

Abstract

The Taliban and al-Qaeda are groups that profess radical forms of Islam and are often mentioned in connection with terrorism (the latter is one of the most well-known terrorist organizations). In the period 1996-2001, both groups were deployed to Afghanistan. The Taliban ruled Afghanistan during those years, and al-Qaeda had the status of a kind of „guest“. As a result of the 9/11 attacks of al-Qaeda, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom. As part of this operation, the Taliban movement was removed from the government and al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden was forced to flee Afghanistan and hide until his death in 2011. The aim of my work will be to describe the development and functioning of relations between the two organizations in the period preceding these events. Why did Osama bin Laden move to Afghanistan? Why did the Taliban allow it? What were the relations between the two organizations? How was the cooperation between them? In addition to sharing a common territory, did this cooperation have other, ie economic, military and political aspects? Was the relationship between them a perfect harmony of political and religious views, or was it rather a pragmatic relationship that was not ideal but benefited both actors?

The analysis of these relationships will be based on available professional literature and sources. One of the theoretical tools that I will try to apply in my work is the theory of rational choice. With its help, I would like to determine more precisely the extent to which the al-Qaeda-Taliban alliance was based on religion and ideology and the extent to which this was a rational calculation, where the expected benefits of cooperation outweighed its potential disadvantages. The working hypothesis of the thesis is that the relationship between the two organizations was not ideal and had considerable disagreements, but the two organizations kept their relationships in balance due to the mutual benefits and profits that resulted from them.

Keywords

Taliban, al-Qaeda, relations, Osama bin Laden, Afghanistan