

Krisztián RÉPÁSI:¹ Building a Brand Name: Franchises and Autonomous Cells of Militant Groups

Executive summary

- Through investigating two main branches of terrorist organizational practices, developing franchise systems and building networks of autonomous cells, as exemplified by al-Qaeda and the Islamic State versus Earth Liberation Front and the Informal Anarchist Federation, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding their functioning:
- Global jihadists expect fidelity and subjection from franchises by requiring them to pledge allegiance, and, in exchange for loyalty, branches can use and benefit from the core organization's brand name, and they can access their resources.
- Contrary to jihadists, the cores of autonomous clandestine cell systems do not try to exercise any control over the various like-minded groups that make up their loose networks.
- Due to the tighter control, the franchise system of jihadists is more effective and dangerous than the uncontrollable and underorganized autonomous clandestine cell system; and are more successful in creating a shared political platform and in communicating their political messages.

One of the main characteristics of Islamic State (IS) and al-Qaeda (AQ) is that they have built a “brand name” by establishing a kind of franchise system.² However, not only “jihadists”³ but also the radical environmentalist Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Italian left-wing terrorist Informal Anarchist Federation (*Federazione Anarchica Informale* – FAI) have pursued to collect like-minded militants under a common banner, nevertheless, unlike “jihadists”, ELF and FAI have tried to reach their goal via developing the so-called “autonomous clandestine cell system”.

This analysis investigates and compares the al-Qaeda and Islamic State franchises, also examining the structure of FAI and ELF, pointing out the similarities and differences between the two. The paper also analyzes the relationship of “jihadist” franchises and of autonomous clandestine ELF and FAI cells with their core organization. Finally, this study compares the franchise system with the autonomous clandestine cell system observing which one is the more effective, dangerous and viable *modus operandi*.

Although throughout the paper the main foci are autonomous cells and local branches and not the central organizations, we also must deal with the core groups to some extent. Hence, on the one hand, it examines briefly the evolution of al-Qaeda's ideology revealing parallels between the Islamic State's strategy and the initial strategy of AQ. On the other hand, since FAI and ELF are little-known organizations with a less known ideological background, it is necessary to investigate their organization and functioning in detail. At the same time, while concentrating on cells, micro groups and larger organizations, the paper will not deal with single individuals (lone wolves).

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² Lots of radical Islamist groups have claimed allegiance to al-Qaeda or Islamic State, and even though these groups bear the AQ or IS name, they operate on local level. See Scott STEWARD: [Defining al Qaeda](#), [online] 2012. 10. 18. *Stratfor* [2016. 12. 01.] This mechanism is very similar to the franchise system of trading companies.

³ Although “jihad”, “jihadist” and “jihadism” are very popular, simple and widely accepted terms, there are some problems with their use because on the one hand, it cannot be considered jihad what AQ and IS militants, or other Muslim religious fanatics have done in the name of the jihad, on the other hand, “jihadism” is an inaccurate and simplistic term to define and describe the ultra-radical ideology of AQ and IS, for this reason, “jihadist” is also inexact. Therefore, we put these expressions in quotation marks.



1. Global “Jihadism” – Local branches

1.1. Al-Qaeda and its franchises: a problematic relationship

Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda leadership wanted to pursue the global “jihad” by using their various branches and cells all over the world (in the United States, Europe, Central, South and Southeastern Asia, North Africa and in the Middle East) against Western targets, allies and affiliates. Leah Farrall reveals that local branches have had to submit themselves to the AQ leadership and accept the idea of targeting the “far enemy”, so beside pursuing local agendas, local wings have had to attack also Western interests, moreover the leaders of AQ branches “had to be willing to present a united front, stay on message, and be seen to fall under al-Qaeda’s authority”.⁴

After the 9/11 attacks, authorities managed to strike back to al-Qaeda by destroying or at least weakening its local organizations, networks and cells. The capability of the al-Qaeda Core in Afghanistan/Pakistan to plan, prepare or execute large-scale terrorist attacks has been reduced, therefore the leadership had to give greater autonomy to the affiliates (elements of the AQ franchise). By the end of the 2000’s, AQ Core’s role in the global “jihad” decreased to such an extent that the leadership with some exaggeration was nothing more than a symbol, thus the role of the various AQ branches has increased significantly.

However, in parallel with the franchising, many problems arose. At first, the multiplication of battlefields, the geographical distance from affiliates and the weakening of local networks by the authorities made AQ Core less capable of influencing the events in the various conflict zones (Yemen, Iraq, North Africa, or Somalia). Second, it became more difficult to control and command the franchise organizations. It became apparent that on the one hand, local wings can damage AQ’s brand. Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) under Abu Musab al-Zarqawi hurt al-Qaeda’s reputation by using indiscriminate violence⁵ against Shiites, but infighting and fragmentation had also posed problems for AQ Core.⁶ (It is worth to mention the internal fighting within al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb).

On the other hand, generational changes occurred on the “jihadi” scene and changes included the shifting focus of the AQ branches from the “far enemy” (Western countries) to the “near enemy” (local governments).⁷ One of the consequences of losing the control over the branches is the establishment of Islamic State (IS) itself. The problems with AQI – the predecessor of IS – started with al-Zarqawi. AQ Core had never agreed with al-Zarqawi on slaughtering Shiites and on triggering a sectarian war, but AQI was operating in an increasingly independent way from the AQ Core. However, “while ignoring criticism of his conduct in war, al-Zarqawi did respond to (Ayman) al-Zawahiri’s calls for institution-building by creating in early 2006 the ‘Majlis al-Shura al-Mujahedeen’ with Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) at its top. This Council was an umbrella coalition that aimed to seize political authority in Iraq, should the US withdraw. The process was further consolidated after al-Zarqawi’s death, with the announcement, in October 2006, of the ‘Islamic State of Iraq’ (ISI) and the appointment of its new leader, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi.”⁸ At the same time, the relationship between the Iraqi affiliate and the AQ leadership had not been restored. After al-Zarqawi’s death AQI never renewed the *bay’at* (oath of allegiance) to Bin Laden,⁹ “and on paper invalidated its subordinate role in relation to al-Qaeda”.¹⁰ The process of splintering culminated during the Syrian civil war. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi saw an opportunity to restore the strength of AQI/ISI by extending the activities to Syria sinking into chaos, but the ideological and tactical differences between the AQ Core and the already autonomous Iraqi branch led to an open split.¹¹

⁴ Leah FARRALL: [How al-Qaeda Works](#), [online] March/April 2011 *Foreign Affairs* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁵ Rivka AZOULAY: [Islamic State franchising](#), [online] April 2015. *Clingendael – Netherlands Institute of International Relations* [2016. 12. 01.] p. 20.

⁶ J. M. BERGER: [The Islamic State vs. al Qaeda](#), [online] 2014. 09. 02. *Foreign Policy* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁷ AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* *ibid.* p. 12.

⁸ AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* *ibid.* p. 15.

⁹ Berger underlines that *bay’at* extends from leader to leader, not from organization to organization. If a leader of a local branch is killed or otherwise removed from play, the new leader has to make a new oath to the AQ’s leader, and this oath must be acknowledged in order to stay in the network. See J. M. BERGER: *The Islamic State vs. ...* *ibid.*

¹⁰ AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* *ibid.* p. 15.

¹¹ For more information about the differences between AQ and IS on *takfir*, the Caliphate, “jihad” and treatment of the enemy, see AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* *ibid.* p. 19.



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Group name	Years	Leaders
Jama'at al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad	1999-2004	Abu Musab al-Zarqawi
Al-Qaeda in Iraq (Al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers)	2004-2006	Abu Musab al-Zarqawi
Majlis al-Shura al-Mujahedeen	2006	Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi
Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)	2006-2013	Abu Omar al-Baghdadi (2006-2010), Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (2010-2013)
Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS)	2013-2014	Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi
Islamic State (IS)	July 2014-	Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

The evolution of IS and its changing leaders¹²

The relationship between the franchise organizations and AQ Core has been problematic or at least ambivalent also for the affiliates themselves. AQ Core has expected the affiliates to pursue “jihad” against the “far enemy”, therefore much less resources remained to the local struggles, which undermined the branches’ local legitimacy.¹³ Thomas Hegghammer highlights that the “jihad” in Saudi Arabia failed not only because of the lacking popular support and the Saudi state’s coercive power, but also because of the decreasing resources for pursuing the global “jihad”. Moreover, the internal debate among militant Islamists on targeting the “far enemy” (Western targets anywhere) or the “near enemy” (the Saudi rulers) also hindered the movement.¹⁴ Jean-Pierre Filiu mentions another example, the case of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). After having sworn allegiance to AQ, Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat renamed itself as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in 2007. With the *bay’at* AQIM has been forced to focus on Western targets, but the organization “has not been able to mobilize many supporters in Europe for global ‘jihad’.”¹⁵

The debate on targets in the early years of AQ

In the last twenty years targeting the West has become the trademark of al-Qaeda, but choosing the idea of global “jihad” against the West was not so obvious until the middle of the 1990s. As Marc Sageman reveals, after the Soviet withdrawal, the Afghan militants started to analyze their common problems with a more global perspective. Everybody agreed that “jihad” or in other words the “liberation of the former Muslim lands under the Christian rule” should be continued, but there was a great dispute on the scenes (in which countries should the “jihad” be continued) and on the targets (who should be attacked). Abdallah Azzam, co-founder of al-Qaeda (died in 1989), promoted a kind of “traditional jihad”. He supported the combat in Palestine, the Philippines and even Spain, but not in Muslim lands like Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.¹⁶ However, among the mujahedin fighters there were many Egyptians who preferred the concept of Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj¹⁷ (died in 1982), whose idea was to fight the “near enemy” in the heart of the Muslim lands. According to Faraj, “to fight an enemy who is near is more important than to fight an enemy who is far”, because fighting the “far enemy” would benefit the interests of local “infidel rule” and fighting imperialism is mostly a waste of time.¹⁸ Plenty of

¹² Source: AZOULAY: Islamic State... ibid. p. 14.

¹³ Ibid. p. 20.

¹⁴ Thomas HEGGHAMMER: *The Failure of Jihad in Saudi Arabia*, [online] 2010. 02. 25. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* [2016. 12. 01.] p. 4-5.

¹⁵ Jean-Pierre FILIU: *Al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb – A Case Study in the Opportunism of Global Jihad*, [online] 2010. 04. 03. *CTC Sentinel*, Vol. 3, Issue 4. [2016. 12. 01.]

¹⁶ Mark SAGEMAN: *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia, 2004, University of Pennsylvania Press, p. 18.

¹⁷ Faraj was a leading figure within the Egyptian militant Islamist organization Tanzim al-Jihad, and was executed in 1982 because he was found guilty in playing a role in the assassination of Anwar Sadat.

¹⁸ SAGEMAN: *Understanding...* ibid. p. 16.; SIMON Róbert: *Az iszlám fundamentalizmus*. Budapest, 2014, Corvina Kiadó, p. 450-451.



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Egyptian mujahedin fighters accepted this idea, seeking help in overthrowing their government by using the Afghan “jihad” resources.

The situation became more complicated at the beginning of the 1990s when the U.S. intervened in the Gulf War and in Somalia, as well as the civil war between the Islamists and the secular government broke out in Algeria, thus the issue of targeting the “far enemy” (the U.S. and France¹⁹) was raised again. The discussion on targets took place on parallel scenes: in Sudan (during AQ’s Sudanese exile), in New York, in Algeria and France.²⁰ According to Sageman, in spite of the American interventions there is no evidence that AQ was targeting the “far enemy” until the middle of the 1990s. Sageman emphasizes that “al-Qaeda concentrated on providing training, logistics and financial support for *jihad à la Azzam* at the periphery of the Muslim world and *jihad à la Faraj* against the “near enemy” in Egypt and Yemen.”²¹ However, “globalists” like Mamdouh Mahmud Salim managed to convince bin Laden to start to fight the “far enemy”, declaring that the main obstacle to the establishment of a Muslim state was the United States. In the question of the targets the Algerian GIA had decided earlier than AQ, and conducted attacks in France favoring the “far enemy” concept,²² so had Ramzi Yousef, who executed the bombing of World Trade Center in 1993. Finally, also Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri also adopted this new strategy.²³

1.2. The Islamic State and Its “Provinces” Outside Syria and Iraq

Outside Syria and Iraq numerous “confirmed” and “unconfirmed” IS branches exist all over the world from the MENA countries through Central and South Asia to the Philippines and Indonesia,²⁴ but only a few of the “confirmed” local organizations are allowed to create a *wilayat* (province). In his 13 November 2014 message, al-Baghdadi announced the creation of five new *wilayats* and confirmed the pledges of *Wilayat al-Jaza’ir* (Algeria), *Wilayat al-Haramayn* (Saudi Arabia), *Wilayat Sanaa* (Yemen), *Wilayat Sinai* (Egypt) and of branches in Libya such as *Wilayat al-Barqah* (Cyrenaica), *Wilayat al-Tarabulus* (Tripolitania) and *Wilayat al-Fizan* (Fezzan). All the branches would constitute integral parts of IS as annexed territories in the future, falling directly under IS command, in addition, the original name of the new provinces would disappear.²⁵ In 2015 another three new *wilayats* were declared: *Wilayat Khorasan* (Afghanistan – Pakistan), *Wilayat Qawqaz* (North Caucasus) and *Wilayat Gharb Afriqiya* (Western Africa), the latter led by the Nigerian Boko Haram – a former AQ affiliate – that pledged allegiance to IS on 7 March 2015.

Among the various IS *wilayats* outside Iraq and Syria the Sinai province and the provinces in Libya are the strongest, because weak state control, marginalized tribal populations, histories of jihadi activism, and porous borders have enabled militants to create their local organizations that pose significant threat to the fragile Egyptian and Libyan state.²⁶

At the same time, the influence of IS provinces should not be overestimated. In Libya, IS militants have to combat other radical groups and the sectarian divide – that could escalate the violence – is not as strong as, for

¹⁹ France supported the Algerian government in the civil war (1992-1997) that is why, the country became target of the Armed Islamic Group (Groupe Islamique Armé, GIA).

²⁰ SAGEMAN: Understanding... *ibid.* p. 18.

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 39.

²² *Ibid.* p. 44.

²³ Sageman emphasizes that the global Salafi “jihad” also includes individuals who, although did not affiliate to the AQ, but pursued the goals of the global “jihad”, such as Ramzi Yousef, who received support for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the 1995 Bojinka plot (the foiled plot was to blow up airplanes simultaneously over the Pacific Ocean). See: *ibid.* p. 64.

²⁴ Jessica Lewis MCFATE – Harleen GAMBHIR – Evan STERLING: [ISIS Global Messaging Strategic Fact Sheet](#), [online] December 2014. *Institute for the Study of War* [2016. 12. 01.], p. 5-6. “Unconfirmed” means that groups, organizations “have only voiced support and not pledged *bay’at*, or if their *bay’at* pledge is unconfirmed, or if their existence is unconfirmed”. See *ibid.* p. 5.

²⁵ Aaron Y. ZELIN: [The Islamic State’s model](#), [online] 2015. 01. 28. *The Washington Post* [2016. 12. 01.]; Azoulay: *Islamic State...* *ibid.* p. 10.

²⁶ AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* *ibid.* p. 22.



instance in Iraq.²⁷ The organization of *Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis* that founded *Wilayat Sinai* is not in more fortunate condition than the IS wings in Libya, because *Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis* has to face one of the strongest armies in the region: the Egyptian military.

Taking a look at IS affiliates in Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, we can say that in spite of the kidnappings, the beheadings and some sporadic attacks, these *wilayats* have not been “too active” so far. The leader of the Algerian *wilayat*, Abdelmalik Gouri, was killed by the Algerian security forces in December 2014, and the group has not been able to strengthen its position so far. The Saudi Arabian and Yemeni IS affiliates also lack the capacity to extend their activities and occupy large territories. In Saudi Arabia, the regime’s security apparatus is one of the main barriers to IS expansion, while in Yemen, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) will not allow the local IS branch to expand its influence.²⁸

Furthermore, Islamic State local affiliates have not yet gained notable successes in Central Asia either. Mairbek Vatchagaev underlines that the combatants of the former Caucasus Emirate – who joined IS – are unable to do anything other than hide from the Russian security services,²⁹ while in Afghanistan the Taliban is still more powerful than the militants of “Khorasan Province”.

1.3. Similarities and Differences Between AQ and IS Franchises

At first sight, there is not too much difference between AQ and IS franchises. Both organizations’ affiliates are the followers of salafism or rather, “salafist jihadism”,³⁰ fighting for the creation of a caliphate. Besides, not only AQ but also IS requires the affiliates to swear oath (*bay’at*), and in exchange for the allegiance, local wings are allowed to use the brand name. In addition, both IS and AQ call Western Muslims (including Muslims in Europe, Canada, Australia and the U.S.) to strike targets in their own countries by any means (“do-it-yourself terrorism” or “lone wolf terrorism”). Al-Qaeda Core and the affiliates have been trying to reach the Muslims living in Western countries for many years.³¹ As for IS, its propaganda machine has also already taken steps to manipulate Western Muslims: on 21 September 2014 Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, spokesman of IS released a statement encouraging “soldiers of the Islamic State” to conduct lone wolf attacks against the West.³² J. M. Berger highlights that one of the most important English-language Muslim radical organizations aligned with the Islamic State is the al-Muhajiroun network in Great Britain, led by the cleric Anjem Choudary. Al-Muhajiroun was banned in 2005, but various successor organizations (e.g. Islam4UK) have been founded, while Choudary himself has been the “primary cheerleader” of militant Islamism: in the 2000s, the cleric glorified al-Qaeda, and now extols the Islamic State. Berger adds that the “al-Muhajiroun network, by any other name, has been one of the most important funnels of British foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq” under the banner of Islamic State. But the Islamic State has other important English-speaking clerics including the Australian Musa Cerantonio and the American Ahmad Musa Jibril.³³

However, apart from similarities, several distinctions can also be discovered between AQ and IS local branches. At first, as Rivka Azoulay notes, by using local franchises against Western targets in Arab countries, AQ’s main aim has been to weaken Western support for Arab regimes which would facilitate AQ’s takeover. Unlike AQ, IS concentrates on gaining territories and maintaining limited governance on the occupied territories (we must point out that IS has not been the first guerrilla/insurgent group which tried to build a “state-like”

²⁷ Kate BRANNEN – Keith JOHNSON: [The Islamic State of Libya Isn’t Much of a State](#), [online] 2015. 02. 17. *Foreign Policy* [2016. 12. 01.] In addition, Libyan forces managed to retake significant areas from IS militants in 2016. See: Thomas JOSCELYN: [Islamic State fighters remain in a few blocks of Sirte, Libya](#), [online] 2016. 11. 19. *The Long War Journal* [2016. 12. 01.]

²⁸ AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* ibid. p. 22.

²⁹ Mairbek VATCHAGAEV: [Islamic State Has Done Little in North Caucasus Despite Winning Over Regional Militants](#), [online] 2015. 09. 10. *The Jamestown Foundation* [2016. 12. 01.]

³⁰ Various terms exist for the most violent form of salafism including “salafist jihadism”, “jihadist salafism” or “revolutionary salafism”.

³¹ Scott SHANE: [A Homemade Style of Terror: Jihadists Push New Tactics](#). *The New York Times*, 2013. 05. 05.; Scott STEWARD: [Jihadism: The Grassroots Paradox](#), [online] 2010. 03. 18. *Stratfor* [2016. 12. 01.]

³² MCFATE – GAMBHIR – STERLING: *ISIS...* ibid. p. 1.; Helen Davidson: [Islamic State’s call to kill westerners has terrorism experts divided](#), [online] 2014. 09. 23. *The Guardian* [2016. 12. 01.]

³³ J. M. BERGER: *Islamic State vs. ...* ibid.



entity in the areas it controlled: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam also managed to provide state functions like revenue collection, policing, judiciary, public services, banking, health care and educational boards sustaining radio and TV stations in Sri Lanka between the 1990s and 2009³⁴). Despite that IS is calling for global “jihad” inciting “every Muslim in the world” against the West, actions are rather localized than globalized,³⁵ in other words, the focus is on the local governments (“near enemy”) and not on the U.S. and Europe: IS does not expect its affiliates to attack the “far enemy”. In this sense, al-Baghdadi did not do anything, just returned to the tactics that AQ had applied until the mid-1990s.³⁶

Another difference is that even though the local wings of AQ are powerful, the central core is weak with the isolated leadership, whilst in the case of IS despite the losses in Iraq and Syria, the central organization is considered strong and the branches weak,³⁷ not possessing large coherent territories. In contrast with IS branches, AQ wings have been controlling vast areas since the beginning of 2000s: large areas are under the rule of AQIM in the Sahel belt, AQAP found safe havens in Yemen’s *Shabwa*, *Abyan* and *Hadramaut* provinces, Al-Qaeda in Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq controlled vast territories in the northern, central, eastern and western parts of the country, al-Shabaab still controls large areas in the South of Somalia, not to mention the Afghan Taliban which has occupied significant parts of Afghanistan.³⁸ In addition, it is worth keeping in mind that IS *wilayats* were created through already existing militant organizations swearing allegiance to al-Baghdadi. “*Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis*, the Derna Youth Islamic Council, *Ansar al-Sharia Libya*’s leader (Abu Ayadh al-Tunisi) and recently Boko Haram have all announced their pledges to IS when they faced a significant crackdown. Pledges presumably allow these groups to benefit from the IS brand name, which enables them to attract more fighters and to access IS resources.”³⁹ Hence, these organizations joined the rising IS because they want to survive by making themselves attractive to the new recruits and by receiving funds from IS.

2. The autonomous clandestine cell system of FAI and ELF

2.1. *The Informal Anarchist Federation – The “New Extreme Left”*

In the 1990s and during the first decade of the new millennium, a generational change occurred within the left-wing terrorism in Italy, Greece and Spain because in parallel with the decline of the Marxist – Leninist terrorism, various insurrectionary anarchist groups were formed. Being an extremist tendency within the anarchist movement, insurrectionary anarchism emerged about 25 years ago, and two major factors helped the rise of this violent ideology: the first was the series of violent protests of the anti-globalist “black bloc” movement during the late 1990s and the early 2000s⁴⁰ (for example in Seattle, Barcelona and Davos), while the second was the global financial crisis in 2008. Francesco Marone highlights that the concepts of Alfredo Maria Bonanno (born in 1937), the most influential theorist of insurrectionary anarchism have been echoed in the acts of contemporary anarchist terrorists. Bonanno’s writings have been translated to other languages and have inspired many activists since the 1980s.⁴¹ As we will see below, the Italian FAI’s ideology and practice reflect Bonanno’s theory about an “informal anarchic organization”; the rejection of any formal or structured mass organization; the clandestine cell system; the use of simple tools to execute the attack; and the creation of an umbrella organization made up of like-minded groups.⁴²

³⁴ See Kristian STOKKE: [Building the Tamil Eelam State: Emerging State Institutions and Forms of Governance in LTTE-controlled Areas in Sri Lanka](#), [online] 2007. 06. 01. *The official website of the Parliament of Australia* [2016. 12. 01.]

³⁵ AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* ibid. p. 21.

³⁶ IS has presumably only tried to compensate the defeats on the Syrian and Iraqi battlefields by perpetrating terrorist acts in Western countries (e.g. November 2015 Paris and July 2016 Nice attack) and does not intend to change the tactics with turning to target also the “far enemy”.

³⁷ Boko Haram is an exception, not to forget that the Nigerian “jihadist” organization was allied with AQ until 2015.

³⁸ Bill ROGGIO: [Debunking the myth that al Qaeda doesn’t seek to control territory like the Islamic State](#), [online] 2015. 09. 10. *The Long War Journal* [2016. 12. 01.]

³⁹ AZOULAY: *Islamic State...* ibid. p. 6.

⁴⁰ Dominic BERGER: [Indonesia’s New Anarchists](#), [online] 2013. 12. 30. *Centre Tricontinental* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁴¹ Francesco MARONE: [A Profile of the Informal Anarchist Federation in Italy](#), [online] 2014. 03. 26. *CTC Sentinel* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁴² Marco BOSCHI: “Criminologia del terrorismo endogeno”. The presentation was held at the headquarters of the Regional Council of Tuscany of the “Order of Journalists” (*Ordine dei giornalisti della Toscana*) in Florence on 29 May 2015. See



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The Informal Anarchist Federation (*Federazione Anarchica Informale*, FAI) is a kind of loose network of individuals and small temporary “affinity groups” (“*gruppi di affinità*”) based on personal relationships. In their open letter, released in December 2003, FAI introduces itself, explaining on the one hand that the group is a federation because of its widespread horizontal structure, and on the other hand, that although the group is not democratic, relationships inside the federation are stable and flexible. Besides, FAI is anarchist, because it wants the destruction of state and capital, opposing to Marxism, because Marxism crushes the possibility of a free society and just substitutes one dominion with another. In addition, FAI informally intends to form an organization that prevents the creation of authoritarian and bureaucratizing mechanisms. In the open letter, members declare that they are not an “enlightened minority” and the organization is not a vanguard, furthermore that “the informal organization is formed of groups and individuals that do not know one another.” Finally, members are not full-time terrorists, because “whoever takes part in FAI is a militant only when preparing and carrying out an action.” Moreover, FAI laid down rules based on three key points: revolutionary solidarity with arrested or fugitive comrades; self-organized revolutionary campaigns; and communication between groups and individuals through actions and through the channels of the movement.⁴³

Although the organization has been active for more than 10 years, we do not know much about it. As the open letter demonstrates, FAI has never been a monolithic organization. Originally, it was founded as an umbrella organization of four already existing groups: Cooperative of Hand-Made Fire and Related Items (*Cooperativa Artigiana Fuoco e Affini*); July 20 Brigade (*Brigata 20 luglio*); Cells Against the Capital’s Jail and its Jailers and (Prison) Cells or in other words the “Five C’s” (*Cellule contro il Capitale, il Carcere, i suoi Carcerieri e le sue Celle*); and International Solidarity (*Solidarietà Internazionale*). All four groups had been responsible for delivering more than a dozen of primitive bombs and letter bombs between 1999-2003 in Bologna, Genoa, Milan and Rome (Global Terrorism Database and Rand Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents have a few records in connection with the pre-existing groups of FAI).⁴⁴ After 2003, a number of Italian micro-groups and cells⁴⁵ have joined the informal anarchists. Although there are no exact data about the number of FAI members, according to Marone’s research, the Italian core organization is composed of about 50-250 people.⁴⁶

The first terrorist act executed under the label of FAI took place in December 2003 when two rudimentary bombs were placed outside Romano Prodi’s private residence in Bologna.⁴⁷ In the following more than 10 years a great amount of letter and parcel bombs were sent to politicians, institutions representing the Italian state or the European Union. Besides, FAI also attacked the authorities, the radical right (Northern League) as well as – in the name of solidarity with the arrested or dead foreign anarchist fellows – the embassies of foreign countries (Chile, Greece and Switzerland) in Rome. Since the beginning of the 2010s the spectrum of targets has been widened: in 2011 a parcel bomb exploded at the headquarters of Swissnuclear, the Swiss nuclear industry association, wounding two employees, and one year later Roberto Adinolfi, chief executive of an Italian nuclear

[here](#) the draft of the lecture published on *SlideShare* on 1 June 2015. For Bonanno, see particularly pages 67 and 85-89, including citations from Bonanno’s works (*Anarchismo insurrezionalista, Teoria e pratica dell’insurrezione, La gioia armata, and L’ipotesi armata*).

⁴³ MARONE: A Profile of... *ibid.*; [Lettera aperta al movimento anarchico ed antiautoritario](#), [online] 2004. *Agence Presse Associative* [2016. 12. 01.]; [Open Letter to the Anarchist and Anti-Authoritarian Movement](#), [online] July 2007 *Escalation* [2016. 12. 01.] (The English version of the open letter) pp. 3-4.

⁴⁴ [The list of the attacks of Five C’s \(CCCCC\)](#), [online] 2016 *Global Terrorism Database* [2016. 12. 01.]; [Records for International Solidarity](#), [online] 2016. *Global Terrorism Database* [2016. 12. 01.]; [Terrorism Incident Database – Incident Incident on 16 07 2001](#), [online] 2016. *Rand Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents* [2016. 12. 01.]; [Terrorism Incident Database – Incident Incident on 09 12 2002](#), [online] 2016 *Rand Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents* [2016. 12. 01.].

⁴⁵ Expressing their solidarity, these micro-groups and cells often name themselves after anarchist comrades who are behind bars, or died, or were injured during an attack (for instance “Nucleo Olga” [referring to Olga Ekonomidou], “Revolutionary Cell Lambros Foundas”, “Mauricio Morales Cell” etc.).

⁴⁶ MARONE: A Profile of... *ibid.*; Boschi: *Criminologia del terrorismo endogeno*, *ibid.* p. 68-70. For the very early years of FAI, see Marco BOSCHI: *Criminologia del terrorismo anarco-insurrezionalista*. Rome, 2005, Aracne, p. 34-48; 112-113.

⁴⁷ Vittorio MONTI: [Bologna, esplosioni sotto casa Prodi](#), [online] 2003. 12. 22. *Corriere della Sera* [2016. 12. 01.]



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power company *Ansaldo Nucleare*, was shot in the knee.⁴⁸ The intercepted conversations of the FAI member Alessandro Settepani have proved the informal anarchists' wide spectrum of targets and tools: "For me, any attack is good" ... "If you carry one out, if you can do it... you can get to work on a miserable ATM or on the Parliament itself... I mean, you can blow up the Parliament, or you can deface it, for instance... it's still an attack. The main thing is that the action should be direct! ... But attacks should be widespread and should not just focus on a specific sector".⁴⁹

2.1.1. *The attempt to establish an "International Anarchist Front"*

Since around 2011, FAI and the Greek Conspiracy of Cells of Fire have tried to set up a so-called International Revolutionary Front (*Fronte Rivoluzionario Internazionale*, FRI). The plan is to coordinate the attacks of anarchist groups and cells around the world creating a "diffuse, horizontal structure of informal groups worldwide, which are not in direct contact, but communicate by carrying out direct action in the framework of specific campaigns".⁵⁰ Several extremist and terrorist acts have been committed under the banner of FAI in Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Mexico, Chile, Argentina and Indonesia so far, but according to the experts, on the one hand, these small groups and cells do not have any direct links to the Italian core membership, and on the other hand, the attacks were not as sophisticated in the technological sense as those in Italy.⁵¹

2.2. *Single issue violence and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF)*

In connection with the violent acts carried out within the framework of autonomous clandestine cell system, the following section not only examines anarchists, but also the groups relating themselves to so-called *single issue* violence.⁵² Several definitions and descriptions have sprung up about this kind of violence. According to Rachel Monaghan, *single issue* violence (including not only extremism, but also terrorism) "seeks not the overthrow of governments but rather the rectification of a perceived wrong or grievance",⁵³ while Paul Wilkinson sees that „single-issue groups, such as animal rights extremists linked to ALF (Animal Liberation Front), aim to change one aspect of government policy and social behavior rather than to remodel the political and socio-economic order as a whole”.⁵⁴

The most important representatives of *single issue* violence are Animal Liberation Front (ALF), Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Army of God (AOG).⁵⁵ ALF activists target companies and individuals associated with animal abuse or exploitation, while ELF, according to the North American ELF Press Office, is "an international, underground movement consisting of autonomous groups of people who carry out direct action in defense of the planet."⁵⁶ Similarly to ALF, ELF also shares the ideology that modern capitalism is the most important threat to the environment, conducts attacks against companies or certain sectors of industry accused of exploiting the Earth. The third group, the Army of God, is rather distinct in nature from the previous organizations being an ultra-radical Christian anti-abortion organization or group that uses violence to combat abortion in the United States.

⁴⁸ Silke KOLTROWITZ: [Anarchist group says behind Swiss parcel bomb](#), [online] 2011. 04. 01. *Reuters* [2016. 12. 01.]; [Rivendicata la gambizzazione di Adinolfi](#), [online] 2012. 05. 12. *RAI Giornale Radio* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁴⁹ Giovanni BIANCONI: [The Life and Ideology of The New Terrorists](#), [online] 2012. 06. 14. *Corriere della Sera* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁵⁰ [EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report \(TE-SAT\) 2013](#), [online] 2014. *Europol* [2016. 12. 01.] p. 32-33.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Single issue* political violence, especially the violent acts of the radical animal rights and environmentalist movements, is considered terrorism in the United States while in Europe not every *single issue* attack is regarded terrorism. Due to the non-unequivocal classification, we avoid the label "terrorism" in connection with the *single issue* violence.

⁵³ Rachel MONAGHAN: Not Quite Terrorism: Animal Rights Extremism in the United Kingdom. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2013. No. 11. pp. 934.

⁵⁴ Paul WILKINSON: *Terrorism versus Democracy*. New York, 2011, Routledge (Third edition), p. 7.

⁵⁵ ALF was founded in 1976, ELF split from its more moderate mother organization (Earth First!) in 1992, while AOG started its activities at the beginning of the 1980s.

⁵⁶ [North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office \(NAELFPO\) has returned](#), [online] 2016 *North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office* [2016. 12. 01.]



2.2.1. The concept of leaderless resistance

All three organizations are umbrella organizations lacking hierarchy and centralized authority structure. Furthermore, activists operate in autonomous cells (or alone) and choose their own targets and methods. The *modus operandi* is often called *leaderless resistance* involving “a radical movement composed of atomistic cells of like-minded activists rather than a distinct organization”.⁵⁷ Leaderless resistance was introduced by the American white supremacist Louis Beam who wrote about this model first in 1983 and in 1992 republished the theory in the magazine *The Seditonist*⁵⁸: “Utilizing the Leaderless Resistance concept, all individuals and groups operate independently of each other, and never report to a central headquarters or single leader for direction or instruction, as would those who belong to a typical pyramid organization.”⁵⁹ The concept, or rather the tactics themselves became popular not only within white supremacist and other right-wing extremist lone wolves, but also among *single issue* organizations and cells, as well as the radical Muslim independent micro-groups and lone wolf individuals living in Western countries.⁶⁰

Although ALF, ELF and AOG are non-hierarchical organizations, their activists have a clear political objective, furthermore they are not full-time terrorists, and often engage in both legal and illegal activities.⁶¹ The latter have included vandalism, arson attacks, and the use of explosive devices against their targets.⁶² Despite the fact that Army of God is an essential part of *single issue* extremism, anti-abortion violence is closer to the lone wolf tactics than to the autonomous clandestine cell violence. That is why, hereinafter, the study will focus only on ALF and ELF, and even more specifically on the latter.

2.2.2. The structure and targets of Earth Liberation Front

Michael Loadenthal highlights that in the past decades, ALF and ELF have further de-territorialized (they appeared among others in Australia, Canada, Chile, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, Sweden and the UK and the USA) and led to the formation of at least three hundred similarly-styled groups.⁶³ The ELF modelled itself after the ALF, and also their targets are very similar: ELF attacks facilities and companies involved in logging, genetic engineering, home building, automobile sales, energy production and distribution, research centers, but the activists have also burned down sport utility and private business vehicles, ski resorts and farms. The leaderless resistance structure is suitable for both the activists and the new members. The decentralized non-hierarchical structure helps the micro-groups to prevent the infiltration of authorities, and facilitate the cell replication, while the *modus operandi* is not unknown for new members because anarchist groups – in which many ELF members are also active – operate in a similar way. Moreover, cells do not know each other, existing cells cannot be merged,⁶⁴ and the organization encourage new members to form their own cell.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ MONAGHAN: Not Quite Terrorism... *ibid.* p. 939.

⁵⁸ Simson L. GARFINKEL: [Leaderless resistance today](#), [online] Issue 2003/3. *First Monday* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁵⁹ Louis BEAM: [Leaderless Resistance](#), [online] Issue 12, February 1992. *The Seditonist* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁶⁰ Nevertheless, ALF was founded 7 years earlier than *Leaderless Resistance* was first published, thus the first violent movement that used the method of leaderless resistance was the animal rights extremism.

⁶¹ Rachel MONAGHAN: Single-Issue Terrorism: A Neglected Phenomenon? *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2000. No. 4. pp. 259-260; MONAGHAN: Not Quite Terrorism... *ibid.* p. 939; [History of the Army of God](#), [online] 2014. 04. 01. *National Abortion Federation* [2016. 12. 01.]; [Army of God](#), [online] 2016 *START – National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism* [2016. 12. 01.]

⁶² Radical environmentalists, animal rights and anti-abortion activists destroy, burn down or explode their targets, indeed, “soldiers” of Army of God harass and sometimes injure or even kill doctors and clinical staff.

⁶³ Michael LOADENTHAL: [The Earth Liberation Front: A Social Movement Analysis](#), [online] Issue 2013/2. *Radical Criminology* [2016. 12. 01.] p. 19.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p. 26.

⁶⁵ [Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front](#), [online] 2001. *North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office* [2016. 12. 01.] p. 15.

The ALF has very similar tactics. As Robin Webb, press officer for the Animal Liberation Press Office declared in an interview: “Anyone, so long as they follow at least a vegetarian – but preferably vegan – lifestyle, can go out and undertake an action that falls within those policies and claim it as the Animal Liberation Front. There is no hierarchy; there are no leaders. There is just a compulsion to follow your heart in pursuit of justice. That is why the A.L.F. cannot be smashed, it cannot be effectively infiltrated, it cannot be stopped. You, each and every one of you: you are the A.L.F.” See [Staying on](#)



In addition, Loadenthal reveals that ELF membership appears on two levels: the covert cell level and the public support level. On the underground level, activists do the pre-operational reconnaissance, surveillance, develop and construct weapons systems, execute the attacks, and announce the actions to support groups and media while the public support (aboveground) level (including press offices) publicizes the attacks in the media, coordinate aid to imprisoned cell members, and developed sympathetic propaganda.⁶⁶

2.3. *The Informal Anarchist Federation and ELF: similarities and differences*

Having observed the structure, methods, targets, aims and communication strategy of FAI and ELF, this section points out the similarities first. First, both organizations have built up a decentralized horizontal structure with small groups of like-minded people. Second, both informal anarchists and radical environmentalists want to strike their targets by “direct actions” using simple tools and methods including vandalism, sabotage, arson and small home-made bombs. Third, despite that FAI terrorist cells attack primarily the state and its authorities, there are overlaps among the targets of anarchists and radical environmentalists. Indeed, in recent years, ELF cells have taken part in numerous attacks claimed by FAI throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas. FAI might want to increase the number of activists and extend the base of supporters, and thus anarchists open towards radical environmentalists by broadening the scale of targets. As a result, not only ELF, but FAI has also destroyed petrol stations, building constructions, relay stations for mobile phones as well as electric pilons. Cooperation among informal anarchists and single issue organizations is palpable. FAI claimed responsibility for an outrage in Chile on the website *325.nostate.net*⁶⁷ in Spanish,⁶⁸ and the English translation of the original post appeared on the website of the ALF magazine *Bite Back* three days later.⁶⁹ Furthermore, a series of attacks (vandalism and arsons) occurred near Moscow in 2011. In a communique posted on *Bite Back*, the local cell of ELF claimed responsibility for the attacks and the message is signed by “ELF Russia, Informal Anarchist Federation / International Network of Action and Solidarity”.⁷⁰

However, there are differences, too. First, although ELF’s sister organization, ALF has organized physical attacks on employees of companies associated with the suffering of animals several times, ELF rather focuses on damaging property and not on harming people. On the contrary, the anarchists of FAI do not hesitate attacking and injuring people (see for example the Adinolfi case, or the various parcel and letter bombs). Second, FAI intends to destroy the entire political, constitutional, economic, social and judicial system, while ELF aims to change only one aspect of governmental policy and social behavior by using violence. Third, the propaganda machine of ELF and ALF is more sophisticated and well-organized than that of FAI. Radical environmentalists and animal rights activists have had press offices, websites, printed and online magazines, while FAI members post their communiques and publish their calls only on *325.nostate.org*, *Indymedia.org*, or on other anarchist, anti-globalist partner websites, hence, FAI propaganda has hardly reached the mainstream media.

3. Conclusions

Both global “jihadists”, and insurrectionary anarchists and radical environmentalists have been aspiring to create a common ideological platform expanding their activities to other countries, at the same time, each of them are trying to reach their goals in different ways.

Al-Qaeda and Islamic State expect fidelity and subjection from franchises by requiring them to pledge allegiance, and, in exchange for loyalty, branches can use and benefit from the core organization’s brand name, and they can access their resources. Regarding the franchises, the most important distinction between IS and AQ

[Target and Going the Distance: An Interview with U.K. A.L.F. Press Officer Robin Webb](#), [online] Issue 22, Fall 2003. *No Compromise* [2016. 12. 04.]

⁶⁶ LOADENTHAL: *The Earth Liberation Front...* ibid. p. 15-16.

⁶⁷ The *325.nostate.net* is anti-fascist, anti-capitalist, anti-globalist and anarchist in nature.

⁶⁸ [Proyecto Fénix 2015: Ataque a empresa de explotación animal. Por la liberación humana, animal y de la tierra \(Chile\)](#), [online] 2015. 04. 08. *325.nostate.net* [2016. 12. 04.]

⁶⁹ [Bite Back Magazine](#), [online] 2015. 04. 11. *Directaction.info* [2016. 12. 04.]

⁷⁰ [Bite Back Magazine](#), [online] 2011. 06. 13. *Directaction.info* [2016. 12. 04.]



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is that having a more “flexible” ideology than AQ, Islamic State does not want to exercise total control over the branches. Moreover, unlike AQ, IS does not put the burden of attacking the “far enemy” on local affiliates.

Contrary to “jihadists”, the core organization of FAI and ELF do not try to exercise any control over the various like-minded groups. Autonomous clandestine cells have received a much greater liberty from their own central organization than the “jihadist” franchises. Nevertheless, neither ELF Core nor FAI Core could direct the cells, of course, every FAI or ELF group has to accept the guidelines, but apart from this, there is no other constraints for the cells. Furthermore, the core organizations do not know the numerous small groups, made up of only 2-6 people. Therefore, this decentralized horizontal structure cannot be considered a network in the strict sense. In my opinion, there is no “worldwide ELF, ALF or FAI network” only lots of like-minded groups or cells that carry out small-scale violent acts under a common banner. This is not altered by the fact that FAI has attempted to establish an “international revolutionary front”, because even if the informal anarchists set up this kind of “front”, the only thing they can do is to extend the decentralized horizontal structure to even more countries but the central organization in Italy would be unable to coordinate anything, not the mention that anarchists themselves a priori refuse any authority and regulation.

The decentralized autonomous clandestine cell system has both advantages and disadvantages. As Michael Loadenthal writes in connection with ELF and the leaderless resistance, regional and national mobilization is a very resource-intensive activity,⁷¹ while leaderless resistance and the autonomous clandestine cell system have proved to be much cheaper, do not require any coordination from the core organization, and it is more difficult for the authorities to infiltrate into a clandestine cell than into a pyramidal organization. At the same time, the disadvantage is the decentralization itself. For example, ELF “lacks the ability to prevent cells from committing lethal actions and claiming them in the movement’s name”⁷² and FAI – as we mentioned above – could also do hardly anything in order to control its transnational cells. In addition, Alex P. Schmid notes that “decentralized command and control arrangements make it difficult for organizations to articulate a coherent political platform, while decentralized operational arrangements make coordinating sophisticated terrorist campaigns difficult.”⁷³

Due to the tighter control, the franchise system of the “jihadists” is more effective and dangerous than the uncontrollable and underorganized autonomous clandestine cell system. AQ and IS affiliates are not collections of like-minded part-time terrorists but organizations consisted of hundreds or thousands of full-time insurgents and terrorists. Moreover, a centrally managed propaganda with media centers and videos uploaded to internet, as well as violent acts committed following a deliberate strategy are more impressive than sporadic attacks followed by short communiques that are illustrated with some pictures on Indymedia, 325.nostate.net or Bite Back Magazine. Although propaganda of ELF and ALF are more organized than those of FAI, media and internet activities of *single issue* groups are far behind the “jihadist” propaganda machine. However, we also must point out that the circumstances are more favorable for “jihadists” than for left-wing terrorists and *single issue* radicals because among other things the armed conflicts, the lack of state control, as well as their embeddedness and some kind of popular support enable “jihadists” to operate more freely in Asia and Africa than the extremists of FAI and ELF in Europe or in the Americas.

Regarding the “jihadists”, the question arises, whether AQ or IS has a more viable franchise system? Apart from the fact that AQ Core stresses targeting the “far enemy” which is very resource-intensive for the affiliates, and that local branches have sometimes proved to be “unreliable” due to infightings (AQIM, al-Shabaab) or disobedient (Al-Qaeda in Iraq), the franchise system of AQ is indisputably more effective than that of IS because it is not the strength of the center but the stability of local wings that is of greater importance, and AQ’s branches are still powerful and well-organized. No matter what happens to the leadership hiding somewhere in Pakistan, the affiliates will survive it. Contrary to AQ affiliates, IS wings are currently weak and vulnerable, moreover several already existing organizations (the Egyptian *Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis*, the Libyan Derna Youth Islamic Council etc.) joined IS only because they had faced crackdowns by other militias or government authorities.

⁷¹ LOADENTHAL: The Earth Liberation Front... *ibid.* p. 39.

⁷² *Ibid.* p. 27.

⁷³ Bradley MCALLISTER – Alex P. SCHMID: Theories of Terrorism. In: Alex P. SCHMID (ed.): *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*. London, 2011, Routledge, p. 242.



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Furthermore, unlike local branches, only the Iraqi-Syrian core organization holds large coherent territories,⁷⁴ not to mention that local AQ affiliates in Yemen, Somalia, North Africa or Central Asia will do everything to impede IS branches to expand their influence.⁷⁵ For the abovementioned reasons, it is highly likely that IS wings, including Boko Haram, will either gradually fade away or merge with other militant groups while the central organization in Syria and/or in Iraq will survive the local affiliates.

In sum, we can state that currently al-Qaeda has the most dangerous and best organized network among the observed militant organizations. “Networks” of insurrectionary anarchists and *single issue* extremists are too loose and weak to obtain resounding success. IS aims to imitate al-Qaeda by copying the idea of developing a franchise system and partially exploiting the AQ infrastructure, but in spite of some early success, Islamic State’s local affiliates are not strong enough at present. Even though AQ’s “popularity” has decreased in recent years, as the 7 January 2015 Paris and 20 November 2015 Bamako hotel attacks demonstrated,⁷⁶ the power and influence of AQ franchises and affiliated groups should not be underestimated.

⁷⁴ Even the vast majority of foreign fighters reinforce the IS Core and not the local wings, moreover it seems that the November 2015 Paris attacks were planned in Syria and organized in Europe (and not in one of the various IS “provinces”) with the help of radicalized French and Belgian Muslims.

⁷⁵ For instance, Shabaab aims to nip any concurrency in the bud by killing or detaining the fighters who gravitate to IS. See Thomas JOSCELYN: [Shabaab leadership fights Islamic State’s attempted expansion in East Africa](#), [online] 2015. 10. 26. *The Long War Journal* [2016. 12. 04.]

⁷⁶ The killings at the headquarters of Charlie Hebdo were linked to AQAP, while Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako was attacked by the militants of Al-Mourabitoun in cooperation with AQIM. For the latter, see: Rukmini CALLIMACHI – Nabih BULOS: [Mali Hotel Attackers Are Tied to an Algerian Qaeda Leader](#), [online] 2015. 11. 21. *The New York Times* [2016. 12. 04.]



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