Marcin Styszyński

PRESENT TRENDS AMONG JIHADISTS
AFTER THE ARAB SPRING

Post-revolutionary environment

The Arab Spring created three main trends in current political Islam. The first field concerns official Muslim parties declaring implementation of some Islamic values in legal, constitutional and social life. They resign from violence and accept political dialogue and mechanisms such as free elections, referendum or parliamentary activities. The second factor reflects Salafi preaching and radical ideas preserving conservative traditions from the period of the Prophet Mohammad. Salafi groups are focused on their theological teaching, charity work and popularization of moral values among societies. The third category concerns jihadist organizations that declare violence and fight against authorities and societies. They refer to the concept of *takfir* (excommunication), which considers the state and the society as a sinful and atheistic group supporting immoral and corrupted governments. Moreover, the idea of *takfir* is close to Al-Qaeda activities regarding violent renaissance of historic caliphate and implementation of strict sharia rules. Al-Qaeda also adapts defensive and offensive sense of jihad to modern political context related to Western policy in the Muslim world.

The victory of the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi groups in parliamentary elections in Egypt and Tunisia in 2011, the presidency of Mohammad Mursi as

well as control of main regions in Libya and Syria by extremist militias increased influences of radical Islam in post-revolutionary countries.[1]

However, after three years of the transition process Arab societies have changed their attitude to the crucial values of the Arab revolution such as democracy, freedom, liberalism or fight against authoritarianism. Egyptian, Tunisian, Algerian or Iraqi and Libyan societies started to compare those ideas to chaos, destabilization, terrorism and economic crisis. Public opinion in the Arab world invented a new definition: *kharīf 'arabī* (Arab autumn), which replaces the positive meanings of the Arab Spring. The implementation of secular or military governments and banning of Islamist organizations provoked concerns among militants and leaders, who sustained their negative and antagonistic reactions or declared cooperation with new authorities.

For instance, some Salafi movements reinterpreted the loyalty to the government based on the concept of *khurūj 'an al-ḥākim* (opposition to the ruler). The idea reflects the philosophy of conservative Muslim scholars like Abu Hanifa, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal or Ibn Taymiyya and Abd al-Wahhab, who ordered loyalty and cooperation with caliphs and emirs representing *Umma* (Muslim Nation).[2] Disobedience to the ruler is allowed in case of sinful and corrupted behavior of the authority. However, the negative opinions about the Caliph must be elaborated carefully by different theologians who issue common legal judgments (ar. *fatwa*). The following examples show the implementation of the philosophy in the current political circumstances.

The general Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi encouraged some radical Muslim leaders to participate in his symbolic speech declaring the overthrow of Muslim Brotherhood's power in Egypt. Positive feedback was declared by *Nour* (Light) party, which refers to Salafi ideology and long preaching activity called *Da'wa salafiyya* (Salafi Call).[3] *Nour* played an important role after the collapse of Mubarak's regime and it became the second political power after Freedom and Justice party affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. Besides, Salafi representatives supported Al-Sisi's presidential campaign by issuing theological manifestos and *fatwas* justifying the policy of the army and glorifying the candidate for the presidency. *Nour*'s key figures stated that Al-Sisi assures Muslim identity of the society and he guaranties security and stability of the state after a long period of demonstrations, clashes, political turmoil and economic crisis.

Similar trends concern some religious leaders in Maghreb. For instance, the radical Sheikh Mohammad Fizazi from Morocco represented extremist ideas against authorities. He was suspected of inspiring Casablanca terrorist attack in 2003 when 45 people were killed as a result of suicide bombings in the popular

---

[1] More about the Arab Spring and current political tendencies in the Arab world see: J. Zdanowski, *Bliski Wschód, bunt czy rewolucja?*, Kraków 2011.

[2] Nazīr al-Khazrājī, *Ashari'at al-bayān*, Bayrūt 2011, p. 277–286.

[3] www.alquds.co.uk/?p=171339&print=1 [accessed 20.08.2014].

restaurant.[4] Sheikh Fizazi was arrested and imprisoned for 30 years. However, after 8 years he was released and demonstrated a dramatic change in his attitude to the Moroccan monarchy. He called the king Mohammad VI: *Amīr al-mu'minīn* (The Emir of all emirs). The meaning reflects a notable title popularized in the Muslim tradition and Arab-Muslim empires. Sheikh Fizazi refused violence and underlined some conservative moral values of the state. He also legitimatised the religious identity of the monarchy and its social policy.[5]

Moreover, the Libyan case pays attention as well. Abdelhakim Belhaj the veteran of the Libyan resistance during Gaddafi's regime and an important member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group affiliated with Al-Qaeda Central established a new party *Waṭan* (Nation). He resigned from radical religious demands and opted for a new state based on regional and nationalist or patriotic values. He participated in reunions of The National Transitional Council of Libya and then the Libyan General National Congress.[6] The reconciliation feedback has been also expressed recently by Algerian Islamic Salvation Front – FIS banned after the parliamentary elections in 1991 and terrorist campaign against secular and military forces. The ex-FIS leader Abdelkader Boukhamkham participated in meetings regarding negotiations on the new constitution and future cooperation with the government. The debate was also accepted by the key figures of the Salafi movements like Madani Mezrag or Al-Hashimi Sahnouni.[7]

In fact, the loyalty gives a chance of peaceful implementation of some sharia values into constitutions and social life of each country. It also enables to conduct preaching activities and to receive financial and political support from the government. Besides, the new secular leaders gain religious and ideological legitimization, which decreases influences of opposition, including extremist organizations like Al-Qaeda.

Al-Qaida Central

The death of Osama bin Laden and other Al-Qaida's leaders like Anwar Awlaqi or Abu Yahia al-Libi as well as political activities of Islamic groups during the Arab Spring have affected structures, activities and strategy of the organization.

---

[4] M. Lahcen, "Morocco remembers 2003 Casablanca attacks", *Magharebia*, 17 May 2013, www.magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/reportage/2013/05/17/reportage-01 [accessed 20.08.2014].

[5] H. Barrada, "Mohamed Fizazi le salafiste de sa majeste", *Jeune Afrique*, 11 Avril 2014, www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/JA2778p050.xml0/ [accessed 20.08.2014].

[6] J.-P. Perrin, "Abdelhakim Belhaj, le retour d'al-Qaeda", *Liberation*, 26 Aout 2011, www.liberation.fr/monde/2011/08/26 [accessed 20.09.2014].

[7] H. Guenanfa, "Révision de la Constitution: invité par Ouyahia, un ex-dirigeant du FIS refuse de participer aux consultations", *Tout sur l'Algerie – TSA*, 1 juin 2014, www.tsa-algerie.com/2014/06/01/revision-de-la-constitution-invite-par-ouyahia-un-ex-dirigeant-du-fis-refuse-de-participer-aux-consultations/ [accessed 20.08.2014].

Al-Qaida referred to the transition process in the Arab world and considered it as a new challenge facilitating the implementation of rigorous religious ideas. Ayman al-Zawahiri released different manifestos and statements elaborating the new political atmosphere in the region.[8] For instance, he applied some symbolic meanings appeared during the revolution such as *thawra* (revolution), *ḥurriyya* (liberty) *'adāla ijtimā'iyya* (social justice) or *sha'b* (people) and *shabāb* (youth). The words described enthusiasm and optimism after the collapse of the regimes. They also glorified revolutionaries and legitimized the organization among the revolutionaries. Al-Zawahiri combined the revolutionary meanings with religious slogans like *sharī'a* (sharia law), *umma islāmiyya* (Muslim Nation) or *rāyāt al-islām* (banner of Islam). The theological words reserved the ideological backgrounds of the organization and intended to create positive image. He also presented some arguments about hypocrisy of Western countries and local secular forces, which supported the Arab dictators for a long time. He proposed an alternative regarding establishment of an Islamic state based on sharia values and traditions of Muslim empires.

However, failures and disappointments of the Arab Spring and destabilization of the political and social situation as well economic crisis encouraged Al-Zawahiri to present a new concept of jihad discussed in the manifesto *Khurūj min dā'irat al-'abthi wa al-fashli* (Exit of the circle of inefficiency and failure)[9]. It contains an innovative vision of the battle and identification of new frontlines in the changing Arab and Muslim world. He specifies Syria, Egypt and Chechnya as the main destinations of jihad.

Syria becomes main battlefield for jihadists who compare it to Afghanistan in eighties when foreign volunteers supported local rebels against the Soviet invasion. The Syrian conflict is also a spectacular and emotional inspiration for volunteers fighting against the brutality of Al-Assad's regime. Al-Zawahiri encourages all jihadists to finish their disputes, unite and fight for the same reasons and goals regarding the implementation of the caliphate in Syria.

The battle in Syria is confronted with jihad in Chechnya. After the death of regional leader Doku Umarov, Al-Qaeda Central emphasized Arab or Middle Eastern context of Caucasus front and appointed the new emir Ali Abu Muhammad a.k.a. Aliaskhab Kebekov. Kebekov spent all his life abroad and established good communication channels with different rebels in the Arab and Islam countries. Al-Zawahiri concept regards reinforcement of financial and logistic support to Caucasus rebels.[10] Moreover, jihad in Chechnya enables to conduct political and economic pressure on Russia, which supports Al-Assad clan and his allies like Iran or Hezbollah in Lebanon. Besides, there are 14 thousands Chechen insurgents in

---

[8] www.muslm.org/vb/showthreat.php [accessed 20.08.2014].

[9] www.archive.org/details/Tampering, see also: www.nokbah.com/~w3/?p=4389 [accessed 20.08.2014].

[10] M. Vatchagaev, "North Caucasus militants announce new leader to replace Umarov", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, No. 11, Issue 54.

Syria who integrate the fight with hostility against Russian invaders in their own country. The group *Jaysh al-Muhājirīn wa al-Anṣār* (The Army of Immigrants and Mohammad's Supporters) with its Caucasian leaders: Omar Gorgashvili, Abu Omar Shishani or Magomed Abdurakhmarov is a good example.

Besides, Egypt is another important point for Al-Zawahiri. Radicalization of Islamic movements after the overthrow of Mohammad Mursi, intensification of terrorist attacks by the group *Anṣār Bayt al-Maqdis* (The Followers of Jerusalem) or Bedouin's rebellion in Sinai encouraged Al-Qaida to focus on the new Egyptian circumstances. Al-Zawahiri states that moderate Islamic forces have failed because of peaceful cooperation with secularists and Western governments. He also hopes that all insurgents will return to the real military fight against their true enemies.

However, Al-Qaida Central has been affected by other political and social trends in different parts of the Middle East and Africa.

Iraq and Syria

Recent activities of Islamist groups in Iraq and Syria result from marginalisation of Sunni communities after the US intervention in 2003 and collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime that privileged Shia opposition and humiliated Sunni clans. Disproportion of social and religious representatives in the new government caused Sunni uprisings in 2006 and then in 2013 in Ramadi, Falluja or Anbar provinces. Besides, regime's officers and soldiers removed from the apparatus also joined the rebellion and shared their organizational and military experiences with the Sunni opposition.[11] The situation created favorable motivations for jihadist groups like *Al-Qā'ida fī al-'Irāq* (Al-Qaeda in Iraq – AQI), *Shūrat al-Mujāhidīn* (Mujahideen Council) or *Ad-Dawla al-Islāmiyya fī al-'Irāq* (The Islamic State of Iraq). They assimilated among Sunni communities and cooperated with different political and tribal forces against domination of Shia government considered as a heretic and apostate authority.[12]

Furthermore, brutality and escalation of the Syrian conflict as well as failures of political negotiations and peace talks intensified the Sunni-Shia schism. The official debate and discourse of main political and religious representatives studied the question of Al-Assad's Shia-allawit identity and cooperation of the Syrian regime with other Shia allies such as Iran, Iraq or Hezbollah in Lebanon.

For instance, the religious schism is evident in sermons of popular Sunni preacher Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. Their speeches delivered in the context of the violent events in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq

---

[11] J.-P. Perrin, "Les ex du regime de Saddam Hussein, terreau des radicaux", *Liberation*, 12 Juin 2014, www.liberation.fr/monde/2011/08/26 [accessed 20.09.2014].

[12] F. Alani, "Irak-Syrie, meme combats", *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Janvier 2014, p. 6. See also: L. de Saint Perier, "Back to Irak", *Jeune Afrique*, 22–28 juin 2014, p. 54–56.

concern rhetoric devices, which influence the audience and encourage potential militants to support particular religious block.[13]

Islamist rebels from Syria refer to the same ideological and theological backgrounds but they are divided in their radicalism and strategy. For example, *Jaysh al-Mujāhidīn* (The Army of Mujahideen) or *Jabhat Ṣuwwār Suryā* (The Front of Syrian Revolutionaries) fight for an Islamic state but they refuse *takfīr* and cooperate with secular opposition, including the Free Syrian Army. However, *Jabha islāmiyya* (Islamic Front) is the biggest moderate group, which includes 45 000 insurgents gathered in eight battalions.[14]

Fights among rival factions, ambitions of particular leaders as well as ideological discussions strengthened the positions of the two main groups *Jabhat al-Nuṣra li-Ahl ash-Shām* (The Support Front for the People of Sham-al-Nusra Front) affiliated with Al-Qaeda Central and *Ad-Dawla al-Islāmiyya fī al-ʿIrāq wa ash-Shām* (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria – ISIS) headed by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.[15] They share the same ideas regarding establishment of the caliphate based on strict sharia law but they discuss the loyalty to Al-Qaida Central and Ayman al-Zawahiri or ISIS leader. Al-Zawahiri condemns ISIS for its autonomy and disobedience. He also stresses that al-Nusra Front under leadership of Abu Mohammad al-Jawlani is the only representative of jihad in Syria. ISIS should return to its first local structures in Iraq and its name: The Islamic State of Iraq.

The leadership of Al-Zawahiri is ignored by many insurgents. For instance, the spokesman of ISIS Abu Mohammad al-Adnani issued the manifesto *Mā kāna haḏā manhajunā wa lan yakuna* (It was not our way and it won't be)[16], which criticizes Al-Qaida Central and defines final separation between Al-Zawahiri and the rest of fighters.

Al-Adnani states that the leader betrayed insurgents, who fight every day in battlefields of Iraq or Syria. Furthermore, Al-Zawahiri distorted basic ideas of jihad, which gathered different militants in the world. The message also glorifies jihad heroes like Osama bin Laden or Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and condemns the current leader of cooperation with infidels and secularists. Al-Adnani also declares that Al-Zawahiri resigned from jihad and implementation of sharia law. He tries to involve the organization in current political and social processes in the Arab and Muslim world by creation of wide *Umma* based on different religious and social trends, including secular forces. ISIS encourages its supporters to continue the fight and return to the roots of jihad. Domination of ISIS in the region was finally de-

---

[13] M. Styszyński, "Środki retoryczne w emocjonalizacji konfliktu syryjskiego", *Forum Artis Rhetoricae* 2013, No. 3 (34).

[14] A. Rodier, *Syrie: situation debut 2014*, "Centre Francais de Recherche sur le Renseignement", 21 December 2013, No. 337, www.cf2r.org/fr/notes-actualite/syrie-situation-debut-2014.php [accessed 16.07.2014].

[15] Abd al-Munʿim Shitūr, "Dāʿash yukaffiru Mursī wa yukhawwinu An-Nuṣra wa yuhājimu Aẓ-Ẓawāhirī", *Al-Chorouq*, 15 June 2014, p. 12.

[16] www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5vweRAVBFk [accessed 16.07.2014].

termined in the end of June 2014, especially after announcement of the caliphate by Al-Baghdadi, who delivered a symbolic sermon in the main mosque in Mosul, Iraq.[17] Liturgical character of the speech, theological phrases, pathetic words as well as suggestive slogans and demands demonstrated the importance and distinction of the organization in the worldwide jihadist movement.

Economic and financial goals became an important factor for ISIS as well. The groups has stolen 429 million USD from the Iraqi central bank and seized Baiji oil refinery in the north of Baghdad as well as strategic dam near Mosul. Insurgents also took control of Shaar gas field near Palmyra, one of Syria's largest hydrocarbons reservoirs.[18] It should be pointed out that ISIS did not pursuit its offensive to the Iraqi capital and concentrated on financial profits in order to weaken the central Shia government and strengthen its own political power in the region.

Al-Baghdadi's followers also began massive media campaign. They publish an English version of the *Dabiq* magazine that targets young, Western audience, attracts potential volunteers and encourages them to join the new state in the Middle East.[19] The journal includes photos illustrating harvest campaign and distribution of food and water in controlled regions. Other pictures show brutal executions of Shia prisoners, representatives of Christian and Yazidi communities. ISIS also applies some euphemistic words and sentences already known in radical Islamist propaganda. For example, different opponents are usually called *ṣalībiyyūn* (crusaders), *ṭaghūt* (a devil, a Satan) or *kuffār* (sinners) and *murtaddūn* (apostates).[20]

The *Dabiq* magazine also contains emotional photos of successful offensive in Syria and Iraq, victorious parades of militants in controlled cities as well as failures of official forces from Baghdad. ISIS also points out its campaign against different Muslim branches, especially Shia and Sufi communities. For example, some colorful and sophisticated graphics show destroyed shrines and wounded Iraqi soldiers among fires and explosions. The pictures are followed by symbolic sentences such as: *Khalifa declared*: *A new era has arrived* or: *It's either the Islamic state of the flood*. ISIS resigns from deep theological argumentations and limits the debate to short messages including citation of particular Quranic verses or ideological statements of leaders and insurgents.

---

[17] www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXempOO7Fl4. See also: www.iraqinews.com/features/urgent-video-isis-releases-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-sermon-mosul-grand-mosque/ [accessed 16.07.2014].

[18] P. Mahadevan, "Jihadism in Africa: Marching together, striking separately, *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis* 2014, Vol. 6, No. 7, p. 4–7. See also: R. Norland, S. Al-Salhy, "Extremists Attack Iraq's Biggest Oil Refinery", *The New York Times*, 18 June 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/06/19/world/middleeast/iraqi-oil-refinery-ablaze-as-army-and-militants-clash.html?_r=0 [accessed 16.07.2014].

[19] The PDF version of the magazine: www.ia802500.us.archive.org/24/items/dbq01_desktop_en/dbq01_desktop_en.pdf [accessed 16.07.2014].

[20] M. Styszyński, "Al-Qaeda's Structure According to Propaganda Techniques", *Acta Asiatica Varsoviensia* 2011, No. 24, p. 125–136.
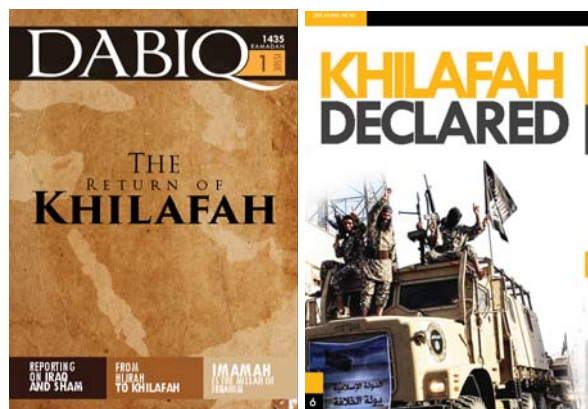
Cover and one of the pages from the *Dabiq* magazine presenting main headlines elaborated in the publication, including policy and strategy of the new caliphate.

In fact, ISIS massive campaign decreased al-Nusra operational and ideological capacities. The indoctrination is usually limited to traditional jihadist websites such as *Shabakat al-Jihād al-'Alām* (Worldwide Jihad Network) or *Shabakat Anṣār al-Mujāhidīn* (Mujahideen Followers Network).[21] However, the websites are often blocked or suspended and they do not target wide audience like YouTube channels, English publications or Twitter and Facebook profiles coordinated by ISIS militants. Besides, al-Nusra Front does not carry out spectacular acts like video transmission of Al-Baghdadi's speeches in mosques, parades in controlled provinces and brutal executions of hostages.

al-Nusra's militants also try to distinguish operations and they emphasis specific strategy of the organization. For example, they started to defend Palestinian case instead of Al-Baghdadi who states that ISIS fighters must overthrow infield and corrupted regimes in Arab countries and then destroy Israel. Besides, al-Nusra Front has seized recently border crossing in Quneitra province connecting Syria with Golan Heights and announced potential attacks against the Hebrew State in order to liberate Gaza and Jerusalem.[22] Al-Jawlani's fighters also target foreigners, who still serve and work in Syria like journalists, NGO's workers or doctors. In 2012 they captured the journalist Peter Theo Curtis, who was finally released by the end of August. al-Nusra is also responsible for the kidnap of 43 UN peacekeepers during fights in Quneitra. Contrary to ISIS, al-Nusra does not commit brutal executions released afterwards in the Internet like it happened with James Foley's decap-

---

[21] www.shabakataljahad.com, see also: www.as-ansar.com [accessed 04.09.2014].

[22] E. Miller, "Syrian al-Qaeda Fighters Flee Southward toward Israel Border", *The Times of Israel*, 25 July 2014, www.timesofisrael.com/syrian-al-qaeda-fighters-flee-southward-toward-israel-border/ [accessed 06.09.2014].

itation. The group often prefers enormous ransoms or liberation of comrades from prisons. Such demands were presented after the kidnap of 43 UN peacekeepers.[23]

Arabian Peninsula

Some new trends are also evident in the Arabian Peninsula, the historic base of modern jihadism. The region was the core base for the worldwide radicals like Osama bin Laden who left Saudi Arabia and Yemen to conduct his fight against the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan.

The US military aid to local monarchies during the Operation Desert Strom in nineties after the Iraqi invasion on Kuwait intensified tensions between Saudis and bin Laden who protested against Western military support to the monarchies in the Gulf. The new form of jihad was studied by other radicals like Ayman al-Zawahiri or Abdullah Yusuf Azzam, a Palestinian teacher and mentor of Osama bin Laden during the Afghan war, who supported establishment of worldwide terrorist organization and drew its ideological backgrounds concerning fight against Western influences in the Arab-Muslim world called a new crusade against Islam. Ideological leaders also opted for restoration of the historic caliphate based on straight sharia laws[24]. The propaganda campaign enabled to precise ideological, structural and military capacities of the organization. It was focused on two opposite images. The first referred to accusations and damnations of different political enemies like Western governments and military forces as well as local authorities and officials. The second idea glorified terrorist activities and encouraged supporters and militants. The opponents were called *ṣalībiyyun* (crusaders), *ʿubbād aṣ-ṣalīb* (believers of the crust), *ṭaghūt* (a devil, a Satan), *kuffār* (sinners) or *murtaddūn* (apostates) and *aʿdāʾ Allah taʿāla* (The enemies of Allah)[25].

It should be pointed out that first Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks were attempted in the Gulf countries. In 2000 a suicide attack seized the United Stated Navy destroyer USS Cole in the Yemeni port of Aden. The event inspired other attacks in the world, including the September 11 attacks or Madrid train bombings in 2004 and London attacks in 2005.

However, successful antiterrorist missions in Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as arrest of main jihadists like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks) disabled logistic, financial and executive capacities of Al-Qaeda headquarters in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The jihadist movement in Saudi Arabia and Yemen was forced to reform and regroup local cells.

---

[23] A. Sterman, "Syrian Rebels Abduct 43 UN Peacekeepers Near Israel Border", *The Times of Israel*, 28 August 2014, www.timesofisrael.com/syrian-rebels-abduct-43-un-peacekeepers/ [accessed 06.09.2014].

[24] L. Wright, *Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, New York 2006.

[25] M. Styszyński, "Al-Qaeda's Structure According to Propaganda Techniques"..., p. 125–136.

In 2009 jihadists formed *Al-Qā'ida fī Jazīrat al-'Arab* (Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula – AQAP) under the leadership of Naser al-Wuhayshi and Anwar al-Awlaqi. Al-Wuhayshi served as a private secretary to Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan. He was arrested in 2001 and handed over to Yemen where he escaped from prison in 2006 with 23 of his followers. Besides, Al-Awlaqi, a US born radical cleric played a key role in ideological and theological formation in the organization. He issued an illustrated magazine *Inspire*, which became an important communication and motivation platform for extremists around the world[26].

The cover of the *Inspire* magazine describing the terrorist plot from 2010 when two packages containing bombs were found on cargo planes from Yemen to Chicago[27].

Sophisticated and modern style of the magazine contained short messages in English based on suggestive graphics and significant pictures similar to tabloid press or comics and graffiti. The slogans exposed in the journals usually refer to martyrdom and bravery of militants as well as destructive activities of Western countries.

Apart from the cargo plots in 2010,[28] the following examples demonstrate some results of Al-Awlaqi's inspirations and AQAP coordination of particular actions. In 2009 Carlos Leon Bledsoe, a Muslim convert who had spent time in Yemen opened fire on soldiers in front of a military recruiting office in Little Rock in Arkansas. On Christmas Day in 2009 Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab a young Nigerian student from Institute for the Arabic language in San'a tried to detonate plastic explosives on board of the plane en route from Amsterdam to Detroit. Al-Awlaqi was also implicated in the 2009 US army base killings in Fort Hood in Texas. Nidal

[26] K. Boon, A.Z. Huq et al., *Global Stability and U.S. National Security*, New York 2012 (Vol. 123).

[27] www.azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/inspire-magazine-3.pdf [accessed 16.07.2014].

[28] K. de Young, M. Leahy, "Uninvestigated Terrorism Warning about Detroit Suspect Called not Unusual", *The Washington Post*, 28 December 2009, www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/27/AR2009122700279.html [accessed 16.07.2014].

Malik Hasan a US Army Major and psychiatrist opened fire and killed 13 people and wounded 32 others.[29] All suspects responsible for the plots confessed that they were motivated by Al-Awlaqi's ideology and slogans published in the Internet and *Inspire* magazine. Finally, Al-Awlaqi has been killed in 2011 by drone attack on his convoy in Jawf province, Yemen.[30] His death coincided with a successful strike in 2011 against Osama bin Laden's hideout in Pakistan where Navy Seals attacked the residence in Abbottabad near Islamabad and killed Al-Qaeda's leader.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

After Al-Awlaqi and Bin Laden's death AQAP's religious figures established an operational branch called *Anṣār ash-Sharī'a* (The Followers of Sharia) to formalize new challenges of the organization. Naser al-Wuhayshi resigned from global and international goals, returned to Sunni tribal roots and limited the activities to local territories[31]. In fact, southern Yemeni provinces of Abyan inhabited by traditional Sunni communities were always an important bastion for Islamists. Local separatism, Yemeni civil war between south and north of the country in eighties and nineties as well as marginalisation of southern regions by president Ali Abdullah Saleh increased jihadist influences.[32] It should be pointed out that different tribes are rather opportunistic and they usually compete with other clans in order to gain more economic and social privileges and profits.

Moreover, AQAP took advantages of widespread corruption and growing poverty as well as instability during the Arab Spring and the Battle of Zinjibar in 2011 between president Saleh's forces and opposition, including Islamist movements. Jihadists seized southern regions and announced establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Abyan.[33]

After the appointment of the new president Abd Rabu Mansur Hadi, new authorities started reconciliation policy and cooperation with tribes.[34] For example, one of the largest tribe Al-Awlaqi declared its support to the government and opposed to Al-Qaeda members. It should be pointed out that Anwar al-Awlaqi be-

---

[29] B. Kenber, "Nidal Hasan Convicted of Fort Hood Killings", *The Washington Post*, 23 August 2013, www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/nidal-hasan-convicted-of-fort-hood-killings/2013/08/23/39c468c8-0c03-11e3-9941-6711ed662e71_story.html [accessed 16.07.2014].

[30] H. Koplowitz, "US Formally Admits Killing Anwar Al-Awlaki, 3 Other Citizens, In Drone Strikes", *International Business Times*, 22 May 2013, www.ibtimes.com/us-formally-admits-killing-anwar-al-awlaki-3-other-citizens-drone-strikes-full-text-1275805 [accessed 29.06.2014].

[31] A.Y. Zelin, "Know Your Ansar al-Sharia", *Foreign Policy*, 21 September 2012.

[32] B.A. Salmoni, B. Loidolt et al., *Regime and Periphery in Northern Yemen: the Huthi Phenomenon*, "National Defense Research Institute-RAND" 2010.

[33] C.L. Coombs, "Yemen's Use of Militias to Maintain Stability in Abyan Province", *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point-CTC* 2013, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 5–7.

[34] *Ibidem*.

longed to that clan and received technical and logistic aid from tribal relatives. Unfortunately, the pact between jihadists and members of Al-Jawf, Marib, Abyan or Shabwa and Hadramout tribes is still strong and it facilitates operational and military capacities of AQAP.

The organization carries out different attacks against central authorities in San'a. In May 2012 an explosion killed 120 people and injured 200 others during a parade. In December 2013 a series of bomb and gun attacks on Ministry of Defense buildings killed at least 56 persons. AQAP kidnaps or executes Yemeni officials and plants many land mines. Militants also lay various ambushes against military and security convoys and patrols.[35]

Furthermore, AQAP increases tensions with Shia communities known as Huthis who live in northern Sa'da regions and belong to Zaydi branch of Islam. It was evident during clashes between Huthis and radical Sunni militants in Dammaj province controlled by Shia Zaydi followers.[36]

Besides, AQAP members have started recently the debate about ISIS offensive and declaration of the caliphate. Apart from different opinions, Naser al-Wuhayshi has already pledged oath of allegiance to Ayman al-Zawahiri. He stressed that insurgents will continue their fights under Al-Zawahiri's administration and will follow his orders due to his theological skills and military experiences as well as long cooperation with Osama bin Laden and Yemeni structures of Al-Qaeda.[37]

North Africa and Sahel

Some new tendencies are also evident in Maghreb and Sahel. Declaration of loyalty to Ayman al-Zawahiri and Al-Qaida's Central in 2006 by Abdelmalek Droukdel a.k.a. Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud as well as creation of *Tanẓīm al-qāʾida fī bilād al-maghrib al-islāmī* (Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb – AQIM) became an important step for jihadist structures in Maghreb. In fact, the support strengthened military and operational capacities of local Al-Qaida's structures. After the affiliation with the central command, AQIM prepared series of terrorist acts against local and Western authorities as well as their economic interests. For example, the group claimed responsibility for the 11 December 2007 attacks against the United Nations offices and the Constitutional Court building in Algiers.[38]

---

[35] A.Y. Zelin, *op. cit.*

[36] R. Al-Jubari, "Hadi Assigns Military Committee to End Fighting in Dammaj", *Yemen Times*, 2 January 2014.

[37] B. Roggio, "AQAP Leader Pledges Oath of Allegiance to Ayman al Zawahiri", *The Long War Journal*, 26 July 2011, www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2011/07/aqap_leader_pledges.php#ixzz39u3GeMW4 [accessed 29.06.2014].

[38] M. Baghdād, *Dimāʾ aṣ-ṣaḥrāʾ*, Al-Jazāʾir 2012, p. 81–107.

However, terrorist activities in Algeria became more and more complicated because of successful antiterrorist operations and strong reactions of the society rejecting radical ideas as well as reconciliation policy implemented by Algerian authorities in 2005. Besides, the support of local theologians and imams from mosques played an important role as well. They delivered different sermons condemning extremism and violence in Islam.[39]

Al-Qaida's fighters were forced to search a new shelter. In 2003 the three main brigades: *Ṭāriq Abū Zayd*, *Al-Furqān* (The Criterion) and *Al-Anṣār* (Prophet's followers) found a new battlefield in southern regions of Sahara poorly controlled by authorities and security services. Al-Qaida's financial, logistic and military capacities were supported by affiliation with local gangs and gunrunners or smugglers of goods and drugs. Good relationships with local communities, including Tuaregs as well as ransoms for kidnapped Western tourists in Sahara played an important role as well.[40]

During the Tuareg rebellion in northern Mali in 2012 Islamist fighters from *Anṣār ad-Dīn* (The Followers of the Faith) or *Ḥarakat at-Tawḥīd wa al-Jihād fī Gharb al-Ifrīqyā* (Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa – MUJWA) joined the uprising and seized Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal regions in the north of the country.[41]

 The expansion of jihadist activities encouraged Western and African forces to start the Serval operation in northern Mali in 2013. The antiterrorist campaign destroyed rebel bases and decentralized Al-Qaida's structures in the region. The everyday fights, smuggling and ransom business were conducted by second rang players from Mauritania who belonged to young generation of jihadists from radical Mauritanian theological schools.[42] Although their ideological backgrounds, they could not achieve fighting spirit and brutality of their predecessors.

Droukdel tried to consolidate his followers and insurgents by delivering different manifestos and statements. A couple of weeks before the intervention in Mali he referred to different problems and social questions in the region. He focused on examples illustrating devastating economic policy of Western countries not only in Maghreb and Sahel, but also in Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Senegal or Cameroon. In his opinion, the real sense of Western presence in the continent regards exploitation of natural resources such as gas, oil or uranium. The negative image was intensified by description of poor African children collecting cacao grains for multinational companies producing chocolate. Droukdel stressed that Western concerns for people in the region are just a political game, which covers authentic

---

[39] *African Journal for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism* [ed. F.J. Madeira], 2012, Vol. 3, No. 1.

[40] M. Mokeddem, *Al-Qaeda au Maghreb Islamique, contrabande au nom de l'islam*, Alger 2010, p. 69–137 ; M. Ag Erless, D. Kone, *Le Patriote et le djihadiste*, Bamako 2012.

[41] Doumbi-Fakoly, H. Magassa et al.., *L'Occupation du nord du Mali*, Bamako 2012.

[42] R. Ould Idoumou, "AlQaida Appoints New Mali Chief", *Magharebia*, 28 November 2012, www.magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2013/09/25/feature-02 [accessed 29.06.2014].

purposes of economic and social domination. He also states that Western ignorance of massacres in Syria is a good example in that context.[43]

***

Although Droukdel's ideological indoctrination many jihadists started to operate individually in different parts of Maghreb and Sahel. They emphasize their local and autonomic character and focus on social, ethnic and geographic character of the region. For example, the battalion *Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣaddīq* derived from *Anṣār al-Sharīʿa* in Tunisia, *Ḥumāt ad-daʿwa as-salafiyya* (Defenders of Salafi Call) controls western Algeria and *ʿUqba Ibn Nāfiʿ* concentrates on Chaambi fortified mountains between Algeria and Tunisia.[44]

The decentralization or nationalization of jihad is also obvious in the context of *Ḥarakat Shabāb al-Janūb li-ʿAdala Islāmiyya* (The Movement of Southern Youth for Islamic Justice) led by Lamine Ben Cheneb who has been killed during the antiterrorist operation in In Amenas.[45] It should be pointed out that Ben Cheneb's organization played a crucial role in the attacks thanks to its logistic and military support. The group operates in Ilizi region since 2005 and it was involved in many plots against Algerian authorities, including the terrorist attack at Djanet airport in 2007. The Movement of Southern Youth declared its separatist ideas and emphasized local identity combined with radical Islamic slogans.[46]

Although neutralization of key figures of the organization, Ben Cheneb's family continues the battle and cooperates with local Tuareg movements. In January 2014 some jihadist forums and websites posted a manifesto of the new group *Ḥarakat al-Aḥrār* (The Movement of Liberated People) headed by Abd al-Salam Tarmun one of the Ben Cheneb relatives and Bukhami Bay al-Souqi the representative of local Sahara clan. Al-Souqi was imprisoned in 2005 and charged with terror plots in Tamarasset and rebel activities against Algerian authorities. He was released in 2007 and disappeared among insurgents in Sahara. *Ḥarakat al-Aḥrār* underlines some separatist demands and presents tragic social situation of local

---

[43] The English version of the manifesto see: SITE Intelligence Group – Monitoring Service – Jihadist threats, www.siteintelgroup.com [accessed 15.06.2013].

[44] Abd ar-Razzāq Abd Allāh, "Tanẓīm al-qāʿida fī bilād al-maghrib al-islāmī yuʿlinu inẓmām jamāʾat ḥumāt ad-daʿwa as-salafiyya ilà ṣufūfihi", *Al-Quds al-ʾArabī*, 29 December 2013, www. alquds.co.uk/?p=118037 [accessed 15.07.2014].

[45] During the attack against in Amenas gas plant in 2013 the terrorist commando *Al-Muwaqiʿūn bi-ad-Dam* (Those who Sign with Blood Brigade) took over 800 people from the gas site. After the raid of Algerian Special Forces most of the workers, including 107 foreigners were freed. However, 39 foreign hostages were killed, see: I. Ghioua, "Les emirs se font la guerre au Sahel", *L'Expression*, 15 May 2014, p. 3.

[46] D. Gardham, "Terrorist Group Behind Algerian Gas Plan Attack Filmed Training in the Desert", *The Telegraph*, 23 January 2013.

communities suffering from thirst and hunger as well as disastrous living conditions. Besides, radical religious slogans are not emphasized too much and they become a background for other social aspects.[47]

The current jihad activity also relies on Mukhtar Belmukhtar.[48] He split with Droukdel who appointed Abu Zeid and Abu al-Hammam[49] the emirs of Sahara and ignored Belmukhtar's ambitions. Mukhtar tired to exclude the leader of AQIM and associate his militants with Al-Qaida Central and Ayman al-Zawahiri. He expressed his concept in the manifesto delivered during the In Amenas attack. He demanded the release of radical sheikh Abd ar-Rahman who was engaged in The World Trade Center bombing occurred in 1993[50] or liberation of Aafia Siddiqui, a nuclear scientist from Pakistan, who was accused of cooperation with Al-Qaeda[51]. The arguments demonstrated solidarity and loyalty of Maghreb structure of Al-Qaeda with ideas and goals of other groups in the Middle East, Africa or Asia.

In fact, the In Amenas crisis strengthened the role of Belmukhtar in the local jihadist movement, but it also polarized the conflict with Droukdel. Besides, Al-Zawahiri did not reply to Belmukhtar's appeals and sustained Droukdel's position.

The situation forced Belmukhtar to find a new secure shelter in Libya where he habituated to political and social unrest after the collapse of Muammar Gaddafi regime. He separated definitely with AQIM leaders and started his cooperation with rebels from *Anṣār ad-Dīn* and MUJWA who survived the operation Serval. Moreover, he created a new group *Murabiṭūn* affiliated with tribal militias in Libya.

---

[47] B. Kibāsh, "Muḥammad as-Sādis yaqūdu tanẓīman jadīdan fī aṣ-ṣaḥrā'", *An-Nahār*, 9 January 2014, p. 7.

[48] Mukhtar Belmukhtar – a veteran fighter from Algerian civil war in eighties. He participated in the Afghan war in eighties and the Algerian conflict in nineties. He was the key figure in the Armed Islamist Group – GIA. He moved in 2004 to border regions between Algeria, Niger, Libya and Mali. He headed his own group *Al-Mulathamūn* (The Masked), which cooperated with local gangs and tribal militias. He also established the terrorist commando *Al-Muwaqi'ūn bi-ad-Dam* (Those who Sign with Blood Brigade), which coordinated In Amenas attack. See: X. Raufer, *Atlas radykalnego islamu*, Warszawa 2011.

[49] Abd al-Hamid Abu Zeid headed the group *Ṭāriq Abū Zayd*, which was acting across Sahel regions between Mauritania, Mali and Niger. It was famous for kidnappings and brutal executions of hostages (for example, the execution of French hostage Michel Germanau or British hostage Edwin Dyer). Abu Zeid was killed during the operation Serval in 2013. Besides, Yahya Abu al-Hammam was the leader of the group *Al-Furqān* (The Criterion). The group was responsible for different attacks against Mauritanian authorities and kidnappings of foreign tourists in Sahara. See: P. Siegel, *What does the Nomination of Yahya Abu al-Hamman Mean?*, "Terrorism research and analysis consortium TRAC", www.trackingterrorism.org/article/djamel-okacha-aka-yahya-abu-al-hamman-successor-abu-zeid [accessed 29.06.2014].

[50] J. Mckinkley, "Islamic Leader on U.S. Terrorist List is in Brooklyn", *The New York Times*, 16 December 1990, www.nytimes.com/1990/12/16/nyregion/islamic-leader-on-us-terrorist-list-is-in-brooklyn.html [accessed 28.06.2013].

[51] D. Walsh, "The Mystery of Dr Aafia Siddiqui", *The Guardian*, 24 November 2009, www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/nov/24/aafia-siddiqui-al-qaida [accessed 28.06.2013].

In fact, *Murabiṭūn* became a small part of wide rebellion in Libya inspired by separatist, nationalist, tribal or ethnic ideas.

Western regions of Libya are dominated by secular and separatist militias as well as military and security forces. It concerns *Katā'ib aṣ-Ṣā'iqa* (Al-Saiqa Brigade), which is a special military formation of three thousand persons separated from Gaddafi's regime during the uprising in 2011. The group is fighting with jihadist insurgents and it is supposed to create new formations in the Libyan army. *Aṣ-Ṣā'iqa* also supports the current offensive of the general Khalid Haftar against jihadist militias.[52] The organization *Ṣuwwār Lībyā* (Revolutionaries of Libya) regards a strong alliance of insurgents who participated in the uprising against Muammar Gaddafi regime. They are very influential in Tripoli. Furthermore, tribal mountainous region in the south-west of the country is seized by *Katā'ib Zintān* (Zintan Brigades), which participated in liberation of Tripoli and arrested Gaddafi's son Sayf al-Islam. They also control the international airport in the capital and support the offensive of general Haftar. The most powerful organization in the west concerns *Katā'ib Misrāta* (Misrata Brigades), which played an essential role during Gaddafi military offensive against revolutionaries. It also supports local politicians from Misrata.[53]

Furthermore, separatists control some eastern regions. It regards Barqa Brigades composed of separatist insurgents from Barqa, Tubruk or Sirt fighting for federalization of the country. The organization controls 60% of oil reservoirs as well as main ports exporting oil supplies to the West. Similarly to ISIS, Libyan rebels took control of the largest oil terminals in Hariga or Zueitina in Cyrenaica. The central government in Tripoli started some negotiations with local militias in order to return the ports.[54] However, Ibrahim Al-Jedran, a former commander in the Petroleum Facilities Guard, took control of four of Libya's oil ports in July 2014. Eastern regions also include different Islamist militias such as *Anṣār ash-Sharī'a* a radical group operating in the region of Darna or *Taḥkīm ad-Dīn* (The rule of religion) a new jihadist organization from Benghazi, which is responsible for different terrorist attacks, especially against Al-Saiqa Brigade.[55]

---

[52] General Khalifa Haftar served in the Libyan army and participated in the coup d'état led by Gaddafi in 1969. He split with the regime after the military conflict between Libya and Chad in eighties. General Haftar escaped with his soldiers to the US via Nigeria and Zaire. He appeared in 2011 during the Libyan uprising and then in 2014 during the military operation against rebel camps. See: A. Bensaada, "Haftar: le pion americain?", *Afrique-Asie*, Juillet-Aout 2014, p. 26–27.

[53] F. Finucci, *Libya: Military Actors and Militias*, "Global Security Organization", www.globalsecurity.org [accessed 10.07.2014].

[54] M. Chmaytelli, "Libya Crude Oil Sales to Rise as Rebels Surrender Two Ports", *Bloomberg Business Week*, 7 July 2014, www.businessweek.com/news/2014-04-07/libya-oil-sales-set-to-rise-as-rebels-agree-to-surrender-ports [accessed 10.07.2014].

[55] M. Dāliʿ, "Al-Kharīṭa al-ʿaskariyya li-katā'ib al-musallaḥa fī Lībyā", *Al-Khabar*, 20 May 2014, p. 18.

Some Libyan groups are more moderate and they cooperate with secular forces. For example, *Rif Allāh Saḥātī* is headed by Ismail al-Sallabi the brother of the influential theologian Ali al-Sallabi from the International Union of Muslim Scholars from Qatar. The Brigade is also affiliated with the worldwide structures of the Muslim Brotherhood. Besides, *Shuhadā' 17 Fabrāyal* (Martyrdoms of 17th February) supports the Muslim Brotherhood structures in Libya. The group is a member of the Libyan army but it reserves its independence and separatism. For example, they refuse to follow orders from the central military command in Tripoli and they occupy their sieges in Benghazi.[56] Tribal and ethnic context is also evident in southern regions of Fezzan, which include influential tribes like Tabu from Chad condemning central government in Tripoli for humiliation and discrimination. Tabu representatives continue violent, clannish fights with Tuaregs living in Ghat near the Algerian borders.[57]

The jihadist movements in Maghreb and Sahel are also affected by ISIS influences. The developing situation in the region encouraged rebels to arrange a meeting in Libya with main leaders, including groups from Egypt, Sudan and West Africa. The debate concerned the new strategy of the organization in the context of the successful offensive conducted by Al-Baghdadi. The participants also discussed the support to Al-Zawahiri's leadership or disobedience and declaration of loyalty to the ISIS caliphate. The new concept of Islamic state proposed by Al-Baghdadi also inspired local insurgents to present some new ideological plans and goals. First scenario includes creation of a big caliphate under the leadership of Droukdel and cooperation with groups from Mali, Tunisia and Algeria. The second idea regards consolidation of allied forces from Libya and Egypt under supervision of Al-Baghdadi. The third scenario concerns creation of a smaller caliphate based on Libyan territories controlled by jihadist militias.[58]

AQIM's leader still sustains allegiance to Al-Zawahiri and glorifies his position in the jihadist movement and long experiences in fight against Western and local enemies. He also criticizes establishment of the caliphate without consultation with other branches in the world.[59] However, scattered groups, including AQIM's members opposed to the opinions and declared positive statements about Al-Baghdadi's caliphate. Tunisian branch of *Anṣār ash-Sharīʿa* and *ʿUqba Ibn Nāfiʿ* have recently expressed their obedience to ISIS structures. *Anṣār ash-Sharīʿa*'s spokesmen delivered a passionate speech in Kairouan mosque glorifying Al-Baghdadi's successful offensive. He also called to liberate jailed members of the organization

---

[56] *Ibidem*.

[57] A. Obeidi, *Political Culture in Libya*, London 2013.

[58] M. Ibn Aḥmad, "Taqārīr amniyya taḥḏiru min naqli at-tanẓīm ilà Libyā", *Al-Khabar*, 7 July 2014, p. 3.

[59] W. Ramzi, "ISIS Caliphate Splits AQIM", *Magharebia*, 18 July 2014, www.magharebia. com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/07/18/feature-01 [accessed 20.17.2014].

in Tunisia.[60] Al-Baghdadi's activities also revived Iyad Agh Ghali, the leader of *Anṣār ad-Dīn* in northern Mali. He claimed that affiliation with ISIS would create new challenges for jihadist groups in the region and it would strengthen operational capacities of insurgents.[61]

The debate about the new strategy has some implications in everyday terrorist activities in the region. For example, Libyan militias from Zintan and rival insurgents from Misrata as well as some Islamist groups started heavy fights for strategic international airport in Tripoli. Since July's battles there are many causalities and damages at the airport and neighboring civilian districts. Besides, international airlines have cancelled their flights to the Libyan capital and foreign embassies closed or suspended their missions.[62]

Moreover, in May 2014 AQIM delivered the manifesto pointing out its involvement in the terrorist attack against Tunisian Interior Minister Lotfi Ben Jeddou that left four security guards dead. It was the first assault of AQIM in Tunisia that shows expansion of cooperation with Tunisian groups. Besides, in July 2014 fourteen Tunisian soldiers were killed and twenty wounded in two terrorist attacks in the area of Jebel Chaambi.[63] The Ministry of Defense stated that it was the bloodiest attack against army since independence in 1956. Algerian and Tunisian authorities have deployed 20,000 soldiers to secure the borders against contraband and penetration of the region by terrorists.[64]

Reactivation of terrorist threat is also evident in west Algeria. On the 14th of July 2014 a roadside bomb killed 3 soldiers and 4 civil guards during a patrol in Sidi Bel Abbas province.[65] It should be remarked that western provinces are more secure than southern areas or central Kabylie where jihadist groups are still active and dangerous. Military bases and many checkpoints in the west of the country as well as peaceful attitude of local communities made terrorist activity very difficult. *Ḥumāt ad-daʿwa as-salafiyya* is the only active group in the region. The military and operational capacities of the organization are rather weak and the rebels suspended terrorist actions a couple of years ago. However, jihadists proved that they are still strong and ready to prepare actions in different regions although security measures.

---

[60] J. Arfaoui, "Ansar al-Sharia Tunisia Spokesman Backs ISIS", *Magharebia*, 7 July 2014, www.magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/07/08/feature-01 [accessed 20.17.2014].

[61] M. Sharāq, "Zaʿīm Anṣār ad-Dīn Iyyād Agh Ghālī yaḏḥaru li-awwal marra fī sharīṭ muṣawwar", *Al-Khabar*, 7 August 2014, p. 3.

[62] J. Tilouine, Y. Ait Akdim, "Les 7 erreurs", *Jeune Afrique*, 3–9 août 2014, p. 10–13.

[63] S. Tajine, "Tunisia Suffers Bloodiest Day in 50 Years as Terror Strikes Border", *Al-Monitor*, 21 July 2014, www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2014/07/tunisia-anti-terrorist-law-attack.html# [accessed 20.17.2014].

[64] W. Ramzi, "Algeria Locks Down Border", *Magharebia*, 11 September 2013, magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/newsbriefs/general/2014/07/21/newsbrief-02 [accessed 20.17.2014].

[65] *Al-Hayat*, 14 July 2014, p. 6.

Besides, Mukhtar Belmukhtar claimed his responsibility for the suicide attack in northern Mali on the 14th of July that killed one French soldier.[66] The assault during the French National Day was a symbolic message for Western and local authorities showing that the jihadist movement is able to conduct terrorist actions although official statements emphasizing the success of the Serval operation.

Finally, Islamist fighters from the new group *Jund al-Khilāfa* (Soldiers of the Caliphate) captured a French citizen Hervé Gourdel in north-east area of Kabylie. The group posted a video with brutal execution of the hostage similar to the last decapitations of hostages in Iraq and Syria. The manifesto was also a symbolic declaration of allegiance to Al-Baghdadi and the Islamic State.[67]

West Africa

The jihad activity in the West Africa refers to growing role of the extremist and sectarian organization Boko Haram. It combines traditional jihadist rhetoric with clannish and African ethnic autonomy. In fact, the organization focused on tribal and social disproportions in Nigeria, especially during the revolts in 2009 in northern provinces of Bauchi, Borno and Yobe. Muslim communities from Hausa and Fulani tribes protested against tragic social and economic situation as well as discriminating policy of southern Christian authorities from Igbo, Yaruba or Ibibio clans taking advantages from oil reserves and industrial growth. The uprising was headed by Mohammed Yusuf a charismatic religious leader who started preaching and religious education of radical Islam in the moderate Nigerian society belonging to Sunni Maliki school of jurisprudence or Sufi doctrines. Yusuf also built Quranic schools, cultural centers and charity associations, which enabled to recruit new followers and form their extremist ideas according to the definition of the term *Boko Haram*, which means in Hausa language: "Western education is a sin". The religious indoctrination was reinforced by economic policy based on alimentary and water deliveries, transportation facilities or manufacturing production controlled by Islamists. Mohammed Yusuf was finally executed by security services during pacification of clashes and demonstrations in 2009.[68]

Abubakar Shekau from Kanuri tribe in the north-east Nigeria became a successor. He took advantages of the situation and combined social and economic disproportions with extremist religious ideas rejecting Western cultural influences

---

[66] www.parismatch.com/Actu/International/Mort-d-un-soldat-francais-au-Mali-Le-retour-de-Mokhtar-Belmokhtar-576046 [accessed 20.17.2014].

[67] G. Mezzofiore, "Algeria: Isis-Linked Jund Al-Khilafah Beheads French Hostage Herve Gourdel", *International Business Times*, 24 September 2014, www.ibtimes.co.uk/algeria-isis-linked-jund-al-khilafah-beheads-french-hostage-herve-gourdel-1467043 [accessed 20.11.2014].

[68] M. Tobota, *Od dżihadu Maitatsine do starć Boko Haram – eskalacja islamizmu w północnej Nigerii*, [w:] *Zachód a świat islamu. Zrozumieć innego*, ed. I. Kończak, M. Woźniak, Łódź 2012, p. 75–84.

and proposing a pure Islamic state based on literary interpretation of sharia laws.

Shekau refers to Yusuf's ideas regarding establishment of an Islamic state in the northern Nigeria.[69] The group tries to turn northeastern state of Borno against other provinces inhabited by Christian or animalist communities. Boko Haram often refers to the Baga massacre from April 2013 when hundreds of civilians were killed or wounded by Nigerian military forces.[70] The organization highlights tragic pictures demonstrating burned villages, massacred bodies and destroyed mosques. Persecutions against Muslims in Nigeria justify violent acts of the organization and create a positive image indicating self-defense policy against humiliation conducted by Nigerian secular authorities supported by Western countries like USA or France.

Shekau also brutalized activities of the organization and intensified terrorist attacks such as suicide bombings, kidnappings and massacres of whole villages. The organization also increased various assaults against churches and public services as well as government representatives. The brutality of the groups was finally determined in April 2014 when around 230 schoolgirls were kidnapped in Chibok.[71]

Boko Haram also cooperates with the new affiliated group *Jamāʿat al-Anṣār al-Muslimīn fī Bilād as-Sudān* (Movement of Muslims' Vanguards in the Black Continent-Ansaru), which lunches brutal actions against foreigners living in Nigeria and neighboring countries. The militia became famous for kidnapping of the French Moulin-Fournier family in the north of Cameroon in February 2013.[72] Jihadist websites posted a video showing masked terrorist commando claiming responsibility of the attack and declaring further actions against foreign citizens. *Ansaru* justified its tactic and stated that militants have been defending humiliated Muslim communities in African countries. The Moulin-Fournier family was finally released by security forces but the event arose concerns about instability and increase of terrorist threats in West Africa.

Specific and violent character of Boko Haram is evident in propaganda campaign. The organization usually emphasizes images showing violent gestures and brutal behaviors of insurgents similar to groups operating in the past in Uganda, Rwanda, and Congo or recently in Central Africa.[73] The manifestos usually start

---

[69] M. Harjani, "Nigeria's Fight against Boko Haram", *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis* 2013, Vol. 5, No. 7, p. 12–15.

[70] A. Nossiter, "Massacre in Nigeria Spurs Outcry Over Military Tactics", *The New York Times*, 30 April 2013, www.nytimes.com/2013/04/30/world/africa/outcry-over-military-tactics-after-massacre-in-nigeria.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1& [accessed 28.11.2013].

[71] M. Mark, "Kidnapped Nigerian Schoolgirls Taken as Brides by Militants", *The Guardian*, 29 April 2014, www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/29/kidnapped-nigerian-schoolgirls-marriage-claims [accessed 20.17.2014].

[72] Nna-Eneka Okereke, "The Resilience of Boko Haram: myth or reality?", *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis*, August 2014, Vol. 6, No. 7, p. 8–12.

[73] V. Thorin, "Boko Haram fait sa loi", *Afrique-Asie*, Juin 2014, p. 28–29.

with religious invocations and Quranic citations in Arabic, which glorify the organization among other rebels and justify terrorist attacks. However, other fragments include casual speeches in local dialects as well as English sentences condemning Western influences in the region. The declarations are also delivered in ironic and chaotic style, sometimes making fun of the West and local authorities. For example, Abubakar Shekau refers to the kidnapping of Nigerian schoolgirls and he states with laughing voice that he will sell them in local market. It should be pointed out that during Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri leadership, manifestos respected Arabic classic rhetoric and religious narration of the speech. They also avoided dialectal speeches or vulgar declarations and gestures.

Boko Haram also tries to expand its activities in the context of ISIS successful campaign in Iraq and Syria. In July 2014 Shekau voiced his support for Al-Baghdadi and emphasized positive and glorifying expressions about the new caliphate. He also claimed his responsibility for attacks against shopping centers in Abuja and some bomb detonations in Lagos ports. Shekau also encourages his militants to continue other attacks in Nigeria and neighboring countries[74]. For example, in July 2014, Boko Haram militants attacked the house of Cameroon's vice-prime minister and they kidnapped his wife. At least three people were killed in the ambush. Besides, a local mayor was kidnapped in a separate attack on his home.[75] It was the first spectacular plot against authorities of the neighboring country. Shekau's insurgents demonstrate in that way military and political potential of the organization, which can attack different targets and places in the region.

Somalia

The organization *Shabāb al-Mujāhidīn* (Youth of Mujahideen) determines terrorist threats in the Horn of Africa. Ideological and operational basis of the organization regards the Union of Islamic Courts – UIC that emerged in Mogadishu in 1994 after a long period of fights between rival political and tribal factions. Islamists took advantages of the tragic social situation in the country and separatist tendencies, which contributed to establishment of autonomous regions such as Somaliland formed by Somali National Movement or Puntland that implemented its own administration and financial system.

Successful terrorist and preaching campaign enabled UIC militants to control strategic regions in Somalia and facilitated implementation of sharia laws among communities tired of long political unrest, health problems and disastrous living conditions. The new Islamist authorities established a militia called *Shabāb al-Mujāhidīn*, which followed UIC orders and fought with secular forces such as Transition Federal Government.

---

[74] F. Fax, "Boko Haram: Abubakar Shekau, Voices Support for Other Extremist Terrorist Group in New Video", *Nigeriana-Nigeria's online newspaper*, 14 July 2014, www.nigeriana.org/blog/75825.html [accessed 20.17.2014].

[75] G. Dougueli, "Sur le pied de guerre?", *Jeune Afrique*, 3–9 Août 2014, p. 30–33.

Ethiopia, Kenya or Djibouti were concerned about the escalation of radical Islam in the neighboring country and prepared military intervention led by Ethiopian forces in 2006. Although neutralization of UIC influences, *Al-Shabāb* structures and operational capacities survived and enabled to conduct jihad against foreign peacekeepers from Uganda, Burundi and Kenya deployed in 2007 under the United Nations and the African Union mandate as well as the African Union Mission to Somalia – AMISOM. In 2008 *Al-Shabāb* affiliated with Al-Qaeda Central. Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri glorified fighters and pointed out its role in the Horn of Africa. Ideological and financial support of Al-Qaeda encouraged Somali insurgents to carry out a terrorist campaign in the region. They executed 548 suicide attacks and 90 kidnaps between 2007 and 2012.[76]

Furthermore, neutralization of many *Al-Shabāb* bases forced the groups to internationalize the terrorist campaign. Some actions targeted Western interests and neighboring countries participating in AMISOM. The twin bomb attacks in 2010 that killed at least 74 people in Kampala determined the first act of terror outside Somalia. The explosions hit a popular restaurant frequented by foreigners, who were watching the World Cup finals. *Al-Shabāb* militias were involved in 100 attacks in Kenya between 2008 and 2012, including assaults against foreigners. For instance, they kidnapped a British couple in Kenya and two Spanish aid workers in Daadab refugee camp. In fact, the Nairobi's Westgate mall attack in 2013 became the most tragic terrorist plot so far. The four attackers entered the building and began firing and throwing grenades causing many causalities and damages. They also held hundreds of hostages for 3 days. After the security operation all terrorist have been killed. However, the total death toll achieved around 70 civilians.[77] *Al-Shabāb* took responsibility of the assault and threatened to continue other similar acts in the near future.

The intensification of terrorist actions outside Somalia initiated the debate about nationalization or internationalization of Somali jihad, especially in the context of Osama bin Laden's death, new challenges for worldwide extremists and ISIS offensive in the Middle East. *Al-Shabāb* still pledges allegiance to Al-Zawahiri called Emir of Umma and welcomes Al-Qaeda traditions and experiences.[78] However, Omar Hammami also known as Abu Mansour al-Amiriki, the American-born leader of foreign branch in *Al-Shabāb* opts for transnational character of the struggle and recruitment of militants from neighboring and Western countries. However, the traditional leader of the organization Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys

---

[76] S. Huzaifah Alkaff, "Deconstructing al-Shabaab's Transnational Jihadist Image", *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis* 2013, Vol. 5, No. 7, p. 9–11.

[77] "Nairobi Siege: How the Attack Happened", *BBC News Africa*, 18 October 2013, www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24189116 [accessed 20.17.2014].

[78] B. Roggio, "Somalia's Shabaab Vows Allegiance to New al Qaeda Emir Zawahiri", *The Long War Journal*, 17 June 2011, www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2011/06/somalias_shabaab_vow.php#ixzz3AhDukQLu [accessed 20.17.2014].

opposes to the idea and presents more nationalist orientation.[79] The debate still sep-arates the two branches and arises concerns about future strategy and operational capacities.

Conclusion

The analysis presented in the paper shows that the Arab Spring and growing role of various political forces in the revolutionary countries as well as elimination of Al-Qaeda leaders changed strategies and goals of jihadist organizations.

In fact, Al-Qaeda becomes more and more theoretical and classic meaning or symbol, which is replaced successively by current social and political tendencies in the Arab world such as separatism, tribalism or religious schism between Sunni and Shia factions. Islamist groups resigned from global aims and activities and con-centrated on local approaches, which facilitate regional and transregional terrorist campaign as well as expansion of influences in neighboring countries. The extre-mist activity in Maghreb, Sahel, West Africa or the Arabian Peninsula and Somalia is a good example in that context. For example, *Anṣār ash-Sharīʿa* and *ʿUqba Ibn Nāfiʿ* operate from their bases in Mali, Libya or Chaambi mountains and attack se-curity forces in Tunisia and Algeria. Besides, Somali *Shabāb al-Mujāhidīn* carries out terrorist attacks in neighboring Kenya, Boko Haram emerges in Cameroon and AQAP threats the stability of the Gulf monarchies.

The research also shows that disintegration of Al-Qaeda branches forced different insurgents to search new secure shelters and allies. It is evident in Magh-reb and Sahel where fighters started cooperation with various political forces like Tuaregs in Sahara or tribal militias in Libya, Mali, Niger or Nigeria emphasizing their autonomy and separation from central governments. Besides, AQAP relies on southern Sunni clans opposed to central government and Shia communities in the north of the country.

Furthermore, jihadists combine tribalism and separatism with religious dif-ferences and disproportions. For instance, Iraqi and Syrian Islamists assimilated with Sunni communities and expressed their regional and religious identity, which is different from Shia domination in the region.

However, the analyses also demonstrate that the jihadists are affected by three important factors. The first concerns resignation of illegal, violent struggle and acceptance of the Islamic theory *khurūj ʼan al-ḥākim* (opposition to the ruler) that encouraged some radical Islamists to approve new post-revolutionary autho-rities declaring Muslim identity of the state. It's evident in the case of some Salafi movements in Egypt like Nour party, which supports Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi and states that the new president guaranties stability of the state and Muslim identity of the society.

---

[79] N.-E. Okereke, "The Resilience of Harakat Al-Shabab al-Mujahidin", *African Journal for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism* 2013, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 121–139.

The second factor reflects concentration on financial and economic sources. The strategy was started by Islamists from Maghreb who based their military and logistic capacities on ransoms and smuggling of arms, drugs and goods, especially after destruction of Al-Qaeda structures in the north of Maghreb and relocation of fighters to Sahara. Financial sources are also important for Somali *Al-Shabāb* or Boko Haram extremists who try to control rich territories. Economic interests enable to expand political influences and affect local communities abandoned by central governments. It's evident in the case of ISIS and Al-Baghdadi. The organization seized crucial Iraqi and Syrian oil and gas fields as well as banks or infrastructures, services and facilities.

However, the third factor regards renaissance of separated Islamists in the context of ISIS offensive and declaration of the caliphate by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The conflict between Ayman al-Zawahiri and Al-Baghdadi show the crisis between the old generation of jihadists and young militants expecting new challenges and inspirations. Some traditional leaders still sustain allegiance to Al-Zawahiri but most of rank-and-file commanders started to express their disobedience and fascination of ISIS successful military and ideological campaign. One of the reasons is that Al-Baghdadi refers to Al-Qaeda heyday when Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri coordinated local branches and inspired different terrorist attacks against regional and Western targets. The *Dabiq* magazine published by ISIS is a good example. The style and ideological message of the journal is similar to the Inspire magazine issued in the past by Anwar al-Awlaqi, Al-Qaeda representative in Yemen. Both journals are published in English and they target Western audience thanks to sophisticated graphics, colorful images and short emotional messages.

Furthermore, ISIS popularity and influences rely on appropriate communication and propaganda channels. They concern traditional, liturgical speeches addressed to the local audience as well as modern forms of communication such as Internet forums, social media or sophisticated journals that affect Western volunteers. In this regard, ISIS defines a new form of jihadism that threats more and more regional and worldwide stability.

Aktualne tendencje w ruchu dżihadowskim po Arabskiej Wiośnie

Artykuł omawia zjawiska społeczno-polityczne w ruchu dżihadowskim, zachodzące po czterech latach od chwili wybuchu Arabskiej Wiosny w krajach Afryki Północnej i Bliskiego Wschodu. Badania dowodzą, że organizacja Al-Kai'da straciła na znaczeniu, stając się pojęciem coraz bardziej teoretycznym i symbolicznym. Likwidacja najważniejszych liderów organizacji i poważne naruszenie struktur zmusiło poszczególne grupy do podjęcia nowych działań, umożliwiających prowadzenie działalności terrorystycznej. Obecnie islamiści rezygnują z globalnych planów i celów, koncentrując się na lokalnych i regionalnych uwarunkowaniach społecznych i etnicznych. Samodzielne i autonomiczne działania poszczególnych grup odnoszą się, między innymi, do poszukiwania nowych sojuszników i bezpiecznych baz. Przykładem może być intensyfikacja współpracy islamistów z bojownikami tuareskimi na Saharze, separatystami na Synaju oraz libijskimi czy też jemeńskimi milicjami plemiennymi skonfliktowanymi z władzami centralnymi w kraju. Badania zawarte w artykule wskazują także dwa główne kierunki aktywności politycznej dżihadystów. Część działaczy zrezygno-

wała z działalności terrorystycznej, deklarując swoją lojalność wobec struktur państwa i zachowując zarazem swoje konserwatywne poglądy. Druga grupa odrzuca politykę rekoncyliacyjną i radykalizuje swoje działania. Przykładem jest wzrost zagrożenia Państwem Islamskim, które zajęło znaczne terytoria w Iraku i Syrii, kontroluje cenne złoża surowców mineralnych i inspiruje ugrupowania w innych częściach świata arabsko-muzułmańskiego, zachęcając do lojalności wobec nowego kalifatu i przyłączenia się do trwającego dżihadu.

słowa kluczowe: Al-Kai'da, dżihad, Państwo Islamskie, islamiści, separatyści, milicje plemienne