

TRANSNATIONAL TERRORIST FRANCHISING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA:  
THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by  
ANASTASSIA BUĐDAY

Department of  
International Relations  
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University  
Ankara  
August 2016



**To my Family**

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THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences  
of  
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

ANASTASSIA BUĞDAY

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THE DEPARTMENT OF  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY  
ANKARA

August 2016

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in (International Relations).

-----  
Assist. Prof. Dr. Nil Seda Şatana  
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in (International Relations).

-----  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çerağ Esra Çuhadar  
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in (International Relations).

-----  
Assist. Prof. Dr. Clemens Maximilian Hoffmann  
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in (International Relations).

-----  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jóhanna Kristín Birnir  
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in (International Relations).

-----  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Haldun Yalçinkaya  
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

-----  
Prof. Dr. Halime Demirkan  
Director

## ABSTRACT

### TRANSNATIONAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS AND FRANCHISING: THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Buğday, Anastassia

PhD., Department of International Relations

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nil S. Şatana

August 2016

In the past decade or so, several major franchises took place between a transnational terrorist organization – such as Al Qaeda and Islamic State – and domestic terrorist organizations. By adopting Al Qaeda's brand name, Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Fighting was not only able to survive through counterterrorism measures enforced by the Algerian government, but also to reshape itself into a transnational terrorist group extending its influence to other countries. This dissertation argues that terrorist organizations are like business firms. Whatever their proclaimed goal is, their ultimate aim is survival. Terrorist organizations apply diverse strategies, in order to 'stay in business,' and franchise being one of them. By applying Zelinsky and Shubik's (2009) typological framework, this work analyzes the

motivations of terrorist organizations, both domestic and transnational, for involvement in the franchise strategy. This framework characterizes franchise as centralized in terms of operations, while being decentralized in terms of resources. This dissertation posits that religion and natural resources play an essential role in this framework: religious motivations are important for the centralization of operations, while the presence of natural resources guarantees that a new affiliate will be able to finance its operations even in cases when the parent organization is unable or unwilling to provide financial support. To explore the relationship between organizational survival strategy, religion and natural resources this work first compiles a dataset on all Sub-Saharan African countries and then conducts both a quantitative descriptive analysis, as well as a qualitative analysis of the case of Nigeria.

Keywords: Franchise, Natural Resources, Religion, Sub-Saharan Africa, Transnational Terrorism.

## ÖZET

### ULUSLARARASI TERÖRİST ÖRGÜTLER VE BAYİLİK: DİN VE DOĞAL KAYNAKLARIN ETKİLERİ

Buğday, Anastassia

Doktora, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Nil S. Şatana

Ağustos 2016

Son on yılda ve öncesinde, El-Kaide ve İslam Devleti gibi uluslararası terörist örgütler ile yerel terörist örgütler arasında birtakım başlıca bağlantılar yer bulmuştur. Cezayirli Selefi Vaaz ve Savaş Grubu, El-Kaide'nin marka adını alarak sadece Cezayir yönetiminin aldığı sert terör önlemlerine karşı varlığını sürdürebilmekle kalmamış, ayrıca etkisini başkaca ülkelere genişleten bir uluslararası terörist grup olmak üzere kendisini yeniden şekillendirebilmiştir. Bu tezde terörist örgütlerin ticari firmalara olan benzerliği ele alınmaktadır. Beyan edilen amaçları ne olursa olsun, bu örgütlerin nihai hedefleri varlıklarını idame ettirebilmektir. Terörist örgütler, “kepenk indirmemek” için, franchise (bayilik) de bunlardan biri olmak üzere çeşitli stratejiler uygulamaktadırlar. Bu çalışma, Zelinsky ve Shubik'in (2009) tipolojik

çerçevesini uygulayarak, hem yerel hem de uluslararası terörist örgütlerin bayilik stratejisine olan iştiraklerine ilişkin motivasyonlarını incelemektedir. Bu çerçeve, bayiliği operasyonel açıdan merkezi olarak, kaynaklar açısından ise merkezi olmayan şekilde nitelendirmektedir. Bu tezdeki varsayıma göre bahsi geçen çerçevede din ve doğal kaynaklar olmazsa olmaz bir rol oynamaktadır: din operasyonların merkezileşmesi için önemliyken, doğal kaynakların varlığı merkez örgütün mali destek sağlayamaması ya da sağlamak istememesi durumunda yeni bir katılımcının kendi operasyonlarını finanse edebilmesini garanti etmektedir. Örgütsel varlık idame stratejisi, din ve doğal kaynaklar arasındaki ilişkiyi sınamak için, bu çalışma ilk olarak tüm Sahra altı Afrika ülkeleri üzerine bir veri kümesi derleyip nicel tahlil yapmış, daha sonra Nijerya'nın durumu üzerine bir nitel tahlil yürütmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bayilik, Din, Doğal Kaynaklar, Sahra altı Afrika, Uluslararası Terörizm.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AQI	Al Qaeda in Iraq
AQIM (AQLIM)	Al Qaeda in the (Lands of) Islamic Maghreb
AQAP	Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
BAAD	Big, Allied and Dangerous Dataset
GIA	Armed Islamic Group
CSCW	Centre for the Study of Civil War
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
EFL	Earth Liberation Front
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FSI	Fragile State Index
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IS	Islamic State
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

ISI	Islamic State of Iraq
LRA	Lord Resistance Army
MPLA	Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MUJWA	Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa
START	National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
NDPVF	Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force
NDV	Niger Delta Vigilante
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PLO	Palestine Liberations Organization
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
GSPC	Salafist Group for Preaching and Fighting/Combat
SCAD	Social Conflict in Africa Database
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TTP	Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan
UN	United Nations
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

“When buying uncut stones, we need to look at their shape, color, and size /.../ No two stones are the same, nor do they cost the same amount. /.../ The bright white color is the one that is most sought after and is more expensive” (Farah, 2004: 63). This is one of the notes found in Wadih el Hage's possession upon his arrest in 1998. El Hage was a naturalized U.S. citizen of Lebanese descent and Osama bin Laden's personal secretary.

Another note, which was produced during the trial for el Hage's role in the U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, sheds even more light on a similar matter:

“The tanzanite are not identical. He wants to make a pair of earrings, a ring and necklace. It has to have same color” adding to the note the name of the jeweler in San Fransisco and his willingness to come to Nairobi to buy the raw stones and pay somewhere between \$60 and \$100 per gram (Farah, 2004: 65).

Tanzanite is a very rare stone; the only place where it is mined is a five-square-mile patch of graphite rock in Northeast Tanzania. Its popularity increased with the release of the *Titanic* movie. In 1990s, not

only Muslim radicalism was on the rise in Tanzania, but the tanzanite trade was also being overtaken by Muslim fundamentalists, who were said to “have established a mafia to dominate the trade” (Block & Pearl, 2001). Al Qaeda’s dealings in tanzanite were similarly discussed in the trial relating to Kenya and Tanzania bombings.

This passage was the initial motivation for the research conducted in this dissertation. The revelation that transnational terrorist organizations, such as Al Qaeda had a whole ‘rulebook’ or guidelines for buying and selling natural resources was thought provoking. The second motivation was the fact that after several years of being Al Qaeda’s franchise in Iraq, al-Zarqawi’s organization went rogue and subsequently became the most ‘notorious’ terrorist organization of the international *jihad* – the Islamic State. Taken that it decided to part ways with its ‘parent,’ the question that arose was what was this organization’s motivation to become Al Qaeda’s franchise in the first place?

Despite extensive media coverage and engrossment of the situation, there is scarce research on whether terrorist cooperation is widespread in the world. Thus, the question this dissertation asks is what are the criteria by which transnational terrorist organizations, such as Al Qaeda and now the Islamic State, decide which group to affiliate with or franchise?

In order to answer these questions, this dissertation utilizes Zelinsky and Shubik’s (2009) typological framework that differentiates

between four types of terrorist organizations, including brand, franchise, venture capital and hierarchy. The franchise model is applied in this work to Sub-Saharan Africa. A franchise strategy is characterized by the centrality of operations and decentralization of resources. I argue that religion is an essential factor for the centrality of operations to be viable. Even if two terrorist organizations are considered Islamist, it does not automatically mean that their religious motivations are the same. I argue that convergence of religious motivation of both a 'parent' and its franchise is essential for the ultimate franchise to take place.

The second important factor is the presence of natural resources in a state where the future franchise originates. According to Zelinsky and Shubik's framework, decentralization of resources means that a new franchise has to be able to finance its own operations. The scholars argue that the parent organization does not provide financial assistance to its franchise. Thus, the presence of natural resources provides a guarantee that the franchise will be able to finance itself through illicit activities, such as, for instance, oil theft. The effects of commodities theft, including oil, on the growth of a terrorist organization was most recently exemplified by the Islamic State and its oil exploitation in Iraq and Syria.

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. The following chapter presents the review of the literature on the relevant topics. The *Literature Review Chapter* is further divided in accordance with

the argument put forward in this dissertation. For such purposes, it first looks at the literature on terrorist organizations as rational actors, then proceeds with the evaluation of literature on cooperation between terrorist groups. Further two sections look at religion as a shared identity and motivation, and natural resources as a source of terrorism financing. The rest of the literature review chapter looks into possible alternative explanations for why transnational terrorist attacks occur in Sub-Saharan Africa and what the likely reasons for cooperation between terrorist organizations are. In addition, literature on grievances as factors that may cause transnational terrorist organizations to choose a particular domestic terrorist organization, as well as the distribution of resource (or social inequality) and recruitment are examined. This part of the literature review includes sections on social, cultural and historical causes of terrorism, as well as the presence of civil conflict and civil unrest. The final section of this chapter elaborates on the concept of state failure or fragility, and the extant arguments on the connection between transnational terrorist organizations and the level of state development. This part is essential as a large section of research on this topic maintains that failed states, including, for instance, Somalia, present the most fertile ground for terrorists due to nearly complete absence of law enforcement practices, porous borders and prevalent corruption.

*Chapter III* introduces the theoretical framework utilized in this dissertation and expands in detail on the main argument. This chapter

is divided into several sections: the first one starts with the explanation of the organizational approach to the study of terrorist behavior, which contends that the ultimate goal of such organizations is survival.

In order to ensure durability, terrorist organizations apply different strategies, including changing their ideology and/or aims. This dissertation focuses on the franchise strategy, which it argues is one of the ways how both transnational and domestic terrorist organizations extend their influence, justify their continued existence and, thus, survive. The process of franchise is not an overnight one, rather it is a slow progression that starts with affiliation and further develops into a franchise, in the presence of two essential factors: religion and natural resources. Thus, I later operationalize franchise as both informal affiliation and official franchise.

The theory chapter further discusses a typological framework put forward by Zelinsky and Shubik (2009). This dissertation expands on the franchise model arguing that religion and natural resources are essential enabling factors in the process of terrorist franchising. Religion here is understood not as a cause of terrorism rather an instrumental tool that allows terrorist organizations to motivate and recruit new members. In addition, religion has a unifying role in franchise as it eases the alignment of goals of a new affiliate with the ones of its parent organization. Borrowing from Seul's (1999) work, this dissertation argues that convergence of religious motivations allows for the establishment of a clear hierarchy in the new parent-franchise

relationship, which is essential for the centrality of operations that characterize the franchise model.

The existence of natural resources in a state of affiliate's origin, on the other hand, is essential as franchise entails the decentralization of resources, which means that affiliate groups have to come up with their own funding. I argue that even though transnational terrorist organizations, like Al Qaeda, sometimes do provide financial support to domestic affiliates, their deliberations on whether or not to affiliate with a particular group are driven in part by the existence of potentially lootable natural resources. Their presence is a guarantee of sorts that the new franchise will be able to continue its operations even when there is no financial support from above. Theoretical chapter also explores previous Al Qaeda franchises, both successful and failed, in Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Algeria.

In *Chapter IV, the Methodology Chapter* discusses the data set used in the present dissertation including all variables, their definitions, operationalization and the coding process. It concludes with the evaluation of the quantitative analysis of the compiled data.

This dissertation uses the Global Terrorism Database (2013: 7) definition of terrorism as “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.” Two major databases were merged together for this project. I used the GTD coding of all terrorist incidents between 1970 and 2012. Second, I

coded all terrorist incidents in Sub-Saharan African countries for motivation and types of terrorist attack for the same years as a research assistant for the Birnir & Satana's "One God for All?" project, funded by the Department of Homeland Security under a START grant.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, we asked permission to use Victor Asal and Karl Rethemeyer's Big Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) dataset on alliances of terrorist organizations. However, since we were not able to obtain the data set as of the submission date of the dissertation,<sup>2</sup> I coded a variable showing whether domestic terrorist organizations that perpetrated an attack in the last 2 years of the dataset (in 2011 and 2012) were affiliated with and/or franchised by Al Qaeda or Al Qaeda in Iraq (later IS).<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, the methodology chapter discussed the limitations of the analyses.

Results of the analysis are shown through simple descriptive statistics, correlations and graphs. This chapter looks at all 45 Sub-Saharan African states<sup>4</sup> and shows the results of descriptive statistics of the hypotheses derived from the theoretical chapter.

The following chapter, *Chapter V*, is the case study of Nigeria. This country was chosen for several reasons: firstly, Nigeria is the most

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<sup>1</sup> Birnir, J., & Satana, N.S. (2016). *One God for All? Fundamentalism and Group Radicalization*. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/research-projects/one-god-all-fundamentalism-and-group-radicalization>.

<sup>2</sup> The authors courteously agreed to sharing their data, however, we did not receive the dataset on time for the dissertation submission.

<sup>3</sup> AQI later on became IS and because the GTD data used here ends in 2012, AQI acronym is mostly used.

<sup>4</sup> For a complete list of Sub-Saharan African states, see Appendix C.

populous state in Sub-Saharan Africa with more than 250 diverse ethnic groups. It also holds vast natural resources, including oil and gas. Oil theft in particular is now identified by some as a new form of terrorism (Adugbo, 2013), providing the attackers with significant funds. Nigeria also scores high on the Fragile States Index, ranging from *high warning* to *high alert*. Most importantly, religion has played an important role in Nigerian history and politics, with the influence of Islam, in particular, reaching back for at least 1,000 years. The contemporary situation in Nigeria and Boko Haram, a domestic terrorist organization that recently was franchised by the Islamic State, cannot be viewed outside this historical and social context. Religion also attracted competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran, when both states decided to intervene in Nigerian domestic situation.

This chapter further discusses the rise of Boko Haram's predecessor and Boko Haram itself, culminating with the Islamic State franchise and the reasons both organizations had for engaging in such a strategy.

The final chapter, *Chapter VI* presents the conclusions derived in this work. Firstly, it briefly summarizes the argument put forward in this dissertation and then focuses on the results of both quantitative and qualitative chapters. As will be seen in the case study chapter on Nigeria, this country is an important case to study the connection between the affiliation-to-franchise process that occurs between domestic terrorist groups and transnational terrorist organizations.

Since its emergence in 2002, Boko Haram has been cooperating with Al Qaeda. However, it never actually became its franchise, as would have been expected. I argue that this fact can be explained by the lack of convergence of religious motivation between two groups. The Islamic State, also previously an Al Qaeda franchise, accepted Boko Haram as its own franchise in 2015. The convergence of religious motivation and the presence of natural resources in Nigeria, including oil and gas, were the ultimate factors that enabled the franchise to take place.

This concluding part is followed by the Appendices section, which includes political maps of Africa and Nigeria, and the list of all Sub-Saharan African states.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This dissertation asks why transnational terrorist organizations engage in the strategy of franchise and domestic terrorist organizations seek affiliation with transnational terrorist organizations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. This chapter first explores the existing literature on rationality of terrorist organizations. It continues with a discussion of possible alternative explanations as to why transnational terrorist organizations may choose to target some states rather than the others. Firstly, the causes of terrorism are explored and later connected to the argument that domestic environment in a state could potentially appeal to transnational terrorist organizations. As such, the existence of grievances among the target state's population, expressed through civil conflict or civil unrest, including riots, demonstrations, and strikes, or presence of a failed state unable to effectively govern provide the terrorist organizations with ample recruitment and support opportunities. In addition, this chapter also examines favorable factors that facilitate the establishment and conduct of attacks by transnational terrorist organization in different

countries based on their level of political development. This includes literature on failed, failing and developed states.

## **2.1 Terrorists as rational actors**

The argument presented in this dissertation posits terrorist organizations as rational actors. Rationality as defined by rational choice theory contends that actors arrive at a particular decision through a cost-benefit consideration, choosing, as a result, an option that would bring most benefit and satisfaction in material or immaterial terms. In terrorism research, it is now understood that terrorists are not necessarily mentally ill, in fact, political psychologist Jerold Post contends, "there is no reason to believe that there is one terrorist mindset, one overarching terrorist psychology" (2007: 6). Moreover, terrorist organizations, as any other organization, are more than just a sum of the individuals within them who may have mental illness or act irrationally.

Thus, Jeff Victoroff, a neurology and psychiatry professor, argues in his review and critique of psychological approaches to the terrorist mindset that rational choice approach "is a powerful tool for discovering theoretically valid and surprisingly counterintuitive forces that probably influence terrorist and government behaviors" (Victoroff (2005: 16). Enders and Su (2007: 33), for example, argue that rational

terrorist organizations will often learn from counterterrorism policies, calculate options and “restructure themselves to be less penetrable.” Nevertheless, rational choice approaches cannot predict the idiosyncratic decision-making (or mindset) of individual terrorists (Ibid.) However, since this dissertation is concerned solely with organizational behavior of terrorist organizations, the rational choice assumption is helpful and appropriate to answer the question of why transnational terrorist organizations target specific countries and domestic terrorist organizations in those countries.

There is a wide scholarship positing terrorist organizations are rational actors who are able to predictably change their behavior, tactics and target depending on the constraints they are facing (Bueno de Mesquita, 2005; Landes, 1978; Sandler, Tschirhart, & Cauley, 1983). In fact, new research into crime and terrorism compares terrorist organizations to legitimate businesses that “choose activities that can ensure continued funding and in which they have the potential of success” (Shelley, 2014: 175). Terrorist organizations are also quick to react to policy measures directed at securing/hardening particular targets, such as securing of embassies, army bases, or introducing metal detectors at airports, leading to changes in targets or means/material used in an attack, for instance, use of plastic explosive in bombs (Enders & Sandler, 1993). This also led to switching of targets to a less protected segment of society – the public. Santifort, Sandler and Brandt (2012) have shown that this hardest-to-protect

target has witnessed the most increase in violence over the years. In sum, the literature on how and why rationality is used in terrorist organization decision-making is vast and I will suffice to use the assumption for terrorist organizational behavior, and refrain from speculating on individual terrorist motives.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Ross (1993: 317): "rational choice theories attempt to explain participation in terrorist organizations and the choice of terrorist actions as a result of the cost benefit calculations of the participants." Many scholars have looked into reasons why some groups choose to resort to non-violent means to achieve their goal, while others in similar or same circumstances resort to such radical means as terrorism. Some of the arguments revolve around psychology, impatience, power ratio, publicity, and worsening economic situation. Atkinson, Sandler & Tschirhart (1987) argue that with the increase in bargaining costs, the duration of a terrorist attack/incident also increases. Grossman (1991) and Blomberg, Hess & Weerapana (2007: 33) argue that "when the resource base of the economy shrinks, dissident groups are less likely to be satisfied with claiming their low share of the smaller pie and are likely to instigate some type of conflict to increase their share of the pie." Their model predicts that dissidents will turn to terrorism during the bad economic situation inside state when launching an organized rebellion is costly. Other studies suggest that terrorism is used in different situation depending on the goal of the group. In some cases, it is used to weaken and disrupt the workings of the government, while in others – to 'advertise' groups' cause, to gain publicity. Such need for recognition in today's world encourages terrorists to engage in "ever more destructive and spectacular violence" (Crenshaw, 2012: 104-105). Terrorism is also a logical choice of the opposition, when the power ration is much more in favor of the government or when opposition is heavily oppressed by the state. Also, groups resort to terrorism when they become impatient with time-consuming legal methods of advertising their cause and gaining support. This can have several causes, such as inability to raise required support, or distrust of the government. Lastly, some groups see current inaction as 'death,' and, thus, the "challenge to the state cannot be left to the future" (Crenshaw, 2012: 105). Other rationalist studies focus on the use of terrorism as a bargaining tool with the government (Howard, 1992: 76), considering this use of terrorism as one of the "most significant innovations in terrorism in the twentieth century." Hostage seizures are one of such examples. Kydd and Walter (2006) look into terrorism as a way of showing the unwillingness of the government to cooperate/negotiate. They term this the "strategy of provocation." This implies that the group applies terror to provoke a harsh response leading to considerable collateral damage from the government. This is further used to show potential group supporters that this government is neither moderate nor willing to negotiate, or to increase the numbers of potential recruits (Lake, 2002). Other motives for using terror is transferring the responsibility of a terrorist act gone bad, such as kidnapping or hostage taking, on the government (Howard, 1992: 77).

## **2.2. Why do terrorist organizations cooperate?**

Cooperation of terrorist organizations under wide terror networks is a relatively new phenomenon. Thus, Victor Asal, a professor from University of Albany, SUNY stands out in this literature with his focus on cooperation and competition between terrorist organizations, through collection of empirical data in the Big, Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) project. Still, Asal does not tackle the question of why transnational terrorist organizations target affiliates in a specific country, particularly in the context of this dissertation, in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Asal, Nussbaum & Harrington (2006: 15) find that transnational terrorist organizations "function in much the same way, and using many of the same techniques, as transnational advocacy networks concerned with issues like the environment or human rights." The scholars focus on the advantages that networks provide terrorists as they do to non-violent organizations. In fact, terrorist organizations are not as deadly as we tend to believe: only 39% of the terrorist organizations active between 1998-2005 killed anyone (Asal & Rethemeyer 2008: 244). Thus, the main objective of these organizations is to pursue goals through intimidation and not actual killing. In this context, where terrorist organizations rationally try to survive and thrive, it becomes plausible for them to cooperate with one another in order to pursue common goals, or to compete against each other in order to secure limited resources. For example, when allied in a network,

terrorist organizations are “more likely to seek to develop or acquire chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) weapons” (Asal, Ackerman & Rethemeyer, 2012: 229).

A new effort in this area of work is a project, Big, Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) initiated by Victor Asal, Karl Rethemeyer and Ian Anderson and supported by the Department of Homeland Security through a START grant. In this project, “social network data, which characterizes relations between terrorist organizations as well as between countries and terrorist organizations” are collected and coded. Moreover, “relationships are coded for categories such as: suspected ally, ally, faction, splinter group, rival, enemy, target, and state sponsor.”<sup>6</sup> The first findings from the data show that

alliances tend to form between organizations that share motivation (especially if the potential partners are both Islamic or both ethno-nationalist in their motivation), are relatively similar in age, seek to target the same country, are drawn from the same region, and are based in countries with small militaries. Overall, terrorist organizations tend to prefer network structures that are organized into cliques or subgroups, though with some outreach to clusters beyond their primary partners (Asal, Park & Ackerman, 2016: 1).<sup>7</sup>

Moghadam (2015) finds there are two types of cooperation between terrorist organizations: high-end cooperation and low-end cooperation. Mergers and strategic alliances are high-end, while tactical and transactional cooperation are low-end. The difference is

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<sup>6</sup> See [http://www.albany.edu/pvc/current\\_projects.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/pvc/current_projects.shtml).

<sup>7</sup> Since this component of the data are not yet publicly available, quantitative testing in this dissertation is limited; however, once this project yields data on Sub-Saharan Africa, it is going to be instrumental in further testing of this dissertation's argument.

in the longevity and extent of the cooperation and Moghadam argues counter-terrorism strategies should take into account what type of cooperation is in place between groups. The most extensive of these types of cooperation is mergers as "groups that merge cooperate along the entire spectrum of activities, from ideological to logistical and operational cooperation" (Ibid.).

Alternatively, Phillips (2015) examines competition and rivalry between terrorist organizations and his study of groups between 1987-2005 shows that violent rivalries prolong the terrorist groups' longevity by mainly strengthening incentives for group members. Thus, terrorist organizations defend themselves and goals against rivals to survive. This is rather similar to how states or, as Asal et al. (2006) argued, transnational advocacy networks work.

Bacon (2014:1), on the other hand, points to the value of shared identities and common ideologies in terrorist alliances. This would be particularly important for high-end cooperation efforts such as mergers and strategic alliances, which are the topic of this dissertation. She also finds that preserving terrorist alliances is difficult and fragile due to the low likelihood of making credible commitments, inherent suspiciousness of terrorist organizations and the lack of third party guarantors that help cooperation and bargaining in other contexts. Bacon's and Moghadam's emphasis on shared identities and common ideologies is particularly relevant to this dissertation's research question and its theoretical argument laid out in the next

chapter. The following section looks at the way religion is represented in the literature on terrorist organization behavior.

### **2.3 Religion as Shared identity and Motivation**

As is the case with many other factors studied in the terrorism literature, there is no unified consensus on the role that religion plays in terrorism. In the context of domestic terrorism, religion is usually associated with grievances. Ross (1993), for instance, identifies religion, or religious grievances as one of precipitant causes that could lead to terrorism. However, this dissertation does not argue that religion leads to terrorism, that religion is a cause of terrorism. Rather, this work contends that religious grievances inside a state could be exploited by domestic and transnational terrorist organizations for their own purposes. This exploitation of religion for other purposes could gain much wider and lethal proportions in societies already divided because of religious adherence through political and historical context, as will be shown on the example of Nigeria in the case study chapter.

In line with geographical area studied in this dissertation, the importance of a more detailed elaboration of views of religion in the terrorism literature stems from the fact that many terrorist organizations operating in Sub-Saharan African region are religious extremist in character. Most of these are Islamist, although there are groups that

combine elements of Christianity and indigenous beliefs within their own ideology, such as the Lord Resistance Army (LRA). LRA was initially established in Uganda to defend the interests of the Acholi people but soon reimagined its goals to entail the establishment of a new state based on LRA's leader's understanding of the Ten Commandments (Cline, 2013). LRA also expanded its area of attacks to include Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Central African Republic. In these and similar cases, religion is presented as organizational identity, and, thus, motivation and justification behind terrorist acts. These groups aspire to redefine the existing society/state and create a new one on the basis of their own ideology. Thus, it would not be hard to imagine religion as an instrument for terrorist cooperation.

A strand in the literature has long argued that religion is a significant factor in terrorism (Avalos, 2005; Hoffman, 1998-1999, 2006; Jones, 2002). Since the mid-1990s, many in academic, political and media circles have argued that terrorism has gone through a transformation and should now be considered 'new terrorism.' It was maintained that this new form had new characteristics, including new actors, motivations, tactics as well as aims. However, the main difference of new terrorism from previous three 'waves of terrorism' was its religious aspect. In his 2001 article, Rapoport called this new kind, 'the fourth wave of terrorism'. This wave is described as follows:

[The fourth wave of terrorism] has been dominated by religious concerns, and especially Islamist ones. By contrast to its predecessor(s), the new terrorists have been willing to inflict mass casualties, kill large numbers of people, and use or attempt to use unconventional weapons to achieve this end. Furthermore, from an organizational perspective, the new terrorists have tended to rely less on hierarchical and more on horizontally articulated and network-based forms than those active in the 1960s and 1970s (Weinberg, Pedahzur, & Hirsh-Hoefler, 2004: 785).

In this vein, Hoffman (1998-99) tries to identify differences between secular and religious terrorists. He makes two important points. Firstly, even if secular terrorist groups have the capacity to execute such an attack, they rarely engage in indiscriminate killings on a mass scale, because for them it would be counterproductive (even immoral) as well as inconsistent with their goals. Religious terrorists, on the other hand, not only have a broad range of enemies but they also consider such killings "morally justified" and "a necessary expedient to attain their goals" (para. 13). Secondly, Hoffmann argues that "[r]eligion-conveyed by sacred text and imparted via clerical authorities claiming to speak for the divine-therefore serves as a legitimizing force" (ibid.). This fact exemplifies the reason behind the importance of clerical sanctions for such terrorists, with terrorists often "blessed" prior to the attack.

Other defining features of "new terrorism" is the lack of state sponsorship, as was seen during the Cold War, (Tucker, 2001; Raphaeli, 2003) as well as their loose networked and less hierarchical structure (Gunaratna, 2002).

Terrorism literature on religion also contains 'primordialist' arguments (Hasenclever & Rittberger, 2000), which could be translated as fundamental or primeval. For instance, Cronin (2002) argues, "religious terrorists act directly or indirectly to please the perceived commands of deity." These views echo Samuel Huntington's (1996) famous "Clash of Civilizations" thesis, suggesting that the world would witness clashes between different civilizations because they differ in the most basic aspects, including religion, culture and history.

In terms of terrorism, the primordialists view multi-religious societies as bound to experience violent "struggle for power between communities with irreconcilable understandings of the sacred" (Hasenclever & Rittberger, 2003: 110). Primordialists would explain violent interactions between and inside nations through differences in their religion (Ibid.: 108). The cause is shown to be the inherent proneness of violence in religion, accepting still the fact that it does not *always* lead to such (Avalos, 2005: 18). Other scholars likewise concluded that the type of religion was essential in evaluating mass casualty terrorist attacks and religious motivation (Tucker, 2001: 7). All in all, these studies view religion as a cause of terrorism mostly because of its content. While there is no study specifically arguing terrorist organizations would cooperate due to content of religion, this would be a natural extension of the new terrorism argument on the relationship between religion and terrorism.

Contrary to the views of a relationship between religion and conflict/terrorism due to either this particular nature of motivation, or an inherent proneness to violence, scholars increasingly argue that it is not religion *per se* that is fundamentally violent, rather religion is strategically used to achieve terrorist groups' goals. As an alternative to primordialist views discussed above, some scholars underline that religion in itself is usually not the cause of conflict, it is only one dimension of an existing conflict (Satana, Inman and Birnir, 2013). Juergensmeyer (2006: 133-143) suggests that the real causes of intergroup tensions are usually social and economic and religion is used to justify terrorism. He states that

at some point in the conflict, however, usually at a time of frustration and desperation, the political contest becomes religionized. Then what was primarily a secular struggle takes on the aura of sacred conflict. This creates a whole new set of problems.

Juergensmeyer's 2003 study also maintains that all religions, including Christianity, Islam and Buddhism not only witness terrorist acts, but also perpetrate them. Similarly, Pape (2005: 4) maintains that religion rarely is the root cause in most suicide terrorist acts. Rather religion is used as a tool in recruiting new members as well as furthering strategic goals of terrorist groups.

Further connection between religion and conflict is examined by Fox (2000, 2002, 2004) who argues that religion may become conflictual in case the group has a desire for autonomy or

independence. The recent division of Sudan into two separate states may be a case in point. Fox also maintains that religion provides not only a framework for understanding the surrounding world, but also codes of conduct, which might even require conflictual behavior on the part of its adherents.

Religion also plays a unifying role, particularly for Muslim recruits around the world. Such organizations as Al Qaeda use religion to justify their actions, a justification that is further passed on to new members. Religion is a motivation to resort to violence in order to 'defend' a faith as any attack on it is internalized, meaning it is perceived as an attack personally. This puts the terrorist, in case of Islam, in what is called 'defensive *jihad*' (Seul, 1999: 557; Jenkins, 2006: 70).

As previously mentioned, Bacon (2014) comes closest to arguing the instrumental role of religion as shared identity in terrorist rivalry and cooperation. However, the mechanisms of how and why that is the case and how religion strategically contributes to cooperation between terrorist organizations are still under-studied. Moreover, this literature has not so far addressed the question of what role religion plays in transnational terrorist organizations' choice of cooperation with domestic organizations. This dissertation contributes to the literature in both realms.

## 2.4 Terrorist Franchising through Natural Resources

As there is no literature directly on the effect of natural resources (Moghadam, 2015) and how they affect a transnational terrorist organization's choice of affiliates, this section discusses the literature on the link between natural resources of a state and transnational terrorism. This dissertation contends that natural resources present an additional benefit for a transnational terrorist organization not only potentially in the form of financing but most importantly it guarantees that new affiliates will be able to operate and further organization's goals without financial support from the parent organization. Thus, when deciding which group to affiliate themselves with, transnational terrorist groups take into consideration the presence of potentially lootable natural resources.

The focus of this dissertation is Sub-Saharan Africa, and according to the World Bank database at least eight out of 45 SSA states have a 30 and higher percentage of their GDP coming from natural resource rents.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, many of these states have a history of weak governmental control over natural resources, resulting in rebel control and exploitation of the mines for funding purposes.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For the period between 2011 and 2015. See, Total natural resources rents (% of GDP). World Bank Data. Retrieved from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.TOTL.RT.ZS>.

<sup>9</sup> Boitsova-Bugday, A. (2011). *Duration of Civil Wars from a World-Systems Analysis Perspective: The Cases of Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone*. MA Thesis, Bilkent University.

This section further looks at scholarly work and different reports available on the topic.

As of December 2015, Islamic State organization was estimated to have a control over 60% of Syrian and 10% of Iraqi oil production. As it did not have the necessary technology or equipment to ensure the same productivity of the oil fields under its control, IS engaged in crude oil trade (OECD, 2016). Having claimed the title of the wealthiest terrorist organization ever, IS' 'oil business' have sparked much controversy regarding the net amount of money the group makes each day. One such account coming from the US Treasury Department's David Cohen who puts the number at \$1 million per day (Reichmann, 2014), although other estimates range as low as \$270,000.

Albeit the sheer amount of money that Islamic State is making through black market oil sales, additional revelation by at least one report is essential for the present thesis. Following the inception of airstrikes against its targets, the IS has shifted from a more direct involvement in oil sales to a safer way of making profit. It handed over the operations to the third parties and installed the taxes on oil production and sales, including operating oil refineries. This is a safer way of making profit. The oil is also sold by the 'ant trade' system, which involves numerous intermediaries. The sales are reduced to canisters rather than tankers. This means that IS is profiting even from small batches of oil (Belli et al., 2014). Most of the oil is consumed in

Iraq and Syria, but the risk of IS oil finding its way to international markets is now estimated to be high (OECD, 2016).

Additional source on links between transnational terrorist organizations and natural resources is inferred from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) unclassified report on "Allegations of Al Qaeda Trafficking in Conflict Diamonds" (FBI, 2003). The work on this report was initiated after the *Washington Post's* series of articles that linked Al Qaeda to rough diamond trade in war-torn Sierra Leone. It was stated that, according to several sources, Al Qaeda made millions of dollars from the sale of diamonds mined by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). This initial series of allegations were followed by 2003 Global Witness report on "how Al Qaeda moved into the diamond trade" and additional *Washington Post* articles<sup>10</sup> (FBI, 2003: 2). Other agencies, later on conducted their own investigations on the subject. The *BBC* documentary corroborated most of the finding of the *Washington Post* report without using any of its sources. Similarly, a UN-backed Special Court investigation for massive human rights violations and crimes against humanity during Sierra Leone's civil war corroborated around 80% of the findings. The European Union intelligence agencies also believed the connection between Al Qaeda and diamonds to be true (Farah, 2004: 87).

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<sup>10</sup> See, Farah, D. (2001). Al Qaeda Cash Tied to Diamond Trade. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2001/11/02/al-qaeda-cash-tied-to-diamond-trade/93abd66a-5048-469a-9a87-5d2efb565a62/>; Farah, D., & Shultz, R. (2004). Al Qaeda's Growing Sanctuary. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A48221-2004Jul13.html>.

It should also be noted that at least one third of the FBI report was classified, at times entire pages are not available for inspection, leaving room for speculation. The report concludes that there was no substance in the allegations regarding the illicit diamond trade and Al Qaeda. In addition, it brought other allegations to the fore: the existence of indications that illicit diamond trade may be funding the activities of another terrorist organization - Hizbullah. The FBI report concluded that despite no connection being found between diamonds and Al Qaeda, the fact that given "relatively small size, and concealable nature of diamonds, the trafficking in diamonds and other precious gems could represent a simple and essentially risk-free means of transporting assets for any terrorist organization" (FBI, 2003: 15). The prognosis of the report puts the risk of any terrorist organization using such natural resources for financing purposes as remaining high.

Allegations touched upon in FBI report were further noted elsewhere. As such, another illuminating report maintained that some terrorists in West Africa were helping Hizbullah with fundraising and recruiting in such countries as Sierra Leone, Senegal, Ivory Coast and Gambia. Such activities are mostly conducted through the facilitation of transnational organized crime (TOC), which includes natural resource smuggling (Onuoha & Ezirim, 2013).

Another recent report compiled by the United Nations and Interpol put illegal wildlife trade, including forest crime, worth at \$213 billion dollars. These revenues are used to fund not only organized

crime, but also global terror groups and militias. UN Security Council has already recognized the seriousness of this situation in such countries as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia. Ivory, one of such goods, is, according to the report, the main source of income for Lord's Resistance Army, operating in South Sudan, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Charcoal is another commodity used by terrorist groups across Africa. Charcoal and taxation are also two of the sources of income for Al Shabaab, accounting for earnings between \$38m and \$68m a year. In addition, report underlines that the low risks associated with illicit trade in wildlife or forest products. It also stresses the lack of information and insufficient investigation into this subject leads to little if any prosecution, which is the reason why both organized criminal groups and terrorist organizations exploit this gap with very little risk for themselves (Nellemann, 2014).

Unlike these reports, academic literature is much scarce on the topic of transnational terrorist organizations and their possible connection to natural resources, particularly on the research question of this dissertation. Piombo (2007: 191) argues, for instance, that in the past the funding for both local terrorist groups and Al Qaeda came from trade in illicit goods. The argument goes that analyses of the financing of terrorist activities were not researched extensively prior to 9/11 attacks. One of the possible reasons for this was the fact that

many such groups were located in one particular country where they raised necessary funds (Madsen, 2009: 73).

This deficiency in research could also be attributed to a period of Cold War, when rival groups could rely on great power funding. The most illuminating example could be the Angolan civil war. Two sides of the conflict received funding from two Cold War rivals – the United States supported National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Soviet Union aided Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). With the dissolution of the USSR, and subsiding of funds from the U.S., both groups were forced to look elsewhere for funding to keep them in the fight. As MPLA was already in the government, it used the revenue from Angolan offshore oil, while UNITA engaged in illegal diamond trade (Harsch, 2007: 17).

Thus, with the end of the Cold War many groups, including terrorist organizations, had to seek new sources of funding. Terrorists turned their attention to a realm previously habituated only by organized crime,<sup>11</sup> although the so-called narco-terrorism had existed before that in Latin and South America. The effects of globalization such as the expansion of international trade, travel and easy and speedy communication enabled terrorists to engage in such activities (Madsen, 2009: 65).

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<sup>11</sup> Terrorist organizations and organized criminal groups should not be confused, despite some common features. Both remain distinct from each other. See, Schmid, A.P. (1996). The Links between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorist Crimes. *Transnational Organized Crime*, 2(2), 40-82.

Oil and gas, but especially oil smuggling, have become targets of terrorists as was recently shown through the example of IS. Terrorists use these resources not only for funding but also as a tool of influencing local communities they want to control (Makarenko, 2003; Napoleoni, 2005).

Finally, the propositions put forward in the FBI report on illicit trade in diamonds and transnational terrorist organizations discussed above, is also mentioned by Schneider (2010: 18) who puts diamond trafficking among the three illicit sources of terrorists financing.

In sum, literature linking transnational terrorist organizations with natural resources is scarce. This dissertation aims at filling this gap in the literature by building on the literature discussed so far. There are other plausible, albeit indirect, alternative explanations relevant to why transnational terrorist organizations cooperate with certain domestic terrorist organizations and not others. The following section will examine those alternative explanations, which will be discussed in the empirical chapters as control variables.

## **2.5 Alternative Explanations**

So far this chapter presented views on terrorist organizations acting as rational actors that weigh costs and benefits of possible paths of actions, taking into consideration constraints in their environment, and change their behavior accordingly. Based on this rationality argument and building on the literature discussed so far, the

present dissertation further maintains that terrorist groups, specifically transnational ones, choose the country that they target, based on cost-benefit analysis and by factoring in the internal dynamics of the state they pick. The two essential factors – religion and natural resources – were also discussed above and will be elaborated upon in the *Theory* chapter. The following sections look into the possible alternative explanations present in the literature.

Factors such as domestic grievances and historical and social context are presented as potential magnets for transnational terrorist organizations who could exploit chaotic situations for their purposes, such as funding and recruitment. In terms of domestic factors, literature looks at whether the country is experiencing a civil war or any other type of civil violence, whether a discrimination against minorities by the state takes place and, thus, whether ethnic/religious groups can easily be mobilized through identity-based cleavages.

### **2.5.1 Social, Cultural, and Historical Factors**

Martha Crenshaw's seminal 1981 article differentiates between *preconditions* and *precipitants* as motivations of terrorist organization behavior.<sup>12</sup> Expanding on Martha Crenshaw's work, Ross (1993), further

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<sup>12</sup> According to Crenshaw (1981), preconditions are factors that create the stage for terrorism in the long-run, while precipitants are specific events that immediately precede incidents of terrorism. Crenshaw further divides preconditions into enabling or permissive factors that provide an opportunity for a terrorist act to happen, and situations that offer a direct inspiration to terrorists. Further literature review is based

categorizes existing causes of terrorism into three groups: structural, psychological<sup>13</sup> and rational choice. The structural arguments maintain that causes of terrorism could be found in the environment, as well as economic, social, political and cultural structures inside the state. Ross further divides structural causes into permissive (preconditions) and precipitant events. Social, cultural and historical facilitation is shown to be one of precipitant causes of violence. This facilitation consists of shared values, attitudes, customs, and traditions, which enable the creation of fanaticism in a group. As a result, members of the same group may come to perceive the use of terrorism as a low risk action; may inspire other groups to commit terrorism, or even "supply discontented individuals or organizations with enough technological knowledge and ideological justification to support their use of terrorism" (Ross, 1993: 322). These factors could

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around this categorization. It should be noted that even though Martha Crenshaw's 1981 work has been an essential part of the study of terrorism causes, it is by no means the first work that introduced this differentiation of causes of violence. Harry Eckstein in his 1965 research argued that there are preconditions and precipitants of an internal conflict. Eckstein stated that this clear distinction allowed to reduce any confusion between small and long term causes of conflict. He defined preconditions as frustration in a society, which allows for a precipitant (immediate cause) to bring about violence. See, Eckstein, H. (1965). On the Etiology of Internal Wars. *History and Theory*, 4(2), 133-163.

<sup>13</sup> This section does not provide literature on the psychological profiles of terrorists or screening that terrorist organizations do in order to find the best recruits for their goals. However, on this issue it suffices to say that terrorist groups, especially *jihadi* networks, like Al Qaeda, prefer to recruit young adults, most of them married and in good physical condition and, importantly, with "high degree of intelligence and advanced levels of education" (Sparago, 2007: 13). Most terrorist organizations do not accept mentally unstable persons in their ranks because they would constitute security risk for the organization (Post, 2005: 616-617). A 2005 article by Ethan Bueno de Mesquita (2005: 515) summarizes it best:

[t]he terrorist organization wants to recruit only the most effective, highly skilled terrorists. This is because higher ability, better educated people are more likely to succeed at the demanding tasks required of a terrorist operative. Consequently, the terrorist organization screens the volunteers.

also lead to members of aggrieved population identifying with a terrorist group if they previously strived and failed for a similar cause (Ross, 1993). Consequently, domestic terrorist organizations likely ally with other organizations that are built on similar ideologies stemming from similar social, cultural and historical backgrounds.

### **2.5.2 Presence of Political Unrest**

Ross (1993) argues that the presence of a previous violent or non-violent unrest inside a state could be a catalyst for terrorism. Types of unrest included are war, guerilla warfare, protests, strikes, demonstrations, riots or any other group terrorist actions. Intrastate unrest could motivate individuals or organizations to engage in terrorism: "[u]nrest can motivate terrorist organization; provide learning opportunities; increase the legitimacy of violent actions; and, heighten a sense of grievance" (Ross, 1993: 323). Intrastate unrest is seen as fertile ground to learn more about the existing grievances among the country's population, and exploit the present volatile situation for their own benefit either through recruiting or financing or both. The existence of present or past civil unrest also increases tolerance towards committing terrorist acts as some segments of the population already had/have an experience in engaging in violent acts.

Civil conflict is identified as a possible catalyst for terrorism inside a state. The link between the two has been to some extent studied in

the literature. Instability inside a state seems to be an important factor for terrorist organizations. Terrorists of the so-called 'new' wave, particularly Islamist in character, are now argued to have immediate political aims, even if their long-term goals are religious (Sedwick, 2004).

Use of terrorism in civil conflicts is argued to be exploited by political actors in order to shape the political behavior of different actors. Terrorism as an indiscriminate violence, as opposed to selective violence, is significantly cheaper (Kalyvas, 2004). The link between terrorism and civil wars also seems to be different across regions. As such, a large amount of terrorist attacks occurs prior to civil wars in Latin America, while they tend to "follow [...] civil war in other region of the world" (Findley & Young, 2012: 285).

Existence of a civil conflict inside a state posits that government does not have full control of its territory at all times.<sup>14</sup> Empirical cases of such wars in Sub-Saharan Africa provide ample examples when lucrative natural resource mines or extraction sites were under rebel

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<sup>14</sup> In this vein, Donald Snow's (1996) classification of world countries into tiers could also be applicable. He divides the countries into the First Tier and Second Tier ones. The former includes mostly the developed world and the latter, including countries of Africa are further classified in terms of development/developability or resource richness. Most of the 52 African states are in the Second Tier category are nondemocratic, 4 of them are in the resource rich subtier, meaning that they receive most of their wealth from petroleum. Snow argues further that the Second Tier countries, unlike tranquil First Tier, have become increasingly unstable. The way in which the latter decides to engage with violence and instability of the former, will, in Snow's opinion, define the future international system, especially when some of the failed Second Tier states were/are not able to control or eliminate domestic violent movements that were/are able to sustain themselves without outside assistance now that the Cold War era-type state sponsorship has ceased to flow in.

control, allowing them to further finance their struggle, thus prolonging the conflict (Boitsova-Bugday, 2011). Under the same conditions, such mines or extraction sites could easily be exploited by terrorist organizations for financial reasons. Fluctuations in access to such resources could have an effect on the resolution of the conflict as well (Hazen 2013). Similar behavior is shown by activities of some transnational terrorist groups as is discussed in section 2.3 on the link between transnational terrorist organizations and natural resources.

Finally, “ongoing civil conflict in a country may reduce and degrade the security infrastructure of a country, allowing for attacks on targets that may otherwise be less vulnerable” (Findley, Braithwaite, Young, Marineau & Pascoe, 2015: 10). The results of a recent study show that the presence of a civil conflict has a positive and significant effect on the likelihood of a terrorist attack (Ibid.). Thus, the presence of political unrest i.e. civil conflict can potentially motivate transnational terrorist organizations to use the chaotic domestic situation to establish cooperative ties with local terrorist groups for recruitment or financing purposes.

### **2.5.3 Grievances**

The third precipitant cause of terrorism as identified by Crenshaw (1981) and Ross (1993) are grievances. These grievances

could be either perceived or actual. Previous studies already linked grievances, such as coercion, repression, discrimination against a particular minority by a majority inside a state, to the inception of political violence or terrorism (Crenshaw, 1981; Gurr, 1993; Hamilton, 1978). In particular, Gurr's (1968) *relative deprivation* thesis is most illustrative of the connection. Gurr argues that people inside a state compare their own conditions to those of other people. If they find that given their abilities and societal opportunities their life is worse than that of others, frustration and resentment arises. This deprivation relative to other groups in a society, when perceived as unjust, can have three different outcomes: a group resigns, expresses its grief by non-violent means, or engages in violence to address the existing disparity.

It should be also noted that even though Gurr's works concentrate on group grievances, including ethnic, and violence, such as political protest or rebellion, his argument is still applicable to terrorism research (Piazza, 2011). According to Ross (1993: 326), structural precipitant factors, such as presence of other forms of unrest inside a state and grievances interact with each other to cause terrorism. As such, the existing unrest "heighten[s] the intensity of already felt grievances" and the greater the amount of grievances, the greater the support of terrorism and its amount. As a result, transnational terrorist organizations can potentially ally themselves with

a domestic group in cases when the latter represents a portion of the population that experiences heightened sense of grievance.

#### **2.5.4 Distribution of Resources/ Social Inequality**

As noted in the previous section, terrorist organizations recruit new members by adapting their strategies to local context. This section examines views in the literature on how unequal distribution of resources inside a state can lead to domestic instability and violence. The arguments presented here crisscross with Gurr's (1968) relative deprivation theory, when groups perceive that they are *unjustly* discriminated against. This leads to the emergence of grievances, which could henceforth be used by transnational terrorist groups for their purposes.

Studies on income and conflict in general argue that differences in "income and wealth within countries is very influential in shaping the risk of violence through its impact on incentives and opportunities for mobilization" (Buhaug, Gleditsch, Holtermann, Østby & Tollefsen, 2011: 815). The scholars looked into the areas where the conflict emerged with a premise that a conflict was more likely to emerge in an area with low income and locations with most income divergence from the state average. They came to the conclusion that

- location of conflict onsets is related to geographical variation in income,
- conflicts are more likely to break out in locations with low income,

- regional inequality makes conflict more likely,
- and pockets of wealth in very poor states are especially likely to see civil conflict break out (Buhaug et al., 2011: 815).

In this vein, Matthew, Brown & Jensen (2009: 8) argued that inequitable wealth sharing can lead to the emergence of grievances among the population, which in turn may lead to the outbreak of the conflict. Essential for the purposes of the present thesis is the fact that conflict onset is more likely when a particular region inside a state is abundant in natural resources, especially high value extractive ones like metal, minerals, stones, timber and hydrocarbons. Such regions faced with acute poverty or a lack of alternative opportunities of income, are prone to produce incentive for groups to either takeover the government or seize the control of these resource-producing areas.

Similarly, Auty and Gelb (2000: 2-3) argue that in resource-abundant countries rents acquired from natural resources attracts political competition:

[r]esource abundance therefore encourages contests for the rents that tend to engender factional or autonomous predatory political states. To stay in power, the governments of resource-abundant countries need to find a way to redistribute rents to favored groups. They tend to do so at the expense of a coherent economic policy.

Such unequal distribution leads to wealth gap between different groups inside a state, or even regional income inequalities. Many resource rich Sub-Saharan African states, including Nigeria, share this essential characteristic. Additionally, in the situations of unequal

distribution of social welfare, increasing gap between majority and minority groups, or one or several groups' isolation from state wealth, the conditions for homegrown terrorism are more favorable. Investing more money in social policies, including reducing unemployment, poverty, inequality and dissatisfaction, are argued to indirectly reduce the terrorist organizations' activity inside the state (Kruger & Meierrieks, 2010).

Other studies also prove that similar grievances on rent distribution can lead to similar results despite difference in regime type. Conflicting studies have shown that resentment that arises from unequal distribution of rents, such as from oil, leads to domestic instability that can undermine democratic (Wantchekon, 1999) and undemocratic authoritarian states, such as Saudi Arabia, alike (Okruhlik, 1999).

This particular type of grievance is essential for the Sub-Saharan African region, as many states there have potentially lootable and lucrative natural resources, including diamonds. Thus, unequal distribution of resources, which in its turn creates grievances among the local population, may potentially contribute to the establishment of cooperative ties between that domestic terrorist group and a transnational terrorist organization.

### **2.5.5 Recruitment**

Recruitment represents an essential part of a terrorist organization's vitality and longevity. Recruitment's main objective is to extend the life cycle of a terrorist organization (Rapoport, 2006: 71). An organization that is not able to recruit new members into its ranks withers away and eventually dies. To prevent this outcome, terrorist groups try to find new members to continue their activity, and adjust their strategies, specifically taking into consideration historical, political and cultural contexts of their target population. Much research has been done on these methods as well as conditions that favor the recruiting process. This is essential to any such organization, as most members would cease to be active beyond the age of 30 (Rapoport, 2006).

In line with the argument put forward in this dissertation, some studies have shown that terrorist organization's leadership may even alter organization's goals in order to sustain itself and recruit new members (Crenshaw, 1988). Though some of the techniques may be similar across different regions, the recruitment process is still mostly contextual. This means that in some regions terrorist groups may have an open access to their target population, while in other areas might have to operate in secret (Gerwehr & Daly, 2006).

Terrorist organizations, in particular, Al Qaeda, "screen" their potential recruits in order to choose those that are most fitting the

characteristics they seek: e.g. young age, good physical condition as well as marital status (Sparago, 2007: 13). This process puts forward certain questions for a researcher. As such, if terrorist organizations screen their potential recruits to get the best of the best, how exactly do they recruit them? What are the favorable conditions for a terrorist group to attract new members into its ranks? What are the motivators that people have for deciding to join a terrorist group?

Most terrorist groups use “effective recruitment ‘pitches’ [that] are tailored to the audience and its cultural, social, and historical context.” This means that they target young people and manipulate any personal and political grievances they may have, or exploit their feelings of social or cultural repression (Gerwehr & Daly, 2006: 74). Terrorist organizations gather information, rather similar to intelligence, on the segment of the population or group that they want to target for recruitment (Alkan & Özdemir, 2008: 41).

Terrorist recruitment strategies are contextual: they depend on the country and the target population. In some cases, transnational terrorist organizations aside from exploiting local grievances<sup>15</sup> and widespread poverty for their own benefit, utilize forced recruitment or even kidnappings. Al Qaeda and its affiliates are known to have used these methods in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. The youth that was

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<sup>15</sup> This is why studying local context, including historical and social grievances is essential for this section of the literature on terrorism.

forcefully recruited or kidnapped is later either forced or tricked into conducting a suicide attack (Bott et al., 2009: 35).<sup>16</sup>

Overall, literature on this subject points to several factors that could facilitate terrorist recruitment, which include societal, religious, historical, political factors and the cult of personality (Sparago, 2007: 18). Terrorist organizations welcome new recruits into a community with a collective identity, which may be lacking in person's life, in areas with conflict and constant instability. Such youth has been displaced from society and could not act individually despite the desire to do so. Terrorist organization provides them with a justification and means for action. Recruitment can also be facilitated by common historical context in certain regions, most notably the Middle East where

the effects of colonialism, humiliating military losses to Israel, oppressive and violent regimes in the region, the cultural assault of the West, and the presence of the United States in the land of Islam, have all contributed to the historical grievances that are pervasive in the region (Sparago, 2007: 21).

This way, a new recruit is able to bond and relate to other recruits, who experienced the same grievances in their own country.

Literature differentiates both internal and external political factors that breed terrorism and facilitate recruiting. In certain areas of the world where traditional tribal structure is still in place, the introduction of Western values and culture can be considered an

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<sup>16</sup> Even though recruitment could be an alternative explanation on its own, this dissertation uses the recruitment argument within its theoretical framework to argue religious motivation of terrorist organizations help with recruitment for both transnational and domestic organizations.

attempt to destroy this traditional way of life. External factors, on the other hand, include international politics, specifically, country's relations to the United States and the West. For instance, American presence in the country can be seen as an offense to Islam. Under such conditions, "[i]ndividuals may see terrorism as the only means of political participatory action," the only way of being politically active (Sparago, 2007: 23-25). Similarly, Speckhard (2006: 288) argues that the (previous) political debates in support of torture in the U.S. and the UK, scandals that emerged from Guantanamo Bay or Abu Ghraib, or burning of enemy corpses in Afghanistan, "provide the best terrorist recruitment."

Still, despite much research, vulnerability to recruitment is not an entirely understood phenomenon (Gerwehr & Daly, 2006: 86). The literature on recruitment, however, agrees on the point that terrorist organizations, including transnational terrorist networks, exploit local grievances to recruit new members into their ranks. There might be similar methods applied, however, each process is contextual, with terrorists conducting research on their target population in advance. In the *Theory* chapter, I integrate this argument on recruitment to the theory I built on how domestic organizations affiliate with or are franchised by terrorist networks.

### **2.5.6 Failed, Failing and Developed States**

In the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, a debate was initiated with respect to characteristics of potential places that could be more attractive to terrorists than others. A large part of this debate centered around failed states as breeding grounds for such organizations or groups. This debate can mostly be divided into two sides: the ones who agree with the proposition and those who do not. The 2005 *New York Times* editorial sums up well the argument of the former: “[f]ailed states that cannot provide jobs and food for their people that have lost chunks of territory to warlords, and that can no longer track and control their borders send an invitation to terrorists.” Menkhaus’ (2003) quote, on the other hand, best represents the opposing camp: “[t]errorist networks, like mafias, appear to flourish where states are governed badly rather than not at all.”

In this debate, U.S. policy-makers as well as many academics argued that failing or failed states pose high security threat, as they become breeding grounds for terrorist groups to conduct transnational terrorist attacks, as well as attract transnational terrorist groups to target these countries.

In this vein, Piazza's (2008: 483) study on failed states and transnational terrorism shows that failing or failed states are statistically more likely to harbor terrorists and be the target of transnational terrorist groups' attacks. Additional findings also show no evidence

that states with an intermediate degree of state failure, also characterized as weak or quasi states are more susceptible to attracting transnational terrorism.

Major line of argument on this side also asserts that failed or failing states due to their inability of projecting power domestically provide more opportunities and low costs for terrorist organizations to establish themselves in those states. This also extends to transnational terrorist organizations, which require more extensive logistics as well as training grounds. Failed states provide such organizations 'power vacuum,' without strict state law enforcement (Piazza, 2008: 471).

Further conventional wisdom on the links between transnational terrorist organizations and failed or failing states includes arguments on sovereignty and sovereignty-linked corruption. This notion places limits on foreign intervention against terrorist threat, which "protects" these groups from foreign military or law enforcement capacity. In terms of corruption certain arguments maintain that conditions in failed states enable high levels of corruption, which may result in governmental officials providing terrorists with false documents, including passports and visas in exchange for certain monetary payments (Takeyh & Gvosdev, 2002; Piazza, 2008). This would no doubt facilitate at least some activities, including travel.

However, some new evidence shows that the link between failed states and transnational terrorist organizations is not as straightforward as seemed previously. As such, Patrick (2011: 61-62)

argues that there are three conditions for the attractiveness of a certain state for transnational terrorist organizations. First of all, failed states indeed provide some of the benefits to a transnational terrorist organization, which include weak border controls, safe haven for training as well as planning. However, there are more disadvantages than advantages for terrorist groups in failed states. With exceptions of Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, other weak states failed to provide large pools of recruits and targets for the terrorists, including political support by executing some of state functions. Patrick (Ibid., 62) argues that countries that have been paraded as potential safe havens for transnational terrorist groups failed to emerge as such, with more developed countries in North America and Europe being chosen by such groups. Economically developed states are also said to be more likely targets of terrorism in comparison to developing ones (Blomberg & Hess, 2008). This could be due to availability of a larger number of targets, lethal weapons, as well as mass transit and communications systems, which increases the effect of a terrorist attack (Ross, 1993).

On the contrary, Li and Schaub (2004) argue that economically developed countries of the OECD are less likely than developing states to experience instances of transnational terrorism. Level of development of a state, indicated by its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) seem to be essential when connected with the *target* state, rather than the state where the attack takes place or the origin country (Krueger & Laitin, 2008).

Secondly, contrary to the findings of Piazza's (2008) study, Patrick (2011: 62) states that due to certain necessities of transnational terrorist organizations, such as some minimal level of operational security as well as applicability of the notion of sovereignty, these groups are more likely to choose a "mid-ranking group of weak – but not yet falling – states" like Kenya. In addition, such states still have transportation and communication infrastructure in place, necessary for conducting terrorist attacks. These countries are also less likely than developed ones to be able to conduct large-scale counterterrorism operations (Ibid.). Similarly, von Hippel (2002) and Menkhaus (2003) argue that failed states are undesirable locations for terrorist group because the aforementioned rules of non-intervention and sovereignty are that much weaker when applied to such states, as opposed to much stronger states. Davis (2009) even points out that "the absence of effective governance allows the United States to strike them [global jihadists] more easily than if they were protected by a weak government able to protest." Hehir's 2007 research also corroborates these arguments.

The final point in whether a country becomes a safe haven for transnational terrorist groups, according to Patrick (2011: 62), is the presence of support from the population and powerbrokers, which in its terms depends on religious and cultural factors that make people sympathetic to group's goals. As such, he argues that an Islamist terrorist group is unlikely to be attracted to a non-Muslim weak or

failed state such as, for instance, Democratic Republic of Congo, or to a Muslim state but with goals opposing those of the group's, such as Iraq in the aftermath of Sunni Awakening.

Further research identified food insecurity inside a state as a factor in whether that state becomes the breeding ground for terrorists (Maras, 2014: 277). It puts forward an example of draught of 2011 that affected many countries in East Africa and the fact that Somalia's Al Shabaab tried to prevent humanitarian aid from reaching the affected regions in those states. Shelley (2014: 118), on the other hand, points to the pervasiveness of corruption in developing states that harbor such groups as Hizbullah and Al Qaeda. Corruption facilitates illicit activities that are essential in providing terrorist organizations with funds.

Additional sources concentrate on resource scarcity and the presence of transnational terrorist groups, such as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen. Chellaney (2013: 13) points to a very low level of fresh water availability per capita in this state. Such possible correlation is interesting provided that Yemen scored eight out of 178 countries in failed states index, after South Sudan, Somalia, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Chad, and Afghanistan. This case also goes contrary to Patrick (2011), von Hippel's (2002) and other arguments on failed states and their attractiveness to transnational terrorist groups.

In addition, there is a division in studies in terms of which countries attract most terrorist groups. As such, von Hippel (2002), for instance, argues that stronger states, Middle Eastern authoritarian states, are the main breeders of terrorists. While, Schneckener (2004) observes that contemporary terrorist attacks are frequently planned as well as coordinated across many countries, and not all of them are failed or failing states. Terrorists appear to prefer states with law being on the brink, although not failed as they still maintain some level of order. He adds that, with an exception of Afghanistan, terrorist networks have little use of failed states.

In this vein, Lee Eubank and Weinberg's (1994, 1998, 2001) much cited research looks at the connection between the regime type and terrorism and examine whether democracies could be more susceptible to terrorism. They find that terrorist organizations are more frequently to be found in democratic states. It is argued that democratic societies facilitate terrorism by reducing organizational costs (Li, 2005). The debate on the links between democracy and terrorism was furthered through arguments that democracy actually decreased the chance of a transnational terrorist attack as in democratic societies people are more likely to pursue their interests through non-violent means (Li, 2005). A recent study provided an explanation that connected both arguments: democracy both promotes and inhibits terrorism. Thus, Li (2005: 278) found that democratic participation reduces the number of transnational terrorist

attacks in that state, while “government constraints increase the number of those incidents, subsuming the effect of press freedom.”

Other studies come to the conclusion that foreign policy of a state is linked to transnational terrorism incidents. As such, Savun and Phillips (2009) argue that regardless of state regime type, countries that exhibit specific foreign policy behavior are more likely to attract transnational terrorism. Democratic states with an isolationist foreign policy are less likely to become a target of transnational terrorism than democratic states with active involvement in international politics that can create resentment among affected actors. In addition, international political stances of states, such as pro-Israeli position of the United States or voting in line with the U.S. in the United Nations General Assembly, also seem to play a role in attracting transnational terrorist attacks (Dreher & Gassebner, 2009; Pape, 2005).

An additional study in this research area encompasses arguments mentioned most of the time in the literature. Kittner (2007) looks at Islamic terrorist networks in particular and argues that there are four conditions for a state to become a safe haven for such organizations:

- geographic features,
- weak governance,
- history of corruption,
- and poverty.

In sum, most arguments on both sides of the debate on whether failed or failing states are the breeding grounds for terrorism in general and transnational terrorism in particular are centered around the notion of sovereignty, state ability to project power internally, economy, as well as effectiveness of law enforcement and overall infrastructure. It is, however, unclear from reading this literature whether these factors are related to terrorist cooperation and if domestic terrorist organizations based in fragile state are more likely candidates for the support of transnational terrorist organizations.

The literature on which state is more likely to become a target of transnational terrorism, or which factors impinge on cooperation between a domestic terrorist organization and a transnational one is grossly under-studied. To sum up all the arguments presented above, failed or failing, developed or developing, all states could become a target, each for different reasons. The argument that this dissertation makes is that regardless of grievances, regime type or economic development, all states could potentially be targeted by international terrorism. What is essential in terrorist motivation though, is the presence of certain conditions that benefit both organizations – the existence of potentially lootable natural resources and religion. The following chapter presents in detail the theoretical framework on terrorist franchising used in this dissertation.

## CHAPTER III

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: TRANSNATIONAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS AND FRANCHISING: THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

*In all such cases Al Qaeda interferes in an evolving conflict, exacerbates it, and tries to channel the outcome towards its own goals and translate local motivations into a coherent ideological and global cause.*

*Radu (2007, para. 9)*

This chapter presents and elaborates on the theoretical framework utilized in the present dissertation. The first section evaluates the organizational approach to the study of terrorist organizations' behavior. According to this approach, the main goal of terrorist organizations, like any other organization, is survival. Different factors impinge on the group's durability/lifespan, including too narrow aims or effective counterterrorism strategies. In order to continue their existence, terrorist organizations adapt to new situations. Such process also entails the redefinition of organizational goals and ideology. Thus,

I posit that terrorist organizations are quite like business firms in many respects, including the fact that they seldom go out of business voluntarily. In order to ensure survival, different strategies are executed at different stages of organization.

This dissertation argues that franchising or branding out is one of the major strategies terrorist organizations utilize to survive and thrive. This strategy involves two parties: the parent organization and the affiliate. To become or create a franchise both organizations involved go through a process of affiliation, which in some cases span several years. The franchise outreach process is beneficial for both parties involved. This work focuses on the motivation of both the parent or transnational terrorist organization, as well as the franchise or domestic terrorist organization.

After expanding on this discussion, the present chapter looks at different cases of franchising of terrorist organizations outside Africa. Next, I discuss Al Qaeda's franchise strategy and the crucial case of Algeria in Northern Africa. The role of religion and natural resources in franchising are further examined within the framework of franchising. Finally, the hypotheses derived from the causal mechanism are presented so that they can be explored through sub-Saharan Africa cases and particularly Nigeria in the following empirical chapters.

The major theoretical contribution of this dissertation to the literature on transnational terrorist organizations is the theoretical underpinning of the connection between terrorist organization

franchising for survival, natural resources and religion. Before and after official affiliation, parent organizations may provide their new franchises with funding. However, the existence of natural resources in a targeted state eases the burden on the parent organization as franchises can themselves utilize the existing resources to generate profit and provide for themselves in cases when a parent organization is not willing or able to provide financial support.

Furthermore, religion plays an instrumental role in this process. It is used to recruit and mobilize, as well as rally support of the local population. Religion is also an enabling factor in the process of franchising. As discussed later in the case of Al Qaeda and AQIM in this chapter, convergence of religious motivation (including belonging of the parent and the franchise organization to the same sect in Islam) allows for a smooth alignment of aims, communication and resources. The existence in a targeted state of grievances among the local population, especially religious grievances that involve people with the same religious affiliation as the transnational terrorist organization claims itself to be, enables the parent organization and the franchise to exploit this context for their own benefit: to recruit new members, enhance the loyalty of the existing ones and extract resources. The following sections elaborate each part of this argument on why transnational terrorist organizations target Africa and derive observable hypotheses.

### **3.1. Understanding Terrorist Organization Behavior**

Several different approaches rooted in diverse fields can be identified to explain terrorist organization behavior (Özdamar, 2008). This chapter only focuses on the organizational approach, as it is essential to the theoretical argument at hand.

#### **3.1.1 Organizational Approach to Terrorist Organization Behavior**

Similar to a commercial enterprise, organizational approach to terrorist organizations focuses on internal politics of the organization and identifies the main goal of a terrorist group as survival. In this context, terrorist behavior is an outcome of internal dynamics as well as cost-benefit analysis. Leaders are working towards enhancing and promoting the organization, providing incentives to the members to further the group's political and/or economic aims. Terrorist organizations offer some of these incentives upon recruitment: a sense of belonging to a group,<sup>17</sup> reputation and comradeship, as well as material advantages to the recruits and their families (Crenshaw, 1988: 19).

Organizational approach to terrorist organization's behavior views terrorist group's goals as fluctuating:

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<sup>17</sup> There is a similarity in incentives for joining a terrorist organization and belonging and identifying with a certain religious group, which are discussed in *Religion* section below.

[t]he operational interpretation of ideology will vary according to the need to ensure organizational survival. The chance for action, no matter what it accomplishes, may be a dominant incentive. Circumstances may alter incentive structures. If an organization is forced into inactivity, substitute incentives must be found. Some groups might shift to dealing in drugs, for example (Crenshaw, 1988: 20).

This approach underlines the importance of ultimate goals of a terrorist organization, however, it "rejects the assumption that the terrorists' principal aim is necessarily to achieve those goals" (Stern & Modi, 2007: 21). Just as organizational goals are not static, the terrorist organization's ideology is also subject to change in order to achieve its survivability. This approach also assumes that a terrorist organization, taken as a whole but consisting of individuals with their own psychological and physical needs, does not operate in a vacuum, rather operates in a changing socio-political context. According to Stern and Modi (2007: 21), "the efficacy of behaviors, missions, and organizational forms depends on the terrorist group's interaction with its environment. Environmental changes act as stressors that may require an adaptive shift in the organization's strategy or structure." In other words, these organizations survive only if they are flexible and adapt.

Moreover, the organizational approach attributes importance to leaders, especially when a terrorist group is first created. Because leader's personal ambitions are tied to the viability as well as political position of the organization, leaders are committed to promoting and enhancing the organization. Thus, they make sure to provide both

tangible and intangible incentives to members. Some factors are helpful at this point, especially the existence of a demand for such an organization among the potential recruits, including the potential for foreign assistance, and “the salience of purposive incentives” (Crenshaw, 1988: 21). Entrepreneurship is vital as the founders “must skillfully create and manipulate incentives to attract members” (Ibid.). The environment is seen as most essential during this phase of the organization: ‘organizational maintenance’ or simply survival becomes the major factor that keeps the organization functioning even when the success of its political purpose is evidently unattainable (Crenshaw, 1988: 19-22). That is why, for example, most jihadist terrorist organizations know that their chances of establishing Islamic hegemony in the world or even in a particular country are slim. Same is true for Sikh terrorist organizations that have been active for almost a century. Nevertheless, these organizations continue to pursue their endeavors.

The way that the organizational approach evaluates the motivation of terrorist organizations is best expressed by the Rand Corporation:

[o]rganizations are dedicated to survival. They do not voluntarily go out of business. Right now, the immediate objective of many of the world’s hard-pressed terrorist groups is the same as the immediate objective of many of the world’s hard-pressed corporations – that is, to continue operations (cited in Crenshaw, 1988: 22).

One group's possible decline is seen as connected to its purpose: the character of the ultimate purpose affects the behavior of a terrorist organization. Borrowing from Wilson's (1974: 47-50) work groups' "purposive incentive[s]" can be classified here as issue-oriented, ideological and redemptionist. The groups that have a very narrow purpose – meaning they are specific issue-oriented - are usually short-lived. Groups with an ideological purpose reject the existing political world and aim to replace it. These groups welcome increased membership, which in its turn establishes an inside hierarchy that differentiates the "doctrinally sophisticated /.../ and those in the rank and file who are to be educated and led" (Ibid., 48). The last category of political purpose is described as redemptionist. These moralistic groups seek to better the lives of their members. They put emphasis on certain personal traits, such as courage, commitment and sacrifice, and tend to be small in size as not many are deemed qualified enough to become a member. Redemptionist groups never reach their ultimate goal leaving them with a choice of either "collapse, inward-looking sectarianism, or acts of rage and despair" (Ibid., 49).

Organizational approach views ideology as flexible. In order to survive, operational interpretation of an ideology can vary depending on the external environment and group exposure to it. The more one group is isolated, the less accurate is the information it receives on what happens around it, and as a result the group's members become increasingly concerned with simply maintaining the group,

rather than achieving its political goals. On the other hand, groups that focus on just one issue can easily adapt to new situations by creating new goals (Crenshaw, 1988: 21).

Consequently, this dissertation argues that transnational terrorist organizations exploit domestic environment of a state to its own advantage for survival. Changing environment is the major reason why domestic terrorist groups seek affiliation and franchise with transnational terrorist organizations. Effective counterterrorism measures or loss of support from the local populations leads terrorist organizations to seek redefinition of their goals in order to justify their continued existence. Thus, by becoming affiliated or networked with a more branded terrorist organization, such as Al Qaeda or the Islamic State (IS) and changing their initial goals so as to fit with the parent organization's narrative, such groups try to prolong their durability. In that regard, terrorist organizations behave like business firms and similar incentives are available to them.

### **3.1.2 Terrorist Organizations as Business Firms**

Zelinsky and Shubik (2009) were, to author's knowledge, the first to propose a new typological framework for terrorist group differentiation. The scholars argued that the existing literature on the organizational structure of terrorist group divides them into either 'old' hierarchical or 'new' networked ones. Indicating the lack of insight

such frameworks have produced, Zelinsky and Shubik put forward a new classification based on a similarity in how firms and terrorist groups operate. This yields four business models: hierarchy, franchise, venture capital and brand. These models differ from each other in two important aspects: the centrality of operations and centrality of resources.

**Table 1: Typological Framework of Terrorist Organizations**

		Resources	
		<i>Centralized</i>	<i>Decentralized</i>
Operations	<i>Centralized</i>	<b>Hierarchy</b> ( Hamas )	<b>Franchise</b> ( Al Qaeda )
	<i>Decentralized</i>	<b>Venture Capital</b> ( Palestine Liberation Organization – PLO- in the 1970s )	<b>Brand</b> ( Earth Liberation Front - EFL )

Source: Zelinsky and Shubik (2009: 328).

The most centralized model in terms of resources and operations in Zelinsky and Shubik's (2009) typology is *hierarchy*. It represents a terrorist organization with very firm command and control structure. The relevant information and decisions are distributed from top to bottom with the lowest rungs given "only low levels of knowledge /.../ necessary" (Zelinsky and Shubik, 2009: 329). Hamas fits well into this

business model as it has a central leadership that exercises control over funding and attacks (Ibid.).

As opposed to *hierarchy*, the most decentralized model in operations is a *brand*. It is represented by a network of very loosely connected organization with as little contact between each other as possible. This model ensures the ultimate survivability of the organization even if the majority of cells is terminated. What unites these groups is the common ideology and terrorist trademark. The Earth Liberation Front (EFL) case illuminates the working of this business model when applied to terrorist organizations. EFL, also known as the “elves” (Best & Nocella, 2006: 19) was a radical environmentalist movement, created in 1992 in England and spread to Europe, that engaged in what is called ‘eco-terrorism,’ conducting around 300 attacks until 2009 against diverse targets, including McDonalds restaurants chain, without any casualty at all (Loadenthal, 2013). EFL adopted a “leaderless *resistance* model, in which autonomous subgroups of trusted confidants form cells for the purpose of carrying out illicit actions based on a set of guiding principles” (Countering Eco-Terrorism, 2012: 12). New members into the network were warned not to participate in activities of the existing cell but rather establish new cells of their own (Ibid.), so that the operations could be kept as decentralized as possible.

The *venture capital* model entails an organization with centralized resources but decentralized operations. According to

Zelinsky and Shubik (2009: 329), the organizations that fit into this business model are not able to maintain large-scale camps due to weak operational command. Venture capital organizations can provide funding to other groups that establish camps but have little to no control over its activities. From late 1990s up until the attacks of September 11, Al Qaeda represented a venture capital model, financing diverse organizations retaining no control over their operations. Palestine Liberation Organization in the 1970s is an additional example of a venture capital business model (Ibid.).

This dissertation focuses on the *franchise* model of terrorist organizations. This business model is the most relevant one when it comes to investigating why transnational terrorist organizations target Africa, as well as why domestic terrorist organizations in Africa choose to become their affiliates and then franchises. Transnational terrorist organizations, like Al Qaeda and the Islamic State have come to be competitors in the race for affiliates on this continent. According to the Central Intelligence Agency director John Brennan, the IS has now around 7,000 fighters in Nigeria alone (Zengerle & Landay, 2016). Boko Haram, a domestic Nigerian terrorist organization recently pledged allegiance to the IS and was subsequently renamed as Wilāyat Gharb Ifrīqīyyah (West Africa Province). In 2014, it even surpassed its future parent organization in its deadlines (Osborne & Buchanan, 2015).

As I assume that the ultimate goal of a terrorist organization is survival, then franchising is plausible for both parties involved. For the

parent organization, it increases its influence throughout the world without having to provide recruits, while a domestic group that faces existential challenges at home can redefine itself and its goals, usually by making them more general/aligned with wider populations than previously was the case. This way a small domestic terrorist group with narrow aims becomes internationalized and can appeal to recruit from a larger pool of potential members in the host country.

Theoretically Zelinsky and Shubik categorize the franchise business model as centralized in terms of operations but decentralized when it comes to resources. As the central authority is unable to fund operations, groups are left to train themselves. However, franchise does enable good transfer of information, through which the organization can spread and adopt new practices (Zelinsky and Shubik, 2009: 329). In the recent years many studies (Guitta, 2010; Mendelsohn, 2016) have utilized the model of a terrorist organization as a franchise for other, usually smaller domestic, terrorist groups in their analysis of the Al Qaeda. It is important to note here that literature on this subject contains a certain discrepancy. Zelinsky and Shubik's own evaluation of evolving Al Qaeda strategy categorizes this organization more in terms of *brand*, rather than *franchise*. However, when compared to the EFL it is evident that defining Al Qaeda as *brand* denies other instances in which it provided funding and was in contact with its official affiliates. It is, thus, safe to say that transnational terrorist organizations, including Al Qaeda, that utilize the

strategy of affiliation fall somewhere in between Zelinsky and Shubik's categorization of *franchise* and *brand*.<sup>18</sup>

The majority of works on Al Qaeda and its franchising strategy concentrate on the Algerian Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb or AQIM, but AQIM is not Al Qaeda's only franchise. Next section first looks into organizations located outside Africa that were franchised by Al Qaeda before moving on to Africa and the AQIM case. The objective is to contextualize through different cases how and why parent and affiliate terrorist organizations enter in a franchise in and outside Africa.

### **3.2 Al Qaeda's Franchising Strategy outside Africa: The Effect of Religion and Natural Resources**

According to the data released by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) Global Terrorism Database (GTD), only one out of 5,000 attacks conducted in 2011 was attributed to Al Qaeda (Central), however, among the top 20 most active terrorist organizations, ten were affiliated with or franchised by Al Qaeda, including Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Shabaab, al-Qaida in Iraq and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan

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<sup>18</sup> Studies conducted so far have utilized the term *franchise*. This dissertation ascribes to the same position, thus, the term *franchise* is hereto forth used.

(TTP) (START, 2012).<sup>19</sup> This section discusses Al Qaeda's franchise strategy in two countries outside Africa - Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Al Qaeda's attempts to use other terrorist groups to further its own agenda goes back to 1980s and 1990s, while it was still based in Sudan. At that time the organization was facing a crisis due to large numbers of fighters leaving for a more active *jihad* movement elsewhere. This prompted Al Qaeda to announce a "blessed jihad" against the United States and later conduct two large-scale attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania (Farrall, 2011).

Still, the strategy only bore fruit after the period between 2002 and 2004 when Al Qaeda's leadership focused on consolidating its ideological foundation. As a result, it drew from *takfiri* (an accusation of apostasy by a Sunni Muslim against another Muslim), thus, justifying attacks on corrupt Muslim regimes, as well as requiring Muslims to attack a global enemy – the United States and the West.

The hybrid ideology and *manhaj* [methodology of receiving, understanding, analyzing and applying knowledge] that emerged make little distinction between targeting local enemies and targeting global ones and have a one-size-fits-all solution -- jihad. Partnering with al Qaeda does not, therefore, require a local group to abandon its own agenda, just broaden its focus. This helped assuage other groups' fears that merging with al Qaeda would mean a loss of autonomy to pursue their own local goals (Farrall, 2011).

Since then, many groups started to align themselves with Al Qaeda, including groups, such as Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (Iraq) in 2003,

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<sup>19</sup> Since its separation from Al Qaeda in 2014, the same trend holds for the Islamic State, which currently has over 40 affiliates in the world. See, <http://www.intelcenter.com/maps/is-affiliates-map.html>.

which is said to have been stronger than Al Qaeda in both resources and “brand power” (Farrall, 2011) and Al Qaeda’s first ever expansion called Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP- Saudi Arabia).

### **3.2.1 Saudi Arabia**

On May 12, 2003, not long after the United States invaded Iraq, two vehicles – one containing the gunmen, the other filled with explosives – stormed the al-Hamra compound with its 20-foot-high perimeter walls. The gunmen threw grenades and shot at everyone in sight. The attack culminated in a massive explosion that was said to have flattened the villas in its vicinity. This was one of the four coordinated attacks executed that day: other two targets were mostly American and British compounds like al-Hamra that were considered to be the most elite expatriate communities in the Saudi capital. The fourth attack was directed against the offices of the Saudi Maintenance Company, in part owned by the U.S., and working in the defense sector (Bowcott & Pallister, 2003).

Several years before these attacks took place, Osama bin Laden assigned Abd al Rahim al-Nashiri and Yusuf al-Uyayri to prepare the infrastructure that would allow Al Qaeda’s future Saudi branch to operate in the country. Once al-Nashiri was captured in 2002, all the attention and responsibility fell solely on al-Uyayri. Towards May 2003, bin Laden wanted the established cells to prepare a terror campaign,

but, reportedly, al-Uyayri considered the group not to be ready and asked bin Laden for more time, which he was denied (Mendelsohn, 2016: 109). It was in this context that the attacks on the Western compounds took place.

As a result, al-Uyayri was proven right and bin Laden's hastiness seriously damaged the brand in the long run. Several months after the May 12 attack, the organization called itself Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), by which time the franchise was already engaged in a battle for its own survival:

The Saudi regime responded to the attack in Riyadh with a brutal crackdown; al-Uyayri himself became one of its first victims, perishing less than three weeks after the Riyadh attack. The branch's efforts to recover and demonstrate its prowess produced some high-profile attacks, but instead of reviving the group, these operations further weakened it. Bombing that killed Muslim civilians and Saudi security forces, along with regime propaganda, proved disastrous to AQAP's nascent image and turned Saudi public opinion against the militants. Hunted down by the regime and rejected and informed on by the public, AQAP suffered attrition and struggled to recruit new members. Although the group's original size was large enough to allow some of its cells to escape dragnet and carry out operations, by 2006 it became clear that al-Qaeda's campaign in the kingdom was a failure (Mendelsohn, 2016: 110).

AQAP was intended to be a unification of disparate groups mostly created by Afghan war veterans. The aim in uniting all these independent groups was ultimately survival: command and control of all prevented them to act out of order or prematurely, thus bringing the whole network under counterterrorism fire (Mendelsohn, 2016: 113-114). Mendelsohn (2016: 114) argues that this first attempt, though

unsuccessful, created a roadmap for the organization's future franchise ventures as a preferred mode of survival and expansion.

What exactly motivated Osama bin Laden to rush into creating a franchise in Saudi Arabia? This dissertation argues that to find answers to this question, one needs to look at the use of religion and natural resources by the parent and franchise terrorist organizations.

Saudi Arabia is symbolically an essential place for all Muslims: it is the birthplace of Prophet Muhammad, the site of two holy cities – Mecca and Medina; it also is the direction Muslims face for the prayer and the center from which the first Muslim armies started spreading Islam (Mendelsohn, 2016: 110). These factors, combined with the stationing of the U.S. forces on the Saudi territory from 1990 onwards, were seen as a guarantee that the Saudis would embrace Al Qaeda's message and goals. Organization's leaders took Prophet Mohammad's order "Let there be no two religions in Arabia" strictly and were humiliated by what they saw as foreign occupation of the holy land (Ibid.: 110-111). Religious aspect in choosing Saudi Arabia is also connected to recruitment and Saudi natural resources. Saudi Arabia is among the largest producers of oil in the world.<sup>20</sup> It also has reserves of natural gas, iron ore, gold and copper (Saudi Arabia, 2016). Saudi Arabia is highly dependent on its natural resources for income: according to the World Bank data, the total percentage of

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<sup>20</sup> As of 2014, Saudi Arabia was number two among the world producers of crude oil. See, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2241rank.html>.

the country's GDP coming from natural resource rents amounted for 79.4 in 1980. Since then the number decreased, but it reached another peak in 2008 with 64.8%. Such abundance of resources leads to accumulation of enormous profits for the Saudis. This money was, among others, used to fund many religious and educational centers, which in turn were accused of spreading anti-Western and anti-American sentiments. Saudi textbooks provided "negative references to the inferiority of non-Muslims and to the need to vanquish them and denunciations of teachings that do not mesh with strict Wahhabist beliefs" (Yetiv, 2011: 110). These places were also used for terrorist recruitment purposes. In his detailed study of oil money and its ties to Al Qaeda financing, Yetiv (2011) finds multiple links, some direct, some established through various organizations, such as the International Islamic Relief Organization, between oil and Al Qaeda. He estimates that the amount of money coming from oil funding Al Qaeda's activities to be very substantive. In 2010, WikiLeaks documents further revealed that the Saudi donors were the most significant source of financial support to many religious (Sunni) terrorist organizations around the world (Spillius, 2010).

In the case of Saudi Arabia and Al Qaeda's first franchise, it is easy to see the role that religion and natural resources played in operations and resource-gathering and influenced bin Laden's ultimate decision to establish a franchise there. The following section discusses Al Qaeda's next franchise.

### 3.2.2 Iraq

Al Qaeda's second franchise was Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (the Party of Monotheism and Jihad), created in 2003 by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian national. His radicalization process started at the age of around twenty when he was arrested and charged with drug possession and sexual assault. Zarqawi was a late arrival for the *jihad* against the Soviets in Afghanistan in 1989 returning back to Jordan where he remained a "fringe" figure in the global *jihad* until the American invasion of Iraq (Ghosh, 2014). During the 1990s, he adopted the Salafi ideology and travelled back to Afghanistan to set up a terrorist training camp. It is argued that it was then that Zarqawi met bin Laden for the first time and received an invitation to join Al Qaeda. The major difference between the two was Zarqawi's wish to target 'near' rather than 'far' enemy: he wanted to target the Jordanian government and Israel, while bin Laden already pronounced the United States to be Al Qaeda's enemy number one. Zarqawi declined the offer and with the fall of Taliban fled to Iraq. There he established Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, drawing mostly on non-Iraqi members, at the same time reportedly receiving financial assistance for training facilities from Al Qaeda's leader (The Islamic State, 2016).

In just one year, beginning with the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Zarqawi rose to the status of a "superstar of international 'jihadi' movement"

(Ghosh, 2014). The group was one of several that was trying to drive the U.S. and coalition forces out of Iraq. But it was also ruthless in its attacks against aid workers as well as native Iraqis. These attacks, particularly against the Shiite population, left the survivors with one question "Why us? Why, when there are so many Americans around, bomb us?" (Ghosh, 2014: para. 5).

Zarqawi's notoriety once again attracted the attention of bin Laden, and this time Zarqawi accepted his offer of affiliation. Thus, Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad was renamed Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). Not all in Al Qaeda were happy with this merger though: Ayman al-Zawahiri reproached Zarqawi's tactics of targeting civilians. When in 2006, Zarqawi was killed by two 500-pound U.S. Air Force bombs and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took his place, Zawahiri once again made his dissatisfaction known (Ghosh, 2014).

The name of al-Baghdadi<sup>21</sup> is most certainly familiar to contemporary readers as the leader of probably the most brutal and one of the wealthiest terrorist groups of all times – the Islamic State (IS, also known as Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)). It is interesting to note here that through the strategy of franchise, Al Qaeda became inadvertently involved in

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<sup>21</sup> Recent news sources claim that al-Baghdadi was killed in a U.S. air strike in Raqqa. See, Summers, C. Has ISIS Leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi Been Killed in US Air Strike? Reports Say He Has Died in Raqqa but No Confirmation from Coalition. Retrieved from <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3640726/ISIS-leader-Abu-Bakr-al-Baghdadi-killed-air-strike-Raqqa-according-pro-Islamic-State-news-agency.html>.

creation of a monster out of one of its sprouts, which now competes against its former parent organization for influence and affiliation.

The period between 2006 and 2011 saw both the reorganization of AQI and setting of the stage for the later emergence of the Islamic State. Al-Baghdadi turned AQI from a foreign organization into a local one, which reduced the amount of resentment the locals had against it. On the other hand, domestic situation in Iraq in terms of Sunni-Shiite conflict failed to improve. With the withdrawal of the U.S. troops, the AQI's ranks swelled with former members of the Saddam's military, including commanders. AQI continued to attack civilians using suicide bombing but now it also attacked the police and military stations, recruiting centers and checkpoints. AQI went rogue and changed its name the second time: Al Qaeda in Iraq was now called Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) (Ghosh, 2014).

One of the factors of Zarqawi's rapid rise to fame could be attributed to his brutal attacks, which shocked even Al Qaeda's leadership. Al-Baghdadi continued in the path paved by his predecessor, fulfilling the latter's dream in the process – becoming a spiritual leader as well. Thus, al-Baghdadi appointed himself “caliph” after his organization took Mosul (Ghosh, 2014).

This franchise turned out to be a much larger failure for Al Qaeda than Saudi Arabia, because, eventually, after becoming IS, the former franchise started challenging its former parent on the international arena. Mendelsohn (2016: 116) even called it one of its

“most self-destructive acts.” So why did Al Qaeda initially decide to proceed with this affiliation? What factors influenced the decision-making process?

As in the case of Saudi Arabia, bin Laden seems to have evaluated Iraq, firstly, in terms of its symbolic meaning for the Muslim world. First of all, Iraq historically was the seat of the Abbasid caliphate (Mendelsohn, 2016: 116). In order to achieve power, the Abbasids played around the internal sectarian divisions in Islam - Sunni and Shia. They maintained that their legitimacy was based on their connections to Prophet Muhammad's uncle (Stokes, 2009: 36). This connection between the Prophet and the Iraqi land<sup>22</sup> allowed Al Qaeda to frame the U.S. occupation as if Islam itself was under attack. In fact, many Saudis preferred to go to Iraq to fight a 'real' battle against a real enemy and its occupation. Iraq seemed more valid and legitimate to them, than the way struggle was framed in Saudi Arabia (Mendelsohn, 2016: 116).

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<sup>22</sup> It is important to note though, that Abbasids were not the first Muslim rulers of Iraqi lands. Iraq was initially conquered by the 1<sup>st</sup> Caliph Abu Bekir and later reconquered from the Persians by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Caliph Umar, just several years after Prophet Mohammad's death. The Umayyad dynasty ruled Iraq after its conquest and before the Abbasids came to power. The latter tried to discredit the Umayyads by arguing that they did not come from the Prophet's lineage. In fact, the Umayyad dynasty came from Prophet Muhammad's grandfather's father's brother. So effectively, the Umayyads did come from the Prophet's lineage, even if from his more distant relatives (Islamic Dynasties, 2014). As for the reason why not only Osama bin Laden but also al-Baghdadi (Wood, 2014) were inspired by the Abbasid Caliphate, the answer could lie in the court's influence. Its legacy is felt even today through poetry, which is considered to be one of the greatest collections written in the Arabic language. These collections and their translations are said to have been at the basis of education in the Islamic and Western worlds. This "recollection of ancient greatness" seems to have influenced bin Laden and his followers (Kennedy, 2006: 296).

Contrary to the way the franchise in Saudi Arabia was organized, Al Qaeda did not have the funds, which is why it preferred to establish an affiliation with another organization in Iraq, rather than expand from its own cadres. According to Mendelsohn (2016), immediately before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Al Qaeda was in no position to directly get involved in the country. Its leaders “besieged in Pakistan's tribal areas” could only “direct some operatives to join al-Zarqawi's emerging network in Iraq and to release statements offering tactical advice – highlighting, for example, the usefulness of digging trenches” (Ibid.: 116).

Engaging in Iraq in the aftermaths of the U.S. invasion was seen as imperative: the inactivity would cost Al Qaeda its reputation. Thus, due to lack of human and material resources, Al Qaeda established a franchise with one of the most notorious Salafi religious extremist organizations, Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, already operational in the country. With its strong leadership, Jamaat capitalized on sectarian religious cleavages. Al-Zarqawi's goals, on the other hand, were in line of gaining more leverage, increasing his organization's name through Al Qaeda's brand. He was also looking forward to resources and funding that he believed would come with the merger (Mendelsohn, 2016: 118) and was convinced that Al Qaeda brand would increase

the group's likelihood of survival in the very competitive Iraqi religious extremist market.<sup>23</sup>

Iraq, like Saudi Arabia is a resource rich country: beside petroleum, it has deposits of natural gas, phosphates and sulfur (Iraq, 2016). Iraq's dependency on its natural resources is very high. According to the World Bank database, between 1970 and 2014, only once did its rents coming from natural resources constitute less than 10% of the GDP, and this was in 1990, after that the data is missing. When it once again becomes available, a year after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the number is once again high, constituting 69.3% of the GDP, which is the highest score since 1970. Iraq, as Saudi Arabia, is in top ten largest producers of crude oil in the world.<sup>24</sup> This oil wealth was the reason why the IS, formerly AQI, was able to expand so quickly (S.B., 2015). Oil was also the prime source of income for the AQI. It is said that between 2006 and 2009 the organization's 'Oil Ministry' raised around 2 billion dollars through oil smuggling (Shatz, 2014).

In conclusion, as in the case of AQAP, it is easy to trace the effects of religion and natural resources in the decision-making process of Al Qaeda in terms of its franchise strategy in Iraq. Al Qaeda did not have the resources to establish itself there directly, which is why it chose a merger with al-Zarqawi's organization. The existence of

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<sup>23</sup> According to the GTD (2013), between the years of 2003 and 2012 there were at least 56 known and active terrorist organizations that conducted attacks in Iraq during this period of time.

<sup>24</sup> As of 2014, Iraq was number seven among the world producers of crude oil. See, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2241rank.html>.

oil wealth in the country was beneficial for Al Qaeda as it provided the benefits of official affiliation, which included strengthening its brand name and engaging in propaganda, while spending very little. Tawhid was operational and recruited effectively through its strong and charismatic leadership. Moreover, al-Zarqawi was ready to seize the opportunity to capture territory and establish a territorial entity once Al Qaeda brand gave his organization the necessary edge. Territorial presence in Iraq clearly equaled further access to natural resources. The following section looks at Al Qaeda's franchise strategy in Africa and assesses similarities to the Saudi Arabia and Iraq cases.

### **3.3 Al Qaeda's Franchising Strategy in Africa: The Effect of Religion and Natural Resources**

In 1989 and 1990, Sudan's religious leader Hassan al-Turabi, also described as "the longtime power behind the throne of Sudan's despotic leader Omar al-Bashir," urged Osama bin Laden to bring Al Qaeda to this Sub-Saharan African state (Joffe, 2016). When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1991, bin Laden, who was at that time in Saudi Arabia, proposed to Saudi leadership to send the *mujahideen* – Afghan war veterans – in order to fight Saddam's army. The Saudis, however, joined the U.S. forces and revoked bin Laden's passport<sup>25</sup> after his denouncements of the ensuing coalition (Al Qaeda, 2015). Al

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<sup>25</sup> Bin Laden's citizenship was revoked after he declined to renounce his criticism of the Saudi dynasty (Mendelsohn, 2016: 112).

Qaeda's leader took on Turabi's offer and fled to Sudan. There he established a network of businesses, which included lucrative government issued contracts on building roads as well as his involvement in the banking sector (Astill, 2001).<sup>26</sup> Bin Laden used his time in Sudan to establish ties with other extremist Islamist groups located in different countries on the continent: Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Somalia, Eritrea, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Uganda (Al Qaeda, 2015). According to a recent study, nowadays Al Qaeda and/or its related groups are active mainly in Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Somalia and Kenya (Hubbard, 2014).

One of the smaller groups that officially affiliated themselves with Al Qaeda was the Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Fighting/Combat (GSPC). The group traces its origins to the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) created by the so-called Algerian 'Afghans.' They fought against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and brought their experience back to Algeria. GIA increasingly committed gruesome acts of violence against the local population, thus, alienating it not only from its previous supporters but also other Islamist groups

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<sup>26</sup> Many in Sudan at that time considered bin Laden a regular Saudi businessman. However, the following account refutes this perception:

In 1995, four activists from an ultra-extreme Egyptian group which considers Islam so corrupt that it would be best to start again, opened fire in a mosque in Omdurman, killing 12 people. Afterwards, they jumped into a Toyota pickup and went hunting for Bin Laden - whom they judged offensively liberal. According to former neighbours, the Toyota screamed to a stop outside Bin Laden's offices, opposite his house, and even before getting out the occupants opened fire. Shots were returned immediately, from the offices and from the roof of the house. Within minutes, one man lay dead in the street, two or three in the offices, and three in the pickup. The fourth attacker was hanged (Astill, 2001).

(Mendelsohn, 2016). In 1998, some of those who renounced GIA formed the GSPC.

In 2003, GSPC declared its allegiance to Al Qaeda and in 2006 officially became its franchise,<sup>27</sup> renaming itself Al Qaeda in the (Lands) of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM or AQLIM)<sup>28</sup>. This merger led to several changes in the group: firstly, it redefined its targets in line with its 'parent,' focusing on Western targets, such as the bus carrying Halliburton employees (Guitta, 2010: 68). AQIM also expanded its target region, conducting attacks in Libya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia, although the larger part of attacks were still perpetrated on the Algerian soil, with a total of 173 attacks both known and suspected for the period between 2007 and 2015 (GTD Database, 2015). In 2012, AQIM also expanded into northern Mali. In collaboration with other extremist groups, including the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA) and a Malian-led group, AQIM exploited a long-standing ethnic separatist insurgency in this Sub-Saharan African state for multiple purposes. For almost nine months, AQIM was able to establish and run training camps in Timbuktu, modelled on bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan. These centers attracted many recruits from around the Muslim countries, including Algeria, Pakistan, Mauritania and Nigeria. The presence of a

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<sup>27</sup> Satana, Bugday and Birnir's (2014) work also looks at transnationalization of domestic terrorist organizations. It examines the cases of Algeria and Turkey comparatively to explain how and why domestic terrorist organizations appeal to transnational terrorist organizations.

<sup>28</sup> This dissertation uses the AQIM abbreviation.

large number of Boko Haram members there confirmed allegations that AQIM was engaged in an alliance of some sort with the Nigerian group (Blair, 2013). AQIM also used its Malian bases for recruiting and weapons restocking purposes (Humud et al., 2014: 19).

Some reports suggest that since becoming Al Qaeda's franchise in 2006, AQIM received very little communication from Osama bin Laden or Ayman al Zawahiri. In this respect, some observers argue that "Al Qaeda is expanding geographically contend that the ability of Al Qaeda leaders to assert command and control is irrelevant if affiliate groups are committed to the same objectives" (Humud et al., 2014: 4). It seems to be one of the benefits of franchising that the parent organization is unburdened of controlling its affiliated groups, while at the same time bearing fruits from the alliance, including spreading its influence into larger areas and improving its image among other terrorist organizations. At a time when cooperation (as well as competition) between terrorist entities substantially increased (Moghadam, 2015), franchising appears to be an instrument of choice among larger transnational terrorist organizations.

As these two theory-building cases indicate, religion plays an instrumental role in which country an organization is chosen or targeted as a franchise by a parent organization. As seen in both Iraq and Saudi Arabia, convergence of religious motivation between AQ and the affiliate organizations were useful in a smooth transition of not

only 'choosing' one's parent organization, but also merging both new and old goals into a single narrative. Consequently, religion became a useful tool for operations.

Natural resources appear as the second essential factor in franchising. The presence of potentially lootable or exploitable natural resources in a state eases the burden of a parent organization as its new franchise can utilize resources at its proximity to generate funds for conducting operations. The next section further elaborates the theoretical mechanisms of this argument.

### **3.4 The Significance of Religion and Natural Resources in Terrorist Franchising**

According to Zelinsky and Shubik's (2009) theoretical framework, business models are defined in terms of operations and resources, each, in its turn, categorized as centralized or decentralized. The franchise model is described as centralized in terms of operations, while being decentralized when it comes to resources. I argue that explanations provided by two variables – religion and natural resources – fills the gap and thus enhance this model.

Terrorist organizations with an ideological purpose, as discussed by Wilson (1974: 47-50), are not content with the existing order and seek to replace it with something else. These organizations also welcome larger membership, which allows for the establishment of a clear hierarchy between those who are at the center, the so-called

doctrinally knowledgeable, and those at the fringes that have only limited information on the workings of the organization and its operations. The orders come from the leadership and are passed on to the lower levels.

In this vein, transnational terrorist organizations with religious motivation/ideology are very similar to the aforementioned description. Religion plays a unifying and leveling role in their franchise strategy. It creates a hierarchy within a larger network of organizations with a clearly visible (and most probably highly respected) leadership. One only needs to look at Al Qaeda and the figure of Osama bin Laden.

In one of his most widely-known works, Jeffrey Seul (1999: 558) contends the reason behind "the frequent appearance of religion as the primary cultural marker distinguishing groups in conflict" is the fact that religion addresses a person's psychological needs more than any other cultural meanings. It provides a stable identity and security, as well as answers "when pluralism and other forms of complexities threaten the established order" (Ibid.: 559). Most important for the arguments put forward in this dissertation is that religion assures peoples' place in the existing order and, through religious texts as well as oral material, provides them with a sense of belonging with others in remote places. Members of a certain religious group "assimilate the group's narrative, which becomes a feature of their individual identities" (Ibid.: 561). Thus, I argue that during the franchise process

religion not only enables a smooth merger but also leads to a more deeper unification of all the members in the organization. Religion and religious texts and materials circulated by the parent organization lead to an establishment of a closer bond between the members, strengthening the hierarchy within. Thus, it is rather the instrumental value of religion that makes it an impeccable tool in terrorist franchising, rather than the content of any particular religion.

This argument clearly goes against the 'new terrorism' literature, as discussed in the *Literature Review Chapter*, which maintains the emergence of a different type of terrorism since the end of the Cold War. Religion in general, and Islam in particular, is seen as the major factor of difference between this fourth 'wave' of terrorism and the previous three. Religion is seen as a new motivational ideology behind the attacks, bringing with it not only a broader range of enemies but also a moral justification for the killings. An additional aspect of religious terrorism scholars argue is what Cronin (2002) calls "pleas[ing] the perceived commands of deity," meaning that terrorist groups' actions are directly or indirectly build around this fulfillment.

However, this dissertation adheres to the literature that views religion not as a cause of terrorism but as its strategic tool. Religion plays an important role in recruiting new members into the organization as well as acquiring funding both domestically and from international donors. In the case of AQIM, and as will be shown with the example of Boko Haram in the *Case Study Chapter*, similar

religious ideology facilitates the process from just cooperation to group affiliation. In an interview to *The New York Times*, emir Abdelmalek Droukdal underlined Islamic imperatives as the main factor behind affiliation, not material ones. He argued that under the conditions “when their enemies have banded together to wage a war against the umma” it was essential for Muslims to unite and through unification of jihad the ultimate goal would be to “please Allah” (Mendelsohn, 2016: 130).<sup>29</sup>

Most, including Mendelsohn (2016), consider this move to have been motivated solely by the desire of the GSPC to survive. The group had to reinvent itself in order to justify its further existence. AQIM was able to quickly adapt to the goals of its parent organization without having to change its own ideology at all. Western targets, especially the U.S., were proclaimed to be the enemy number one, while at the same time also fitting Algeria into the picture. Despite Algeria's low priority for the United States, the country's still viable connection with France and the latter's role in Algerian affairs was introduced into Al Qaeda's narrative of fighting the “far enemy” (Mendelsohn, 2016: 129).

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<sup>29</sup> It is important to note here that this dissertation argues that convergence of religious motivation is one of two factors in the terrorist franchise process. However, I do not argue that any religious motivation can become an enabling factor. Instead I posit that religious motivations of the parent and host organizations have to be similar, which means terrorist organizations should identify with the same religious sect, but they also must aspire similar goals. For instance, the case of Boko Haram in the Case Study Chapter clearly shows the importance of this convergence through failure of affiliation with Al Qaeda and the success of franchise with Islamic State.

Al Qaeda's franchising with AQIM is evaluated to have been less rushed than those in Saudi Arabia and Iraq. The choice of GSPC is even questioned by some, as Al Qaeda had no immediate reason to expand in Algeria, as opposed to Iraq. And the question that arose was why did Al Qaeda engage in this affiliation (Mendelsohn, 2016: 128)? It should be noted first that Al Qaeda first appears to have shown interest in GSPC during the Algerian civil war. It is even argued that Osama bin Laden sent his delegates to Algeria to urge the GSPC to "'get rid the Islamic Group's ties' with the GIA" that had become increasingly brutal to the local population and foreigners alike. He is additionally reported to having offered "'financial assistance and weapons through smuggling networks spread all over the world' in exchange for the GSPC's loyalty" (Guitta, 2010: 55). The presence in the country of natural resources such as oil and gas would later present an additional target opportunity for AQIM's splinter group Al-Murabitoun led by Mokhtar Belmokhtar (Bond, 2015).

It is important to note here that franchise is not a one-way process, rather it is beneficial for both parties involved. What a parent organization gains is, first and foremost, influence in other regions of the world. It is now able to claim attacks conducted by its franchise as part of its own agenda without sparing additional resources. Franchise may also entail additional recruits to the parent organization or even financial benefits. However, increasing its influence is the most

essential benefit for the transnational terrorist organization in the process of official affiliation.

AQIM franchise proved to be beneficial to Al Qaeda on several important issues: first, AQIM provided a considerably large number of recruits to Al Qaeda operatives in Iraq. According to some estimates, this number ranges from nine to twenty-five percent (Roussellier, 2011: 5). Second, through the GSPC Al Qaeda gained access to jihadists as well as the contacts in the criminal world that belonged to the former. AQIM's affiliation proved financially profitable as the group engaged in illicit activities, including smuggling, trafficking and kidnapping, with a possibility of AQIM being involved in a cocaine trade en route to Western Europe from Latin America via West Africa. This trade would further destabilize the region, benefiting the terrorist groups operating there (Roussellier, 2011: 8). This role is described as follows:

In one of the poorest regions in the world, AQIM's involvement with smuggling, money laundering, the black market, and drug trafficking across the Sahara-Sahel, West Africa, and further afield ensures minimum financial back-up and steady recruitment while expanding its transnational outreach (Roussellier, 2011: 6).

Lastly, by bringing the GSPC under its wing, Al Qaeda sought to spread its influence in the region, presenting itself as a "protector of oppressed Muslims and its [Al Qaeda's] expressed interest in relieving the plight of France's Muslims." It was seen as a possibility to distract the American efforts from Afghanistan and provide a little breathing space for the organization there (Mendelsohn, 2016: 130).

As for the GSPC, its motives seem to have been driven mainly by a desire to continue its existence. In 2002, the organization had around 4,000 members, however, these numbers were rapidly declining. At the same time, the Algerian government issued an amnesty to fighters, an opportunity that many decided not to miss. Further on between 2005 and 2006, a crackdown on the organization decimated its numbers by nearly half, as 500 members were either caught or killed. Mendelsohn (2016: 130) argues that “[u]surprisingly, these developments also impacted the remaining fighters’ morale. With public support for the anti-regime insurgency slipping ever further, the battle appeared lost.” One can grasp the severity of the ensuing situation when even the former leader of the GSPC’s media wing revealed that the affiliation was required in order for the organization to justify its continued existence (Ibid.).

In terms of resources, transnational terrorist organizations that prefer to use the strategy of franchise are not entirely consistent when it comes to the provision of financial support to their new affiliates. This dissertation adds to Zelinsky and Shubik’s (2009) theoretical framework by arguing that even if resources are decentralized in the franchise model, some still do provide funds at times. However, the decentralization of resources entails that a franchise has to be able to provide for itself in case the monetary support from its parent is not available. The presence of natural resources in a state of an official affiliate’s origin presents not only a benefit of potentially transferring

some of the funds to the central organization (albeit rare), but also a guarantee that the particular franchise will be able to take care of its own finances, thus, ensuring the execution of operations. This dissertation argues that transnational terrorist organizations prefer franchises from countries with abundant natural resources.<sup>30</sup>

### **3.5 Hypotheses**

All the above shows the “business” nature of terrorist organizations. The franchise strategy of Al Qaeda and affiliation strategy of the AQIM, AQAP and others indicate that these groups engage in cost-benefit analysis, just as business companies do. These organizations strive to survive and thrive, just as business companies do. The difference is that while legitimate companies tend to avoid unstable regions or states that are considered bad for business, terrorist groups, on the contrary, thrive in chaotic situations, such as in civil conflicts or civil instability, which, when exploited correctly, provides them with a large pool of recruits and funding. Religion is used as an instrument in achieving these objectives and natural resources help the franchise succeed without substantial funding from the parent

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<sup>30</sup> Also, as this dissertation utilizes Birnir & Satana (2016) database to differentiate between terrorist organization's motivation, instances such as solely rent-seeking or conducting terrorist attacks in order to obtain financial benefits, including ransom from kidnappings, are coded separately under the economic motive. In the same vein, religion is not coded under ideology, rather it is a separate motive, while groups that are, for example, nationalistic or are political organizations that do not have a religious or ethnic motive are coded under ideological motive (i.e. communism or socialism).

organization. Similar to Shelley's (2014) argument on terrorist organizations as business firms operating within the triangle of crime-corruption-terrorism, this work argues that the axis of survival-religion-natural resources attracts transnational terrorist organizations, willing to further their own franchises. Concomitantly, domestic terrorist organizations seek this affiliation as a way to continue to exist in changing circumstances (i.e. increased counter-terrorism efforts or decrease in popularity of the movement).

Natural resources have previously been singled out on many occasions as one of the drivers of conflicts, both as a source and a resource. The abundance of natural resources in a state and factors associated with them, including unequal distribution of rents, is now widely believed to not only create grievances among the local population but also provide funding for the rebels and insurgents alike (Ross, 2005), thus, increasing the duration of either a civil conflict or insurgency. Some scholars even argued that specifically diamonds are "a rebel's best friend" (Collier, 2003: 41). The role of diamonds in civil conflicts has been discussed relatively widely, however, there is no consensus on it. For instance, contrary to Collier's work, Regan and Norton (2005: 330) maintain that the existence of diamonds in a particular country, in fact, decreases the likelihood of civil war outbreak. Others assert that the abundance of natural resources in a state not only is a source for rebel groups to fund their activities, attract and recruit new members, but it also defines the composition

of the group (Weinstein, 2005). Humphreys (2005: 508, 511, 534) also underlines the way resources not only attract greedy local actors but also third parties, such as states and international corporations. These actors are, thus, more likely to not only become involved in but also incite civil conflicts.

Despite the extensive literature on natural resources and their links to civil conflicts, similar arguments in the terrorism field are less common. The existing literature focuses on the way these resources are used for funding purposes. However, to the author's knowledge there is no study linking natural resources of a state to transnational terrorist organizations and their franchising strategies. Studies have already shown that international companies get involved in civil war-torn countries when the latter possess natural resources that these companies can profit from. Many of the case studies are Sub-Saharan African conflicts. These companies engage in deals with either the governments or the rebels or both in order to obtain lucrative deals or long-term mining rights (Boitsova-Bugday, 2011). As this dissertation established thus far how transnational terrorist groups operate similar to business firms, we can, thus, investigate these organizations for their own possible connections to natural resources, thus, contributing to the existing literature.

From the theoretical framework presented in this chapter the following hypotheses are derived:

H1: *Domestic terrorist organizations based in countries with a high percentage of the GDP coming from natural resources are more likely to be franchised by transnational terrorist organizations.*

H2: *Domestic terrorist organizations based in countries that experience domestic terrorist attacks based on religious motivation are more likely to be franchised by transnational terrorist organizations with religious motivation.*

These hypotheses are explored first quantitatively in *Chapter IV* and then qualitatively through the case study of Nigeria in *Chapter V*.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODOLOGY AND QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

In *Chapter II*, I assumed that terrorist organizations carry out a rational cost-benefit analysis before making a decision on whether to cooperate/ally with other terrorist organizations i.e. domestic terrorist organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa. In *Chapter III*, the theoretical framework is established on that assumption supplemented with the notion that terrorist organizations, like other organizations, seek to survive; thus they learn and adapt. The theoretical framework is built on Zelinsky and Shubik's (2009) franchising model with the addition of two variables: religion and natural resources, to answer why transnational terrorist organizations affiliate with and franchise domestic terrorist organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this chapter, I explore the following hypotheses using a large-N data set to examine the relationship between religion, natural resources and transnational terrorist franchising. The exploration of hypotheses is conducted

through description of the variables and cross-tabulations, correlations and visual aids.<sup>31</sup>

*H1: All else being equal, domestic terrorist organizations based in countries with a high percentage of the GDP coming from natural resources are more likely to be franchised by transnational terrorist organizations.*

*H2: All else being equal, domestic terrorist organizations based in countries that experience domestic terrorist attacks based on religious motivation are more likely to be franchised by transnational terrorist organizations with religious motivation.*

#### **4.1 Research Area and Case Study Selection**

This dissertation studies the Sub-Saharan African region. The decision to study this particular area stems from several factors. On the one hand, the choice of looking at Sub-Saharan Africa was informed by the author's keen interest in the region since her MA thesis.<sup>32</sup> In the thesis, I applied Immanuel Wallerstein's theoretical framework to examine the effect of exploitation of natural resources on civil wars in Africa. I have looked at international companies, particularly those providing private security services and their involvement in civil wars in Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in order to trace the connection between mercenaries, natural resources of

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<sup>31</sup> As explained below, once the Asal & Rethemeyer 2016 data set is obtained for terrorist cooperation, I will run a regression analysis in the future.

<sup>32</sup> Boitsova-Bugday, Anastassia. (2011). *Duration of Civil Wars from a World-Systems Analysis Perspective: The Cases of Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone*. M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University.

states experiencing conflict and the duration of civil wars. That research found the duration of civil conflicts to be linked to foreign exploitation of valuable commodities in those three states, particularly oil, ore, gold and diamonds.

Such exploitation of natural resources of conflict-torn states in Sub-Saharan Africa is still as pressing as ever. In the case of Nigeria, terrorism has found a new face – that of oil terrorism.<sup>33</sup> Even the United Nations activities aimed at curbing illegal exploitation of Congo's resources did not produce significant results. Recently, it led to calls for a new European Union legislation to help stop trade in natural resources that fuel conflict.<sup>34</sup>

On the other hand, because this dissertation looks at both the presence of potentially lootable natural resources, religion and instances of domestic and transnational terrorism, Sub-Saharan Africa provides a valuable testing ground for the theory of terrorist franchising. It is also a good region for exploring the explanatory power of alternative explanations presented above.

In terms of the latter, SSA is plagued by the negative effects of tribalism and ethnicity. Some scholars categorize countries according to the severity of the problem that they face. As such, very few Sub-Saharan African states enjoy homogeneity in terms of ethnic groups:

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<sup>33</sup> Aduabo, D. (2013). Nigeria: Crude Oil Theft Another Face of Terrorism – Alison-Madueke. *AllAfrica*. Retrieved from <http://allafrica.com/stories/201310281365.html>.

<sup>34</sup> New EU Law Could Help Stop Natural Resource Trade Fuelling Conflict. (2013). *Global Witness*. Retrieved from <http://www.globalwitness.org/library/new-eu-law-could-help-stop-natural-resource-trade-fuelling-conflict>.

one example here could be Botswana. The countries in West Africa have very significant levels of ethnic diversity but this is managed through an effective distribution system, while still maintaining government legitimacy. The third category is represented by countries such as "Zimbabwe, Namibia, and modern-day South Africa, [which suffer from] racial, ethnic, religious, or cultural divisions severe enough to require special arrangements to be mutually accommodating in an ambivalent form of unity in diversity." And finally, the fourth category of states is united by no commonly held understanding of a nation, values or self-identification. These countries, including South Africa and Sudan, are dominated by one ethnic group and the rest view the nation-state concept as a colonial imposition (Deng, 1997). The existence of ethnic or tribal rivalries/tensions/grievances provides ample opportunity for transnational terrorist groups to turn them into benefits.

In addition, many Sub-Saharan African states have experienced some level of internal conflict; some, like in Democratic Republic of the Congo, or Sudan-South Sudan, are still ongoing. Certain instances of such internal struggles ended in military coups, including Nigeria, which throughout its latest history experienced several domestic military interventions in politics that finally ended in 1999 with the restoration of the civilian government.

Also, all of Sub-Saharan African states are categorized under different levels of *warning* in Fragile State Index, with only one

exception – Mauritius. Some arguments presented in the previous chapter regarding the link between state failure and transnational terrorism, emphasize the attractiveness of such states to terrorists. Even though this dissertation does not subscribe to this view, it only makes the region under study so much more compelling of a case for hypotheses testing.

Interestingly enough, Gaibullov, Sandler and Sul's 2013 study singles out Sub-Saharan Africa and argues that while most transnational terrorism can be linked to Lebanon's transnational terrorism, terrorist attacks in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1970-2007 have rather region-specific causes and patterns.

As discussed above, many Sub-Saharan African states possess lootable natural resources, which have already been exploited by rebel and other groups. Finally, choosing Sub-Saharan Africa controls for several variables, such as socio-economic, cultural and historical factors, that were discussed in the *Theory* chapter under *Alternative Explanations*. Sub-Saharan Africa was almost singlehandedly colonized by Western countries, gained independence at around the same time and the tribal societal structure is common to the continent. Therefore, looking at Sub-Saharan countries to trace the influence of religious motivation and natural resources controls for the effects of these variables on franchising of domestic terrorist groups by transnational terrorist organizations. For this and the above reasons,

Sub-Saharan Africa was chosen as the region of study for the quantitative analysis in this dissertation.

Adding to the quantitative part of the dissertation, a detailed single case study of Nigeria is also conducted. Single case study is useful to understand the causal mechanisms through tracing the affiliation and franchising processes; however, it is not sufficient to understand the complex relationships in Africa. Case study is defined as an “in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon. The study is conducted in great detail and often relies on the use of several data sources” (Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg, 1991: 2). As information for case studies is collected from a multitude of sources, it allows for a “more holistic study of social networks and of complexes of social action and social meaning” (Feagin et al., 1991: 6). It also helps to trace the processes under scrutiny through detailed historical analysis and exploration of the explanatory factors and the alternative explanations.

For the single case study part of the thesis, among the 45 Sub-Saharan African states, Nigeria was chosen foremost due to its gripping history and contemporary surge of terrorist attacks by terrorist organizations. Nigeria has vast oil fields, and for the period between 1981 and 2015, has been heavily dependent on its natural resource rents. The total percentage of GDP coming from natural resource rents at one point (1993) reached as high as 73.5%. Despite the fact that much of Nigerian oil fields are located offshore, oil theft has

increasingly come to constitute a new kind of terrorism (Aduabo, 2013). In addition, Nigeria has experienced a large number of both domestic and transnational terrorist attacks, with over a hundred occurring in 2014 alone. Some attacks have been conducted by Boko Haram, a group affiliated with Al Qaeda and later franchised by the Islamic State,<sup>35</sup> aiming at overthrowing the Nigerian government and installing *sharia law*.<sup>36</sup>

Nigeria has also witnessed events that led to recurrent grievances among the local population, which could be exploited by terrorist groups: the Biafran civil war of 1967-1970; huge regional discrepancy between the North and the South; increased poverty amid ample natural resources, which distribution of revenue is also a point of contention with violence stemming from it; as well as pervasive corruption. All these alternative explanatory factors make Nigeria an interesting and compelling case to study terrorist franchising and the effects of religion and natural resources on the decision making process of both transnational and domestic terrorist organizations.

The next section expands on the data sets and coding sources used and operationalization of the variables.

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<sup>35</sup> This was stated by the National Counterterrorism Center, which is a United States government organization collecting information on national as well as transnational counterterrorism efforts. See, *National Counterterrorism Center*. Retrieved from <http://www.nctc.gov>.

<sup>36</sup> Boko Haram. *National Counterterrorism Center*. Retrieved from [http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/boko\\_haram.html](http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/boko_haram.html).; see also, Chothia, F. (2012). Who are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamists? *BBC African Service*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13809501>.

## 4.2 Research Design

The hypotheses outlined above are explored using original and secondary data from 1970-2012. The unit of analysis is incident year/country.

There are two major databases that were merged together for this project. This dissertation uses the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) definition of terrorism, as described in the *Introduction* chapter and coding of all terrorist incidents between 1970 and 2012. Second, I coded all terrorist incidents in Sub-Saharan African countries for motivation and types of terrorist attack for the same years as a research assistant for the Birnir & Satana's "One God for All?" project, funded by the Department of Homeland Security under a START grant.<sup>37</sup> The important novelty of the Birnir and Satana's data is the detailed differentiation between local and transnational terrorist attacks. It should be noted here that there have been previous attempts to code the attacks accordingly. As such, the study conducted by Enders, Sandler, and Gaibulloev (2011) in the *Journal of Peace Research* argues that the division of terrorist attacks within the GTD into domestic and transnational is essential for understanding different effects that each may have on diverse aspects. The authors' major finding suggests that domestic terrorism under certain conditions

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<sup>37</sup> Birnir, J., & Satana, N.S. (2016). *One God for All? Fundamentalism and Group Radicalization*. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/research-projects/one-god-all-fundamentalism-and-group-radicalization>.

may spill over into transnational terrorism.<sup>38</sup> The GTD also now has a differentiation of attacks taking into consideration where the attack originated from and the target of the attack; however, the coding is not as detailed.

One of the differences of Birnir and Şatana's project from other studies/databases that look at terrorism is the detailed differentiation between six types of terrorist attacks:

### **Local-local**

(LL – dummy variable)

1 = “Yes”

0 = “No”

An attack is conducted by an organization that is a representative of a local ethnic group (originates in the country in which the attack takes place) and the attack is perpetrated against the home government.

### **Local-transnational**

(LT – dummy variable)

1 = “Yes”

0 = “No”

An attack is coded as local-transnational in case when it was perpetrated by an ethnic group that is local, however, the attack was not directed against the home government.

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<sup>38</sup> Enders, W., Sandler, T., & Gaibulloev, K. (2011). Domestic Versus Transnational Terrorism: Data, Decomposition, and Dynamics. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(3), 319-337.

### **Diaspora-local**

(DL – dummy variable)

1 = “Yes”

0 = “No”

In case when an attack was conducted by a terrorist organization that represents an ethnic group that does not originate in the country (is a diaspora), and the attack is perpetrated against the home government.

### **Diaspora-transnational 1**

(DT1 – dummy variable)

1 = “Yes”

0 = “No”

A terrorist attack is coded as diaspora-transnational 1 when it is perpetrated by an organization that is a representative of an ethnic group that is not local to the country in which the attack takes place, and the attack is not directed against this diaspora's home government, and the attack's target is located in a state in which this diaspora group has co-ethnic kin.

### **Diaspora-transnational 2**

(DT2 – dummy variable)

1 = “Yes”

0 = “No”

The incident is considered to be diaspora-transnational 2 in case it was perpetrated by an organization representing an ethnic group that is

not local to a country where attack takes place, the attack was not conducted against the home government of the diaspora, and the target of this attack is not situated in the state in which the diaspora has a co-ethnic kin.

### **Purely transnational**

(PT – dummy variable)

1 = “Yes”

0 = “No”

The complete definition for purely transnational terrorist attacks is provided below.

The incident is perpetrated by a purely transnational terrorist network that CANNOT be said to advocate for any one ethnic group in the target state and, thus, CANNOT be matched to any ethnic group inside that state. The target could be either local (government, citizens, etc.) or transnational (NGOs, international organizations, embassies, etc.).

OR

The incident is perpetrated by an organization that CANNOT be said to advocate for any one ethnic group (either local or diaspora) in the country in which the attack takes place. The target could be either local (government, citizens, etc.) or transnational (NGOs, international organizations, embassies, etc.).

Such differentiation between different types of attacks has not been done before, and is essential in establishing a connection between religiously motivated terrorist attacks.

The GTD started in 2001 after the scholars at the University of Maryland received a large database that originally was collected by

the Pinkerton Global Intelligence Services (PGIS). The latter trained researchers from 1970 to 1997 to first identify and then record the acts of terrorism from diverse sources. With the funding from the Department of Homeland Security, the GTD team extended the data initially until 2007, and later on till 2014.<sup>39</sup> The present data used in this dissertation ranges from 1970 to 2012, as the database was updated after the dissertation was halfway through its original variable coding.

Furthermore, originally, we contacted Victor Asal at SUNY Albany and asked permission to use Victor Asal and Karl Rethemeyer's Big Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) dataset on alliances of terrorist organizations. However, since we were not able to obtain the data set as of the submission date of the dissertation,<sup>40</sup> I coded a variable showing whether domestic terrorist organizations that perpetrated an attack in the last 2 years of the dataset (in 2011 and 2012) were affiliated with and/or franchised by Al Qaeda or Al Qaeda in Iraq (later IS).<sup>41</sup>

Next the operationalization of all the variables and their coding rules are described in detail.

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<sup>39</sup> *History of the GTD*. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/about/History.aspx>.

<sup>40</sup> The authors courteously agreed to sharing their data, however, we did not receive the dataset on time for the dissertation submission.

<sup>41</sup> AQI later on became IS and because the GTD data ends in 2012

#### 4.2.1. The Dependent Variable

**Terrorist affiliation/franchising.** This variable identifies whether a perpetrator of a terrorist attack is an affiliate and/or a franchise of a transnational terrorist organization. I define an affiliate as an informal alliance where the domestic organization may or may not receive operational and resource assistance and an official recognition from the transnational organization. A franchise is a domestic terrorist organization that received formal recognition from the parent organization and is in a centralized alliance in terms of operations and a de-centralized alliance in terms of resources with the transnational organization.

Since the BAAD data were not available, I was only able to code the last two years of the GTD data for this variable. To code this dummy variable, Stanford University's Mapping Military Organizations<sup>42</sup> project data was used. If a perpetrator is an affiliate of a transnational terrorist organization (AQ or AQIM), the variable is coded 2, if it is a franchise of any of these organizations it is coded 1 and otherwise 0.<sup>43</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Independent Variables

**Religious motivation.** The theory argues that religion indirectly affects terrorist franchising. Transnational terrorist organizations do not affiliate

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<sup>42</sup> See, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/maps/view/alqaeda>.

<sup>43</sup> In the future, I plan on coding all years and/or use the BAAD data for a more comprehensive analysis.

with or franchise any organization; they seek domestic organizations that converge with them in religious motives. Thus, this variable measures whether the terrorist organization's motivation is religious. There are severable motivations, i.e. economic, ideological, ethnic and religious, coded in the Birnir & Satana 2016 dataset. If the motive is religious, the variables is coded as 1, if not, it is coded as 0.

**Natural Resources.** In order to be able to evaluate the relationship between natural resources and franchise strategy of transnational terrorist organizations, this dissertation uses the data compiled by the World Bank. World Bank data provides what percentage of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) consists of natural resource rents. Total rents are represented by the sum of oil, natural gas, coal (hard and soft), mineral, and forest rents. The database is available for the years between 1981 and 2015 and merged into the dataset by country/year for each terrorist incident.

#### **4.2.3 Control Variables**

**Presence of Political Unrest.** This is controlled by using two variables: the presence of a civil conflict and the presence of a civil unrest, such as demonstrations, violent protests and governmental crackdowns on protestors. The former is coded by using PRIO Data on Armed Conflict, a project that emerged as a result of the collaboration between the

Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW) and Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University. Only the data on intrastate conflicts is utilized. The data ranges from 1946 until 2014.<sup>44</sup> This is a dummy variable: if a civil conflict is present for a given year, it is coded 1, if there is no civil conflict, 0 is coded.

The civil unrest variable is collected from the SCAD or Social Conflict in Africa Database. The SCAD collects information on low-scale types of social conflict, including protests, riots, strikes, inter-communal conflict, government violence against civilian populations and other forms of social conflict for the period between 1990 and 2014. It is a dummy variable. When a civil unrest takes place in a given year, the variable is coded 1, if not, then 0.

**Group Grievances.** Grievances, such as, for instance, ethnic or religious, have long been identified as a precipitant cause of terrorism (Crenshaw, 1981; Ross, 1993). Grievances experienced by a group can be both real and perceived. They are also directly connected to civil conflicts or civil unrest as ethnic or religious groups engage in violence in order to correct the existing the existing situation that gives rise to their resentment. According to the Fragile States Index, “[w]hen tension and violence exists between groups, the state’s ability to provide security is undermined and fear and further violence may

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<sup>44</sup> *Data on Armed Conflict*, Retrieved from <http://prio.no/Data/Armed-Conflict/>.

ensue."<sup>45</sup> This, as discussed above, could potentially attract transnational terrorist organizations who would try to exploit the existing chaos for their benefit.

Grievances as a control variable are measured by using *Group Grievances* variable provided by the *Fragile States Index* data. The data are available for the years between 2005 and 2015. The variable is numerical (ordinal) with the highest score of 10, which represents the highest amount of group grievances in a particular state.

***Distribution of Resources (Social Inequality)***. Empirical studies have shown that unequal distribution of income could lead to grievances among country's population, which in itself could prove to be attractive for transnational terrorist groups. This is operationalized here by using the GINI coefficient. The World Bank estimated GINI is used to show how the existent distribution of income inside a state is different from an ideally equal one. The data is available for the years between 1981 and 2015. However, the problem with the GINI coefficient is the unavailability of values for each country/year. As such, some Sub-Saharan African states have, for instance, only one known value for a five-year period. This dissertation solves this problem by imputing the most recent value for years that have missing data.<sup>46</sup> The GINI has a

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<sup>45</sup> See, *Fragile State Index 2015*. Retrieved from <http://library.fundforpeace.org/library/fragilestatesindex-2015.pdf>, 17.

<sup>46</sup> The same approach was already undertaken in Piazza's (2011) study on poverty, discrimination and domestic terrorism.

numerical value, which is included in the Sub-Saharan Africa dataset as is. The maximum inequality value for this indicator is 100.

**State Fragility.** Menkhaus (2003) and (Piazza, 2008) argue that failed and failing states are more likely to attract transnational terrorist organization for different reasons. Among the benefits that such states are claimed to present are weakly (or not at all) governed borders, prevalence of corruption, little to no policing on vast stretches of land, as well as a large pool of disgruntled unemployed people. According to this alternative explanation, transnational terrorist groups would choose to target either failed to failing states in the Sub-Saharan African region. Fragile State Index is used here to operationalize levels of state failure.

The fragility of state is coded here using the Fragile States Index (FSI). The data are available for the years between 2005 and 2015. The variable is ordinal ranging from 1 to 11. The following numbers correspond to the types of warning within the FSI coding system.

1 = very sustainable (corresponds to a Total of 0.1-20.0)

2 = sustainable (corresponds to a Total of 20.1-30.0)

3 = highly stable (corresponds to a Total of 30.1-40.0)

4 = very stable (corresponds to a Total of 40.1-50.0)

5 = stable (corresponds to a Total of 50.1-60.0)

6 = low warning (corresponds to a Total of 60.1-70.0)

7 = warning (corresponds to a Total of 70.1-80.0)

8 = high warning (corresponds to a Total of 80.1-90.0)

9 = alert (corresponds to a Total of 90.1-100.0)

10 = high alert (corresponds to a Total of 100.1-110.0)

11 = very high alert (corresponds to a Total of 110.1-120.0)

A summary of all the variables and their coding rules can be found in Table 2 on the next page.

**Table 2: An Overview of the Variables and the Coding Principles**

	<b>Coding Rules</b>
<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<p><b>Terrorist Franchising</b>            (1 if a terrorist organization that conducted the attack is a franchise, 2 if a terrorist organization that conducted the attack is an affiliate of a transnational terrorist organization, 0 if not)</p>
<b>Independent Variables</b>	<p><b>Religious motivation</b>            (1 if the perpetrator had a religious motive, 0 if not)</p> <p><b>Natural Resources</b>            (represented by a percentage that total natural resource rents are of the country's GDP)</p>
<b>Control Variables</b>	<p><b>Presence of Political Unrest</b>            (two nominal variables, PRIO and SCAD: for each, 1 if a conflict/unrest is present, 0 if not)</p> <p><b>Group Grievances</b>            (ordinal, with the highest possible being 10)</p> <p><b>Distribution of Resources (Social Inequality)</b>            (percentages, the highest possible being 100)</p> <p><b>State Fragility</b>            (ordinal, with the lowest being 1 and the highest being 11)</p>

### 4.3 Results

Overall, there are 8112 terrorist incidents in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1970 and 2012. Nigeria, with 1176 incidents (14.5%), is third to South Africa and Somalia, which experienced 1937 (23.9%) and 1310 (16.1%) attacks respectively. 2012 was the worst year in Sub-Saharan Africa with 1109 terrorist attacks (13.7%).

Not surprisingly, 68.6% of the incidents took place in countries experiencing a civil war and 82.2% of the incidents took place in countries that had lower level violence.

In terms of motivations for the terrorist incidents I find that 37.5% of the incidents were perpetrated with religious motivation and ideological motivation covered 46.7% of the incidents. The descriptive statistics are summarized in Table 3 for all the variables.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics**

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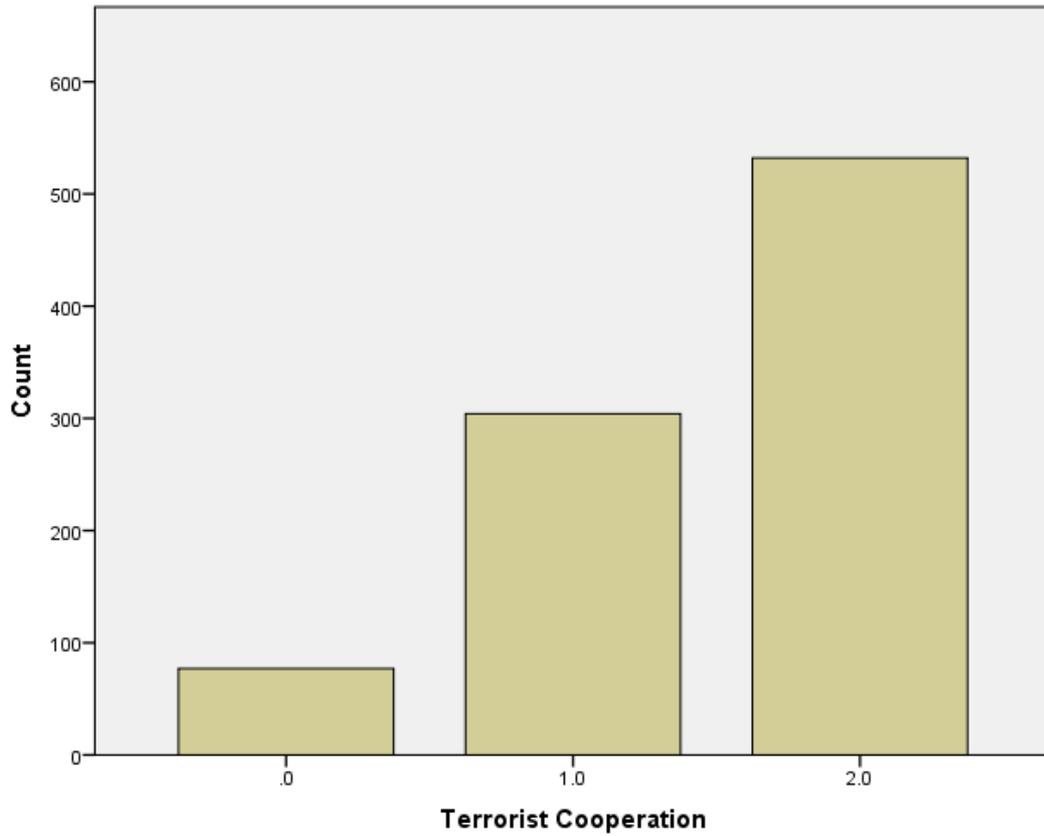
Variable	Number of Observations	Mean	St. Dev.
Terrorist Franchising	913	1.498	.6474
Natural resources	8112	15.16	12.4066
Religious motive	4052	.375	.4842
Civil Conflict (PRIO)	8112	.686	.4641
Political Unrest (SCAD)	8112	.822	.3822
Social Inequality	6696	46.91	10.5783
Fragile State	3058	10.08	.955
Group Grievance	3058	9.22	.8612

Next I explore the dependent variable, *Terrorist Franchising*, albeit with the limited 2011, 2012 sample. Since I coded only 2011 and 2012 for the franchise variable, Table 4 indicates that there are only

913 observations that are coded for the variable (out of 8112 incidents). Overall, I find that 91.6% of all terrorist incidents in Sub-Saharan Africa are perpetrated by organizations that are in a franchise or affiliation with AQ and AQI. Of these, the former is 33.3% and the latter is 58.3%, which means affiliation/franchise is indeed a method of choice for transnational terrorist organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2011 and 2012. Only 8.4% (77 out of 913) of the incidents were perpetrated by organizations that were not franchised or affiliated with AQ or AQIM.

**Table 4: A Popular Strategy: Terrorist Cooperation in 2011 and 2012**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
<b>Affiliation</b>	532	58.3	58.3
<b>Franchise</b>	304	33.3	91.6
<b>No ties</b>	77	8.4	100.00
<b>Total No of Terrorist Incidents</b>	913	100.00	



**Note: 0: No Ties**

**1: Franchise**

**2: Affiliation**

**Figure 1: Terrorist Cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2011 and 2012**

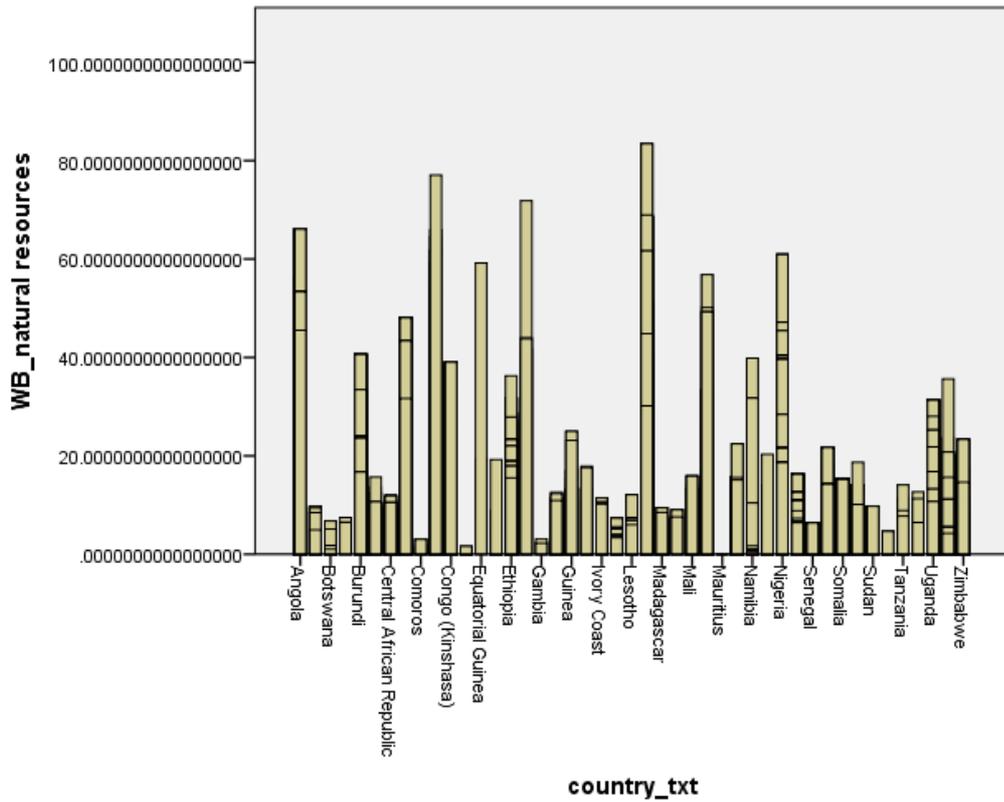
Only 8.2% of all the 8112 terrorist attacks were purely transnational which means they were perpetrated without any involvement of groups inside the country. Purely domestic attacks are 81.7% of all the incidents. When we juxtapose these findings with the finding of how common franchising & affiliation are, a tentative conclusion is that transnational terrorist organizations rarely carry out solo terrorist attacks in Sub-Saharan Africa. Instead, they use strategy of franchise and use domestic terrorist organizations to do their “dirty work.”

Next I explore the relationship between the *Religious Motivation* and *Terrorist Franchising* variables. The Cross Tabulation depicted in Table 5 shows that 304 out of 304 incidents (100%) where the motivation is religious were perpetrated by domestic terrorist organizations that were franchised by transnational terrorist organizations. Similarly, 532 out of 532 incidents (100%) where the motivation is religious were perpetrated by domestic terrorist organizations that were affiliated with transnational terrorist organizations. Only 8 out of 77 attacks were religiously motivated but the perpetrator was not affiliated or franchised by a transnational terrorist organization. This provides support for Hypothesis 2, which argues that domestic terrorist organizations with religious motives in perpetrating attacks are more likely to be affiliated and/or franchised by transnational terrorist organizations.

**Table 5: Cross Tabulation by Row: Franchise Strategy by Religious Motivation**

	<b>No Religious Motive</b>	<b>Religious Motive</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No Ties</b>	69 (89.6%)	8 (10.4%)	77 (100%)
<b>Affiliation</b>	0 (0%)	532 (100%)	532 (100%)
<b>Franchise</b>	0 (0%)	304 (100%)	304 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	69 (7.6%)	844 (92.4%)	913 (100%)

Next I explore the *Natural Resources* variable, which cannot be analyzed by looking at a cross tabulation since it is a continuous variable. Figure 2 shows a histogram of the percentage of natural resources of the GDP in Sub-Saharan African countries. It represents the highest percentage of the GDP coming from natural resources rents recorded during the years between 1970 and 2012. The average is 15% of the GDP with resource rich countries like Liberia in 1994 that marks 83% or resource poor countries that mark only 0.01% such as Mauritius in 1989.



**Figure 2: Percentage of Natural Resource Rents of the GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa and Terrorist Incidents (Maximum Value Witnessed During All Years)**

This analysis shows that although Sub-Saharan Africa is a resource-rich region, the % of the natural resources of the GDP is not as high as presumed, which could be due to various factors including corruption or inefficiency in extracting the resources.

Finally, I explore the relationship between natural resources and the franchise variable by using bivariate correlations. As previously mentioned, I will use more sophisticated methods i.e. logistic regression for the analysis in the future since the dependent variable is categorical. First I check to see if there are any multicollinearity problems.

### *Multicollinearity*

Checking for multicollinearity, I find that all 5 indicators I use as the control variables are highly correlated with one another (significant at 0.01 level). Looking at the independent variables, I find that religious motive is correlated with all variables except for natural resources and natural resources is correlated with all controls except for group grievance and religious motivation. Hence these explanatory variables need to be introduced into a regression sequentially in the future.<sup>47</sup>

When I run a bivariate correlation between Franchise and Natural Resources, I find that the two variables are positively correlated ( $p=0.323$ ) and the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level in a 2-tailed test. Thus, I conclude that natural resources and franchise are correlated and the relationship needs to be further investigated by using logistic regression once the comprehensive data are available.

Overall, the data analysis conducted so far shows several interesting and important trends for future research. Firstly, despite the fact that many Sub-Saharan African states are rich in natural resources, the actual percentage of the GDP coming from natural resource rents is smaller than anticipated. This could have several explanations, including the pervasive corruption that prevents greater

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<sup>47</sup> My plan is to collect data for all years available for all the variables and run a logistic regression as the dependent variable is categorical. Alternatively, if the Asal & Rethemeyer data become publicly available, I will run the results against this data.

extraction of natural resources. Secondly, the relationship between religious motivation and franchise or affiliation is important to investigate further. One hundred percent of all attacks for the years 2011 and 2012 conducted by affiliates or franchises of transnational terrorist organizations had religious motivation. While nearly ninety percent of attacks perpetrated by groups with no ties to either Al Qaeda or AQI (IS) had no religious motivation. This result is significant and show the importance of religious motivation in the franchise process.

The next chapter looks at the case of Nigeria and Boko Haram. It investigates the effects of religious motivation and natural resources on Boko Haram's eventual franchise with the Islamic State.

## CHAPTER V

### CASE STUDY: NIGERIA

On April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, 276 girls were kidnapped from a boarding school in Chibok in Borno state, northeast Nigeria. Multiple campaigns followed, including the one that attracted both praise and criticism alike - *#BringBackOurGirls*. In July of the same year, Boko Haram (BH) – a Nigerian terrorist organization that kidnapped the girls and was already increasingly visible in the international media through its bloody attacks on the civilian population, started adding both the flag and Islamic chants of another terrorist organization to its own videos. This organization was the Islamic State (or previously Al Qaeda in Iraq). In October, the IS acknowledged its alignment with BH in terms of ideology, comparing the Chibok girls' kidnapping to the way IS enslaved the Yazidi girls, some of whom were being sold through apps postings, which read: "Virgin. Beautiful. 12 years old... Her price has reached \$12,500 and she will be sold soon" (*Virgin. Beautiful*, 2016; Almkhtar, 2015). In March of 2015, Boko Haram's affiliation with the IS was official.

This chapter explores the case of Nigeria and Boko Haram's affiliation/franchise with the IS. It starts off with background information on Nigeria, its population and natural resources, and briefly touches upon Nigerian history. The second section discusses religion in Nigeria, with a focus on Islam. It is divided into two subsections: religion in pre- and post-independence Nigeria. The former, among other topics, touches upon the effects of colonialism on the relationship between the Muslims, the Christians and people of indigenous beliefs. The latter, in its turn, looks at the effects that the oil boom of 1970s had on the same triangle. This section of the *Case Study Chapter* also briefly looks at the Maitatsine movement of the 1980s, an organization that has been compared to Boko Haram, but most importantly, is widely accepted in the literature as its predecessor. After the Maitatsine movement, this dissertation elaborates on the Yan Izala movement and the rise of Boko Haram leading up to its ultimate affiliation with first Al Qaeda, then its franchise relationship with the IS. The final sections discuss this affiliation/franchise process and the effects of religious motivations and natural resources on the decision-making of both parties. This dissertation maintains that affiliation or franchise relationship between a transnational and domestic terrorist organization is not a spontaneous decision, it is rather a process involving bargaining of the actors for ideological, operational and resource-related issues, which could span several years, as was discussed in the *Theoretical Chapter*. This chapter concludes with

evaluations of alternative explanations presented in the *Literature Review* chapter.

## 5.1 Introduction

Nigeria is one of the largest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; when compared to other countries it is larger than the combined territory of Benin, Togo, Ghana and Burkina Faso. When compared to some states in the U.S., Nigeria proves to be more than twice the size of California and six times the size of Georgia (*Nigeria*, 2016). Nigeria is located in West Africa with Benin, Niger, Chad and Cameroon for its land neighbors.<sup>48</sup>

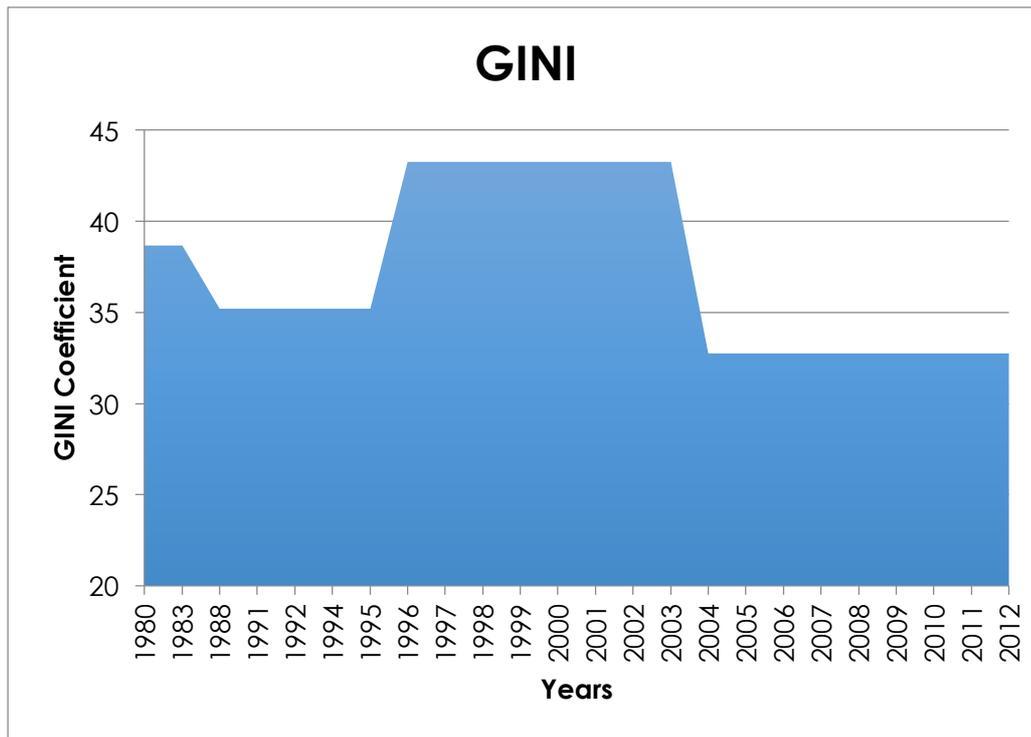
Nigeria's population is very diverse: it is home to more than 250 ethnic groups, most of them quite small in numbers. The largest ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulani cluster, comprising of around 29 percent of the population, the Yoruba 21 percent, the Igbo 18 percent as well as Ijaws making up around 10 percent. The total population is estimated to be around 182 million as of 2015 (*Nigeria Population*, 2016), making Nigeria Africa's most populous nation. Around half of the total population live in urban areas, including Lagos. This city, the largest in the country and the most densely populated, was until 1991 the capital of Nigeria. After than the capital was moved to Abuja, a smaller and newer city (Stokes, 2009: 493). It is also important to note

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<sup>48</sup> See, Appendix A: The Political Map of Nigeria.

that Nigeria has a very young population: as of 2015, the median age for men is estimated to be 18.2 years with 18.3 years for women. Life expectancy is low in comparison, for instance, to the neighboring Benin (60.11 years for men and 62.9 years for women) with men expected to live until 52 years of age and women until 54.1 (CIA Factbook, 2016).

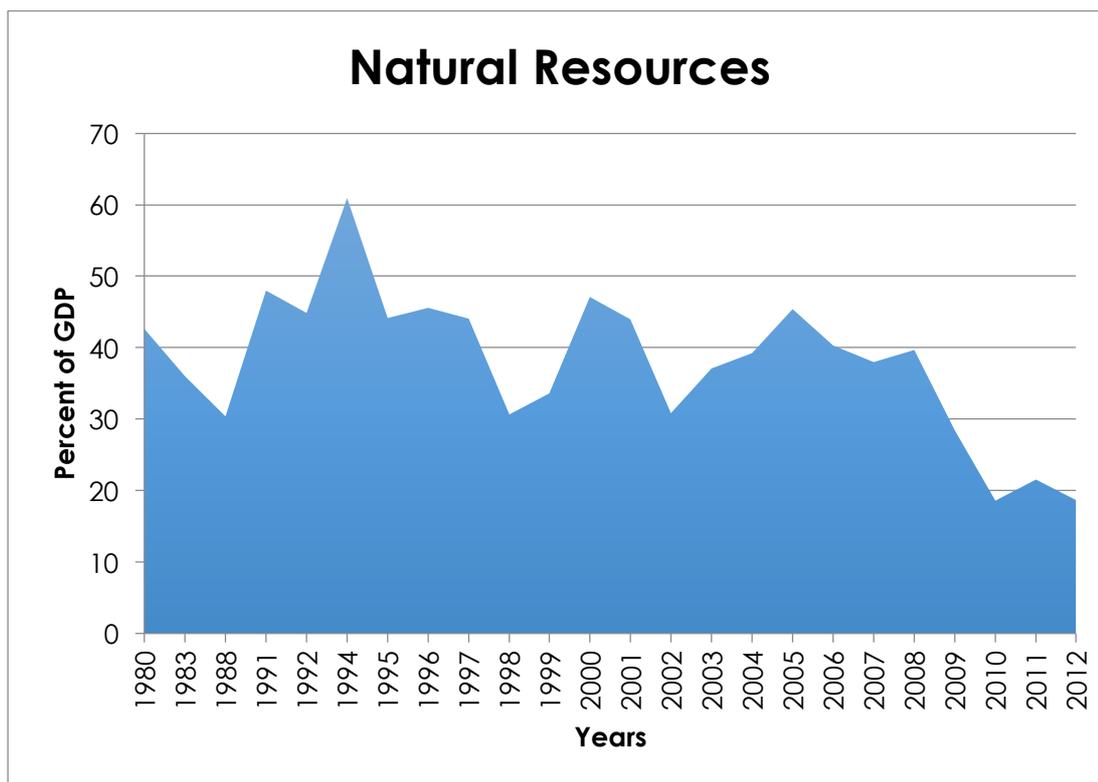
Nigeria's income inequality represented through the GINI score, is similar to more developed countries, including the United States. In comparison with South Africa, on the other hand, Nigeria has a better score: during the same timeframe South Africa's GINI score reached its highest at 64.8 in 2006.



Source: World Bank Data.

**Figure 3: Evolution of the Existing GINI Indicators for Nigeria between 1980 and 2012**

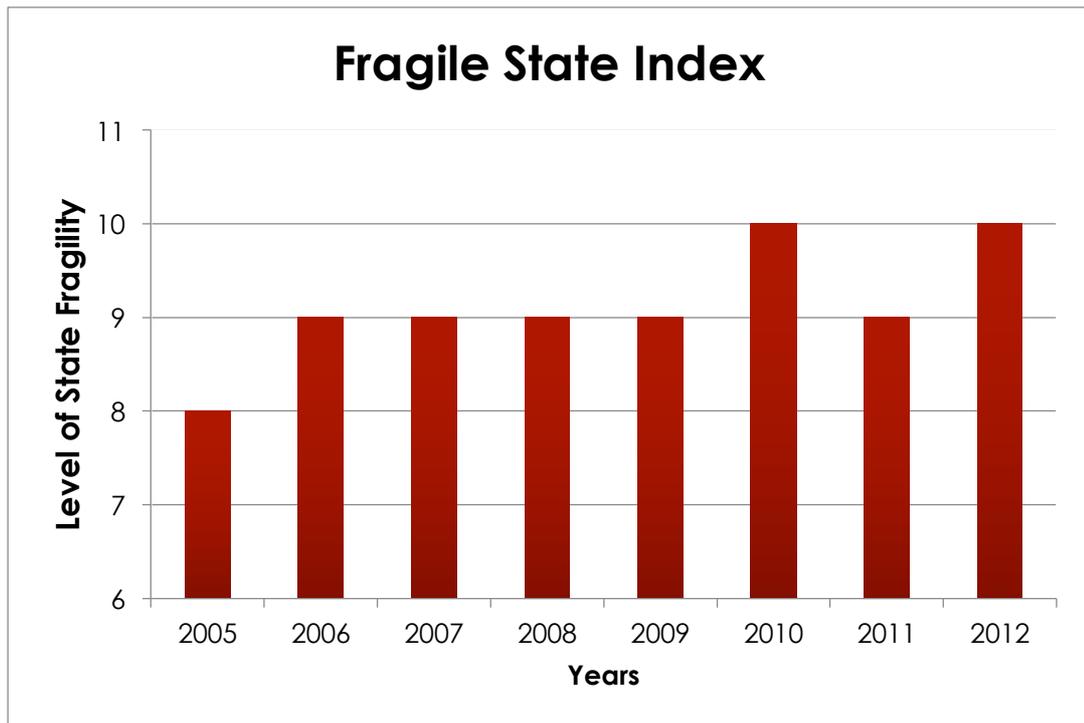
Nigeria is also rich in natural resources: these include natural gas, petroleum, tin, iron ore, coal, limestone, niobium, lead as well as zinc. Nigeria was one of the most dependent states on its resources (essentially petroleum revenues) in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially in the 1990s: the World Bank data on the total percentage of the country's GDP coming from natural resources shows that during the peak of Nigeria's dependency on rents, the percentage of the GDP reached nearly 74 in 1993. As will be discussed further in the chapter, this dependency also played a role in exacerbating the existing religious tensions among the local population and greatly increasing the gap between the rich and the poor.



Source: World Bank Data.

**Figure 4: Evolution of the Total Percentage of the Nigerian GDP Coming from Natural Resource Rents between 1980 and 2012**

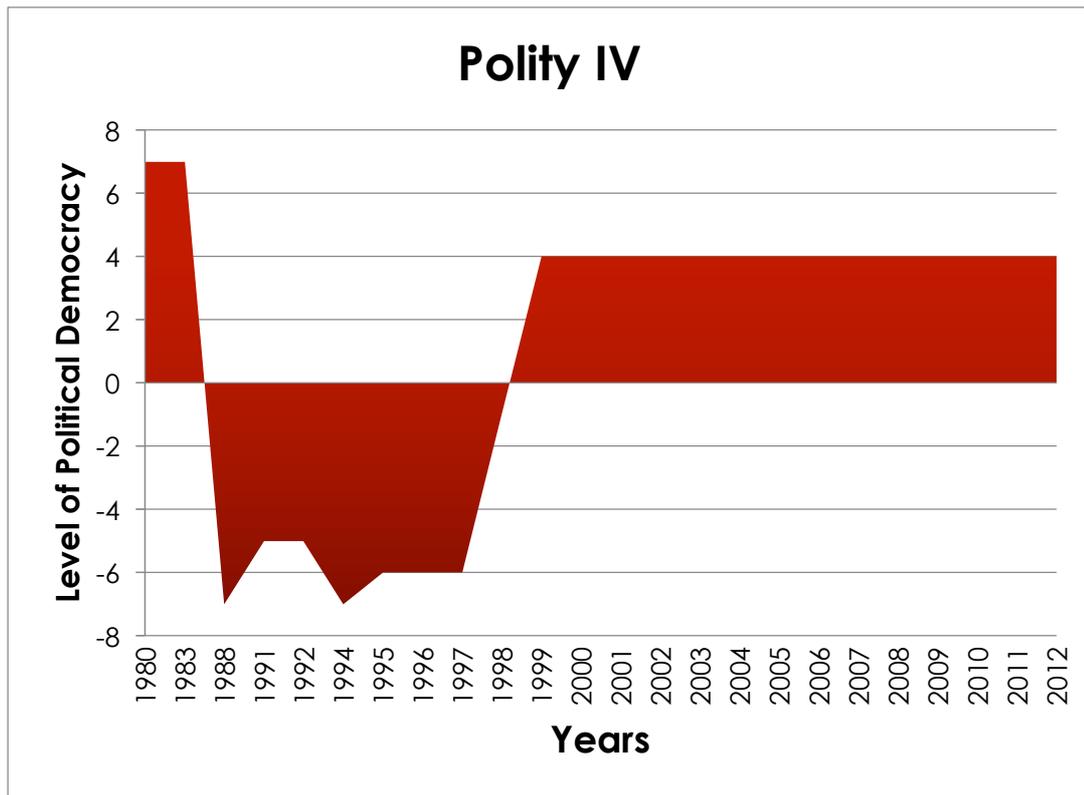
For the past ten years when the Fragile States Index was estimated, Nigeria has always had a poor rating: from *high warning* (level 8) to *high alert* (level 10) (the highest score in the data is 11). The following figure shows Nigeria's FSI ranking change throughout the years.



Source: Fragile States Index.

**Figure 5: Evolution of Nigeria's FSI between 2005 and 2012**

Similar to the FSI rating, Nigeria does not rank well in terms of democratic governance. Its highest score so far was 7 (with 10 being full democracy and -10 – full autocracy) during early 1980s. The negative score given to Nigeria after 1983 is most probably due to a series of successful and failed military coups that took place in the country between 1983 and 1999, when civilian rule was finally restored. The Polity IV data clearly shows the transition from military to civilian rule, as the score increases towards democracy since 1999. However, with a ranking of 4, it is still difficult to say that this particular Sub-Saharan African state is a democracy.



Source: Polity IV database.

**Figure 6: Evolution of Nigeria's Level of Political Democracy between 1980 and 2012**

The earliest inhabitants of the territories that today make up the country of Nigeria was the Nok culture that emerged here around 2,500 years ago. This civilization is considered to be the earliest known in West Africa. The name Nok was given to this culture after small terra-cotta figurines were found near the Nok village. Apart from the Nok, other civilizations inhabited the area at different times: the Ife culture emerged around 1,000 C.E., the Kingdom of Benin was at its greatest from mid-15<sup>th</sup> and mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, the Songhay collapsed in 1591, leading to strengthening of the Kanem-Bornu kingdom, which also saw its own decline towards the 17<sup>th</sup> century. From the 14<sup>th</sup> century until the

start of the 19<sup>th</sup>, northern Nigeria was divided into Hausa city-states, later conquered by the Fulani (Stokes, 2009: 493-494).

The colonial history of Nigeria started with the arrival of the Portuguese. From then on until the arrival of the British, the Nigerian coast was used as an important port in the slave trade. In 1851, Britain annexed the port of Lagos in an effort to stop the slave trade. Ten years later the city officially became British colony. Through a number of treaties with local rulers, Britain managed to extend its influence to what is now southern Nigeria, and in 1903 it also took hold of the North, through seizure of the Sokoto Caliphate. Nigeria, as it is today, was unified into one territory under British colonial rule in 1914 (Ibid.).

It was also during this time that the territory was given its current name. It is said to have been Flora Shaw, the colonial editor of London's *Times*, who came up with the name "Nigeria" after she married this colony's first governor (Campbell, 2013: 2). Towards the end of the British imperialism, the Nigerian constitution of 1954 was drafted and it put in place a federal system, essentially dividing the country into three territories: the North (Hausa), the East (Igbo) and the West (Yoruba), with three major ethnic groups being in majority in each. (Ibid.) Today, these regions are most frequently referred to as the North, the South and the Middle Belt.

## 5.2 Religion and Natural Resources in Pre-Independence Nigeria

Islam has held a prominent place in the history of Nigeria for the past 1,000 years.<sup>49</sup> One of the earliest conversions took place in mid-11<sup>th</sup> century when the King of Kanem-Bornu adopted Islam. Later on the Hausa rulers followed in his steps. Interestingly, in Nigeria Islam only truly became the religion of the masses starting from 1950s; before that it was mostly practiced among the elites (Harnischfeger, 2006: 40-42).

It is possible to differentiate at least three waves of Islamization in the territories of modern Nigeria: the first one occurring around 1,000 years ago, the second – at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the establishment of Hausa-Fulani sultanate and the preceding *jihad*, and the last wave taking place from the 1950s when the democratic elections were introduced and the Fulani leaders realized the importance of the electorate (Harnischfeger, 2006: 42).

Trans-Saharan trade and the pilgrimage route played an important role in the events leading to the second wave of Islamization in Nigeria. Both paths allowed for a flow of people and ideas. The pilgrimage to Mecca also connected kingdoms of West Africa that converted to Islam with the birthplace of religion. Both routes are connected to several attempts to establish an Islamic state or states here (Hunwick, 1992: 145). However, among these only one

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<sup>49</sup> Professor Edmond Keller from the University of California Los Angeles during our conversation in 2014 was the one who first gave me an idea to look further into the historical context of Nigeria in order to understand the emergence of Boko Haram as a domestic insurgency at first.

succeeded. In 1804, Shaykh Usman dan Fodio who was a Fulani scholar, preacher and mystic, withdrew his followers from the Hausa state of Gobir (Northwest Nigeria). He later established his own community on the basis of 'true' Islam and proclaimed *jihad* against Gobir and then against all the Hausa states, whose leaders were declared "unbelievers" or *kuffar*. The Fulani were already present in the Hausa kingdoms; their Islamic education allowed them to rise to important posts, including as kings' advisors, secretaries or tax collectors (Harnischfeger, 2006: 41). Those Fulani who proclaimed *jihad* on the Hausa were those who lived a separate life in contained communities. Dan Fodio's uprising underlined the tyranny and corruption of the Hausa: "[w]homsoever they wish to kill or exile or violate his honour or devour his wealth they do so in pursuit of their lusts" (Isichei, 1984: 203). It only took five years for the Hausa rulers to lose their power. Their places were then filled by the new "royal" families from the Fulani. In the space of 25 years, the Sokoto sultanate/caliphate was created. It spanned the territory of modern northern Nigeria, and parts of Benin, Niger and Cameroon (Stokes, 2009: 231). The sultanate represented a "historical precedent of unified Muslim temporal rule, which continues to appeal to many" (Englebert & Dunn, 2013: 103).

In order to remain in power and gain legitimacy among the Hausa population, further *jihad* was declared; it was meant to unite people in their struggle against the "others," the "unbelievers."

(Harnischfeger, 2006: 41), thus, directing the attention outwards rather than inwards. The Fulani and Hausa forces moved in two directions, south to the lands of the Yoruba and Nupe ethnic groups and east towards Bauchi, or as it was also called “the land of the slaves” (Ibid.). These conquests also laid the foundation for further religious and ethnic tension that would occur with increased frequency after the Nigerian independence. As was the case in the Ottoman Empire, many converted not because of spiritual motivations, but rather due to benefits that came with it. However, in Nigeria many members of small ethnic groups conquered by the Hausa-Fulani not only adopted new religion but also new ethnic identity. This led to frustration among the unconverted members of the same ethnic group. Such conversion meant that Fulani habits, customs, even dress was also adopted. As such, when some Nupe adopted Islam, other Nupe viewed them as part of the ruling elite and described them as follows: “[o]f such men [they] say not ‘they become Mohammedans’ but ... ‘they become Fulani’” (Nadel, 1942: 143). In later years, during clashes between Nigerian Christians and Muslims, these new converts were said to have been at the front lines of the latter, even if it meant that they would be going against their own ethnic kin (Harnischfeger, 2006).

Despite the *jihad*, forced and voluntary conversion, the Hausa-Fulani rulers preferred not to engage in mass Islamization. Many ethnic groups living on the border of the Sokoto sultanate tried to evade the Fulani and preserve their beliefs by moving to higher ground – the Jos

Plateau, the Muri Mountains or some other remote and inaccessible regions. Many of those who failed to successfully hide were captured, enslaved and brought to the center of the sultanate: “[i]n these areas [periphery of the Caliphate] the jihad resembled a raid, as the warriors of God were more concerned with hunting for slaves than with spreading their religion” (Harnischfeger, 2006: 42). At some point the number of slaves was so high that it is argued they comprised half of the center’s population (Ibid.). Most of the slaves were used for work in the caliphate itself, however, some were exported to North Africa (Hunwick, 1992: 145). Conversion to Islam, though, did not make a person above enslavement. In Adamawa (present-day Cameroon) the rulers even punished those who tried to adopt Islam or preached it: “[u]ntil the end of the 1950s, those locals who tried to convert to Islam (and those Fulbe who proselytized) were beaten and jailed by the Sultans” (Gausset, 2002: 169).

This situation continued throughout the colonial period. The system of governance put into place or better say adopted by the British colonizers was beneficial for them when it came to ruling but did nothing in term of establishing a united *nation* of Nigeria. This is by far not the only such case: the British system of ‘divide and rule’ was applied in other regions with similar or worse consequences. What this did to Nigeria was ensure the continued domination of one ethnic group – the Fulani: “[w]e feel that the Fulani and English races have much in common. Both have had a long experience and special

aptitude for administering their own and other people's affairs" (Lieutenant Colonel Beddington, 1934, quoted in Omolewa, 1989: 11). By aligning themselves with the new rulers, the Fulani were finally able to expand into the territories that were previously out of their reach. Many of the newly conquered tribes did not have a leader or a chief, the British assigned that position to the Fulanis (Harnischfeger, 2006: 43). One of reasons could be the lack of British cadres in Nigeria. According to some sources, the British rule over Nigeria in 1900 consisted of six civilian administrators, 120 officers and an army of local ex-slaves. These numbers did not particularly differ thirty years later: this time Britain had 85 officers aided by additional chiefs who were supposed to police a population of 20 million (Campbell, 2013: 4). Despite a de-facto British rule, the emirs of the North retained most of their previously held power. In order to please the Fulani, the British restricted the activity of Christian missionaries in the Northern territories, a restriction that was partially lifted in 1931 (Harnischfeger, 2006: 43). Campbell (2013: 2) argues that due to this separation less hospitals and clinics were built in the region, as well as no Western schools,<sup>50</sup> which "perpetrated much of the North's premodern backwardness." It would also fuel ethnic resentment: while the North remained backward, the colonizers put in place Western institutions, propagated modern education through Christian missionaries, and taught the

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<sup>50</sup> In his 2012 autobiographical work on the Biafran civil war, Chinua Achebe, a celebrated Nigerian author and novelist who among others received the Man Booker International award in 2007, wrote that the South and the Middle Belt had "some of the very best secondary schools in the British Empire" (2012: 20).

Southerners, especially the Igbo, how to conduct businesses and use modern technology. As a result of subsequent business successes of the Igbo, they were viewed as “the Jews of West Africa” and many a times resented by other ethnic groups (Campbell, 2013: 3-4).

In 1949, the great grandson of Shaykh Usman dan Fodio, the founder of the Fulani empire, founded the Northern People's Congress (NPC), a political party largely supported by the Hausa-Fulani (Okoth, 2006: 31). The party won the 1954 election in the North, and when Nigeria gained full independence in 1960, it also took hold of the federal government. This development put ethnic minorities at disadvantage once again: those who did not align themselves with the governing party were crushed. In fact, oppression was already evident in, as early as 1953, but one particular episode from 1957 exemplifies the way religion was connected to the oppositional unrests. In March, riots broke out in Gusau and Northeastern Sokoto. The Tijaniyya groups that belonged to a Muslim brotherhood were attacked, some of their houses looted and burned. The Sultan of Sokoto issued an authorization for a severe treatment of the group. The attacks were ‘justified’ by arguing that the Tijaniyya were actually not real Tijaniyya and that they were disrespectful of the authority, while Islam “enjoins on its adherents absolute obedience to authority” (Dudley, 1968: 190). The arrested were even forced to smoke cigarettes, which was against their beliefs (Ibid.). Religious tensions continued after the Nigerian independence as well.

Nigeria also witness its first oil exploration during the colonial period: the first major work was conducted by Nigerian Bitumen Corporation, a German company's Nigerian subsidiary between the years of 1907 and 1914. During the First World War the company was coerced to leave the country. After the war, it was denied exploration rights, as the British preferred this work to be conducted by British companies. Shell's influence on Nigeria emerged gradually from 1938 when a joint venture of Shell and BP were given license to drill oil in the whole of Nigeria. Thus, Shell-BP effectively became an oil monopoly there (Frynas, 2000: 9). During the times when local political parties in Nigeria engaged in conflict, Shell-BP found large quantities of oil that could be used for commercial purposes. Finally, in 1957 the production of crude oil in Nigeria began (Ibid.). British interests in Nigerian oil would in the next decade decide the outcome of the Nigerian civil war.

The next section looks at this period focusing once again on the importance of religion in Nigerian politics and everyday life. The section also discusses the effects of oil boom on Muslims in the country as well as the predecessor of Boko Haram – the Maitatsine movement of the 1980s.

### 5.3 Religion and Natural Resources in Post-Independence Nigeria

Seven years after Nigeria was proclaimed independent from its colonial power, a civil war broke out. It lasted until the 1970 and was fought for the secession of the Biafran Republic. This civil war, like the Katangese secession attempt in the Democratic Republic of Congo, became a proxy war for major powers. The British supported the federal government due to their interest in Nigerian oil.<sup>51</sup> The Soviet Union, in turn, aspiring to political influence in West Africa joined in on the same side. Biafra, on the other hand, was supported by the French who wanted to counter British influence in the region (Shillington, 2013: 428). The Biafrans tried to frame this war in terms of *jihad* against the Christians, however, scholars refute this notion. The war is evaluated in light of preserving Nigerian federacy. A case in point was the mixed religious composition of the army that attacked Biafra (Hunwick, 1992: 148). The British who were supporting the federal government underlined the same point:

The charges of Jihad have also been denied by British officials who assert that more than half the members of the Federal Government are Christian, while only 1,000 of the 60-70,000 Federal soldiers are Muslim Hausas from the North (Achebe, 2012: 229).

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<sup>51</sup> Most of the oil fields are located in Biafra, which meant that in a successful Biafran secession, Nigeria would have not only lost most of its oil reserves but also nearly half of its coastline. With the independence of India and Pakistan, Nigeria became Britain's "largest /.../ overseas possession." The British also understood the importance of the country, and Biafran region in particular, with such vast resources of oil and gas that have already started to be exported in the 1950s (Campbell, 2013: 5).

Although it is important to note here that the fears of *jihad* among the local population could not be dismissed as ungrounded: just three years before the Biafran war started, the leader of the NPC claimed to have successfully converted 60,000 “infidels” in a span of five months. He also often underlined the continuation between the Sokoto caliphate and the NPC government (Harnischfeger, 2006: 44).

The importance of oil and international actors involved in this conflict was once again reiterated during the so-called “Kwale Incident” that took place in mid-1969. The Biafran military intelligence reportedly received information that the staff of Eni, an Italian governmental oil company, were engaged in espionage. They were allegedly passing on reports to the Nigerian federal government on the Biafran positions, movements as well as training. An operation in Kwale, where the Okpai oilfield is located, was executed, and as a result ten Italians and one Jordanian national were killed, eighteen other were captured. This caused international outrage: even Pope Paul VI wrote a private letter to the Biafran leader General Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, pleading with him to pardon all the arrested. Opposite views circulated both inside and outside Biafra, with some blaming it on the oil companies: “[o]ilmen are more dangerous than mercenaries.... These are the people responsible for our suffering” (Achebe, 2012: 219). The incident was resolved after the prisoners were released and taken out of the region, but some still

speculated whether this decision was due to a fear of possible Italian armed invasion to rescue its citizens (Ibid.: 220.).

The Biafran civil war also resulted in the increase in the number of states, which meant that there were no longer three main regions, but 12 and subsequently 30.<sup>52</sup> This period also saw several important developments both domestic and international that would lay the foundation for the possibility of Boko Haram's emergence.

As was discussed in the introductory part of this chapter, Nigeria has abundant oil and gas reserves and their commercial exportation started in 1950s. Oil has shaped the Nigerian society more than any other factor. The wealth and societal changes that came in all its force with the oil boom of 1973. Burke III and Lubeck (1987: 646, 652) argue that by the time the oil prices skyrocketed, Nigeria already had in place a more or less equitable distribution of rents system. But unlike Algeria and Iraq at that time, Nigeria was a country with "weaker state structures and weaker nationalist credibilities." However, the dramatic increase in oil rents failed to ultimately produce wealth for the whole population. According to the 1981 World Bank report of the economic situation in Nigeria,<sup>53</sup> one in five households in the country did not have adequate incomes to meet their basic food needs. In comparison, Bauchi, a state in northern Nigeria, had 36 percent of

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<sup>52</sup> I have discussed the problems that arise from Nigerian diversity, both ethnic and cultural, with Professor Paul G. Adogamhe in Toronto, Canada, in March of 2014.

<sup>53</sup> See, Nigeria – Basic Economic Report. (1981). *World Bank*. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/243211468082131593/pdf/multi0page.pdf>.

such households and 68 percent of household below the poverty line.<sup>54</sup>

The oil boom affected the Muslim population of Nigeria more than any other group. Before the oil boom, an old system of relationship between the *malam* (Hausa for scholar) and *gardawa* (Hausa for student) was still mostly intact. It referred to a tradition in which young people studying Koran moved from town to town with their teacher and were employed in temporary jobs, such as those related to handicraft. With the oil boom, however, these students found their jobs undermined because of the introduction of materials and new techniques:

Within cities like Kano, the full dimensions of the crisis and its consequences for the *gardawa* system are clear. The traditional Muslim charitable institutions that once sustained the itinerant Koranic students collapsed at the same time that the incidence of theft and violent crime was increasing enormously. In the situation of new and massive wealth, rural vagabonds became suspect, and the norms of charity appropriate to an earlier era were eroded by fear of thieves and violence. Since the 1980 uprising wandering Koranic students and public preaching without an authorization have been banned (Burke III & Lubeck, 1987: 652-653).

Additional factor that triggered the events of 1980 and beyond, was rooted in the educational system in northern Nigeria. If previously 90% of children did not attend school, which meant that *mallams* had great influence in this area. This all changed when the local Muslim

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<sup>54</sup> The extent of poverty in Nigeria and the possibility of Nigeria with right policies becoming a rich country, as it has abundant natural resources, we discussed with Professor Paul G. Adogamhe in Toronto, Canada, in March of 2014. Professor Adogamhe also recently published an article on this topic in the *Poverty & Public Policy* journal.

elite decided to embrace the universal primary education. It was as if a system “rooted in the reproduction of a precapitalist Muslim state” was very quickly being replaced by one based on Western education (Burke III & Lubeck, 1987: 655).

In this context, a movement emerged that is considered to be the predecessor of Boko Haram; Adesoji (2010: 100) even argues that “[t]he wide gap in time notwithstanding, the socio-economic conditions that sustained the Maitatsine uprising in 1980 are relevant to the Boko Haram situation.” In the 1960s Cameroonian Muhammad Marwa moved to Kano, in northern Nigeria; he proceeded to create a significant following among the Muslim migrant in “the walled city of Kano” (Loimeier, 2012: 140). Marawa had two major titles, each reflecting his beliefs: he bore a title of Maitatsine, which means “the one who damns” because he damned “the corruption of Kano, its un-Islamic practices, and the failure of its Muslim community to support the gardawa according to established local standards of redistribution” (Burke III & Lubeck, 1987: 656). He was also called the “master of rejection” because he rejected everything that was a non-Koranic innovation, such as watches, bicycles, even ritual prayers (Loimeier, 2012: 140). Instead, he

rejected the Islamic traditions as a source of law in favor of the Koran alone, and permitted his followers to pray only three times a day (instead of the canonical five). He also excused them from facing east while praying. While Marwa never claimed to be a Mahdi [a redeemer of Islam according to a prophecy], he did claim to be a prophet, and his movement is to be situated in

the context of West African Mahdism and millenarianism (Burke III & Lubeck, 1987: 655).

In 1980, the tension between the Maitatsine movement and the Nigerian security personnel as well as other Muslim scholars intensified leading to Marwa and his followers being called heretics by the established scholars in Kano. The violence broke out as the Maitatsine movement tried to storm a major mosque in Kano. The Nigerian army brutally suppressed the rebellion: the fighting killed 6,000 people (Marwa himself as well) in the span of several days. The uprising continued in other cities, though, up until 1993 (Loimeier, 2012: 140). Burke III & Lubeck (1987: 657) identify several causes why this movement was unsuccessful, however, the most important reason for the movement's failure is the isolationist state of the Maitatsine members from other groups in the society and a lack of strong vision that is necessary in creating a feasible Muslim country.

#### **5.4 Islamic Movements and the Rise of Boko Haram**

The final factor in the rise of the Boko Haram, discussed in the present work, is the Yan Izala Islamic reform movement. It was established in 1978 in the city of Jos, Middle Belt, although it was present since the 1960s in reaction to Sufi brotherhoods. It managed to become the most influential reformist movement in Nigeria. Loimeier

(2011: 207) even argued that with Yan Izala's creation "a new phase in the development of Islam in Northern Nigeria began."

The Yan Izala movement thus represented an emancipatory programme of Islamic reform which offered Muslim women, youth and usually urban, Western-educated Muslims an alternative vision of Islam no longer mediated by established religious authorities (Loimeier, 2012: 141).

Sponsored by Saudi Arabia,<sup>55</sup> not only did the Yan Izala movement escalate the conflict with the Sufis in Nigeria, through its program it also increased the participation of Muslims, especially women, in the political process. The Yan Izala was against the Sufis on the basis of

their innovation (*bid'a*); their spiritual, mystical path; their practice of saint veneration; their resort to the use of amulets; their supererogatory prayers; their conspicuous consumption and their esoteric episteme (the Sufi shaykh as intercessor between individual believer and God); as well as their closeness to the traditional Muslim authorities, especially the Sultan and his emirs (Harmon, 2014: 119).

The Sufi Brotherhoods' connections to the Sultan date back to the creation of the Sokoto Caliphate, when the Sufis were encouraged to actively seek new members and increase their influence, because they were seen as "collaborators in the grand project of renewing and spreading Islam in this corner of Africa" (Hill, 2010: 15). The brotherhoods would become one of the primal targets of Boko Haram later on (*Ibid.*, 20).

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<sup>55</sup> The conflict between Yan Izala and the Sufis was also a proxy "war" between the Saudis who supported the former and Iran that recently emerged from the revolution and was looking for ways to increase its influence. In Nigeria, Iran was trying to decrease an entrenched influence of Saudi Arabia. This meant that as long as the Saudis were against the Sufi Brotherhoods, Iran as a matter of course tried to cultivate support of the Sufis (Hunwick, 1992: 152).

What is more pertinent for the emergence of Boko Haram is the emergence of second generation of Izala members who were disillusioned with the system. Yan Izala frequently sent its students to study in Saudi Arabia, but what these students found out upon their return was the lack of job opportunities for them. Most of the existing positions were filled by the first generation of Izala's members who, it seemed, were not planning to retire. These second generation Izala members became ardent supporters of political *sharia*<sup>56</sup> once the *sharia law* was implemented in one third or all Nigerian states in 1999. (Loimeier, 2012: 145-146).

Some explain the decision of these Nigerian states to introduced *sharia law* in terms of their loss of power in 1999 to a Christian and their use of “religion to entrench their dominance in their home base” (Harnischfeger, 2006: 44). This wave of Islamization produced more fear among the religious minorities in the North and the Middle Belt, and to a lesser extent in the South. The reason for this was because many Muslim Northerners moved to the south. With increase in their numbers, Muslim settlers were more and more vocal in pronouncements of their intentions:

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<sup>56</sup> Author's Interview with Edmond Keller. I discussed the general radicalization of Nigeria, especially after the introduction of *sharia law*, with Professor Edmond Keller from UCLA in May of 2014. His own views on the emergence of Boko Haram, for instance, are centered around grievances based on identity and citizenship. Similarly, to Professor Keller, Mohammed Sulemana, who at that time was a researcher at the Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, in our conversation in June of 2014, highlighted domestic factors, such as grievances, as being important in solving the Nigerian crisis and designing effective counterterrorism strategies to eliminate the Boko Haram threat.

Since Muslims are called upon to change the political order according to the will of God, they feel entitled to oust the indigenous Christians from their positions of power. Gaining control over land<sup>57</sup> becomes part of a holy mission which requires that wherever they settle they must strive for supremacy over the infidels (Harnischfeger, 2006: 45).

Like colonists they regard their new home as an “institution vacuum” in which they set up a copy of their own culture, without paying heed to the indigenous way of life (Kopytoff, 1987: 26).

This is why many saw this attempt at Islamization as the most frightful, because it reminded people of *jihad* that dan Fodio announced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Harnischfeger, 2006: 40). Pronouncement of the politicians from the states that enforce *sharia law* did not help alleviate the tensions: “Zamfara is ready to contribute whatever it will cost to spread Sharia in the Southern part of Nigeria” (Tell, 2000: 23).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> It is essential to note here that in Nigeria land belongs to the community rather than an individual. The Nigerian constitution upholds the rights of the “indigenous” people to their land when a citizen belongs to a state and his/her ancestors (parents or grandparents) belonged to the indigenous community of that particular state. When the Northerners came to the Middle Belt or the South, they refused to acknowledge the existence of the natives’ ancestral right to the land (Harnischfeger, 2006: 40, 45).

<sup>58</sup> The establishment of the *sharia law* was applauded by many Nigerian Muslims as they saw it as a way to end the corrupt governance and improve their living conditions. However, the results were even worse: since 1999 conflicts between Muslims and Christian caused the death of at least 18,000 people. In terms of law implementation, many Muslims became increasingly aware that the law was profitable for the corrupt politicians who through their rhetoric of its implementation were trying to gain constituency and stay in power. Many (poor) people were prosecuted for minor crimes such as theft, stoning of women for adultery also took place (although men in such cases were released without punishment due to a lack of evidence). In some areas alcohol was outlawed even for the Christian minority. All in all, people became disappointed with *sharia law* because it did not produce the results they were hoping for. One Nigerian put it well when he said that “[p]eople want *sharia*. But not this kind of *sharia*” (Brulliard, 2009). People also argued that while minor crimes were punished according to the law, corrupt politicians still remained in power. For a more detailed information on *sharia law* in Nigeria, its implementation and detailed criminal cases see, “Political Shari’a”? Human Rights and Islamic Law in Northern Nigeria. (2004). *Human Rights Watch*, 16(9)(A). Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/nigeria0904/>.

It was in this context that Boko Haram<sup>59</sup> (or *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad*, Arabic for *People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad*) emerged. It is generally agreed that the group that we come to know today as Boko Haram emerged around 2002, although Bello (2013: 67), basing it on the information received from a Nigerian military official, dates it as far back as 1995. However, back then Boko Haram was no more than a small group of young Muslims calling themselves *Shabaab*. The latter was led by Abubakar Lawan who later went to study at the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia. It is said that Mohammad Yusuf became the leader of *Shabaab* two years later (Ujah, Mamah, Omonobi, Obinna & Idonor, 2009). In the time period of 2002 and 2009, Mohammad Yusuf managed to create a considerable following around himself, which consisted of mostly young men between the ages of 17 and 30. He was able to increase his influence in the North through religious institutions that he apparently owned: these included a school and a mosque. His group expanded to Yusuf's home of Yobe,<sup>60</sup> quite a large state on the border with Niger in north-east Nigeria. Once there, Yusuf established a base naming it "Afghanistan." At that point in time, Boko Haram also started providing help to the poor (Olojo, 2013: 3).

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<sup>59</sup> Boko is Hausa for "book" and haram comes from Arabic and means "forbidden." This name was first given to the followers of Mohammad Yusuf in the Railway Quarter, a neighborhood in Maiduguri, the largest city in the Borno state, north-east Nigeria (Campbell, 2013: 131).

<sup>60</sup> See the political map of Nigeria in the Appendices section.

Yusuf claimed that there were only four “pure salafists”: the first one being bin Laden, then, the Taliban, Sayyid Qutb and, finally, Ibn Taymiya.<sup>61</sup> Group’s leadership in their pronouncements attacked the current Nigerian state proclaiming it to be void of legitimacy on the basis that it was not of Islamic character. It is also important to note here that around the same time, on 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2003, Osama bin Laden broadcasted a message in which he calls “illegitimate” countries, such as Nigeria, apostates in need of *jihadi* liberation; this, he claims, is the reason why these states experience increased number of terrorist attacks (Olojo, 2013: 9).

Boko Haram’s proximity to Al Qaeda or at least its reverence for bin Laden himself at least in part stems from the 9/11 attacks. Many young Muslims in Nigeria “drew inspiration from the ‘guts’ that Osama bin Laden personified” (Ibid.: 4).<sup>62</sup>

Boko Haram also argued that all the poverty and misery of the Nigerian people started with the fall of the Sokoto Caliphate to the British in 1904. Essentially, Boko Haram was a small insurgence in the north of Nigeria that was aiming at the creation of an Islamic state in the country. It is also said that at the time of its creation and initial expansion BH was mostly non-violent, however, Campbell (2013: 131)

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<sup>61</sup> Ibn Taymiya (or Taymiyyah) was an Islamic scholar of the 13-14<sup>th</sup> century who was born in present-day Turkey and later died in Syria. He sought the return of Islam to its original sources, the Quran and the *sunnah*.

See, Ibn Taymiyyah. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. (2016). Retrieved from <https://global.britannica.com/biography/Ibn-Taymiyyah>.

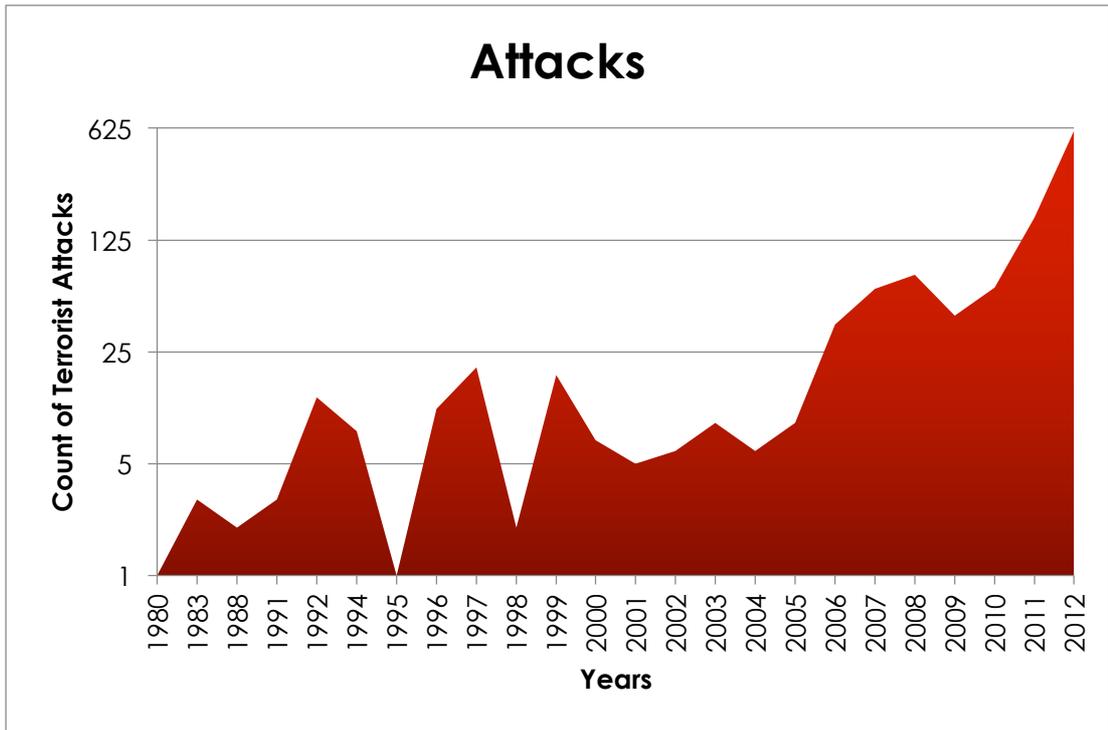
<sup>62</sup> This could also be seen through a craze that hit mostly northern Nigeria after September 11 attacks when a large number of newly born babies were given the Osama name. See, Osama Baby Craze Hits Nigeria. (2002). *BBC*. Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1741171.stm>.

argues, its switch to more violent activity was in part caused by the brutality of the Nigerian security apparatus. In fact, many considered Boko Haram to be on the payroll of Nigerian politicians that were using the group in order to win elections. Thus, it is said that one of the BH affiliates during the period of 2003 and 2007 was appointed Borno state's Commissioner of Religious Affairs (Olojo, 2013: 5). These connections seem to have helped in Yusuf's release from multiple arrests over the years (Campbell, 2013: 133). Still, some of the events that took place between 2003 and 2007 are not so non-violent, for instance, the organization's massive 2004 attack on police stations, which included up to 200 BH members, made headlines and earned it a title of "Nigerian Taliban," although no direct connection between the group and Taliban was found. In the aftermath of this attack, Mohammad Yusuf fled to Saudi Arabia through Sudan, but later returned with the help of deputy governor of the Borno state (Loimeier, 2012: 150).

Probably the most important event in the history of Boko Haram was the killing of Mohammad Yusuf in 2009 while in police custody. During the same crackdown, at least 1,100 Boko Haram members were also killed. In 2009-2010 the organization had to reinvent itself: Abubakar Shekau became its leader and started using new attack techniques, including suicide bombers. Adesoji (2010: 95) argues that the 2009 Boko Haram uprising "not only set a precedent, but also

reinforced the attempts by Islamic conservative elements at imposing a variant of Islamic religious ideology on a secular state."

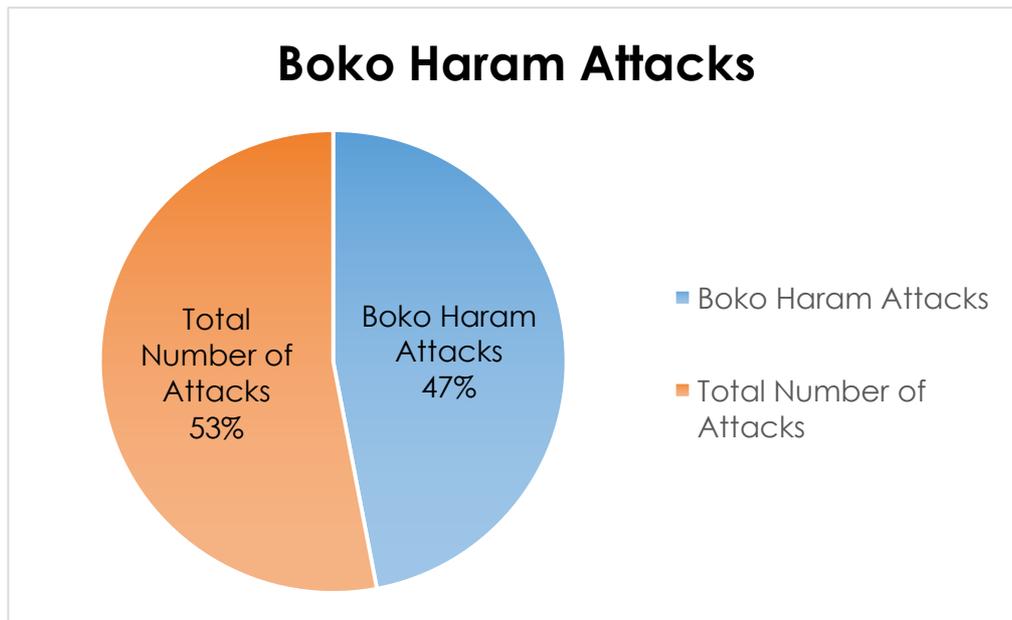
Over the past 22 years, Nigeria has seen a dramatic increase in the number of terrorist attacks. This rise is attributed to the attacks conducted by Boko Haram. A total of 1,176 attacks were conducted in Nigeria during the period of 1980 and 2012, 558 or nearly half of these were perpetrated by Boko Haram. The Islamist organization came to represent such a major security challenge for the state that in 2012 the Nigerian government allocated five billion dollars for combating it (Campbell, 2013: 21). The following two graphs represent the increasing trend of terrorist attacks over time and the percentage of Boko Haram attacks to the overall terrorist attacks in Nigeria.



Source: Global Terrorism Database.

**Figure 7: Number of Terrorist Attacks in Nigeria between 1980 and 2012<sup>63</sup>**

<sup>63</sup> For best visual representation of the changes in the number of terrorist attacks in Nigeria over the years, logarithmic progression was used in this table.



Source: Global Terrorism Database.

**Figure 8: Percentage of Boko Haram Attacks to the Total Number of Attacks between 1980 and 2012**

### **5.5 From Affiliation with Al Qaeda to Franchise by the Islamic State (IS): The Effects of Religion and Natural Resources**

The previous sections laid out the social, cultural and historical factors that contributed to grievances and inequality in a failing state. While these factors impinge on why transnational terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda and the Islamic State would find Nigeria and Boko Haram a likely candidate for affiliation and/or franchising, this dissertation argues that the decisive variables for the recent terrorist cooperation in the context of Nigeria was due to alignment of religious motivations/ideology of the organizations and effective use of natural resources by Boko Haram.

This section outlines the progress of Boko Haram from affiliation with Al Qaeda<sup>64</sup> to franchise with the Islamic State which eventually took place on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The motivation of both groups to engage in this franchise is evaluated through theoretical framework presented in *Chapter III*. In a nutshell, this dissertation argues that the ultimate aim of terrorist organizations is survival, which is why they utilize different strategies to 'stay in business.' Franchise is one such strategy that allows transnational terrorist organizations to expand its influence, even if only for propaganda's sake, increase its ranks and possibly obtain funds.<sup>65</sup> Two factors are essential for the affiliation to take place: religion and the presence of natural resources. As Zelinsky and Shubik's (2009) typology suggests, franchises are centralized in terms of operations, while decentralized in terms of resources. I argue that as in theory-building cases discussed in *Chapter III*, terrorist affiliation/franchising that took place in Nigeria is best explained through this model.

This dissertation maintains that religion is one of the two crucial factors in the process of affiliation. It provides the base for recruitment, as well as unites people and terrorist organizations around a common goal and motivation. It also eases the establishment of a hierarchy

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<sup>64</sup> Personal Interview with Christine Agius. During my discussion of Boko Haram and its emergence with Dr. Christine Agius, in May of 2014, she was kind enough to point me in the direction of several sources on the establishment of Boko Haram in Nigeria, some of them are used below.

<sup>65</sup> As argued before, mostly the parent organizations choose self-sufficient domestic terrorist organizations to franchise so that if necessary they could extract resources from these organizations.

within the new alliance, thus, ensuring that the centrality of operations will be maintained. The importance of ideological similarity was already established on the cases of AQI and AQIM, as previously explained. From the beginning Al Qaeda was not happy with AQI's attacks on the Shia population in Iraq. This franchise ultimately became probably the greatest failures of Al Qaeda because it propelled the AQI and later IS to the front of international *jihad* and made it into a competitor to its former parent. AQIM, on the other hand, continues to be loyal to Al Qaeda.<sup>66</sup>

It seems that initially Boko Haram was just a domestic Islamist organization that wanted the establishment of Islamic caliphate in Nigeria. The events of 2009 radicalized the organization and put it on the path of later affiliation. Mohammad Yusuf was apparently preparing for the upcoming *jihad* in Nigeria as he is said to have sent some of his followers abroad for medical training (Adesoji, 2010: 100). However, within one week of his death, BH's interim head put together the following proclamation:

[i]n fact, we are spread across all the 36 states in Nigeria, and Boko Haram is just a version of Al-Qaeda, which we align with and respect. We support Osama bin Laden, we shall carry out his command in Nigeria until the country is completely converted to Islam, which is according to the wish of Allah (Karmon, 2014: para. 7).

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<sup>66</sup> A small faction of AQIM did, in fact, align itself with the Islamic State around 2015, which enabled IS to gain foothold in Algeria. This franchise is now known as ISIS Wilayat Jaza'ir or ISIS Affiliate in Algeria (Estelle & Snyder, 2016).

This alignment was further underlined by Abubakar Shekau once he ascended to the leadership position.<sup>67</sup> Shekau did not waste time to declare a *jihad* against both Nigeria and, importantly, the U.S. Zenn (2015: 18) underlines the similarity between this pronouncement and Al Qaeda's own statements potentially signifying that "al-Qa'ida may have responded to Boko Haram's public requests for media guidance and assisted in drafting Shekau's script." As such, Shekau pledged loyalty to "'the amir of al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb,' Usama bin Ladin, Ayman al-Zawahiri and the 'Islamic states' in Iraq and Somalia," proclaiming "[o]h America, *jihad* has just begun" (Zenn, 2014a).<sup>68</sup>

This change in strategy could be explained by the group's dire state at that time: its charismatic leader was killed along with more than 1,000 of organization's members, which put its future existence at risk. Boko Haram's leadership officially proclaimed their support for Al Qaeda, essentially indicating their willingness to work with and learn from the organization. Here, it is essential to note that at the time of Mohammad Yusuf's death there was only one major actor in international *jihad* – Al Qaeda, and Boko Haram's attempt at establishing closer ties with it is quite logical. As in the Algerian case, if the official franchise ever took place between AQ and BH, Boko Haram would have been a success for Al Qaeda in terms of extending

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<sup>67</sup> Personal Interview with Mohammed Sulemana. During my conversation with Mohammed Sulemana in June of 2014, we talked about the dual narrative Boko Haram has: one about the Nigerian state, thus is a domestic narrative, and another on international *jihad*.

<sup>68</sup> In another piece, Zenn (2014b) dates Boko Haram-Al Qaeda communication back to 2004 when BH was the one to contact the latter.

its influence in Sub-Saharan Africa and not worrying about the financial side of the operations due to the presence of natural resources in the state. The major reason for failure of the enterprise was ideological differences i.e. varying religious goals and motivations, as was the case with AQI (later the IS).

During the time period between 2006 and 2013, Boko Haram was actively involved with Al Qaeda and its Algerian franchise. There is also information that AQI or later IS also had connection with the group: after Yusuf's death AQI was one of the several AQ affiliates that expressed condolences to Boko Haram for the death of its leader (Zenn, 2015: 18). It was also Al Qaeda's Algerian franchise that was instrumental in establishing initial contacts between BH and IS that would later lead to their official affiliation (Ibid.: 17).

When in 2012 Ansaru split from Boko Haram and affiliated itself with Al Qaeda, BH engaged in numerous coordinated activities with the group: among these were the propaganda videos with Shekau lookalikes when his own communication line was unavailable. In 2012, Shekau also released a video in which he praised AQI founder al-Zarqawi. Despite these signs, Boko Haram only acknowledged its coordination of operations with Ansaru's AQIM extension in 2013 with the kidnapping of a French priest in Cameroon (Zenn, 2014a, 2015). Previously the same year, Boko Haram conducted another raid into the Cameroonian territory, kidnapping a family of seven and claiming

it to be a retribution for French attacks on its Al Qaeda allies in Mali (Tumanjong, Hinshaw & Landauro, 2013).

Since then Boko Haram profited greatly from its connection to and affiliation with Al Qaeda and especially AQIM. Al Qaeda was one of its largest financial supporters. When first established, terrorist organizations are particularly vulnerable in a competitive environment; in fact, most organizations do not survive their first year (Young & Dugan 2014). Funding from outside matters in those early stages of organization. Boko Haram was no exception. Around 2003, Osama bin Laden sent his emissaries to Nigeria and dispersed 3 million dollars among the groups that shared Al Qaeda's determination to establish Islamic rule. The "major beneficiary" was Boko Haram. This connection was strengthened with Mohammad Yusuf's flight to Saudi Arabia and through the AQIM connection after 2009 (McCoy, 2014). Boko Haram did not need financial assistance from AQ once it established its hegemony in the country as the most brutal and determined terrorist organization with access to natural resources.

In addition to funding, AQIM provided much needed expertise in training, conducting operations, suicide attacks and media representation at Boko Haram's inception. These all led to behavioral changes in Boko Haram. As was discussed previously, BH started conducting across-border raids, increased its indiscriminate killings of civilians, engaged in large-scale kidnappings, used improvised explosive devices and, maybe, most importantly – initiated the use of

suicide bombers (Karmon, 2014).<sup>69</sup> Boko Haram members received training in AQIM camps in Mali and Somalia (Busari, 2016). 2011 was in this respect an important year as it first marked the difference in BH's tactics. It was the year when BH attacked a United Nations compound in Abuja by using suicide car bombing. This attack resulted in the deaths of at least 21 people with many more injured (Abuja Attack, 2011).

When we look at Moghadam's (2015) typology of inter-group cooperation, one of the reasons he mentions for why mergers can be useful to terrorist organizations is funding and an identity crisis. He argues that terrorist organizations experiencing problems in these two areas can benefit from a merger with a larger organization. When looking at the case of Boko Haram and Al Qaeda, one cannot help but question why the former did not eventually become the latter's franchise, as it did with the IS. Al Qaeda provided funds to Boko Haram, which ultimately allowed it to grow and become what the *Forbes* magazine ranks as the world's 10<sup>th</sup> richest terrorist organization with an annual turnover of around \$52 million.<sup>70</sup> The financial aspect, none withstanding, when all three organizations are evaluated together, the decision of Boko Haram to officially pledge to the Islamic

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<sup>69</sup> During our conversation with Dr. Amy Pate in February of 2015, who is a Research Director at START, we discussed the strengths and weaknesses of Boko Haram, especially during the years between 2012 and 2013, when Dr. Pate maintained that the number of attacks decreased but the lethality of attacks actually increased. At the time of our conversation, Dr. Pate had just recently come back from a field work in Nigeria. She later published the results of this trip as a START report.

<sup>70</sup> See, The World's 10 Richest Terrorist Organizations. (2014). *Forbes International*. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinternational/2014/12/12/the-worlds-10-richest-terrorist-organizations/#b5a92bf2ffae>.

State in March of 2015, seems much more logical and business-like than might seem at first.

The argument in the case of Nigeria, I posit, rests on convergence of religious motivations and the presence of natural resources here. One of the major conflictual issues in the past relationship between Al Qaeda and the Islamic State's predecessor was the latter's willingness to attack the Shia and then fellow Sunni Muslims. This was also the case between Boko Haram and Al Qaeda, when even Somalia's Al Shabaab, as Al Qaeda's loyal affiliate, was trying to undo the image of his parent organization as Muslim killers, exemplified by BH attacks (Zenn, 2013). This religious motivation that both Boko Haram and the IS subscribed to eased the affiliation process between the two organizations. This brutality was probably one of the major factor that ultimately distanced Shekau's group from AQIM and Al Qaeda. For instance, in 2013, in response to Boko Haram's three brutal attacks against two secondary schools and one college that occurred in June, July and September, a Mauritanian scholar associated with AQIM that issues religious edicts online, wrote the following:

[t]argeting schools to kill young students is impermissible, since they have not joined the ranks of the apostate military yet... This will give the enemies of the religion and Western media the opportunity to exploit these scenes to prove to Muslims that the mujahideen are far from Islam... These schools can be combated by warning people against enrolling in them, punishing the families who send their sons to them, and by destroying them when they are empty of the students (Zenn, 2013: para. 7).

As was discussed in the theoretical chapter, the roots of the Islamic State go back to al-Zarqawi and his brutal attacks against the Iraqi Shia population, which did not sit well with the Al Qaeda leadership. Islamic State continued this bloody history, not shying away from conducting massive attacks even during the most holy month of the year for the Muslims all over the world, the month of fasting – Ramadan. It has recently boasted of having killed or maimed around 5,200 people during the 2016 Ramadan. People and international media were asking the same question: how could they be killing fellow Muslims during this holy month? Before the fast started, the IS called for its followers to engage in killing wherever they were (Agerholm, 2016). Shiraz Maher (2016) argues that the reasons lie in its extremist ideology. IS effectively considers everyone who does not adhere to its version of Islam and *sharia law* or refuse to pledge allegiance to the organization, non-believers or enemies.<sup>71</sup> Boko Haram used the same tactic and in 2015 perpetrated several attacks in Nigeria. On one occasion they gunned down at least 100 people during prayer and on another attacked a mosque, a prayer and a market all during one celebratory day, Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the fasting period (Boko Haram in Nigeria Kills 97 Muslims Ramadan Massacres, 2015; Dixon, 2015).

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<sup>71</sup> For a piece on the Islamic States attacks on Muslims, including links to a UN report on this issue as well as news coverage of major attacks see, Obeidallah, D. (2016). No One Wants to See ISIS Defeated More Than Muslims. *The World Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dean-obeidallah/isis-defeat-muslims\\_b\\_10825028.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dean-obeidallah/isis-defeat-muslims_b_10825028.html).

Also, the trade-mark “notorious” beheadings by the Islamic State organization, were emulated by Boko Haram starting from 2013. In February of that year, Boko Haram militants attacked a residence used by North Korean doctors at Potiskum, Yobe state in north-northeast Nigeria. They killed three doctors, one of them through beheading (Three North Korean Doctors Killed by Suspected Islamists in Nigeria, 2013). In 2015, Boko Haram continued in this vein by beheading a Nigerian soldier and releasing its first such video (Akbar, 2015). It is argued that this brutality of the IS, prompted Al Qaeda to prohibit such practice among its members in 2014, distancing itself even further from its previous franchise (Lane, 2014).

In addition, at the time of the franchise, Boko Haram and IS were the two organizations that proclaimed caliphate.<sup>72</sup> In case of the IS, it had control over a large part of Iraqi and Syrian territory and provided services there, including banking and judiciary. On the other hand, Boko Haram's announcement of the same year (2014) about the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in Borno state, northeast Nigeria, was more in line with “chasing out the army and police and all government institutions. Since most people also flee, there's not much left to rule” (Schwartz, 2015: para. 22), although at some point hundreds of thousands of Nigerians were temporarily under BH's ‘caliphate’ rule (Windrem, 2014).

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<sup>72</sup> Personal Interview with Amy Pate. During our conversation with Dr. Amy Pate from START, we also discussed the proclamation of caliphate establishment by Boko Haram in 2014 and its significance for the jihadist movement overall.

At the start of August, 2016, the Islamic State 'fired' Shekau, the leader of its Nigerian franchise. In his place, the organization appointed Abu Musab al-Barnawi<sup>73</sup> who has already made his appearance and declared that Boko Haram will no longer target Muslims, including markets where they shop and would now attack Christians who he views as trying to Christianize the rest of Nigeria. Shekau did not take this decision well. He responded by releasing an audio recording arguing that it was still necessary for him to stay, that he would not be ordered by an "infidel:" "[t]oday, I woke up to see one who is an infidel whom they want me to follow. No, I won't ... We cannot subject ourselves to people who are in ignorance of all holy books and teachings" (Maclean, 2016: para. 8; Quist-Arcton, 2016).

The decision of not targeting Muslims in Nigeria is IS's latest strategy in countries outside Iraq and Syria.<sup>74</sup> Boko Haram has steadily been losing territory and its brutal attacks on Muslims has split the organization itself and this development did not escape IS leadership. It was one of the commanders of BH, known under the name of Mamanmunari, who reported on Shekau's behavior to the IS: "killing his own members, particularly commanders, who are fighting for him just because they question his attacks on mosques and markets ...

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<sup>73</sup> al-Barnawi first appeared in Boko Haram's videos as the organization's spokesperson. Speaking in Hausa against democracy, foreign education, and flattening of the cities that resisted the caliphate, "his delivery /.../ was considered and softly spoken" (Boko Haram in Nigeria, 2016).

<sup>74</sup> Callimachi, R. (2016). ISIS Seems to Tailor Attacks for Different Audiences. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/03/world/middleeast/isis-muslim-countries-bangladesh.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/03/world/middleeast/isis-muslim-countries-bangladesh.html?_r=0).

they tried to persuade Shekau to desist from giving orders to kill their fellow Muslims ... but Shekau refuses" (Maclean, 2016: para. 10). This development emphasizes even more the 'business' character of terrorist groups who are preoccupied with their public image and continuation of recruits and resources to ensure survival.

Boko Haram's brutality against even moderate Muslims could have led to a further split within the organization, as previously happened with Ansaru. The latter split from BH in 2012 and announce that it was trying to regain the "lost dignity of Muslims of black Africa" and was aiming at creating a caliphate in the country (Gaffey, 2016). Ansaru concentrated on imitating AQIM's tactics in terms of kidnapping and ambushing. It is argued to have also included AQIM members in its ranks (Zenn, 2015: 18). It is entirely possible that the ultimate decision to say to Shekau "we are sorry but your services are no longer required because your activities are ruining the image of the whole company" was at least in part motivated by a desire to preclude any such splits. What this split did was to tip the scales a little bit in Al Qaeda's favor and, considering where the IS is right now in terms of loss of territory and power, it would not want such a split to happen now. An additional factor is the possibility that IS does not want Boko Haram to be "stealing the limelight" and would like it to be led by someone "who will be following, as they see it, the tenets of Islam" (Quist-Arcton, 2016). So essentially, brutality against Muslims to a point when even IS was worried about its own image as a parent

organization in this franchise, and the perception that Boko Haram under Shekau conducted attacks that received more world attention than IS itself, likely led to the decision to get rid of Shekau and install someone they could control easier and who would make BH a 'true' franchise that would support rather than overshadow its parent. This dissertation argues that this instance is further evidence of the centralized structure of the current Boko Haram-IS franchise.

This dissertation also contends that the existence of natural resources in a state is essential for the franchise process as it provides a certain guarantee that franchise organization will be able to financially support itself in cases when its parent organization is unable or unwilling to provide assistance. Boko Haram profits from the extensive oil theft that happens in Nigeria every year. In fact, in 2014 the extent of money that this organization acquired from crude oil theft reached as high as \$20 billion (Barnes, 2015). The importance of dealing with oil theft was also acknowledged in 2014 by Senator Bukola Saraki of the Kwara state, western Nigeria. He argued that in order to defeat Boko Haram, the Nigerian government must stop "leakages from oil theft to shady government deals" (*Block Oil Theft to Stop Boko Haram – Saraki, 2014*).

In 2015, during the meeting with #BringBackOurGirls group, the U.S. congressman Darrell Issa reiterated this fact by arguing that Boko Haram was acquiring funds through the sale of crude oil. This development led to a launch of an official inquiry by the Nigerian

President Muhammadu Buhari (Iaccino, 2015). The links between Boko Haram and oil theft are now being studied in more detail by the officials in Nigeria and the United States. Oil theft is so pervasive in Nigeria that it is estimated to cost Nigeria around 3 to 8 billion dollars each year (Blanchard & Husted, 2016: 8).

The attacks on crude oil installations in Nigeria has international ramifications as well. The direct attacks on oil pipelines in Nigeria lead to supply outages: in early March of 2016, the outages in “Iraq and Nigeria alone have knocked offline about 850,000 barrels of exports” (Egan, 2016: para. 8). Such outages lead to rises in the price of oil, bringing profits to terrorist organizations: “ISIS stands to gain from supply outages that lift oil prices because the terror group makes money selling oil” (Ibid.: para. 9).

In general, the importance of oil in Nigeria for the international *jihad* was already noted in 2009: “Nigeria is an ideal al-Qaeda target because the flow of its oil to the United States<sup>75</sup> and the West can be disrupted without damaging the energy infrastructure of Arab oil-producers” (Scheuer, 2009: 317).

The organization is also known to acquire funds through kidnappings as a “way to extract concessions from the Nigerian state

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<sup>75</sup> Since mid-2013 U.S. import of crude oil and petroleum products from Nigeria significantly dropped, although the decrease in total imports could be seen already in 2012. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, in 2010 the total crude oil and petroleum products from Nigeria was 373,297 thousands of barrels. In 2015, this number decreased to just 30,407 thousand barrels. See, *U.S. Imports from Nigeria of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products*. U.S. Energy Information Administration. Retrieved from <https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=PET&s=MTTIMUSN11&f=A>.

and other governments, and a threat to foreigners and Nigerian government officials" (McCoy, 2014: para. 15). Boko Haram is also known to collect taxes from the local population (Ibid.).

Overall, despite the fact that the affiliation between the Islamic State and Nigerian Boko Haram is just over one year old, it is possible to see that convergence of religious motivations between two organizations was one of the major factors in this franchise. We are yet to see what happens in the next month or so in Nigeria with respect to a newly appointed leader. The acceptance of al-Barnawi into BH with no rupture in the group would underline the way religion enables the establishment of hierarchy in an organization, as al-Baghdadi should be the ultimate decision-maker, according to the centrality of operations argument. The upcoming months could also shed even more light on Boko Haram's finances and oil theft.

## **5.6 Assessment of Alternative Explanations and Concluding Remarks**

Although there is no direct literature on terrorist franchising in Sub-Saharan Africa, in the *Literature Review Chapter I* pointed to possible alternative explanations of cooperation between transnational and domestic terrorist organizations. In the case of Nigeria, the background information summarized the historical, cultural and socio-economic factors and grievances as well as conflict and ongoing failing state status of Nigeria. There is little doubt

about how vulnerable Nigeria is to domestic and transnational terrorism:

[t]here was mass poverty; inequality in educational, political and employment opportunities; ignorance due to limited educational opportunities; growing unemployment; and governmental corruption, including the misuse of resources, by which the people were repulsed (Usman, 1987: 21; Enwerem, 1999: 125; Ale, 2009: 8, all cited in Adesoji, 2010: 100).

Particularly grievance argument finds support in the Nigeria case and the example of the Niger Delta is illustrative. The Niger Delta is the region where most of the Nigerian oil production is located. It has also seen a rise in terrorist groups, such as Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), which are vowing for an equal distribution of rents from natural resources. The local population has suffered considerably throughout the years as Nigerian politicians and international companies continued to profit from oil exploration. Their activities led to the destruction of local environment, and otherwise committed human rights violations. The local population, though, living in the most resource rich region of the country, are very poor. The extent to which oil companies are willing to go in order to secure their interests there can be best seen on the example of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was the leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People. In the 1990s, the Ogoni tribe leaders engaged in non-violent protest against the Shell arguing that the company ruined the ecosystem of the Delta. Shell was subsequently accused of assisting the Nigerian army in tracking

and ultimately hanging the leaders, bulldozing the Ogoni peoples' villages to make room for its oil pipes, providing equipment to the military and co-planning village raids. In 2009, Shell decided to pay 15.5 million dollars to settle the case before it went to court. Pilkington (2009) argued that Shell took this path because the company was "anxious about the evidence that would have been presented had it gone ahead" with the proceedings and simply decided to pay off. This dissertation contends that one factor, such as, for instances, grievances (even if long-standing) is not enough to attract a transnational terrorist organization to consider a franchise there.

In the case of the Niger Delta and newly emerged terrorist groups, there is a combination of grievances and the presence of natural resources, however, a crucial factor is missing – religious motivation. On an additional note, Scheuer (2009: 317) does argue that Al Qaeda would be willing to finance some of these local Niger delta struggles, but "would not even consider an effort that aimed at Islamicizing the overwhelmingly Christian insurgent movement there." And it is quite unimaginable that a transnational terrorist organization such as Al Qaeda would affiliate itself with a terrorist group of another faith.

In addition, the Nigerian population experienced grievances going back at least to the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the subsequent *jihad* waged by the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups. Thus, terrorist cooperation cannot be

explained by the continued presence of grievances – which is a constant – and while grievances are an antecedent in the causal mechanism, it cannot account for why a transnational terrorist organization decides to affiliate with or franchise a local Nigerian terrorist group in the last decade.

In this vein, the continuity of domestic unrest as represented by the SCAD database also does not provide a full explanation for the initiation of this process of terrorist cooperation. In terms of civil conflict as an alternative explanation, apart from the Biafran conflict, civil war is only present in Nigeria in the years 2004, 2009, 2011 and 2012 according to PRIO database. By 2004, Boko Haram had already received financial support from Al Qaeda, however, the latter still did not engage in franchise during that year or any subsequent civil war-present year. This fact also renders civil war as an alternative explanation less useful.

The distribution of resources or societal inequality explanation does not adequately answer the research question as well. Theoretically, the existence of high societal inequality as represented here by the World Bank GINI index causes grievances among the local population, which could potentially attract transnational terrorist organizations. However, when one looks at the GINI evolution in Nigeria (see Figure 3), a significant decrease in societal inequality falls on the years 2003 and 2004 just around the commonly accepted year of Boko Haram's inception in 2002. The available data shows that

there is no change in the index in the following years, which also does not shed light on why the process of affiliation started.

The final alternative explanation from the literature points to the fragility of a state as an important factor in whether transnational terrorist organizations will want to affiliate with or franchise with a domestic terrorist organization in that state. Some argue that failed states are attractive to such organizations as the lack of security infrastructure and corruption provides many benefits. Others disagree and argue that developed states are as likely (even more so) to become a target of a transnational terrorist organization, as explained in the Literature Review Chapter. In the Nigerian case (see Figure 5), the FSI is does not change significantly ranging from 8 to 10, which corresponds to high warning, alert and high alert. Indeed, the index for the year 2012 is worse than for the year 2005, but both equally represent a fragile state with a number of troubling issues. Small fluctuations over the course of eight years for which the FSI is available, cannot adequately account for why the IS decided to franchise Boko Haram and why Boko Haram agreed to this enterprise at this point in time.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSION**

In the recent years the media coverage of terrorist cooperation increased; however, academic scholarship has not yet caught up with this phenomenon. Studies on the topic are scarce and the existing focus is mainly on Al Qaeda and its affiliates. Al Qaeda's hegemony in transnational terrorism has since been challenged by another transnational terrorist organization - the Islamic State, which for several years was itself affiliated with Al Qaeda. The research question that I asked in this dissertation is what motivates transnational terrorist organizations to franchise domestic terrorist organizations and what characteristics are they looking for in their future franchise? Consequently, how and why do domestic terrorist organizations seek affiliations with transnational organizations?

This dissertation first assumes that terrorist organizations are rational and argues that terrorist organizations are like business companies that has the primary aim of survival and if possible, corporate development. They adapt their strategies, goals and

ideologies according to new situations and environments; they learn like any other organization.

This dissertation utilizes Zelinsky and Shubik (2009) typological framework that categorizes terrorist organizations into four types: hierarchy, venture capital, franchise and brand. Among these types of cooperation, franchise model is the one that most applies to Sub-Saharan Africa. The operations are centralized and resources are decentralized in the franchise model. Asal et al. (2006) posits that cooperation between terrorist organizations is not so different than other transnational entities. Further, Moghadam (2015) pointed to the usefulness of official mergers and high-end cooperation between terrorist organizations. However, these arguments do not study the process of domestic organizations' gradual affiliation with transnational terrorist organizations, and eventually becoming a franchise.

Therefore, building on these arguments, I argue that transnational terrorist organizations engage in franchising strategy and domestic terrorist organizations appeal to transnational organizations to become franchises as a way of ensuring group survivability. The parent organizations seek out chaotic environments, where terrorist attacks are perpetrated by religious motivations. They also seek to extend their influence beyond one region.

I add two new variables to the progression of an affiliation to a franchise argument: religion and natural resources. In this argument,

the content of religion is not a cause of terrorist cooperation, but rather an instrument/incentive/motivation for domestic and transnational terrorist organizations to manipulate others in order to achieve their goals and recruit new members. Religion also eases the affiliation and hierarchization process within the larger network.

Furthermore, among the possible franchises transnational terrorist groups choose those that are located in countries with potentially lootable natural resources. This is essential as the franchise model presupposes the decentralization of resources, but as is evident in some cases parent organizations often do finance their franchises, but in most cases they are not able or willing to provide such financial support to their new franchises. Natural resources are, thus, a way that new affiliates can finance their operations and ensure their continuation.

Thus, my two hypotheses argue that first, a domestic terrorist organization in a country with natural resources second a domestic terrorist organization with religious motivation is more likely to be affiliated and franchised by a transnational terrorist organization.

This dissertation used three theory-building cases of Al Qaeda franchising both outside and in Africa. The first two were Al Qaeda's very first franchise in Saudi Arabia and the next one was its Iraqi franchise. Both cases illuminated the importance of religious motivation and the presence of natural resources for the franchising process.

In the case of Saudi Arabia and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula or AQAP, Osama bin Laden's ultimate decision to establish a franchise, firstly, lay in symbolic significance of the country as a birthplace of Prophet Muhammad as well as the site of two holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Al Qaeda's leadership believed that the presence of U.S. troops on these holy lands would certainly guarantee numerous recruits who would agree with Al Qaeda's goals and message. Saudi Arabia was also essential in terms of natural resources. A substantive amount of money from oil was used to fund Al Qaeda's activities. In addition, oil money was used to fund educational centers that would, then, spread anti-Western and anti-American sentiments and enabling recruitment to Al Qaeda.

The case of Al Qaeda's second franchise – Al Qaeda in Iraq – also showed similar trends. Here, however, due to the lack of funds Al Qaeda decided to franchise with a completely distinct group<sup>76</sup> created by al-Zarqawi in 2003 - Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad. The importance of Iraq was also symbolical. Iraq was historically the seat of the Abbasid caliphate, the rulers of which claimed their legitimacy based on their connections to Prophet Muhammad's uncle. Due to this particular connection, Osama bin Laden was able to frame the real occupation of Iraq by the coalition forces as an attack on Islam. Oil was the second essential factor in Al Qaeda's decision to

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<sup>76</sup> In the case of AQAP, Al Qaeda used its own operatives and resources to create a franchise.

franchise. The organization simply could not fund its new franchise, which is why the existence of natural resources was of essence.

Wealth that came from Iraqi oil was the reason why AQI, and later the Islamic State, was able to expand so quickly. It was a guarantee for Al Qaeda that its new franchise would be able to finance its operations and sustain itself.

Both franchises proved unsuccessful for Al Qaeda: it rushed the decision in Saudi Arabia and launched an organization that was not entirely ready; while in Iraq, ultimate divergence in religious motivation caused AQI to break away from its parent organization and pursue its goals on its own.

These theory building cases along with Al Qaeda's franchise in Africa – Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, indicate the importance of religion and natural resources in the franchising process. Also, they underline that the relationship between domestic and transnational organizations evolve from (unofficial) affiliation to (official) franchise over time. In other words, the phenomenon at hand is not just an outcome but a process.

This dissertation analyzed the hypotheses derived from both the theoretical framework and theory-building cases quantitatively and qualitatively on the case of Nigeria. The results of the quantitative analysis showed that during the period between 1970 and 2012 Sub-Saharan Africa experienced a total of 8112 attacks, 1176 occurring in Nigeria. The most important finding is that 91.6% of terrorist incidents

were conducted by terrorist organizations that were either a franchise or an affiliate of Al Qaeda or AQIM in the sample that I coded for 2011 and 2012. Moreover, purely transnational terrorist attacks are few. This makes franchise a popular strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa.

I have examined several alternative explanations and the quantitative chapter operationalizes and describes these variables, however, I was not able to carry out a logistic regression. Thus, a more comprehensive analysis is left for future scholarship. Nevertheless, with the current analysis, the quantitative results point to support for the two hypotheses of the theoretical argument.

These preliminary findings find further support in the qualitative case study chapter. The case of Nigeria proved to be illuminating on the motivations behind the franchising process for all parties involved. All alternative explanations were laid out and evaluated in the chapter. Nigeria has a long history of, among others, religious grievances that go back to at least the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Sokoto Caliphate was established and subsequent *jihad* announced.<sup>77</sup> During the colonial times, in order to facilitate their control over the newly established colony, the British preserved the traditional system of rule. In reality this meant that the power of the dominant Muslim Hausa-Fulani ethnic group was prolonged and state was divided into three regions, corresponding to the majority ethnic

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<sup>77</sup> The history of Islam and its influence on the territories that now comprise Nigeria, dates even further to around 1,000 years.

group that lived there. Another disadvantage that would come back to haunt Nigeria during later uprisings, culminating in the emergence of Boko Haram, was the restriction that the British put in place against Christian missionary activities in the North, the Hausa-Fulani region. On the other hand, such activity was encouraged in the Christian South and the Middle Belt: schools, universities and hospitals were created; the local population emulated British practices of conducting business and use of modern technology; the colonizers also put in place Western institutions. The North, though, remained backward.

Nigeria has witnessed several waves of Islamization, each producing resentment and fear among the Christians and people of indigenous beliefs. The latest wave was the introduction of *sharia law* in 12 out of 36 Nigerian states in 1999. Initially supported by a large number of Muslims, it soon came as a disappointment because it failed to produce what they were hoping for – end of corruption.

During this context, Boko Haram, a group that in 2015 would officially become the Islamic State's franchise, first emerged in 2002. Funding from outside is essential in early stages of organization before it develops its own funding sources. Boko Haram was no exception. A year after its official creation by Mohammad Yusuf, Boko Haram started receiving funds from Al Qaeda. In 2003, Al Qaeda sent 3 million dollars to local Nigeria terrorist groups that were supportive of its cause and a large portion of it went to BH. The latter continued to engage in extensive cooperation with Al Qaeda and its Algerian franchise AQIM.

AQIM provided support, training in Mali and Somalian Al Shabaab's camps, as well as weapons to Boko Haram members. However, despite this cooperation and the presence of natural resources in Nigeria, Boko Haram never officially became Al Qaeda's franchise. As was shown in the *Case Study Chapter*, Al Qaeda and Boko Haram had divergent religious motivations. Boko Haram's brutal attacks against the Muslim population, especially schools and young children, were harshly criticized by prominent Al Qaeda network's members.

On the other hand, Boko Haram and the Islamic State's religious motivations converged in 2014-15. Neither of the organizations hesitated to attack those whom they deemed as not following what they perceived as the 'right' Islam. Their tactics such as kidnapping and selling or marrying off young girls were also similar. This dissertation argues that what led Boko Haram to ultimately become the IS' franchise was this similarity in religious motivation.

The second factor that was important as well was the presence of natural resources in Nigeria, including oil and gas. Nigeria loses up to \$8 billion dollars' worth of crude oil to theft. The official investigations both in Nigeria and the United States are now underway, but the available sources argue that Boko Haram's oil theft in 2014 could be as high as \$20 billion. It has also been designated world's 10<sup>th</sup> richest terrorist organization by the *Forbes* magazine. I, thus, conclude that even though IS-Boko Haram franchise is only over a year old, the effects of religion and natural resources on the decision to franchise is

evident. It was not a sudden event, Boko Haram's connections with AQI and then IS evolved over time and ultimately led to the franchise.

This dissertation provides both theoretical and empirical contribution to the literature on terrorism, particularly the growing literature that recently started studying terrorist cooperation. It also lays the groundwork for further research. As such, with the public release of the BAAD database, new research could look at ideological and organizational similarities between domestic and transnational terrorist organizations. The affiliation and franchise relationships could be separately examined. In addition, the literature could investigate how popular terrorist franchising is outside Sub-Saharan Africa, expanding on the Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Algeria cases. By applying the theoretical framework presented in this dissertation, new research could test it against other cases, such as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan in Pakistan or Al Qaeda Kurdish Battalions that operates in Kurdistan Regional Government area in Iraq. Such empirical testing has great potential and can further shed light on one of the ultimate strategies of terrorist organizational survival – franchising.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A. Political Map of Africa<sup>78</sup>



<sup>78</sup> Source: United Nations, Africa, no. 4045 Rev. 7 November 2011. Map reprinted here with the official permission from the UN.



## APPENDIX C. The List of Sub-Saharan African States, Their Former Colonial Power and the Year of Independence<sup>80</sup>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Colonial Power</b>	<b>Year of Independence</b>
Angola	Portugal	1975
Benin	France	1960
Botswana	Britain	1966
Burkina Faso	France	1960
Burundi	Belgium	1962
Cameroon	France	1960
Central African Republic	France	1960
Chad	France	1960
Comoros	France	1975
Congo (Kinshasa)	Belgium	1960
Congo (Brazzaville)	France	1960
Ivory Coast	France	1960
Djibouti	France	1977
Equatorial Guinea	Spain	1968
Eritrea	Italy/Britain/Ethiopia	1941/1952/1991
Ethiopia	N/A	N/A
Gabon	France	1960
Gambia	Britain	1965
Ghana	Britain	1957
Guinea	France	1958
Guinea-Bissau	Portugal	1974
Kenya	Britain	1963
Lesotho	Britain	1966
Liberia	N/A	N/A

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<sup>80</sup> Source: CIA Factbook.

Madagascar	France	1960
Malawi	Britain	1964
Mali	France	1960
Mauritania	France	1960
Mauritius	Britain	1968
Mozambique	Portugal	1975
Namibia	South Africa	1990
Niger	France	1960
Nigeria	Britain	1960
Rwanda	Belgium	1962
Senegal	France	1960
Sierra Leone	Britain	1961
Somalia	Britain/Italy	1960
South Africa	Britain	1961
Sudan	Britain/Egypt	1956
Swaziland	Britain	1968
Tanzania	Britain	1964 (merged)
Togo	France	1960
Uganda	Britain	1962
Zambia	Britain	1964
Zimbabwe	Britain	1980