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ANALYSES AND COMMENTARIES

Terrorismo: quale modellazione del rischio? Alcune riflessioni preliminari

DIEGO BOLCHINI¹

Abstract

Il testo prende spunto da una pubblicazione realizzata nel 2015 dal CoE-DAT (Center of Excellence- Defence Against Terrorism) della NATO, riguardante possibili profili di modellazione del rischio terroristico nello scenario contemporaneo. All'analisi testuale del Paper vengono associate alcune riflessioni, originanti dalla corrente letteratura esistente sul fenomeno terroristico e da casi empirici di studio tratti dalla cronaca recente.

In conclusione, l'indirizzo programmatico auspicato è che tanto le scienze sociali di tipo "soft" quanto le scienze "dure" possano concorrere sempre maggiormente ed in modo integrato per la *clinical recognition*, *change detection*, diagnosi e possibile prognosi e contrasto del fenomeno terroristico inteso quale modalità di combattimento.

Keywords

Terrorism; Risk Modeling; Anthropology; Asymmetric Warfare

1. Introduzione. Tra attentati e terremoti

Il rischio di un attentato terroristico può essere modellato secondo alcuni principi scientifici, come quelli che governano il rischio sismico della faglia di Sant'Andrea in California o altre catastrofi naturali? Secondo Gordon Woo, *Catastrophist* presso la Risk Management Solutions di Londra, la risposta è (almeno parzialmente) affermativa.

¹ Diego Bolchini è analista di relazioni identitarie e processi culturali. Già collaboratore dell'I-SPI di Milano (Focus/Osservatorio Energetico per Camera, Senato e MAE) e dello IAI di Roma (webzine affarinterazionali.it su tematiche legate a sicurezza e terrorismo). Ha prodotto contributi di taglio storico-narrativo per il Sito web istituzionale del Sistema di Informazione per la Sicurezza della Repubblica (SISR), per *Limes- Rivista Italiana di Geopolitica* e diverse altre testate specializzate in sicurezza, geopolitica e difesa. Negli Anni Accademici 2015/2016 e 2016/2017 è stato docente di *Analisi delle Informazioni per la Sicurezza* al Corso di Perfezionamento Post-Laurea in *Intelligence e Sicurezza Nazionale* svolto presso l'Università degli Studi di Firenze, Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche e Sociali.

È questo in sintesi quanto rappresentato dal ricercatore in un paper pubblicato nel 2015 per la Rivista DATR (*Defence against Terrorism Review*) del NATO Centre for Excellence – Defence Against Terrorism (CoE-DAT) di Ankara, Turchia².

Il Professor Woo ha dalla sua una formazione accademica incentrata sulle c.d. “scienze dure”: laureato in Matematica presso la Cambridge University e specializzato in mathematical modeling di rischi estremi, ha completato un PhD in theoretical physics al MIT ed è stato adjunct professor presso l’Institute of Catastrophe Risk Management della Nanyang Technological University di Singapore³.

L’academic bias (distorsione cognitiva) segnalata da Woo nel suo lavoro di ricerca, a cavallo tra riflessione sociale e speculazione teoretica-modellistica, andrebbe rintracciata nei tradizionali approcci di studio e analisi sul terrorismo. Questi sarebbero prevalentemente qualitativi, poiché prodotti per la massima parte dagli “humanities departments” delle Università e Centri Studi di riferimento. Ignorando spesso, di converso, gli approcci quantitativi. Usando le parole dell’autore:

Academic discourse on terrorism is centered around humanities departments, where political risk briefings are prepared but there is no tradition for quantitative risk analysis.

Partendo da tale punto di vista, nel suo studio Woo individua alcuni principi generali applicabili al *terrorism risk modeling*, attingendo ad un vasto data-set di eventi terroristici – effettivamente avvenuti o falliti – occorsi negli ultimi 20 anni. Lo scopo è quello di fornire un supporto concettuale ad ampio spettro che sia di ausilio per lo studio del fenomeno terroristico, incrementando la capacità di *terrorism risk management*, muovendo da casi esemplari.

Woo non è certo il primo a tentare di ricostruire una modellistica generale del terrorismo. Tra i molti, un precedente significativo risale ad esempio al 2005, quando lo studioso indiano Siddartha Mitra schematizzò un efficace *framework* analitico sul problema terroristico basato su 4 ordini di variabili (necessarie, precipitanti, facilitatrici e perpetuanti)⁴.

In Italia, il sociologo Alessandro Orsini ha invece posto l’attenzione sul modello individuale DRIA (Disintegrazione e Ricostruzione dell’identità

² G. Woo, *Understanding the Principles of Terrorism Risk Modeling from Charlie Hebdo Attack in Paris*, CoE-DAT, Ankara, 2015. http://www.tmmm.tsk.tr/publication/datr/volume10/03Understanding_PrinciplesTerrorism_RiskModelingfromCharlieHebdoAttackinParis.pdf

³ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/rdr/hidden-events/annual-conference-2014/acc-speakers/gordon-woo>

⁴ S. Mitra, *A Framework for Analytical Treatment of Terrorist Problems*, Jadavpur University, Department of Economics, 2005. http://papers.ssm.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=777086

sociale, Integrazione in una setta e Alienazione dal mondo circostante) in una sua recente pubblicazione di taglio divulgativo⁵ al fine di modellizzare il processo di incubazione terroristico a livello individuale.

Lo studio di Woo appare tuttavia degno di rilievo per l'ampio spettro teorico di analisi adottato, suffragato da svariati riferimenti empirici.

L'analogia concettuale tra terrorismo e terremoto richiamata nel titolo e all'inizio del paragrafo appare speculativamente interessante. Oltre che per l'auspicato livello predittivo, anche e soprattutto per i possibili fattori di *retroazione* esistenti in entrambi i due fenomeni, il primo riconducibile al mondo naturale e il secondo al mondo sociale.

Così come sono riportati infatti in letteratura tecnica terremoti indotti dall'uomo nella sua azione di sfruttamento di risorse naturali (estrazione di energia geo-termica, riempimento e svuotamento di bacini idrici artificiali, estrazione e re-iniezione di metano o petrolio nel sottosuolo), anche per il terrorismo andrebbero indagati i fattori socialmente "precipitanti" all'origine costitutiva del fenomeno inteso come mezzo di lotta.

In una prospettiva multi-fattoriale, infatti, il terrorismo non è inquadrabile come un fenomeno di punto, dalla genesi estemporanea e a-specifica. Esso è un fenomeno che è alla sua base "culturale" e ideologico, e solo successivamente "cinetico" e stragista nella sua fenomenologia tattico-operativa. Pertanto può essere innescato dall'azione stessa dell'uomo in quanto soggetto politico che si pone in trazione o in pressione su specifiche identità sociali e nazionali. Dunque, per dirla alla Clausewitz, agendo su materia umana "viva e reagente".

Operare politicamente in modo errato o a mezzo di interferenze distruttive in aree a rischio "tellurico-ideologico" ex ante – in virtù dell'humus sociale peculiare del luogo (c.d. potenziali "zone di faglia" socio-deviante) – potrebbe in quest'ottica facilitare genesi e sviluppi terroristici. Parallelamente, efficaci campagne di contro e di de-radicalizzazione corrispondono invece al costruire abitazioni e pareti "cognitive" di tipo anti-sismico⁶.

⁵ A. Orsini, *ISIS: i terroristi più fortunati del mondo e tutto ciò che è stato fatto per favorirli*, Rizzoli, 2016.

⁶ Nelle parole del Ministro della Difesa italiano "La coalizione anti-Daesh sta dando buoni risultati. Occorre però una strategia di prevenzione di lunga durata perché una volta sconfitto militarmente, il terrorismo dovrà essere combattuto con altri strumenti". È fondamentale fissare un obiettivo di lunga durata, nella consapevolezza che se da un lato la sconfitta di Daesh significherebbe la sconfitta del terrorismo che si è fatto Stato, per estirparne per sempre la minaccia occorrerà mantenere salda la coalizione anche in futuro usando strumenti non solo di intelligence, ma anche culturali (R. Pinotti, intervento al *Mediterranean Dialogues*, 2^a Edizione, Roma, Dicembre 2016) http://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Pagine/Difesa_e_sicurezza_Pinotti_al_Mediterranean_Dialogues_forum.aspx

Sia concessa un'ultima notazione preliminare sulla parola e sul concetto di terrorismo, in sé avente scarso valore euristico⁷. Il Prof. Umberto Curi, Emerito di Storia della Filosofia presso l'Università di Padova, ha sottolineato in tal senso la distorsione cognitiva ed epistemologica derivante da una indebita "sostantivazione" del terrorismo (*nominalist fallacy*)⁸.

Il terrorismo non dovrebbe in effetti essere visto come soggetto, vale a dire nemico in carne ed ossa, quanto invece come una modalità di lotta trasversale adottata da diversi soggetti, aventi spesso prospettive ideologiche differenti tra di loro.⁹

2. I principi generali del terrorism risk modeling secondo Gordon Woo

Il primo principio delineato da Woo nel suo studio è relativo all'Impact Factor (fattore di impatto) di un evento terroristico. A livello generale l'autore distingue tra *macroterror attacks* (la cui frequenza è relativamente ridotta in ragione della complessità di pianificazione ed esecuzione di *high-impact plots*) e *microterror attacks*. I terroristi cercano in entrambi i casi di massimizzare il danno prodotto, secondo differenti metriche del danno e della perdita (*loss metrics*): numero di vittime, distruzione materiale, economica o simbolica, tutti elementi che rappresentano il "valore esposto" (*element at risk*) all'azione terroristica.

Analogamente, osservando le serie storiche su scala globale di fenomeni naturali, per un terremoto la frequenza di sismi su scala Richter molto elevata è relativamente bassa rispetto a eventi tellurici di minore intensità. Sebbene nel fenomeno naturale terremoto manchi l'"*intent*" ovvero la volontà di uccidere, la capacità distruttiva espone in termini oggettivi cose e persone.

⁷ Considerandone l'etimologia storica e la sua introduzione nel lessico politico, potrebbe essere un termine quasi fuorviante, se si considera che il "terrore" nasce come funzione di governo e modalità di esercizio del potere, al servizio di una accezione forte della politica e di una progettualità condotta al limite dell'utopia: stiamo parlando del periodo delle rivoluzioni francese che va dal 1793 al 1794, laddove circa 16.000 cittadini francesi vengono giustiziati a seguito di processi sommari, in virtù della legge dei sospetti varata dal Comitato di Salute Pubblica di Robespierre e Saint Just. U. Curi, *I figli di Ares, guerra infinita e terrorismo*, Castelvechi, 2016.

⁸ In modo paradossalmente analogo, in termini di errata sostantivazione, secondo il poeta siriano Adonis "Nel Corano *an-nar* (il fuoco) è lo strumento di supplizio estremo. Il Corano attribuisce al fuoco un'identità e la parola. Si fa ricorso all'antropomorfismo e al pensiero magico, quello del fanciullo che non distingue ancora l'animato dall'inanimato" (Violenza e Islam, Guanda, 2015, pag. 56).

⁹ U. Curi, *I figli di Ares, guerra infinita e terrorismo*, Castelvechi, 2016.

Il secondo principio è riassunto nel modo seguente: *Publicity Impact is Key to Targeting*. Da ciò deriva il fatto che nella selezione degli obiettivi da colpire, le grandi città – come Bali (2002), Casablanca (2003), Madrid (2004), Londra (2005), Mumbai (2008), Boston (2013), Parigi (2015), Ankara (2016), Bruxelles (2016) e Berlino (2016) nel caso di eventi terroristici collegati al jihadismo islamico – siano ritenute dai terroristi più appetibili di piccoli villaggi o località dell’entroterra delle Nazioni individuate.

Tale approccio selettivo è apparso nel tempo trasversale a differenti organizzazioni terroristiche, a prescindere dalla loro natura, ideologica-religiosa (AQ e IS) o anche politica-secolare e nazionalistica. Woo cita come esempio concreto per questa seconda categoria l’IRA (*Irish Republican Army*) in Gran Bretagna e i suoi attacchi alle città inglesi di Manchester e Londra nei suoi anni di attività.

La cassa di risonanza cognitiva e psicologica di un singolo evento terroristico è spesso dirompente. Come bene evidenziato dallo psicologo israeliano Daniel Kahneman nel suo testo *Thinking, Fast and Slow*¹⁰: “*La mia esperienza illustra come funziona il terrorismo e perché sia così efficace: induce una cascata di disponibilità. Un’immagine estremamente vivida di morte e distruzione, rafforzata di continuo dall’attenzione dei media e dalle frequenti conversazioni, diventa altamente accessibile, specie se è associata ad una situazione specifica (che la richiama)*”.

3. I principi di sostituzione del target e di inter-dipendenza

Il terzo blocco di riflessione è relativo ai concetti di inter-dipendenza e sostituzione tra target selezionati da gruppi terroristici. Secondo il principio di sostituzione del target, *terrorists will attack the softer of two similarly attractive targets*. Per l’autore, questo principio esprime un approccio quasi darwinistico, essendo simile a una legge base del mondo naturale: presa una popolazione di prede di riferimento, i predatori puntano sempre alle prede più vulnerabili.

In letteratura specialistica si parla generalmente di *hard target* (palazzi di governo, ambasciate, basi militari), muniti di misure di protezione passiva o attiva a diversi livelli, tali da essere attaccati in taluni contesti geopolitici prevalentemente a mezzo *suicide events* e *soft target* (come redazioni di giornali, metropolitane, discoteche, pub, bar) non concettualmente pensati all’origine per difendersi da tentativi di intrusioni e/o attacchi. Nella prospettiva degli

¹⁰D. Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, tradotto in Italia come *Pensieri Lenti e Veloci*, Mondadori, 2012.

studiosi statunitensi Berman e Laitin «*suicide attacks are more likely against hard targets – targets for which an effective attack makes escape unlikely*»¹¹.

Il principio di sostituzione del target opera a diversi livelli: dalla strada, alla città, alla Nazione. Woo riporta in questo senso l'esempio dei fratelli Kouachi, autori delle stragi di Parigi del 2015. Segnalati sulle US no-fly lists, non avrebbero potuto perpetrare attacchi su suolo americano, anche se questa fosse stata la loro volontà originaria. E ove questa vi fosse stata, avrebbero dovuto necessariamente selezionare un'altra Nazione-bersaglio, come appunto la Francia, ove avevano piena libertà di accesso e circolazione.

Analogia logica di sostituzione del target vale per gli obiettivi "umani": il regista olandese Theo Van Gogh, assassinato ad Amsterdam nel 2004, fu considerato dai suoi assassini un *soft target*, avendo declinato la possibilità di avere una scorta di sicurezza. Di converso Ayaan Hirsi Ali, scrittrice del medesimo cortometraggio *Submission*, giudicato blasfemo dagli estremisti, godeva di uno speciale programma di protezione personale.

Di converso, guardando criticamente l'applicazione empirica del principio di sostituzione del target, è da segnalare che in alcuni contesti specifici come l'Afghanistan la selezione di obiettivi mirata ad *hard target* non è residuale, ma rappresenta una significativa quota di attività della galassia insurrezionale locale.

Si pensi in tal senso all'autobomba esplosa contro i servizi di sicurezza afgiani (NDS, National Directorate of Security) a Kabul nell'aprile 2016, che ha rappresentato il peggiore attacco occorso nella capitale afgana dal 2011. O ancora prima, all'attentato rivolto all'ambasciata indiana di Kabul del 2008¹².

Cosa ci insegna dunque questa tipologia di attentati rispetto alla ricerca di un modello e di un *pattern* nell'agire terroristico? Forse questo: partire dall'analisi di singoli, specifici casi e cercare, attraverso il metodo induttivo, di individuare principi e modelli di comportamento terroristico non deve portare a costruire false sicurezze destinate ad essere infrante da casi "*non-normali*" (intesi come posti agli estremi della gaussiana di distribuzione degli attentati terroristici) nel mutare continuo dell'ambiente di riferimento. Questo esercizio intellettuale e scientifico di ricerca di regolarità di comportamento, cionondimeno, rimane essenziale al fine di costruire un approccio di sicurezza che possa modellizzare – se pure in modo approssimato e non certamente conclusivo – il profilo di minaccia terroristica.

¹¹ E. Berman, D. Laitin, *Hard Targets: Theory and Evidence on Suicide Attacks*, National Bureau of Economic Research, November 2005. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w11740>

¹² J. Smith, H. Shalizi, *Afghan Taliban kill at least 28 in major attack in central Kabul*, Reuters, 19/04/2016. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-blast-idUSKCN0XG0BO>

Venendo adesso al principio di inter-dipendenza del target, invece, si afferma nello studio di Woo come – in questo caso diversamente dalle catastrofi naturali – i rischi terroristici non sono assoluti ma relativi. Esemplicando: il rischio sismico di un edificio non è dipendente dal rischio sismico di un altro edificio collocato in un punto diverso della città. Nel caso del terrorismo, un cambio nella postura di sicurezza di un hotel in una città considerata a rischio terrorismo può potenzialmente influenzare l'esposizione alla minaccia di altri hotel ubicati nella stessa città (poiché ad esempio potrebbe orientare e influenzare la scelta del target da parte del gruppo di fuoco terroristico).

4. La selezione dei mezzi di offesa e l'analisi relazionale delle cellule

Il quarto ambito concettuale riguarda invece la selezione dell'armamento operata dai terroristi e un'analisi strutturale del network terroristico. Per quanto concerne il primo aspetto, il data-set esaminato da Woo porta a dire che i terroristi tendono a privilegiare armi di tipo tradizionale, non sofisticate ma funzionali (tipicamente esplosivo e armi da fuoco di piccolo o medio calibro).

L'autore in tal senso, quale scenario di contrasto, fa notare che un attentato chimico in scenari urbani in tempo di pace non si riscontra dal 1995, quando del gas Sarin fu disperso nella metropolitana di Tokyo dalla setta Aum Shinrikyo. Anche il tentativo di *weaponization* del virus Ebola in Congo non ha avuto sinora successo, in ragione delle chiare difficoltà tecnico-realizzative di stoccaggio e diffusione di mezzi di offesa biologica da parte di gruppi non statuali e terroristici. Concettualmente possibile appare di converso l'importazione nel breve periodo di tecniche, tattiche e procedure di attacco storicamente sperimentate in contesti extra-europei. Si pensi, in tal senso, all'ipotesi paventata già nell'estate del 2016 dal direttore della DGSI (*Direction générale de la sécurité intérieure*) Patrick Calvar rispetto ad automezzi esplosivi (andando dunque oltre la modalità di offesa "cinetica" portata avanti nel recente passato a mezzi camion azionati su folla a Nizza nel luglio 2016 e a Berlino nel dicembre 2016¹³).

Un'analisi strutturale del network terroristico porta invece a far enunciare il seguente principio generale: maggiore è il numero di componenti della cellula, maggiore è la probabilità che la stessa venga intercettata (*interdiction probability*).

¹³ F. Biloslavo, Panorama, 27 luglio 2016. Calvar vanta uno specifico background operativo rispetto al contesto mediorientale, essendo stato dal 2004 al 2007 *sous-directeur du contre-terrorisme et du monde arabo-musulman* presso la disciolta DST (Direction de la Surveillance du territoire, agenzia antesignana dell'odierna DGSI).

Questo avviene perché in un ambiente ormai saturo di *signature* elettroniche, telefoniche e tracce informatiche di relazioni umane, oggi nessun individuo può vivere in una condizione di completo e totale isolamento relazionale. I servizi di sicurezza in un simile contesto non possono certo leggere le menti degli attentatori, ma possono effettuare azioni di tracking e monitoraggio su comunicazioni e attività relazionali, combinando differenti fonti di ricerca fuse tra di loro, tra *digital e real world* (c.d. digital humint¹⁴).

Quale esempio di cronaca recente, il caso del kickboxer italo-marocchino Abderrahim Moutaharrik arrestato a fine aprile 2016 in una indagine sulle reti di IS nel Nord Italia appare emblematico. RegISTRAZIONI in arabo classico inviate via WhatsApp avrebbero incitato il soggetto in progettualità ostili, secondo quanto riportato alla stampa dagli inquirenti¹⁵.

Una cellula terroristica di *n*-elementi può inoltre essere studiata sotto il profilo della “performance organizzativa-realizzativa”, laddove la sua efficienza (percentuale del task completato rispetto a quello assegnato) può essere inficiata da scelte di campo di singoli operativi della cellula (scelta binaria tra lealtà e defezione). In tal senso procedure di screening sull’affidabilità del soggetto sono messe in atto dai terroristi islamici (rilascio della c.d. *tazkia*, una sorta di accreditamento per l’arruolamento) in modo non dissimile da quanto avviene per le principali consorterie della criminalità organizzata sul territorio nazionale¹⁶.

Attorno alla cellula/ “gruppo di fuoco” (*active terrorists*) ruota poi tutto il mondo dei “fiancheggiatori” (*supporters/ facilitators*). Anche defezioni a questo livello possono inficiare le attività, i processi organizzativi e le risorse economiche, fisiche, infrastrutturali e tecnologiche destinate allo sviluppo della progettualità ostile della cellula terroristica.

Caso emblematico in tal senso fu per le Brigate Rosse l’uccisione di Aldo Moro nel 1978. Nelle parole dell’ex Generale dei Carabinieri Francesco Delfino, già in servizio presso il SiSMI nel periodo 1978-1987: “...il cruciale 1978, vero anno di cesura, diviso tra l’impennata di nuovi militanti, nuovi quadri entusiasti ma deboli, e la caduta verticale di simpatie a seguito dell’omicidio. Al tempo della sua massima espressione eversiva, nel 1977, le BR potevano contare dai 100 ai 150 militanti a tempo pieno più circa 600 fiancheggiatori.”¹⁷

¹⁴ M. Lombardi, A. Burato, M. Maiolino, *Digital Humint. Nuove Prospettive di Analisi*, in *Gnosis*, 2/2016.

¹⁵ F. Brunati, ANSA/Terrorismo: *smantellata rete Isis Nord Italia*, 6 arresti, ANSA-Lombardia, 28/04/2016; http://www.ansa.it/lombardia/notizie/2016/04/28/ansa-terrorismosmantellata-rete-isis-nord-italia-6-arresti_e259885f-898f-4bf2-bb0d-c36302bdf2f6.html

¹⁶ N. Pollari, *Tecniche delle inchieste patrimoniali per la lotta alla criminalità organizzata*, 2000, Laurus Robuffo, Roma. Pag. 52.

¹⁷ F. Delfino, *La Verità di un Generale scomodo*, 1998, I.E.T. Verona.

Radicalmente più problematico è il caso di eventi terroristici del tipo *self-starters*, racchiusi spesso in filiere corte di tipo familiare. Qui la capacità di interdizione preventiva e tempestiva appare critica.

Una tipologia ancora più subdola è oggi infine rappresentata da eventi terroristici portati avanti da elementi *travisati*, come tristemente dimostrato dal caso dell'uccisione dell'ambasciatore russo in Turchia, Andrey Karlov a mezzo di un poliziotto turco ideologicamente compromesso. Un *insider terroristic threat*, dunque, che replica in contesti urbani "euro-atlantici" (considerando la Turchia appunto come Paese NATO e "storicamente" candidato all'UE) la fenomenologia già nota in Afghanistan come "green-on-blue" attack¹⁸.

Si pensi, nel contesto asiatico, all'uccisione del Major General statunitense Harold Greene avvenuta nel 2014 all'interno di un Accademia di formazione afghana nei pressi di Kabul a mezzo di un elemento travisato da soldato afghano¹⁹.

5. La caratterizzazione ideologica nel lungo periodo

Woo nella sua analisi riporta poi un ultimo significativo punto. Il rischio terroristico va parametrato sotto l'assunzione teorica che la minaccia terroristica ha una prospettiva di lungo termine e soprattutto di tipo trans-generazionale, non eradicabile da sole azioni di contrasto del tipo *hard power*.

Facendo specifico riferimento agli attentati di Parigi del gennaio 2015 contro la redazione di Charlie Hebdo, Woo osserva come alcuni degli attentatori fossero stati radicalizzati da Djamel Beghal, teologo estremista di lungo corso, già attivo in Afghanistan prima dell'11/9 e associato alla Moschea di Finsbury Park a Londra, centro noto alle cronache per essere stato un importante incubatore di pensiero radicale islamico²⁰.

Analogamente, il giornalista Premio Pulitzer per la saggistica nel 2016 Jobi Warrick nel suo *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS* parte da uno studio biografico molto accurato del leader di AQ in Iraq Abu Musab Al Zarkawi ucciso nel 2006 per ricostruire la matrice ideologica più autentica del Califfato.

¹⁸ Si definisce "green on blue attack" un attacco condotto da un poliziotto o da un soldato afghano contro un appartenente alle forze NATO in Afghanistan. <http://www.ibtimes.com/what-green-blue-attack-killing-us-major-general-harold-greene-just-third-insider-attack-1649920>

¹⁹ <http://abcnews.go.com/International/maj-gen-harold-greene-highest-ranking-soldier-killed/story?id=24856054>

²⁰ S. Dambruoso, G. Olimpio, *Milano-Baghdad, 2004*, Mondadori.

Da parte sua, lo studioso Peter Neumann²¹ del King's College di Londra ricordava al Panel *Jihadi Terrorism* dell'Oxford Analytica Conference 2015 che quando anche il fenomeno IS e la sua utopia jihadista fosse sconfitto domani, il *life cycle* dei radicalizzati a livello individuale si potrebbe esprimere ancora nell'arco di 10-20 anni. Analoga prospettiva ha adottato l'MI6 Director, Alex Younger, a margine di un intervento avuto nel settembre 2016 dove ha ipotizzato una persistenza di rischio nel medio-lungo periodo, proseguendo per una intera "vita professionale" degli addetti alla sicurezza nazionale.

Significativamente, Woo nel suo paper non parla di integralismo islamico rispetto ai fatti di Parigi ma di "*Extremists Claiming Affiliation with Islam*" (ECAI). Tale definizione appare ben rappresentare il divario ontologico esistente tra Islam come religione in sé e individui che ne rivendicano una affiliazione in chiave eversiva/destabilizzante e stragista, muovendosi *de facto* sul piano della politica e del micro-sociale più che su un piano spirituale, rituale e di specifica sensibilità culturale.

In un testo del 2010 dedicato alla storia dell'MI5, il Servizio di Sicurezza interno del Regno Unito, lo storico britannico Christopher Andrew ha dedicato un capitolo proprio al fenomeno islamico inteso quale minaccia securitaria interna ad un Paese, intitolato significativamente con l'ossimoro "*Holy Terror*"²².

Sotto il profilo delle serie storiche analizzate nel testo di Andrew, è interessante notare come con l'etichetta verbale *Holy Terror* vengono presentati nel libro fenomeni violenti ed eversivi all'attenzione dell'MI5 in diverse epoche. Essi sono collegati genericamente all'area culturale "islamica" ma appaiono molto diversi tra di loro.

Dapprima lo "State Terrorism" attribuito al MOIS (Ministry of Intelligence and Security) iraniano, rispetto al quale Andrew segnala l'uccisione dell'ultimo Primo Ministro iraniano al tempo dello Shah di Persia, Shahpur Bakhtiar, avvenuta a Parigi nel 1991 e la fatwa emessa da Khomeini nel 1989 nei confronti dello scrittore Salman Rushdie.

Poi, a metà degli anni Novanta il GIA (*Groupe Islamique Armé*) algerino, già responsabile di attacchi importanti sul suolo francese.

Solo dal marzo 1996 Al Qaeda e i suoi affiliati (il primo *exclusion order* di ingresso nel Regno Unito a Osama Bin Laden fu emesso nel gennaio 1996).

²¹P. Neumann è Professor of Security Studies at the War Studies Department del King's College di Londra e Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR, www.icsr.info) <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/warstudies/people/professors/neumann.aspx>

²²C. Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm: The authorized History of MI5*, Penguin Books, 2010.

Oggi infine, ai tempi di IS, la minaccia ideologica rappresentata da una interpretazione/strumentalizzazione fanatica dell'approccio sunnita-rigorista appare essere quella prevalente.

6. Conclusioni

Processi e metodi per la sicurezza territoriale di scenari urbani in senso anti-terroristico sono in continuo divenire e da relazionare allo specifico vettore di minaccia applicato, caratterizzato da specifica direzione e intensità al tempo T e nel luogo L.

Questo vettore è la risultante di un campo di forze antagoniste e un numero n di variabili quali: capacità di contro-terrorismo locale, capacità *stealth* e resilienza delle cellule votate all'azione, livello di protezione del target, nuove procedure e modalità di attacco, etc.

In questo modello, un attentato terroristico appartiene ad una classe di eventi del tutto peculiare, basata certo su singole, caotiche e talvolta contraddittorie volontà umane, ma anche da inquadrare all'interno di alcuni parametri e principi tendenzialmente lineari, per come sopra esposto.

Nell'approcciare il fenomeno terroristico occorrerebbe evitare due comuni errori, inversamente proporzionali tra di loro: da una parte la sovra-semplificazione (giacché semplificare è a volte mistificare), dall'altra l'*overload* (*sovraccarico*) di analisi (poiché *over-analizzare* significa a volte disorientare²³).

Dove rimane la realtà in tutto ciò? È una ansia conoscitiva legittima per la società contemporanea e la sua cultura relazionale che weberianamente “è una sezione finita dell'infinità priva di senso del divenire del mondo, alla quale è attribuito senso e significato dal punto di vista dell'uomo”²⁴.

Buona parte della letteratura scientifica prevalente negli studi sul terrorismo (gli americani Bruce Hoffman e Marc Sageman²⁵, l'israeliano Ariel

²³ Per il filosofo e frate francescano inglese William of Ockham (Guglielmo di Occam, 1285-1347) e il suo celebre rasoio del pensiero: “*Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*”.

²⁴ M. Weber, *Il metodo delle scienze storico sociali*, 1922

²⁵ Ex-operativo nella CIA in Pakistan e Psichiatra. Nel suo primo libro, *Understanding Terror Networks* (2004) affermò contro il *conventional wisdom* del tempo che la vittoria nella GWOT (Global War on Terrorism) non sarebbe stata raggiunta con l'uccisione dei capi e dei leader di AQ. Nelle parole di B. Hoffman: “*According to Sageman, al Qaeda was not an organization to be systematically destroyed but a social network that had to be disrupted*”. L'approccio sociale e bottom up (che non esclude tuttavia la prospettiva top down) viene enfatizzato nel successivo testo *Leaderless Jihad* del 2008. Nel suo ultimo testo, *Misunderstanding Terrorism* del 2016, Sageman conia il termine “blob theory” per indicare una minaccia terroristica neo-ihadista diffusa, amorfa e fluida, al di là delle architetture gerarchiche e formali di comando.

Merari e A. Orsini altri) appare concordare sui criteri di razionalità e piena intenzionalità terroristica.

Secondo lo studioso francese Olivier Roy il fenomeno terroristico odierno – almeno relativamente all’area target francese – sarebbe da associare ulteriormente a una sorta di “*generational revolt that affects a specific category of young people*”. Usando le parole della ricercatrice Sofia Zavagli, assistente di ricerca al Clingendael Institute e Fellow all’International Centre for Counter Terrorism (ICCT) dell’Aia:

il problema della radicalizzazione in Francia riguarda solo due categorie di persone: i giovani (figli di) immigrati di seconda generazione e i giovani francesi convertiti all’Islam. È una crisi generazionale condotta contro la generazione dei padri in cui si assiste non alla radicalizzazione dell’Islam, ma all’islamizzazione del radicalismo²⁶.

Al di là delle interpretazioni di fondo o di contesto specifico, scienze sociali e scienze dure dovrebbero concorrere a livello di *clinical recognition, change detection*, diagnosi e possibili prognosi e cure rispetto al fenomeno tanto sul piano analitico qualitativo quanto sul piano quantitativo. Richiamandosi alla citazione riportata in apertura al testo e attribuita al Generale Mario Mori, appare significativo osservare come ad una prima approssimazione lo “sciame di api” terroristico possa sembrare emblema e quintessenza del caos e dell’imponderabile.

Visto più da vicino, osservato nei suoi movimenti interni, il micro-cosmo dello sciame appare invece possedere regolarità e sincronizzazioni incredibili. Attorno a queste regolarità andrebbe costruita una efficace analisi di contrasto, arrivando sino all’ape regina protetta da tante api operaie. Le api, infatti, dopo una fase iniziale di volo disordinato (c.d. *febbre della sciamatura*) si dirigono tutte verso gli stessi punti e si sovrappongono una sopra l’altra negli stessi luoghi.

Il popolamento e lo studio incrociato di data-sets sempre più precisi e strutturati sulle “arnie” terroristiche permetterà di sintonizzare ancora meglio i “sismografi di rischio”, aiutando i ricercatori e gli operatori di sicurezza nella mappatura dei diversi e possibili profili di minaccia. Facendo dunque *intelligence* interagendo e dialogando con fatti, fenomeni e persone che si muovono nel contesto securitario contemporaneo.

Sulla stessa linea di pensiero il giornalista inglese Robert Fisk, che già nel 2006 dalle pagine del *The Independent* affermava: “*Perché continuare a prendersi la briga di dare la caccia a Bin Laden? È un po’ come arrestare gli scienziati nucleari dopo che hanno inventato la bomba atomica*”.

²⁶ <http://www.affarinternazionali.it/articolo.asp?ID=3249>

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An emerging and crucial change in the international security and defense community. Bringing the Socio-Cultural Perspective Back into the Intelligence Analytical Approach

MARCO MAIOLINO

Abstract

According to the US National Intelligence Council (NIC) publication *Global Trends 2030*¹, the current and future world is and will be shaped by a number of influential factors:

- Individual empowerment is rising, thanks to the reduction of poverty, growing middle-classes, level of education, discovery and use of new technologies and improving sanitation.
- The patterns of global power will change, we are already observing an ongoing power transition from a hegemonic to a multipolar world, where states are and will not be the sole power brokers, other actors will step up on the international stage.
- Demography will demonstrate to be crucial, growing against ageing populations, statistics foresee a 60% of the global population living in urban areas by 2030 and migrations will stabilise as a constant and growing phenomenon.
- Moreover, the climate change and resources scarcity is and will be another difficult challenge to global governance.

All those trends will be integrated by other vectors of change such as economic instability, efficiency of global governance, development and use of new technologies, regional instability and conflicts creation and resolution.

Now, taking into account the totality of those factors, the trajectory of a common upward sloping aggregate curve may be down, insecurity will increase and, even more importantly, it will be composed by a basket of new and different threats.

These new trends and menaces will need to be detected, understood, prevented and ultimately engaged, and obviously old knowledge, tools and strategies will never fit the feat.

We live within a liquid reality, featured by the concept of constant evolution, hence, the security and defense cadre will have to bear the tough effort to adapt to new and complex environments, a pretty difficult task.

Within this framework the concept and meaning of conflict is changed as well. Warfare may no longer be intended as a pure matter of states, brought about by the physical engagement of official and opposing armies. Since the end of World War Two, the international Law of Armed Conflict²

¹ US NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COUNCIL, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, NIC, 2012, pp. 1-137

² A. CASSESE, *International Law*, second edition, Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 399-481

already started to regulate a new set of actors: insurgents, national liberation movements, lawful and unlawful combatants. However, the transformation is much wider, this is the era of Hybrid Warfare³. This paper will present Human Dynamics and, more precisely, Sociocultural Intelligence (SO-CINT) as innovative and useful tools to face the new conflict scenario.

The need to deeply understand the field of operation, but more broadly the international environment with its different social and cultural contexts, political and legal features, economic conditions, groups composition and influence, is key, for the intelligence and the wider security and defense community. Not only to bring about successful operations in territories where military forces are engaged. The even greater advantage would be determined by the possibility to understand, control and dissolve threats before they turn into crisis.

This preventive effect, shows clearly how social sciences and the socio-cultural perspective must be applied not only to the military domain, rather, it is best suited for the most comprehensive intelligence spectrum⁴.

Following the guiding principles expressed above, this paper is going to explore the re-employment of Human Dynamics as a source of revolution for the international Intelligence Community and its methodological and analytical angle. The work will be developed starting from the intelligence history underlining the past role and space of employment of social sciences, the subsequent step will regard the description of socio-cultural intelligence as a discipline, what it is (scientific background), how it works (methodology), and why it is important. Furthermore, the main international examples of socio-cultural Intelligence application will be provided.

Concluding, socio-cultural Intelligence material application will be discussed.

Keywords

Intelligence, human dynamics, counter-terrorism

The need to deeply understand the field of operation, but more broadly the international environment with its different social and cultural contexts, political and legal features, economic conditions, groups composition and influence, is key, for the intelligence and the wider security and defense community, not only to bring about successful operations in territories where military forces are engaged. The even greater advantage would be determined by the possibility to understand, control and dissolve threats before they turn into crisis.

³ A sophisticated campaign that combine low-level conventional and special operations; offensive cyber and space actions; and psychological operations that use social and traditional media to influence popular perceptions and international opinions (Hoffman)

⁴ To know more about the wider Intelligence spectrum please visit <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2012/01/20120110143416su0.9688488.html#axzz3n1HEbavv> it is possible to find similar information comparing the National Security and Defence Strategy of various states, for instance https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61936/national-securitystrategy.pdf or <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-sert/scmg-eng.aspx>

This preventive effect, shows clearly how social sciences and the socio-cultural perspective must be applied not only to the military intelligence (COIN, support and stabilization), rather, it is best suited for the most comprehensive intelligence spectrum¹, that is composed of counter-terrorism, humanitarian relief, countering weapons of mass destruction, operating in cyberspace, maintaining a nuclear deterrence and deterring/defeating aggression, as well.

Following the guide principles expressed above, this paper is going to explore the re-employment of Human Dynamics as a source of revolution for the international Intelligence Community and its methodological and analytical angle. The work will be developed starting from the Intelligence's history, underlining the past role and space of employment of social sciences and then, focusing on present and future pivotal trends, getting momentum within the IC and representing a strategy to fix the current and ineffective environment.

The subsequent step will regard the description of socio-cultural intelligence as a discipline, what it is (scientific background), how it works (methodology), and why it is important. Furthermore, the main international examples of socio-cultural Intelligence application will be provided, describing experiments (employed in the military and civil Intelligence field) such as the Human Terrain Team, the Nawa District innovative operation, the Stability Operations Information Center (SOIC) and many others.

Concluding, a case study will be provided.

1. Intelligence past, present and future perspectives

Robert R. Tomes, adjunct professor of Security Policy Studies at the George Washington University and serving on the Board of the Council for Emerging National Security Affairs (CENSA), refers to socio-cultural Intelligence as: «an area of Intelligence collection, analysis, and reporting that atrophied in the 1980s and 1990s⁵».

Already since the nineteenth century, with the Great Britain Great Game⁶ in Asia, and then throughout the World War II, social science were strongly integrated within military and Intelligence operations, the use of anthropologists to under-

⁵ R.R. TOMES, *Toward a Smarter Military*, Socio-Cultural Intelligence and National Security, The US Army War College Quarterly Parameters, Contemporary Strategy and Land-power, vol. 45, n. 2, 2015

⁶ <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/south-asia/1980-03-01/great-game-asia>, in which the Great Game identify the activities of the rival Great Britain and Russian intelligence contending the fate of Asia to each other, and the broader Anglo-Russian dispute over the Asian destiny

stand foreign cultures, such as the Human Relations Area Files at Yale⁷ (an internationally recognized organization fostering cross-cultural studies of Human cultures) and the recruitment of local forces to support the national Army to fight enemy forces located oversea are just a couple of examples of the operations realized by the American then called Office of Strategic Services (OSS), as a branch of the broader Special Operation Forces (SOF).

The OSS⁸, former Coordination of Information (COI), funded in 1942, gathered intelligence from almost every country in the world and conducted “black” propaganda operations (creating and using forged documents to embarrass, misrepresent and vilify the adversary) against the enemy. It was dismissed in 1945 and its approximately 7.700 cubic feet of analytical data, divided between the infant Central Intelligence Agency (CIA established in 1947) and the Department of Defense (DoD).

During the Cold War, the gathering of socio-cultural data were mainly used to detect possible breeding grounds of socialist ideology around the globe. An example of their application, in the military operational fields, is given by the support for the giant and famous Operation Cedar Falls⁹ (Search and Destroy in the Iron Triangle), where intelligence activities were deployed to locate and understand enemy positions and behavior in a wide forested area close to Saigon.

Unfortunately and committing a big mistake, after the Vietnam War and on, in the 80s and 90s, the socio-cultural perspective was set aside, a much more technical approach was adopted, focusing on the development of new and more advanced technologies of detection (that are going to be discussed further) and the collection of technical data about the enemy’s military capabilities (mostly nuclear arsenal). A functional and systemic analytical approach started to be employed, the Red light switched on and intelligence officers began to work more like bulls than analysts.

As it is clarified by the experts R. Kerr, T. Wolfe, R. Donegan and A. Pappas, along the 2000s and precisely in 2002-3, with the failure of the intelligence community (IC) to discover weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the S. Hussein’s Iraq¹⁰ (because of the use of old data, collected before 1998, strong hypothetical assumptions based on pieces of technical evidences and lacking any socio-cultural knowledge of the target), the wind of change began to blow over the IC, transforma-

⁷ *Ibid.* and <http://hraf.yale.edu/>

⁸ To gather deeper information regarding the role and scope of the OSS please visit <http://www.ossociety.org/>; <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/intelligence-history/oss/art03.htm> and <http://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/oss/>

⁹ See B.W. ROGERS, *Cedar Falls-Junction City: A Turning Point*, Vietnam Studies, Department of the Army, Washington DC, 1989, pp. 1-160 and <http://www.historynet.com/operation-cedar-falls-search-and-destroy-in-the-irontriangle.htm>

¹⁰ <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/>

tions of collection methods, analysis, subsequent production and interaction with policy-makers needed to happen.

It must be said that after the Cold War, during which all the Intelligence efforts were focused on the Soviet Union (proving to be very effective due to a deep understanding of the target developed through years), the IC had to reorganize itself to face a new world of multipolar actors and threats, when governments, lacking big, evident and immediate menaces, decided to cut resources for Technical Intelligence (TECHINT) and Human Intelligence (HUMINT). All this, linked to an emerging crisis to crisis approach, that hardly fit the comprehensive perspective required by emerging and complex environments.

In fact, one of the biggest intelligence's mistake, at that time, was the separation between collection and analysis, giving collection the highest priority, with technical collection (enemy capabilities) largely overcoming socio-cultural collection.

Moreover, one of the most hazardous step taken by the analytical cadre, was the straight move from long-term/in depth analysis to short-term analysis, functioning as a fast take-away meal for decision makers, this inoculated within an organizational framework made out of independent centers, underlying a weak mental, issue by issue, approach to complex problems¹¹.

Writing about the excessive and unbalanced rise in importance of technical collection systems, it is again R. R Tomes to light up the matter¹².

First of all, Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance systems (ISR) are air, space and ground sensors, people communication and ad hoc infrastructures needed to work with remotely sensed data. They (imagery and signal intelligence satellites, planes, drones and radars) are in evolution since the Cold war to improve international and national security.

Obviously, those devices are still crucial for today's gathering operations but, it may not be denied that, first: «Ninety percent of the intelligence comes from open sources. The other ten percent, the clandestine work is just the most dramatic. The real intelligence hero is Sherlock Holmes, not James Bond¹³», and second, we have to realize that, the reason why the discussed technologies were so successful in the past was thanks to the Intelligence element, or the existence of well trained and skilled professionals that were able to critically observe, connect and analyze detect-

¹¹ R. KERR, T. WOLFE, R. DONEGAN, A.PAPPAS, *Collection and Analysis on Iraq: Issues for the US Intelligence Community*, Studies in Intelligence, Journal of the American Intelligence Professional, vol. 49, n. 3, CIA, 2005, pp. 47-54

¹² R.R. TOMES RAND, *Informing US National Security Transformation Discussions: an Argument for Balanced Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance*, Defence Studies, 3:2, 2003, pp. 20-35

¹³ T.M. PAULSON, *Intelligence Issues and Developments*, Nova Science Publisher, NY, 2008, p. 78

ed information. The Human factor proved to be key. More advanced technologies does not mean more effective and realistic analysis.

Unfortunately, until today, there has been an excessive attention toward developing new and cutting-edge ISR technologies, leaving the improvement and teaching of analytical abilities apart. Fragment of detected information, interpreted by over-confident politicians have substituted professional and well researched intelligence products. What comes out clearly is the loss, happened along the 80s, of the *information dominance* definition's understanding and scope as: «a superior understanding of a potential adversary's military, political, social and economic structures, to include their strengths, weaknesses, locations and degree of interdependence, while denying an adversary similar information on friendly assets¹⁴».

We are currently facing the economic Law of Diminishing Returns in ISR investments (hence, the more you invest in ISR technologies, the less you gain from it), if a reverse trend is willing to be started, analysts must be trained and analytical skills linking the detection of the enemy's capabilities to the socio-cultural environment surrounding it, enhanced.

As H. Kissinger wisely said: «Since the mass of information available tends to exceed the capacity to evaluate it, a gap has opened up between information and knowledge and, even beyond that, between knowledge and wisdom¹⁵».

Keeping on describing present flaws of the current security, defense and Intelligence community, and trying to identify future trends and perspectives, Major General M.T. Flynn, Captain M. Pottinger and P.D. Bachelor (DIA), starting from their direct experience in Afghanistan in COIN operations, point out a set of crucial problems¹⁶.

First of all, the Intelligence Community was and is too focused on detecting enemy networks, leaders and capabilities, without lending any attention to the geographical context in which operations are developed. Knowledge of social and cultural structures, economic and political features, religious influence and organization, enabling officers to understand the very motivation at the base of certain behaviors completely misses, so as so the support that is supposed to be given. Second, Intelligence on the socio-cultural context have the greatest strategic importance, a map to gain popular support and marginalize the enemy itself. Hence, to empower effective decision-making, a strong effort must be devoted to info collection and analytic brainpower employed toward new environments, at the regional, national

¹⁴ H.M. SAPOLSKY, B.H. FRIEDMAN, B.R. GREEN, *US Military Innovations since the Cold War: Creation without disruption*, Strategy and history, Routledge, US and Canada, 2009, p. 163

¹⁵ H. KISSINGER, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?: Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century*, Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, NY, 2001, p. 284

¹⁶ M.T. FLYNN, M. POTTINGER, P.D. BATCHELOR, *Fixing Intel: a Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan*, Voices from the Field, Centre for a New American Security, 2010, pp. 1-24

and district level of understanding. Local politics, economics, power-brokers identification, effective means of influence, levels of cooperation among the population and ongoing development programs must become the target instead of channeling all the resources exclusively over the enemy.

Third, quite often, vital information on socio-cultural context do not get to top-level analysts at regional bases or headquarters. Part of the issue may be addressed to the non-existence of effective and updated networks of file-sharing¹⁷ (inefficiency of INTELINK or different close networks), although the American Defense Connect Online¹⁸ (DCO), a cyber tool allowing co-operation across the US Secret Internet Protocol Router Networks (SIPRNet) and the Unclassified but Sensitive Internet Protocol Router Network (NIPRNet), may be seen as a valuable model and step forward. Moreover, the cult of secrecy may take part of the responsibility but, to a greater extent, there is an excessive disparity, within Intelligence centers, between red (focused on enemies) and white (socio-cultural matters) analysts, with senior analysts being reluctant to leave their chairs to go to the field, identifying depositors of valuable data (local people, NGOs, IOs personnel and others), building up mutually beneficial relationships with them and bringing information back to the base, sharing adequately.

Concluding, fourth, the old functional approach, based on topics of concern (insurgents, terrorists, smugglers and so on) and only “Red” activity of the enemy must change, it needs to be integrated to a new geographic approach, focused on areas, featured by specific socio-cultural dimensions and including the direct adversary within the bigger picture.

An interesting example of a comprehensive geographical approach¹⁹, applied to the US military organization, has been provided by Joel Lawton. He suggests the establishment of a socio-cultural intelligence, regionally oriented program at the Combatant Command (COCOM) echelon, being it already the confluence point of the NORTHCOM (North America), SOUTHCOM (South America), EU-COM (Europe), CENTCOM (Middle East and Northern Africa) and PACOM (the Pacific) branches (each branch would have its own analytical teams), it would be more beneficial than establishing a tactical unit in all operational environment.

A renovated “White” activity, best performed by the best and hungriest civilian analysts (they are better suited to create lasting relationships with a wide range of actors and do not have security clearance so they may easily travel from the regional

¹⁷ M.S. BURTON, *Connecting the Virtual Dots: How the web can relieve our information glut and get us talking to each other*, Studies in Intelligence, Journal of the American Intelligence Professional, vol. 49, n. 3, CIA, 2005, pp. 55-62

¹⁸ <http://www.dco.dod.mil/>

¹⁹ J. LAWTON, *How the Military Intelligence Community Has Failed to Incorporate Sociocultural Understanding of Their Operational Environment*, Small Wars Journal, 2014, pp. 1-9

base to the battleground and back), on the lines of the so called “civilian surge”²⁰, need to be stressed and started.

One of the main peculiarity of this SoSA approach is the channelization of analysis into three color-coded categories²¹, red, white and green, where red is the dominant tone, and Fusion Intelligence: «as the process of collecting and examining information from all available sources and intelligence disciplines to derive as complete an assessment as possible of detected activities [...] an all-source approach to intelligence collection and analysis²²», looks more like a pretty red-centric intelligence, aiming at just capturing or killing enemy operatives, reducing the direct threat in the immediate time perspective (true), but remaining a weak long-term and effective solution.

Following the SoSA and color codification, red is the enemy, white is the population and green the target or host nation, and what is crucial and abominable is that the various actors falling within those watertight compartments, are supposed to always act coherently as a red, white or green subjects. This mistaken approach chains analytical thought up and wrongly eliminate the complexity of the various target socio-cultural environment, forgetting that people do not act rationally (pretty often) and they have multiple identities, hence, they do not interact in a foreseeable and mechanic way, they just chaotically interact, and the above described mindset loses interactions.

In accordance to B. Connable, the solution²³ of this structural problem would be the elimination of the color-coded model, shifting from the System of Systems Analysis of complex environments, to a much more *holistic* approach, where the socio-cultural perspective represents a fundamental element of a geographical (addressing areas, regions and districts), horizontal and comprehensive (taking into account the complexity and interconnection between actors, factors, actions and motivations characterizing those environments) approach, depicting an effective and realistic picture of the targeted reality.

Under this innovative framework, selected and properly trained analysts would be neither red and white, nor “man hunters” and “leaf eaters”, they would be neu-

²⁰ To know more about the civilian surge issue please see B.T. CARREAU, *Domestic Agencies, Civilian Reserves, and the Intelligence Community*, Centre for Technology and National Security Policy, 2009, pp. 135-162

²¹ To have a better taste of the Intelligence methodological approach see R.J. HEUER JR, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, Centre for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 1999, pp. 1-184 and J.R. COOPER, *Curing Analytical Pathologies: Pathways to Improved Intelligence Analysis*, Centre for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 2005, 1-62

²² U.S. JOINT CHIEF OF STAFF, *Joint Intelligence*, Joint Publication 2-0, Washington DC, 2007, p. II-11

²³ B. CONNABLE, *Military Intelligence Fusion for Complex Operations a New Paradigm*, Occasional Paper, RAND National Defence Research Institute, 2012, pp. 1-26

tral, omnivores²⁴, hungry and able to conduct true fusion and all-source researches, focusing on intent deception, identifying the real behavior of the various actors, and ultimately committing themselves to maintain or change it.

Obviously this innovation would represent an earthquake shake to the current military and intelligence doctrine, training and education, hence, it should happen gradually so that the *status quo* may be transformed into a completely revolutionized system passing through the required steps of specialization.

Despite this recommendation, the need to fix the security, defense and intelligence community²⁵ remains urgent, and the following sections will demonstrate and analyze the importance of undertake this revolution, centered around the Human Dynamics and the re-integration of the socio-cultural perspective.

2. Taking off the Blinkers: Sociocultural Intelligence a New Perspective

Starting from the cornerstone to which the need of socio-cultural Intelligence is a lesson learned, at least for the American IC and basing the argument over the testimonies cited above and the Marines Corps publication *Small Wars Journal*, impressively rising this issue since 1940²⁶, it is striking to note how Human Dynamics are neither consistently part of the US Joint Intelligence Doctrine (being considered still a less important intelligence area), they only seem to have a relative degree of importance in the Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) [JP 3-07] section²⁷, with a strong focus on war deterrence and peace promotion, nor in the wider NATO perspective, where the commitment to establish a permanent Joint Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance System (JISR)²⁸, launched in Norway, in May

²⁴ Regional Command West Stability Operations Information Centre, undated, p. 3

²⁵ I want to clarify that, on the one hand, the above discussion is focused on the sole Intelligence Community (for the most) but it serves as a model to reflect problems characterising the broader Security and Defence Community as well. On the other hand, the analysis is mostly based on documents coming from the U.S environment and this is due to a lack of similar publications regarding the wider Western framework and the forefront position that the U.S occupy (thanks to resources, knowledge and capabilities) in the field of security and defence.

²⁶ L.C.J.P. COLES, *Cultural Intelligence and Joint Intelligence Doctrine*, Joint Operations Review, 2005, p. 1

²⁷ US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, JP 3-07, IV-2, Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 1995

²⁸ To know more about the NATO JISR visit http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_111830.htm?selectedLocale=en and http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_110351.htm?selectedLocale=en

2014 (UV14), is focused on «Maintaining NATO's technological edge²⁹», developing new and more advanced ISR technologies, without making any reference about socio-cultural perspectives, knowledge and abilities. This represents the common technical paradigm started in the 80s, or the situation that needs to be changed.

Identifying the subject, a quite famous definition of cultural intelligence is provided, in the business environment, by David Livermore, as: «The ability to be effective across various cultural contexts – including national, ethnic, organizational, generational, ideological and much more³⁰». Within the Security and Defense domain, despite the non-existence of a common definition, I prefer to use the Lieutenant Commander John P. Coles' one: «an analysis of social, political, economic and other demographic information, that provides understanding of a people or nation's history, institutions, psychology, belief (such as religion), and behaviors. It provides a baseline for designing successful strategies to interact with foreign people whether they are neutral, people of an occupied country, or enemies³¹». There are two very important implications within this description, first, socio-cultural intelligence gives information regarding the motivation of people actions, supplying invaluable preventive effectiveness in operations preparation and the strategic use of these motivations to stop or change certain behaviors. Predicting intents has become more urgent than obtaining insights on enemies' capabilities alone, given the danger represented by strongly committed and motivated individuals, willing to perpetrate attacks, making use of low technology or even rudimentary devices (capable of causing many casualties as well). Second, the understanding of every kind of activity happening into the targeted environment is crucial (hence, development programs, activities of NGOs, IOs and so on).

Furthering the discussion about socio-cultural intelligence's definition, it must include the analysis of socio-cultural data, be useful for decision-makers and represent theories and methods derived from social sciences³², including the widest range of subjects (or all the sciences that study the behaviors of individuals, groups, organizations and societies), implemented depending on operational requirements. Besides, according to A. Speyer and J. Henning,

²⁹ http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_110033.htm

³⁰ <http://davidlivermore.com/blog/cq/>

³¹ L.C.J.P. COLES, *Cultural Intelligence and Joint Intelligence Doctrine*, Joint Operations Review, 2005, p. 1

³² L. FRIEDLAND, G.W. SHAEFF, J.G. TURNLEY, *Socio-Cultural Perspectives: a New Intelligence Paradigm*, Report on the Conference at the MITRE Corporation, MITRE technical report MTR070244, doc n. 07-1220, McLean, 2006, pp. 1-70

the socio-cultural understanding applied to intelligence is based over three layers of knowledge³³:

- *Cultural Awareness*: or a basic familiarity with foreign behaviors, religion and language
- *Cultural Understanding*: or the focus over the reasons lied behind certain behaviors (mindsets, customs, attitudes, environmental factors...)
- *Cultural Intelligence*: that is the iceberg's tip, or the acquisition of the drivers and implications of those behaviors

Socio-Cultural intelligence is, thus, an all-source analysis, where all the three elements listed above must be developed comprehensively (no one may be excluded).

Having defined socio-cultural intelligence, the socio-cultural *analysis*, as applied by the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (OSDI) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), results to be both the analysis of socio-cultural data and scenarios, and, even more strategically the application of its perspective to the analysis of any type of data and scenarios, hence a cross-cutting analytic approach based on a true all-source intelligence to deeply understand foreign population and environments.

Now, writing about how socio-cultural intelligence works in reality, in terms of analytical features, there are some important elements, deserving profound attention.

First of all, before starting any socio-cultural intelligence analysis, analysts must be aware of their cultural breed and the way in which it affects the objectivity of their judgement³⁴ (ethnocentrism is an example of the kind of odds determined by one's cultural heritage). Secondly, socio-cultural intelligence is an all-source and multidisciplinary analysis, hence it requires the concomitant use of qualitative and quantitative analysis (such as Game Theory, Probability theory, Statistics analysis, Signal Detection Theory and others) and the much more complex to be realized, integration between different scientific

³³ A. SPEYER, J. HENNING, MCIA's *Cultural Intelligence Methodology and Lessons Learned*, Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, paper presented at the Socio-Cultural Perspectives: A New Intelligence Paradigm Conference, Annex 1, McLean, 2006

³⁴ A. SCHEUNPFLUG, *Cross-Cultural Encounters as a Way of Overcoming Xenophobia*, International Review of Education, 43, n.1, 1997, pp. 109-116 and as references A. SIMONS, *The Military Advisor as Warrior-King and Other Going Native Temptations*, Anthropology and the United States Military: Coming of Age in the Twenty-first Century, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003; R. JOHNSTONE, *Analytical Culture in the U.S. Intelligence Community: An Ethnographic Study*, CIA Centre for the Study of Intelligence, Washington DC, 2005

dimensions as social sciences, behavioral sciences, engineering and physical sciences³⁵.

Moreover, one of the most crucial factor is represented by data collection, socio-cultural Intelligence needs information coming from the broadest variety of INTEL sources, making a comprehensive use of signal intelligence (SIGINT), human intelligence (HUMINT), imagery intelligence (IMINT) and open source intelligence (OSINT)³⁶.

Within this framework, HUMINT results to occupy the largest part, given the labor-intensive and qualitative nature of the info collected. Hence, socio-cultural intelligence is characterized by the key role of qualitative analysis, that, if properly employed, may be as objective as the quantitative one³⁷, obviously requiring the development of its own and adequate analytical tools.

Those tools may even be quantitative in nature, as computational models, given their usefulness to model and analyst complex problems, characterized by the presence of large amount of data. However, those instruments need to be calibrated³⁸ to develop effective socio-cultural analysis, on the one hand they are going to be filled up with a majority of qualitative data to which they have to adapt, on the other hand, they (usually framework models) need to be fixed in terms of specificity, addressing specific problems and time and space perspectives. Furthermore, socio-cultural data and environments may reveal to be extremely liquid, providing for changing data and uncertain realities, hence, the underlined instruments must address this kind of uncertainty and another kind, more structural in nature, depending on the modeler theoretical approach in relation to the problem that has to be solved³⁹.

Ultimately, the effective functioning of socio-cultural intelligence largely depends on, as deduced from the above implications, well structured qualitative analytic techniques (such as analysis of competing hypothesis, high impact/low probability analysis, social networks analysis and all the other approaches falling within this classification) that provide for fundamental alter-

³⁵ L. FRIEDLAND, G.W. SHAEFF, J.G. TURNLEY, *Socio-Cultural Perspectives: a New Intelligence Paradigm*, Report on the Conference at the MITRE Corporation, MITRE technical report MTR070244, doc n. 07-1220, McLean, 2006, pp. 1-70

³⁶ J. BAMFORD, *War of Secrets: Eyes in the Sky, Ears to the Wall, and still Wanting*, New York Times, 2002, September 8, Sec. 4, 5 and D. BLAIR, M.E. LEITER, *Intelligence Reform: The Lessons and Implications of the Christmas Day Attack*, Testimony before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, 111th Cong., 2d sess., 2010, 1-94

³⁷ G. KING, R.O. KEOHANA, S. VERB, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1994, 3-230

³⁸ M.S. MORGAN, M. MORRISON, *Models as Mediators: Perspectives on Natural and Social Science*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1999, 1-388

³⁹ T. NISLEN, T. AVEN, *Modes and Model Uncertainty in the Context of Risk Analysis*, Reliability Engineering and System Safety, 79, n. 3, 2003, pp. 309-317

native modes of thinking⁴⁰, a very effective remedy for the attitude, well rooted within the IC, to see outcomes as the linear result of a logical chain of events, a never changing straight rail of causes and predictable effects. Analysts must learn to look out of the beaten track.

As a suggestion, according to Kiron K. Skinner, political science may be truly helpful to develop qualitative analyses⁴¹, because of the application of its intimate Strategic Perspective⁴², being used to take into account leaders (as individual), their decision-making, connecting it to influential factors provided by the national and international context in which they operate. This approach is extremely valuable to decode complex environments, deeply understanding the changing role (identities) and behaviors of actors and the influence operated by environmental factors and transformations.

However, the real application of SOCINT brings about problems of integration at different levels. On the superficial layer, as it has already been said, the socio-cultural perspective is composed by a mix of different scientific disciplines such as sociology, psychology, political science, economics, anthropology and so on, those disciplines are rooted on a diverse set of methodologies, theoretical approaches, data collection and analysis and tools. Hence the interdisciplinary coordination of the previous subjects, working harmoniously within a common perspective, requires mental openness and a great amount of constructive dialogue⁴³, that is often difficult to build up.

Beyond the surface, the biggest pool of Human Dynamics knowledge are stored outside the intelligence environment, hence the detection of these valuable resources and the cooperation with the detaining entities (business sector, academia, NGOs and others) are paramount.

Socio-Cultural Intelligence may reveal to be crucial to improve the effectiveness of the largest intelligence operational spectrum.

Starting from the military operational environment, with the first recent apparition during Counter-Insurgency operations (COIN)⁴⁴, such as the

⁴⁰ R.J. HEUER, R.H. PHERSON, *Structured Analytic Techniques for Intelligence Analysis*, CQ Press, Washington DC, 2010, pp. 1-359

⁴¹ K.K. SKINNER, *Qualitative Analysis for the Intelligence Community*, *Intelligence Analysis: Behavioural and Social Scientific Foundations*, Committee on Behavioural and Social Science Research to Improve Intelligence Analysis for National Security, National Research Council, National Academy Press, Washington DC, 2011, pp. 101-110

⁴² Among many others see H.E. GOEMANS, *Fighting for Survival: The Fate of Leaders and the Duration of Wars*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 44(5), 2000, pp. 555-579; G. CHIOZZA, H.E. GOEMANS, *International Conflicts and the Tenure of Leaders: Is War still ex-post Inefficient?*, *American Journal of Political Science*, 48(3), 2004, pp. 604-619

⁴³ W.S. BAINBRIDGE, *The Future of Social Sciences*, *Futures*, 35, n. 6, 2003

⁴⁴ To know more about COIN operations see G.P. GENTILE, *A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army*, 2009, pp. 5-17

Nawa⁴⁵ district in Afghanistan, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, with the development of Afghan and Iraqi culture awareness among soldiers before of being deployed on the field, by the Marines 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and the Marines Corps Intelligence.

SOCINT is nowadays recognized to be functional in all the Population-Centric operations and, more broadly, for the general Department of Defense (DoD) Planning and Operations⁴⁶: «the question is not whether to use social science or not, the choice is whether to use it consciously to achieve mission objectives across the full spectrum of conflicts or whether to use only the small portions of social science already employed by the defense community»⁴⁷. Within this general operational framework, SOCINT is determinant for many reasons, it describes historical and socio-cultural conditions generating the need for a military intervention; enlightens key Human Dynamics that make the difference between victory and defeat, understanding the effects of military operations in foreign contexts, so that it may functionally establish relations with the widest set of local actors; develops a rich knowledge of the operational framework; detects, analysis and exploits changes in socio-cultural factors and, ultimately, grasps, predicts and supplies the background needed to eventually modify behaviors.

More specifically applied to individual field of operations, intelligence over Human Dynamics can be successfully applied to:

⁴⁵ Nawa is an Afghan district of 70 000 farmers in the Helmand province, a location where the insurgent opposition was extremely hard and where the local population was totally subjugated by the Talibans. Here SOCINT was innovatively applied to understand the environment, identifying and building trust relationships with local populations, NGOs, administration and every valuable actor acting in the area. The operation was very successful in taking local control, with indigenous actors even reporting on and ostracising the Talibans, to have a better look at the issue see M.T. FLYNN, M. POTTINGER, P.D. BATCHELOR, *Fixing Intel: a Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan*, Voices from the Field, Centre for a New American Security, 2010, p. 13-15

⁴⁶ H. CABAYAN, D. ADESNIK, C. ARMSTRONG, A. ASTORINO-COURTOIS, A. BARLELKA, T. BOZADA, D. BROWNE, C. EHLSCHLAEGER, D. EYRE, M. FLYNN, J. FERRELL, L. HOWARD, R. JONES, D. KROOKS, A. MCGEE, T. PERKINS, D. PLAFCAN, L. WHALLEY, *Operational Relevance of Behavioural and Social Science to DoD Missions*, Sarah Canna, NSI, 2013, pp. 1-15; M. FLYNN, J. SISCO, D. ELLIS, *Left on Bag: The Value of Sociocultural Analysis in Today's Environment*, Prism, 3, 4, 2012; J.A.GORDON, *Cultural Assessment and Campaign Planning, a monograph*, United States Army Command and General Staff College, School of Advanced Military Studies, Kansas, AY 03-04, pp. 1-43

⁴⁷ H. CABAYAN, D. ADESNIK, C. ARMSTRONG, A. ASTORINO-COURTOIS, A. BARLELKA, T. BOZADA, D. BROWNE, C. EHLSCHLAEGER, D. EYRE, M. FLYNN, J. FERRELL, L. HOWARD, R. JONES, D. KROOKS, A. MCGEE, T. PERKINS, D. PLAFCAN, L. WHALLEY, *Operational Relevance of Behavioural and Social Science to DoD Missions*, Sarah Canna, NSI, 2013, p. 7

- *Stability Operations*: supplying profound knowledge of the environment and identifying effective conduits and structural limitations to peace creation. Comprehensively addressing the challenge to build up stability (solving various political, economical, security, social and other issues).
- *Deterrence and Compelling Operations*: giving insights over individual decision-making features, groups dynamics, motivations and principal drivers. A fundamental background to succeed in shaping the behavior of certain actors.
- *Shaping Operation*: identifying strategic local partners and planning effective strategies to influence them, creating mutually beneficial and long lasting relationships. A key move to avoid enemies gaining the favor of the local population, thus obstructing friendly forces freedom of action.
- *Support Operations*: constructing a basin of knowledge, tools and techniques to improve the quality of analysis, in a way to honor the greatest responsibilities of the IC, protection of people and help decision-makers to take as sound and effective decisions as humanely possible.

Furthermore, counter-terrorism is another operational field to which Socio-Cultural intelligence results to be extremely well suited. As the ARTIS director of research Scott Atran put forward:

problems of radicalization and political and social destabilization leading to violent extremism are severe, threatening societies around the globe. These are social science problems in their very essence⁴⁸.

Then, he keeps on explaining that⁴⁹, first of all, a meaningful role in preventing terrorism is the creation of mutual and lasting trust with the population and ethnic groups most affected by extremism, understanding how to do it is crucial, requiring a truly deep knowledge of the environment, developed through a sincere partnership with NGOs, International organizations, the private sector and academia.

To be successful in the action, it must be taught how, actors not always act rationally and depending on context factors they might be pushed by different drivers than the simple costs and benefits evaluation. Intelligence over the Human factors may be able to discover those different values, driving the actions of certain targets.

Apart from having a comprehensive bigger picture of the operational framework, this innovative approach will disclose interesting historical traits,

⁴⁸ S. ATRAN, *Briefing to the US Science Board on Countering Violent Extremism*, ARTIS Research, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, University of Michigan, Oxford University, 2012, p. 8

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 1-8

underlining creation and influence of certain groups, being aware of effective counter-values applied on culturally different, value driven and group-fused individuals. In this way, effective strategies of group-breaking and close-alternative value promotion will be laid down.

Ultimately, socio-cultural intelligence may provide extremely valuable information on the type of links (trust, brotherhood, friendship, knighthood and so on) cementing extremists' relationships, and so, helping other disciplines, such as SOCMINT for instance, to catch how they communicate, through what vehicles and codes.

Besides, the study of human dynamics demonstrated to be strongly linked to the development of an efficient information security⁵⁰. The focus here is related to the precious help that SOCINT may give in understanding the "wetware" or, as discovered by Robert Axelrod and Ross Anderson, the biases of human social cognition that are able to elude the most sophisticated technologies. This definition led us to the central problem of social engineering⁵¹, as the use of deceptive social and psychological methods, on the human element, in order to obtain protected info, access or influence behaviors toward those goals. A very low cost, high pay-off mean to circumvent complex cyber protections. Also in this case, technology has improved much on cyber security but, no attention was given to the human-based (the user) menace.

Social engineering is composed by four phases, research, developing trust, exploiting trust and using info obtained. Into this context, Socio-Cultural intelligence may supply knowledge about those deceptive methods, target weaknesses and attacks perpetrators.

Concluding the discussion over the practical applicability and effectiveness of Socio-Cultural intelligence, being this a fundamental part of my personal thesis, with the arguments provided above and the following ones, I want to demonstrate the outstanding relevance of this innovative approach to address the challenges developed by the national (regional or international depending on the kind of institution served) security as in its broadest sense as thinkable. The elements described along this chapter, when comprehensively applied and integrated to other intelligence disciplines (moving hand in hand) and due to their crisis preventive and decision-making positive in-

⁵⁰ A.D. NELSON, *Patching the Wetware: Addressing the Human Factor in Information Security*, Graduate Research Project, Department of the Air Force, Air Force Institute of Technology, Air University, Ohio, 2011, pp. 1-62

⁵¹ K.D. MITNICK, *The Art of Deception: Controlling the Human Element of Security*, Wiley Publishing, 2003; and T. THORNBURGH, *Social Engineering: The Dark Art*, InfoSec Conference 2004, ACM, 2005, pp. 133-135

fluent nature, may be used to help (they are not a kind of magic formula at all) solving structural and cross-cutting security dares⁵² such as:

- *Pursue*: it reduces national and international threats, through the investigation of potential enemies networks, goals and activities. Here Socio-Cultural intelligence will analysis ambiguous, complicated and evolving information. Besides, it will deeply understand influential environmental factors linked to potential enemies *modus operandi* and how their behavior reveals superficially hidden intents and motivations.
- *Prevent*: it avoids menaces to turn into crisis. In this framework, Socio-Cultural intelligence will better catch emerging national, regional or global trends and threats, in addition to enemies' causes and processes of opposition, deriving from various and specific human factors. Thus, based on those precious data, effective strategies of prevention and opposition (such us disengagement or behavior modification for example) will be laid down.
- *Protect*: for professionals serving in the security field, it is and must be a vocation, a mission, centered around reducing vulnerabilities and increase resilience of the interested system. In this specific case, Socio-Cultural intelligence is key to identify suspicious behaviors within a wide range of contexts, developing analysis of behavioral indicators and meanings, connecting them to deep knowledge of environmental vulnerabilities. Moreover, it will enhance resilience and protection, promptly and effectively advising decision-makers.
- *Communicate*: effectively with a wide range of actors (the public, different stakeholders and communities). Communication is fundamental to create and increase security. Here Socio- Cultural intelligence, including the construction of mutually beneficial and long lasting relationships as a constitutive element, may provide interesting insights on how different actors communicate and react to certain messages, limiting dangerous misunderstandings, while, improving the overall communication within the Intelligence Community, benefiting an effective information sharing as well.

Examples of applied sociocultural intelligence:

1. *Human Terrain Teams System (HTTS)*⁵³: This US military project started in 2005, when the military realized the urgent need of having a much deeper

⁵² UK OFFICE FOR SECURITY AND COUNTER-TERRORISM, *Countering the Terrorist Threat: Social and Behavioural Science, How Academia and Industry can Play their Part*, Directorate of the Home Office, Crown copyright, 2010, pp. 1-17

⁵³ M.VAROUHAKIS, *Challenges and Implications of Human Terrain Analysis for Strategic Intelligence Thinking*, Conference on Defence and Military Intelligence, Political Studies Associ-

socio-cultural understanding of the operational environment in which it was engaged, due to the strong opposition it was facing in those scenarios, precisely Afghanistan and Iraq.

The program, challenged by many odds such as methodological problems (in mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis), difficulties linked to the deployment of scientists (civilians) within high-risk combat areas and translation related troubles, demonstrated to be truly valuable and consisted on the deployment of social scientists teams, called Human Terrain Teams, within operational fields to provide the military with valuable socio-cultural insights regarding local actors and influential factors. The HTT's contribution was absolutely transversal participating to a wide range of operations including Village Stability Operations (VSO) and Special Operations Forces (SOP).

Despite one of the program's biggest challenge was represented by integrating HTT at a strategic level, in cooperation to Intelligence officers (not understanding the specialized expertise brought by social scientists, quite often), this integration realized great achievements in terms of adding strong methodological rigor and theory-based prediction to Intelligence analysis. In fact, probably the greatest success of the HTTS was gained incorporating Human Terrain Teams into Information Dominance Centers (IDC), showing the social science capacity to supply extremely qualitative long-term Intelligence analysis, rather than short-term, collection focused analysis.

Many pages⁵⁴ have been written on HTTS and it received a lot of criticisms⁵⁵, mostly from the American Anthropologists Association, due to the danger of sending civilian scientists to dangerous areas and ethical accusations such as the risk, for researchers, to harm their research subjects, if the info collected were used in targeting operations.

2. *The Stability Operations Information Center (SOIC)*⁵⁶: this innovative commanders' tool, finding its origins in the Major General Michael T.

ation, 2015, pp. 1-11

⁵⁴ See among others, M.ZEHFUSS, *Culturally Sensitive War? The Human Terrain System and the Seduction of Ethics*, Security Dialogue, 43 [2], 2012, pp. 175-190; M.HILL, *Terrorists are Human Beings: Mapping the US Army Human Terrain System Program*, Differences, 20 [2-3], 2009, pp. 250-278; M.MCFATE, F.FONDACARO, *Human Terrain System During the First Four Years*, Prism, 2[4], 2006, pp. 63-82

⁵⁵ <http://www.aaanet.org/issues/AAA-Opposes-Human-Terrain-System-Project.cfm>

⁵⁶ COIN ADVISORY AND ASSISTANCE TEAM (CAAT) HEADQUARTERS, *The Stability Operations Information Centres (SOIC): Comprehensive Understanding for Comprehensive Operations*, HQ ISAF, Afghanistan, 2010, pp. 1-18

Flynn bright idea, and recently applied during US operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, may have the potential to successfully face the Contemporary Operating Environment (COE), trying to supply the long awaited *holistic* approach.

SOIC is intended to create a broad civil-military information sharing organization to support COIN operations and more broadly Population-centric operations, it is not a Fusion Center (FC), it is a much broader information environment aiming at providing a truly deep environmental understanding of operational contexts through a multidisciplinary lens.

SOIC use to give large attention toward the development of ties with the widest range of local, national and regional actors, its activity may be defined as a multi-discipline intelligence and information sharing, with the aim of creating timely, realistic and useful reports, capable of efficiently advise decision-making. A very interesting feature of those centers is an organizational structure based on a team of teams system, pooling together various expertise, and focusing on a complex network of groups and cells, from the most important Population Support Group, dealing with environmental understanding and constructed around experts having different backgrounds such us social scientists, officers (locals and foreigners) traveling to gather direct information, and STRATCOM experts to; a Fusion Cell, made by intelligence collectors and analysts, having the crucial role to develop kinetic operations (targeting for instance) when necessary; a Support Cell, created by different kind of professionals such as communication systems maintenance, and dealing mainly with logistics and technical support; and an Exploitation and Co-ordination Cell, collecting a pool of Law Enforcement experts to operate forensic exploitation and criminal investigation, as an instance.

Also in this case, criticisms arose over the validity of the project, mostly about the segregation of “white” and “green” analyses⁵⁷, happening for a combined variety of reasons such as the inclusion of analysts not possessing top-secret clearance or the lack of physical space within classic Fusion Centers.

Furthermore, another interesting US project is represented by the Distributed Common Ground Station (DCGS)⁵⁸, storing, organizing, divulging and updating socio-cultural information coming from social science experts, to analysts and operatives.

⁵⁷ B. CONNABLE, *Military Intelligence Fusion for Complex Operations a New Paradigm*, Occasional Paper, RAND National Defence Research Institute, 2012, p. 11

⁵⁸ <http://dcgsa.apg.army.mil/>

3. *Civilian Programs*: At a civilian level, some program has been established by a number of countries as an effort to address the flaws of the current IC structure, collection and analysis and the new challenges posed by the nowadays global complex reality, to national and international security:
 - *MINERVA initiative*⁵⁹: This program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), is a university-based social science research program, established in 2008, aiming at dealing with new topics (that were previously disregarded by the IC) resulting to be extremely relevant in terms of national security. The central goal is that of identifying and understand socio-cultural elements defining the identities of various world's regions and able to affect the present and future stability of these areas. This is developed through focusing the research efforts of the American top universities and research institutions to detect causes of present and future insecurity and provide qualitative analysis capable to effectively support present and future decision-makers. MINERVA is only one of the many US efforts to develop civil socio-cultural expertise, such as National Security Education Program, DoD Regional Centers and the Consortium for Complex Operations⁶⁰.
 - *Academic Outreach Program*⁶¹: This Canadian Security and Intelligence Service-based initiative, established in 2008 and linked to the already present awareness and attempt (underlined by the Canadian Military) to enhance cross-cultural competences within the army⁶², starting from the true integration of Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) within the intelligence analytical framework, aims at creating a multidisciplinary, cross-cultural and international network of different partners such as NGOs, academia and civil society, to take part in the Canadian SIS activities. In this case, the stated objectives are to empower a broad threats mitigation strategy, effectively channeling different analytical resources to tackle menaces that are more specific in nature, and to fix cultural biases and collection flaws in order to increase the quality of the analytical outputs, efficiently supporting decision-making.

⁵⁹ <http://minerva.dtic.mil/overview.html>

⁶⁰ See <http://www.nsep.gov/>; <http://www.dsca.mil/programs/dod-regional-centers> and <http://cco.ndu.edu/>

⁶¹ <https://www.csis.gc.ca/pbletns/wrldwtch/2010/takngstck-en.php> and <https://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/bts/cdmctrchen.php>

⁶² B.R. SELMESKI, *Military Cross-Cultural Competence: Core Concepts and Individual Development*, Centre for Security Armed Forces and Society, Royal Military College of Canada, 2007, pp. 1-27

- *Partnership for Conflict Crime and Security Research*⁶³ (PaCCS): This is a UK-based program, established through the Global Uncertainties Program by the UK Research Council, in 2008. Also in this case, the project establishes a cross-disciplines cooperation, including public, academic and private actors. The pivotal role is that of addressing and improve the understanding of current and future global security challenges, focusing on specific field of analysis, such as conflicts, cybersecurity and transnational crime, enhancing information sharing and effectively supporting leaders in taking sound, acknowledged and effective decisions.

3. Russia a Case of Study

Russia is absolutely well aware of the features of the innovative and NATO codified Hybrid Warfare and, as a smart and comprehensive strategy to fight it, it combines a variety of asymmetric operations and actors (economic, informational, diplomatic, military and so on), within which the human dynamics understanding and exploitation are well entrenched.

In the Socio-Cultural intelligence domain, Soft power rather than Hard power deserves the predominant attention, but what for the Western diplomacy is all about making themselves attractive, for the Kremlin means: «a matrix of tools and methods to reach foreign policy goals without the use of arms but by exerting information and other levers of influence⁶⁴», that is a quite different understanding.

As the water described by the aforementioned Sun Tzu, the Kremlin makes use of a fluid ideology intruding nations, social movements and groups to manipulate them, using their own languages and channels to serve its will.

According to the truly helpful and skilfully made analysis of the issue, provided by Peter Pomerantsev and Michael Weiss, Russia employs three main kind of hybrid arms, the weaponisation of information, money and culture/ideas, exploiting many strategic conduits such as media, political parties, group influencers, finance, private companies, NGOs, think tanks and cultural activities⁶⁵.

⁶³ <http://www.paccsresearch.org.uk/about/>

⁶⁴ V. PUTIN, *Vladimir Putin on Foreign Policy: Russia and the Changing world*, Valdai, 2012

⁶⁵ P. POMARANTSEV, M. WEISS, *The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money*, a special report presented by The Interpreter, Institute of Modern Russia, 2014, pp. 1-42

More specifically, *weaponisation of information* is used, as showed by the Al Jazeera documentary *Air Strikes and Media Misses*⁶⁶, under different circumstances and methods, not only by Russia but by many international actors such as the US, Turkey, Israel and India for instance.

The use of information as a weapon, is the heart of the Russian *dezinformatsiya* machine, developed through, first, the media and especially RT (the Russian international news channel) broadcasting in Russian, English, Arabic, Spanish and French, counting on more than 300 million USD budget per year, with the task of confusing the reality (the truth is everything but important, the new goal is to create the reality), making the West appear bad and supporting useful false stories and conspiracy theories, exploiting strategic communication channels such as Western voices.

Second, managing armies of “trolls”⁶⁷ to fight on social media, messing up social networks and their contents (again confusion and reality creation), and, third, infiltrating international media with advertisement and editorial inserts, making psychological pressure over and expelling undesired journalists as well.

Weaponisation of culture/ideas, funding and engaging many strategic conduits as intellectual influencers, think tanks, political parties (from far-right to far-left), as demonstrated by the strong effort to build stable relationships with European nationalist political parties⁶⁸ and religious and social movements worldwide. The aim is to make strategic use of the collected cultural understanding.

Weaponisation of money, here the game is played around diplomatic aggressiveness (menacing of cutting gas supplies for example), reiding (or stepping in a company through shares and using every available mean to take the business over) and corruption of companies’ board, then operating favorable lobbying. The whole strategy is structured to exploit the so called asymmetric interdependence⁶⁹, or, making the enemy think to heavily depend on your resources.

To go deeper into the question, through an instance, and focusing on the activities in the Baltic States, and among various kinds of intrusions within the Baltic’s political, economical and social spheres⁷⁰, the European Center

⁶⁶ Watch the whole video on <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/listeningpost/2015/10/syria-air-strikes-mediamesse-151010110426139.html>

⁶⁷ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/02/putin-kremlin-inside-russian-troll-house>

⁶⁸ <http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-france-national-front-loan-le-pen/26707339.html>

⁶⁹ http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ESDP/91773/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/9bdae328-1b65406a-8b40-863985f9690a/en/Power_Audit_EU_Russia_1107.pdf

⁷⁰ In order to have a more profound insight into these methods of influence, please see A.GRI-GAS, *Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States*, The Means and

for Minority issues reported the following “strange” activities⁷¹: in order to get the public opinion ready for separation and make people aware of existing secessionist movements (that obviously did not exist before, they are created by the Kremlin as in the same wise as it constructs reality), flyers inciting separatist sentiments and actions and red paints on buildings’ walls citing «NATO is terror» for instance, were found in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia⁷² (in this case they were discovered in 2008, curiously only months after the Russian invasion of Georgia).

Interestingly, in Lithuania, red paints written in a precarious Lithuanian language citing «Russians go home» were seen on the walls of the Irina Rozova’s daughter private house⁷³, and Irina is a pro- Russian minority politician, member of the “Russian Alliance” party.

Moreover, similar movements were registered on social media as well, Facebook pages calling for separatism were launched targeting strategic areas (usually dens of Russian inhabitants), in Estonia, where its North-Eastern region was renamed the Baltic Russian Republic and cut-off from the national map⁷⁴, in Latvia where the Latgale region was called the Latgalian’s People Republic, even showing a new flag⁷⁵, and in Lithuania, that saw its Vilnius region becoming the People’s Republic of Vilnius⁷⁶ and calling for the “green men” (Russian forces) to support the secessionist effort.

Those moves are not to be intended as sporadic and independent from each other, they are all co-ordinated, in fact all the on-line pages made references to separatist activities within other regions, and they are definitely part of a much broader project, counting on thirty secessionist movements in 12 states, aiming at re-taking control over the Eastern European lands, started in Ukraine in 2014, and serving the Kremlin’s Eurasian Grand Strategy⁷⁷.

Ultimately, Russia plays different games in different regions: «In the Baltics it destabilizes; in Eastern Europe, co-opts power; in Western Europe, divides and rules; in USA, distracts; in Middle East and South America, fans

Ends of Russian Influence Abroad Series, Chatham House Briefing Paper, Russia and Eurasia Programme, 2012, pp. 1-16

⁷¹ M. KUKLYS, R. CARSTOCEA, *Instigations of Separatism in the Baltic States*, ECMI issue Brief, #35, 2015, pp. 1-18

⁷² <http://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/klaipeda/miesto-pulsas/uz-provokacijos-byla-670664#.VXW-jEEakDeu>

⁷³ <http://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvos-diena/kriminalai/vandalai-isterlijo-seimo-nares-dukters-nama.htm>

⁷⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/BalticRussia>

⁷⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Wileńska-Republika-Ludowa>

⁷⁶ <http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/ispuolis-ar-nevykes-pokstas-agituoja-uz-vilniaus-liaudies-respublika.d? Id=67034814>

⁷⁷ I. MELIANAS, *Mūsų laukia Vilnijos, Klaipėdos ir Ignalinos ‘liaudies respublikų’ įkūrimas? (Separatism in the Post-Soviet Space and its Instigators)*, Delfi, 2015

flames»⁷⁸. The Kremlin uses its deep understanding of the enemy's socio-cultural environment to plan the strategy that best suits specific areas and regions and, interestingly to this research, it happens under the eyes of a Western Intelligence Community that is too focused on engaging the enemy target, for example detecting and shutting down cyber attacks, searching for hidden developments of innovative weapons, aggressive deployment of forces and other technical capabilities. In my opinion, if the socio-cultural perspective was already applied to the IC mind-set, these activities could have been timely detected and limited, including the still unclear aims and likely future developments of the Russian military build-up and offensive in Syria⁷⁹.

4. Conclusions

Concluding the paper and understanding the large amount of resources that are required by the discussed revolutionary Grand Design (obviously incorporating efforts related to Social Media Intelligence, operations and STRATCOM as well), individual countries, such as Italy for example, could find the effort as unbearable for the limited possibilities they may rely on, however, I strongly recommend, on a smaller scale, the application of the socio-cultural perspective to the national Intelligence structure and mind set, as a starting point. A goal that can be shared and achieved formally cooperating with specialized centers of research outside the pure Intelligence national bodies or enhancing the creation of the required skills and expertise through the development of a broader business intelligence project⁸⁰, at a national level.

⁷⁸ P. POMARANTSEV, M. WEISS, *The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money*, a special report presented by The Interpreter, Institute of Modern Russia, 2014, p. 24

⁷⁹ The US Congress launched an investigation over these flaws, see <http://uk.businessinsider.com/r-exclusivecongress-probing-us-spy-agencies-possible-lapses-on-russia-2015-10?r=US&IR=T> and <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/10/09/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-propagand-idUKKCN0S325U20151009>

⁸⁰ The IS use of this specific strategy, that is fairly demonstrated by the expertise with which it, to make just a couple of examples, communicates, approaches the international arena, finance itself and intrudes local, national and international groups, is well documented and explained on <http://www.sicurezzaaterrorismosocieta.it/> and <http://www.itstime.it/>, while, concerning China, it is very interesting to see how it employs its leading international think tanks, see OPEN SOURCE CENTRE REPORT, *Profile of MSS-Affiliated PRC Foreign Policy Think Tank*, OSC, 2011, pp. 1-34; Iran has been quoted because it has drastically increased its spending over cyber warfare capabilities, it is a country full of resources, its media are politically driven and it is currently developing strategic diplomatic ties, just to raise a bunch of thoughts on the issue.

Furthermore, taking up the American example, it is clear how this specific project might be better suited for the interests and possibilities of larger entities. Regional stakeholders for instance, such as the NATO alliance, whom is currently researching on and applying some of the discussed approaches such as Strategic Communication for instance, and may take the socio-cultural perspective as a new development frontier, benefiting of the comprehensiveness and uniform, in terms of methodology and material employability, that it currently lacks⁸¹.

Besides, the EU and its, specifically interested by this research, Intelligence Analysis Centre⁸² (INTCEN, being aware that a federation is not a union and of other relevant contextual and internal problems), might look at Human Dynamics as a valuable and effective paradigm and operational field as well.

Reminding the profound validity of the re-adoption of the social-cultural perspective and the broader advancement of Human Dynamics within the global Defence and Security domain, and in order to successfully face the challenges posed by the new phenomenon of *Hybrid* conflicts, the current international reality not only demonstrate but also loudly claim for the fulfillment of the urgent needs underlined along this research.

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⁸¹ S. TATHAM, R. LEPAGE, *NATO Strategic Communication: More to be Done?*, National Defence Academy of Latvia, Centre for Security and Strategic Research, Policy Paper n. 01, 2014, pp. 1-63

⁸² To know little more about INTCEN see <http://www.statewatch.org/analyses/no-223-eu-intcen.pdf> and http://www.eeas.europa.eu/factsheets/docs/20150206_factsheet_eu_intcen_en.pdf

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Intelligence failures: between theories and case studies

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Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to understand why the Intelligence Community at time fails, taking in account several major intelligence failures starting from the most shocking one in the twentieth century – the 9/11 terrorist attack – to the most recent – France and Belgium multiple attacks.

Intelligence failures are not easy to study because there is not accepted single theory that explains why the intelligence community fails. This field of interest, which has his roots in the Pearl Harbor surprise attack, has always attracted interest. This interest is due because of the importance of the Intelligence Community role in the security field. The most studied intelligence failure episode was the attack on Pearl Harbor, but a major interest arose when one of the most shocking, for the western world, surprise attack took place within the United States. The 9/11 terrorist attacks. What went wrong? Although surprise attacks are not the only types of intelligence failures, we will focus on them because of the sadly recent events.

This paper is structured as follow:

Paragraph 1. Takes in account the different definitions of the word “intelligence” which can be an organization, information, a process, a product. To better understand the intelligence failures we decided that the best definitions to rely on are intelligence as information and as a process. Intelligence as information is defined as a tangible product to collected and analyzed; and intelligence as a process (the intelligence cycle) is composed of five important steps, which are: requirements, collection, analysis, production and dissemination.

Paragraph 2. The aim of this paragraph is to explore the different theories of the intelligence failures and try to understand which one can be applied for our case studies. The traditional school believes that the problem of the intelligence failure lies in faulty analysis of the available information: the failures lies in the analysis stage. While for the contrarian school the problem rises in the collection stage: intelligence officials need to rely more on the use of the intelligence means (HUMINT, TECHINT, SIGINT, IMINT) for a better information collection. The reformist school does not recognize the problem in the intelligence cycle but in the organizational structure of the intelligence agencies. Complex structures, hierarchies, specialization can limit the sharing of important information: the dots are not connected.

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Paragraph 3. The third paragraph regards the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It is worth saying that intelligence as “information” matches perfectly for this specific case: the information regarding the attacks were present but the organizational structure of the American intelligence community failed to connect the dots. We can easily say that US intelligence community failed to prevent the 9/11 terrorist attacks because the American intelligence agencies did not share information due to their complex organizational structure. For the different nature, protocols, cultures, internal problems, and interest the FBI and CIA did not share several important information.

Paragraph 4. After analyzing the different theories and the first case study we agree in recognizing that the problem of the intelligence agencies in non-sharing information is due because of their organizational structure (of course, this is not valid for all the intelligence failure events as the intelligence can fail for other reasons also). This last paragraph simply describes and analyzes two tragic events that took place in Europe between 2015 and 2016: the Paris attacks and Brussels attacks. Just like the 9/11 case study we agree in addressing the failure of the intelligence community of both countries in not sharing information.

Keywords

Intelligence, Intelligence failure, Intelligence bias, Intelligence Community, Intelligence theories, Intelligence schools, terrorist attack.

1. Definitions of intelligence

When we perceive the word ‘intelligence’ our leading thoughts associate intelligence to spies stealing secrets, cover actions and other secretive activities. These actions are elements of intelligence but a more thorough definition is required.

There is no accepted definition of intelligence [14]. For Sherman Kent, historian and former CIA senior analyst, intelligence is “*knowledge but is surprising that there is not more general agreement and less confusion about the meaning of the basic term. The main difficulty seems to lie in the word intelligence itself, which has come to mean what people in the trade do and what they come up to. Is both a process and end-product*” [14]. However something seems to be missing, who is in charge of this process? Professor Walter Laqueur adds that information refers to an organization collecting information, the Intelligence Community (hereafter IC) of a nation. A complete definition, that unifies the previous two, is defined by Mark Lowenthal [1], National Intelligence Council officer, identifies intelligence as a process, product and an organization:

- as a process: intelligence is the process by which specific types of information, important for national security, are requested- collected- analyzed and provided to policymakers (the intelligence cycle);

- as a product: intelligence is the product of the process described above (reports, NIE, PDB);
- Organization: of people and organizations such as agencies, institutions that form the IC.

The IC exists for carrying out three important missions:

1. Collecting and analyzing information: is the IC primary mission, in order to present the final product to the president and other policymakers. This enables them to take actions and make decisions.
2. Counterintelligence: includes a range of methods used to protect the nations against aggressive operations carried out by foreign intelligence agencies and terrorist groups. Counterintelligence employs two approaches: security and counterespionage. Security is physically guarding the nation's personnel, installations and operations against hostile forces [9]; counterespionage is when an agent penetrates (infiltrates) the inner councils of a foreign intelligence agencies or terrorist group;
3. Cover actions: the purpose is to secretly shape events overseas in support of a Nation policy. More specifically cover actions is carried out by one state to alter the political or economic development in another state, while preserving the source of influence [12].

The last, but not least important definition of intelligence is given by Michael Warner: *“Intelligence is a particular form of information that allows policymakers, operational commanders, to make more effective decisions”* [1]. Here information is perceived as exceptional data that allows policymakers to take crucial decisions.

To better understand why intelligence fails, we will rely on only two specific definitions: intelligence as information and as a process.

1.1 Intelligence as a process

The IC activity is carried out by following a specific process: the intelligence cycle.

- Requirements: means defining policy issues or areas in which intelligence is expected to make a contribution. Every issue is important, but for the intelligence community priorities need to be set: some issues require more attention: weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, foreign commitments etc;
- Collection: after setting the priorities, the IC needs to collect information (or better say raw data) about the priorities. The IC has several disciplines for collecting information: human intelligence (HUMNIT), technical

intelligence (TECHINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), imagery intelligence (IMINT);

- Analysis: this stage of the cycle is seen as the most significant; in fact, most of the intelligence failures are made during this stage. Information collectors pass this particular data to the analysts, at this stage the information that needs to be analyzed: raw information is converted in actionable intelligence; later on the analyst places the data in a historical context, determines which data is meaningful and which is not;
- Production and dissemination: information is delivered to the consumers (policymakers) in form of an intelligence product;

Feedback: policymakers, after receiving the final intelligence product, can discuss with the IC if any adjustments are required.

1.2 Intelligence as information

While, intelligence as information, means that information is a tangible product collected and analyzed with the goal to achieve a deeper comprehension of subversive activities at home, political, social economic and military situations around the world [9].

The kind of information used by the IC is much different from the one of the open-sources. The most important information is that which the nations attempt to hide. The hidden information is brought to light by encoding communications and stealing activities. This kind of information gathering is called clandestine operations, core activity for the intelligence agencies. Governments for national security reasons, need to rely upon these types of operations because it's the only way to retrieve important data which is hidden by the potentially dangerous others. To emphasize the importance to have this type of information, Abram N. Shulsky has written "*intelligence often entails access to information some other party is to trying to deny*" [9].

2. Intelligence failure: definition and theories

Similar to the definition of intelligence it is not easy to define intelligence failure. The intelligence can fail for many reasons often despite the best work of the intelligence [6]. As the US Marine Corps intelligence director Lieutenant General Paul Van Riper lamented that "*the IC does a damn good job. It troubles me that people always speak in terms of operational success and intelligence failure*" [6]. This is due because intelligence failures are well documented. The post-failure commissions (as the 9/11 Commission) which

task was to understand what wrong, have access to secret and sensitive reports for addressing their task. On the other hand, when the IC succeeds nothing is said. This is due to the fact that the sensitive and secret reports remain inaccessible. Therefore, success is not documented. In fact, the lack of understanding when and how the IC succeeds makes it more difficult to address an intelligence theory.

Academics, security studies experts and intelligence officials have different views in understanding why the IC fails. For some intelligence officials and academics the IC is responsible “*an intelligence failure is the inability of one or more parts of the intelligence process to produce timely accurate intelligence on an issue or event of importance to national interest*” (cit. Mark Lowenthal). For others failures are committed from policymakers “*who either neglect or misuse the intelligence they are given*” [6] (cit. Abram N. Shulsky). However, as we said in the previous paragraphs the intelligence process involves both: the IC and policymakers. Said so, a better definition could be a failure of the IC to produce the intelligence needed by policymakers or a failure of these to act on the intelligence appropriately [6]. Before getting into the specific theories, it is necessary to understand what the conventional wisdom is.

2.1 Conventional wisdom

The surprise attack on Pearl Harbor is the leading case in the field of intelligence failures. Since this failure was studied by Roberta Wohlsteter a conventional wisdom arose. She argues that the failure to prevent the Pearl Harbor attacks was a failure that occurred in the analysis stage: “*we failed to anticipate Pearl Harbor not for the relevant materials, but because of a plethora of irrelevant ones*” [6]. This meant that an excess of noise had occulted the intelligence warnings that were present. This failure explanation is known as the ‘problem of signal-to-noise ratio’. In today’s world this problem has been replaced with the ‘connect the dots’ problem: **the intelligence agencies had the relevant warning but they failed to analyze them. Signal versus noise and connecting the dots are known as the conventional wisdom.**

Intelligence failure theories are diverse and at times opposite. The intelligence theories that I am going to define are the Traditional School, Reformist school and the Contrarian school.

2.2 Traditionalist school

This school can be explained in a simple word: pessimistic. This school of thought can be summarized in Richard Betts famous quotes “*the intelligence failures are not only inevitable but natural*” [2].

As I mentioned previously, Roberta Wohlstetter established the so called conventional wisdom but she's also convinced that the task of intelligence is intrinsically difficult and believes that intelligence performance is not likely to get much better in the future [6]. For Roberta Wohlstetter, the problem of the intelligence failure, lies in the faulty analysis of the available information and not in the collection of that information; her 'signal to noise' problems explains her view. Signal is a piece of evidence that points to the action of the adversaries, while for noise is to be intended "signs pointing in wrong directions that obscure the signs pointing the right way" [4]. Analysts fail to understand which signal to take in account.

Instead, because failures are natural traditionalist do not blame the responsibility on intelligence officials. If anyone is responsible of the intelligence failures, it must be the policymakers. This point of view is supported by the two most permanent traditionalists, Betts and Handel.

Betts argues that "*the principals cause of surprise is not the failure of the intelligence but the unwillingness of political leaders to believe intelligence or react to it with sufficient dispatch*" [6]. For Handel intelligence is a process (or cycle) in which "*historical experiences confirms that the intelligence failures are more often caused by a breakdown on the level of acceptance than on the acquisition or analysis levels*" [6]. Warning without responses is useless [3].

For others such as Richard Heuer, Robert Jervis (according to Betts and Handel as well) the intelligence failure occurs because of mental mindsets, assumption that are resistant to change and cognitive bias.

Beliefs, assumptions, concepts, form a mind-set that guides perception and processing of new information. Mind-set is unavoidable [9].

There are two factor that unconsciously influence the analysis of the information:

- Historical context: because analysts are usually working with incomplete, ambiguous and contradictory data they need to place them in a historical context. As the information is incomplete the analyst relies on one or more historical precedents that can shed light on the present [9].

However, if a historical precedent is vivid and powerful it can influence the analyst's thinking assessing the judgments. This happens when the analyst thinks that the two events are similar and the outcome is the same.

- Rejecting alternative hypothesis: it is almost natural to discount disconfirming intelligence; it is easier to accept information supporting a hypothesis that is believed to be valid.

Owever, Heuer tries to identify several ways to overcome this problem. Analysts should question their assumptions, try to identify and find alternatives to them and be cautious in questioning in mirror imagining and filling in the gaps. Mirror imaging is when an analyst assumes that the other side

will act the same as you, in the same circumstances. This leads to dangerous assumptions because people of other cultures do not act the same way we do.

While cognitive biases are inevitable “they effect honest, dedicated and intelligence men” [8]. Cognitive biases are more difficult to overcome because it is not caused by emotional predisposition towards a certain judgment but from subconscious mental procedures for processing information, it is a mental error [7]. As Betts noted, “*unlike organizational structure...cognition cannot be altered by legislation*” [2].

2.3 Reformist school

The reformist school is more optimistic than the traditionalist school. This theory focuses on the limits of the organizational and bureaucratic organizations of the intelligence community rather on analysis or psychological limits.

This school believes that the warnings are present before the failure, but the IC fails because it does not connect the dots. Connecting the dots problems here is not viewed as an analytical failure, but due to the complexity of the IC structure and organization. To clarify this point of view we need to just take into account how many intelligence agencies the United States has: 17 independent intelligence agencies, employing over 100,000 people with an annual budget of almost \$ 70 billion [5]. Amy Zegart is one of the most critical of the IC organization “deeply rooted organizational weakness” [16]. In her book, *Spying Blind*, she explains in simple words why the intelligence organizational and structure are the main cause of the intelligence failures. For Zegart the IC organization failed to adoption in dealing with new threats: the intelligence community did not change after the Cold War, however when the Cold War ended changes in the intelligence community was necessary. Micheal Hyden, former CIA director, argues that there are differences in the IC during the Cold War and today: during the cold war the enemy’s force were relatively easy to find but hard to kill. Today the situation is reversed. We are now in an age in which our primary adversary is easy to kill but hard to find [5]. The threats of the Cold War era are not the same of today’s: a new approach is necessary. As Charles Porrow contented “*most bad rules were once good, designated for a situation that no longer exists*” [5].

Others like Charles F.Parker and Eric K. Stern highlighted that the intelligence organizations have difficulty to share information and coordinate the analysis because the agencies tend to be divided by organizational culture, procedural differences, organizational goals and bureaucratic rivalries which does not permit information sharing [11].

Amy Zegart is one of the best academic experts in believing that those differences are the main cause of failures. In addition there is a sense of rival-

ry between the intelligence agencies. This sense of rivalry is best explained through social categorization, that is the human tendency to make “us vs.them” and cognitive categorization “*in which a group accentuates the perceived differences of other agencies in situations where groups must cooperate to achieve larger goals*” [11]. The IC lacks of corporateness [15]. Addressing the reformist school, it is important to mention Glenn Hastedt, who noticed that **intelligence failure occurs because the nature of the organization leads to hierarchies, specialization, centralization which can limit the sharing of information** [6].

2.4 The Contrarian school

The contrarian school believes that intelligence fails because it fails to collect information. They perceived the failure in the collection stage. A permanent contrarian is David Khan, a historian and journalist, who studied the Pearl Harbor intelligence failure challenging Roberta Wohlstetter conventional wisdom. In his article, “*The Intelligence failure of Pearl Harbor*”, he clearly stated “*there was a dearth of intelligence materials. The intelligence officers could perhaps have foreseen the attack if the US, year before, had insinuated spies into high-level Japanese military, flown regular aerial reconnaissance of the Japanese navy and put intercept units aboard ships*” [10]. The intelligence officials need to rely on the use of the intelligence means for a better information collection. Another challenger of the traditionalist school is Ariel Levite who argues that no credible warning was available before the attack, but he supports the idea that if sufficient intelligent is available reliable and effective warning can be given [6].

3. The 9/11 terrorist attacks, which theory is more appropriate?

3.1 CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

The Central Intelligence Agency was established for gathering information on foreign countries without jurisdictional authority to collect information on United States citizens.

CIA was at the front line of the IC during the Cold War performing a significant role. However, as the Cold War ended the agency had to face several complications specifically the adaptation-changes problem to dealing with unfamiliar threats. With the end of the Cold War the agency had to face several uncertainties: who’s the enemy now?

During the Cold War era the main objective of the CIA was the Soviet Union while from the early nineties the main national /international threat was transnational terrorism. The shift from a state actor-enemy to a non-state actor enemy was the main challenge. CIA officials stated that “*we were dealing with a rapidly changing world; we have been exclusively focused on the Soviet Union...every morning we woke up and it was there. Terrorism is something very different, understanding the power of small groups of individuals that moved across borders and hidden from view was the major challenge*” [16]. The CIA’s weakness and failure to change is due to three organizational deficiencies: structure, culture and incentives.

The agency turned to be a decentralized structure. The activities within the agency were divided between headquarters and fields, which covered a specific geographic area with their own priorities [16]. This decentralized structure was not able to face terrorism. Cold War security demands enhanced the culture of secrecy between agencies. In the CIA a sense of agency parochialism [16] had contributed to develop one of the agency’s main problem: information sharing with the other intelligence agencies. Incentives were counterproductive as the work of analyst were considered a ‘good job’ because of the number of final reports produced, rather than the quality of them. Incentives and culture brought up a us vs. them attitude between the agencies and the CIA [16].

The CIA missed several occasions to at least comprehend what was happening between 2000-2001, the first bad performance dates back to the Kuala Lumpur meeting. From January 5th 2000 to January 8th 2000 an Al-Qaeda meeting was taking place in Kaula Lumpur, the purpose of these meetings was the planning of the USS Cole attack and the 9/11 attacks. The Kaula Lumpur meetings were under CIA surveillance, but at the end of the meeting they lost track of the three men suspected when they moved to Bangkok. On 8 January, the CIA knew the name of Khalid al-Mindhar and that he held a US visa, although they didn’t consider the possibility that he would probably travel to the United States (in fact a few days later he settled in California) and a few more days later they identified a second man, Nawafa-al Hazmi.

The CIA internal organization was so disjointed that an agent of the CIA’s Bin Laden Unit believed that the two suspected were still under surveillance in Malaysia [16]. The CIA information sharing problem is quiet evident: the CIA failed to prevent Nawafa al-Hazmi travelling to the United States because they never requested any information about him to both the National Security Agency and the State Department, therefore the CIA did not know that he held a US visa.

The CIA did not inform the FBI about the two men holding a US visa and the possibility to travel in the US, indeed they were never signaled on the

watch listing with the attempt to daring them to enter the United States. Focusing strictly on the information that a single agency possesses is erroneous because that data could be incomplete, but the CIA culture-secrecy prevents the agents to share information. This problem is best explained in the words of an agent “we approach each case as if it’s me,my,mine” [16].

On August 15, 2001 an official at the flight school in Minneapolis was suspicious about Zacarias Moussaoui, a man with no aviation background but willing to pay between \$ 8.000 to \$ 9.000, with the only interest to learn how to take off and land. The FBI field office in Minneapolis took the case and arrested him. On August 23, 2001 George Tenet was briefed about the arrest, in a briefing titled “Islamic Extremist learns to fly” but because he thought that this case was an FBI case he didn’t take action and he did not inform the White House³.

3.2 FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Federal Bureau of Investigation was established with the purpose to investigate possible violations of US federal law on the United States soil. The FBI failed in the 9/11 attacks for the same reasons of the CIA, organizational deficiencies: structure, culture and incentives.

The agency’s internal structure is decentralized: power is concentrated in 56 local offices called field offices, each of them covers different specific geographical areas headed by a special- agent in charge that decides the office priorities, its own cases to solve and guarding its own information. Because of this type of organization each field office persecutes their own cases, much of them were local cases rather than national, are reluctant to spend energy on cases which they had no control and for which they received no credit. Counterterrorism was not one of the FBI priorities and this type of structure demonstrated it: it’s a kind of organization that can work for law enforcement but not with dealing with terrorism, which needs national efforts. Law enforcement culture is what made the FBI weaker in facing terrorism. With the rising of terrorism threat a new approach was needed; counterterrorism is much different from old crime mission. In addition, sense of loyalty makes it more difficult for the FBI to share information between the different field offices and between the entire IC. Traditional incentives within the agency are another reason why FBI failed to implement organizational changes facing terrorism.

³ The 9/11 Commission Report. Available at: <https://9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf>, p. 276.

Performance within the agency were evaluated on the numbers of arrests, prosecutions, convictions; counterintelligence and counterterrorism were considered a no enhancing career activities because these types of activities do not have quantifiable results⁴. As described above after the Kaula Lampur meeting the CIA did not notify the FBI about Al-Mihdhar and Hazmi and the possible intention to travel in the US. The two suspected terrorists arrived in the US on January 15, 2000 and settled in San Diego. Only by the summer of 2001 the FBI started to collect information on Mihdhar. Yet, they discovered that he held a US visa and that he was already in the United States, but because his original visa application had listed his destination as New York, the message was sent to the NY field office on August 28. A New York agent started to check local database and noted that Mihdhar had entered the US through Los Angeles [6]. The Los Angeles field office received the request to look for him only on September 11th. The FBI's decentralized structure explains even more two other important events: the Phoenix memo and Zacarias Moussoui's arrest.

By spring 2001 FBI special agent, Kennteh Williams, by July 10 he sent a memo to the FBI headquarters and to two agents of the international terrorism squad in NY of the "possibility of a coordinated effort by Osama Bin Laden to send students to the US to attend civil aviation schools"⁵. The memo was sent only at the FBI field office of Portland because one of the men suspected had a connection to a local case. This kind of misunderstanding can be explained partially because of the bureau's fragmented structure and partially because the FBI failed to dedicate and devote themselves to 'national cases' preferring local cases.⁶ Zacarias Moussaoui's arrest has been defined as the best, failed, chance to hinder the 9/11 attacks. On August 15, 2001 a Pan American International Flight School employee was suspicious about a foreign student, Zacarias Moussaoui, who paid between \$8,000 to \$9,000 in cash for training on a Boeing 747 without any qualifications and most important he was just interested to learn to take off and to land. The Minneapolis FBI field office started an intelligence investigation finding that Moussaoui possessed jihadist beliefs "an Islamic extremist preparing for some future act"⁷. The suspected terrorist was then imprisoned because he had overstayed his visa. The FBI's mistake in the case happened after the arrest: the Minneapolis field office

⁴ *Ibidem*, p.76.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p.272.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 273.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p.275.

had disputes with the headquarters over whether or not sufficient ground existed to obtain a criminal or a FISA⁸ warrant to search his belongings.

3.3 CIA and FBI sharing information problem

As a result of the difference in nature of the mission of the US intelligence agencies, a problem of negligence exists, and restricts the flow of information to where it is most needed [13]. The US Intelligence Community is composed of 16 independent agencies; they have their own missions and priorities. The 9/11 Commission Report confirmed that the two agencies failed to connect the dots because: they did not share information as a consequence of their internal organizations and cultural differences.

3.4 Organization structure problem

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs both agencies internal structures were so decentralized that even within the agencies sharing information was impossible.

3.5 Cultural bias

The 9/11 Commission Report highlighted the legal barrier that had prevented the information sharing between the FBI and CIA. This legal barrier is known by intelligence agency as “the wall” which prevents criminal investigations from using intelligence sources to gain warrants. Specifically, the wall refers to cultural biases within each organization as well as limited legally approved methods of data transfer between them creating barrier to information sharing because it takes too much time and efforts to share information [13]. Furthermore, FBI and CIA are well known for having an aversion to sharing information: a turf war is at the heart of CIA-FBI lack of cooperation.

3.6 Adoption failure

When the FBI and CIA were established they had to face diverse enemies than today's: their primary attention was devoted to foreign countries (most at the Soviet Union). It is easier to deal with a state actor because you know who is the threat, his capabilities, intentions, and there is a clear distinction

⁸ Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978: regulates the intelligence collection directed at foreign powers and agent for foreign powers in the U.S. To require court review of proposed surveillance this act was interpreted by the courts to require that a search be approved only if its ‘primary purpose’ was to obtain foreign intelligence information (Definition in The 9/11 Commission Report, Chapter 3).

between domestic and international threats. While facing threats like groups of terrorists in the era of globalization, a thoroughly unprecedented and challenging issue: it is easier today for groups of people/terrorists to exercise trans-nationally as a consequence of the use of information and communications technology.

4. France and Belgium terrorist attacks: cooperation difficulties

The 9/11 case study shows up that the intelligence is a like a puzzle: if you miss a piece you will never have the full picture. The information (pieces) are present but the actors (the agencies) did not share those pieces: connecting the dots is impossible. Yet, if is so hard to share information between agencies of the same country, do we imagine how hard is between agencies of two or more countries? France and Belgium attacks are certainly the case.

But before proceeding our analysis a clarification is needed.

Sharing information doesn't mean that if the agencies share information is sure that they can prevent or foresee an attacks. Sharing information is useful when the information are valid and on time. Having a high quantity of information doesn't mean that there is less chance to fail.

As Roberta Wohlstetter clears out, intelligence failures can occurs because the 'signal to noise ratio' problem: the intelligence can fail not because they don't have information but because of a plethora of irrelevant one. As explained in the first paragraph "signal is a piece of evidence that points to the action of the adversaries, while the noise are signs pointing in wrong directions that obscure the signs pointing the right way" [4]. The analysis stage is the most delicate one.

Similar to the 9/11 attacks, Belgium and France were aware of some important information, but they failed to share because of their internal and external organizational structures.

Compered to the 9/11 case study, the terrorist attacks that shocked the two European cities, seems even more 'easy to study'. As France and Belgium are two sovereignty states organized with their own structures, organizations, legal structures and law enforcement, sharing information with other countries is not that easy. Protocols, different laws, reluctance in sharing information because of rivalry or power can make cooperation between two States almost impossible.

The terrorist attacks that occurred in Paris (November 2015) and Brussels (March 2016) could be seen as two separate events, on the contrary they are

linked because of the information and terrorists involved. France and Belgium secret services failed together in preventing these two events.

4.1 Paris multiple attacks

On the 13th of November 2015, in only 33 minutes, the bloodiest attack on French soil since World War II took place.

Six coordinated attacks between Stade de France and I, X, XI arrondissement were carried out by at least 10 terrorists killing 130 people and wounding circa 368. Few hours later the Islamic State claimed the attacks.

Everything was planned in several steps:

- a first kamikaze blew himself on the street long the way to the State de France killing one person;
- few minutes later a Seat black car, carrying some of the terrorists, stopped in several cafe and restaurant between I, X, XI arrondissement shooting with kalashnikov on people;
- another terrorist blew himself on Boulevard Voltaire;
- black Polo stopped in front of the theatre Bataclan, where a concert was held, three terrorists were able to get in the theatre and started to shoot on the crowd before killing themselves.

Six attacks in 33 minutes, are not easy to prevent but what if some of the terrorists were already known by the French or others intelligence agencies?

Some of the attackers were already known to the authorities but France failed to surveil them. Because France has 11,000 radicalized individual which 1,200 are foreign fighters⁹ a traditional surveillance systems is impossible to take place: to monitor a suspect 24/7 are needed circa 15-20 man. The intelligence agency DGSJ has more or less 3,300 officers, which means that all the suspected are impossible to control.

Ismael Omar Mostefai and Samy Amimour, the Bataclan suicide bombers, were known to the French authorities, but still they had the possibilities to fly to Syria and return back to Europe.

But the more emblematic episode took place the day after the Paris attacks: Salah Abdeslam, the mastermind of the attacks, while escaping to Belgium was stopped at the French boarder but released; Belgian authorities passed Salah's information to the French just 15 minutes later he was released.

The Belgium authorities did not share with French a important information: Salah Abdeslam and his bother Ibrahim, who died during the attacks,

⁹ *The Paris attacks: A case of intelligence failures?* Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2015/ISIL/Paris-attacks-terrorism-intelligence-ISIS/EN/index.htm> p.3.

were known to be radicals. A no-sharing information problem in the this case raises between two countries.

As Salah Abdeslam, born in Belgium and neutralized French with Moroccan origin, entered the Belgium borders the Belgium authorities started a manhunt. Because Belgium laws do not permit house raids by the police after 9 p.m and before 5.a.m.: two days after Salah went back to Belgium his house could not be searched. He was captured 4 months later on the 18th of March, in his family apartment in Molenbeek.

Molenbeek, a Brussels neighborhood home of almost 100.00 Moroccans¹⁰ notorious for radicalism, is known to be a difficult neighborhood almost a “parallel world¹¹” with youth not feeling part of the community and easily switching from common crime to violent extremism¹². Salah, like many others youth of this Belgian neighborhood, was already been arrested for ‘little’ crime as drug puddling and while in prison he was recruited like most of others jihadists.

4.2 Belgium attacks

On the 22nd of March 2016 Brussels was under terrorist attacks: Najim Laachraoui and Ibrahim el Bakraoui blew themselves at Zaventem airport while a second suicide bomber, Khalid el Bakraoui blew himself in the underground train station near the European Institutions. The Brussels attacks took place just after 4 days Salah’s capture.

Yet, like the French attacks, all of the three terrorists were known to the Belgium authorities:

- Belgium intelligence service were already been alerted by Turkey of Ibrahim el Bakraoui intention to reach Syria. When he was stopped on the Turkish borders he was asked to be deported in the Netherlands where he was than free to travel in Belgium. The Belgium authorities did not arrested Ibrahim because they did not have formal accuses;
- while his brother, Khalid, was on Interpol blacklist after the Paris attacks, but the Belgium federal police did not noticed the warning even if he was already suspected by the Belgian police of the Paris terrorist attacks;
- Naihmlaachraoui was known to be the one who made the suicide vests for the Paris attacks;

¹⁰ *Belgium’s Security Failures Made the Brussels Attacks All But Inevitable*. Available at <http://time.com/4269505/brussels-attacks-security-failure-belgium/>, 3.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p.4.

¹² *Ivi*.

- Salah Abdeslam was known to one of the intelligence agencies in Belgium at least from 2014, while others only by January 2015.

In addition, when Salah Abdeslam was captured, he was questioned only for one hour on the Paris attack, but founding of heavy weapons could have been a warning of the two Brussels attacks.

The intelligence failures of the Brussels attacks lies on the organizational structure problems of the Belgian territory. Belgium is indicated as a country created artificially because of the ethnic fractures: French speaking and flamish speaking which makes cooperation even more harder¹³. Belgium has a weak federal government with powerful local municipalities; in addition Brussels counts circa 1 million of people with 19 municipalities and 6 different police forces which most of the time the don't communicate with each other. This might explain why all of the intelligence agencies in the country did not have same information at the same time. As Belgium is known to be Europe hub of Islamist radicals, such errors are even more incomprehensible to understand.

If sharing information within the same country seems impossible, sharing information between different countries can be defined an utopia. We must always take in account that both countries are member of the Schengen Treaty which means: freedom of movement.

If freedom of movement is possible between some European countries, why they don't share information if suspected people are in the Schengen zone? Yet, European intelligence agencies and several database do exist, but sharing information with others is not mandatory. For example, the Schengen Information System is update only by some of the European States within the Schengen treaty. **It has been estimated that Europe has 5 thousands of European citizens that turned to be radicalize but the database contains only 2.786 names of these foreign fighters**¹⁴.

Organizational structure of a country IC is what can make impossible sharing information. In addition we need to keep always in mind that the intelligence game has his on rules which the most important one is explained by Sir John Sovers, head of the British M16, *“the service who first obtains the intelligence has the right to control how is used, who else it can be shared with, and what action can be taken on it. It's rule number 1 of intelligence sharing.*

¹³ *Brussels Attacks: What the Belgians Missed*. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/03/belgium-terror-attack-intelligence/475464/>

¹⁴ *Da Parigi a Bruxelles, il disastro dell'intelligence*. Available at http://www.ilmessaggero.it/primopiano/esteri/bruxelles_parigi_disastro_intelligence-1627055.html

There are good reasons for these rules: no intelligence service risk compromising its sources. Because whenever intelligence is revealed, others try to hunt down the source. Agents can get identified, arrested, tortured and killed¹⁵. Terrorism, as a borderless phenomenon, needs to be fought with a common strategies based on shared information within a well-organized structure.

5. Conclusion

Intelligence failures are not easy to evaluate, considering the many reasons and events that can lead the IC to fail. An accurate intelligence failure theory is possible to define only if, as Erik Dahl and Robert Jervis noted, intelligence failures and intelligence successes can be compared. However, this comparison is often difficult to accomplish because intelligence successes are studied less, because reports and other types of information are not released outside the intelligence environment.

Despite the fact that the comparison difficulty exists, the theories in paragraph 2 attempted to give a better understanding on why and how the intelligence can fail. The traditional school believes that failures are natural because of human psychology. They placed their attention on the analysis stage assuming that analysts tend to fail because of human cognitive bias. Yet, that same cognitive bias can be overcome: the analyst can be trained to take in account more than one hypothesis, confronting his/her assumptions with other contrasting and at times opposed in respect to its own. We truly recognize that intelligence failures are at best explained by taking into account the reformist and the contrarian school. For the reformist school failures are due because of the IC organizational structure, whereas for the contrarian school the IC does not collect a sufficient amount of information.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks demonstrated that the US IC organization and structure are the real weakness that led the IC to fail. The Twin Tower and Pentagon terrorist surprise attacks represented the classic intelligence failure where the IC missed to connect the dots because of poor information sharing due to its organization and structure. At a first glance, one may think that the huge American IC apparatus, which is composed by 16 independent agencies, is the main problem that can lead the intelligence to fail. However, the US IC huge structure is necessary because of the United States role in world politics, especially regarding the security field. The real problem of the organization and structure of the agencies is how the several agencies are interconnected amongst them. There are no effective mechanisms to ensure information sharing throughout the agencies. Information

¹⁵Europe, *Stop Trying To Make 'Intelligence Sharing' Happen*. Available at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/14/europe-stop-trying-to-mak-brussels-paris-bombings/>

sharing is crucial because the intelligence mission is like a puzzle: if just one piece is missing, you cannot see the whole picture. If information is spread amongst the agencies and sharing is not possible, the IC has a high probability to fail in preventing or predicting a possible plot.

Monopoly of information within the agencies has always been the motive to blame this behavior of each agency toward each other – yes, this is true – but the technical / organizational differences are the core obstacle. Considering today's environment, which includes non-state-actors and new threats that are hard to combat, the centralization and hierarchal structure must be challenged. Centralization of the information and hierarchy structure within the agencies slows down the information sharing process. Hierarchy impedes information sharing between different levels in the agencies: information sharing is only possible after the higher level in the hierarchal structure gives his authorization. This process is too slow; it does not enable the gathering of all information that is spread between the agencies. Decentralization can result more effective: delegating more decisions to frontline employees because they have more information can speed the process of information sharing between the agencies, without waiting for the higher-level officials consent. Despite all it is still not adequate enough. Secrecy, even if it is one of the most significant features of the intelligence, can create obstacles amongst the agencies. Each agency has different codes due to secrecy issues; therefore communication amongst them is almost impossible. Identifying a common code can help to speed up the process of information sharing. These adjustments are needed within the IC of a Nation.

Even more difficult to adjust is the non- information sharing between the Intelligence agencies of different nations. France and Belgium terrorist attacks had underlined the tragic importance of information sharing even between countries. As terrorism is a borderless phenomenon, a borderless strategy is highly needed. However, as we noted in paragraph 4, as every country has its own organizations, legal structures and law enforcement, sharing information with other countries is almost impossible. In addition, we must always take into account the concept of sovereignty: because States are sovereign entities they are reluctant to limit their power in favor of others. Because information is power, sharing information with others means undermining their sovereignty. As information is important to elaborate security and economic strategies of a country, at which extent are states willing to share information? Would they ever develop a solid organization that mandates sharing information when it comes to terrorism and other security issues?

Although and most importantly keeping information for themselves means hoping to intervene through a blitz and other measures, are states ready to give up this possible moment of glory?

There are no simple answers to these questions. Rationally, if we think that the main objective of the IC of a Nation is to protect its citizens and soil from security

issues such as terrorism, the answer is obvious: there is no doubt, they need to share the information. On the other hand, is sharing information part of the intelligence game?

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Populism as an element of security policy. The 2016 Polish Anti-terrorism Law – a case study

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Abstract

The European Union is facing the trouble which the US, after 9/11, had to deal with. How much safety are we ready to sacrifice for freedom and how many privileges and civil liberties can we give away for common safety, and finally: when is enough, enough? Europe is not as lavish with freedom slogans as the US, but we can assume that Europe is going to put an end to limiting civil liberties faster than Americans are. Reaction to terrorist attacks might be „a way towards populism”. Populism is especially visible during turning points or times of political crisis. Often the reaction of the state is inadequate to a terrorist attack. Almost every act of terrorism results in a strong reaction from the state. Usually, the first decision made is a halt in current law and order. Special rules and regulations become more significant.

The article suggests that both authoritarianism and populism are part and parcel of political culture and they appear in the face of national danger. What is more, it is not clear which actions and repression used by the authorities could be considered anti-terrorism tactics, and which mere populist and authoritarian actions. This article analyzes whether there is a relation between democracy and terrorism. In other words, greater fear of the unknown results in an increase of authoritarian feeling and leads to looking for controversial and sometimes radical, solutions. Apparently, the more democratic a country, the more dissatisfied a society is, which contributes to lesser understanding of the complexity of the process and to making judgments as well.

This paper analyze the Anti-terrorism Law, passed by the Polish Parliament in June, 2016. The said regulation is a way of a showing the authorities' will to manifest their consistent and uncompromising attitude towards threats. The Law intends to introduce: purchase of pre-paid cell phones only on presentation of an ID; holding in custody for 14 days those suspected of terrorism and also carrying out house searches at all times. However, some parts of this regulation seem to be colliding with the idea of a democratic state in which freedom is the superior value. The conflict, which has been caused while passing this Law, addresses two issues. The first one is a traditional conflict of values between security and liberty. The second one is a manifestation of a populist, and perhaps naive, belief that strict law will be an effective weapon against terrorism.

It is very difficult to eradicate populism. It is going to be present one way or the other in the public sphere. What is more, populism is so flexible that it can adjust to any doctrine and political conditions. It is worth to verify if do modern, democratic citizens of Europe need populist governments? The answer to this question lies in social behaviors, especially during election campaigns in which politicians present their fresh and pragmatic look. The remedy for populist slogans is knowledge; it is also an effective tool in understanding the complex socio-political events.

Keywords

Counterterrorism, security, surveillance, Patriot Act, Freedom Act, freedom, privacy

1. Introduction

The article suggests that both authoritarianism and populism are part and parcel of political culture and they appear in the face of national danger. What is more, it is not clear which actions and repression used by the authorities could be considered anti-terrorism tactics, and which mere populist and authoritarian actions. This article analyzes whether there is a relation between democracy and terrorism. In other words, greater fear of the unknown results in an increase of authoritarian feeling and leads to looking for controversial and sometimes radical, solutions. Apparently, the more democratic a country, the more dissatisfied a society is, which contributes to lesser understanding of the complexity of the process and to making judgments as well.

This paper shall analyze the Anti-terrorism Law, passed by the Polish Parliament in June, 2016. The said regulation is a way of a showing the authorities' will to manifest their consistent and uncompromising attitude towards threats. According to the government, passing of this Law was crucial before the NATO summit and World Youth Days held in Poland. The Law intends to introduce: purchase of pre-paid cell phones only on presentation of an ID; holding in custody for 14 days those suspected of terrorism and also carrying out house searches at all times. As a result, a few foreigners have already been expelled from Poland on grounds of being suspected of terrorist activity. However, some parts of this regulation seem to be colliding with the idea of a democratic state in which freedom is the superior value. The conflict, which has been caused while passing this Law, addresses two issues. The first one is a traditional conflict of values between security and liberty. The second one is a manifestation of a populist, and perhaps naive, belief that strict law will be an effective weapon against terrorism.

2. Security vs. liberty as a political challenge

The EU does not have much influence on security policy of its member countries as this policy is their own prerogative. The UK, after 2005 tragedy, is definitely going for a more strict level of society surveillance. As a proof, one can point at the British Prime Minister, Theresa May, who revealed a bill which allows Internet providers to keep a record of websites accessed by

British citizens¹. Such actions are socially acceptable in UK and this is unquestionably a proof of confidence in the state, which is clearly visible both in Great Britain and in France. The citizens show their trust in the state by giving away prerogatives and hoping these will not be abused politically to, for instance, eliminate the opposition.

By giving away a part of our freedom (to ensure personal safety) we assume that the state will protect us against terrorist attacks. Meanwhile, one aspect should be noticed in this heated debate. Despite heavy financing, law changes, giving the services more powers, if we take into consideration the lifestyles of western societies, means of communication and all the other ways of crossing the borders between countries, we cannot assume that it is impossible for another tragedy to happen².

Worth noticing is the fact that among Polish respondents there is no differentiation between Islamists (orthodox Muslims) and Muslims when giving answer to question on who carried out attacks in Paris or Brussels³. The terms „Islamists” and „Muslims” are being treated interchangeably. The French, however, use a more specific term when saying who the perpetrators were – they use the word „Jihadists”⁴. One of the Jihadist’s attributes is being Muslim, but it is the political aspect of being involved in ISIS which is important here. These were French and Belgian citizens, most of whom traveled through Syria and were trained there. The instigator, though, was ISIS itself which admitted to have organized those terrorist attacks.

The European Union is facing the trouble which the US, after 9/11, had to deal with. How much safety are we ready to sacrifice for freedom and how many privileges and civil liberties can we give away for common safety, and finally: when is enough, enough? Europe is not as lavish with freedom slogans as the US, but we can assume that Europe is going to put an end to limiting civil liberties faster than Americans are.

„Passenger name record” case should be mentioned here; in short the issue concerned keeping and giving away personal data of people travelling

¹ A. Griffin, *Theresa May could launch huge attack on privacy and internet surveillance protections as prime minister, campaigners warn*, „The Independent”, July 12, 2016 [in:] <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/theresa-may-prime-minister-privacy-mass-surveillance-snoopers-charter-attack-warning-a7133431.html> (reading date: December 12, 2016).

² A. Tsoukala, *Democracy in the Light of Security: British and French Political Discourses on Domestic Counter-Terrorism Policies*, „Political Studies”, 2006, vol. 54/3, p. 607-627.

³ *The threat of terrorism*, (2016) The Communication Research Center for Public Opinion, [in:] http://cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2016/K_127_16.PDF, (reading date: December 12, 2016).

⁴ J. Lichfield, *How much longer before France spirals into hatred?*, „The Independent”, July 17, 2016, [in:] <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/how-much-more-can-france-take-before-it-spirals-into-hatred-a7140686.html>, (reading date: December 12, 2016).

to or from EU by air or sea⁵. The Americans have a similar system but in Europe it raises many questions. The EU Parliament is having a hard time passing this law. There is also a problem with access to the system comprising of many different agencies. Until recently, the agencies which needed access to the system had to have many more permissions. The new regulation aimed at making it easier to access the system, making it almost automatic. The civil liberties defenders argue that such unlimited access for many agencies is unnecessary because their actions would resemble trying to „find a needle in a haystack”⁶.

Also, there appears a question of what other data can be found in such a system – for instance – who travels a lot and with whom. It might be a serious threat to people’s privacy. An example of this might be the fact that the system gathers information and notifies the appropriate agencies even when a person buying a plane ticket wants to have a halal or kosher meal during his/her flight. A lot of, seemingly harmless, data can be used as additional information on a given citizen.

So, once again, the question of what should be done to increase the effectiveness of special services arises. How much privacy are we willing to sacrifice and how to improve the flow of information between particular countries (which is quite troublesome for EU countries). Up until today, it has not been working well, as far as some countries are concerned. Before the terrorist attack on 13th November, 2015, Paris, there was a huge problem with information exchange between France and Belgium. It is worth mentioning that the attack was planned in Brussels and the terrorists used the poor condition of Belgium’s special services to their advantage.

Therefore, one could ask about the proportion and selecting adequate means to what had happened. American experience is very important here. The introducing of „Patriot Act”, and many other solutions, led to many questions which remain unanswered until today in the US. American citizens are divided in opinions on the actions of George W. Bush and his administration. They seem to believe that the former US president did as much harmful things as he did good, and the legacy of his presidency still is a matter of many discussions and questions⁷.

⁵D. Lowe, *The European Union’s Passenger Name Record Data Directive 2016/681: Is It Fit for Purpose?*, „International Criminal Law Review”, 2016, vol. 16/5, p. 856.

⁶S.K. McCluskey, *The Crime of Being Suspicious: British Counter-Terrorism Legislation and the History of Discriminatory Preventative Laws in the United Kingdom*, „Rutgers Race and the Law Review”, 2016, vol. 17.1, p. 131-165.

⁷B. E. Whitaker, *Exporting the Patriot Act? democracy and the ‘war on terror’ in the Third World*, „Third World Quarterly”, 2007, vol.28/5, p. 1017-1032.

American experience is important, although we need to remember that there was a continuation of previous administration's policy, power and safety measures in the US. President Obama inherited all the regulations and safety policy. Snowden revealed the scope of surveillance which had already been conducted during Obama's presidency. The president had to know about that. American law does not allow phone tapping its citizens without a warrant, but still permits foreigners (including other countries' leaders) to be tapped⁸.

In 2015, as a result of a dispute over the scope of legal surveillance, US Congress did not extend the USA „Patriot Act” which was eventually terminated. Instead, on 2nd June, 2015, another law was passed – the USA „Freedom Act” returned many privileges to Secret Service. This new regulation prohibits, however, gathering information on citizens' phone calls and only allows checking whom a given subscriber has been calling⁹. NSA cannot get access to telephone billing anymore – this can only be kept by telecommunications companies and the authorities can only access it with the permission of a federal court. The difference between those two Acts also concerns tracing back information. Under the „Patriot Act”, if the suspected person had been engaged in actions against the state, it was possible to trace their activity a few years back, while under the „Freedom Act” it is only possible to check their future activity¹⁰.

In the face of danger, democratic governments have or introduce extraordinary privileges. The aim of this is minimizing terrorist threats. However, in order not to transform democracy into authoritarianism, the authorities should obey the law so the safety enacting institutions would not abuse their powers.

⁸ T. Ebenger, *The USA Patriot Act: Implications for Private E-Mail*, „Journal of Information Technology & Politics”, 2008, vol. 4/4, p. 47-64; Ch. P. Banks, S. Tauber, *U.S. District Court Decision-Making in USA Patriot Act Cases after September 11*, „Justice System Journal”, 2014, vol. 35/2, p. 139-161.

⁹ A. Napolitano, *Freedom Act Is Just Patriot Act Light*, „The Ledger”, June 13, 2015; B. Forsyth, *Banning Bulk: Passage of the USA Freedom Act and Ending Bulk Collection*, „Washington and Lee Law Review”, 2015, vol. 72/3, p. 1307-1341.

¹⁰ M. DeBonis, E. Nakashima, *Vote on NSA bill down to the wire*, „The Washington Post”, May 24, 2015, p. A.1.

3. Increased populism level as one of the consequences of terrorist attacks

Terrorist attacks aim at causing panic and fear among people and their result is a natural need for quick, effective and also radical solutions. There are many comments on the failure of multiculturalism. What is happening is the consequence of a clash of two different worlds. Terrorist attacks might contribute to an increased popularity of populist organizations¹¹. Terrorist attacks are accompanied with frequent questions about the time, place and reason why such terrible acts took place. These are reactions to dramatic events. However, the usual answers are emotional, because it is hard to understand the complexity of modern threats.

The starting point of further analysis of populist mechanisms in public sphere (especially in the context of fear) are terrorist attacks. A very interesting, yet tragic, comparison which shows different styles of understanding safety policy are March, 2016, Brussels and November, 2015, Paris events. It is here where one may see some faults of the institution and law systems in terms of safety.

After the attacks in Paris, the trail was supposed to lead to Molenbeek, a district in Brussels. It is a district that has been nicknamed hotbed of Jihadists, a district of poverty and Muslims from Morocco; a district of low repute¹². The critical remarks, however, were aimed at local governments that have been rather unwilling towards actions of radical Islamists, who continued to recruit their Jihadists for wars in Syria and Iraq on the street of Brussels. Local governments ignored that fact and were counting on gaining support in local elections from the immigrants. Moreover, there were places where Belgian police forces did not even bother to go. It is worth mentioning that the mastermind of the November, 2015, attacks in Paris was raised in Molenbeek¹³.

Another important fact is that Belgium, unlike France, went for civil liberties rather than against them. The law and regulations in France have been toughened several times, whereas in Belgium (until recently) between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. special squads could not enter a house in which a potential

¹¹ D. Wright-Neville, D. Smith, *Political rage: terrorism and the politics of emotion*, „Global Change, Peace & Security”, 2009, vol. 21/1, P. 85-98.

¹² A. Higgins, *Belgium Confronts the Jihadist Danger Within*, „New York Times”, January 25, 2015, p. A.6.

¹³ T. Hume, *Brussels raids: Police hit Molenbeek, area at heart of Belgium's jihadist threat*, „CNN Wire Service”, November 15, 2015; S. Lefebvre, „The Belgians Just Aren't up to It”: *Belgian Intelligence and Contemporary Terrorism*, „International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence”, 2017, vol. 30/1, p.1-19.

terrorist resided. After the Paris attacks in November it all began to change. Now Belgian police squads may be fully operational 24h¹⁴.

Another reason for attacks in Belgium was the poor institutional condition of the state. Brussels is divided into 19 administrative districts so it is difficult to maintain uniform policy towards radicals. What is more, there are 6 police departments in Brussels, and each department works separately. It is hard then to coordinate actions and exchange information effectively in the face of terrorist threats¹⁵. This gives a rather grim and full image which constitutes the answer to the question why that had to happen eventually.

The above-mentioned mistakes, negligence and weaknesses in safety policy can quite easily become an argument for populists. Populists look at the social reality dichotomously: they divide it into friends and foes. In other words, they divide it into „us” and „them”. Of course, they emphasize they are “our” leaders and that they have a monopoly on the solutions to the biggest problems. What can be observed as well is the authoritarian and dominating leadership which goes hand in hand with opportunism¹⁶.

The analysis of populism requires great caution as this phenomenon is amazingly popular in democracy; one might even say it is a kind of a side effect of democracy and a manifestation of weakness of political system. Some authors of the definition of populism describe it as „using political, economic or social slogans, of emotional and irrational character, addressing the needs for simple solutions to difficult problems, which are easily accepted by majority. (...) A populist eagerly uses signs of social discontent in order to become a spokesperson of the masses”¹⁷. In reality, it is difficult to tell exactly which politician is a populist because there are not many politicians who do not flatter their voters, especially during electoral campaigns. This thought may prompt further remarks on populism as a vital part of democracy.

Researchers attempt to deal with this phenomenon. They enumerate characteristic features of this political attitude which aims at defining populism. Therefore, it deals with „anti-elitism” – it means that populist politicians call upon fight against the elites. What is more, populist programs are collections of generalities, utopian and contradictory slogans with means insufficient for

¹⁴ N. De Visser, *How Belgium Became a Terrorism Hotbed: For the past year, terrorist plot after terrorist plot has been tied back to Belgium. How did this tiny nation become ground zero?*, „The Daily Beast”, November 15, 2015.

¹⁵ J. Dettmer, *Belgium Promises to Revamp Security While Bridling at Criticism*, „Voice of America News”, November 20, 2015.

¹⁶ A.A. Kallis, *Fascism, ‘Charisma’ and ‘Charismatisation’: Weber’s Model of ‘Charismatic Domination’ and Interwar European Fascism*, „Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions”, 2006, vol.7/1, p. 25-43.

¹⁷ *Populism*, Lexicon of Political Science, eds. A. Antoszewski, R. Herbut, Wrocław 2002, p.332.

goals. So, populists usually do not have a coherent ideology but only a simple image of a target social order. On the one hand, they say they believe in the people and their creative part but, on the other hand, they worship their charismatic leader and do not use democratic procedures in their own party ranks¹⁸.

Populism is especially visible during turning points or times of political crisis. Often the reaction of the state is inadequate to a terrorist attack. Almost every act of terrorism results in a strong reaction from the state. Usually, the first decision made is a halt in current law and order. Special rules and regulations become more significant. Very often the conflict is being escalated. Subconsciously, the guilty are being sought; negative features are being ascribed to whole social groups – just as it is happening with Muslim society, which is being accused of terrorism. It leads to more demand for security and protection. The state addresses these needs with even more serious and special means (including illegal ones)¹⁹.

Executive order on immigration issued on 27th January, 2017, by Donald Trump, illustrates the emotions which constitute security policy. This executive order prohibits citizens of seven countries (mostly Muslim countries: Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen) from entering the US and suspends accepting Syrian refugees²⁰. However, nobody can be deprived of their rights only because he/she was born in a certain place, is of different faith or has simply trouble in life. It is written so in the constitutions of European countries and in the US Constitution. Therefore, a constitutional regulation occurs to be a tool which stirs up a conflict rather than ensures safety.

Taking into consideration fear of the society, which is a natural and inevitable reaction to terrorist attacks, one can assume that many governments will use populist slogans more willingly because the atmosphere of fear facilitates their use and acceptance. With no objection from the public opinion it will be easier to pass controversial anti-terrorist laws. Most European countries set terrorist threats as their priorities as far as safety policy is concerned. And these are the views of politicians that constitute the main issue of the political dispute along with the polarization of economical and social situation. Each

¹⁸Y. Stavrakakis, I. Andreadis, G. Katsambekis, *A new populism index at work: identifying populist candidates and parties in the contemporary Greek context*, „European Politics and Society”, November 29, 2016, p. 1-19.

¹⁹G. Andréani, *The ‘War on terror’: Good cause, wrong concept*, „Global Politics and Strategy”, 2004, vol.46/4, p.31-50.

²⁰S. Raghavan, L.Loveluck, K. Sieff, *Trump’s order to ban refugees and immigrants triggers fears across the globe*, „The Washington Post”, January 26, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/trumps-impending-bans-on-refugees-and-immigrants-triggers-fears-globally/2017/01/26/c698e67e-e33d-11e6-a419-eefe8eff0835_story.html (reading date: February 01, 2017).

tragic event determines the socio-political feeling making the authorities act in a specific way. Summing up, fears determine the actions of politicians and societies creating thus populist attitudes.

Reaction to terrorist attacks might be „a way towards populism”. A fine example of this is Marine Le Pen’s National Front, which succeeded in municipal elections in France, 2015. Its success was based on fears of terrorism, immigrants and bad economic condition of the country. The National Front became a threat which current political elites cannot ignore anymore. The right-winged populism can threaten democracy. It uses national and extreme slogans and criticizes capitalism thus gathering masses of voters. It uses growing uncertainty among the people who believe that life has become too complicated and they cannot overcome the crisis. The right-winged populism and radicalism is often considered a fad. But the examples of Le Pen and Geert Wilders – the leader of anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic Party for Freedom (PVV) – show that populists are becoming stronger and they will be present in politics for a longer period of time. The right-winged populism and radicalism may become a threat to the western political system and thus to western democracies²¹.

The ideological profile is getting muddied more often. This strategy makes the politics acceptable ideologically for both left and right-winged citizens. We can come to a conclusion, then, that it is very difficult to eradicate populism. It is going to be present one way or the other in the public sphere. What is more, populism is so flexible that it can adjust to any doctrine and political conditions. Its slogans are far from the truth and often they are just lies. Communication with the citizens becomes merely a use of stereotypes because those appeal to the imagination of the masses. Each politician tries to present himself/herself as the representative of the nation. Politicians put emphasis on problems and issues which whip up enthusiasm. They try to prove they are on the ordinary people’s side. They blur the line and do not glorify the elites not to lose popularity. Populism is a domain of media-democracy which facilitates using simple and effective, though emotion-based, solutions.

4. Polish Anti-terrorism Law, 10th June, 2016

This Law is the first of its kind in Poland. It was enacted before NATO Summit and World Youth Day held in Poland in 2016. The main aim of the

²¹ N. Gutteridge, *Europe’s right-wing populists to hold EU counter-summit on Trump’s first day as President*, „Express”, January 20, 2017; D. Aaronovitch, *Right-wing populists have no chance of power: From Ukip to Le Pen and Wilders, the supposed surge of the anti-establishment parties is being vastly overstated*, „The Times”, February 09, 2017, p. 31.

Law is increasing the effectiveness of Polish anti-terrorist system and, most of all, increasing the safety level of Polish citizens. It aims at improving coordination between security services and also facilitating their operation in case of terrorist attacks.

5. ABW (Internal Security Agency – ISA/ABW) and its new rights

The new Law gives ABW new possibilities. It enhances security service and turns ABW into a „Super Service”. According to the new Law, Head of ABW is the coordinator of anti-terrorist policy and is responsible for preventing terrorist attacks. Minister of the Interior and Administration is responsible for preparing for such events, reacting against them and ensuring there is enough resources for normal operation of the Agency. The innovation is the fact that Head of ABW is in charge of all the security services and he/she can coordinate their work. It might prove to be harmful and ineffective because those services compete with each other and that might cause chaos.

ABW plays a major role in fighting against terrorism; it coordinates the investigations.

Article 5.1. In order to perform the tasks referred to in Article 3 Paragraph 1 hereof, the Head of ABW coordinates the analytical and information Activities undertaken by the special services referred to in Article 11 of the Act of 24 May 2002 on the Internal Security Agency and the Intelligence Agency, as well as the exchange of information transferred by the Police, Border Guard, Government Protection Bureau, State Fire Department, Customs Service, General Inspector of Financial Information, General Inspector of Revenue Control, Military Gendarmerie and the Government Security Centre, regarding threats of a terrorist nature, as well as data about the persons referred to in Art 6 Paragraph 1, by collecting, processing and analyzing these data²².

CAT ABW (ISA’s AntiTerrorist Center) gained a better position by getting access to all databases of ABW. ABW will keep a record of people suspected of terrorism and will have access to data and information gathered in public institutions such as NFZ (National Health Service) or National Bank of Poland. This will allow the security services to access confidential information and keep a record of people suspected of terrorism.

²² *The Law of June 10, 2016 on anti-terrorist operations in Poland*, Article 5§1, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

Article 38.8. “Article 34a. 1. Within the remit of its competence, the ABW may, if it is necessary for the effective prevention of offences specified in Article 5 Paragraph 1 point 2, or for the detection or identification of perpetrators and obtaining of evidence, use the information processed by banks and which are a banking secret, as well as information on the agreements on securities accounts, agreements on money accounts, agreements on insurance policies, and other agreements referring to the trading in financial instruments, provision of payment services or agreements concluded with investment fund contributors, and in particular the data processed by entitled entities pertaining to persons who have concluded such agreements²³.

ABW will be able to keep foreigners under surveillance, including refugees. Head of ABW can keep foreigners under surveillance with no warrant up to 3 months.

Article 9.1. In order to recognise, prevent and combat offences of a terrorist nature, the Head of ABW may order the following covert activities to be undertaken, for a period no longer than three months, with regard to a person who is not a citizen of the Republic of Poland, and with regard to whom there is a fear of possible involvement in terrorist activities:

- 1) obtaining and recording the content of conversations by technical means, including with the use of telecommunication networks;
- 2) obtaining and recording the content of the image and sound of persons from premises, means of public transportation and other venues other than public spaces;
- 3) obtaining and recording the content of correspondence, including correspondence kept by means of electronic communication
- 4) obtaining and recording the data contained in IT data carriers, telecommunication end devices, as well as information and tele-information systems;
- 5) obtaining access and controlling the content of consignments²⁴.

Polish security services can monitor foreigners' phone calls up to 3 months with no warrant. They may also check their e-mails. They will also be able to block websites, ban public gatherings and mass events. The new Law also suspends the right to property in times of terrorist threats – security services will have the right to use private property (apartments, houses and cars). The

²³ *Ibidem*, Article 38§8, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

²⁴ *Ibidem*, Article 9§1, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

new Law also speaks of hotels, malls, churches and sports halls as of strategic objects which can be used by ABW.

The new Law allows to keep a person suspected of terrorism in custody up to 14 days (with the court's consent). Until recently it was only possible to keep a person in custody up to 48 hours, and the court had additional 24 hours to examine the case. If there were no charges for the person in custody, he/she had to be released – the new Law gives additional 14 days.

Article 26.2. In the case referred to in Paragraph 1, the court may, upon a motion of the prosecutor, apply the measure of remand custody for a period no longer than 14 days. The independent condition for remand custody is the justifiable demonstration of the commitment, attempt or preparation of an offence of a terrorist nature²⁵.

The authors of the new Law wanted to remove all obstacles while acting against terrorism and therefore introduced a regulation allowing house searches and detainment 24h a day, even between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.; before the new Law was passed this was impossible.

The new Law also allows Head of Ministry of the Interior and Administration to expel foreigners immediately if they pose a threat to the state. The expelled foreigner can lodge an appeal while remaining abroad.

Article 48.2. The Minister competent for internal affairs shall, upon a motion of the Commander in Chief of the Police, Head of the Internal Security Agency or the Head of the Army Counter-Intelligence Service, issue a decision on the expulsion from the territory of the Republic of Poland of an EU citizen, or family member who is not an EU citizen, with regard to whom it is feared that s/he may be involved in terrorist or espionage activities, or who is suspected of committing one of these offences. The decision referred to in Paragraph 1 is subject to immediate execution²⁶.

Additionally, mass events and public gatherings can be banned temporarily. This has to be done according to certain security levels and procedures in case of terrorist attacks.

Article 21.1. Upon the introduction of the third or fourth level of alert, the minister competent for internal affairs may, on his/her own initiative or

²⁵ *Ibidem*, Article 26§2, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

²⁶ *Ibidem*, Article 23§1, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

the initiative of the Head of ABW or the Commander in Chief of the Police, introduce a ban on public gatherings or mass events in the area or the facility subject to the level of alert, if such a measure is necessary for the protection of the lives and health of people or public safety²⁷.

The new Law allows drones to be shot down; also terrorists can be neutralized with the so-called „sniper shot”, which was not allowed by Polish law until recently. The police were supposed to warn the suspect by saying “Freeze!” before taking a shot; now, in a critical situation, they are not.

Article 48.2. As part of the counter-terrorist activities, should it be necessary to counteract the direct, unlawful, and sudden attack against the life or health of a person, and when the use of a firearm in a manner inflicting the least possible damage is insufficient, and counteracting such an attack in any other manner is impossible, it is admissible, taking into account all the circumstances of the event of a terrorist nature and all possibilities of counter-terrorist activities, to use a firearm against the person committing the attack, which may result in the death or the immediate threat to this person’s life or health. Such use shall be referred to henceforth as „special use of a weapon”²⁸.

Of course, even if a police officer saves somebody’s life, there is the perspective of a long process of explaining whether the use of weapon was justified or not. Another problem is identifying the perpetrator, because very often it is not until that „sniper shot” when the person is correctly identified as a terrorist, and the shot is supposed to prevent a tragedy. Who can tell that there was a terrorist attack in the first place? Most often it is the job of a court, after the fact.

The new Law also introduces amnesty for the people who will inform the security services about a planned attack and decide to cooperate with ABW. Pre-paid telephone SIM cards, which were considered „anonymous” until recently, will have to be registered. To buy them you need to show an ID or, if you are underage, ask your parents to buy them for you.

Article 43. The following changes are introduced to the Act of 16 July 2004 – Telecommunication Act (Journal of Laws of 2014, item 243, with later amendments²¹):

²⁷ *Ibidem*, Article 21§1, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

²⁸ *Ibidem*, Article 48§2, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

- 1) after Article 60a, Article 60b is added in the following wording:
 “Article 60b. 1. The subscriber, with the exclusion of the subscriber using the publically available telephone services provided by means of a public phone or by dialing the access number to the network of the services provider, provides the service provider with at least the following data:
- 1) in case the subscriber is a natural person:
 - a) name and surname,
 - b) PESEL number, should the subscriber have one, or the name, series number and the number of the document confirming the person’s identity and, in the case of a foreigner who is not a citizen of a member state or of the Swiss Confederation – the passport number or number of the residence card²⁹

Associating each telephone number in Poland with a certain subscriber’s name was a necessity, according to the current authorities. However, in a very short time, the Internet was full of ads offering already registered SIM cards for sale. The Anti-terrorist Law does not prohibit selling or buying registered SIM cards, so it is legal. Legislators did not foresee that the Law can be omitted. The opponents of the new Law argued it is a threat to citizens’ privacy and might be a tool for illegal surveillance. They also said that real terrorists will have no trouble finding people who could register SIM cards for them.

Shortly after enacting the new Law, on the Ministry of the Interior and Administration website appeared an announcement saying that the pre-paid SIM card regulation was a success. The statistics were supposed to be a proof that the number of calls from supposed bombers was significantly reduced and thanks to that the security services could deal with serious problems.

Therefore, it is debatable whether the Anti-terrorist Law is effective or not. The regulation on registering pre-paid SIM cards is not a Polish invention, though. It is present in some European countries as well, e.g. Germany in order to avoid the risk of anonymity.

6. The faults of Anti-terrorist Law

The aim of the Law is making the state strong against modern threats. Therefore, regulations should be effective and allowing quick operation. But in the very initial phase of the bill some of the regulations were ambiguous. Many NGOs that deal with citizens’ rights protested against the bill. Amnesty International said that the bill was harmful to privacy of ordinary people. Po-

²⁹ *Ibidem*, Article 43§1, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

land tops the list of countries in which security services have most privileges. Draginja Nadaždin, head of Amnesty International Poland, says that safety measures in Poland limit people's freedom of speech and act against the rules of law; often security services are not subject to control³⁰. Other organizations, which also analyzed the laws on security services, confirm this information, for instance: Panoptikon Foundation – they believe that the new Law is not an answer to the question of terrorism. They also think that current regulations harm mainly ethnic and religious minorities³¹.

Piotr Niemczyk, former UOP (Office for State Protection) agent, says that current regulations might limit civil liberties so much that it can turn against anti-terrorism actions. They were officially questioned by The United Nations Human Rights Committee which said they were against The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and ratified by Poland in the communist era³².

The Law was also strongly criticized by a Board of Ministry of Digital Affairs. The experts say that ABW agents have too much access to foreigners' e-mails and phone calls. They emphasize the lack of effective way to make the citizens register pre-paid SIM cards. AIS's access to NHS database is also debatable³³.

Public debates resulted in many questions about deleting the databases. Such personal information as fingerprints, face images, DNA profiles, political views, ethnic background, religious beliefs, labor unions membership, health condition, addictions or sexual preferences of foreigners are supposed to be kept undeleted³⁴.

³⁰ *Poland: Law Anti-Terror threat to human rights*, [in:] <https://amnesty.org/pl/polska-ustawa-antyterrorystyczna-zagrozeniem-dla-praw-czlowieka> (reading date: December 20, 2016).

³¹ *A Surveillance Act and counterterrorism – check how they work*, [in:] <https://panoptikon.org/wiadomosc/ustawa-inwigilacyjna-i-antyterrorystyczna-sprawdzamy-jak-dzialaja> (reading date: October 14, 2016).

³² *The law, which does not improve security* [in:] <http://www.institutobywatelski.pl/25597/komentarze/polityka-komentarze/ustawa-ktora-nie-poprawi-bezpieczenstwa> (reading date: November 22, 2016).

³³ *What is the law „anti-terrorist”?* [in:] <https://panoptikon.org/wiadomosc/czego-dotyczy-ustawa-antyterrorystyczna>, (reading date: November 22, 2016).

³⁴ *Commissioner for Human Rights complains anti-terrorism law to Constitutional Tribunal*, [in:] <https://www.rpo.gov.pl/pl/content/rzecznik-praw-obywatelskich-skar%C5%BCy-ustaw%C4%99-antyterrorystyczn%C4%85-do-trybuna%C5%82u-konstytucyjnego>, (reading date October 10, 2016).

7. Is the Anti-terrorist Law a threat to democracy?

What is the problem with the Law, then? Does it really limit civil liberties and rights? It appears to be a clearly constitutional issue. While reading the Law, we can learn about the fact that the state of emergency can be declared by head of an intelligence agency without any scrutiny on behalf of democratic mechanisms.

Article 21. 1. Upon the introduction of the third or fourth level of alert, the minister competent for internal affairs may, on his/her own initiative or the initiative of the Head of ABW or the Commander in Chief of the Police, introduce a ban on public gatherings or mass events in the area or the facility subject to the level of alert, if such a measure is necessary for the protection of the lives and health of people or public safety³⁵.

In other words, decisions of head of ABW are completely unauthorized. It can be stated, then, that the Law holds an article which stands against the Constitution and it allows declaring the state of emergency through back door. Whether this happens or not is an open question. Is the above mentioned enough not to trust the government or maybe there is no reason to do so? Of course, the state of emergency is a last resort tool. It was declared in France, due to terrorist attacks, in November, 2015. It gives the authorities additional rights to search people, introduce no-go zones and search houses also during the night³⁶.

French authorities say that the state of emergency helped in fighting against Jihad terrorists. In this context, the Polish Anti-terrorist Law might become useful. The problem is that nobody can be sure as to what extent this Law is going to be used because there are no regulations which describe the limits of power exercised by the ruling party.

Since 1989 there has been a heated debate in Poland as to what democracy really is. The ruling party claims that democracy is when majority choose the ruling party and then the ruling party introduces changes not caring about the society's will. The problem is that Polish democracy, which is often juxtaposed with political systems present in Russia, Belarus or Turkey, is often only present at the ballot box or during the election campaign. The period of time between elections is ignored. However, democracy is not only about ruling

³⁵ *Ibidem*, Article 21§1, available at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20160000904>, (reading date: October 10, 2016).

³⁶ J.J. Gandini, 'A spider's web across the nation'; Towards a permanent state of emergency, „Le Monde Diplomatique”, January 01, 2016.

in the name of majority; it is, above all, about limiting any acts of lawlessness and protecting minorities.

8. Conclusion

A certain kind of paradigm evolution of political elites can be observed in Europe. It is connected with governmental crisis and the relation between the authorities and the citizens. The uncertainty of middle-class citizens and their fear that the current political, economic and social order will break because of a terrorist attack or a wave of immigrants is also important. The enormity of doubt caused by economic changes results in the need of simple, populist recipes.

The ruling party, in order to gain and maintain power, must rebuild the relationship with the citizens. There is no return to *status quo* because certain patterns (both in economy and in politics) have expired. Do modern, democratic citizens of Europe need populist governments? The answer to this question lies in social behaviors, especially during election campaigns in which politicians present their fresh and pragmatic look. When the elections are over, though, it appears that their faces were covered with masks. This phenomenon calls for the need of introducing or intensifying citizenship education and safety education. The remedy for populist slogans is knowledge; it is also an effective tool in understanding the complex socio-political events.

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Public sentiment after the terrorist attacks and their impact on the attitudes on Polish people

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Abstract

Terrorism occurs in all parts of the world although most incidents occur in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. Terror is first of all the terror of the next attack. Killing dozens or hundreds of people is not the ultimate goal of terrorism. These events achieve a broader goal of creating division, fear, and escalating racist and xenophobic trends. Populist, far-right groups may well fuel more hatred. What if terrorism contributes to political and social disruption, which in turn leads to even more grievances that inspire further campaigns of political violence? From Denmark to the Netherlands to Poland, a new wave of rightwing parties has emerged over the past decade-and-a-half, and they are casting a much wider net than Jean-Marie Le Pen ever attempted to. And by deftly appealing to fear, nostalgia and resentment of elites, they are rapidly broadening their base. Such organisations, just like other populist and anti-immigrant parties gaining support in the polls across Europe, have been quick to make political capital from the attacks, citing them as proof that all their fears about Islamism were true.

The aim of the thesis is to discuss recent acts of terrorism in Europe in 2015-2016 and their influence on both the social attitude and the political decisions of the ruling elites in Europe. Therefore, the thesis is trying to answer the question whether the rise of a terrorist threat entails an increased support for radical, populist and nationalist movements in Poland.

The questions asked to the two groups of people representing two opposing social groups, were quite a challenge. Both groups, despite being different from each other, take part in an ongoing public discussion about what could be done to limit the terrorists threat.

The threat of terrorism in Poland is more serious now than in the previous years. It is worth examining how society perceives the problem of terrorism and whether the anxiety connected with it could have any impact on the shape of the political scene. Statistical data show that the sense of terrorist threat in society has been politicised and the differences between particular political circles run along the ideological divisions.

An important field of research, picturing social attitudes is an analysis of the society in the perspective of sociodemographic divisions.

Having to verify some correlations between terroristic attacks and an increase in the hostility towards refugees, it is worth confronting those tragic events with the data illustrating the current attitudes in society.

Keywords

Terrorism, Escalation, Radicalization, Populism, Poland

1. Introduction

Terrorism has been evolving as a political and religious tactic for hundreds of years. Initially, terrorist acts were on a local scale and involved a small number of people. As time went by, capabilities grew and terrorist acts became more violent, destructive and global. Terrorism is a mean to achieve political goals through the use of violence, force and fear. Thus, it is an intentional use of terror, which affects far more than just direct victims¹.

2. Methodological aspects of the social sense of threat

The aim of the thesis is to discuss recent acts of terrorism in Europe in 2015-2016 and their influence on both the social attitude and the political decisions of the ruling elites in Europe. Therefore, the thesis is trying to answer the question whether the rise of a terrorist threat entails an increased support for radical, populist and nationalist movements in Poland. The thesis is also trying to depict the mood in the Polish society regarding the tragic events that occurred in Europe. In Poland, at the turn of 2016 and 2017 two thirds of the respondents (67%) equated the wave of immigration with a terrorist threat². Therefore, it is worth analyzing how public opinion sees a connection between a mass immigration and terrorist attacks. The commentators, publicists, politicians and Polish society are divided on this matter. What the thesis will also attempt to do is to confront the world of academics and the world of ordinary citizens to find differences in how terrorist sources and threats and the ways of dealing with them are perceived by the two social groups.

The choice of Polish society as the subject matter stems from a few reasons. Firstly, after fifty years under the communist rule, Polish people appreciate the benefits of being the EU member. Poland has not yet completely eradicated the stigma of communism, which is still for some of the Polish citizens, including the ruling elites, a traumatic experience. Secondly, Poland is an intriguing field of study for social mood, especially when taken into consideration that Poland is regarded as a leader in East-central Europe.

Despite its difficult history, Poland has not experienced a trauma of recent terrorist attacks. The country is not situated in the heart of the mainstream European matters. However, it does undertake such challenges as hosting some international events. In the time of our research, these were the NATO

¹ B. Hoffman, *The Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, „The Atlantic Monthly”, 2003, vol. 291/5, s. 6, [in:] www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/2005/RAND_RP1187.pdf (reading date August 12, 2010).

² *The attitude of Poles to accept refugees*, [in:] http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2017/K_001_17.PDF (reading date: December 12, 2016).

Summit in Warsaw on the 8th-9th of July and World Youth Day in Cracow, which took place on the 26th-31st of July. What also needs to be mentioned is an antiterrorist act passed in Poland on the 10th of June, which was a reaction to the increasing terrorist threat in the Western European countries³.

The two concepts, which are the key to defining and analyzing a relation between the threats and the social attitude are social determinism and social indeterminism. The first concept claims that political parties and the government reflect social divisions. In other words, decisions taken by the government are related to the changes which take place in society⁴. The change on the level of the governing group is linked to the social changes. Thus, the presence of a particular party in a country and the popularity of political slogans can be explained in the context of the given social groups, whose interests are represented by this party.

At present, it seems that the prevailing social mood approves of antiterrorist movement, even at the cost of some civil liberties. The acceptance of the limited social liberties occurs when safety is threatened. Taking into consideration social anxiety, which is a natural reaction to the recent terrorist attacks, it can be assumed that many governments will find it easy to enforce antiterrorist laws⁵. Most European countries have put this agenda as their top priority when it comes to social security.

The second concept, social indeterminism, says that a political system and the ruling parties which it comprises, are independent from the social background. They create the social attitude, rather than are influenced by it⁶. Therefore, the political system, which is governed by its own independent rules, reflects the occurrences happening on the level of the ruling elite. These occurrences may act as an inspiration or a catalyst for various dynamics of change, may contribute to social stability or an increase in social tensions. In the realm of security policy, there are also cases, when decisions are taken independently of the situation, creating new circumstances, whose outcome is difficult to predict.

Naturally, the two mentioned theoretical approaches concerning the understanding of the interaction between a political system and society, complement each other. Nevertheless, the approach which will prove to be predominant in this paper is social determinism. It explains the thesis, that terrorist acts

³M. Górka, *Freedom or Security? Contribution to the Discussion on the Example of the Law on Anti-terrorist Operations of 10 June 2016*, „e-Politikon”, 2016, vol. 19, p.49-79.

⁴S.M. Lipset, S. Rokkan, *Party systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives*, New York, 1967, p.15.

⁵O.S. Kerr, *Internet Surveillance Law after the USA Patriot Act: The Big Brother that Isn't*, „Northwestern University Law Review”, 2003, vol. 97/2, p. 607-610.

⁶G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems*, Cambridge 1976, p. 179-181.

influence society and its representatives in the government. Political parties, in order to win and maintain the power, need to cater to the social mood. In the context of a terrorist threat, this occurrence is represented by any display of the government's firmness and determination to fight terrorism, even at the cost of some civil liberties.

3. Asylum policy

A popular question appearing in the mass media particularly after terrorist attacks, is whether Europe would be able to defend itself. When they say Europe, observers, publicists, and also politicians mean the European Union and its European values on which this institution is founded on. The answer depends on many factors. In Europe, there are discernible centrifugal tendencies, for instance some extremist as well as separatist movements⁷. Moreover, many outside players, such as Russia and in some way the United States, have been trying to weaken the European project for political and economic reasons. It is not in their interest to have strong players in Europe, they prefer to have bilateral relationship with other countries, for example the United States with Great Britain or Germany. Therefore, there are many temptations and pressures from the outside, but not all of them are clearly noticeable or transparent. For a long period of time, internal issues circled around a pragmatic dispute about the crisis in the euro zone. It turned out, however, that the truly important dispute is the one about values. It arose because of the immigration crisis, which have been escalating for many years. Yet, when such a powerful country in the European Union as Germany faced this particular problem, there appeared a necessity to create more serious and optimal policies with regards to immigration. Angela Merkel, in her dramatic speech, put everything at stake saying that the European dream is not a pragmatic alliance, but it is based on some values, which cannot be negotiated. Since then, a discussion about the meaning of the values, which are fundamental to the European Union has started⁸.

It is a complex problem, because the discussion on the approach towards refugees entails two clashing standpoints: shall they be taken in or not? What makes this issue even more complicated is that some people link it to terror-

⁷ B. Martinovic, M. Verkuyten, J. Weesie, *Group identity, ethnic separatism and multiple out-groups: The Basque case*, „Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology”, 2011, vol.21/1, p. 28-40.

⁸ A. Troianovski, *Populist Tide Puts Angela Merkel on the Defensive; Trump victory and anti-immigrant sentiment across Europe boost opponents of German chancellor and her refugee policy*, „Wall Street Journal”, 18 November 2016.

ism. The question is whether these two problems should be treated separately or not? There is a strong conviction within society and the political elite that there is a connection between a wave of refugees and a terrorist threat.

Some groups in Poland, which point at a bit exaggerated picture of the terrorism threat, often indicate the reports published the American government every year about terrorist attacks around the world. In 2014 there were a few thousands of such attacks, with thirty-three thousand people were killed in them. The people responsible for them are predominantly members of different radical Muslim movements, originating in countries such as Nigeria, Somalia, Pakistan, Afghanistan or Syria. It is highlighted that it is not a civilizational war, but it is a war waged by fanatics against the whole world, not just Europe⁹.

The opponents of this viewpoint claim, that there is a close correlation between the mass immigration from the Muslim countries and a potential possibility of further attacks¹⁰. In a large assemblage of people, it is much easier to smuggle and hide extremists and recruit them among the newcomers. All these factors increase the likelihood of terrorist attacks.

The topic which ignites a lot of emotions and inflames discussions both in the European Union headquarters and within the EU members is the refugee policy. The attacks which were carried out by refugees for some serve as proof that the people who come to the European Union countries may be a threat. On the other hand, others points out that many terrorists came to Europe when they were children and are belong to the second or even third generation of refugees and their views became radicalized in Europe resulting from them not having another alternative or possibility wanting to fit in in the new environment¹¹.

Further terrorist attacks, which were orchestrated by people belonging to immigrant communities, may provide arguments for both parties of the dispute. The greater the reluctance towards the refugees in Europe is, the bigger favour is given to the Islamic State. It willingly attracts people who feel cast away by society, especially by the communities they live in. Integration plays a key role in this matter. The quicker these people become a part of the society they live in, the smaller is their desire to help organizing terrorist attacks and become more radical in their views. It is worth mentioning that not only refugees tend to radicalize. It also happens to people who are excluded from

⁹ *Country Reports on Terrorism 2014*, [in:] <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/239631.pdf> (reading date: December 15, 2016).

¹⁰ R. Kim, *Do not scare immigrants!*, „Newsweek”, 26 May 2015.

¹¹ E.D. Gould, E. F. Klor, *The Long-run Effect of 9/11: Terrorism, Backlash, and the Assimilation of Muslim Immigrants in the West*, „The Economic Journal”, 2016, Vol. 126/597, p. 2064-2114.

society for economic or political reasons. Some terrorist attacks in Europe have been carried out by such individuals. Anders Breivik from Norway is one of them.

Amongst those responsible for terrorist attacks in Paris, both in the editorial office of the weekly Charlie Hebdo as well as in the music club in Bataclan and a few nearby cafés and restaurants, were mainly French citizens, born and raised in France, whose parents or grandparents immigrated to Europe. These people very often feel eliminated. In last few decades, there have been a few protests in the suburbs. In time, these clashes with the police spun off into what we call radicalization. Radicalization is additionally fuelled by the economic crisis in Europe and the high unemployment, particularly among young people who have not entered the labour market yet. Radicalisation is also strengthened by the activity of the Islamic State, which can serve as an inspiration for many people. It is also important is that the Islamic State widely uses modern technologies, such as social media, video recordings and others¹².

This all makes some people likely to radicalise their set of beliefs. Dissatisfaction with one's life, potentials and possibilities to develop makes it easy for terrorist organisations to recruit new members. Those recruits use this opportunity and do something that influences their lives and the whole society.

In 2013 INTERPOL estimated that around five thousand people with European citizenship fight for ISIS. Surely, some of them were killed while fighting, but the European services say that some of the radicalised soldiers are going to be back. It is said that in 2015 and 2016 the Islamic State was in defensive. As a result, some of the terrorists who are now abroad may use their European Union passports to come back to the European countries they used to live in. The question is how to pinpoint them when they are crossing the European Union border. For instance, Kouachi brothers, who are behind the attack in the weekly Charlie Hebdo, were trained in Yemen. It was not the Islamic State, but a place where terrorist organisations operate. Then, they managed to get to the European Union¹³.

¹² S. Mahood, H. Rane, *Islamist narratives in ISIS recruitment propaganda*, „The Journal of International Communication”, 20 December 2016, p.1-21.

¹³ K. Bennhold; E. Schmitt, *Paris attacks expose flaws in French surveillance: Lapses and turf issues derailed original attempt to track radical brothers*, „International New York Times”, 19 February 2015, p.4.

4. Proportions in the scope of antiterrorist operations

When it comes to the problem of security, it is worth looking at what happened in the USA after 9/11 to avoid the mistakes made by the Bush and Obama administration. It is a great challenge which Europe has to face. In his landmark speech given on 13th of November 2013 right after the attack in Paris, Francois Hollande announced some changes which are to affect even the constitution. The president of France in a solemn and determined way proclaimed that the state of emergency would be prolonged for an unspecified time in the future. In reality, it meant that civil liberties were limited and the executive authority was given greater power to secure safety at the cost of personal freedom. This decision resulted in an expansion of policing forces and judicial power to approximately 8.5 thousand people, disregarding the costs it incurred. In France, because of a large budget deficit, it may come as a surprise. The changes also affected the constitution, particularly clauses 16 and 36, which give the president special powers in the state of emergency. Hollande thought that it was not enough and that he demanded special powers. Another idea which was suggested was to revoke French citizenship from those, whom the executive power would think appropriate¹⁴.

Putting emotions aside, emotions which are understandable given the tragedy that affected the French, some countries, for instance Poland, may think these actions irrational. Of course, we are given a privilege of a geographical distance and emotional perspective to analyse the matters more objectively. Terrorist attacks can reoccur in other places, therefore we must be very careful in assessing the events in France. What really happened was that a few young men carried out terrorist attacks to assassinate with the help of modern communication tools. It was just a handful of people, but the aftermath of the attacks affected the entire population of France, which is 60 million of people. The Muslims, whom are to be automatically blamed, depending on different statistics live between 4 and 6 million of Muslims, depending which source we look at, were used as a scapegoat¹⁵.

Following this path, one should consider the question of the citizenships of the attackers. Were they Belgian or French? The problem we come across is not easy to explain or classify. If the attackers were fully-fledged citizens, then another question appears. What is wrong with the assimilation or social integration? What does it look like in western countries and why does it result

¹⁴ S. Erlanger, *After Paris attack, safety vs. liberties: Rattled countries tilt toward bolder security, starting rights debate*, „International New York Times”, 21 November 2015, p. 4.

¹⁵ M. Tepfenhart, *Right-wing Extremists in Europe*, „Comparative Civilizations Review”, 2001, vol.65, p. 57-72.

in terrorist threat? Do terrorist attacks fulfil some needs of a specific group of people?

Having posed these questions, a whole range of answers started to be formulated after the Cherie Hebdo attacks in January 2015. The attacks on 13th of November 2005 put the January attacks in a completely different light, raising the issue which the French call „the centre of the suburbs”. It is a phenomenon typical for large European cities. In 2005, we experienced street riots in Great Britain, Sweden or France. These events serve as a background for a discussion, which in fact is pointless. The language used in this discussion was created to explain different issues. The European elites argue over whether that the problem should be dealt with by the left or the right, and in the meantime the actual problems of people living in the suburbs are not resolved. These problems include exclusion, unemployment and a lack of social integration. They affect poor people and are not dependant on culture, but on common economic factors¹⁶.

It should be stated that Muslims also die in terrorist attacks, and this is really the biggest misunderstanding. Statistics show that in France there are more Muslims serving in the police, army or other kinds of public services than in ISIS¹⁷. Therefore, we should ask ourselves the questions who are the Muslims in Western Europe? Like the Catholic community in Poland, which is not homogenous, the Muslim community is also quite diverse. It comprises of people who consider themselves Catholic liberals and of those who have more conservative beliefs. Thus, not taking this factor into consideration would be unjust for the Muslim case.

Another question worth asking is whether Europe has changed after the attacks or has it just got used to them? The attack in Germany was connected to Islamic fundamentalism, which might introduce a new perspective to the European war on terror. This war has been going on for long and it seems it will continue for much longer. The German attacks were a tragic reminder that there is no respite from terrorism, that more attacks may yet to come and Europe is not as safe as we may think.

Surely, attacking the symbol of a religious holiday, family peace and holiday time shocked many people. It became a trigger for the European Union to introduce new safety regulations. The European Commission proposed an

¹⁶ M. Verkuyten, B. Martinovic, Immigrants' National Identification: Meanings, Determinants, and Consequences, „Social Issues and Policy Review”, 2012, Vol. 6/1, p. 82–112; L. Berger, *Local, National and Global Islam: Religious Guidance and European Muslim Public Opinion on Political Radicalism and Social Conservatism*, „West European Politics”, 2016, vol. 39/2, p. 205-228.

¹⁷ G. Jackowska, *France: the army and police infected jihad*, [in:] <https://euroislam.pl/francja-armia-i-policja-zakazone-dzihadem> (reading date: December 16, 2016).

entire series of regulations – from a better exchange of information to restrictions in arm trading.

The European elites are suggesting further ideas on how to control money flow and cash exchange in order to make financing criminal or terrorism activities more difficult. These changes were proposed in February 2017 and, quite interestingly, they coincided the Berlin attacks, which served as one more reason to take action. These regulations are less controversial, they simply introduce a greater control over cash handling and over electronic trading platforms for exchanging currencies, or the so called pre-paid cards. Pre-paid cards allow transferring money without having a bank account. Money is transferred to the card and its owner can use it. It is mainly used by parents to give money to their children when, for example, they go on holiday, or by employers to grant holiday bonuses to their employees. These pre-paid cards are, indeed, very useful. People who do not have a bank account can use them to do online shopping or do money transfers, when cash handling can be problematic. However, without a bank account is impossible to keep the track of the transactions or identify a person who makes them. This gives a lot of worries to the European Commission. That is why they proposed that each transaction over 150 euro will require presenting an identity card¹⁸.

All of the above are just administrative attempts to make access to arms, its financing and monitoring more difficult. Undoubtedly, they are helpful, but the problem runs deeper. Civil liberty organisations point out that tightening the regulations on pre-paid cards is going to result in the limitation of personal freedom, which will affect ordinary citizens, the ones who do not plan any terrorist attacks. In the end, it is an ordinary citizen who may encounter problems while making money transfers and using pre-paid cards.

5. The impact of terrorist threats on politics in Europe

Without a doubt, the threat of terrorism has a great political influence on Europe. In nearly all political elections, the topic of safety and terrorism is present. These issues are also crucial in the upcoming political debates. In the researched period of 2015 and 2016 there has been an increase in the popularity of the populist and radical groups, especially in Germany, France and the Netherlands. Populist parties are fighting for power. In the Netherlands, Geert Wilders's party is leading in the polls, in France Marie La Pen

¹⁸D. Shreeja, *European Commission details plan to curb terrorism financing*, „SNL European Financials Daily”, 8 February 2016.

is thought to surely enter the second round of the presidential elections¹⁹. In Germany the Alternative for Germany, after being quite successful in local elections, is planning to repeat the same success in national elections. In the latest Bundestag elections, they missed crossing the threshold by as little as 0.2 %. Currently it is believed that they will not have any problems with reaching the desired threshold. There is even a notion that The National Democratic Party of Germany is going to become the third most powerful party in the parliament²⁰.

Terrorist threat will surely leave a mark not only on politics of particular countries but it will also determine the European Union politics. At the turn of 2016 and 2017, the Slovak presidency finishes and the Maltese presidency begins. Malta may be a small country, but it is extremely interested in the immigration matters. This is because it is a transition point for those who migrate from North Africa to Italy. Hence, the matters of safety have been and will remain crucial in the EU politics. On a side note, it is worth wondering whether the overall EU politics is affected depending on what country is currently the president.

Malta is a significant example, because it belongs to the group of countries whose constitution guarantees their neutrality. Therefore surely, Malta will be the voice of those countries which are concerned about the integrity over safety and defence in the EU in the future. Surely, Malta will not block those matters, but it will definitely make sure that the interests of countries like Austria, Sweden and itself to be recognized²¹.

However, after the recent terrorist attacks, a tough and determined attitude of political leaders towards the terrorist threat is understandable. What also plays an important role is the increasing popularity of the far right, Marine Le Pen and the National Front. Controversial and emotional speeches are a normal part of the election campaigns²². This can explain Sarkozy's reaction

¹⁹ *At a summit in Germany, nationalism goes international*, „The Economist”, 24 January 2017 [in:] <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21715550-marine-le-pen-geert-wilders-and-other-european-populists-try-make-common-cause-summit> (reading date: December 17, 2016).

²⁰ L. Corrias, *Populism in a Constitutional Key: Constituent Power, Popular Sovereignty and Constitutional Identity*, „European Constitutional Law Review”, 2016, vol. 12/1, p.6-26.

²¹ J. Dempsey, *EU and NATO vie to set trans-Atlantic agenda*, „International Herald Tribune”, 19 February 2005, p.1; F. Fabbrini, *Austerity, the European Council, and the Institutional Future of the European Union: A Proposal to Strengthen the Presidency of the European Council*, „Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies”, 2015, vol.22/2, p.269-334; *Malta : Minister Abela reaffirms Malta's political commitment to security and stability in the Mediterranean*, „MENA Report”, 16 November 2016.

²² C. Liphshiz, *'Trump effect' for Europe's far right?*, „Washington Jewish Week”, 24 November 2016, p.1,15,17; J. Magnay, *French PM tips Le Pen victory*, „Weekend Australian”, 19 November 2016, p.12.

and his strong words, which strived to surpass even French Prime Minister Manuel Valls's fierce rhetoric. The latter went as far as talking about obliterating the opponents. The escalation of the emotionally-charged language is what is necessary in the election campaign. In other words, there is no need to change the constitution, but such rhetoric is necessary to make it sound like „a slam of a fist on the table”²³.

A term often used during public debates is „the union of safety”, which turns out to be a very complex process, often with a wide range of meanings. First of all, the term relates to protection against terrorism or more severe crimes. Mainly, it means restriction with regards to money laundering activities, an easier access to citizens' personal information and a guarantee that the attacks in Paris, Brussels and Berlin will not happen again.

Secondly, the other term which is widely used is „the union of defence”, which entails tough defence measures. This concept is mainly promoted by France and Germany, as the next step towards further integration after Brexit. „The union of defence” aims at improving the military cooperation. In 2016 the main goal was to improve the coordination of the EU's military missions and the administrative procedures. A joint purchase of equipment is also on the agenda²⁴.

How will the other countries and the European Union react to such restrictions? It is often difficult to see the internal political conditioning in other countries. Observing the reaction of Francois Hollande it is worth explaining the wider context of the situation. The context is that a weak president was fighting for the re-election in 2017. On the first of December 2016 Francois Hollande announced in his proclamation that he would run for the re-election in the presidential elections planned for 23rd of April and 7th of May. In the latest polls before the disclosure of this decision he was reaching support of under 10%. He became the first president in the post war France who did not run for the re-election²⁵.

Currently, the EU is trying to reinvent itself and, as much as it is possible, to encourage the member countries to exchange information and create a system for gathering and processing data. The aim of this is to identify someone who is leaving, for instance, Greece or Bulgaria and going to Turkey, but had been in Syria or Iraq before. Without this information, it will not be pos-

²³ J. Lichfield, *Police across Europe set to get greater powers*, „The Independent”, 20 November 2015, p. 14.

²⁴ O.G. Mosoiu, *Common Security and Defence Policy – General frame work of European Common Security and Defence Manifestation*, „Science & Military Journal”, 2015, vol.10/1, p.56-60.

²⁵ A.S. Chassany, *Hollande the unifier leaves Socialists in disarray: France: Elysee exit*, „Financial Times”, 03 December 2016, p.4.

sible to establish whether such an individual, who is on their way to France, Sweden or Germany, has good or bad intentions.

On the other hand, secret services share their confidential information unwillingly. Confidentiality is the main principle of their functioning. Here appears a problem of the mentality of these services, and also the character of their activities. Some of them, to work and protect efficiently, need to keep their secrets, because openness would impair the operations²⁶.

In 2008 and 2009, when the crisis in the Eurozone began, it was possible to see papers headlines such as “we created the common currency too fast” without establishing any mechanisms which could held during the crisis. After that the famous two-packs or six-packs, which were a special sets of regulations, which were supposed to improve the situation in the Eurozone, were adopted. Nowadays, one can hear analogical remarks saying that the Schengen Area was created too quickly without a possibility to control some of the matters, without any cooperation with protection of borders or control over the flow of people through them.

The lack of the mentioned mechanisms was a result of the resistance of the EU members, which were reluctant to waive their sovereignty for the sake of Brussels. Ironically, now some of the members are calling for an improvement of the cooperation within the EU. On the other hand, there are countries which want to retrieve the powers they lost to the EU. Because of this, many aspects of the European integration are open to questions.

When it comes to creating the European Union secret services, it is very doubtful that the members will agree to something more than a consultancy institutions, perhaps an agency which could improve the flow of information. The entire Europol is a supportive and consulting unit, in the same way as for a long time Frontex was not a border control service but just an advisory consulting centre. Currently, Frontex is becoming border control police, an event which has caused a lot of resistance from different countries²⁷.

Even now, during the transformation process into an union agency (previously it was an intergovernmental structure), Europol serves practically to exchange information. Officials (mainly policemen) serve to improve coordination between particular services of member countries. Many experts point out that Europol, because of the lack of other institutions, was supposed to support the police forces²⁸. The cooperation was supposed to help in break-

²⁶ A. Wagner, *Intelligence for Counter Terrorism: Technology and Methods*, „Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism”, 2007, Vol. 2/2, p. 48-61.

²⁷ S. Wolff; A. Schout, *Frontex as Agency: More of the Same?*, „Perspectives on European Politics and Society”, 2013, vol.14/3, p. 305-324.

²⁸ J. Jansson, *Building resilience, demolishing accountability? The role of Europol in counter-terrorism*, „Policing and Society”, June 2016, p.1-16.

ing cross-border gangs, struggles with smuggling and searching for people who committed a crime in one country and escaped to another one. Yet, the question is whether this single institution is able to deal with a challenge of fighting against terrorism?

There are some pros and cons of making use of an already established organisation and its existing structures, which should be just extended. It would be more difficult to build up the agency from scratch, because it would have to be fitted to the EU structure. The question is whether the EU members will agree to such a solution? The member countries are unwilling to give away these prerogatives to Brussels. Some countries claim that, particularly in these areas, there should be more cooperation, stressing the fact that the cooperation, in fact, does not exist, so its extension would not be a big operation. It must be remembered that hunting down terrorists like those who prepared the Berlin attack on 19th December 2016, is extremely difficult. If a terrorist does not cooperate with anyone and the attack is not coordinated on a high level, it means there was no e-mail correspondence, or any other form of contact. Such terrorists, called "lone wolves" are the most difficult to be tracked down and caught²⁹.

6. Scholar community vs. ordinary people against a terrorist threat in Poland

The questions asked to the two groups of people representing two opposing social groups, were quite a challenge. Both groups, despite being different from each other, take part in an ongoing public discussion about what could be done to limit the terrorists threat.

Are the worlds of experts, scientists and academic, the so called intellectual elites and of common citizens speaking with one voice? Did the elites shut themselves off or not? A popular statement often repeated across the EU, is that the so called "euro elites" alienate themselves and have no relation with ordinary communities. Because of this, any Eurosceptic thesis come upon a breeding ground.

A group of respondents, casually keeping up to date with political events, is not interested in the attacks in the Middle East (28.4%). On the other hand, the terrorist attacks that happened in Europe were very important and symbolic to them (78.3%). Another important issue was a wave of female rapes (65,5%) which happened midyear in 2016 (65,5%). Very often, when

²⁹ G. Michael, *Counterinsurgency and Lone Wolf Terrorism*, „Terrorism and Political Violence”, 2014, vol.26/1, p. 45-57.

answering the questions, they used the term “civilisation war”. The key factors for them were religious and cultural differences (81,2 %). It was pointed out that religious denomination lies at the basis of terrorism. Another recurring belief was that the German chancellor Angela Merkel is to be blamed for irresponsible immigration policy and openly encouraging immigrants to come to Europe (54,3%). The respondents also put the blame on Polish politicians who have been encouraging multi-cultural attitudes in society for years (47,8%).

On the other hand, the attitude of the scholar community, representing scientific, humanistic and social circles, shows a broader understanding of terrorist threat, both in a historical and geographical context. The problem of an unstable situation in the Middle East, which appears to be a Gordian knot nowadays, was often mentioned (71,7%). The fact that there were significantly more hesitations and fewer assertive, unambiguous and clear formulas how to solve the problem being stated by the scientific community, is very characteristic. Additional questions, relating to the further scenarios were formulated. (68,2%). It can be supposed that this particular social group is considerably less prone to make assessments or formulate ad hoc statements. It was pointed out as well that it is an extremely difficult to tell what motivates terrorists in Europe, since they were born in the European countries in the second or third generation of immigrants. Scholars also noticed the irresponsible policy of Western Europe towards the Middle East countries (58,3%), for example the intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the domestic war in Syria which is a result of the Arabic Spring.

A common denominator connecting the two above groups were answers stating that political elites (both internal and European) have to reinvigorate their actions and catch up with current processes. The scholars' expectations in this matter reached 63,1%, the common citizens' expectations were a bit higher and amounted to 70,1%. Other similar answers related to the need of sealing the borders and verifying people who enter the European Union. 66,8% of the scholars talked about the importance to focus on the safety of the country's eastern border, which is also the EU border. 84,3% of the common citizens think it necessary to improve the effectiveness of the immigration policy.

7. The influence of terrorist attacks on the behaviour in the Polish society

The threat of terrorism in Poland is more serious now than in the previous years. What directly contributes to this fact is the influence of mass media and the news which appeal to the emotions of the people. The simple fact that a terrorist attack may have a place in the country influences the sense of security in society. It is worth examining how society perceives the problem of terrorism and whether the anxiety connected with it could have any impact on the shape of the political scene.

The attitude of a party's electorate towards a terrorist threat³⁰

Party electorates specified on the basis of a voting declaration in possible parliamentary elections	What is closer to your views on the matter of terrorist threat in Poland?		
	There is a real threat of terrorism in Poland	The threat of terrorism is exaggerated in Poland/ does not exist	Difficult to say
	In percentage		
Right-wing party	53	38	8
Left-wing party	46	50	4
Centre party	41	56	3

Statistical data show that the sense of terrorist threat in society has been politicised and the differences between particular political circles run along the ideological divisions. Yet, the attitude of particular party's electorates towards a terroristic threat is not very different. The differences between the right-wing and left-wing electorate when it comes to the possibility of a terrorist attack amount to 12%.

The second subject area shows a bigger discrepancy in the answers between the two political poles. The discrepancy when it comes to the belief about the problem of terrorism is exaggerated and amounts to 18%.

The overall mindset towards the feeling of a threat occurs more often among the right-wing electorate. The left-wing voters are more sceptical about the possibility of an attack taking place. It is worth pointing out that

³⁰ Own study on the basis of Public Opinion Research Center, [in:] <http://www.cbos.pl/PL/publikacje/raporty.php> (reading date: December 12, 2016).

this survey was carried out at the beginning of December, before the attack in Berlin.

An important field of research, picturing social attitudes is an analysis of the society in the perspective of sociodemographic divisions. It appears that some groups representing one chosen category react similarly to external stimulus as well as they represent a similar way of expressing the sensitiveness towards any event. Taking into consideration the analysis of sociodemographic variables it is possible to notice a strong relationship between a fear and anxiety against the terroristic assassination and factors such as age, place of residence, education and sex.

The highest anxiety over a possibility of a terrorist attack is declared by young and middle-aged respondents, the least worry was declared by elderly people, especially those over 50 years old. It is worth noticing that there is a high level of anxiety within the group of young people. Such situation may be an impulse to radicalise approaches and support controversial political projects more willingly.

As far as education is concerned, it appears that the fear over modern threats is particularly present in the group of people with basic or vocational education. They constitute a group of people who are susceptible to political influence by populist circles. The situation changes in the secondary education group of respondents. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a correlation in terms of education, the higher level of education is, the lower is the fear over terrorist attacks. Nevertheless, this is only a tendency, and it should not be forgotten that there is a percentage of people with higher education who fear the possibility of terroristic attacks. Otherwise, one will form stereotypical and false assumptions on the profiles of these particular social groups.

When it comes to the place of residence, it appears that the people living in small villages, towns and cities of 50 to 200 thousand inhabitants are more worried about a terroristic attack. On the other hand, the feeling of security is higher in large urban areas. This phenomenon is somewhat a negation of the real terrorist threat which occurs in large urban agglomerations. It might be because people living in smaller cities and towns are more susceptible to media's influence. On the other hand, the residents of large cities may have a bigger sense of mobility and at the same time, safety. That is why they perceive various types of threats on a routine basis.

In the case of the sex of the respondents, it appears that there is a slight difference in the way safety is perceived. A larger number of women than men feel anxiety over terroristic attacks. Moreover, it seems the women, more than men, are more convinced and determined in their attitudes.

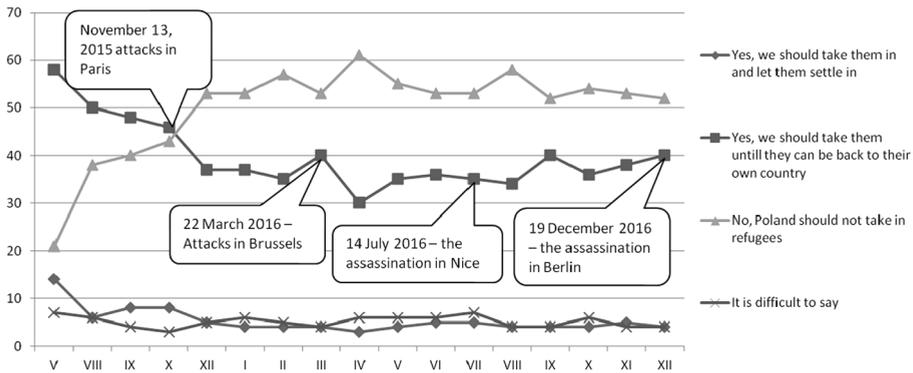
Sociodemographic divisions of Polish society towards the fear of a terrorist attack (the statistics given in percentage)³¹

Are you afraid of terrorist attacks?	Age				Education				Place fo residence				Sex			
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60>	basic	Occupational	secondary	higher	village	town to 50 thousand	city more than 51 thousand to 200 thousand	city more than 201 thousand to 500 thousand	More than 500 thousand	Male	Female
	Yes, I am very worried	17,7	15,8	3,6	2,8	2,6	6,3	2,4	5,6	5,2	4,3	5,2	5,0	5,7	5,2	4,8
I am worried	26,6	19,6	37,7	36,1	38,7	54,9	52,2	39,1	30,6	46,8	37,4	36,2	31	30,1	38,5	40,7
I am not really worried	14,4	23,8	25,8	23	28,1	15,4	19,3	23,4	26,8	16,3	24,8	27,4	32	28,6	21,3	26,4
I am not worried at all	3,4	5,6	6,4	17,3	9,3	3,7	5,3	7	7,2	4,6	7	7,9	8,7	10	6,6	6,4
It is difficult to say	3,7	5,1	5,9	6,2	5,1	6,5	6,9	5,2	4,2	9,3	4,6	3,1	1,5	1,4	6,4	3

³¹ The results of the research were obtained through surveys, observations and interviews with the inhabitants of West Pomeranian, Pomeranian, Greater Poland, Mazovian, Little Poland and Lublin Voivodship, between March and December 2016. Some of the surveys, observations and interviews, due to the respondents' professional situation, are protected under personal data protection law. In the author's view, the conclusions based on the research show a representative section of Polish society and their attitude to a terrorist threat. Although the researched group was not a large one, and it can be argued that the conclusions are too general, the authors think that the challenge undertaken by them is an innovative step taken in the field of research on the social reception of modern threats and is a contribution to further, more in-depth research.

Having to verify some correlations between terroristic attacks and an increase in the hostility towards refugees, it is worth confronting those tragic events with the data illustrating the current attitudes in society. Needless to say, one should be aware that other social and political events may also have an impact on the public opinion.

A chart presenting the approach of Polish people towards accepting refugees from countries engulfed in armed conflict³²



In Poland, the overall approach towards taking in refugees from countries engulfed in arm conflicts is negative. November 2015, after the Paris attacks, was a breakthrough moment when positive and negative attitudes clashed with each other. After these tragic events, the respondents have begun to expressed their reluctance towards taking in refugees. They also began to identify a refugee as a terrorist more often. It is easy to see that the terrorist attacks that followed only strengthened this tendency. The attitudes on taking refugees in or closing the borders for them are now more or less stable, and the difference between the two approaches amounts to 15 to 20%.

7. Conclusion

Terrorism is a complex phenomenon having many different facets, but its possible occurrence will always cause fear in society. It can be assumed that causing panic among the population is terrorists' main. This fear causes a disruption in public order, social norms and customs. It makes many governments redefine their liberal democracies in the face of potential risks. As a result of introducing new, stricter regulations to restore security, social freedom and liberty is infringed upon. It is extremely

³² Own study based on data from the Centre for Public Opinion Research, source: http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2017/K_001_17.PDF (reading date: December 12, 2016).

difficult to draw the line between freedom and security, and it is difficult to provide the sense of freedom from terroristic threat to citizens. It is worth understanding, though, what fears and worries drive citizens in modern democracies.

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FOCUS: FOREIGN FIGHTERS

***Intelligence* e definizione della minaccia. Dal terrorismo convenzionale al “Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale” di matrice islamica: *Foreign Fighter* e “lupi solitari come fattore di destabilizzazione interna agli Stati**

CLAUDIO BERTOLOTTI

Abstract

Gli attentati in Europa e in Turchia del 2015 e 2016 confermano un'efficiente capacità operativa e di coordinamento da parte del “fenomeno Stato islamico” (IS), evoluzione della realtà proto-statale dello Stato islamico da cui deriva.

Un'evoluzione che, se da un lato, si è sviluppata seguendo un approccio che possiamo definire aziendale attraverso le fasi di marketing, premium-branding, franchising e outsourcing, dall'altra, ha portato all'adozione, sviluppo e adattamento di tecniche offensive in quello che possiamo definire “teatro operativo urbano europeo”, in primis le tecniche dei commando suicidi e dei “team-raid” tattici.

Al tempo stesso il “fenomeno Stato islamico” ha aumentato la sua capacità offensiva potenziale con il rientro dei foreign fighters a cui si uniscono i soggetti operativi di prossimità, i “lupi solitari” all'interno dei propri stati, le donne, operative ma anche mogli e madri dei combattenti, e i bambini-soldato – i c.d. “leoncini” – impiegati anche come attaccanti suicidi. Manca però una definizione condivisa del nuovo modello di terrorismo e delle sue caratteristiche. Una mancanza che può pregiudicare il successo di una strategia di contrasto poiché priva di un comune e condiviso parametro di valutazione gli organi di intelligence, la polizia giudiziaria e l'attività di analisi della minaccia.

Nello specifico, si propone un nuovo approccio metodologico finalizzato alla definizione, lettura, e analisi del fenomeno stesso a partire dalla natura che è specifica di un terrorismo fluido, dinamico e multidimensionale: il “Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale”.

Abstract

The 2015-2016 terrorist attacks in Europe confirm the effective operational capability of the “phenomenon” Islamic State (IS), that has shifted from the quasi-state nature with a territorial control, to a denationalized and without borders nature.

An evolution that shows, on the one hand, a “business approach” based on the four phases of marketing, premium-branding, franchising and outsourcing; on the other hand this evolution, represents the adaptation of the guerrilla and military approach to the “European urban operational warfare”, in particular because the suicide commandos and the tactical “team-raids”.

Furthermore, the “phenomenon Islamic State” is growing its potential offensive capability because of four human elements: the return of the foreign fighters, the role played by the “lone-wolves” (“proximity” operational subjects) in their own countries, the women, in operational roles in para-military units or in “social roles” as mothers and wives and, finally, the child-soldiers – also known as “lion cubs” – employed also as suicide attackers.

Taking into consideration the changing nature of the threat and the approach to contrast it, what is still missing is a common definition of the new model of terrorism and its characteristics.

It lacks of a theoretical and legal approach that could influence the effectiveness of a strategy to contrast the phenomenon because of absence of a common and shared vision on the menace, in particular by the intelligence agencies, the national and international police and the strategic analysts.

In the current debate on what are the characteristics of the threat, its weaknesses and the possible solution, Author of the present article proposes a new methodological approach finalized to define, understand and analyze the phenomenon, starting from the specific nature of a terrorism that is fluid, dynamic and multidimensional: the “New Insurrectional Terrorism”.

Keywords

Commando suicida, Foreign Fighter, intelligence, Isis, Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale, Stato islamico, Terrorismo.

Keywords

Foreign Fighter, intelligence, Isis, Islamic State, New Insurrectional Terrorism, suicide commando, terrorism

1. Introduzione¹

Gli attentati di Parigi, Bruxelles e Istanbul del 2015 e 2016 hanno confermato una capacità operativa e di coordinamento molto efficiente da parte del “fenomeno *Stato islamico*” (IS), lo sviluppo contemporaneo e globale della minaccia proto-statale del cosiddetto *Stato islamico* da cui deriva.

Un’evoluzione che ha portato all’adozione, sviluppo e adattamento di specifiche tecniche offensive di guerra applicate al “teatro operativo urbano

¹ Il presente articolo è stato sviluppato sulla base del paper dal titolo *Intelligence e natura della minaccia: dal terrorismo convenzionale al Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale di ISIS&Co. attraverso le fasi di marketing, premium branding e franchising* presentato in occasione del convegno SISP 2016, Sezione 8 “Relazioni Internazionali”, Panel 8.3 Intelligence e regimi politici democratici e autoritari, Milano 15/17 settembre 2016. Un ringraziamento particolare al Prof. Umberto Gori per i suoi preziosi commenti che hanno contribuito ad arricchire questo contributo di pensiero a e renderlo più stimolante.

europeo”. La tecnica dei *commando* operativi, di “*team-raid*” e degli attacchi suicidi, in particolare, e l’imposizione di una presenza capillare di pseudo-cellule IS, hanno evidenziato la natura evolutiva del terrorismo di matrice jihadista islamico-radicalo: un terrorismo in *franchising* capace di influenzare sempre più le dinamiche globali della violenza o, ancora di più, la percezione collettiva delle stesse.

Ma nonostante siano evidenti sviluppi che si impongono progressivamente, e con cui gli organi di sicurezza internazionali si confrontano, manca una definizione condivisa e universale del nuovo modello di terrorismo e delle sue caratteristiche, anche perché molte variabili dipendono del contesto e dalle diverse conflittualità che ne costituiscono la base e in cui il fenomeno si colloca. E la mancanza di una condivisa definizione limita l’implementazione di una strategia di contrasto che sia davvero comune – e quindi efficace –, anche da parte degli organi *intelligence* che rappresentano il primo strumento di contrasto.

Nello specifico, al fine di affrontare la mutabilità della minaccia jihadista mettendo in atto risposte concrete ed efficaci, si evidenzia la necessità di un approccio metodologico che comprenda la definizione, la lettura, e l’analisi del fenomeno stesso a partire dalla natura che è specifica di un terrorismo fluido, dinamico e multidimensionale, di cui vanno comprese a pieno le sfumature e peculiarità *glo-cali*, come base per un approccio consapevole e condiviso.

Questo elaborato, la cui prima parte è introduttiva all’argomento oggetto di studio (proto-stato insurrezionale vs “fenomeno”), si pone l’obiettivo di descrivere la natura evolutiva del fenomeno stesso attraverso una categorizzazione dei fattori che lo contraddistinguono, indicando inoltre le fasi di sviluppo che lo hanno portato ad imporsi come minaccia contemporanea attraverso un approccio di successo che può essere definito aziendale: *marketing*, *premium branding*, *franchising* e *outsourcing* (esternalizzazione della minaccia).

2. Evoluzione storico-operativa e fine dell’IS: da proto-stato *de facto* a “fenomeno” a-nazionale, globale, auto-indotto dalla natura emulativa, spontanea, puntiforme.

L’attuale situazione di crisi e destabilizzazione dell’area grande-mediorientale ha origine con l’invasione statunitense dell’Iraq nel 2003; si infiam-

² *Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* (ISIL; arabo: دولة الإسلامية في العراق والشام), o *Islamic State of Iraq and Syria* o *Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham* (ISIS), o *Islamic State*, o *Daesh* (arabo داعش), è un proto-stato in cui il monopolio relativo della forza è gestito da un’or-

ma nel 2012 con l'uscita di scena delle forze americane, il sostanziale collasso iracheno e l'espansione jihadista dello "Stato islamico dell'Iraq" che ha saputo ben approfittare della nascente guerra civile siriana.

Una guerra civile che si è trasformata in una *proxy war*, una guerra per procura, in cui attori statali e non-statali esterni si sono inseriti nel conflitto intra-musulmano (*fitna*) tra sunniti e sciiti.

Dalla parte dei ribelli anti-governo siriano di Bashar al-Assad la natura del conflitto è fluida e composta da non meno di cento gruppi combattenti, tra cui l'ormai marginale *Free Syrian Army*, di orientamento laico ma costretto recentemente ad allearsi con gli ex-qaedisti di *Jabhat al-Nusra* (ora *Jabhat Fatah Al-Sham*) in contrapposizione a uno *Stato islamico* – principale realtà jihadista – che deve affrontare crescenti difficoltà sul campo di battaglia convenzionale e, per questa ragione, in fase di adattamento e riorganizzazione.

Sul piano politico, lo *Stato islamico* ha avuto nella sua narrativa un obiettivo definito specifico: la ricostituzione del "califfato" sul modello della massima espansione geografica dell'Islam tra l'VIII e il XV secolo.

Una realtà guidata dall'auto-proclamato califfo Ibrahim Abu bakr al-Bagh-dadi che, pur nell'evidenza dell'irrealizzabilità dell'impresa, è riuscito a coagulare attorno a una visione idealizzata migliaia di volontari disposti a morire nell'illusione di un mondo nuovo, puro, apparentemente a portata di mano. Un progetto che ha portato alla costruzione di un proto-stato teocratico sunnita in "Syraq" – quell'area operativa a cavallo di quelli che furono i confini di Siria e Iraq – con proprie risorse finanziarie, un'amministrazione statale minimale e la capacità di governare su una popolazione che, nel momento di massima espansione, comprendeva 6milioni di abitanti su una superficie di 250mila chilometri quadrati.

Un'espansione territoriale e politica, mossa in parallelo a quella mediatica, che non ha solamente minacciato i confini tra la Siria e l'Iraq ma insidiato l'esistenza stessa dei due stati³. Un'evoluzione che, al contempo, ha portato alla globalizzazione dei successi-eccessi della violenza, dando così vita alla seconda anima dell'IS, quella del "fenomeno" *Stato islamico* – distinto dalla

ganizzazione fondamentalista islamista in grado di controllare un proprio territorio in Iraq e Siria, con un limitato controllo territoriale in altre aree del Medio Oriente e del nord Africa e all'interno di paesi dell'Asia meridionale e con affiliazioni con gruppi, organizzazioni e attori regionali. La sua presenza è riportata anche in Libia.

Nel presente paper si è scelto di non utilizzare l'acronimo "Daesh", preferendogli "Stato Islamico" o la sua abbreviazione "IS" in quanto formula preferita dallo stesso Stato Islamico; tanto più che Daesh è termine non gradito al sedicente califfato e, al contempo, viziato da approccio ideologico e parziale poiché, pur essendo l'acronimo in arabo di ISIS, non trova applicazione né utilizzo diffuso all'interno dello stesso mondo arabofono.

³ *Isis's advance in Iraq*, in Financial Times, 18 marzo 2016.

realità politico-territoriale – derivante da un’acorta strategia che si è progressivamente sviluppata su quattro fasi:

la prima è il *marketing*, la diffusione sul mercato del “terrore” dello *Stato islamico* (dal 2006 al 2014);

la seconda è quella di *premium branding*, l’imposizione del proprio marchio sulla galassia del terrorismo contemporaneo (dal 2014 al 2015);

la terza, la diffusione in *franchising* di realtà affini, o l’affiliazione di gruppi già esistenti, che si battono sotto la bandiera nera del “califfato” (dal 2015 ad oggi) e, infine,

la quarta, l’*outsourcing*, il processo di autonomia operativa delocalizzata, esternalizzata a singoli soggetti (“lupi solitari”) non direttamente collegati o coordinati con l’organizzazione “IS”, (in atto).

Un’evoluzione complessiva basata, in un primo tempo sulla competizione con gli altri movimenti di orientamento jihadista (al-Qa’ida in *primis*) e, successivamente, sul riconoscimento reciproco con altri gruppi di opposizione armata impegnati nel perseguimento di proprie e specifiche agende politiche locali; ciò ha portato al risultato della sua progressiva comparsa a livello planetario.

Ma oggi, a oltre un decennio dalla sua fondazione e a due anni dalla sua rapida espansione territoriale, lo *Stato islamico* ha perso la spinta vitale; e con essa ha perso anche terreno, capacità operativa e finanziaria – passata dai circa 2 miliardi di dollari nel 2014 agli 870 milioni del 2016 ⁴, pur mantenendo una propria presenza nominale in alcuni territori chiave nella vasta area del Grande Medio Oriente (dalla Libia alle aree dell’Af-Pak). Ciò è avvenuto a causa dell’offensiva della “Coalizione internazionale” a partecipazione e guida statunitense in Iraq, e dell’altra offensiva sostenuta dall’asse russo-siriano-iraniana in Siria, e del ridimensionato o cessato sostegno dei supporter sunniti (tra cui la Turchia); ma è valutabile che la riorganizzazione operativa, *mutatis mutandis*, consentirà allo *Stato islamico* (o a quello che ne sarà) di tenere alcune posizioni su un campo di battaglia non convenzionale, asimmetrico e de-territorializzato, muovendosi sul doppio binario della propaganda e dell’azione, andando oltre l’utopico progetto del “califfato”.

Una delle ragioni per cui lo *Stato islamico* potrebbe essere ancora in grado di agire in termini offensivi, risiede proprio nella capacità operativa e nella possibilità di veloce e diffusa *info-sharing* delle tecniche di preparazione e utilizzo di equipaggiamenti per attacchi e delle procedure operative. Ciò avviene perché la leadership dello *Stato islamico* ha consapevolezza degli effetti militari ma ancor più di quelli psicologici, tanto sul “nemico” quan-

⁴Heißner S., Neumann P., Holland-McCowan J., Basra R. (2017).

to sull'opinione pubblica⁵. E in linea con questo principio si sta evolvendo come “fenomeno” attraverso l'imposizione di un *premium-brand* di successo capace di portare violenza ovunque e in ogni momento, ma non perché sia effettivamente in grado di farlo, bensì perché altri soggetti lo faranno in sua vece.

Lo *Stato islamico*, così come oggi lo conosciamo, sarà con ogni probabilità sconfitto nella sua natura organizzata, ma il “fenomeno” *Stato islamico* – inteso come evoluzione extra-territoriale e fuori dall'effettivo controllo dell'organizzazione operativa in Syraq – si sta già adattando, portando il conflitto da convenzionale ad asimmetrico in cui si imporranno i sempre più temuti attacchi suicidi che coinvolgeranno combattenti sempre più giovani tra le fila del “califfato”⁶ che andranno ad unirsi agli europei musulmani (prevalentemente di seconda o terza generazione, ma anche migranti e convertiti), soggetti disadattati sociali, psichiatrici, frustrati, socialmente emarginati che, attraverso la violenza nel nome dell'Islam, sono alla ricerca di un proprio ruolo all'interno di una comunità di cui spesso non sono mai stati parte.

Il colpo di coda di uno *Stato islamico* attaccato e ferito si anticipa come un'ondata di violenza ideologica che, come dimostrano gli episodi di violenza in Europa e nel Nord Africa, imporrà la sua presenza anche al di fuori dei confini mediorientali, e lo farà – come già sta facendo – attraverso la violenza individuale, imprevedibile e irrazionale di quei “lupi solitari” e delle azioni organizzate dei *commando* suicidi contro obiettivi simbolici e mediaticamente appaganti.

E il “fenomeno” *Stato islamico*, sintesi di esaltazione ideologica e violenza portate all'estremo, punta ora al reclutamento di quei “soggetti tipo”, marginali e psicologicamente instabili, di cui si è accennato; è questo il bacino di reclutamento del Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale di matrice jihadista (di cui si parlerà più oltre): è la capacità di reclutare tali soggetti a fare la differenza trasformandoli in “armi intelligenti a tempo”, capaci di adeguarsi alla mutabilità della situazione. In questo modo lo *Stato islamico* è riuscito a trasformare la propria natura di proto-stato *de facto* a “fenomeno” ideologico e identitario, sempre più svincolato da un riferimento geografico, di orientamento globale e finalizzato alla condotta di operazioni di natura autonoma, emulativa, spontanea, puntiforme.

⁵ Bertolotti C., Beccaro A. (2015b).

⁶ La cosiddetta generazione dei “leoncini”, adolescenti cresciuti nella folle idea di un califfato globale, educati fin da piccoli alla violenza spettacolarizzata e rituale.

3. Lo sviluppo del “fenomeno *Stato islamico*” attraverso l’esternalizzazione dell’azione offensiva (*outsourcing*)

In tale processo evolutivo di natura fenomenica si collocano gli episodi di violenza spettacolare su cui si concentrano il processo *intelligence*, l’attività giudiziaria e di analisi. E proprio la violenza spettacolare è il *leit motiv* dell’offensiva “non coordinata” contro l’Europa, in Europa.

Dopo l’attacco alla redazione della rivista satirica francese *Charlie Hebdo* del 7 gennaio 2015, il successivo 13 novembre la violenza jihadista ha colpito nuovamente Parigi, e con essa tutta l’Europa, attraverso la condotta di azioni spettacolari. Una manifestazione di violenza organizzata che, dopo un ulteriore attacco al Belgio (Bruxelles, 22 marzo 2016), ha coinvolto anche la Turchia, con un’azione suicida coordinata all’aeroporto internazionale “Ataturk” di Istanbul il 28 giugno 2016 e, ancora, il successivo 31 dicembre (in quest’ultimo caso un singolo attaccante).

Operazioni che sono accomunate – ad esclusione dell’ultima in Turchia dove ha agito un singolo “assaltatore” – dall’essere azioni spettacolari, organizzate e strutturate, compiute da squadre d’assalto di tipo “*commando suicida*”, o “*team-raid*”, che operano in un contesto di *urban warfare* contemporaneo, in cui combattenti-suicidi sono affiancati e sostenuti da elementi operativi, così come avviene in Afghanistan e in Siria e Iraq⁷.

Episodi di violenza che, con 256 morti e 859 feriti, confermano un’adeguata capacità operativa e di coordinamento e provano il trasferimento di una competenza tecnica da un teatro di guerra a un altro. Ma a differenza di quanto avvenuto nei “convenzionali” teatri operativi – dall’Iraq all’Afghanistan, alla Siria, alla Libia – oggi l’evoluzione di questa specifica tecnica di combattimento si è imposta in Europa.

Quanto sta avvenendo è un sostanziale spartiacque evolutivo del fenomeno terroristico contemporaneo che evidenzia come la diffusione della violenza jihadista fondamentalista, dal Medio Oriente e il Nord Africa, abbia spostato anche in Europa il suo campo di battaglia: è una minaccia reale, conseguenza dell’avanzata neo-jihadista dello *Stato islamico* in combinazione

- *in primis*, con le dinamiche conflittuali locali interne all’area MENA,
- in secondo luogo, con l’aumento di aree territoriali fuori dal controllo degli Stati, spesso falliti, (opportunità primaria dello *Stato islamico*) e,
- infine, con il disagio sociale di una parte della comunità musulmana – sia appartenente all’area MENA (in particolare Tunisia, Libia, Siria e Iraq) sia europea (quest’ultima spesso di seconda, o terza, generazione).

⁷ Bertolotti C., Beccaro A., (2015a); e Bertolotti C. (2010).

Sono episodi, quelli registrati in Europa, “coordinati” sul piano comunicativo e strategico ma autonomi e indipendenti su quello operativo e che, nello specifico, non sono ascrivibili al terrorismo tradizionale; bensì si inseriscono all’interno di uno scenario di violenza in fase evolutiva e che fonda le sue radici in quelle dinamiche conflittuali dell’area grande-mediorientale.

Oggi tale minaccia è in Europa; una minaccia, in parte endogena (attaccanti dal passaporto europeo) e in parte esogena (capace di muoversi lungo le direttrici migratorie “mediterranea” e “balcanica”), che è in grado di influire sui piani geopolitico, della sicurezza, dei rapporti di cooperazione e delle alleanze: spazi geografici e sociali che, se da un lato sono fulcro delle instabili dinamiche internazionali, dall’altro, sono oggetto d’interesse dello *Stato islamico*.

Va poi posto in evidenza un ulteriore fattore dinamizzante rappresentato dalle azioni che possiamo definire “autonome” e “ispirate”, dove la capacità attrattiva ed emulativa delle azioni “coordinate” è in grado di spingere individui non direttamente collegati o riconducibili allo *Stato islamico* vero e proprio, né alle organizzazioni che ad esso si rifanno, a commettere individualmente azioni simili ma con un livello di organizzazione minimale, quando non del tutto assente, dai risultati operativi poco significativi ma in grado di ottenere un’attenzione mediatica elevata; conseguendo dunque una forma di successo attraverso la diffusione mass-mediatica dell’informazione. La concentrazione di azioni “individuali” che seguono temporalmente quelle organizzate conferma tale lettura del fenomeno.

Il fattore comune, tra le due tipologie di azioni (“coordinate” e “autonome”) è dato dalla natura degli attaccanti, sia della prima tipologia che della seconda, che è esterna allo *Stato islamico*, ma che ad esso si richiama. In questo senso possiamo parlare di “esternalizzazione” della violenza, dove il soggetto ispiratore (l’IS) è in realtà non direttamente coinvolto per pianificazione e la condotta dell’azione operativa ma lo è, ancora una volta, sul piano strategico e comunicativo attraverso gli appelli e alla rivendicazione degli attacchi (solo quelli di successo) e la minaccia di nuove azioni (spesso quelle “autonome” con esito favorevole che seguono quelle “coordinate” dal forte impatto emotivo generale).

L’approccio “aziendale” dello *Stato islamico* trova così, ancora una volta, conferma nel processo di esternalizzazione in *outsourcing*.

4. *Foreign fighter*⁸ come fattore di destabilizzazione interna agli Stati

Dall'inizio del conflitto siriano nel 2011, sarebbero circa 31-42.000 i *foreign fighter* tra le fila dell'IS e gli altri gruppi jihadisti; la maggior parte originari di paesi arabi e asiatici, ma circa 6.500/7.500 europei.

Dal 2015, causa la perdita di territorio da parte dello *Stato islamico*, il flusso si è ridotto in maniera consistente provocandone un indebolimento progressivo. Da un picco massimo di 2.000 aspiranti *foreign fighter* al mese, per l'IS e gli altri gruppi jihadisti, nel periodo 2014-2015, si è passati a circa 50 individui al mese nel 2016⁹.

Ma, nonostante sia valutato un totale di 41.000 caduti tra le fila del fronte insurrezionale in Siria e Iraq e a fronte della diminuzione complessiva dei volontari, il livello di minaccia non è diminuito significativamente e le stime più recenti del potenziale umano jihadista danno un numero di combattenti oggi compreso tra i 10.000 e i 31.000.

5. Il cambio di strategia: perdita di territorio, ritorno “a casa” e autonomia operativa

La progressiva sconfitta sul campo di battaglia convenzionale apre a nuove complicazioni. L'attenzione va al rischio che i *foreign fighter* andranno a rappresentare a livello globale; in altre parole, la probabile fine fisica dello *Stato islamico* potrebbe aprire a una nuova stagione di violenza a cui dovrà far fronte la Comunità internazionale.

In generale, le donne e gli uomini stranieri radicalizzati starebbero tornando nei propri paesi di origine e, a contatto con gruppi o individui radicali locali, andrebbero ad alimentare situazioni critiche per la sicurezza interna degli stati. Alcuni di questi combattenti sono già rientrati, o rientreranno, in Europa, Nord Africa e nel Medio Oriente, andando a costituire un pericolo significativo che molti governi non sono in grado di contenere o contrastare.

Gli jihadisti che rientrano dalla Siria, dall'Iraq e dalla Libia – radicalizzati e addestrati – sono una minaccia già nel breve-medio termine, sorta di “bombe intelligenti a tempo” che sono parte di una rete virtuale di combattenti con una potenziale libertà di azione tattica, dotati di buona *expertise* operativa e temprati da esperienze di combattimento estreme.

⁸ Bertolotti C. (2017).

⁹ Witte G., Raghavan S., McAuley J. (2016).

Ciò sta portando a una trasformazione della minaccia stessa – da pericolo violento a fenomeno regionale internazionale – che agirà su due livelli operativi: quello degli “aspiranti combattenti” che decideranno di colpire attraverso azioni violente – attacchi terroristici improvvisati, individuali ed emulativi potranno essere il nuovo capitolo dell’offensiva dell’IS in Europa – all’interno dei propri stati di appartenenza, non potendo più aderire alla lotta per il “califfato” in Siria e Iraq, e quello in cui i *foreign fighter* “veterani” del *jihad* creeranno nuovi spazi e occasioni di conflittualità.

Uno studio pubblicato dall’australiano LOWY Institute¹⁰ suddivide i futuri *foreign fighter* in quattro categorie:

1. chi sceglierà di rimanere in Siria, Iraq e Libia;
2. chi lascerà lo “Stato islamico” in Siria e Iraq per proseguire il *jihad* in un altro teatro di guerra;
3. chi cercherà di far rientro nel proprio paese d’origine;
4. chi andrà in un paese terzo in cerca di rifugio.

6. Un nuovo approccio strategico dei *foreign fighter*: “hide and plan, recruit and train, hit and inspire”

Quello che sta attraversando in questo momento lo *Stato islamico* è un adattamento pragmatico che si pone come logica conseguenza dell’evoluzione operativa sul campo di battaglia convenzionale, in linea con le indicazioni date da Abu Mohammad al-Adnani¹¹, il secondo più potente e influente leader dell’IS. Fu lui a suggerire, prevedendo gli sviluppi del conflitto e le conseguenze dell’offensiva della “Coalizione” internazionale contro l’IS, un cambio di approccio strategico¹²: dal consolidamento territoriale dello *Stato islamico* all’espansione ideologica e “individuale” al di fuori dei suoi confini. Un cambio di metodo che si fonda su quelli che possiamo definire i “tre doppi pilastri operativi”: “nascondersi e pianificare, reclutare e addestrare, colpire e ispirare”.

Alcuni indicatori confermano questo nuovo approccio:

1. Il ritorno dei *foreign fighters* nei paesi di origine;
2. L’esistenza di nuove cellule terroristiche in paesi stranieri;
3. Le azioni emulative individuali (“lupi solitari”) che rispondono all’appello a colpire nei propri paesi.

¹⁰ Khalil L., Shanahan R. (2016).

¹¹ Indicato quale responsabile della pianificazione degli attacchi di Parigi del novembre 2015 e di Bruxelles nel 2016; risulta essere stato ucciso nell’agosto del 2016 da un attacco drone statunitense.

¹² Wright R. (2016).

Un esempio è rappresentato dall'attacco a Berlino del 19 dicembre 2016 portato a termine dal radicale islamista tunisino Anis Amri, pregiudicato e colpito da provvedimento di espulsione in Italia. Come evidenziato dall'analisi dello statunitense *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, l'attaccante avrebbe avuto contatti diretti con soggetti affiliati allo *Stato islamico* in Libia e con il network jihadista guidato dall'imam iracheno *Abu Walaa*, punto di riferimento operativo dell'IS nella Germania nord-occidentale e impegnato in un'intensa attività di reclutamento-indottrinamento che avrebbe portato decine di "soggetti tipo" a prendere parte alla progettazione di attacchi in Germania – analogamente al network di Khalid al-Zerkani a Bruxelles. Un episodio, quello di Amri, che sarebbe tutt'altro che isolato e che confermerebbe la capacità dell'IS di agire indirettamente e tramite i suoi affiliati non solo attraverso la Siria, bensì mediante gli altri paesi, come appunto la Libia da cui muovono centinaia di migranti. Una situazione, emersa a seguito delle indagini condotte dall'*intelligence* e dalla polizia giudiziaria tedesca che pone in evidenza la concretezza di una minaccia diretta interna all'Europa.

L'elemento significativo, in analogia con quanto riscontrato in altri paesi dell'Unione europea, è il ruolo fondamentale giocato dai predicatori, gli Imam, che, attraverso i proprio contatti diretti con l'IS, l'utilizzo di una narrativa basata sulla retorica radicale e competenze tecnologiche in grado di garantire un adeguato livello di sicurezza nelle comunicazioni (codici criptati e altri protocolli di sicurezza), inducono i "soggetti tipo" ad agire sul piano operativo e a coordinare azioni in nome dello *Stato islamico*¹³.

7. Lo "Stato islamico" alle spalle

La maggior parte delle azioni di natura terroristica in Europa e rivendicate dallo *Stato islamico*, evidenzia come il ritorno dei *foreign fighter* sia solo una parte della *grand strategy* volta a mantenere un ruolo rilevante al di là dei confini territoriali, sempre più labili, dello *Stato islamico*.

L'Unione Europea non è infatti la sola a dover far fronte a un'offensiva jihadista che minaccia direttamente anche, e ancor di più, i paesi del Nord Africa e del Medio Oriente, come la Turchia, l'Egitto o la Tunisia. Un esempio è dato dai combattenti jihadisti che, lasciata Sirte in Libia, si sono uniti, a sud, con il gruppo di Boko Haram, o si sono trasferiti in Tunisia¹⁴ dove i veterani del jihad starebbero creando le basi per istituire un altro "califfato".

¹³ Heil G. (2017).

¹⁴ Gaaloul, ricercatore presso l'International Center of Strategic, Security and Military Studies di Tunisi, intervista in "The Washington Post", 9 settembre 2016. Testo disponibile al sito: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/flow-of-foreign-fighters-plummet-as-isis->

E dalla Tunisia in particolare – la principale fonte di *foreign fighter* con circa 3.000 combattenti, di cui 850 già rientrati – è diminuito il flusso di volontari sui fronti siriano-iracheno e libico in seguito al ridimensionamento territoriale dello *Stato islamico*, all’offensiva della “Coalizione” e al rafforzamento delle misure di controllo delle autorità tunisine; la conseguenza è uno sdoppiamento dell’estremismo jihadista dell’IS in “pericolo esterno” e “rischio interno”. Ciò significa che i *foreign fighter* non scompariranno ma si manifesteranno come pericolo in altra forma, penetrando l’Europa e il Nord Africa attraverso “nuove vie” tra le quali anche quella migratoria, come dimostrato dalla significativa presenza di “reduci” europei del *jihad* tra gli attaccanti di Parigi, Bruxelles e Istanbul – soggetti riconducibili all’IS che avrebbero sfruttato il flusso di migranti provenienti dalle zone colpite dalla guerra in Siria e Iraq. È una conferma dell’efficacia degli appelli lanciati dall’IS ai suoi seguaci in Europa e in un sempre più instabile Nord Africa, affinché compiano azioni offensive, che evidenzia come il loro ruolo “di prossimità” sia vantaggioso se concretizzato in attacchi suicidi e azioni dirette contro obiettivi esterni.

Per contro, a conferma di quanto sostenuto per il “pericolo interno”, è interessante evidenziare come gli attacchi secondari – in genere individuali e autonomi, come quelli di Nizza e Berlino del 2016 che da soli hanno provocato un totale di 99 morti e 350 feriti – immediatamente successivi a quelli strutturati e organizzati a livello di gruppo, siano eventi che non hanno interessato soggetti con esperienza di *jihad* in Siria, Iraq o Libia, bensì individui indottrinati attraverso altre vie di proselitismo, come le carceri, gli ambienti religiosi radicali o l’auto-indottrinamento tramite il Web.

Sulla base di queste premesse, è possibile delineare uno scenario potenziale in cui i *foreign fighter* jihadisti giocheranno un ruolo sempre più importante, *in primis*, come modello di riferimento per i futuri aspiranti jihadisti e, parallelamente, in attività di propaganda e reclutamento – grazie al loro ascendente (in particolare sulle fasce generazionali più giovani) alimentato da una narrativa di successo incentrata sul “riscatto” sociale e sull’aspetto “romantico” del *jihad*, e, infine, in attività di facilitazione, finanziamento e radicalizzazione. Insomma, un ruolo di primo piano, in linea con quello che ebbero i *foreign fighters* rientrati dall’Afghanistan negli anni ’90.

8. Donne e bambini: l'altro fronte dei *foreign fighter*

Se Al-Qa'ida non ha mai accettato donne tra i propri combattenti operativi, al contrario, lo “Stato islamico” ne ha fatto un ampio utilizzo, sfruttandone la portata anche sul piano mediatico-comunicativo attraverso un messaggio universale e incentrato sull'aspirazione ad essere parte a pieno titolo della grande *Umma*, la comunità dei musulmani.

Un'opzione che va incontro, alimentandola, alla “necessità” di dare il proprio contributo al *jihad* attraverso la diffusione di un'immagine alternativa dell'IS, così da aumentare il proprio bacino di aderenti e sostenitori, anche tra le donne. Una scelta che ha portato, nel biennio 2014-2015, una significativa e giovane componente femminile ad unirsi al “califfato” in Siria e Iraq. Circa il 10 per cento dei *foreign fighter* provenienti dall'Europa, dal Nord America e dall'Australia, sono donne, 200 i soggetti in una fascia di età compresa tra i diciotto e i venticinque anni.

Un fenomeno sociale che, pur quantitativamente ridotto, è interessante in quanto fondato sull'attrattività di un modello alternativo, per quanto illusorio, che ha saputo convincere donne musulmane (ma anche alcuni soggetti non musulmani) ad aderire al progetto del “califfato” attraverso un “rito di passaggio” simbolico con il quale hanno acquisito un ruolo sociale all'interno di una comunità affine in cui, per essere considerate al pari delle altre donne, non devono abbandonare la propria religione. Questa è ovviamente un'immagine costruita, attraverso una narrativa esclusiva da parte dell'IS, attorno alla società occidentale, che viene indicata quale realtà da abbandonare rinunciando a qualunque legame con essa.

E il gesto di bruciare, distruggendoli, i passaporti occidentali, è l'atto simbolico che quel “rito di passaggio” impone; in questo modo emerge come modello di riferimento l'approccio criticista dell'IS verso l'idea di identità nazionale *tout court* e in favore dell'identità religiosa.

Parte di queste donne ha trovato un nuovo spazio sociale entrando a far parte delle unità femminili para-militari e di polizia del “califfato” in Siria e Iraq; tra queste la brigata “Khansaa”, unità di “polizia morale” dello *Stato islamico* composta da donne provenienti da tutto il mondo: Arabia Saudita, Tunisia, paesi europei, in particolare Regno Unito e Francia.

Sono donne che prendono parte a un percorso di addestramento basilico della durata di circa due settimane, durante le quali apprendono l'uso e la funzionalità delle armi e partecipano a seminari di religione focalizzati sulle leggi e i principi dell'Islam attraverso l'interpretazione dell'IS; percorsi formativi che sono gestiti da docenti in prevalenza marocchini e algerini. Diverso il trattamento per le donne straniere, rispetto a quelle autoctone – ra-

ramente a contatto diretto tra di loro; le prime godrebbero di un trattamento differente, con maggiori libertà complessive.

Altre donne hanno invece contribuito allo *Stato islamico* assumendo il ruolo di “spose” per i combattenti jihadisti e “madri” per i figli del “califfato”; in tale dinamica, un elemento interessante è dato dalle circa 31.000 donne incinte all’interno del territorio controllato dall’IS¹⁵.

Analogamente al nuovo ruolo assunto dalle donne, anche i bambini all’interno dello *Stato islamico* svolgono un’analoga funzione, contribuendo al perseguimento degli obiettivi a lungo termine del “califfato”. Bambini, o più in generale minori, intesi come categoria o gruppo sociale, da sempre parte della guerra e dei conflitti, il cui ruolo è valutato come centrale nella visione politica dell’IS e dei suoi obiettivi ideologici futuri, in quanto soggetti predisposti, fin dall’età della fanciullezza, all’indottrinamento e alla desensibilizzazione alla violenza. In particolare, i bambini appartenenti alla fascia di età 3-6 anni, sono relativamente influenzabili sul piano morale e possono essere convinti con facilità a commettere atti di violenza estrema ed inumana.

In generale, a fronte di una carenza di informazioni verificate sul totale dei minori interessati, il loro coinvolgimento all’interno del territorio sotto controllo dello *Stato islamico* è valutabile come estensivo; un coinvolgimento che li formerebbe, mediante un’intensa attività di indottrinamento di stampo islamico-radicalo – attraverso la specificità dell’interpretazione dell’IS –, all’interno di scuole religiose (*madrassa*) e campi di addestramento paramilitari dove questi apprenderebbero fin dai primi anni l’uso delle armi individuali, nozioni base di combattimento e tecniche di decapitazione umana.

Sul campo di battaglia propriamente detto, gli stessi minori verrebbero impiegati come arma da battaglia al fronte, o come supporto alle truppe combattenti, come scudi umani o per le trasfusioni di sangue a favore dei guerrieri feriti¹⁶.

In Siria e in Iraq, infine, lo *Stato islamico* addestrerebbe i figli dei *foreign fighter* con lo scopo di forgiare i combattenti della “prossima generazione” e “*shahid*” (martiri, intesi come attaccanti suicidi) da impiegare in altri paesi; un potenziale di bambini-soldato stranieri che ammonterebbe a circa 1.500 unità, la maggior parte dei quali provenienti da paesi arabo-musulmani, ma con una significativa presenza di individui originari di paesi europei.

¹⁵ Dearden L. (2016).

¹⁶ Brannen K. (2014).

9. L'evoluzione del “terrorismo”: approccio concettuale e conseguenze pratiche¹⁷

Da quanto discusso nei precedenti punti, appare dunque evidente come la minaccia del terrorismo di matrice islamica si sia evoluta, trasformandosi e adattandosi molto velocemente alle dinamiche conflittuali contemporanee e riuscendo, al contempo a imporne di nuove, addirittura cambiando gli equilibri geopolitici regionali sul piano sostanziale.

Un singolo atto di terrorismo può oggi influenzare le dinamiche globali, come già dimostrato dagli attacchi contro gli Stati Uniti l'11 settembre 2001. Ma la definizione di “terrorismo”, sul piano concettuale, può determinare specifiche risposte e misure di contrasto e avere dirette conseguenze sul piano politico e sociale.

In particolare, quello affrontato è un terrorismo di matrice islamica radicale, in cui la religione ha lo scopo di giustificare atti di violenza e guerre. In tale contesto si porrebbe la scelta, debole sul piano sia concettuale sia politico-strategico, di non utilizzare la parola «islamico» associata al termine «terrorismo» nella narrativa e nel linguaggio formale dell'Unione Europea e, in particolare, all'interno del documento “*Combating terrorism. Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA on combating terrorism*”, approvato dal Parlamento Europeo il 16 febbraio 2017; così come la parola «*jihad*». Una scelta che antepone un'opportunità comunicativa politica alla sostanza di una *policy* comunitaria chiara e definita.

Eppure, va preso atto dell'assenza di una condivisa definizione universale di “terrorismo” poiché le varie organizzazioni, nazionali e internazionali, e le agenzie dei vari governi hanno differenti definizioni che si basano su proprie esigenze, interessi e priorità¹⁸.

La difficoltà nella definizione del “terrorismo” si manifesta, sul piano concettuale e giuridico, nella determinazione di uso legittimo della violenza. Pertanto, la stessa definizione di terrorismo, e dunque l'approccio teorico, è controversa; gli stessi paesi membri delle Nazioni Unite non hanno ancora trovato un accordo su una definizione condivisa, comportando significative difficoltà nell'adozione di misure di contrasto che siano universalmente riconosciute¹⁹.

¹⁷ Bertolotti C., (2015a); e AA.VV. (2015).

¹⁸ Si rimanda al contributo italiano al NCTB (*Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding*) *Counterterrorism Project – Final report*, WODC, Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice, gennaio 2006.

¹⁹ 1. The UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004) gives a definition of terrorism: «criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily

Sul piano sostanziale, i cosiddetti “atti di terrorismo” o “terrorismo” sono spesso manifestazioni tattiche condotte da specifici attori quali stati, soggetti non-statali o proto-statali, gruppi (come movimenti insurrezionali, opposizione armata, guerriglia) ed individui, all’interno di una più ampia agenda geopolitica, politica e militare. Ma la tattica, in sé e per sé, va considerata come una specifica tecnica non-convenzionale e non “terrorismo” *tout court*²⁰.

Si vuole qui porre l’attenzione sulla mutabilità dello scenario strategico, all’interno del quale il fenomeno della violenza contemporanea si sviluppa, analizzandolo come una tattica militare funzionale ai meso-obiettivi operativi e al macro-obiettivo strategico, ovvero un «metodo operativo che può trovare applicazione all’interno di una vasta gamma di strategie, inclusa la strategia insurrezionale»²¹.

10. Il Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale

Questo contributo di pensiero vuole affrontare la minaccia rappresentata dal terrorismo contemporaneo collocandolo all’interno di una categoria a

injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature».

2. The **Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism** defines terrorism as: «any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda and seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty or security in danger, or seeking to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or property or to occupying or seizing them, or seeking to jeopardize national resources»; Adopted by the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior and the Council of Arab Ministers of Justice in Cairo, Egypt in 1998.

3. The European Union (EU) defines terrorism for legal/official purposes in Art. 1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism (2002). This provides that terrorist offences are certain criminal offences set out in a list consisting largely of serious offences against persons and property that: «(...) given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation where committed with the aim of: seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a Government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization». Official Journal of the European Communities, L 164/3, COUNCIL FRAMEWORK DECISION of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism. Testo disponibile al sito: <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2002/jul/frameterr622en00030007.pdf>.

²⁰ Beccaro A., Bertolotti C. (2015a).

²¹ Mets S. (2012).

parte, per sua natura mutabile: il “Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale” – (*New Insurrectional Terrorism* – NIT)²², che non sostituisce quella generale di “terrorismo”, ma le si affianca con l’intento di descrivere un fenomeno che terrorismo *tout court* non è.

Il “Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale” è l’approccio concettuale al terrorismo contemporaneo – islamico-radicalo – proposto ufficialmente nel 2015 dal gruppo di ricerca internazionale della “5+5 *Defense Initiative*” – l’iniziativa di difesa intergovernativa per la sicurezza del Mediterraneo occidentale, di cui fanno parte Italia, Mauritania, Marocco, Libia, Algeria, Tunisia, Malta, Francia, Spagna, Portogallo.

11. Considerazioni sulla mutabilità della minaccia

All’interno dell’arco grande-mediorientale, dalla Libia all’Afghanistan, lo spettro del terrorismo è presente da tempo e nessuno Stato è scampato ai suoi effetti. In particolare, l’area Medio Oriente e Nord Africa è un *hot-spot* di «terrorismo domestico» e principale base del cd. «terrorismo internazionale»²³.

Nello specifico, la manifestazione violenta del fenomeno si è estesa dal Medio Oriente all’area mediterranea, imponendosi come sviluppo di una minaccia insurrezionale²⁴ la cui natura è transnazionale, o denazionalizzata, connessa con altri fenomeni insurrezionali, gruppi di opposizione armata locali e criminalità organizzata.

Inoltre, il NIT non è finalizzato a destabilizzare un singolo Stato, o governo, all’interno di confini internazionalmente riconosciuti, ma è orientato alla rimozione dell’intero complesso di governi, istituzioni, paesi, o confini statali e con essi le stesse geometrie legate al trattato di Sykes-Picot che un secolo fa portò alla definizione dell’area MENA così come oggi la conosciamo.

Questa la definizione teorica del NIT codificata dall’autore del presente contributo:²⁵

Il “Nuovo Terrorismo Insurrezionale” è l’utilizzo, o la minaccia di utilizzo, intenzionale, calcolato, razionale e auto-giustificato della violenza al fine di perseguire obiettivi politici, religiosi e ideologici. Undici importanti elementi lo caratterizzano:

1. L’essenza dell’azione è l’utilizzo, o la minaccia di utilizzo, della violenza.

²² Bertolotti C., (2015a).

²³ Bartolucci V. (2013).

²⁴ Questa categoria include movimenti etnici, politici, ideologici, religioso/settari intenzionati a imporre il loro modello rivoluzionario e alternativo attraverso l’uso della violenza.

²⁵ AA.VV. (2015).

2. Il fine dell'azione è politico.
3. È rivoluzionario, sovversivo e finalizzato alla realizzazione di un modello proto-statale.
4. Ha (o può avere) il relativo monopolio della forza all'interno di un'area territoriale definita.
5. Comprende aspetti politici, socio-economici e religiosi.
6. Ha natura di fenomeno in evoluzione adattativa (principio della «flex-adaptability»²⁶).
7. È «stra-ttico»: la natura strategica è espressa attraverso azioni tattiche non necessariamente interconnesse tra di loro.
8. È «glo-cale»²⁷, transnazionale, a-nazionale, senza frontiere.
9. Il campo di battaglia è triplice: reale (convenzionale e asimmetrico, areale o puntiforme), virtuale (Info-ops, propaganda Web, GTA *gaming*), e cibernetico (minaccia di attacchi cyber).

I target sono sia non-combattenti sia combattenti (politici, militari, religiosi e simbolici, ecc.).

È simbiotico; opera attraverso un'esternalizzazione della violenza alimentata dallo spirito di emulazione e in risposta ad appelli al *jihād* (“lupi solitari”).

Il NIT, in sintesi, è la manifestazione contemporanea di un fenomeno che si pone all'interno di uno scenario di conflittualità globale, transnazionale e “denazionalizzata” attraverso il perseguimento di finalità politiche e simboliche.

La natura del NIT non è di tipo unitaria, bensì è dinamica e multidimensionale; dove il proto-stato IS è simbolo di riferimento dello sviluppo evolutivo fenomenico.

Un'evoluzione – nel rispetto degli undici parametri identificati – che va considerata quale punto di riferimento del processo di analisi e stabilisce ritmi e dinamiche di una minaccia sostanziale e di natura fluida.

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²⁶ Capacità di flessibilità nell'adattamento alla mutabilità delle situazioni.

²⁷ Il termine concettuale si basa sulla combinazione delle parole “globale” e “locale”, con ciò descrivendo gli effetti di fattori locali sulle dinamiche globali.

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From 'foreign fighters' to 'foreign *terrorist* fighters': the evolution of terrorism

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Abstract

Up to 30,000 foreign *terrorist* fighters are estimated to have joined the conflict in Syria under the ISIS flag. Although foreign fighters' phenomenon is not new, its unprecedented numbers and its rapid evolution caught the whole International Community unprepared. Worried by the sophisticated radicalisation process through the Internet and social media platforms, the lack of borders' control capacity, the evasive travel patterns, and fearing the so-called 'blowback effect', the UN Security Council provided the first targeted response to foreign fighters with the adoption of Resolution 2178(2014), definitely turning the concept of 'foreign fighters' in 'foreign *terrorist* fighters'. Totally overturning academics and scholars' definitions, the UN Security Council identified foreign fighters as individuals travelling for purpose of terrorism, and called for Member States to criminalize such conduct. This article will analyse the main factors which lead to the evolution of foreign fighters' concept, trying to figure out the consequences and the outcomes.

Abstract

Sono più di 30.000 i *foreign terrorist fighters* che si stima abbiano raggiunto le fila dell'ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). Nonostante il fenomeno dei *foreign fighters* non sia nuovo, la sua inaspettata ampiezza e la sua repentina evoluzione, hanno colto impreparata l'intera comunità internazionale. L'aumento della radicalizzazione tramite internet e i social media, la carenza di un efficace controllo alle frontiere e il cosiddetto 'blowback effect' hanno portato il Consiglio di Sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite a rispondere in maniera mirata al fenomeno dei combattenti stranieri con la Risoluzione 2178(2014). Sovvertendo completamente la definizione data da studiosi ed esperti in materia di antiterrorismo, il Consiglio di Sicurezza ha identificato come *foreign fighters* qualunque individuo che esca dal territorio di residenza o domicilio con lo scopo di partecipare, pianificare, preparare un atto terroristico, ed ha invitato tutti gli Stati Membri a modificare il proprio ordinamento affinché tutti coloro che corrispondano a tal profilo vengano perseguiti adeguatamente. Questo articolo si pone come scopo principale l'analisi dei fattori che hanno portato il Consiglio di Sicurezza a considerare i *foreign fighters* come terroristi cercando di individuare possibili conseguenze e risultati.

Key Words

Foreign fighters, foreign terrorist fighters, ISIS, terrorism, UN Security Council, Resolution 2178(2014), combattenti stranieri, Consiglio di Sicurezza, terrorismo internazionale, Stato Islamico, Risoluzione 2178(2014), Comunità Internazionale.

1. Introduction

*«All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women
merely players»*

Let's start from Shakespeare quotation to imagine the world as a flat playground. Imagine it as an enormous chessboard in which everyone plays a role in the chess game.

In the period 2013-2016, ISIS has certainly played the role of the 'king' on the black side of the chessboard: it was considered the richest world terrorist organisation; it controlled territories along with the economy and the politics of the fragile area of Syraq; it gained the world media's attention for months; it perpetrated strategic terrorist attacks in core areas of Europe; and, above all, it persuaded thousand of people to join its cause, transforming them into pawn ready to fight and commit suicide for religious believes. These pawns are the so-called foreign *terrorist* fighters.

Many times, we heard about them on television, newspapers or internet news. But who exactly are they? Why have they become terrorists? In order to answer these questions, this article will at first analyse the concept of foreign fighters, their history, roots and motivations; then, it will set the difference between 'past' and 'modern' foreign fighters; it will distinguish freedom fighters from terrorists; it will analyse ISIS role in the evolution of foreign fighters' concept and it will finish framing foreign fighters in the bigger context of NIT – New Insurrectional terrorism.

2. Foreign fighters' definitions

The expression 'foreign fighters' first appeared in a headline published by The Times of London on March 21, 1988: «*Khost Outpost Falls to Mujahidin Led by Foreign Fighters*». It covered the story about the victory of the Afghan conflict by Afghan mujahidin, helped mostly by fighters coming from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan, against pro-Soviet government forces

(Malet, 2010). Since its first appearance, subsequent mentions were found in global media reports through the 1990s and the 2000s until nowadays.

Although foreign fighters have recently acquired international importance, they are far from being a new phenomenon. We found foreign fighters' presence in many of the conflicts which characterised the XX century. In analysing their historical involvement, scholars' literature considered them as fighters who, motivated by religion, kinship, and/or ideology, leave their own State of residence to participate in hostilities occurred in a country different from their own.

Cerwyn Moore and Paul Tumelty in 2008 focused on jihadists in Chechnya defining them as

non-indigenous, non-territorialized combatants who, motivated by religion, kinship, and/or ideology rather than pecuniary reward, enter a conflict zone to participate in hostilities (Moore and Tumelty, 2008, pp. 412-413).

Kristin Bakke also focusing on Chechnya War referred to foreign fighters as transnational insurgents [...] who, for either ideational or material reasons, choose to fight in an intrastate conflict outside their own home country, siding with the challenger to the state. Transnational insurgents [...] exclude foreign legions and private security firms (Bakke, 2010).

David Malet, between 2008 and 2013, in a comparative study of transnational rebels' mobilisation in the Israeli War of Independence, the Soviet-Afghan War, the Spanish Civil War and the Texas Revolution defined them as «non-citizen of conflict states who join insurgencies during civil conflict» (Malet, 2013, p. 9). In his definition, the author expressly excludes terrorists, regular military forces, foreign legions, and private contractors operating abroad on behalf on a state (Malet, 2015).

Thomas Hegghammer built on Malet's definition, adding some characteristics and describing a foreign fighter as

an agent who (1) has joined, and operates within the confines of an insurgency, (2) lacks citizenship of the conflict state or kinship links to its warring factions, (3) lacks affiliation to an official military organisation and (4) is unpaid (Hegghammer, 2011, pp.57-58).

According to the author, the four different criterions need to exclude certain categories. Criterion (4) excludes foreign fighters from being mercenaries and the criterion (3) rules out soldiers. Criterion (2) excludes 'transnational insurgents', as defined by Salehyan (2009), because linked by ethnic or kinship ties which influence mobilisation considerably, and criterion (1) distinguishes international terrorists by foreign fighters (Salehyan, 2009).

A different definition was developed by the Academy of International Law and Human Rights that identified a foreign fighter as an

individual who leaves his or her country of origin or habitual residence to join a non-state armed group in an armed conflict abroad and who is primarily motivated by ideology, religion and/or kinship (Geneva Academy, 2014, p. 7).

This latter definition inspired the one provided by one of the first book that comprehensively addresses foreign fighters' phenomenon, *Foreign Fighters Under International Law and Beyond*. According to the authors, foreign fighters are

individuals, driven mainly by ideology, religion and/or kinship, who leave their country of origin or their country of habitual residence to join a party engaged in an armed conflict (De Guttry et al., 2016, p. 2).

Those definitions refer to foreign fighters' mobilisation in conflicts precedent to the Syrian War. This latter definitively marked the difference with the past, introducing a new concept of 'foreign fighters': the so-called 'foreign terrorist fighters'.

This latter transition is clear whether we look at the adoption of the term foreign fighters by policymakers who described them, in press releases, as Al Qaeda's fighters or affiliated terrorist groups from outside of Afghanistan (Malet, 2015). The divergence has become even more marked with the adoption by the UN Security Council of Resolution 2178/2014, in which foreign (terrorist) fighters are defined as

individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts, or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict (UN SC, Resolution 2178, p.2).

3. Why the transition to foreign *terrorist* fighters?

The transition from *fighters* to *terrorist fighters* is the consequence of many elements, that will be analysed hereby:

- the changed perception we have which reflects the different role foreign fighters assumed in the Syrian War with the advent of ISIS;
- the internationalisation and evolution of terrorism: NIT (New Insurrecional Terrorism);
- the blurred line between terrorist and freedom fighters;
- the birth, the growth and the strengthening of ISIS;
- the expressed will of foreign fighters in joining terrorist groups as ISIS;

- the blowback effect: foreign fighters who joined terrorist groups, radicalised, acquired knowledge on bombs and weapons' use and on terrorist techniques, and then come back to perpetrate terrorist attacks in their country of origin.

3.1 Historical pathways

In order to better understand the above-mentioned changed perception, we should start by retracing foreign fighters' involvement in two emblematic conflicts that registered the highest rate of long-distance foreign fighters' mobilisation before the Syrian war: the 1930s Spanish Civil War and the Afghanistan War.

3.1.1 Back to The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939): history, roots and motivations

The Spanish Civil War is probably one of the best documented civil conflict that included a transnational participation of foreign fighters. As defined by Malet, the Spanish conflict represents «a non-ethnic intrastate war in which the foreign fighters were non-coethnic with the local Spanish insurgents» (Malet, 2013, p. 91).

In 1936 the *coup d'état* led by General Francisco Franco, supported by Spanish fascist military forces, gave the opportunity to demand loudly for a defensive mobilisation of broad international constituencies: on one side, Germany, Italy and Portugal openly helped the fascist Nationalist faction, although international non-intervention agreements; on the other side, the Spanish parliamentary coalition of republicans, communists and anarchists was assisted by the Soviet Union. But, since Stalin was reluctant to engage Soviet forces for an open support, the Comintern decided to start a propaganda campaign to recruit sympathisers as a counter-force (Malet, 2010).

The result was the growth of the International Brigades (IB), military units made up of volunteers coming from abroad to take part in the Spanish Civil War. It was headquartered in Paris where an underground railroad and false passports distribution centre was set up to make recruits cross the Pyrenees into Spain (Malet, 2010). According to Malet, between 30,000 and 60,000 combatants were part of the IB and joined the Spanish Civil War (Malet, 2015). This mobilisation was both regional and global: the largest contingent were French citizens who came directly across the border, followed by German and Italian volunteers aimed by a sentiment of anti-fascist unity (E.H. Carr, 1984); others came from different continents as Russia and United States. In the United States, for example, the American Communist Party saw its members double (from 41.000 to 82.000 members) between the be-

ginning of the Spanish war in 1936 and its end in 1938. Most Americans saw the Communist party as a way to defend from fascists' regimes and to protect social justice ideology (Malet, 2013). Indeed, many citizens of the United States who joined the Communist Party during the Spanish Civil War period had neither the desire to establish a Marxist state nor a solid knowledge of Marxist theory. They were only interested in the ideology of social justice for the poor and the minorities (Malet, 2010).

Len Norris, American veteran in the Spanish conflict admitted to being not a communist but an anti-fascist: «*I had become an anti-fascist. An anti-fascist meant being opposed to the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini*» (Gerassi, 1986).

The anti-fascist identity grew stronger, also and above all, in countries which experienced the fascist or Nazi regime. The Italian Carlo Rosselli, leader of the anti-fascist party *Giustizia e Libertà*, argued that the Spanish war was just one front in a global conflict against fascism. With the adoption of his slogan "*Today in Spain, tomorrow in Italy*" he tried to provoke a strong reaction in Italy against Mussolini's fascist regime.

In general, most transnational insurgents were volunteers between 21 and 27 years old. They were not interested in monetary rewards; they were not mercenaries. Instead, foreign fighters were led by ideological reasons, perceived as a moral duty. There was the idea of sacrifice for a cause, seen as their own. It was a shared response moved by political and social ideologies they were ready to die for.

3.1.2 Back to Afghanistan War (1979-1989): history, roots and motivations

After the Second World War, Afghan monarchy was shaken by the need of modernization. Both the United States and the Soviet Union competed to provide development projects throughout the 1950s, even though Kabul regime started to set closer ties with Moscow as a supposed better example of modernization (Malet, 2013). Mohammed Zahir Shad, the then-king of Afghanistan, sustained the modernizers and suppressed their fundamentalist opponents, before being overthrown by his brother-in-law Mohammed Daoud. He proclaimed himself president and continued efforts of modernization targeting for assassinations the leaders of Islamist groups who had developed their party to resist to 'Soviet-style collectivization'. Despite his repressive policy, the Islamist opposition raised until a coalition of Communist factions, supported by the army, overthrown Daoud on 27 April 1978 (Malet, 2013). A new government, led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and openly aligned with the Soviet Union, was established. But the new regime failed to consolidate its power and increased traditionalist re-

sentment. Fearing the collapse of the Afghanistan's communist government, in December 1979 the Soviet Union 40th army invaded the country, occupied the capital, killed the then-president Hafizullah Amin, and installed Babrak Karmal as head of state (Brown, 2008).

The invasion of a Muslim country by an atheist superpower was immediately perceived as a '*call for Jihad*' throughout the Muslim World (Brown, 2008). All Muslims share the responsibility for the defence of Muslim territories; it is not limited to the residents of the conflict zone. Two types of arguments support the call for a common action. On one side, the **sense of solidarity and unity** of the Muslim nation emphasised by the fact that victims are systematically referred to as 'our brothers or sisters' as there were blood relations among them. On the other side, the **Islamic Law** declaring fighting an individual religious duty (*fard ayn*) for all Muslims (Hegghammer, 2011).

This Pan-Islamic solidarity is as old as Islam, and since the XIX century, the notion of the *ummah*¹ has been used by political actors for different purposes. In this case, the main purpose was the defence of religion against Communism.

The Pan-Islamist identity movement emerged in moderate forms in the late 1960s in gathered religious institutions in the region of Hijaz in Saudi Arabia, with the purpose of encouraging cooperation between Muslims worldwide.

Originally, the Hijaz community constituted a marginalised elite, but, with the support of International Islamic Organisations, like the Muslim World League and the so-called Muslim Brotherhood International Organisation, it had the opportunity to transform into a social movement and to work internationally (Hegghammer, 2011).

Practically all the literature speaks about a generic 'Saudi support' for the Afghan Jihad that turned into pan-Islamic identity speeches emphasising the unity of the Muslim nation. Like many others pronounced by activists to increase Muslims' awareness of global affairs, these speeches were «alarmist, self-victimizing, conspiratorial, and xenophobic» (Hegghammer, 2011, p. 83). Here, an abstract from a speech by Muhammad Ali Harakan, the Muslim World League Secretary-General (April 1980):

Jihad is the key to Muslims' success and felicity, especially when their sacred shrines are under the Zionist occupation in Palestine, when millions of Mus-

¹ In the Quran the term *ummah* means "community, nation, population". (See Quran V, 48). It is associated to the Islamic community. The term could also be interpreted as adjective with the meaning of "belonging to the *ummah* or community" or "belonging to the Arab *ummah*" or "belonging to the Arab nationality". For further details and information, see e.g. Nallino (1940) and also Bedendo.

lims are suffering suppression, oppression, injustices, torture and even facing death and extermination campaigns in Burma, Philippines, Patani, USSR, Cambodia, Vietnam, Cyprus, Afghanistan, etc. This responsibility becomes even more binding and pressing when we consider the malicious campaigns being waged against Islam and Muslims by Zionism, Communism, Free Masonry, Qadianism, Bahaism and Christian Missionaries (Harakan, 1981, p. 281).

This message belongs to a wider massive propaganda diffused in a range of magazines with global distribution as the *Muslim World League Weekly News of the Muslim World* and the monthly *Journal of the Muslim World League* (Hegghammer, 2011). Wounded Muslim women and children and any other close-up colour photographs were the principal motivator elements for the Jihad. On their side, governments tolerated Pan-Islamic propaganda because it defamed primarily non-Muslims powers, not Muslim governments. The result was a Muslim's increase of awareness and mobilisation towards conflict zones, and in particular towards Afghanistan.

Initially, the mobilisation purpose was not to fight, but to help and provide humanitarian aid to Afghans stroke by war. In the 1970s and 1980s a vast network of Islamic charities, most of which administrated by International Islamic Organisations that monitored the humanitarian situation in the Muslim world and promptly provided help to any area affected by a crisis, was deployed.

In this context, emerged Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian preacher born in 1941 in West Bank Transjordan, who joined the Muslim Brotherhood in the mid-1950s.² As the Afghan conflict escalated, he took interest in the military dimension of the Afghan jihad, transforming the *humanitarian aid* in *military support*. In fact, he grew frustrated that by 1984 only 'ten or twenty men' had travelled from outside to fight (Malet, 2013). So, he called on his 'brothers' of the Muslim Brotherhood to send mujahidin, and he started a massive propaganda campaign to recruit foreign fighters.

After his arrival in Pakistan in 1981, Azzam produced recruitment literature from 1982 onward, gave talks about the Afghan conflict in the Arab world from 1983 onward, and founded in Peshawar in 1984 the Makhtab al- Khadamat (also known as MAK or Service Bureau), an institution funded by Wahhabi Saudi donors and used as 'foreign fighter logistics office' (Hegghammer, 2011).

²For the Azzam's biography in English, see e.g. Calvert, 2007, pp. 83-102; Azzam, 1988; Malet, 2013 pp.164-165; Hegghammer, 2011, pp.85-88; Schnelle, 2012, pp. 625-629

Due to his links with the Hijaz Pan-Islamist community and his status of a religious scholar, Azzam became the founder of the so-called *Afghan Jihad* (Kepel and Milelli, 2010), and the main responsible for recruiting Western and non-Western foreign fighters. MAK leaders globally distributed its magazines, recorded Azzam's sermons, and travelled all around the world, including in several American cities, to spread Azzam word. In his book *The Lofty Mountain* (1988), the Palestinian preacher recalls the support for Afghan Jihad asked by his colleague Sheikh Tameen al-Adnani in American metropolises like San Francisco, Orlando and Tucson (Malet, 2013). The global extension of Azzam influence can also be measured looking at *Al Jihad* magazine, which was sold in 50 different countries, from Sweden to Hong Kong with a peak of 70000 copies per issue.

Azzam's influence and recruitments' efforts are clear in his books *Join the Caravan* (1987) and *The Defence of Muslim Territories: The First Individual Duty*. In the first one, Azzam describes Afghanistan as «one front in a larger war against Muslims» (Malet, 2013, p. 167), and gives sixteen reasons to fight for Jihad. Among them, fighting is conceived as the only way «in order that the Disbelievers do not dominate», «fulfilling the duty of Jihad, and responding to the call of the Lord» and «hoping for martyrdom» (Azzam, 1987, pp. 4-5). In the second one, Azzam focuses on the transnational nature of fighting for jihad arguing that it is an obligation for all Muslims and not only for the residents of attacked lands (Malet, 2013).

Driven by Azzam's propaganda, thousands of foreign fighters joined the Afghan conflict. It started with a group of 60 local mujahidin -including Osama bin Laden- known as 'Brigade of Strangers' in 1984, and it evolved in thousands of recruits coming from Middle East, Africa, North America and Southeast Asia.³

In sum, foreign fighters' phenomenon represents a branch of a new trend of the Pan-Islamist movement emerged in the 1970s and spread in the 1980s with Abdullah Azzam's propaganda in the Afghan conflict context. Initially, the Pan-Islamist movement was the result of the non-violent action of marginalised elites which supported the idea of inter-Muslim aid and cooperation. Then, the movement changed its face during the Afghanistan War in the

³ Despite the difficulty to gather evidence about the precise number of foreign fighters, some authors elaborated some data. Jason Burke estimated that up to 25000 foreign fighters took part in the Afghan conflict (Burke, 2007, p. 61). According to Thomas Hegghammer, these estimates are a higher than what actually was: in fact, he estimated between 5000 and 2000 fighters against the Soviet Union (Hegghammer, 2011). Instead, David Malet considered "Arab Afghans", a group with fighters coming from South Asia, Malaysia, Africa and some Westerners, and he estimated a total number of roughly 4000 combatants. (Malet, 2013, p.158)

1980s because of Azzam influence in recruiting and inciting to fight against the Soviet Union in the name of an inter-Muslim solidarity.

Gradually, with Al Qaeda's growth and ISI's birth, foreign fighters' mobilisation assumed a different role: there was the will not only to fight against a precise enemy invading Muslims' territories, but also to defeat the 'unbelievers', in particular, the United States and the Western world. After the death of Azzam, his pupil Osama Bin Laden passed on his ideology, globally communicating his will to fight against the unbelievers. To this purpose, in 1998, Al Qaeda, through its declaration of a 'World Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders', constituted an ideological and organisational framework for foreign fighters (UN doc. S/2015/358, p.6).

We assisted at a progressive evolution of the foreign fighters' phenomenon: from 'religious and idealist fighters' to 'extremist fighters'.

3.1.3 *Past foreign fighters and modern foreign terrorist fighters*

The historical framework is emblematic for the analysis of foreign fighters' phenomenon: on one hand, it marks the difference between foreign fighters with European origins (Western foreign fighters) and foreign fighters with Muslim origins (Muslim or non-Western foreign fighters); on the other hand, it highlights the transformation from *fighters* to *terrorists*.

Foreign fighters are no more perceived as transnational insurgents who join a conflict in another country to defend values or an ideology, but they appear as a new way in which terrorism occurs.

Before analysing the reasons of this transition, it can be resumed that past foreign fighters (i.e. foreign fighters involved in past conflicts):

- were not interested in material incentives: they were no mercenaries⁴, or, in any case, monetary rewards were not a sufficient motivator to lead them to join someone else's conflict.

⁴Most authors rejected the idea that foreign fighters could simply be reduced to mercenaries. According to Hegghammer, foreign fighters are unpaid, a defining criterion which excludes foreign fighters from being mercenaries (Hegghammer, 2011, p.58). According to some other authors, they are not unpaid, but payments and benefits cannot be considered as sufficient motivators. (See e.g. Malet, 2015, p. 462; Coll, 2014, p.155).

This opinion is reflected in international law: according to Article 47 of the 1977 *Additional Protocol I* and Article 1 of the 1987 *UN Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries*, mercenaries are individuals who directly participate in hostilities without being nationals of a party involved in an International Armed Conflict (IAC), residents of the territory controlled by a party, or members of the armed forces of a party. They are «motivated to take part in the hostilities essentially by the desire for private gain», and thereby exclude individuals who are motivated primarily by ideology or religion (See Geneva Academy, 2014, p. 16).

- were moved by idealist, ethnic or religious non-material incentives: for instance, in the Spanish Civil war, which registered the highest rate of Western foreign fighters, the mobilisation was due to political and social reasons; while, in the Afghanistan War, which saw the widest participation of Muslim foreign fighters in XX century conflicts, the mobilisation was initially due to pan-islamic solidarity and identity, strongly influenced and based on the religious duty imposed by the *Quran*.

It is fundamental to keep in mind past foreign fighters' motivations in order to understand why 'modern' foreign fighters were attracted by ISIS and involved in the Syrian conflict.

Before discovering if modern foreign fighters (i.e. those who joined the Syrian conflict under the flag of ISIS) have the same motivation factors, it is worth pointing out that research on foreign fighters' motivation remains limited due to the scarcity of reliable data and the difficulty to collect evidence. Besides, in order to analyse 'modern' foreign fighters' phenomenon more swiftly, it is proposed here to distinguish them into 'categories'. The main distinction is between Western (i.e. coming from Western countries and in particular from Western Europe) and non-Western (i.e. Arab origin) foreign fighters. This first 'classification' is due to the fact that the Syrian conflict attracted foreign fighters coming from more than 100 countries. In fact, at the beginning of 2016, the UN Security Council estimated that around 30,000 foreign *terrorist* fighters, coming from over 100 Member States, were actively engaged in the activities of Al-Qaeda, ISIL and associated groups (UN doc. S/2016/92, 2016). While most of them (approximately 70%) came from traditional states of origin such as Libya and Saudi Arabia (Geneva Academy, 2014), more than 5000 are Western-Europeans. The average age seems to be 25, 26 years old, although many teenagers (15-18 years old) result to be attracted by ISIS. Furthermore, more than 10 percent of foreign fighters flew to Syria are young women (Barrett, 2014).

Among Western foreign fighters, many had neither connection to Syria nor strong ethnic ties. In fact, most have grown in Europe and were second-generation immigrants, others converted to Islam or self-radicalised in the West (Reed et al., 2016). A subcategory of Western foreign fighters should hence be detected: converts and second-generation immigrants.

Each category of foreign fighters presents slightly different **motivation factors**. While non-Western foreign fighters are motivated by the same mentioned religious reasons, Western foreign fighters seem to be moved by different factors.

First of all: **empathy.**

Some foreign fighters decided to leave their home country because of the empathy for what is perceived to be taking place in Syria and the wish to 'do something' to stop it. In conflicts throughout history each side attempted to picture the other as barbarous, violent and bloodthirsty. The media and internet boosted propaganda campaigns, making it easier to influence and manipulate people's perception. This is the case of foreign fighters many of whom travelled abroad for the empathy felt for the Muslims victims of violence and the complicity of the Western Powers in perpetuating the conflicts. The mother of an ISIS deceased fighter declared that her son left for providing humanitarian aid and finding his 'identity':

«His initial intentions were to help women and children and to do something productive with his life, and he specifically told me those exact words. He said 'women and children are being tortured, and murdered, and raped, nobody is doing anything about it and I'm finally doing something productive with my life'. He truly believed that even killing others was justified in order to save all these women and children who were victims and who couldn't stand up from themselves» (Frenett and Silverman, 2016, p.67).

Secondly, **adherence to an ideology.**

Foreign fighters travel abroad and join ISIS for adherence to an ideology. Among them, there are: the 'true believers', i.e. those who are totally committed to the ideology of the group without having experienced the conflict itself, then those who consider ideology as a supporting factor, and finally those who approach an ideology through their experience of the conflict. This latter case was the case of the first wave of foreign fighters who travelled to Syria to overthrow Assad and who ended up inside terrorist groups as ISIS. Through the diffusion of the foreign fighters' phenomenon on the web and the media, and through the strategically built web propaganda of ISIS, young men and women radicalised on Internet, projecting to travel abroad with an already well defined ideology (Frenett and Silverman, 2016).

Finally, **search of adventure.**

The great majority of Western foreign fighters appears to have joined the conflict moved by a search of adventure, «a greater sense of purpose and meaning in their lives» (Barrett, 2014, p. 18). They are young men and women who are seeking to define themselves, looking for an identity. According to French authorities many French volunteers were disaffected, aimless, lacking an ideology or an identity (Barrett, 2014). The lack of self-identification and life's meaning are sentiments which came across all the interviews to returning foreign fighters or foreign fighters' familiars. The mother of a Canadian

ISIS fighter affirmed that her son on his 17th birthday said he had «thrown his life away doing nothing. It was important for him to be somebody special and do something that had meaning» (Frenett and Silverman, 2016, p. 72). The wish to assume a fresh identity playing the role of 'alienated and frustrated teens' is a common feature of Western foreign fighters travelling towards ISIS-held territories, but it is not the only one. The search for identity and life's meaning combined with the adherence to an ideology or the empathy for the dramatic situation in Syria or both, lead unsuspecting young men and women to leave their country, take up arms and join the conflict or, worst, pledge allegiance to ISIS (Frenett and Silverman, 2016).

Thus, a partially-new **profile of foreign fighter** takes shape: young men and women, mostly students, without previous experience on battlefield or strong ethnic/ kinship ties to Syria or Iraq, driven by **boredom, disaffection** and **alienation** that made them look for adventure and a greater purpose in their lives (UN doc. S/2015/358, 2015), rather than by extremist ideology and religion.

This profile characterises especially Western foreign fighters, rather than non- Western ones. In fact, most of **non-Western** foreign fighters are much more influenced by the religious factor and by an **extremist ideology** which recalls the one spread by Azzam at the time of the Afghanistan War. Their priority is the perceived individual responsibility to protect fellow members of the *ummah* (the global muslim community) from persecution. It demonstrates that they are moved mainly by the adherence to an ideology and empathy, rather than disaffection and search for identity and meaning. This latter characterises especially Western foreign fighters.

Among Western foreign fighters there are converts and second-generation immigrants. The first ones do not have any kinship or ethnic relation with the Syrian people, and find their motivation for engaging in the conflict in the discover of Islam. This is the case, for example, of the Italian foreign fighter Giuliano Delnevo, died in Aleppo in 2013. He was born in 1989 in Genoa to a Catholic middle-class family. He was a quite introverted person and experienced socialisation and academic difficulties in his teenage years. His closest friends was Naim, a Moroccan classmate. Once turned 18, Delnevo and his friend spent some months in Ancona, in central Italy, where Delnevo met a group of fellow workers, probably from Bangladesh, members of Tablighi Jamaat, the Islamic missionary movement established in India in the 1920s. In 2008, Delnevo converted to Islam and changed his name in Ibrahim (Vidino, 2014; Delnevo, 2015). Since then, he devoted most of his time to Islam. In 2012, he began looking for connections that would allow

him to join a field of jihad abroad. He shaved his long beard and started wearing Western clothes again. Then, on 27 November 2012, he reached Syria, travelling through Turkey by plane. After a few weeks, he called his father, telling him he had travelled to Syria and joined a group of foreign fighters led by Chechen militants. He seemed enthusiastic about his experience and optimistic about the final outcome of the conflict against the Assad regime. He died few months later in Aleppo on 12 June 2013 (Marone, 2016). Like Giuliano, many other foreign fighters were unsuspecting boys and girl from families stranger to Muslim religion, who converted to Islam and radicalised especially on Internet. They step from a 'cognitive' radicalisation, based on the acquisition of radical attitudes, values and beliefs, to a 'behavioural' form, associated with actual participation in a range of radical activities, including illegal and clandestine ones, which can culminate in violent extremism and terrorism (Marone, 2016; Neumann, 2013).

By contrast, Western foreign fighters **sons and daughters of second-generation immigrants** radicalise mainly because they feel alienated in their 'new' homeland. This is often the consequence of the **lack of acculturation** and **integration** which drives them to 'reconnect' with Islam. This feelings of loneliness, isolation and alienation are encouraged by ISIS in its propaganda in order to attract 'rebel boys and girls' and separate them from the 'West'. So, it is worth noting that behind the radicalisation and motivation of these Western foreign fighters there is a great deal of discomfort, exploited by extremist groups.

In this context, it should also be opened a parenthesis concerning **women joining ISIS**. The so-called Islamic State asserts that '*jihad is a religious obligation of every Muslim*' (Van Leuzen et al., 2016). This vision, spread by Azzam and then Bin Laden, is also confirmed by many Islamic jurists who agree that «*jihad could became a personal obligation (fard al-ayn) in the event of a sudden attack*», where even women and children are expected to participate (Van Leuzen et al., 2016, p. 102).

On their side, many women seem to be attracted by '**warriors badboys**'⁵, and they seek to join ISIS (or ISIL)-held territories in order to build families and expand the (supposed) proclaimed Caliphate. Other women likely join ISIS hoping for a better life, one in which they are revered as mothers and wives; a life in which they may escape from the discrimination, the alienation and the abuse they may experience in their homelands (Van Leuzen et al., 2016).

⁵This expression has been used by a former jihadist talking about the reasons why young women join ISIS. (See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2D9iEroUTmQ>)

Finally, still other women may be motivated by **violence, intolerance** and the will to fight in front line in order to 'destroy the unbelievers'. This is the case, for example, of Maria Giulia Sergio, an Italian girl grown up at Inzago, near Milan, from a Catholic family. She converted to Islam, she adopted the niqab (the veil that covers the entire face with only a slit for the eyes), subscribing also a petition in its favour, and progressively radicalised on Internet. In September 2014, she reached Syria travelling through Turkey, and joined ISIS where she received military training to fight 'the unbelievers' in front line. In her eyes, Sergio fulfilled the duty of the 'journey' (Hijra) to the newly proclaimed 'caliphate', responding to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's call. In Internet and SMS communications with her family, intercepted by the Italian authorities, Sergio declared to have endorsed the duty to 'destroy the unbelievers' and expressed a strong desire to 'die as a martyr'. Apparently, she is still there fighting under ISIS flag (Marone, 2016). According to her sister, who was sentenced to four years of prison, Maria Giulia Sergio is ill and presumably dead. In the meanwhile, in Italy she has been convicted by final judgement of the Assize court of Milan to nine years of imprisonment.⁶

In sum, the illustrated motivation factors seem to mark a change with 'past' foreign fighters, in particular with **Western foreign fighters** who were mainly driven by political and social ideologies. Instead, some recurring elements can be found in non-**Western foreign fighters**: both 'past' and 'modern' foreign fighters seem to be motivated by an inter-Muslims solidarity, the will to fight the Jihad and die as martyrs. In particular, Western foreign fighters, encouraged and manipulated by web terror propaganda, express their will to 'destroy the unbelievers' in the name of Jihad and die as martyrs, while non-Western foreign fighters feel also the responsibility to fight for the *um-mah*.

However, it is worth pointing out that the precise mix of factors is specific to the individual. The motivation factors, and the related differences between the proposed categories of foreign fighters are aimed at clarifying the reasons why young men and women travelled towards the Syrian conflict zone and took up arms under the ISIS flag.

⁶ See e.g. <http://www.today.it/cronaca/morta-maria-giulia-sergio-fatima-terrorista.html> (retrieved on 1 March 2017)

3.2 From 'freedom fighters' to terrorists

The 'association' of foreign fighters with terrorism has been rejected by scholars also because terrorism is a confused concept: there is no an universally agreed definition and it is uncertain the line between terrorist acts and the right of self-determination.

What has limited the possibility to adopt a universally accepted definition of terrorism derives from the intrinsic political nature of terrorism: a broad and expansive definition avoids to omit any possible interpretation of the phenomenon, but it tends to consider legitimate some acts that are not commonly accepted. Instead, a restricted and narrow definition allows to focus eventually on particular terrorist acts and to exclude wide-ranging, but it tends to let unpunished some conducts that could be pursued as terrorist.

In particular, for someone the leading principle is the State's protection, security and defence; for others, prevails the concern about the unjustified repressions towards the so-called 'freedom combatants'.

Thus, the same act may be considered terrorist or not in accordance with the political aims pursued by States or the political positions of who judges (Symeonidou-Kastanidou, 2004). It means that what constitutes a terrorist act for one country's legal system, could be qualified as a revolutionary act by another country. Hence, the famous phrase '*one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter*' (UN Report on Terrorism and Human Rights, 2001; Di Stasio, 2010).

The international community discussed about this political (and cultural) divergence and it divided in two 'fronts': the Western States and the Arab States. More precisely, these latter have always affirmed that all the conducts carried out by the population that fight for its own freedom and independence, pursuing the right of self-determination (i.e. against colonial or occupying powers or discriminatory regimes), cannot be included among terrorist acts. So, these conducts are excluded by the conventions on terrorism.

The position of the Arab States has always conditioned the UN works and obtained also some results. The most significant is the 1972 Resolution 3034/XXVII that assured the legitimacy of the national freedom movements and condemned the acts of State terrorism committed by colonial or racial regimes or occupying powers. Because of this divergence, the General Assembly established the first sectoral conventions, in which there was a clause providing the non-action liability of the conducts pursued by who fight for his independence.⁷

⁷ See e.g. art 12 of the 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages

However, with internationalisation of terrorism, the right of self-determination became only the excuse behind which terrorists protected themselves. As consequence, the distinction between terrorism and right of self-determination faded out. In its declaration adopted on 9 December 1994 the General Assembly affirmed «*the unequivocal condemnation of all acts, methods and practices of terrorism, as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomever committed, including those which jeopardize the friendly relations among States and peoples and threaten the territorial integrity and security of States*» (UN, General Assembly, doc. A/RES/49/60, 1994, art. 1). It emphasised also that «*criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them*» (UN, General Assembly, doc. A/RES/49/60, 1994, art. 3).

On these basis, the UN Security Council stated the mandatory principle of non-justification of all terrorist acts. Hence, the 'front of Arab countries' reduced progressively, but it continues to obstruct the adoption of a globally accepted definition of terrorism.

3.3 ISIS role in the evolution of foreign fighters in foreign terrorist fighters

ISIS was another main reason for the transition of foreign fighters to foreign *terrorist* fighters. Through its highly-strategic propaganda action, he persuaded thousands of young boys and girls to leave their homelands and join the conflict, picturing the Islamic State as a perfect state in which every Muslim could serve his/her faith.

Although at present ISIS is finally almost destroyed, it helped the international community to adopt effective legal instruments; implement operational measures; enhance cooperation; prevent radicalisation and violent extremism; strengthen borders' control and security; and encourage Member States to foster a culture of inclusion, dialogue and trust that would reduce the risks of alienation and disaffection, which lead hundreds of boys and girls to leave their countries in search for an identity.

ISIS success has unfortunately characterised the three-years period 2014-2016; in order not to repeat the same mistakes, we will analyse its history and development and the reasons which lead it to success.

3.3.1 History and development

Also known as ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) and Da'esh, the ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) is nothing more than the evolution of the *Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn* (Al Qaeda in the Land of Two Rivers), but commonly known as AQI (Al Qaeda in Iraq), the organisation founded in October 2004 by Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi and Osama Bin Laden (Felter and Fishman, 2007).

Although the two were the antithesis one of the other (Bin Laden son of a construction magnate with ties with the Saudi royal family, who attended elite schools and university, while Al-Zarqawi born and grown up in one of the poorest quarters of Zarqa, in Jordan, and was heavily involved in crimes, alcohols and drugs), Al Zarqawi and Bin Laden shared the same extremist ideology of waging violent jihad aspiring to create an ideal Islamist State. However, though they agreed that the ultimate aim should be the complete deliverance of Muslims, their strategies were different. While Bin Laden had a global and expansionist vision in mind that led him to focus on *global jihad* and on enemies as the United States, Al Zarqawi was more focused on *local jihad*. Moreover, while Bin Laden believed the 'unbelievers' to be non-Muslims (and in particular Western powers), Al Zarqawi interpreted the term 'unbelievers' referring to all those who did not share his Salafi ideology (which led later to attack Iraqi Shiite shrines).

Despite the differences, in December 2004 they reached an agreement with Al Zarqawi pledging allegiance to Al Qaeda and Bin Laden naming him the emir (commander or leader) of an Al Qaeda branch in Iraq, AQI (Charles River Editors, 2014).

However, Al Zarqawi leadership did not last. After his coordinated deathly attack against three hotels in Amman, Jordan, he was killed in a US airstrike on 7th June 2006. He was promptly replaced by Abu Ayyub al-Masri, an Egyptian explosive expert and master bomb maker. Few months later, on 15th October 2006, ISI (Islamic State of Iraq) was created, with Al Masri as war minister and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi as leader.

Despite the controversy concerning Omar al-Baghdadi's identity⁸ and the

⁸ According to US sources deriving from the interrogation of Khalid Abdul Fatah Da'ud Mahmud al-Mashadani, a senior ISI leader and close associate of Al Masri captured in July 2007 by US Coalition forces, ISI was a merely front organization governed by a fictional figure-head (Omar al-Baghdadi) controlled by Al Qaeda leaders. Apparently, at the beginning he was just a fictitious character created by Al Masri. Despite this remains a theory due to the lack of concrete evidence, the fictitious identity of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi would explain why in the first videos he had his face covered and why there had been so many false reports and rumours about his capture and death. The situation grew more complex when the first photographs of al-Baghdadi were diffused and when he was publicly identified as Hamed Dawood al-Zawy,

low numbers indicating the real ISI's strength and presence in Iraq⁹, ISI grew stronger due to the audio messages and the web propaganda launched by the group, until the 18th April 2010 when with killing of Abu Ayyub al-Masri and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi in a joint US and Iraqi raid near Tikrit, the organisation faced a setback.

Nonetheless, with the US forces' withdrawal from Iraq in December 2011, ISI began to regain strength again. Taking advantage by the political instability left by the US withdrawal, the radicalisation followed to the Arab Spring and the start of the Syrian civil war, ISI rose again. Omar al-Baghdadi was succeeded by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (whose real name is Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri) who is actually the leader of ISIS. Probably, he is the most influential figure of ISIS because he has been described by the TIME Magazine as 'the world's most dangerous man' (Kearney, 2014), and he has a \$25 million bounty on his head. In April 2013, al-Badri released an audio statement announcing the birth of ISIL.

Since its birth, the newly-created organization demonstrated its intentions of expansion in 'the Levant', especially Syria.

In January 2014, ISIL claimed the full control of Fallujah, and throughout the 2014 it gained control of several key cities in Iraq like Ar-Raqqa, Samara, Tikrit and Mosul.

The Caliphate was proclaimed by ISIS on 29th June 2014 with an audio recording posted on Jihadi websites. The spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, announced the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate and the changing name of ISIS in IS (Islamic State). He also announced the group leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who is referred as to 'the Caliph' and the 'leader for Muslims everywhere'.¹⁰

In addition to the mere propaganda's action of ISIS, the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate is rich with religious, cultural and historic significance. Generations of Sunni radicals have dreamt of a moment when, in the words

former officer of the Iraqi Army. According to the US military, it was at a later stage that Al Qaeda filled the position of al-Baghdadi with a real person. For further details, see Charles River Editors, 2014.

⁹According to a July 2007 National Estimate and a Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) report, AQI/ISI accounted for 15% of the total attack in Iraq. This estimate notably decreased with the September report of the Congressional Research Service according to which less than 2% of the total number of violent incidents in Iraq were caused by ISI. (See Charles River Editors, 2014). It is hence clear that ISI's strength in Iraq was exaggerated, and has not been provided detailed elements on ISI's real impact in Iraq.

¹⁰See *Sunni rebels declare new 'Islamic caliphate'*, Aljazeera, 30 June 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/isil-declares-new-islamic-caliphate-201462917326669749.html> ; BCC, *Isis rebels declare 'Islamic state' in Iraq and Syria*, 30 June 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28082962>

of ISIS spokesman Mr. al-Adnani, Muslims rose by 'the dust of humiliation and disgrace'. This whirlwind jihad attracted most of foreign fighters flown to Syria.

From the announcement of the Caliphate, ISIS saw a progressive expansion. It managed to control the northern part of Syria, in the zone between Aleppo- Ayn al-Arab and Ar-Raqqa City, and the central part riddled with gas fields. ISIS militants found also support in the area dangerously close to Damascus, and were able to launch attacks in Lebanon and on the Jordanian border.

Moreover, ISIL's expansion is demonstrated by its worrisome regional campaign and linked-activity in Southern Asia. The campaign has been resumed by the ISW in four **ISIS areas of influence**: the **core terrain** in Syria and Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, and the Sinai Peninsula; **regional power centres**, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Egypt; the **remainder of the Muslim world**; and the **non-Muslim world**.

The campaign perpetrated throughout the 2015 and 2016 saw a dramatic increment with the Ramadan period, started on 6 June and ended on 5 July 2016. ISIS used the Muslims holy period of Ramadan as a justification for its attacks and as an occasion to reorient its strategy (Mcfate et al., 2016). ISIS launched several attacks within and along the periphery of the Muslim world to foster regional disorder and push the boundaries of the proclaimed caliphate. The group is also trying to expand to the edges of non-Muslim lands, as shown by arrests in Ingushetia, Russia and escalating attacks in majority-Muslim areas in Bangladesh, the Philippines and in Pakistan. Besides, in order to weaken regional power centres ISIS attacked the Egyptian capital and Mecca, in Saudi Arabia. It also continued the operation 'The Invasion of Abu Ali an-Anbari', declared on 30 April 2016, by claiming attacks in Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Egypt. ISIS's campaign demonstrates resiliency it has in its core terrain. In fact, despite the anti-ISIS offensives through continued attacks around Baghdad, ISIS affirmed the establishment of a new wilayat, Sahel, in Syria, on 23 May 2016 (Forrest, 2016).

It was only in the second half of 2016 that the Global Anti-ISIS Coalition obtained the first results in pushing back ISIS: on 26 June 2016, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) sustained by the global coalition forces cleared the city of Fallujah and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) reestablished the control on the route from Ar-Raqqa City to the Syrian-Turkish border.

At present, the many of the conflict areas controlled by ISIS were set back to the real 'owners': the Syrian Republic and the Republic of Iraq. ISIS definitively re-dimensioned, passing from proto-state to terrorist organisation.

3.3.2 Reasons for ISIS's success

Considered the rapid evolution of ISIS, it should be clear that it was more than a terrorist organisation. It was more likely a 'state-like entity', based on a well-organised hierarchic system and strict and extremist Sharia rules, which was able to set a political control on occupied territories. There are at least three factors which contributed to ISIS expansion and development.

First of all, **ISIS's ideology**.

The ideology of ISIS is the direct descendant of the Islamic fundamentalism which assumed political relevance in the 1970s and 1980s because of the contribution of three mainly events: the 1973 oil boom and the rise of Saudi Arabia, the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the Afghanistan War (1979-1989) against the Soviet Union. It derives from Azzam ideology, based on the idea that «*Islam is the comprehensive and exclusive solution for all political, economic, and social problems of the world*» (Charles River Editors, 2014). The radical belief stressed in ISIS propaganda is the commitment for the liberation of Muslims across the World, with the Caliphate identified as the *safe home* that protect them. Through this message, ISIS attired young men and women from all countries who were ready for the 'heroic fight' to protect the *ummah* from the 'near enemy' (apostate regimes) and the 'far enemy' (the West) (Atwan, 2015).

Secondly, the **Web propaganda**.

The global diffusion of social media and the Internet allowed ISIS to spread its ideology everywhere in the world, recruiting boys and girls, and calling for Muslims' support. The potential of the growing technological sophistication had been already discovered by Al Qaeda which used the Internet for building a global movement. In a letter from 2002 to Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar, Osama bin Laden wrote:

«It is obvious that the media war in this century is one of the strongest methods; in fact, its ratio may reach 90 percent of the total preparation for the battles» (CTC, 2002).

Like Al Qaeda, ISIS exploited the potential of the information and communications technologies (ICT) and, in particular, social media tools, to disseminate its messages to potential recruits. ISIL has been able to establish a low-cost and powerful system to spread its ideology, identify potential recruits, find supporters and allocate human resources to persuade targeted individuals to join its ranks (UN doc. S/2016/92, 2016).

In particular, this has fuelled the growth in the number of foreign *terrorist* fighters who posted their 'adventures' among ISIS ranks on Facebook, Twit-

ter and Instagram. In April 2014, for example, Abu Daighum al-Britani, a British fighter with ISIL, used Twitter to circulate a screenshot made using Instagram of himself holding a severed head. By August, Twitter had served up hundreds of videos of ongoing beheadings, rows of crucified men hung on crosses, and even a picture of a seven-year-old Australian boy holding a severed head offered to him by his father. But there are not only horrific posts: tweets of cats and real-life moments, like the one which shows a French foreign fighter proudly showing he found a jar of Nutella in a Syrian store, were continuously posted on Twitter and other social media platforms for propaganda purposes (Klausen, 2015).

Thirdly, the **illicit fundraising and the economic development.**

ISIS appeared to be the world's richest terrorist organisation never existed. In Syria and Iraq, ISIS gained control of gas and oil fields that in 2014 produce them around one million dollars per day (Bronstein and Griffin, 2014). In 2016, ISIS claimed its profits have doubled with two million dollars per day deriving from the oil production (Dozier, 2016). The UN Security Council Monitoring team provided also some estimates based on discussions with Member States, energy experts and open source material. According to its data, the Monitoring Team estimated that ISIS oil's production amount to 47,000 barrels per day, with a range of \$18 to \$35 per barrel. In accordance with this data ISIL's estimated potential revenue from crude oil ranged from \$846,000 to \$1,645,000 per day (UN doc. S/2014/815, 2014) in 2014. These numbers further increased in 2015 (CAT, 2015), for then reducing in 2016 when, thanks to air strikes, oil production has fallen by between 30 and 50 per cent (UN doc. S/2016/501). The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) estimated that, in 2016, ISIL earned approximately \$260 million from illicit oil sales, compared with as much as \$500 million in 2015 (UN doc. S/2017/97).

As a result of the decreased income derived from oil trafficking, ISIL has intensified its efforts at illicit activities (like bank robbery, extortion, donations from foreign *terrorist* fighters, the looting of antiquities) and, in particular, taxing and confiscation (UN doc. S/2016/92, 2016). According to UN estimates, ISIL has been earning as much as \$30 million per month from this revenue source, which includes forced 'zakat', business 'taxes', fees for electricity and water, 'rent' for seized real estate, and customs duties and passage fees (UN doc. S/2016/830).

In addition to the above-mentioned revenue sources, ISIL has continued to benefit from external donations and ransom payments by families of hostages, particularly from the Yazidi community. UNAMI estimated that these payments amounted to between \$35 million to \$45 million in 2014 (UN

doc. S/2016/92, 2016). Although it is difficult to understand the total income generated by ISIS since the proclamation of the Caliphate, it is clear that it amounted to further billions.

This is particularly worrying whether we consider that, with these numbers, *returning* foreign *terrorist* fighters could easily be able to generate sufficient funding for recruitment and the planning of terrorist attacks around the world.

3.3.3 ISIS: a structured hierarchical governmental organisation

The success of ISIS raised serious questions concerning its qualification. It was undoubtedly more than a terrorist group as shown by its organised structure which was not limited to an internal hierarchical administrative and decision-making apparatus, but it extended to a territorial system organised in central administration and *wilayats* (provinces).

The (self-claimed) 'Islamic State' (IS) organizational system sees the 'Caliph', self-proclaimed representative of the Prophet, as the ultimate authority. Currently, this role is played by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who is flanked by two deputies: Abu Muslim al-Turkmani and Abu Ali al-Anbari. Both were former members of the Iraqi Ba'ath party, and were fellow prisoners in the US prison Camp Bucca. Under Baghdadi and its deputies, there were advisory councils and several departments, run by committees, and which oversee different aspects of the self-proclaimed Islamic State. The leader of each department formed the 'Baghdadi's cabinet'.

The most powerful council is the *Shura Council* which oversees the IS affairs and communicate the decisions to the lower rungs of the hierarchy, assuring that the decisions are correctly implemented.

Then, there is the *Sharia Council* which deals with all religious and juridical affairs. It selects the Caliph, maintains the discipline within the politic body and ensures that the whole State's administration complies with the Sharia Law, and supervises the Sharia Police and the Sharia court system, which deal with all the religious and civil complaints, brought by the police or by individual citizens.

Next to these major councils, ISIS was able to set: the Security and Intelligence Council, the Military Council, the Economic Council, the Education Council, the Islamic Services Council, the IS Institution for Public Information and the Provincial Council (Atwan, 2015).

To this structure, that is further more complex than a hierarchical system leading a group or an organisation, the self-identified IS had its own army and sophisticated weapons, its own coin currency¹¹ and its own bank in Mosul.¹²

Because of the abovementioned reasons, ISIS had gained the media world's attention for the three-years period 2014-2016 and persuaded thousand of young students to join its ranks, transforming them into terrorists or potential terrorists.

3.4 The evolution of terrorism: nit

The transformation from foreign fighters to foreign *terrorist* fighters absorbed them in the context of terrorism.

In the last fifty years, terrorism undoubtedly saw an evolution. In our contemporary society, the phenomenon we face is completely different from terrorism of the 1970s/1980s. According to some scholars (Quadarella, 2006; Di Stasio, 2010), next to the 'classical' international terrorism, which developed in the 1990s and targeted one or more States, and the internal terrorism, can be identified a 'new' international terrorism.

The 'new' international terrorism aims at the whole International Community with large scale attacks, and planned and coordinate acts, operated in the framework of the common political purpose of destruction of the democratic western system and values. The date that can fix the birth of this new kind of terrorism is the 9/11 attack at the Twin Towers in New York, which deeply affected the International Community.

According to the same authors (Quadarella, 2006), the new international terrorism can be classified as international individual offence because it encompasses the three indicators required for a crime to be considered an international individual offence: (i) the prosecution as customary law,¹³ (ii) the

¹¹ ISIS revived the gold dinars of the First Caliphate, the one of Abu Bakr, who succeeded after the death in 632 AD to the Prophet Muhammed. On 30 August 2015, ISIS released a one-hour long video affirming that it had struck its own coinage. The coin would be a 21-carat gold, would weigh 4.25 grams, and it would be an equivalent to 139 dollars due to its weight in gold. The militant group also claimed that the currency will never lose value in comparison to paper money. (Wyke, 2015)

¹² In January 2015, ISIS opened its own bank in Mosul, which was destroyed with other buildings one year later in a US airstrike on 14 February 2016. However, ISIS militants claimed that "the banks were totally empty of any cash and we still do not understand why the coalition still insists to target empty banks". (Moore, 2016; Atwan, 2015)

¹³ This *first element* is supported by the IHL which enshrines the imperative prohibition to commit any terrorist act, and by the customary law formed after the 9/11 attack as a result of the common behaviour of States and international organisations which condemned terrorism

prejudice of fundamental interests for the International Community,¹⁴ and, in general, for the whole humanity, (iii) the possibility to qualify terrorists as individuals-entities of a State or an international criminal organisation.¹⁵

The existence of a new kind of terrorism in contemporary society has been underlined and amplified in the context of the '5+5 Defence Initiative 2015' a cooperation forum aiming to strengthen security in the western Mediterranean area. The project, coordinated by the Euro-Maghreb Center for Strategic Researches and Studies (CEMRES) for the Defence Departments of the '5+5' Area¹⁶, seeks to promote trust and collaboration among the 10 countries in order to face the global threat posed by terrorism. To this purpose, it was adopted of a new concept of international terrorism: The *New Insurrectional Terrorism* (NIT). This notion, elaborated by Claudio Bertolotti, the only Italian researcher for the '5+5 Defence Initiative', and adopted in the '5+5 Defence Initiative' research project *Securing the Borders of the 5+5 Space: Cooperation and implications*, describes terrorism as the intentional use or threat of use of violence; an auto-justified violence moved by political, religious and ideological purposes.

It is composed of nine different elements: (i) the use or threat of use of violence as nature of the terrorist activity; (ii) the political purpose; (iii) the revolutionary/subversive purpose of destroying International Community's values; (iv) it is based on political, socioeconomic and religious multitude; (v) its unpredictability; (vi) the 'strategic' nature based on tactical action which are not necessarily interconnected; (vii) its transnational, borderless nature which makes it extremely 'flexible' and capable of adapting in different political situations, (viii) the battlefield is real (conventional and asymmetric) as well as virtual (i.e. based on information operations and web propaganda)

in all forms and means. In this context, an important role was assumed by the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council which adopted important resolutions on the suppression, the fight, and the prevention of terrorism. It should be noticed indeed that majority of the scholars recognises the validity of the UN documents as *opinio juris* and its important role in the formation of customary rules in international criminal law.

¹⁴This *second element* concerns the prejudice of international interests and values of the International Community *in toto*, i.e. peace, international security and the respect of the fundamental rights (See e.g. ICC Statute, Preamble; UN Resolution 1368/2001 and 1373/2001)

¹⁵This *third element* is the identification of terrorists as individuals-bodies which do not act alone, but in a broader framework based on a political common plan. It is confirmed by the majority of scholars, and finds support in the international criminal tribunals' Statutes and in their jurisprudence. It is demonstrated by the fact that many judgements recognise the individual criminal responsibility of the authors for 'crime of terror', and the Statutes charge for war crimes or crimes against humanity not only governmental entities, but also non-state actors.

¹⁶The 5+5 Area gives its name to the 10 countries which form it: Italy, France, Algeria, Libya, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

and cybernetic (i.e. informatics attacks); and (ix) any kind of targets: civilian, military, political, religious or even symbolic combatants and noncombatants (Bertolotti, 2015a,b,c).

The innovative concept of *New Insurrectional Terrorism* (NIT) combined with the juridical recognition of the existence of a new international terrorism classified as international individual offence, respond to the necessity to have a flexible legal framework, based on interstate cooperation and intelligence services collaboration, that can adapt to this new form of terrorism and respond to new phenomenon, like the foreign fighters' one.

4. Conclusions

In the context of NIT, emerged the figure of 'foreign terrorist fighter'; a figure which has been playing the role of pawn of ISIS on the chessboard and which differs from history, roots and motivations from past foreign fighters. It includes young men and women, mostly students, without previous experience on battlefield or strong ethnic/ kinship ties to Syria or Iraq, driven by boredom, disaffection and alienation that made them look for adventure and a greater purpose in their lives (UN doc. S/2015/358, 2015), rather than by extremist ideology and religion.

This new profile of 'modern' foreign fighter, involved in the Syrian conflict under ISIL flag, made the UN Security Council react blurring the concept of 'foreign fighters' with the new one of 'foreign *terrorist* fighters'. It implies that foreign fighters are considered terrorist even if they do not physically perpetrate terrorist offences. It is sufficient the *intention* of perpetrating (i.e. financing, planning or preparing) terrorist acts. It should hence be noted that is punishable not only any individual who commit or intend to commit a terrorist act, but also anyone who support terrorist activities and groups, by financing them or supplying/selling them arms and other materiel or support them including through information and communications technologies, such as the internet and the social media.¹⁷

So, it is worth stressing that foreign *terrorist* fighters are not punished for joining terrorist organisation, but for the fact itself of travelling or attempting

¹⁷It is stated in UN Resolution 2178 (2014) that foreign *terrorist* fighters and those who finance or facilitate their travel and subsequent activities may be included on the Al-Qaida Sanctions List pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) whether "they participate in the financing, planning, facilitating, preparing, or perpetrating of acts or activities by, in conjunction with, under the name of, on behalf of, or in support of, Al-Qaida, supplying, selling or transferring arms and related materiel to, or recruiting for, or otherwise supporting acts or activities of Al-Qaida or any cell, affiliate."

to travel in order to commit or have the intention to commit terrorist acts. It means that foreign fighters are criminalised regardless of their association to terrorist groups, and in case they join a terrorist group, they are also punished for terrorism's association as 'aggravating factor'.

However, it should be said that most of foreign fighters leave their country for joining terrorist groups, and currently ISIS. Many of them are so motivated by violence purposes to make them 'dream' to die as suicide bombers or as fighters, some others are likely less conscious of the risks they face with. That is why, some of them are come back disillusioned by the 'ISIS experience'. In both cases, they know exactly that ISIS is a terrorist organization, and that joining it constitutes a criminal offence, punished more or less severely pursuant to the different domestic legislations.

In sum, playing on the white side of the chessboard, the UN Member States managed to counter-attack ISIS's foreign *terrorist* fighters. However, although we are some moves away from checkmate, we should be able to address returning foreign fighters and the potential blowback effect. It means that each response at national, European or international level shall mirror the gravity and the seriousness posed by the terrorist threat, but shall also ensure the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Between 'public security interest' and 'respect of human rights' countries shall tip the balance in favour of measures that do not jeopardise the democratic values and fundamental freedoms which constitute the basis of Western society.

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The Islamic State and terrorism: inner working of ISIL related to the role of *foreign fighters*

SERGIO SALAZAR VILLAMARÍN

Abstract

The Islamic State (IS) is one of the most deadly terrorist organizations completely different to the many ones existing nowadays. Its difference relies on the idea of achieving a world-wide “Caliphate”, meaning an organized self-productive institution ruled by Shar’ia Law as its political and religious code to govern, looking towards to be considered as a structured state. However, the purpose of this paper is to analyze the role of Foreign Fighters, which has developed into one of its most important elements in order to spread a new wave of terrorist attacks around the world.

The main idea of the article is an attempt to answer a particular question: by the analysis of the profile of Foreign Fighters and the modus operandi of the attacks, Does IS performs its terrorist attacks as organized cells, as self independent lone-wolfs or by the new procedure known as zombies supervised by a Command Control Body? Or the Islamic State’s propaganda is the only trigger needed to perform such violent outbreaks anywhere, at any time?

Keywords

Islamic State, Foreign Fighters, Radicalization, Europe’s terrorist Attacks, IS Recruitment, IS Modus Operandi

1. Understanding the Radicalization Process within IS Foreign Fighters

Nowadays, the world is facing countless problems in different scales. Many of these issues had been developing through many years of wrong actions and avoidable political, economic or military decisions. This essay is aimed to analyze a particular outcome of a conjunction between military/political actions taken by strong actors, which are not necessary to be mentioned, and had bring the Middle East, as the principal scenario for the birth of what we know today as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or simply: the Islamic State (IS).

Nonetheless, our interest will be focused in analyzing one of ISIL main weapons: the Foreign Fighters Phenomenon. The concept of Foreign Fight-

ers has not a universal definition per se, however as the composition of the concept arise, it can be stated that refers to individuals who gets involved in a conflict, which is not developed in their own country. Therefore, the reasons to joining this fight can be different, nonetheless it can be categorized in two major groups: first is related to certain ties with local fighters through “pre-existing connections or friendship gangs”¹. In other words, is a matter of transforming old costumes from former groups that were involved in illicit activities such as drug trafficking, delinquency with no future at all, into a *mujahedeen group* defending and pursuing a cause.²

On the other hand, a particularly group of young people, who had always felt misunderstood, underestimated, surviving with difficulties faced in their daily life, plus permanently feeling excluded and with lack of opportunities within their societies. These fragile groups are becoming more solitary and isolated, looking for a place to belong, a space where they can embrace a purpose of living, a cause. This behavior is developing into a mixture of feelings, where the final outcome is anger.³ Therefore, one of the motors driving both groups to decide their commitment to the fight is merely based on exploiting their necessity to feel connected or belonging to a cause, where their lives can provide significance about their purpose or their duty in the society.

As it can be seem, these patterns share a social background as one of its main conjunctions, therefore the analysis of this behaviors were under the loop of the process known as *Radicalization*. This concept has been formally addressed after the 9/11 attacks, in order to understand the process which individuals change their behavior and especially, understanding the consequences of this shift. The main focus to analyze was why individuals living mainly in European societies, decide to embrace violent activities as their way to expression this “anger” which was developed during the process.⁴ Through the development of this new threat, it could be expected that the first way to address the issue was to collect information of possible suspects turning into “radicals”, in order to elaborate a general profile, which could help to identify any clue before the fulfillment of their tasks.

While going deep into the process of *Radicalization*, it is necessary to understand its first step, which I would like to call **Profile Analysis**. During

¹Rik Coolsaet. Egmont Paper 81: *Facing the Fourth Foreign Fighter Wave, What drives Europeans to Syria and to Islamic State? Insights from the Belgian Case*. Pp 3.

²Rik Coolsaet. Egmont Paper 81: *Facing the Fourth Foreign Fighter Wave, What drives Europeans to Syria and to Islamic State? Insights from the Belgian Case*. Pp 3.

³Rik Coolsaet. Egmont Paper 81: *Facing the Fourth Foreign Fighter Wave, What drives Europeans to Syria and to Islamic State? Insights from the Belgian Case*. Pp 3.

⁴Rik Coolsaet. “Al Radicalization is Local” *The Genesis and Drawbacks of an elusive concept*. Pp 3.

the development of the post 9/11 attacks, the counterterrorism policies lead by Belgium and Netherlands, were focus on the development of a general profile system, which would help to analyze the behavior of possible attackers. The principal shift towards to the analysis of developing a profile for the suspects was the main difference between the perpetrators in the U.S (attacks made by foreigners, after a period of carefully planning and financing) and the attacks in London and Madrid (made by people grown within European societies, from migrant communities settled decades before).⁵

One of the first attempts to elaborate these profiles, were developed by the counterterrorism officials in Belgium shortly after September 2001, once taking into consideration the “anger behavior” of young Moroccan students in France. This social expression was now under surveillance by Belgian and Dutch Intelligence Services, especially by the latter in the reason that they had been watching closely particular cases of young Dutchmen recruitment by what is described as “fundamental Muslims” mainly from abroad. The ages of the youngsters oscillated between 18 to 31, most of them Netherland nationals with Moroccan origins.⁶

The conclusions of the studies were drafted in a report, which mainly summarize and matches the characteristics of the second group: young people feeling completely lacked from comprehension, in an identity and in a social level as well. For them, this visualization portrayed by radical Islam faith brought them what their societies did not offer: confidence, closeness among them and especially, a purpose to find their identity. However, the most important fact from this report is the feeling from these youngsters to be involve in a fight between right and wrong, which at the end results as complete commitment to their actions.⁷

Another very important outcome from this report relies on the importance to understand two main things: first of all, that *Radicalization* is a complex and very long process, which aims particularly the involvement of the individual to join and fight in the *Jihad*. By the other hand, is also the first time that instead of only focusing on the group joining to this process, there is a brief analysis of the role of the “Recruiter” as a matter of fact, the role of this individual becomes a key factor in order to achieve the commitment of the group into the cause. Is the one, which has to play along with tons of patience and

⁵Rik Coolsaet. “Al Radicalization is Local” *The Genesis and Drawbacks of an elusive concept. The Genesis of a Concept (2001-2004)* Pp 5.

⁶Rik Coolsaet. “Al Radicalization is Local” *The Genesis and Drawbacks of an elusive concept. The Genesis of a Concept (2001-2004)* Pp 7.

⁷Rik Coolsaet. “Al Radicalization is Local” *The Genesis and Drawbacks of an elusive concept. The Genesis of a Concept (2001-2004)* Pp 8.

psychological manipulation towards convincing the fragile group of youngsters into fulfilling their tasks in this new journey acquired.⁸

Nonetheless, after the development of the 2004 terrorist bombing attacks in Madrid, the *Profile Analysis* needed to wide its scoop into a deeper and more structured investigation. The consideration into local groups of people engaging into violent behaviors towards especially to western societies, developed many concerns about the analysis for preventing further attacks, meaning that was not only necessary to focus into a Profile Analysis, but into understanding the reasons of what was causing particular group of people to join and accept this ideals as well.

This new feature was denominated as “home-grown”, and it was especially emerged after the 2003 US invasion to Iraq, which helped to fuel once more anti-western feeling among locals but it widespread to migrant communities in Europe, particularly Muslim. This phenomenon was a complete shift towards in how the radicalization process took shape. This new awakening of hate against foreign invasion in Iraq, trigger many people to join the view of radical Islam thought but the message was not necessary to join the fight with direct involvement, there were no necessary to use former soldiers to gather groups and brainwash the communities. The former connections, and the importance of the unity among people sharing the radical view of Islam in some of these communities were already present.⁹ Therefore, it was time to take into consideration many other layers, especially to understand the nature and the principal cause of this path of radicalization.

The new approach of studying *Radicalization* was now concern about the main causes that might turn a certain individual against the society. It was labeled as “root-causes” and it was linked most of all due to social factors such as poverty, inequity, lack of opportunities and general frustration. Within the world of Terrorism Analysis, these characteristics are known as part of the *Strain Theory*, which emphasizes that terrorist mobilization might be the response from a group of people living under these conditions.¹⁰ Once more, it can be seemed that the common issue regarding the understanding of the process of radicalization tends to be related to a kind of social discrimination, or at least, a feeling from it.

From a personal point of view, the process of understanding the root causes of the dilemma is a key factor in order to address the proper way to devel-

⁸Rik Coolsaet. “Al Radicalization is Local” *The Genesis and Drawbacks of an elusive concept. The Genesis of a Concept (2001-2004)* Pp 8.

⁹Rik Coolsaet. “Al Radicalization is Local” *The Genesis and Drawbacks of an elusive concept. The Genesis of a Concept (2001-2004)* Pp 9.

¹⁰Peter Neumann, Brooke Rogers. *Recruitment and Mobilization for the Islamist Movement in Europe. Introduction: Social Movements Theory.* Pp 7.

op counterterrorism effective policies. In order to understand why a certain group of individuals are convinced to join violent acts in order to be listened is a sign of addressing a necessity as soon as possible. This do not mean that it can stop the problem immediately, whoever it can create relieve and portrayed a different view especially to the problematic of youngsters been more and more attractive to radical ideals in order to express the inconformity with the system.

Reaching up to close this first topic, a possible question might surface: *is there any particular profiling system to point out if an individual is involved into this process?* Well, this had become a very sensitive subject since it can be dealing with physical appearances that in fact will be dealing with discrimination, nonetheless people changing habits and behaviors might be a hint towards developing a comprehensive study into profiling possible subjects.

Some of these features are related to exceeded long of the beard (common lengths do not exceed the three fingers measure), or the shortness of their hair cut, use of the *Jelaba (Traditional Islamic Dress)* or a form of wider pants up to the ankles along with sometimes the use of traditional hat and a particularly rejection to use shorts or engage in sport activities.¹¹

However, there is a much important fact rather than physical appearances and is to take into consideration the changes within the individuals behavior. Per instance, the individual takes extraordinary attention to avoid places where alcohol consumption is permitted, stop smoking or even listening to music. Its social life is less and less reduced evading public places and especially, shifting their behavior with women even to stop looking at them.¹²

Individuals start to change its behavior even with their close ones. They would like their family or closest friends to understand its new point of view. The relation toward its family (especially women) would turn into obligates them to cover their bodies when they want to go outside or even to avoid been around when male visits are at home. This behavior becomes some intrinsic that sometimes individuals break communication with people that do not approve its new point of view.¹³

These features come along with many other aspects regarding political and religious expressions, which somehow can differ with a common view of the topics, especially when the individual is concentrated in blaming all of Muslim's suffering to the West, embracing the use of violence or approval

¹¹ Javier Jordan, Fernando M. Mañas. *External Signs of Radicalization and Jihadist Militancy. Anthena Intelligence Journal Vol 2 N°1. Individual Indications: Physical Appearances.* Pp 2-3.

¹² Javier Jordan, Fernando M. Mañas. *External Signs of Radicalization and Jihadist Militancy. Anthena Intelligence Journal Vol 2 N°1. Individual Indications: Individual Behavior.* Pp 4.

¹³ Javier Jordan, Fernando M. Mañas. *External Signs of Radicalization and Jihadist Militancy. Anthena Intelligence Journal Vol 2 N°1. Individual Indications: Individual Behavior.* Pp 4.

of any fierce reaction as a form of self-defense. Such behavior could be connected along with interests in acknowledging and reading information from jihadist sources (which might not be expressed openly) however with the use of Internet, is nowadays a useful tool to collect any kind of material in relation to it.¹⁴

It needs to be clear that many of these features are not officially labeled as profiling possible radicals, whoever it helps in order to understand or analyze individuals towards comparing many subjects, which had been involved in or had been suspects to be joining terrorist activities. Counterterrorism organizations are trying to develop better and reliable guidelines in order to address the analysis of human behavior as primarily, therefore the importance taken into the comprehension of “root-causes” such as the environment surrounding individuals had been up leading the research in the last years.

2. Foreign fighters and the islamic state

The phenomenon of Foreign Fighters is the most interesting topic regarding the analysis of the Islamic State. The purpose of this section is to review the figures of Foreign Fighters joining the war on Syria and especially, to understand why the message from terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State is so attractive to many people from all over the world. However is also very important to understand the role of Foreign Fighters returning to the countries where they grew up (Europe in this case), in order to be involved in any violent activities, particularly related in terrorist attacks.

According to The Soufan Group, by 2014 the first numbers related to foreign fighters joining the war in Syria were 12,000 from at least 81 countries, where around 3,000 of them belong to Western states.¹⁵ There are 3 important terrorist groups, which benefit from the flow of people joining the war in Syria: Ahrar al-Sham, Jabhat al-Nusra and The Islamic State, with the share characteristic of being founded by Al-Qaeda members. These groups are known to be well financed, better organized and most of all, very inclusive to new recruits.¹⁶

There are many reasons why Foreign Fighters decide to join the terrorist groups as first option. One of them is that most of these groups do not have a

¹⁴ Javier Jordan, Fernando M. Mañas. *External Signs of Radicalization and Jihadist Militancy*. Anthena Intelligence Journal Vol 2 N°1. *Individual Indications: Individual Behavior*. Pp 5.

¹⁵ Richard Barret Senior Vice President of The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters in Syria. Key Findings*. Pp 6.

¹⁶ Richard Barret Senior Vice President of The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters in Syria. Key Findings*. Pp 6.

problem managing the language and skills; it is not necessary to speak Arabic or not having any military experience, only the willing to be committed to the terrorist groups ideals. By the other hand, while Foreign Fighters start its journey, among the first people they met are Jihadi fighters, which become their guides and mentors making it easier their involvement to Jihadi cause.¹⁷

Nonetheless, the numbers of Foreign Fighters had been increasing since 2014, from 27,000 to 31,000 involving people from 86 countries.¹⁸ The top 3 countries in 2014 were: Tunisia (around 3,000 people), Saudi Arabia (2,500 people) and Morocco (around 1,500).¹⁹ However, by the year 2015, it can be seen what was expressed before regarding the increase in the number of individuals joining the war and a sudden change: Tunisia had increased its numbers up to 6,000 people, then Saudi Arabia had maintain its figures and Russia had taken the third place with 2,400 people.²⁰

The main difference that this phenomenon had brought to the scenario of analysis is the use of social media as its main tool to attract many recruiters as it can. Applications such as Twitter or Facebook had proven to be very effective to widespread IS violent ideology and its message to the world. By spreading propaganda, testimonials from former fighters, or even extreme messages of violence (beheadings, public executions), the group had got the attention from many other supporters as fundraisers as well in order to welcome everyone who shares its views.²¹

Many of these foreigners might also like to join these groups in the reason of having already a contact or particularly by checking the experiences shared by these individuals on the media. Various new members shared their life under the Islamic State, portraying a simple life with optimistic outcomes surrounded by acceptance, friendship and especially, a purpose in their lives, especially if these actions are surrounded by courageousness and bravery.²² Despite the other kind of propaganda related to violence, many foreigners are willing to take the risk of joining especially due to the last statement, since

¹⁷ Richard Barret Senior Vice President of The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters in Syria. Introduction*. Pp 10.

¹⁸ The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq. Key Findings*. Pp 4.

¹⁹ Richard Barret, Senior Vice President of the Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters in Syria*. Pp13.

²⁰ The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters: An Update Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq*. Pp 5.

²¹ Richard Barret Senior Vice President of The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters in Syria. Key Findings*. Pp 7.

²² Richard Barret Senior Vice President of The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters in Syria. Who Goes*. Pp 17.

they are people living vulnerable realities at their home places, looking for a meaning in their lives.

Another significant characteristic about Foreign Fighters regards on the average age of the people involve in this phenomenon. It can be expressed that most of the individuals joining the war on Syria are mainly between 18 to 29 years old. To cite an example, there is a testimonial from Ahrar al-Sham member, who described a Swedish couple arrival in 2014 because of the call of *Jihad*. He was 22 years old converted to Islam and his wife was 21, both of them were provided with guns and accepted in the group.²³

As it can be seen, the terrorist organizations are by far not necessarily interested in military experiences or expertise, the important thing is the willingness from the foreigner to join the ideals and help to the struggle. For most of these young individuals, experience is gained by time and by involvement into the conflict. From this assumption is what makes the Foreign Fighters very interesting and at the same time very dangerous people, in the reason that there is not prove until now, how much emotional damage they had been exposed to after this sort of war experiences.

Therefore, this phenomenon had brought many concerns especially to Western societies in the reason that many of their nationals involved in these journeys might return to their countries, transformed into complete different individuals as they once were. This assumption is commonly known as “blowback effect” and it means that these violent experiences would be taken back to their countries of origin, becoming a possible trigger to be getting in contact with terrorist activities.²⁴

According to some scholars, this effect should be analyzed individually in the reason that there is not enough evidence to prove that all of the Foreign Fighters returnees are engage in terrorist activities, nonetheless a specific case such as the gunman that killed 4 people at the Jewish Museum in Brussels, on May 2014. This individual belonged to a jihadist group from France and it was proved that he went to Syria for about a year, to fight among the Islamic State.²⁵

It has to be taken into consideration that some of the returnees Foreign Fighters from Syria, were already European citizens with Middle Eastern

²³ Richard Barret Senior Vice President of The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters in Syria. Who Goes*. Pp 16.

²⁴ Lorenzo Vidino. *New (and old) Patterns of Jihadism: Al-Qa'ida, The Islamic State and Beyond. Chapter 2: European Jihadist in Syria: profiles, travel patterns and governmental responses*. Unprecedented Numbers and Fears. Pp 31.

²⁵ Lorenzo Vidino. *New (and old) Patterns of Jihadism: Al-Qa'ida, The Islamic State and Beyond. Chapter 2: European Jihadist in Syria: profiles, travel patterns and governmental responses*. Unprecedented Numbers and Fears. Pp 33.

origins, therefore they had been living in certain communities for long time. It means that since this phenomenon had appeared and had got many attention about its dynamics, analysis had also been interested to point out possible places where *Radicalization* might occur more easily than anywhere else.

The most interest fact about these places is that are widespread within different countries some of them pretty new such as the Lisleby District of Fredrikstad in Norway, and other very commonly known as principal spaces for promoting *Radicalization* among its residents such as: Bizerte, Ben Gardane (Tunisia), Derna (Libya), Pankisi Gorge (Georgia) and the Molenbeek District in Brussels (Belgium).²⁶

3. Different roles within the islamic state

The Islamic State had become more and more attractive to the world in accordance to the flows of people joining the group as it can be seen in the later paragraphs. Linked to that information, it is necessary to understand how IS necessities in recruitment are hierarchized and how the group will be benefit from the people arriving to its territory. From a personal point of view, IS have three pillars in which their organizational structure had prevail until now: first, the importance of well provided military expertise and experiences. Second, a strong ideological organized Sharia Council (shaping the laws and behaviors of its individuals living within) and third the use of Media tools, in order to recruit not only potential soldiers but neutral personal as well, to address many civilian fronts (medicine, engineering, administration and particularly, women).

While discussing the phenomenon of Foreign Fighters is inevitable to link the attraction to its military expertise and experiences. The Islamic State had demonstrated to be a well equipped and managed military structure especially during its first year of expansion in 2014. This strength demonstrated from the beginning from the so called *Caliphate* had been one of the main reasons why many people is attracted to the idea of joining a powerful organization which was commanded in this field by a former Georgian fighter called Omar al-Shishani (died in July 2016)²⁷. Despite this recently low hit to IS, one of the main characteristics from the military personal is its commitment, enthusiasm and fearless behavior in order to display their violence

²⁶The Soufan Group. *Foreign Fighters An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq. Hotbeds of Recruitment*. Pp 10.

²⁷Roland Oliphant, Josie Ensor. "Isil admits minister of war Omar al-Shishani killed" <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/07/14/islamic-state-admit-minister-of-war-omar-al-shishani-killed/>

during their attacks. Sum up to a military strategy based on the use of terrorist attacks such as parked bomb vehicles and suicide bombings, plus the advertising through the media by issuing this kind of operations under reports or videos, had been one of the most important tools to get attention from possible recruits all over the world as well other organizations in order to obtain monetary funds to continue its operations.²⁸

While IS continued expanding, many soldiers were left behind in order to provide security measures among the new territories. In order to provide a total securitization of the held areas IS combine military presence with the second pillar: the spread of Sharia Law. *The Sharia Council* plays a key role in this action, especially by the establishment of *Sharia police force*, particularly in charge of supervising the population behavior under Islamic costumes and practices. To provide legitimacy of the proper religious behavior the Islamic State had recruited prominent preachers and thinkers supporting the spread of the ideology portrayed, especially Saudi nationals entirely linked to Salafism preaching and practice such as Abu Human Bakr Bin Abdul Aziz al Athari, who was expelled from Bahrain in the reason of its radical discoursing.²⁹

The third pillar of IS attracting Foreign Fighters to its call is related to important use of the Media. The use of this tool had not been always addressed, as the main channel to spread the group's ideology, though is also the main tool for attraction to potential recruits in many different levels. IS wanted to portray a reliable salafist anti western ideal government looking for more local acceptance by providing another different approach from the constant corruption and weak authority from the local governments.³⁰ By this statement, its clear that salafist supporters could play a key role especially in the local administration of conquered lands which could create a considerable movement among the supporters in the majority of the population (Sunni) towards the local control from the Assad Regime (Shi'as).

Many examples can be described within what I would like to label, as "IS Social Recruitment": *Dabiq Magazine*, founded by German citizen called Abu Talha al-Amani, after having a brief military experience with IS he decided to step down and put all of his effort in spreading IS official propaganda through Media.³¹ Another practical example to describe how IS wants to be portrayed as a state is by recruiting people of expertise in social necessities, such as providing a reliable Health Care sector. Dr. Abu Yousef, an Australian

²⁸ Richard Barret. *The Islamic State. Military Operations*. Pp 35-37.

²⁹ Richard Barret. *The Islamic State. Structure*. Pp 30.

³⁰ Richard Barret. *The Islamic State. Administrative Operations*. Pp 41.

³¹ Marco Arnaboldi, Lorenzo Vidino. *Twitter and Jihad: The Communication Strategy of IS. Part III: The Objectives of the Propaganda. The Caliphate, Social Media, and Swarms in Europe: The Appeal of IS Propaganda to 'Would Be' European Jihadist*. Pp 130.

physician had joined a medical team in Raqqah (Syria), city under controlled by the Islamic State. During his interview, he expressed its commitment to “join the jihad and help the Muslim community in the area that he can, which is medical field”³².

What caught much attention from Foreign Fighters roles into the Islamic State is the number of females, especially from European origins, which are willing to join the call for *Jihad*. One of the most common patterns of women joining the Islamic State is by the marriage arrangement to a *mujahedeen*, especially after meeting and preparing everything by the Internet. Nevertheless, there were particular scenarios where the female presence was also related directly in the conflict, such as two girls from Vienna (Bosnian origins) with 15 and 16 years old, leaving their homes in order to reach Syria, posting by social media the use of *niqab* along carrying weapons.³³

4. Europe’s terrorist attacks linked to foreign fighters

Between 2015 and 2016, Europe had been one of the most vulnerable targets to terrorist attacks, especially by the so-called *Islamic State*. The novelty related to the November 13th 2015 Paris Attack and the March 22nd Brussels Attack, is that both situations were perfectly planned and coordinated by a group of supporters to IS, which is completely the worst menace to European Intelligence Services. To provide a general overview of the chaotic situation, Paris suffered 6 to 7 coordinated attacks between the State of France, 10th and 11th District of the city. As a result, the total amount of victims of the attack was 130 dead and around 300 people injured, within around 100 of them in critical conditions.³⁴

Regarding the Brussels Attack, two explosions occurred within the Departures area at Zaventem Airport and a third explosion blasted at Maelbeek Subway station, once again with extreme coordination and organization. The final outcome of these terrible attacks was 31 people killed by the explosions between the airport and the subway station, along with more than 270 injured

³² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Xh6LRZV0I0> Australian doctor join IS in Raqqah/Syria.

³³ Lorenzo Vidino. *New (and old) Patterns of Jihadism: Al-Qa’ida, The Islamic State and Beyond. Chapter 2: European Jihadist in Syria: profiles, travel patterns and governmental responses. Who are the European foreign fighters?* Pp 34.

³⁴ BBC. “Paris Attacks: What happened on the night”. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34818994>

in both attacks.³⁵ Europe was now facing one of the most terrible scenarios related to terrorist attacks since the once taken place in Madrid in 2004. The new ways of proper intelligence cooperation and shared information might be the path to understand how these terrible situations can be stopped.

By analyzing the Paris Attack scenes, an abandoned black Volkswagen near the Bataclan theatre was linked to a Belgian national named Salah Abdeslam, who became the first prime suspect in pursuit.³⁶ However, during the examination of evidence, the security forces also discovered that another suspect was even more important to be found, his name was Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who was under surveillance radar since the uncovered plot of an IS cell in Verviers (East Belgium) in January 2016, where after a fierce battle between the police and suspects of terrorist activities, Abaaoud became a wanted extremist by the police by the allegation of being the head of this terrorist cell. He was a Belgian national, with origins from Morocco who spent sometime in Syria and appeared in IS videos, driving a truck transporting mutilated bodies supposedly to a mass grave.³⁷ All the connections to be referred as the “mastermind” of the Paris Attacks were later confirm by an interview made by *Dabiq Magazine*, where Abaaoud reveals how he was able to plan several attacks under the “local intelligence services nose” by travelling back to Belgium with two other jihadists (the ones killed in Verviers raid) obtaining weapons, hiding places and preparing ways to expand the fear within the European societies.³⁸

On November 18th 2015, after a couple of days later of the Paris Attacks, the intelligence services organized a raid in the Saint Denis neighborhood in northern Paris. After a fierce gun battle, the suspects were finally eliminated. Authorities confirmed the main target of the operation was Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the principal organizer of the Paris attacks, along with his cousin Hasna Ait Boulahcen and a third individual which was connected to the Paris

³⁵ Claire Phipps. The Guardian. “Brussels bombings: what we know so far”. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/23/brussels-bombings-what-we-know-so-far>

³⁶ Ben Farmer, Telegraph Staff. “Who is Salah Abdeslam and who were the Paris terrorists? Everything we know about the Isil attackers.” <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11996120/Paris-attack-what-we-know-about-the-suspects.html>

³⁷ Joss Halliday, Jonathan Bucks. “Abdelhamid Abaaoud: what we know about Paris attacks mastermind”. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/16/abdelhamid-abaaoud-suspected-mastermind-of-paris-terror-attacks>

³⁸ Joss Halliday, Jonathan Bucks. “Abdelhamid Abaaoud: what we know about Paris attacks mastermind”. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/16/abdelhamid-abaaoud-suspected-mastermind-of-paris-terror-attacks>

Attack by fingerprints founded in the abandoned car which was used for the shootings in the 10th and 11th District.³⁹

As investigations were developing, new data helped Intelligence Services to undercover the group behind the Paris Attacks. The main important facts to underline about this group relies on family connections (Salah's brother was the suicide bomber Comptoir Voltaire Café), a possible dangerous subject undermined by authorities named Omar Ismail Mostafei, radicalized between 2010-2014, especially after his trip to Syria in 2013. Turkish authorities labeled him as a "possible terror suspect" notifying the French government in December 2014 and in June 2015, with no reply until after the attacks.⁴⁰ Abaaoud and Abdeslam share childhood friendship and both of them lived in Molenbeek neighborhood were on March 18th 2016, Salah Abdeslam was arrested after more than 4 months on the run since the Paris attacks.⁴¹

Authorities managed to connect both terrorist attacks by many of these facts, whoever one person of interest beside Salah Abdeslam and Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who was connected in both attacks was Najim Laachraoui. His fingerprints were recovered in the both attacks and he was the second suicide bomber identified in the Brussels airport.⁴² Along Laachraoui, another high profile suspect linking both attacks is Mohamed Abrini, detained in April 9th 2016 in Brussels. He was accused of being part in logistics activities related to the Paris attacks, especially by being seeing in surveillance videos with Salah Abdeslam days prior the Paris Attack, using a car, which was possible one of the vehicles used to help the attackers reach the Stade of France. In the other hand, he confessed that he was the person involved in the Brussels airport attack, who did not proceed to detonate the bomb and fled the scene.⁴³

However, new information had surfaced by November 2016, explaining that the principal suspect in connection with both attacks is "Abu Suleyman

³⁹The Guardian. "How the events of the St-Denis raid unfolded-a visual guide". <https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2015/nov/18/st-denis-raid-what-we-know-so-far-paris-attacks>

⁴⁰ Ben Farmer, Telegraph Staff. "Who is Salah Abdeslam and who were the Paris terrorists? Everything we know about the Isil attackers." <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11996120/Paris-attack-what-we-know-about-the-suspects.html>

⁴¹ Ben Farmer, Telegraph Staff. "Who is Salah Abdeslam and who were the Paris terrorists? Everything we know about the Isil attackers." <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11996120/Paris-attack-what-we-know-about-the-suspects.html>

⁴² Larry Buchanan, Hayeoun Park. "Uncovering the links between Paris and Brussels Attackers". <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/03/23/world/europe/how-the-brussels-and-paris-attackers-could-be-connected.html>

⁴³ Larry Buchanan, Hayeoun Park. "Uncovering the links between Paris and Brussels Attackers". <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/03/23/world/europe/how-the-brussels-and-paris-attackers-could-be-connected.html>

al-Firansi”, former French soldier, born in Morocco as Abdelilah Himich. He had been pointed out by many IS defectors as the face of the *Amn al-Kharjee*, the external operations branch in charge of planning and carrying attacks in Europe. Firansi, defected the French Legion in 2010 and by 2011, he was arrested in Paris by cocaine possession. He was convicted to 5 years in prison by 2013, however he only served 5 months. By 2014, he managed to travel to Syria, where he joined Al-Qaeda before pledging alliance to the Islamic State.⁴⁴

5. Terrorist attacks modus operandi

The first approach is the commonly known *terrorist cells*. This is considered as the smallest component into a large and complex terrorist organization, it works as a group of individuals sharing a common goal, a common ideology, with an expertise in a specific role, supervised and guided by a command and control chain, demonstrating planning and coordination when the task is fulfilled.⁴⁵ These individuals are highly trained or have some previous knowledge into their specific roles (bomb making, guerilla tactics, logistics, weapons handling) becoming a well-organized group, which are only waiting for an order to perform their action.

After the detailed information about Paris and Brussels attacks, the main assumption is that according to proven links and connections with each other, these individuals were part of an *sleeping cell*, meaning that the group was organized and each of them had their specific roles (suicide bombers, gunmen, logistics). Usually the members of the group are deeply committed to the ideology and to the purpose, therefore these actions are taken to the last step, which is dying and causing as much casualties as they can.

The second approach is a very complex one especially to identify and prevent: *the lone wolf*. Completely opposite to *cells*, these individuals are self-independent and present no coordination at all by the time their attacks are performed. Usually they do not have any skill or expertise in any area (weapons, logistic, bomb making) and rely very much on improvisation, nothing sticks right up to a plan or to a coordinated action.⁴⁶ The *lone wolf attacks* represents a leaderless action, in the reason that the person involved in this

⁴⁴ Counter Extremism Project. “Abu Suleyman al-Firansi”. <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/abu-suleyman-al-firansi>

⁴⁵ Marco Lombardi. *Global Security: Terrorism and Organized Crime*. Lecture from Master in Middle Eastern Studies Program (2016), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore.

⁴⁶ Marco Lombardi. *Global Security: Terrorism and Organized Crime*. Lecture from Master in Middle Eastern Studies Program (2016), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore.

situation decides to take involvement only by portraying the ideology or a certain cause, which it thinks it represents. Most of the time, the representatives of the ideology or the cause are not aware of the support carried by the attacker until it is proven, mainly by the attacker itself.⁴⁷

Finally, the last approach is a concept recently developed named *zombie approach*. The word *zombie* comes from the cyber domain vocabulary meaning an infected computer seems apparently normal until an external stimulus activates the virus targeting a specific objective. Therefore, the *zombie approach* is related to individuals with expertise and trained to fight, which are already socially connected in their societies making them easily blend into the population, linked with the cause or the ideology (mainly driven by sentimentalism) waiting for a signal in order to engage the attack.⁴⁸

6. Is there a command control body behind the organization of the attacks?

Finally, the analysis of the terrorist attacks and its approaches would help the investigation to understand the following question: is there a Command Control Body within the Islamic State, which is completely in charge to arrange any attacks or plots to conduct terrorist attacks worldwide, by the use of *terrorist cells*, *lone-wolf attacks* or *zombie approach*? Or the Islamic State's propaganda is the only trigger needed to perform such violent outbreaks anywhere at any time? After the review of the information presented in this paper, it can be expressed that the answer could be a combination of both assumptions.

One of the assumptions refers to an organizational body, which is in charge of coordinating the entire topic related to Foreign Fighters, especially related to its task as tools for terrorist attacks. The Islamic State Organizational Chart portrays a Fighters Assistance Council, which is in charge of providing aid to these individuals, nonetheless it is not clear specifically what kind of support the Islamic State had delivered either economically, militarily or ideologically.⁴⁹ According to Europol Public Information, Intelligence services believe

⁴⁷ William E. Dyson. *Terrorism: An Investigator's Handbook. Section I: The natures of terrorism and the threats it presents. Chapter 2: Defining, Delineating and Dissecting Terrorism*. Pp 35.

⁴⁸ Marco Lombardi. *Global Security: Terrorism and Organized Crime*. Lecture from Master in Middle Eastern Studies Program (2016), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore.

⁴⁹ Nick Thompson, Richard Allen Green, Inez Torre. "ISIS: everything you need to know about the rise of the militant group". <http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2014/09/world/isis-explained/>

that IS managed to develop an “external actions command trained for *Special Forces style* operations abroad” targeting the European Union particularly.⁵⁰

Within this first assumption, it is necessary to underline that IS prefers to use a n already assembled local *terrorist cells* with the particular difference of being managed by an individual who might received training in Syria, however is not always necessary.⁵¹ In other words, IS relies on assembled groups commanded by a leader with direct involvement with IS (the case of Paris attackers) creating an easier scenario to control the individuals, which are already prepared to engage into an attack. As it was expressed in the previous chapter, these individuals share common expertise such as weaponry handling and explosives managing.

Being part of a local assembled terrorist group usually means being part of local society, and this is linked directly to the *zombie approach*. At least one individual would be under this category in the meaning of easily blending within their own society, establishing the necessary connections to clearly move around without raising any suspicion either from authorities or the public in general. The individual is completely free to plan, to prepare and to wait until the signal is displayed, the “call”, which becomes the green light to take any action.

Linked to this assumption of an “external action command” it can be expressed that IS authorities are not directly involved in the performance of the attacks from Syria. The blueprints or the main ideas of plots and assaults might be developed in Syria; nonetheless the game changer relies on trusting local leaders to proceed with free tactical coordination about how, when and where to deliver the attacks, supporting the Islamic State strongest signature: “strikes at will, at any time and almost at any chosen target.”⁵²

By the other hand, in terms of analyzing *lone-wolf attacks* it is important to address one of IS top officials and main supporters of the approach: Abu Muhammad al-Adnani (killed on August 30th 2016). He was identified as the N°2 leader within IS structure, where he was one of its main charismatic propagandist, famously known by a video posted in September 2014 where he stressed the importance to attack any disbeliever engaging in the war against IS, by “killing them in any way or manner (...) Smash his head with a rock,

⁵⁰ Europol Public Information. *Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks. Terrorist Involved*. Pp 5.

⁵¹ Europol Public Information. *Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks. Terrorist Involved*. Pp 5.

⁵² Europol Public Information. *Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks. Terrorist attacks / Target selection*. Pp 7.

or slaughter him with a knife, or run him over with a car (...).⁵³ By his statement, it is important to understand how IS embraced the idea of promoting *lone-wolf attacks* within their combatants rank, supporting and claiming any related actions to this approach. This is one of the main reasons why the Nice attacks was immediately related to the Islamic State, despite of any relevant connection proven until now.

Reaching up to this point, from a personal point of view, the second assumption (Ideology as the main trigger to provoke terrorist attacks) might be connected with the *lone-wolf approach*, in the reason that *lone-wolf attacks* does not necessary require any planning or structure in order to be done. The effort and the organization dedicated from the Islamic State to the spread of its variety of propaganda, relies on reaching every corner of the globe. The message is completely distributed among all of the population, and it is impossible to control all individuals beginning the path of radicalization, when most of the attention is dedicated to “people of interest” within the Intelligence apparatus.

Therefore, like it was expressed in the previous paragraphs the proper answer to the main question of this project, is a combination of both assumptions. The Islamic State managed to create an external command control body in order to coordinate and handle international attacks, as a main tool of spreading a physical message of its retrograde ideology, using primarily local *sleepers* (well organized, trained in weaponry and explosives) mostly supervised by individuals who were or are directly connected with top officials in Syrian territory, occupied by the Islamic State. People involved in these units are usually familiar with their environment, allowing them to easily proceed with their plans catching no attention, especially from authorities (therefore, is connected as well with the *zombie approach*).

On the other hand, the undeniable effective use of media in order to spread the radical message of violence portrayed by the Islamic State ideology, had also influenced many people in order to get engage in their declared worldwide *Jihad*, especially by performing *lone-wolf attacks*. The complex situation facing the analysis of *lone-wolf attacks* is its nature of unpredictable scenario, where the final outcome is even more complicated to understand, especially while evaluating the main reasons of the attack. The Islamic State had taken advantage of this situation, by claiming responsibility in many recent *lone-wolf attacks* (Orlando mass killing shootings, Würzburg stabbing attack), linking this approach to IS modus operandi of terrorist attacks. None-

⁵³Robert Windrem, Tracy Connor. “ISIS says N° 2 Leader Abu Muhammad al-Adnani is Dead in Syria”. <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/isis-says-no-2-leader-mohammad-al-adnani-dead-n640171>

theless, particularly in the Nice attacks, there is no physical proof to link the attack with IS, despite their claiming of responsibility in the following days.

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