

Annotation

This diploma thesis focuses on the study of violent non-state actors with a focus on the case of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen. The goal of this thesis is an in-depth analysis of the chosen group through the optics of theories of violent non-state actors. The analysis is based on the ARI Framework, created by Ersel Aydinli, which focuses on three main analytical categories – autonomy, representation, and influence. This thesis aims to broaden the existing knowledge and understanding of AQAP in its global, regional, and local contexts, as well as in the context of the ongoing Yemeni civil war. In this way, it contributes to the growing literature on violent non-state actors. This thesis offers a detailed study on the evolution and capacities of the case at hand and embeds these findings into a broader historical context of the development of extremism and jihadism in Yemen. It studies the evolution of al-Qaeda in Yemen since the 1990s, inception of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and tracks its existence until 2018 with the intention to provide a deeper understanding of the group's structure, goals, strategy, and overall functioning.