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# An Analysis of the Differences in Terrorist Activity in Yemen and Qatar.

Bachelor's project in History with Teacher Education

Supervisor: Dr. Michael J. Geary

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Faculty of Humanities  
Department of Historical Studies



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Kunnskap for en bedre verden



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## Introduction

When the Ottoman Empire fell in 1918, the Middle East was divided into different states. Most of these new states were governed by locals, but were protectorates of the victorious countries after the first world war: Great Britain and France.<sup>1</sup> Amongst these newly developed states, they were destined to completely different fates. Some countries would struggle through wars and poverty, while others would find abundance of oil and gas and become some of the richest countries in the world. What all these countries had in common was that they would all, whether they wanted to or not, become involved with or have to fight against terrorist organisations. While several terrorist organisations had been founded during the mid-1900s, the problems of these terrorist organisations were unknown for many until the attacks on World Trade Centre on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2001. After the terrorist attack, President George W. Bush declared a war on terror. As a consequence of the declaration of war, the United States strengthened their military efforts in the Middle East and invaded huge parts of the region. These actions were supported by many of the NATO countries. When starting the War on Terror, President Bush declared that: "We will find those who did it. We will smoke them out of their holes. We'll get them running and we'll bring them to justice."<sup>2</sup> While the United States has attempted to bring terrorists to justice, there has been an increase in terrorist attacks and terrorist activity all over the world since 2001.<sup>3</sup> A majority of the western world, who had been at peace since the Paris Peace Treaty after World War Two, now found themselves under a new threat. Attacks such as the Paris shooting in 2015, the 2016 truck attack in Nice and the Madrid bombings in 2015 have created a general fear of terrorism all over Europe.<sup>4</sup> However, 95% of the casualties of terrorist attacks happen outside of Europe, more precisely in the Middle East, North Eastern Africa and Southeast Asia.<sup>5</sup>

In today's society terrorism is defined as "acts of violence that target civilians in the pursuit of political or ideological aims."<sup>6</sup> This is a broad definition with several possibilities for debate and self-reflections. This includes an indication that may imply support to those who claim that acts committed by the United States and NATO in the War on Terror are acts of terrorism. One example of this point of view being Iran, who in early 2020 publicly declared that the United States' bombings of Syria and Iran were acts of terrorism.<sup>7</sup> However, this thesis will not consider such point of views as terrorism, but rather focus on the terrorist acts committed by terrorist organisations. This is because the debate revolving defining terrorism is too complex to be covered in this thesis. However, it is important to acknowledge that there are several points of views surrounding this topic that will not be commented on in this thesis.

As a consequence of the technological revolution and globalisation process, terrorist activity is present all over the world. While the methods of terrorism and terrorist recruiting have changed, terrorism itself is not a new concept. Terrorism has been practised for thousands of years. One example being how Nero the Emperor of Rome, claimed that the Fire of Rome in 68 AD was committed by the Christians in order to

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<sup>1</sup> Waage, Tamnes & Vik 2016: 118

<sup>2</sup> ABC News 2001: 0.37

<sup>3</sup> University of Maryland 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Van Der Does, Kantorowicz, Kuipers & Liem 2019.

<sup>5</sup> University of Maryland 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2008.

<sup>7</sup> National Broadcasting Company News 2020.

discredit the Roman Empire and thus gain support for Christianity. By today's definition Nero thus accused the Christians of committing a terrorist act. While modern terrorism is often associated with the terrorist organisations located in the Middle East, there are several terrorist organisations in Europe as well. One of the most known is the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The IRA was one of the main actors in the conflict in Northern Ireland between the 1960s and early 2000s.<sup>8</sup> IRA, the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda are examples of terrorist organisations, but terrorism is also committed by individuals. One example of a terrorist attack committed by an individual is the terrorist acts that happened in Norway on the 22nd of July 2011. An individual bombed a government building in Oslo and attacked a political youth camp at Utøya, which led to a total of 74 casualties.<sup>9</sup> While terrorism committed by individuals is a growing problem in the Western countries, the terrorist organisations continue to dominate in several of the countries in the Middle East.

This thesis will therefore examine the terrorist activity in Yemen and Qatar by adapting the "root cause" theory, with the objective to answer the question: In how far can the "root cause" theory explain the differences in terrorist activity in Yemen and Qatar. Each chapter will examine different root causes included in the theory in order to investigate how the different root causes have influenced the terrorist activity in the country. By applying a comparative analysis to the two case studies, the differences and similarities of the countries' history and the presence of terrorist activity will be examined. Yemen and Qatar are two countries that have a lot of shared history. Until 1918, the countries had been a part of the Ottoman Empire and until the late 1960s the countries were protectorates of Britain.<sup>10</sup> Both countries are desert states located on separate coasts of the Middle East. The two countries did seemingly have the same opportunities to succeed in the modern world. However, one of the main reasons for me choosing these countries are the fact that they turned out extremely different. Terrorist organisations, especially Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) have been able to grow and establish a safe haven in Yemen for decades. Qatar, on the other hand has been able to avoid dominance of terrorist organisations and recruitment to terrorism. When Qatar found an abundance of oil and gas within its borders in the 1940s and were able to start their export of oil as early as 1949, the country's future as one of the world's leading exporters of fossil fuels were secured. Since then, Qatar has been able to evolve their production and by the 1990s Qatar focused mostly on export of gas instead of oil, to prevent their dependence on oil.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, Qatar is one of the wealthiest countries in the world and is currently the country with the highest Gross National Income (GNI) per capita.<sup>12</sup> On the other side of the GNI scale, Yemen is located at the tenth lowest.<sup>13</sup> One of the main reasons for the low GNI is the instability within the country and the absence of resources making Yemen unable to produce export goods. The instability is rooted in the fact that Yemen originally was divided into two different countries: Aden and South Arabia. These regions were united in 1967, but because of a deep political division between them they were under separate governments until 1990. This division is still present in Yemen today and is one of the underlying reasons for the current civil war that started in 2015. Former President Ali Abdullah Saleh became president of a united

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<sup>8</sup> Palmer 2014: 1025

<sup>9</sup> Grønning 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Waage, Tamnes & Vik 2016: 118

<sup>11</sup> FN-Sambandet 2019.

<sup>12</sup> FN-Sambandet 2019.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Development Programme 2019.

Yemen in 1990. However, the Yemeni people suffered under his reign and he was overthrown during the riots of the Arab Spring in 2011. Yemen also score low in the Human Development report of 2019, placed as low as at 177 out of 189 countries.<sup>14</sup> Meaning that Yemen is one of the countries in the world with lowest life expectancy and lowest education expectancy with few chances of social development. These differences between Yemen and Qatar make the foundation for this thesis' research question: In how far can the "root cause" theory explain the differences in terrorist activity in Yemen and Qatar.

In order to examine the differences in terrorist activity within Yemen and Qatar, one need to examine the previous research on the field. The thesis bases its examination on the principles of the "root cause" theory. The main principle of the theory is the idea that certain circumstances combined with some precipitant factors, can provide a social environment, which can result in the emergence of terrorist organisations and terrorist activity.<sup>15</sup> Poverty, social inequality, demographic factors and political grievance are some of the conditions in which the theory depends on. While these factors have been addressed as causes of terrorism by the United Nation Security Council after the War on Terror began in 2001, scholars are reluctant to use the theory in their research.<sup>16</sup> One of the reasons being that there are methodologically difficulties applying it. However, the main reason for scholars' reluctance towards the theory is that it implies that there are legitimate reasons and causes behind terrorist acts.<sup>17</sup> Hence, the theory is seen as controversial because it is in conflict with the "moral clarity" behind the actions made to confront terrorism.<sup>18</sup> The fear of legitimizing terrorist acts and associating them with a legitimate political cause is prominent within the research field. By accepting the theory, one must also be critical of the measures NATO and its member states have taken to fight terrorism. These measures have cost unknown numbers of civilian lives and brought destruction to huge areas in the Middle East. Thus, a scholar who argues on the grounds of the "root cause" theory would claim that the acts of counterterrorism in the Middle East has contributed to an environment where terrorism can continue to flourish. Understandably this leads to the theory being controversial both within different research fields and political spheres. While many scholars are reluctant to apply the "root cause" theory in their work, some have done extensive research that focuses on the principles of the theory, without naming it the "root cause" theory. When applying the theory, the thesis focusses on the work of Edward Newman and his efforts to explain the "root cause" theory. Another important source of information is Professor Brian Burgoon at the University of Amsterdam who has written an article about the social welfare policies and the political economic roots of terrorism. In his paper he argues for how a change in social welfare policies can reduce international and domestic terrorism. The professors, Aniruddha Bagchi and Jomon A. Paul, at the Kennesaw State University, have conducted a study on youth unemployment in the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan (MENAP) region and the connection between high unemployment rates and emergence of terrorism. April L. Ally's work on Yemen has been central in explaining the current situation in the country. . These are just some of the scholarly journals used to examine to what extent the "root cause" theory can explain the differences in terrorist activity in Yemen and Qatar. A list of non-scholarly articles has also been used to gain a general

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<sup>14</sup> United Nations Development Programme 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Newman 2006: 750

<sup>16</sup> UN Security Council 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Newman 2006: 751

<sup>18</sup> Newman 2006: 752



impression of the situation in the two countries. When examining Qatar, reports from official organisations such as the United Nations have been used in order to get an objective view on the current status in the state. Several newspaper articles have also been used to broaden the perspective of the examination. The newspaper articles chosen are both located in the Middle East and in Western parts of the world.

## **Chapter One: "Desperate people can resort to desperate solutions"**

One of the fundamental parts of the "root cause" theory is the idea that poverty breeds terrorism. According to the theory, poverty can lead to a development of resentment and desperation which can ultimately lead to political extremism.<sup>19</sup> However, poverty includes more than an absence of money or a low Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Poverty is amongst other things often connected to "underdeveloped, poor or weak governance."<sup>20</sup> States that do not have a well-functioning government often miss institutions that are able to control of their people. These are states that are often referred to as "failed states". According to the theory a state's lack of resources also have shortcomings in controlling their people, which leads to "back holes" in which terrorism and extremism can thrive. This is also a debated issue in the United Nations' General Assembly. The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Klaus Topfer, claims that poverty and environmental degradation can

(...) fan the flames of hate and ignite a belief that terrorism is the only solution to a community's or nation's ills. When people are denied access to clean water, soil, and air to meet their basic human needs, we see the rise of poverty, ill-health, and a sense of hopelessness. Desperate people can resort to desperate solutions.<sup>21</sup>

This chapter will focus on poverty as a "root cause" of terrorism. Poverty in the sense of "poverty of resources, combined with poverty of prospects, choices and respect".<sup>22</sup> Different scholarly journals, reports and statistics will be used to argue for why this part of the "root cause" theory can be used as a factor to explain the differences in terrorist activity in Yemen and Qatar.

### **Access to resources and the emergence of terrorism**

According to the "root cause" theory there is a direct link between a country's GDP and the terrorist activity in the country. In the case of Yemen, Yemen is one of the countries in the world with the lowest GDP per capita. Yemen's history has been characterized by an extreme lack of resources.<sup>23</sup> One of the reasons for this is the conflict between the northern and southern part of the country since the 1970s. However, in 1990 the two parts were united, but the years of conflicts put its mark on Yemen.<sup>24</sup> While many countries got out of poverty with the help of foreign aid and investments in industry and agriculture, Yemen remained stuck in poverty. The principles of foreign aid or foreign investments are that the funds can help the government's spending to foster growth. However, in the case of Yemen, it has led to the consolidation of resources in the hands of the few.<sup>25</sup> According to Colton, who has done extensive research on Yemen's economy, argues that the unwillingness of the government to help its citizens has left Yemen in anarchy with few alternatives for moving forward.<sup>26</sup> As inhabitants of one of the poorest countries in the world, the Yemeni people tried to change their country through revolution during the Arab Spring in 2011. However, the revolution did not turn

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<sup>19</sup> Newman 2006: 751

<sup>20</sup> Newman 2006: 751

<sup>21</sup> Newman 2006: 752

<sup>22</sup> Newman 2006: 751

<sup>23</sup> Dumont 2010: 1

<sup>24</sup> Dumont 2010: 3

<sup>25</sup> Colton 2010: 425

<sup>26</sup> Colton 2010: 425

out the way the people might have wanted. Since 2012, when President Saleh was overthrown, Yemen has struggled to host free elections leading to a power vacuum within the state. As a consequence of the failed revolution in 2011, a new civil war broke out in 2015. This still ongoing war has definitely decreased any chances Yemen might have had to get out of extreme poverty and thus also ruined its chances to fight terrorism.

Before the beginning of the new civil war in 2015, President Saleh's government was trying to convince the countries contributing to Yemen's economy through foreign aid to increase the funds in order to fight terrorism. The poverty and internal conflicts in the country could according to a case study by Ioannis Mantzikos examining the relationship between state failure and terrorism, "provide AQAP with a freer hand to use the country as a launching pad for regional and international operations."<sup>27</sup> This correlates with the "root cause" theory's argument about poverty breeding terrorism. Arguments similar to that of Mantzikos were used by the Yemeni government to increase the foreign aid from countries such as the United States and Great Britain. In response to President Saleh's government's plea to these countries the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), issued a report documenting their views on the "root cause" theory. The report was written in connection to an AQAP group located in Yemen's attempt to bomb a plane in 2009. "The foundation of political opposition and extremist ideologies is, to a great extent, based on people's level of satisfaction with the services their government provides (...)"<sup>28</sup> However, what the report ignores is the unstable foundation of Yemen's political system and institutions, not to mention the growing dissatisfaction with President Saleh, whom a few years later would be overthrown during the Arab Spring. Furthermore, scholars had at the time and since the unification of Yemen declared the regime as a "a formidable obstacle to genuine democratic reform".<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the report ignores several of the obstacles in Yemen's way out of poverty. It also ignores the growing suspicion regarding President Saleh's corruption within the country. While Saleh was president for over 30 years, he was far from a popular president, especially in his last years in government. Despite his country's suffering, Saleh was able to accumulate millions of dollars during his 30-year reign.<sup>30</sup> Consequently, one can argue that Yemen's way out of poverty was blocked by its own government, but by doing so they were unable to stop the domination of terrorism which would be the government's demise.

Another critical reason why Yemen cannot fight the domestic terrorism is the absence of water in the country. Yemen is a desert state with no permanent rivers, meaning it is dependent on rain and underground water. However, because Yemen is a dessert state with drought periods, the rainy days are few. In addition to this already existing problem, the Civil War that started in 2015 has led to an increased pressure on the water reserves. This as a consequence of Saudi-Arabia's intervention in the civil war. Saudi-Arabian interference has led to restrictions on imports and an increase in bombings of water plants. As a consequence, several of Yemen's water-treatment plants have been out of operation.<sup>31</sup> In 2019, Yemen's access to water was at 2% of the world

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<sup>27</sup> Mantzikos 2011: 257

<sup>28</sup> Phillips 2011: 97

<sup>29</sup> Alley 2010: 75

<sup>30</sup> Brehony & Al-Sarhan 2015: 61

<sup>31</sup> Mohareb & Ivers 2019: 110

average.<sup>32</sup> Leading to the suffering of millions, the water shortage crisis is not easily fixed. The absence of infrastructure makes it difficult and expensive to move water from the few working water plants to the people who need it. A huge part of the population thus resort to drinking water that make them sick. As a result of the water shortage and the desperation to fight dehydration, the water prices have tripled since 2015.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, the rich are able to purchase the water they need, while the poor struggle to fight dehydration. Even so, the extreme shortage of water does not only affect the amount of drinking water available. The agricultural sector in Yemen is dependent on 90% of the water currently available in Yemen. As a result of the water shortage, the already failing agricultural sector in Yemen is struggling even more. Without the self-sufficiency the access to food is limited and insecure. This problem increased after the attack on the port city of Hodeida in 2018, which limited food imports to a minimum. Thus, the people are not only fighting against dehydration but also starvation. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 14 million people are at risk of starvation in Yemen.<sup>34</sup>

According to the "root cause" theory, the government's inability to provide its population with necessary resources such as water, can lead to a growing acceptance of extremism and violence. People who are unable to access necessary resources are more likely to turn to terrorism if exposed to propaganda and an environment with extremist ideologies.<sup>35</sup> As a result of the absence of resources, there has been and still is a growing dissatisfaction towards the government within the country and the rest of the world in general. This dissatisfaction makes it easier for people to resort to the few solutions they have, one of them being terrorism. In their recruitment propaganda, AQAP has tended to portray life as a terrorist as lucrative in comparison to the life in poverty. According to professor Gregory Johnson at Princeton University, AQAP have supplied people with water, housing and electricity, something that Saleh's government had never prioritised.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, joining an organisation or showing support to a terrorist organisation may seem like the best solution for many people in Yemen, making it even more difficult to fight terrorism in the region.

Qatar's economic situation is quite different from the one of Yemen. As one of the wealthiest countries in the world, Qatar is a major economic and military power in the Middle East. While Yemen has been struggling through civil wars and the troubles of the Arab Spring, Qatar has been making a fortune from their oil and gas export. Because of this wealth, a majority of the population of Qatar has access to the resources necessary to live a meaningful life. Even so, there is a huge gap between the wealthiest and the poorest within the country. Consequently, the Qatari government has attempted to decrease this trend and end poverty in the country. The theory thus assumes that there is no terrorist activity within the country. This because there is not an environment characterized by poverty which can create acceptance for terrorist ideology and radical Islam. Within the general population of Qatar there are few opportunities for terrorist organisations to gain supporters. Despite this, there is some signs of terrorist activity in Qatar, which makes Qatar a fascination object for examination. What separates Qatar from most countries in the world is that it is a wealthy country where terrorist activity

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<sup>32</sup> Al-Hebshi 2019: 2

<sup>33</sup> Junea 2010: 136

<sup>34</sup> Mohareb & Ivers 2019: 110

<sup>35</sup> Newman 2006: 750

<sup>36</sup> Cable News Network 2012: 1.30

occurs through the wealthiest in the society funding terrorism abroad. The Qatari government has at several occasions been accused of funding terrorism. Both as a consequence of their deprioritising when it comes to stopping Qatari businesses funding terrorism and Qatari officials funding terrorism themselves. These allegations have in some cases been proved, but there have been no prosecutions made. One example of a Qatari official accused of funding terrorism is Qatar's Former Ambassador to the Netherlands Khalid bin Fahad Al Khater, who were accused by several news agencies of funding terrorism in the Netherlands and Belgium. Several newspapers in the Middle East based their allegations on documents obtained by the Dubai-based newspaper Al Bayan.<sup>37</sup> According to these documents, Khalid helped fund the recruitment and training of terrorists in Europe.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Qatar's interference in foreign politics have also raised questions about their involvements with terrorist organisations, which will be explained further in chapter two. As a result, Qatar has been under sanctions and boycott by many countries. Even so, there is seemingly no link between poverty of resources in Qatar and the terrorist activity in the country.

Several scholars have examined the connection between a growing economy and transnational terrorism and terrorist funding. For instance a study made by Walter Enders and Gary A. Hoover examining the relationship between GDP per capita and the occurrence of domestic and transnational terrorism, concludes that the relationship between GDP per capita and terrorism is non-linear.<sup>39</sup> In other words, there is no direct link between the general wealth of a country and the occurrence of terrorism. This contrasts with the basic concepts of the "root cause" theory. However, an important part of Enders and Hoover's conclusion is that a rise in a country's GDP could lead to an increase in both domestic and transnational terrorism.<sup>40</sup> Another study, examining the unemployment in MENAP countries has also concluded that the amount of natural resources is an important factor when it comes to terrorism. According to the study the amount of natural resources is negatively associated with domestic terrorism but is shown to correlate with transnational terrorism.<sup>41</sup> Not only does the conclusion fit with the findings of Enders and Hoover, but it is also connected to the situation in Qatar. These studies imply that one of the reasons why countries with a growing economy can end up contributing to transnational terrorism, is that there is an underlying acceptance for the either the terrorist ideology or the use of violence as a political or religious measure. This can be the case in Qatar, but there are no direct proof regarding the question of why Qatar has contributed to terrorism.

### **The relationship between poverty of opportunities and terrorism**

As previously mentioned, the people of Yemen have few opportunities to get out of poverty without fleeing the country. Millions of people are fighting starvation and dehydration making little room for such things as education. Education is one of the most important factors for enhancing social mobility in a society.<sup>42</sup> There are not many functioning schools in Yemen and there are also few educated teachers to work at the

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<sup>37</sup> Egypt Today Staff 2018.

<sup>38</sup> Egypt Today Staff 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Enders & Hoover 2012: 272

<sup>40</sup> Enders & Hoover 2012: 272

<sup>41</sup> Bagchi & Paul 2012: 19

<sup>42</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2019.

schools. This problematic absence of a functioning education system has since the beginning of the Yemeni Civil War in 2015 increased. As a result of the ongoing war schools and education centres all over Yemen have become victims of bombings and restrictions. UNICEF estimates that over 2 million children remain out of schools in Yemen.<sup>43</sup> While a majority of the population in Yemen are able to read and write, the lack of education for all children limits the opportunities to become qualified for work that will help them out of poverty. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other humanitarian organisations are trying to rehabilitate schools but the instability in the country stops a lot of their efforts. In 2019, 200,000 children were attending UNICEF funded schools in Yemen.<sup>44</sup> However, the absence of a functioning education system leads to a lack of opportunities, which according to the theory will contribute to an increase in terrorist activity. The hopelessness of the people grows when they are aware of the fact that most people born into poverty in Yemen will live a life in poverty. This hopelessness contributes to a growing acceptance for terrorism and increases the possibility that someone suffering under these circumstances will be recruited into a terrorist organisation. Hence, one can argue that one of the reasons why terrorist organisations have been able to work with little opposition in Yemen, is that a majority are living without any opportunities to change their own life situation. As previously mentioned, AQAP in Yemen have contributed to people getting access to water, housing, and electricity, which definitely increase the acceptance towards the organisation. Moreover, the feeling of hopelessness also leads to a general feeling that all life changes might be good changes, thus increasing the possibility to join a terrorist organisation.

When examining the social mobility in Qatar, there are more opportunities for the Qatari people to get out of poverty than the people of Yemen. One of the reasons why is that the education system is quite different in Qatar. According to the UN 94,1% of children attend school.<sup>45</sup> The remaining 5,9% are left out of the school system because of poverty or different disabilities. However, a report written by an Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) observer praised Qatar for the improvements in the Qatar has done regarding their education system the last decade. The observer was pleased to find out that the Qatari government was considering ratifying the UNESCO's convention against Discrimination in Education.<sup>46</sup> Meaning that Qatar would not discriminate against sex, religion, ethnicity etc, when it comes to the education of children. Which will decrease the percentage of children not attending school in the country and thus also help fight poverty. One of the reasons why not all children in Qatar attend school is that 50% of the school's in Qatar are private schools.<sup>47</sup> This leads to an economic segregation within the country. However, there still is an opportunity for all children to attend school. Therefore, the theory would argue that there is not any terrorist activity in Qatar, but as previously mentioned, there is. This terrorist activity is connected to the funding of terrorism, not recruiting within the Qatari community. When examining the terrorist activity, there are evidence that connects the most educated and powerful people in Qatar to the funding of terrorism. What is curious about this, is that the people using their resources on funding terrorism have every opportunity to use their money the way they may want. As a result, one can question why they would want to fund terrorist organisations. One can argue that the instability in

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<sup>43</sup> UNICEF 2018.

<sup>44</sup> UNICEF 2018.

<sup>45</sup> FN-Sambandet 2020.

<sup>46</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2019.

<sup>47</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2019.

the Middle East strengthen Qatar's position as military and economic power in the region, but there is no confirmed concrete answer to why Qatar is funding or helping organisations fund terrorism.

When examining the differences in terrorist activity in Qatar and Yemen through the "root cause" theory's principles revolving poverty as a root cause of terrorism, this thesis concludes that while there is obvious need for further research on the subject, the theory is to some degree able to explain these differences. However, this is only if the theory is specified to domestic terrorism. This is because the theory, while fitting the domestic terrorism in Yemen and the lack of domestic terrorism in Qatar, does not explain why the top layers of the Qatari society use their resources to fund terrorist activity abroad. The situation in Qatar is even more interesting when seeing it in the light of Bagchi and Paul's research, that concluded that an increase in foreign aid might lead to an increase in transnational terrorism, something non-profit and humanitarian organisations should be aware of. In the case of Yemen, it is obvious that the poverty creates a hopelessness within the population which is contributing to an indifference or an acceptance towards the terrorist organisations dominating the country.

## **Chapter Two: "A burning sense of injustice and dispossession"**

The second chapter of this thesis will focus on social inequality and injustice as root causes of terrorism. Through applying the "root cause" theory, this chapter will continue to investigate if the theory can help explain the differences in terrorist activity in Yemen and Qatar. According to the "root cause" theory, a "burning sense of injustice and dispossession" will make people more prone to resort to violent acts such as terrorism.<sup>48</sup> This combined with the presence of an ideology that justifies violence, and an environment where terrorism can thrive is created. One part of this chapter will focus on the Houthi Movement in Yemen. While the movement is not on the official list of terrorist organisations, the Yemeni government and governments in its neighbouring countries have several times tried to get the movement on the official terrorist list. This because the movement at several occasions has resorted to violence to bring forth their political message. Thus, for the sake of examining the interesting situation surrounding the movement's interference in Yemen, this assignment will consider the activity within the movement terrorist activity. In addition to the Houthi movement, this chapter will focus on several elements connected to the Qatari and Yemeni people's feeling of social inequality and injustice. Topics concerning corruption and welfare policies are examined as factors contributing to social inequality and injustice and their connection to the emergence of terrorism.

### **The Houthi movement**

The Houthi movement in Yemen is an interesting case of how a feeling of injustice can make people resort to violence and terrorism. In the early 1990s, the northern part of Yemen was according to its citizens discriminated by President Saleh's government. This feeling of injustice towards the president led them into becoming a militia in the early 2000s and fighting against Saleh in several wars until the Arab Spring.<sup>49</sup> After the failures of the peace treaty following the Arab Spring, the movement has increased its control in the region and their influence within the country. While the Houthi movement is at war with Al-Qaeda, their extremist ideology and acts of terrorism make them at war with the NATO forces as well. A known Houthi slogan is "God Is Great. Death to America. Death to Israel. Curse upon the Jews. Victory to Islam."<sup>50</sup> This slogan was shouted by thousands of Houthis at a gathering protesting the United States' bombing that killed the Iranian General Soleimani in January of 2020. The Houthis' reaction to the death of the General confirms the connection between Iran and the movement, which has been suspected and criticised. In a series of tweets Yemen's minister of information, Moammar Al-Eryani, begged the United State Office of Foreign Affairs to list the Houthi movement as an official terrorist organisation.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the Houthi movement's growing dominance in Yemen has led to the interference of several of the countries in the Middle East.

Qatar is one of the countries who have interfered with the Houthi movement in Yemen. The country has on several occasions been criticised for their way of interfering in Middle East politics. During a hostage exchange deal in 2014, Qatar was criticised for going

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<sup>48</sup> Newman 2006: 753

<sup>49</sup> Brehony & Al-Sarhan 2015: 28

<sup>50</sup> Arab Weekly Staff 2020.

<sup>51</sup> Middle East Eye Staff 2020.



against the original plan. Reports following the exchange uncovered that Qatar paid Jabhat al Nusra, an Al Qaeda group in Syria, ransom money in the exchange deal. The original deal for the exchange was the exchange of 13 Syrian and Lebanese nuns held by the terrorist organisation for 150 women and children held by the Syrian government. However, when Qatar also paid an unknown amount of money for the exchange the allegations towards the country increased.<sup>52</sup> When giving terrorist organisations money, whether it is with the intention to save the lives of hostages or as general funding, one must know that the money will strengthen the organisation. Qatar's interference with the Houthi movement are similar to its interference with the exchange deal. Prior to the exchange deal, Qatar tried to negotiate a ceasefire between the Houthi rebels and the Yemeni government. Similarly, to the exchange deal Qatar agreed to pay the Houthis an unknown amount of money so the movement would agree to ceasefire. While the terms are uncertain, sources have claimed that the deal included up to \$500 million in aid to restore the Houthi region.<sup>53</sup> However, Qatar failed to make a lasting peace and in 2014 the military group gained full control over big parts of Yemen. Since then, Qatar has been criticised for paving the way for the Houthi takeover in Yemen through the failed ceasefire, which granted the movement hundreds of million dollars to strengthen their power in Yemen. The case of the Houthis goes to show how years of injustice and discrimination can lead to the emergence of terrorism. When the movement became a militia after years of oppression, and when being in an environment characterised by oppression and social inequality, they were able to gain support. With the help of sponsors such as Qatar and Iran, the movement has been able to grow and gain strength. As a result of Yemen and Saudi-Arabia's efforts to make the Houthi movement an official terrorist organisation, it seems like it is just a matter of time before it is placed on the official terrorist organisation list.

### **Injustice in form of corruption**

Before the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011, there was a growing dissatisfaction with the Yemeni regime because of the corruption within the government.<sup>54</sup> After the uprisings, the people were promised a new reformed constitution that would focus on democratic processes and ending corruption. However, there was no consensus for such reforms and the corruption continued to dominate society in Yemen.<sup>55</sup> This, as previously mentioned, led to a new civil war in 2015. However, not all politicians during Saleh's reign were corrupt. The Yemen Parliamentarians Against Corruption had at the time, in an attempt to end corruption in the country uncovered several high-profile corruption cases in the oil sector during Saleh's regime.<sup>56</sup> During the 2006 election Saleh won with 77 percent of the votes. His campaign was based on the idea to end corruption in the state. However, after the election he did no such things, and instead he marginalized the supporters of the reform within his own party.<sup>57</sup> Both the fact that several high-profile politicians have been proven to be corrupt and Saleh breaking his campaign promises have been used in AQAP propaganda to maintain and enhance the people's dissatisfaction. The former Al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden has on several occasions referred to the humiliation and

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<sup>52</sup> Williams 2014.

<sup>53</sup> Dorsey 2015: 453

<sup>54</sup> Ally 2013: 75

<sup>55</sup> Ally 2013: 78

<sup>56</sup> Ally 2010: 76

<sup>57</sup> Ally 2010: 75

degradation of the Islamic world to justify terrorism.<sup>58</sup> In Yemen AQAP has taken advantage of the situation in their propaganda. All sections of the Al-Qaeda have had a tradition for blaming the West, especially the United States for their misfortunes, but the propaganda in Yemen does not focus on the West. For instance, in propaganda focusing on the problems in the oil sector, AQAP does not focus on the West's greed to exploit the Middle East to obtain oil, but rather on the fact that the locals are missing out on what is rightfully theirs because of corruption from their own government.<sup>59</sup> This shows that AQAP knows how to take advantage of people's dissatisfaction and feeling of injustice within the country in order to recruit members and gain support. This makes for an important argument for why a feeling of injustice is an important "root cause" for terrorism.

Similar to the situation in Yemen, the Qatari people have been promised a more democratic government. In 2005 the government formed a consultative assembly where 30 of its 45 members would be elected by the people. However, by 2020 the assembly has still not been elected. While Qatar is an emirate, meaning that the power is inherited and not elected by the people, there have been indications of democratic reforms in the country. However, the corruption is an important part of why this reform is not possible. The corruption in Qatar was once again in the world media's spotlight after Qatar was given the 2022 World Cup in football. The United States Justice Department is one of many who have accused Qatar of bribing FIFA officials in order to be elected to host the World Cup. These allegations have been denied by the Qatari government.<sup>60</sup> Even so, the World Cup will contribute to a massive growth in tourism and will be an opportunity for Qatar to advertise for their country, which would be of great value for the wealthiest people in Qatar. Despite the corruption, the current emir and his government are very popular amongst the people of Qatar. This is because the government has used significant amounts of resources on fighting poverty, building infrastructure, and securing education to all groups.<sup>61</sup> The ability to hide money transfers are certainly present. However, while the corruption in Qatar allow Qatari businesses and wealthy people to transfer money invisibly which in some cases to terrorist funding, there are no indications that the corruption impact the everyday lives of the majority of people to an extent where they react negatively to the injustice.

### **Social inequality as a root cause of terrorism**

According to the "root cause" theory a sense of social inequality within a country can lead to an increase in terrorist activity. One way to prevent social inequality is to have working welfare system securing a minimum to the lower layers of society. In a study by Burgoon from 2006, the connection between social or political welfare policies and the emergence of terrorism was examined. The study argues that one can see similarities between the role of inequality in other violent conflicts such as civil wars, and the role of inequality in the emergence of terrorism.<sup>62</sup> Several scholars have according to Burgoon argued for how inequality through income inequality and land inequality fuels the social discontent which again spur the violent movements. Closely connected to inequality and

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<sup>58</sup> Newman 2006: 753

<sup>59</sup> Phillips 2011: 111

<sup>60</sup> Al Jazeera 2020b.

<sup>61</sup> FN-Sambandet 2019.

<sup>62</sup> Burgoon 2006: 118

injustice is the lack of social welfare policies. In the study Burgoon concludes that social welfare policies tend to reduce factors such as social inequality. A factor that according to the "root cause" theory will increase terrorist activity. Therefore, the presence of functioning welfare policies will contribute in preventing terrorist activity.

When examining the two countries investigated in this thesis, one finds significant differences between the welfare policies in the countries. Burgoon's research indicates that a country with well-functioning welfare policies will suffer less both domestic but also transnational terrorism. Already before the unification of Yemen in 1990, the government of South Yemen was trying to build a welfare system. The policies were continued after the unification but were gradually less prioritised by President Saleh.<sup>63</sup> When the Yemeni Civil War started in 2015, the remainder of the welfare system collapsed. As a result, Yemen currently has no welfare system, which will increase the social inequality and contribute to a growing acceptance of terrorism. Now, while struggling to end the ongoing civil war, the country is trying to focus their spending on education and healthcare, which fit Burgoon's research on how to end poverty and social inequality. However, while making education and healthcare more available is a way to end social inequality over time, this has little effect on the current terrorist recruitment. This is because these changes are long term changes, that will fight terrorist recruitment over time, not instantly. Thus, while Yemen are doing their best in fighting terrorism, the lack of a welfare system that takes care of the poorest make joining terrorist organisations an easy choice for many. The propaganda often portrait life as a terrorist as a lucrative life in comparison to the life of many in Yemen. This is because members and supporters of terrorist organisations have better access to necessities such as food and water.<sup>64</sup>

As previously mentioned, there is a huge gap between the wealthiest in Qatar and the poorest. Despite this, Qatar has a functioning welfare system that is able to secure all its citizens their necessities. Thus, there are difficulties finding links between the social inequality in the country and the terrorist activity. This is correlated to Burgoon's conclusion that welfare policies prevent the negative consequences of social inequality.<sup>65</sup> This is because there is a welfare system that to some degree is supporting the lower levels of society in Qatar. Another important reason why there is no visible link between the two are that there are no indications that the lower layers in Qatar resort to terrorism. As previously mentioned, the terrorist activity in Qatar is connected to the wealthiest people and organisations in the country funding terrorist activity outside of Qatar's borders. Additionally, the government have in the last decade used a lot of resources on fighting poverty in the country, which has made them very popular amongst their people. As a consequence of Qatar's efforts, the general population in Qatar are satisfied with the government, thus making it harder for terrorism to emerge. There can be individuals whom, if being in an environment where terrorism was generally accepted, would be predisposed to joining a terrorist organisations because of their living condition. However, this terrorism is less likely to be turned against their own government because of the government's popularity. Thus, while there is social inequality in Qatar, the government is trying to decrease it by fighting poverty through education and welfare policies. This secures the people of their necessities, which will

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<sup>63</sup> Lacker 2017: 687

<sup>64</sup> Cable News Network 2012: 1.30

<sup>65</sup> Burgoon 2006: 118

lessen the possibility of terrorism. There are also no indications that there is a general acceptance amongst the Qatari people for terrorism, which will make establishing a terrorist network within the country an impossible task.

This chapter has examined the link between social inequality and injustice and terrorism. There are several links between the theory and the situation in Yemen and Qatar. One of the main arguments used in this chapter is that the Houthi movement started as a consequence of injustice and discrimination. When examining AQAP propaganda, this chapter has concluded that because the terrorist organisation use injustice as a factor in their propaganda there must be a significant link between the feeling of injustice and the emergence of terrorism and recruitment to terrorism. In Qatar, there is discrimination and feeling of injustice amongst the poorest within the country, but these groups do not resort to terrorist acts. This is because the government is able to secure a meaningful life for its citizens, making the dissatisfaction amongst the people limited. Thus, if an individual or small group would want to resort to terrorism, this would not likely be directed towards the government in Qatar, and would thus most likely lead to these individuals joining a terrorist organisation abroad. Concludingly, the "root cause" theory can explain the differences in terrorist activity on the grounds that the situation in Yemen leads to the emergence of terrorism while the situation in Qatar results to no domestic terrorism.

### **Chapter Three: "Problematic changes in the population"**

The last parts of the "root cause" theory that this thesis will examine is urbanisation and demographic changes. According to the theory changes within the population structure may lead to an environment where terrorism can thrive. Changes such as a rapid demographic growth, specially a growth of young males are factors that influence the terrorist activity in an area.<sup>66</sup> Closely connected to the demographic growth is urbanisation. This is because a growing population often leads to an increase in urbanisation. However, the urbanisation is often seen as a problem because it leads to growing unemployment and overpopulation in cities all over the world. Young men are generally the group in society that commits most crimes, which makes the group vulnerable to terrorist recruiting.<sup>67</sup> These problematic changes in the population will in this chapter be examined as root causes of terrorism. In order to examine these root causes, the chapter will focus on unemployment amongst young men in the MENAP region and the increasing pressure on resources created by the demographic growth.

#### **Urbanisation and the emergence of terrorism**

As previously mentioned, urbanisation is often seen as a problem because it leads to overpopulation in the cities. However, research indicates that there is no direct connection between the population density and the emergence of terrorism.<sup>68</sup> Even so, it is important to mention the effect the population density has on terrorism. While there is no documented link between population density and terrorism, societies where people tend to meet in crowds are natural targets for terrorist organisations. In a society where most people live in cities, large crowds will meet in marketplaces, parks, trains, and busses. Big cities are therefore often targeted by terrorist groups. Sanaa, the most populated city in Yemen, has on several occasion been the victim of terrorism. One example of a terrorist attack in the city, was when the newly established Yemeni branch of the Islamic state conducted a suicide bombing in 2015. The terrorist organisation sent two suicide bombers into a mosque in Sanaa. The attack was closely planned to hurt and kill as many people as possible and thus coincided with the celebration of Eid at Friday prayers at the mosque. 126 people died in the attack and it was seen as a new blow to the country already struggling with AQAP and Houthi presence.<sup>69</sup> Consequently, the urbanisation creates accessible targets for the terrorist organisations, which can ultimately lead to an increase in the terrorist activity. However, these accessible targets are more accessible in countries where there is a dysfunctional police force or state control, such as in Yemen. In Qatar there are big cities as well, but because of strict state control and a general control and surveillance of the Qatari people, these targets are not as available. Qatar also have a significant smaller population than Yemen, despite of the high population density.

Another factor connected to the rising urbanisation is that it in many cases leads to rising unemployment rates. A study by Aniruddha Bagchi and Jomon A. Paul examines the link between unemployment amongst young males and terrorism in the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan (MENAP) region. Their research focused on the existing

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<sup>66</sup> Newman 2006: 752

<sup>67</sup> Newman 2006: 754

<sup>68</sup> Newman 2006: 758

<sup>69</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation 2015.

research of unemployment as a measure of economic deprivation. In their research they conclude that there is a link between youth unemployment and domestic terrorism, but not for transnational terrorism.<sup>70</sup> The positive relationship between youth unemployment and domestic terrorism thus supports theories that dissatisfaction due to deprivation stemming from unemployment can lead to violent acts such as terrorism. This correlates with the current situation in Yemen. Since the unification of the country in 1990, Yemen has been characterized by civil wars and instability. Because of this, the unemployment rates have been high since the 1990s. When other countries were getting out of poverty and benefitting from the globalisation process, Yemen found themselves at a loss for investors willing to invest in the country. The Gulf War also contributed to Yemen losing a lot of their foreign aid, because the government chose to support the losing side of the conflict.<sup>71</sup> This combined with a failing agricultural sector and the corrupt oil sector led to an increase in the unemployment.

Immediately following the Gulf War, the unemployment was unofficially estimated at 30-40%. This was significantly higher than the official number of 10%.<sup>72</sup> One of the reasons for why the estimated number was significantly higher than the official number was that the government had little control over its citizens at the time and was not able to control who were employed and unemployed. When Yemen redeemed its foreign aid, the corruption in the country was at a rate where the aid did not stimulate the economy. Therefore, the unemployment rates continued to rise through the early 2000s. By 2010 the unemployment was at an alarming 40% and half the population of Yemen was living on less than \$2 a day.<sup>73</sup> This growth correlates with the growth in the terrorist activity in Yemen. Research argue that the connection between high unemployment rates and terrorism provide motivation for governments to reduce unemployment by enhancing economic growth to create jobs and improve the education system.<sup>74</sup> These measures are made to give the youth the skills and knowledge necessary in order to be a necessity for the society, which will ultimately have a positive impact on the lives of the youth, especially the young males. However, the situation in Yemen does not allow for such changes to happen. The Houthi rebels have blocked half of the United Nations' aid programmes in the country.<sup>75</sup> This as an attempt to force the UN to give them control over the humanitarian campaign to prevent civilian casualties. The consequences of the increasing unemployment created by the urbanisation and demographic growth in Yemen are closely connected to the already examined root causes: poverty, social inequality, and injustice. The unemployment stops the citizens opportunities to get themselves out of poverty which gives them an environment and situation where the solution might be terrorism. In a country where more people are in desperate situations there is also more acceptance for terrorism, thus allowing terrorist organisations to gain a stronghold easier than in other countries.

When examining the urbanisation in Qatar, there has been some increase in urbanisation over the last decades. However, Qatar is a significantly smaller country than Yemen, meaning that most people have been living in cities for centuries. Furthermore, the population of Qatar is also a lot smaller than the population in Yemen. Therefore, upon

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<sup>70</sup> Bagchi & Paul 2018: 15

<sup>71</sup> Colton 2010: 416

<sup>72</sup> Colton 2010: 415

<sup>73</sup> Colton 2010: 418

<sup>74</sup> Bagchi & Paul 2018: 19

<sup>75</sup> Al-Jazeera 2020a.

examining the unemployment in the country, the unemployment rates are extremely low. As a result of Qatar's wealth, the country has been developing new infrastructure and therefore has been at need for foreign workforce. In 2013, over 1.4 million foreign workers were employed in Qatar, which makes up 90% of the workforce in the country.<sup>76</sup> A huge part of these workers are from poor countries in Asia and are unskilled or semi-skilled construction workers. In order to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Qatar has been building several football stadiums and new hotels. This has led to an increasing need for labour. However, Qatar has been criticised for treating these foreign workers as slaves.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, the "root cause" theory argues that because there are no problems revolving urbanisation that can lead to for example rising unemployment rates, there should not be any domestic terrorism within Qatar. This correlates with the study of Bagchi and Paul. However, neither the "root cause" theory nor the research of Bagchi and Paul can explain the existing transnational terrorist activity in Qatar. As previously mentioned, there is not domestic terrorist activity in the country, but some groups are funding terrorist activity outside the country. Therefore, because terrorist funding is not a part of domestic terrorism, the theory of Bagchi and Paul coincide with the current situation in Qatar. Moreover, the urbanisation part of the "root cause" theory, when applying it to Qatar can help explain that there is not any domestic terrorism in the country. Even so, the theory does not explain the occurrence of terrorist funding and why some groups in Qatar use their resources to fund terrorism. However, it is important to acknowledge the fact that terrorist organizations do not always emerge from the societies in which they conduct terrorist acts.<sup>78</sup> Meaning that the terrorism happening in for example France, may be controlled and conducted from outside the country. Another part of Bagchi and Paul's research concluded that transnational terrorism tends to decrease with political stability and regulatory quality.

### **Demographic growth and absence of resources**

A demographic growth in an area is seen as a significant problem. This is because a sudden growth in the population put an increasing pressure on the resources in the country. If a country is unable to keep up with the population and secure housing, healthcare, sanitation and other necessities, the growing population will suffer. Closely connected to the previously examined root causes, the demographic growth can ultimately lead to dissatisfaction which can spur the emergence of terrorism. When examining the demographic growth in Yemen, there is a disturbing pattern. From 2010 to 2020, the population increased by six million, from 23 million to 29 million.<sup>79</sup> While a sudden demographic growth can increase poverty, poverty can also increase the demographic growth. This is because poor societies, especially in developing countries, have no tradition of family planning and thus also limited access to contraceptives. Poor societies also have limited healthcare and few institutions for taking care of the elderly. Therefore, poor parents often have more children, so that there will be someone to take care of them when they are unable to take care of themselves. While the tradition is centred around the fear that many of the children will die at a young age, the child mortality increases, making a demographic explosion. This is what is happening in Yemen with the child mortality decreasing 50% from 2000 to 2020.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Bener 2017: 2

<sup>77</sup> Bener 2017: 3

<sup>78</sup> Newman 2006: 759

<sup>79</sup> FN-sambandet 2020.

<sup>80</sup> FN-sambandet 2017.

One example of the population growth in Yemen is the capital Sanaa, that is one of the capitals in the world with the fastest growing population. In 1975 the population was approximately 200,000, however by 2020 the population has grown to almost 3 million.<sup>81</sup> When the population density increases the need for resources in that area increases as well. However, in Yemen's case there is a significant lack of resources and the mobilisation of resources to different areas are therefore difficult. As previously mentioned, one of the major problems in Yemen, is the lack of water. This is because Yemen is a desert state with no permanent rivers, meaning it is dependent on rain and underground water. However, before the enormous demographic changes this was not a major issue. Now, the situation is one of the most critical aspects of Yemen's state failure.<sup>82</sup> The agricultural sector also demands huge amounts of water, estimated to 90% of the water in the country. In 2019, Yemen's access to water was at 2% of the world average.<sup>83</sup> This connects the urbanisation and poverty causes together. As previously mentioned, a lack of resources can lead to "desperate solution", in this case terrorism. Therefore, it is natural to argue that the demographic explosion in Yemen has led to an increase of terrorism, because of the increasing pressure on the resources. Terrorist organisations located in Yemen are able to increase their recruitment and strengthen their hold in the area because lack of resources lead to a feeling of desperation which can lead to desperate acts such as terrorism. Despite the lack of resources, the organisations are able to import weapons and food through their sponsors. One of their main sponsors allegedly being Iran, one of the strongest military powers of the Middle East.<sup>84</sup> As previously mentioned joining a terrorist organisation can also be seen as a way to survive because members of terrorist organisations in poor countries such as Yemen often have more access to necessities such as water and food.

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While the demographic growth in Yemen has led to an increasing pressure on the country's resources, Qatar has not experienced this demographic explosion nor the lack of resources. As mentioned, Qatar has had an increase in foreign labour during the last decades. This has led to a shift in the demography, meaning that there are currently more men in the country than women, which can influence the demographic growth. Another reason why Qatar has not experienced the same growth that Yemen has, is because Qatar is one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Qatar's people are therefore educated when it comes to family planning, they have healthcare for their elderly, and they do not depend on their children in the same way the people in Yemen does. In other words, Qatar shows the same demographic tendencies that the western world has. Equality between the sexes are also an important factor for controlling the demography. Therefore, when examining Qatar's demography in the light of the theory, there is a link between the absence of domestic terrorism and the demographic growth in the country. In other words, the stable demography in Qatar contributes to keep the country stable thus lessening the possibilities that terrorism can flourish in the country.

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<sup>81</sup> FN-sambandet 2018.

<sup>82</sup> Junea 2010: 138

<sup>83</sup> Al-Hebshi 2019: 2

<sup>84</sup> Arab Weekly Staff 2020.

<sup>85</sup> Cable News Network 2012: 1.30



## Conclusions

This thesis has examined in how far the “root cause” theory can explain the differences in the terrorist activity in Yemen and Qatar. In the first chapter the thesis covered the poverty aspect of the theory, through a focus on poverty of resources and poverty of opportunities. This chapter concluded that while the “root cause” theory aligns with the situation in Yemen. Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the world and it is characterized by civil wars and a growing influence from different terrorist organisations. This has led to an extreme lack of resources, both when it comes to GDP but also food, water, and other essentials. The Yemeni people are also in a situation with few opportunities for social mobility and education. The theory also fit the current situation in Qatar. While, the findings of this thesis conclude that there is terrorist activity in Qatar, despite the country being one of the wealthiest countries in the world, there is no link between poverty and this terrorist activity. This is because the terrorist activity stems from the top layers of the Qatari society, whom are funding terrorism outside of Qatar. Therefore, because the theory focuses on domestic terrorism, the theory is still able to explain why there is no domestic terrorism in Qatar.

When examining the link between social inequality, injustice and the emergence of terrorist activity, the chapter focused on several aspects of Yemen and Qatar. Firstly, an interesting case is the one of the Houthi movement, which is not on the official list of terrorist organisations, but Yemen and its neighbouring countries have on several occasions attempted to put the organisation on the list. The Houthi movement is a group that have suffered for decades under a regime that according to them has discriminated the region which has led to the lack of infrastructure and an increase in poverty in the region. Qatar has also been involved with the movement’s activity in Yemen. Qatar tried to create a truce in Yemen, by doing so Qatar payed millions of dollars to the Houthi movement. The truce failed and the money was likely used to strengthen the movements military power, which is one of the reasons why Qatar’s relationship to different terrorist organisations have been investigated. Another important part of the theory examined in the chapter was the connection between injustice and terrorism. This was done by investigating the corruption within the countries. In Yemen, the corruption has led to the feeling of injustice and dissatisfaction to a degree where terrorist organisations are taking advantage of it in their propaganda. This is also the case when it comes to the social inequality in the country. It has the same effect on the people as the feeling of injustice, it creates dissatisfaction. AQAP has at several occasions aimed their propaganda towards the Yemeni government to fuel the dissatisfaction to increase their recruitment. This shows how the feeling of injustice and the growing social inequality in Yemen contributes to an increase in terrorist activity and terrorist recruitment. In Qatar, there are difficulties finding links between these factors of the “root cause” theory. This because, while there are feelings of injustice and social inequality in the country, the government is doing their best to provide the people with necessities, which prevents these factors becoming the basis of dissatisfaction. Therefore, the theory is able to explain these differences but with some shortcomings.

When examining the urbanisation and demographic changes within Qatar and Yemen, the thesis argues that the changes seen in Yemen leads to terrorism. The first argument is that the tendencies within the country leads to high rates of unemployment. Based on the findings of Bagchi and Paul (2018), high unemployment rates lead to the development of groups of young men, which is known to be the group most likely to

commit criminal acts, and these groups will be more likely to resort to terrorism. This is also connected to the recruitment process of the terrorist organisation. The organisations often speak to these groups, men with little prospects for their lives and in the search for a meaning. Another factor found that leads to terrorist activity in Yemen is the rapid demographic growth which puts further pressure on the lack of resources. The country's water shortage is one of its main problems and the problem is growing alongside the population. This lack of resources is also a growing problem because of the urbanisation. The urbanisation leads to the need to distribute these resources to the areas where they are needed the most. However, the current situation in Yemen does not allow such distribution. This is connected to the poverty aspect of the "root cause" theory, and helps support the theory that desperate people, such as people that are lacking crucial resources like water are more likely to resort to desperate solutions, like terrorism. In Qatar, there is a growing urbanisation and high population density but because the country is a small country with less than three million inhabitants, the urbanisation and demographic changes does not influence the terrorist activity in the country. This is because the urbanisation and demographic changes do not lead to a growing dissatisfaction.

Overall, this thesis shows that there is a need for further research on the concept of root causes of terrorism. While the theory can help explain some differences between the presence of domestic terrorism in Yemen and Qatar, the theory has its shortcomings in explaining why the wealthiest members of the Qatari society contribute to transnational terrorism. The fear of undermining the efforts of NATO and the United States in the region still leads to a neglect of the main principles of the theory. Even so, as illustrated in this thesis, the impact poverty, urbanisation, social inequality, demographic changes, and the feeling of injustice have on the terrorist recruitment cannot be ignored. Therefore, it is crucial that there are continuous efforts made to decrease these factors. However, as concluded in the research of Enders and Hoover (2012), a sudden increase in resources can decrease domestic terrorism, but will increase the transnational terrorism. Consequently, ending terrorism is a long process, but as the last two decades of war has shown, violence does not decrease terrorism.

*With guns you can kill terrorists, with education you can kill terrorism.*  
- Malala Yousafzai, Nobel Peace Prize winner (2014)

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