situations changed on the ground. In Colombia, as the conflict evolved, civil organisations changed, enabling them to settle disputes and negotiate with armed actors.[187] We see similar reorganising in Daraya. The council created new structures to respond to new challenges. Over the years rebel groups became more independent, but the structures created early on assured functioning relations between the rebels and the local council.[188]

In late 2012 a police station was formed, mainly to keep an inventory of the possessions of those fleeing the city. It developed into a security office[189] which the local council, the military side, and civilians established.[190] The task of the security office was to solve problems between people or security incidents, such as stealing.[191] The security and military offices were also responsible for the coordination of the military police. If armed groups had problems with civilians, they should not arrest them, but let the police solve it.[192] The military police was formed after a security incident, which concerned an underground apartment. It was civil property, but members of an armed group wanted to take it. The owner

> complained to the security office in the local council and the security office's response was that they want to avoid a misunderstanding with the military office or the armed groups, so they decided to coordinate with the military office, and they called for a meeting, and they invited all the leaders of the armed groups in the area to find a solution to avoid similar incidents, and as a result the military police was formed.[193]

Some of the fighters provoking problems were arrested, their military equipment was confiscated, and they were not allowed to continue as an armed group. The council did not take the incident to the media so that it would not initiate conflict within the community or that the regime could use to its advantage.[194]

In another case, rebels wanted to kill a person they claimed had leaked information about them to the regime. Through the military office and *Shuhadaʾ al-Islam* the local council negotiated to imprison the person instead,[195] although sometimes alleged traitors faced capital punishment.[196] Civilians can transform rebel groups by using the language of human rights and democracy. Participating in governance can regulate and institutionalise rebel behaviour.[197] One important regulation for the armed groups was that although fighters could move freely in the city, they must not carry guns.[198] 'This was a golden rule in Daraya, no guns in the city'.[199]

In early 2014 there was less fighting, and the frontlines were calmer. The siege was tight, but the fighters had more time to engage in civil affairs. The fighters demanded a higher status for themselves within the city.[200] As a consequence, the council, civilians, *Shuhada' al-Islam*, and *al-Ittihad al-Islami* created a 'presidential authority'.[201] This unified authority was to lead the city[202] by determining salaries, negotiating with the regime, and distributing food. The council followed the authority's decision. However, it only worked for about one year.[203]

In late 2015, the council established a 'civilian administration', *idara madaniya*, which included three experienced people. Its tasks were to improve the council's performance and to maintain the civil offices' status by better managing relations with the military office. Consequently, all office leaders dealt with these three people, who liaised between them, the executive office, and the fighters. This improved the council's situation and enabled it to function until the end of the siege in 2016, despite the declining humanitarian and military situation.[204] 'The last year, it was better for us in Daraya, because they [the fighters] understand us, – the local council has good ideas, can deal with the outside and inside, the civilians, with the military guys'.[205]

Explanatory factors for civilocracy

Wartime governance can be structured in many ways and usually it is the rebels who rule.[206] However, as the empirical evidence above shows, civil-initiated and -led rule is also possible. I propose that *civilocracy* is the best term to describe this form of governance. Civilocracy depends on several factors. Triggering wartime events can change the mindsets of civilians *and* fighters, making them willing to cooperate with each other and preventing outsiders from intervening. Collaboration in high-risk organisational processes requires trust between civilians and rebels. It can be generated through local ties or other means. Civilians need to have prior knowledge that pushes them to initiate governance. Finally, the governance institutions can be old or new, but it is crucial that rebels are subordinate to them. These factors can differ between conflicts, but they need to lead into institutions that consolidate rebels and maintain internal rebel order[207] thereby sustaining civil governance.

Rebel governance elsewhere in Syria's opposition-held areas falls under rebelocracy or aliocracy. The first three factors, wartime events, experiences of nonviolent activism and local ties, existed there as well and civilians did initiate governance indicating that civilocracy could have happened. However, the factors' interplay did not lead to the consolidation of rebel groups or to relative civilian control of rebel groups. Therefore, civilocracy existed only in Daraya. I now illustrate examples from local councils where the

three factors were present, but the form of governance that emerged was aliocracy.

The massacre and siege were triggering events which encouraged civilocracy and helped maintain it. Shocking forms of violence have been common during the Syrian war creating fear[208] but also rifts in communities.[209] It has not always led to rebel-civil coordination.[210] For example, the town of Zabadani faced several violent raids and a siege but the local council had no authority over the rebels.[211] Contrarily, the massacre in Daraya made clear to the rebels that if they wish to survive, they need to allow civilians to govern them. Rebels could not gain people's support by creating wartime institutions. The siege put the Darayan rebels under heavy pressure on the front lines having less time to get involved in civil affairs.[212] Without the means to establish governance, rebels had to prioritise military matters,[213] although as fighting became less intense, they tried to have more say in governance. Douma, a city on the other side of the capital in Eastern Ghouta, was besieged for several years and faced similar violence and humanitarian conditions as Daraya. Its local council enjoyed relative success[214] and similarly sought to control the weapons FSA groups had in the city.[215] Still, it could not consolidate the competing rebel groups, some of them radical Islamists. Infighting and infringements on civilians were common. The head of Douma's local council explained that for the council, 'the most dangerous obstacle is the continuous struggle in the city between Islamic trends – who impose their control'.[216] The siege diminished resources in Daraya, while protecting rebels and civilians from competitive armed groups, such as a Jabhat al-Nusra-linked group. If the surroundings of the capital would have remained an open battlefield, it is possible that radical groups would have taken over the local council.

For civilocracy it is essential that civilians understand the importance of civil structures.[217] Local circumstances on how this understanding is gained can vary but if civilians do not initiate governance, it would leave rebels room to create rebelocracy or aliocracy. Darayan activists' commitment to peaceful tactics before 2011 and the knowhow learnt during these years made them realise that civilian-led governance would be essential during a militarising revolution.[218] Pre-war activism or experiences in resistance influence how civilians participate in governance or oppose militant actors.[219] Nonviolent activism in Syria was not exceptional to Daraya. The city of Saraqeb in Idlib Governorate has been known for many decades for anti-regime groups. The local council delivered services successfully and worked side by side with a local armed group, *Thuwwar Saraqeb* (Revolutionaries of Saraqeb).[220] It did not establish structures that would have consolidated the group, leading to aliocracy.

Besieged, fighters in Daraya remained local, and everyone benefitted from close, multiplex ties between fighters and civilians, much needed when engaging in high-risk work.[221] Meanwhile, fighters could concentrate on fighting and opt out of governance. They received enough legitimacy by fighting for the shared goal,[222] revolution, and knew that civilians would not challenge their positions. The siege reinforced community cohesion, as the remaining people strived to survive and fight the common enemy together. Such ties were important for a cohesive community to exist and for civilocracy to develop. Trust needed for civilocracy can be created through other means besides pre-existing ties, for example, by being on the same side. In civilocracy that does not lead to civilians yielding under rebel rule. Daraya shows that both support for *and* cooperation with rebel groups are necessary for civilocracy, but civilians need to have their own vision of governance.[223] Local ties between council members and local, FSA-affiliated armed groups existed across Syria, but they did not lead to similar structures as in Daraya. Rebel groups in Idlib Governorate challenged civil governance structures because providing services was a way to gain legitimacy.[224]

From these examples we can conclude that causal and enabling factors for civilocracy were present across Syria's opposition-held areas. However, nowhere else did their interplay lead to a governance structure that would have enabled civilocracy. Indeed, what distinguishes Daraya's local council from other councils in Syria's opposition-held areas was the military office that organised rebels under it, creating civilocracy instead of aliocracy. Whereas pre-existing, high-quality institutions are a requirement for aliocracy,[225] for civilocracy institutions that combine civil and military actors are important. Other local councils did establish security structures,[226] but even relatively powerful councils, such as in Aleppo city,[227] had to respect the parameters set up by rebels. Crucially, contrary to peace communities[228] or cases where rebels initiate governance,[229] civilians and rebels in Daraya negotiated security structures together. Working with the military office's leader was relatively easy and civilians could transmit norms to the fighters,[230] also the groups with whom cooperation was not as easy could be controlled.[231] Furthermore, the office provided a place even for those more hostile fighters to express grievances without having to resort to arms. Under dire conditions order was negotiated and renegotiated[232] and community cohesion maintained.

Wartime events, the massacre and siege, and pre-existing conditions, experiences of nonviolent activism and local ties, gave civilians in Daraya tools to organize rebels under their rule and to create civilocracy. Armed groups could have emboldened themselves and used the existing multiplex ties to create their own governance had civilians not taken the lead. In Daraya civilians raced against rebels to start governance. Because of their history of nonviolence, they quickly realized that military affairs needed to be organized

under civil rule. Civilocracy does not happen out of pure luck, instead civilians need to be active in initiating it and maintaining it during the war.

Conclusion

In Daraya, the community's norms and wartime events affected how civilocracy was initiated and sustained. The massacre by the Syrian regime was a triggering point and united the community under civil rule. Expecting more violence, fighters were afraid of civilians' reactions, and they could not easily coerce civilians under their rule. The siege excluded Daraya from other opposition-held areas and in a way protected it from more radical groups. The knowhow of the nonviolent activists gave people tools to negotiate agency and adjust civil work within changing conditions. Under these conditions, the council benefitted from close civil-military ties. These factors, wartime events, experiences of nonviolent activism, and local ties, led the civilians to organize rebels under the military office and to maintain order by building new structures. Consequently, Daraya experienced almost four years of civilocracy.

During the course of the Syrian war civilocracy did not exist in other areas. Had Daraya's rebel groups been able to unite with other opposition-held areas, more radical groups could have taken control and the story of Daraya's local council would have changed fundamentally. It was dissolved after Darayans were forced to flee; in Idlib's opposition-held areas, where more radical groups existed in 2016, conditions to continue the council's work simply did not exist.[233]

This research has theoretical implications for the scholarship on rebel governance and civil resistance. The notion of civilocracy, unaccounted for in earlier research, expands our understanding of wartime order. Civilocracy is an interesting sub-branch of rebel governance that explains civil-initiated and -led governance. The findings show that organisations do not need to exist from before the war or be well-equipped[234]; people understanding the need for civil governance can create new institutions and become legitimate and efficient in governance and resist both rebelocracy *and* aliocracy. These civil institutions can consolidate rebels under them, restricting rebels' abilities to use violence against civilians. Further distinguishing civilocracy from aliocracy, in civilocracy rebels do not intervene in governance, but instead fighters and civilians cooperate, and rebels understand their position in the system.

Daraya is a special case of rebel governance where civilocracy is the form of governance. It encourages scholars to search for cases of civilocracy in other civil wars. Even though they are objectively more powerful because of their weapons, rebels' superiority in governance should not be assumed. The factors leading to the establishment of the military office are not rare in war-settings, therefore, civilocracy can clearly occur in other conflicts. To better

understand the dynamics of civil wars, we need to examine various causal explanations, which can be different from Daraya, for the emergence of this particular governance form in the midst of conflicts.

Policy implications indicate that communities striving for democracy amidst war should be identified and supported early because they can build sustainable foundations for a just wartime and post-conflict order. Rebel groups can be consolidated under civil structures and, although rebels' independence might grow, existing structures make cooperation easier than trying to assimilate independent rebel groups at later stages of war. A positive and self-reinforcing cycle, in which socialized, cooperative armed groups have leverage over non-disciplined groups, emerges and creates internal rebel order. Post-war transformation of rebels into a law-abiding army is not an easy task as demonstrated by Deniz Kocak[235] in this issue, but dialogue constructed during war between civilians and fighters can endure[236] making post-war transitions easier.

Notes

1. Eddin et al. August, *Afterward, 5 Stories of Love.*
2. Thomson, *Syria's Secret Library*; Minoui, *The Book Collectors of Daraya.*
3. Interview 9.
4. Khalaf, *Governance Without Government in Syria*; Omran, *Changing the Security Sector in Syria.*
5. Berti, *From Cooperation to Competition*; Heller, *Keeping the Lights on in Idlib.*
6. Sosnowski, *Ceasefires*; The Syria Campaign, *Daraya*; Enab Baladi, *The Local Council of the City Daraya.*
7. Gowrinathan and Mampilly, *Resistance and Repression.*
8. Pfeifer and Schwab, Politicising the Rebel Governance Paradigm.
9. Arjona, *Wartime Institutions*, 1374; Waterman and Worrall 2020.
10. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 26.
11. Arjona, *Wartime Institutions,* 1375.
12. Mitchell and Nan, *Local Peace Zones.*
13. The names of all research participants have been anonymised for security reasons.
14. Pearlman, *Memory as a Field Site.*
15. Fieldwork inside Syria was not possible for security reasons.
16. Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, *Interpretation and Method.*
17. Poopuu, *Dialogical Research Design*; Kaplan, *Balancing Rigor.*
18. Kaplan, *Balancing Rigor.*
19. Arjona, Kasfir and Mampilly, *Introduction*, 3.
20. Arjona, *Wartime Institutions.*
21. Amiri, and Jackson, *Taliban Taxation in Afghanistan.*
22. Schwab, *Insurgent Courts.*
23. Kasfir, *Guerrillas and Civilian Participation.*
24. Arjona, *Rebelocracy*; Mampilly and Stewart, *A Typology of Rebel.*
25. Reno, *Predatory Rebellions.*
26. Terpstra and Frerks, *Rebel Governance and Legitimacy.*

27. Barter, *The Rebel State in Society.*
28. Hirschel-Burns, *Sowing the Seeds.*
29. Arjona, *Civilian Resistance*, 184–185; Rubin, *Rebel Territorial Control*, 465.
30. Kasfir, *Guerrillas and Civilian Participation*, 273–274.
31. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 34–35.
32. *Institutions; Arjona, Civilian Resistance.*
33. Mampilly and Stewart, *A Typology of Rebel.*
34. van Baalen, *Local Elites.*
35. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, 173.
36. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 26.
37. See, for example, Avant et al. *Civil Action*; Krause, *Resilient Communities*; Suarez, *Living between Two Lions*; Kaplan, *Resisting War*; Arjona, *Civilian Resistance.*
38. Jackson, Weigand and Tindall, *Understanding Agency.*
39. Kaplan, *Nudging Armed Groups.*
40. van Baalen, *Local Elites*, 7–8.
41. Hancock and Mitchell, *Zones of Peace*; Mitchell and Nan, *Local Peace Zones.*
42. Hall, *Building Bridges at the Grassroots,* 12–14.
43. Garcia, *Filipino Zones of Peace.*
44. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, 188.
45. Gowrinathan and Mampilly, *Resistance and Repression*; van Baalen, *Local Elites.*
46. Kasfir, *Guerrillas and Civilian Participation*, 274; Barter, *The Rebel State in Society*, 231.
47. Arjona, *Rebelocracy*, 224–226.
48. Kaplan, *Resisting War*, 79–83.
49. Ley, Mattiace, and Trejo, *Indigenous Resistance.*
50. Contrary to this, Daraya does have strategic significance because it is situated close to Syrian Air Force's Mezzeh air base. Sosnowski, *Ceasefires*, 281.
51. Förster, Dialogue Direct, 213
52. Kasfir, *Guerrillas and Civilian Participation*, 286–288.
53. Arjona, *Rebelocracy.*
54. Arjona, *Wartime Institutions*, 1375.
55. Arjona, *Civilian Resistance*, 183–184.
56. Waterman and Worrall, *Spinning Multiple Plates*, 569.
57. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 25.
58. Kaplan, *Resisting War*, 9, emphasis in the original.
59. Arjona, *Wartime Institutions*, 1374.
60. Worrall, *(Re-)Emergent Orders*, 711.
61. *Richter and Barrios Sabogal, Dynamics of Peace.*
62. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 38.
63. Waterman and Worrall, *Spinning Multiple Plates*, 571, 576.
64. Arjona, *Wartime Institutions*, 1375.
65. Waterman and Worrall, *Spinning Multiple Plates*, 576.
66. Kaplan, *Resisting War*, 34.
67. Interview 9; Kasf, *Water Bottles & Roses.*
68. Interview 5; Interview 9; Yassin-Kassab and Shami, *Burning Country*, 53.
69. Interview 5; Interview 7; Interview 9.
70. Interview 5.
71. Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Daraya: Nine Years After*, 4, 6.
72. Interview 9.
73. Yassin-Kassab and Shami, *Burning Country*, 169.

74. di Giovanni, *Syria Crisis: Daraya Massacre.*
75. Interview 5; Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Daraya: Nine Years After*, 7.
76. Interview 1.
77. Yassin-Kassab and Shami, *Burning Country*, 169; Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Daraya: Nine Years After*, 11, 20.
78. Amnesty International, *Syria: Voices in the Crisis*; Aljazeera, *Syria: Evacuation of Daraya.*
79. The Syrian Observer, *Daraya: After 800 Days of Siege.*
80. Interview 5; Interview 7.
81. Interview 9; Human Rights Watch, *Syria: Incendiary Weapons.*
82. Interview 3.
83. Enab Baladi, *The Regime Closes.*
84. Nebehay and Davison, *U.N. convoys bring food.*
85. Enab Baladi, *The Regime Closes.*
86. Interview 2; Shaheen, *Syrian Civil Defence Group.*
87. Loris-Rodionoff, *Démocratie rebelle.*
88. Interview 4; Interview 6; Aljazeera, *Syria: Evacuation of Daraya.*
89. Interview 3; Sosnowski, *Ceasefires*, 283.
90. Kaplan, *Resisting War*, 4.
91. Interview 4.
92. Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, *Local Administration Structures*, 16–17.
93. Ley, Mattiace, and Trejo, *Indigenous Resistance,* 182.
94. Interview 9.
95. Interview 9; Yassin-Kassab and Shami, *Burning Country*, 68.
96. Interview 5; Interview 7; Loris-Rodionoff, *Démocratie rebelle.*
97. Interview 9.
98. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State.*
99. Ibid.
100. Interview 4.
101. Ibid.
102. Interview 9.
103. Interview 5.
104. Interview 7.
105. Interview 2.
106. Interview 6.
107. Interview 9.
108. Ibid.
109. Interview 5; Interview 7.
110. Interview 5; Interview 9; Loris-Rodionoff, *Démocratie rebelle.*
111. Interview 4; Interview 5.
112. Interview 7; Interview 9; Enab Baladi, *The Local Council of the City Daraya.*
113. Interview 3.
114. Barter, *The Rebel State in Society*, 236.
115. Interview 9.
116. Syria in Brief, *The CIA's TOW Program*; Browne, *Syria's Thermopylae.*
117. Interview 9; Daraya Local Council, *Summary about Islamic Martyrs' Brigade.*
118. Interview 3; Interview 5.
119. Interview 5; Interview 9; Syria in Brief, *The CIA's TOW Program.*
120. Smaller armed groups present in Daraya during the siege were, for example, *Katabet Sahabet* (Interview 3) and, under *al-Ittihad al-Islami*, Al-Miqdad bin Amr

Brigade and Saad bin Abi Waqqas Brigade, the first two originally from Kafr Sousah (Interview 7; Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, *Implications of Daraya Exiting*, 2).

121. Interview 2, Interview 7.
122. Interview 3.
123. Interview 1; Interview 7.
124. Amnesty International, *Syria: Voices in the Crisis*.
125. Enab Baladi, *The Regime Closes*.
126. Interview 9.
127. Interview 1.
128. Interview 4.
129. Interview 2.
130. Mazur, *Revolution in Syria*, 224.
131. Interview 1; Interview 5.
132. Interview 1; Interview 2; Interview 4.
133. Interview 5.
134. Browne, *Syria's Thermopylae*.
135. Interview 2.
136. Interview 3; Interview 4; Interview 5; Interview 9; Eddin et al., *Afterword: 5 Stories of Love*.
137. Kadushin, *Understanding Social Networks*, 36.
138. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*, 20–21.
139. Gould, *Multiple Networks*.
140. Parkinson, *Organizing Rebellion*; Hamilton, *Women and ETA*.
141. Interview 6.
142. Mampilly and Stewart, *A Typology of Rebel*, 25.
143. Grubb, *The Impact of Civil Action*, 132–133.
144. Interview 4.
145. Interview 5; Interview 9.
146. Interview 3.
147. Interview 3.
148. Enab Baladi, *Commander of the Lions*.
149. The Day After, *Syrian Local Councils*, 8.
150. Interview 1; Interview 3.
151. Interview 3.
152. Interview 4; Thomson, *Syria's Secret Library*.
153. Interview 4.
154. Being perceived as 'revolutionary' made the Syrian regime to consider people as 'terrorists'. Leaving the besieged area and seeking services from the state (Rubin, *Rebel Territorial Control*, 479) was not possible for all as it could lead to human rights violations towards fighters and civilians alike.
155. Interview 5.
156. Arjona, *Civilian Resistance*, 184–185.
157. Rubin, *Rebel Territorial Control*, 465.
158. Enab Baladi, *To prevent 'splitting of the ranks'*.
159. Interview 3.
160. Förster, *Dialogue Direct*.
161. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 38.
162. Interview 9; Enab Baladi, *The Local Council of the City Daraya*; Sosnowski, *Ceasefires*, 282.

163. Interview 8.
164. Interview 2.
165. Interview 8; Loris-Rodionoff, *Démocratie rebelle.*
166. Interview 5; Interview 9.
167. Interview 9.
168. The Day After, *Syrian Local Councils*, 12.
169. Interview 3; Interview 4.
170. Waterman and Worrall, *Spinning Multiple Plates*, 571.
171. Interview 3.
172. Interview 9.
173. Interview 4; Interview 9.
174. Interview 2; Interview 3.
175. Interview 4.
176. van Baalen, *Local Elites*, 8.
177. Interview 4.
178. Interview 5.
179. Interview 2; Interview 4.
180. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State.*
181. Interview 2; Interview 6.
182. Interview 9.
183. Enab Baladi, *A Large Security Campaign.*
184. Interview 7.
185. Interview 4.
186. Worrall, *(Re-)Emergent Orders*, 711–712.
187. Kaplan, *Protecting Civilians in Civil War.*
188. Interview 2; Interview 7.
189. Interview 9; Enab Baladi, *The Local Council of the City Daraya.*
190. Interview 1; Interview 2; Interview 3.
191. Interview 1; Interview 3.
192. Interview 4.
193. Interview 3.
194. Ibid.
195. Interview 4.
196. Enab Baladi, *The Center for Public Security.*
197. Barter, *The Rebel State in Society*, 238–240.
198. About similar rules in Côte d'Ivoire, see Förster, *Dialogue Direct.*
199. Interview 1.
200. Interview 9.
201. Interview 9; Interview 5. It was referred to in Arabic as *lajna rʾiasya* and *hayʾat rʾiasya* (Interview 5; Interview 7).
202. Interview 5.
203. Interview 9.
204. Ibid.
205. Interview 4.
206. Arjona, Kasfir and Mampilly, *Introduction.*
207. Waterman and Worrall, *Spinning Multiple Plates*, 571.
208. Worrall and Penziner Hightower, *Methods in the Madness?*, 8–12.
209. Wessels, *Killing the Dispensables*, 17.
210. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 40; Kasfir, *Guerrillas and Civilian Participation*, 281.
211. Syria Untold, *Cities in Revolution.*

212. Interview 3.
213. Kasfir, *Guerrillas and Civilian Participation*, 272.
214. The Syrian Observer, *An Interview with the Head of the*.
215. LDO, *Movie| Douma Local Council*.
216. The Syrian Observer, *An Interview with the Head of the*.
217. Waterman and Worrall, *Spinning Multiple Plates*, 569.
218. Interview 7; Interview 9.
219. Kasfir, *Guerrillas and Civilian Participation*; Ley, Mattiace, and Trejo, *Indigenous Resistance*, 182.
220. Arjona, *Institutions; Arjona, Civilian Resistance*, 116; Arjona,*Rebelocracy*.
221. Gould, *Multiple Networks*.
222. Kasfir, *Rebel Governance*, 38.
223. Arjona, *Institutions, Civilian Resistance*, 116; Arjona, *Rebelocracy*.
224. Heller, *Keeping the Lights on in Idlib*.
225. Arjona, *Rebelocracy*.
226. Omran, *Changing the Security Sector in Syria*.
227. Khalaf, *Governance Without Government*, 61.
228. Masullo, *Refusing to Cooperate*, 20.
229. Arjona, *Institutions; Mampilly and Stewart, A Typology of Rebel*.
230. Kaplan, *Nudging Armed Groups*.
231. Interview 3; Interview 4.
232. Worrall, *(Re-)Emergent Orders*, 711–712.
233. Interview 2; Interview 7.
234. Arjona, *Wartime Institutions*.
235. Kocak, *Rebel Security Governance*.
236. Masullo, *Refusing to Cooperate*, 18.

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