

Abstract

Nowadays, the theory of proxy warfare receives more and more attention. However, it is not an entirely new phenomenon. Recent conflicts in Syria and Yemen got proxy warfare to the forefront of academic and public interest. This thesis aims to describe the existing proxy relationships in the area of the Middle East and analyze those relations from the perspectives of an actor's motivation to forge such a relationship and management of the proxy. The principal-agent (p-a) analysis is the approach that allows us to do that. We apply this approach to three case studies. In the first case study, we analyze the principal-agent relationship between Iran and Hezbollah. In this relationship, we can observe a high alignment of interests, and therefore it should be a textbook example of the p-a relationship. In the second case study, we focus on the relationship between Israel and Hamas. However, it may seem like there is no possibility these two actors will cooperate in any sense. We described that if "declared interests" (ideology) are put aside, both principal and agent can find a common pragmatic interest enabling them to establish the p-a relationship. The third case study analyzes Hamas as a hybrid actor, suggesting that one agent (Hamas) can be in the principal-agent relationship with two hostile principals (Iran, Israel). However, the nature of particular p-a relationship is different.