AL-QAEDA: ITS IDEOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

AL-QAEDA: ITS IDEOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

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This thesis analyses al-Qaeda phenomenon in terms of its ideology and organizational evolution. Firstly, 'true believer perspective' and 'rational actor perspective' will be applied as a theoretical framework to be able to explain al-Qaeda's ideological character and success of its organizational evolution. Secondly, al-Qaeda's ideology, i.e. al-Qaedaism, will be analyzed in terms of its key terms and ideologues. Lastly, I will try to answer the question how al-Qaeda has evolved since its foundation by focusing its breaking points in its organizational evolution and what kinds of strategies al-Qaeda formulated each time when it faced a crisis particularly. The thesis argues that while al-Qaeda transforms itself to an ideology, which enables it to inspire many Muslims around the world and make it harder to deal with the organization, it shows the ability to overcome crisis by making the necessary changes in its organizational structure at the same time.

KeyWords: Al-Qaeda, Al-Qaedaism, Organizational Evolution, True Believer Perspective, Rational Actor Perspective.

ÖZ

EL-KAİDE: İDEOLOJİSİ VE ÖRGÜTSEL GELİŞİMİ

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Bu tez, ideolojisi ve örgütsel gelişimi açılarından El-Kaide fenomenini açıklamaktadır. İlk olarak, El-Kaide'nin ideolojik karakterini ve örgütsel gelişimindeki başarısını açıklayabilmek için, teorik altyapı olarak 'gerçek inanan perspektifi' ile 'akılcı aktör perspektifi' kullanılacaktır. İkinci olarak, El-Kaide'nin ideolojisi olan El-Kaideism, önemli kavramları ve ideologları açısından analiz edilecektir. Son olarak, özellikle örgütsel gelişimindeki kırılma noktalarına ve kriz ile karşılaştığı her anda, ne tür stratejiler ürettiğine odaklanarak, kuruluşundan itibaren El-Kaide'nin nasıl evrim geçirdiği sorusu cevaplanmaya çalışılacaktır. Bu tez, El-Kaide'nin, kendisini, birçok müslümanı teşvik etmesini sağlayan ve kendisi ile mücadeleyi daha da zorlaştıran bir ideolojiye dönüştürürken; aynı zamanda örgütsel yapısında gereken değişiklikleri yaparak krizlerin üstesinden gelme yeteneğini gösterdiğini ifade etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: El-Kaide, El-Kaideism, Örgütsel Gelişim, Gerçek İnanan Perspektifi, Akılcı Aktör Perspektifi.

To My Parents,

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AQIM	AL-QAEDA IN ISLAMIC MAGHREB
AQ-I	AL-QAEDA IN IRAQ
AQAP	AL-QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA
CIA	CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
GIA	ISLAMIC ARMED GROUP
GSPC	SALAFIST GROUP FOR PREACHING AND COMBAT
IS	ISLAMIC STATE
ISI	ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ
ISIL	ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND THE LEVANT
NIF	NATIONAL ISLAMIC FRONT
UN	UNITED NATIONS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Al-Qaeda is a terrorist organization which was established by Osama Bin Laden. Its ideological origins can be found in the radical Sunni interpretation of Islam which is called as Salafism. Its main long term objective is to found the caliphate and the violent jihad is the only instrument in this way according to al-Qaeda. However, there are many terrorist organizations which had the similar ideological origins such as Gamaa Islamiya and Islamic Jihad operating in Egypt and Armed Islamic Group operating in Algeria. What distinguishes al-Qaeda from the rest of terrorist organizations is that it is a truly transnational terrorist organization which both has the ability to operate in various parts of the world through its affiliates and networks and attract the young Muslims from all over the world through its inspirational role.

It is accepted widely that the year 1998 is the year of al-Qaeda's establishment as an organized and hierarchical organization although the roots of the organization dated back to Afghan jihad against Soviets during the Soviet-Afghan War between 1979 and 1989. Al-Qaeda is not a static organization which applies the same strategies and has the same rules. Al-Qaeda has the ability to formulate a new strategy to be able to survive each time when it faces a crisis since its establishment, which is the key to its success and another factor distinguishing it from the other terrorist organizations, and therefore it has evolved continuously. In this sense, it is a rational actor absolutely.

Along with its organizational existence, it turned itself into a social movement through its ideology -al-Qaedaism- and thanks to al-Qaedaism, it has managed to spread its ideological influence to the places where al-Qaeda cannot reach with its organizational links. Al-Qaedaism is so powerful ideology that it has the ability to be able to turn the human into a weapon as it can be seen from the case of suicide bomber- the term 'martyrdom operation' is used by al-Qaeda- which constitutes one of the main tactics of al-Qaeda. Moreover, al-Qaedaism gives the members of al-Qaeda a feeling of superiority over the rest of people and determines who the enemy is. As Christina Hellmich puts it, fundamentalists believe that

they are the true believers,[1] which is valid for al-Qaeda as well. If the true believers are clear, the enemy is clear also. When the issue comes to al-Qaedaism, it is not important to discuss to what extent al-Qaedaism reflects Islam correctly[2] or how many Muslims espouse al-Qaedaism. The important point is that al-Qaedaism has the power to inspire some Muslims and push them toward carrying out a terrorist attacks. As a result, it is impossible to deal with al-Qaeda only with bullets and necessary to understand al-Qaedaism along with al-Qaeda's organizational evolution.

In this thesis, I seek to answer two research questions:

- What are the key tenets of al-Qaedaism as an ideology which gives al-Qaeda an ability to inspire many Muslims in various parts of the world?

- How has al-Qaeda as a terrorist organization evolved?

I divided the thesis into three chapters. In the first chapter, I will try to analyze al-Qaeda through theoretical frameworks. Firstly, al-Qaeda will be explained through 'true believer' perspective, which points out al-Qaeda's ideological character. Secondly, it will be analyzed through rational actor perspective, which points out al-Qaeda's strategic thinking aiming to maximize its benefits. In the second chapter, only the key terms and ideologues which are crucial to al-Qaedaism will be explained in a detailed way because al-Qaedaism is a broad ideology consisting of many ordinary ideologues and religious concepts along with many unknown thinkers and this makes it impossible to cover all because of the limited scope of the thesis. By doing this, the first research question will be answered. In the third chapter, I will explain the organizational evolution of al-Qaeda in a detailed manner by focusing the breaking points in this evolution particularly and what kinds of strategies al-Qaeda have formulated when it has experienced a crisis, and the resurgence ability of al-Qaeda will be shown. By doing this, the second research question will be answered.[3]

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[1] Christina Hellmich, "Al Qaeda: Terrorists, Hypocrites, Fundamentalist? The View from Within", *Third World Quarterly,* Vol:26, No:1, (2005): 42.

[2] It is useful to say that the explanations about al-Qaedaism are not the author's views.

[3] The point which should be mentioned about the third chapter is that the Middle East is a region where political, military, etc. conditions in the field have been changing very quickly and even while these words are written, some organizations in the field can be destroyed or their name can change. That's why the general strategies which al-Qaeda formulated in the post-Arab Uprisings period will be explained.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

While al-Qaeda is analyzed, there are two popular lines of thinking. The first one is described by Rohan Gunaratna: "(…) aiming to galvanise the spirit of its supporters, al-Qaeda corrupts, misrepresents or misinterprets the Koranic text (…)."[4] These kinds of explanations imply that al-Qaeda instrumentalizes Islam intentionally to justify its violence and to gather public support for its political purposes.[5] In my opinion, it is a fact that the religion has been used to justify the violence by al-Qaeda; however, it is inaccurate to give the religion only an instrumental role. As Christina Hellmich puts it, al-Qaeda regards itself as 'true believer' and their religious opinions and political deeds are compatible with each other according to it.[6] Put differently, al-Qaeda believes that it consists of a handful of pioneers who defends the right version of Islam. That is why al-Qaeda sees itself as a high authority capable of deciding what is right and wrong in terms of Islam. Since its interpretation of Islam embodied as al-Qaedaism is the sole truth, al-Qaeda does not recognize the religious legitimacy of the purists and politicos[7]- the other factions in Salafism apart from the jihadis represented by al-Qaeda- although all three belong to the same religious interpretation, Salafism.

The second popular line of thinking is the 'crazy terrorist' one. L. Ali Khan describes the terrorist figure created within the framework of this line of thinking:

> It is dark and evil, part real and part phantom, part human and part animal (…)
> part strategic and part crazy. (…) But this monster's most defining

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[4] Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 14.

[5] Hellmich, "Al-Qaeda: Terrorists, Hypocrites, Fundamentalists? The View from Within," 40.

[6] Christina Hellmich, "'Here Come the Salafis' The Framing of al-Qaeda's Ideology within Terrorism Research," in *Knowing Al-Qaeda: The Epistemology of Terrorism,* ed. Christina Hellmich and Andreas Behnke (Farnham ; Burlington, VT : Ashgate, 2012), 16.

[7] In this chapter, I will mention the terms only through their names not to repeat over and over because all those terms mentioned in this chapter will be explained in a detailed way in subsequent chapters.

characteristic is that it is driven to violence by its nature, compelled by an ingrained mental/psychological/cultural/religious formation. Its violence has little to do with any outward political or geopolitical grievances.[8]

The rationale behind this is clear: while healthy people do not think of harming people, those suffering from psychological disorder can want to kill others.[9] This line of thinking can sound reasonable at first sight because why a person wants to kill another person in the name of religion is a legitimate question. However, it is also inaccurate to define those terrorists as addicted to violence pathologically. As a result, it is necessary to assess al-Qaeda in the way it regards itself to be able to understand the organization. This is not to condone or justify its violence. This is the first step to destroy the threat. In this sense, al-Qaeda will be analyzed from two different but interrelated theoretical perspectives as an answer to two lines of thinking mentioned above respectively.

2.1. True Believer Perspective

Al-Qaeda does not read Islam in terms of religious spirituality and makes Islam have a political agenda and therefore, this situation affects the relationship between the politics and Islam directly. "In other words, the meaning is not actually derived from the source itself, but from its relevance to the surrounding political situation".[10] Contrary to what Gunaratna said, this is not a distortion in essence. The Scripture gains new meanings in accordance with the changing political context. Actually, this line of reasoning is not new and dates back to Umayyad Dynasty.[11] Since Umayyad Dynasty, what kind of meaning a religious concept owns has been dictated by political circumstances directly, which will be shown in a detailed way in the second chapter. In this sense, the current political and military contexts are important for al-Qaedaism and there are many references to the difficulties which Muslim has experienced in al-Qaeda's fatwas:

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[8] L. Ali Khan, *A Theory of International Terrorism: Understanding Islamic Militancy* (Leiden/Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2006), 206.

[9] Hellmich, "'Here Come the Salafis' The Framing of al-Qaeda's Ideology within Terrorism Research," 14.

[10] Hellmich, "Al-Qaeda: Terrorists, Hypocrites, Fundamentalists? The View from Within," 47.

[11] In order to prevent a misunderstanding, it is necessary to say that my goal is not to compare a terrorist organization with an Islamic state. I just want to show that this line of reasoning is not confined to modern age.

> The United States and their allies are killing us in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir, Palestine, and Iraq.[12]

> Every day, from east to west, our *umma* of 1200 million Muslims is being slaughtered, in Palestine, in Iraq, Somalia, Western Sudan, Kashmir, the Philippines, Bosnia, Chechnya, and Assam.[13]

In addition to that, as other evidence to the close relationship between politics and religion, al-Qaeda derives religious truthfulness and legitimacy from political choices in domestic and foreign issues. For example, Bin Laden, in his letter 'Betrayal of Palestine' in 1994, attacked the religious legitimacy of Bin Baz, the religious leader of Saudi Arabia and argued that he had no religious legitimacy due to his fatwa approving Oslo Accords between Israel and Palestine. Similarly, in his letter 'Invasion of Arabia', Bin Laden attacked the religious legitimacy of Saudi royal family due to its decision to allow the US forces to enter the country as a deterrent force against Iraqi forces during Kuwait invasion, which is completely a political decision. As another example, al-Qaeda's negative attitude toward democracy, representatives of it and people living in it can be given, which will be explained in the second chapter.

Moreover, al-Qaeda burdens Muslims with religious duties derived from its interpretation of political context. For example, a call for defensive jihad was made to mobilize Muslims in the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and 2001, and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by explaining that all Muslims should take on the responsibility to fight 'the enemies of Islam'[14]. As another example, al-Qaeda declared the all American civilians as legitimate target due to the US' foreign policy in the region in its famous 1998 fatwa:

> To kill the Americans and their allies- civilians and military- is an individual duty incumbent upon every Muslim in all countries, in order to liberate al-Aqsa Mosque and the Holy Mosque from their grip, so that their armies leave all the territory of Islam (…).[15]

According to al-Qaeda, there are no distortion and lie in its interpretation of Islam, al-Qaedaism, but its meaning can change in accordance with the necessities of political and military conditions.

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[12] Bruce Lawrence, ed. *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama Bin Laden*, trans. James Howarth (London: Verso, 2005), 140.

[13] Ibid., 153.

[14] This expression is used according to al-Qaeda in the thesis.

[15] Lawrence, *Messages to the World,* 61.

As Mark Sedgwick puts it, contrary to similar terrorist organizations in pre-modern period, al-Qaeda is the result of today's globalized world[16] and therefore, al-Qaeda exploits two new developments in the modern world to be able to present itself as the sole true Islamic group. Firstly, there is no control of official religious establishments on the interpretations of holy texts anymore. Secondly, some questions such as what kind of a life Islam orders for Muslims in a period which is different from the splendid Islamic past spring to Muslims' mind.[17] In such a world lacking an official opinion about what is right and who is the right Muslim according to Islam, al Qaeda has the opportunity to answer those questions convincingly by presenting itself as the sole defender of Islam because of its fight against the US, its allies and apostate regimes in the region.

Al-Qaeda represents a social movement which aims at religious revivalism as well. William O. Beeman explains the common characteristics of the religious revivalist groups very well and those characteristics fit into al-Qaeda. Firstly, the group leaders regard the internal corruption in society as the main reason of decline and society was charged with being weak and hesitant.[18] This characteristic is compatible of al-Qaeda's claim to be true believer because the one who is capable of accusing society of anything is the sole powerful actor in society and the rest of society should be saved from the falsehood by the powerful actor according to this line of thinking. Secondly, the group defines an Other and describes it as persecutor externally, and champions the defiance violently.[19] In this sense, the Jewish-Crusader alliance is the external culprit of all sufferings which Muslims have experienced. Thirdly, the group forms a dual myth which associates the splendid past with romantic future. While the past represents the most powerful situation of the group, the future draws a picture that the group will reach that situation again.[20] According to al-Qaeda, the most glorious condition of Islam was in the Prophet's time and the romantic future defines the al-Qaeda's goal to repeat it in the future. Put differently, Islam describes both the past which al-Qaeda misses and the future which it wants to build in accordance with Islamic

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[16] Mark Sedgwick, "Al-Qaeda and the Nature of Religious Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:16, No:4. (2004): 804.

[17] Hellmich, "Al-Qaeda: Terrorists, Hypocrites, Fundamentalists? The View from Within," 42-43.

[18] William O. Beeman, "Fighting the Good Fight: Fundamentalism and Religious Revival," in *Anthropology for the Real World*, ed. J. MacClancy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001)

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

principles. Lastly, religious revivalists tend to conceptualize the world with strict and uncompromising terms and therefore, the one can be only a friend or foe.[21] Applying the strict terms causes al-Qaeda to see its fight against the enemies of Islam as a cosmic war. "By cosmic war, I *[Mark Juergensmeyer]* mean a war beyond human imagination (…) great wars of good and bad, of truth and evil (…).[22] While al-Qaeda is the representative of truth and goodness, the enemy is absolute evil. Moreover, the cosmic war concept leads al-Qaeda to act more violently and uncompromisingly because the enemy is not an ordinary group or government, the evil itself. In this cosmic war, anyone who fights against al-Qaeda which represents goodness is absolute evil and should be eradicated. That is why there is no chance for co-existence.

In this picture, the ideology is an indispensable part of a religious revivalist organization and reinforces the four characteristics mentioned above. Ideology causes people to believe that they can see the unseen and know the unknown. For example, Mahmud Abouhalima, who was founded guilty of attacking World Trade Center in 1993, told Mark Juergensmeyer that "you read what you read, you see what you see on television, and you are fooled. You don't know what is really going on"[23]. Al-Qaeda's ideology is al-Qaedaism and the religion is undisputable part of it.

As a result, Islam is part of al-Qaeda's religious revivalism and also each time when a new political, military, etc. crisis emerged, it gains new meanings to be able to formulate a new solution to that crisis. That is why it is over-simplification to describe al-Qaeda as a group to exploit Islam violently for its political aims. There are Muslims who espouse al-Qaedaism, no matter how many they are because it is possible to kill people in vast numbers with a few terrorists. In this sense, apart from fighting against al-Qaeda's organizational existence with weapons, it is necessary to fight against al-Qaedaism through civilian instruments to be able to eradicate al-Qaeda threat completely. The point which should not be forgotten is that the weapons can eliminate the tangible organizational entity, but the ideology is bulletproof. As long as the ideology exists, the organization can find a chance to revitalize itself.

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Mark Juergensmeyer, *From Bhindranwale to Bin Laden: The Rise of Religious Violence,* Presentation at Arizona State University, October 14-15, 2004, https://cloudfront.escholarship.org/dist/prd/content/qt7322q2p5/qt7322q2p5.pdf?t=krnwof. Italics is mine.

[23] Ibid.

2.2. Rational Actor Perspective

There is no theoretical model which is capable of explaining a social phenomenon perfectly and every model has some deficiencies. This situation is valid for al-Qaeda as well. By keeping this in mind, it can be said that rational actor perspective is in a relatively better position to explain al-Qaeda. The main reason for the deficiency of this perspective in terms of explaining al-Qaeda is that the literature was formed first to study Marxist/leftist terrorist organizations in the 1970s. However, as Bryan Caplan says, instead of trying to produce a new model, it is more useful to loosen the assumptions until they conform to the realities.[24] By doing this, it can be seen that al-Qaeda fits the rational actor perspective highly.

Firstly, according to the rational actor perspective, rationality is implemented in strict terms and it is thought that the actors always prefer the action yielding maximum post action benefit.[25] This is right perfectly on paper because the terrorist organization seeks to make some benefits in accordance with its political goals. However, the main bone of contention here is how the benefit is interpreted. According to the assumption, it is necessary to reach a tangible benefit after every single action, but this is not possible in reality. For example, while Spanish government ordered their military forces in Iraq to withdraw after Madrid bombings in 2004, the British government continued to fight in Iraq after the London bombings in 2005; however, it cannot be stated that while Madrid bombings are rational, the London bombings are not. For this reason, although the assumption that the actors aims to maximize their benefits is right, it is necessary to interpret the term 'benefit' in terms of tangible/intangible and short term/long term to be able to make the assumption fit the realities. For instance, the fear is an abstract category, but it is an important benefit for al-Qaeda to be able to create fear among the target society, that is British society, in the example mentioned above.

In this sense, the suicide terrorism- martyrdom operation- is an important example of why the term 'benefit' should be interpreted from various angles. According to the rational actor perspective, this kind of an action is irrational because the actor is dead. However, as Bryan Caplan maintains, "suicidal terrorism in particular would be even rarer or non-existent if

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[24] Bryan Caplan, "Terrorism: The Relevance of the Rational Choice Model," *Public Choice* Vol:128. (2006): 105.

[25] Robert Nalbandov, "Irrational Rationality of Terrorism," *ASPJ Africa and Francophonie* Vol:8, No:4. (4th Quarter 2017): 25.

everyone satisfied the assumptions of homo economicus"[26]. In other words, a kind of rationality which homo economicus cannot understand exists and in this sense; the religion is an indispensable part of rational actor model.[27] As Wiktorowicz and Kaltenthaler puts it, a rejection of getting involved in high-cost/risk activism for a person who espouse the organization's ideology and wants religious reward run counters his/her interest since it meant that he/she would not enter to heaven.[28] The calculation of the person is obvious: obey the sacred principles and acquire afterlife reward; become deviant and experience endless pains.[29] From this perspective, the martyrdom operation as an extreme form of high cost/risk activism is a rational choice for a person who want to go to heaven.

Secondly, achievement is measured according to whether the terrorist organization acquired its declared political aims or not.[30] However, this assessment is result-oriented and measures the reality in black and white terms. Moreover, it overlooks the fact that the terrorist organizations can achieve benefits in a way heading towards acquiring its political goals, which is called "tactical rationality"[31]. For example, al-Qaeda has not reached one of its goals, the elimination of Jewish-Crusader military, political, economic etc. effects in the region, yet; however, that the US withdrew its forces from Iraq is a success. Moreover, apart from many reasons, al-Qaeda has also an important impact on the Obama Administration, which cannot carry out assertive military policies in the region like the Bush Administration and this is a success for the organization. In this sense, it is necessary to interpret the term 'success' loosely to be able to make this assumption conform to realities.

Thirdly, it is assumed that the group applies to terrorist tactics only after the group recognizes that alternative political methods are hindered.[32] This assumption is a right for

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[26] Caplan, "Terrorism: The Relevance of the Rational Choice Model," 92.

[27] Homo economicus acts according to the tangible benefits and wordly rewards. To die is not a benefit for homo economicus. According to rationality which homo economicus cannot understand, the person pursues heavenly rewards such as religious salvation and going to heaven. For this reason, to die for a religious cause is a benefit for him/her.

[28] Quintan Wiktorowicz and Karl Kaltenthaler, "The Rationality of Radical Islam," *Political Science Quarterly* Vol:121, No:2. (Summer 2006): 297.

[29] Ibid., 312.

[30] Max Abrahms, "What Terroists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," *International Security* Vol:32, No:4. (Spring 2008): 82.

[31] Nalbandov, "Irrational Rationality of Terrorism," 33.

[32] Abrahms, "What Terroists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," 84.

the Marxist/leftist terrorist organizations in the 1970s; however, it is both right and incomplete assumption for al-Qaeda. It is right because as Martha Crenshaw says, "terrorists also learn from the experiences of others (…)"[33] and in this sense, al-Qaeda can deduce from others' experiences that alternative political ways are useless. For example, Ayman al-Zawahiri argued in his book, *Bitter Harvest*, that the struggle of Muslim Brotherhood through the instruments within the system, which means peaceful democratic methods, is an example of total failure. Moreover, the parliamentary election in 1992 in Algeria was cancelled by the regime because of the Islamic Salvation Front's landslide victory. In this regard, al-Qaeda realized that non-violent methods failed in Egypt and Algeria and this is an important factor for al-Qaeda to choose violence as a proper method. On the other hand, the assumption is incomplete because al-Qaeda bases its usage of violence on a strategic rational analysis. According to this analysis, al-Qaeda applies violence to protect Islam from its enemies; to achieve its organizational aims; to comply with Qur'an's call to fight, which will all be explained in the second chapter in a detailed way. Al-Qaeda seeks to change the current political, military, economic, etc. structure radically. "Today's terrorists don't want a seat at the table, they want to destroy the table and everyone sitting at it".[34] There is no way except violence to be successful. As a result, the others' experiences are highly instructive for al-Qaeda; at the same time, it tends to use violence as a natural result of its strategic analysis. These are three core assumptions which need to be relaxed.

Al-Qaeda is a terrorist organization which is capable of making rational decisions and modifying its decisions in accordance with the lessons taken from past mistakes. As will be shown in a detailed way in the third chapter, al-Qaeda's decision to change its focus from the near enemy to the far enemy; organizational changes, affiliate strategy, Zawahiri's letter to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in post-9/11 period; the decision to sever its links with ISIL and the strategy to keep in with the local people in post-Arab Uprisings period, etc. are based on the rational calculations. Brynjar Lia and Thomas Hegghammer give another important example: the document *Jihadi Iraq: Hopes and Risks* which examines the weak sides of the US-led coalition in Iraq and proposes to both hit Spanish forces and exploit the elections in

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[33] Martha Crenshaw, "The Logic of Terrorism: The Terrorist Behaviour as a Product of Strategic Choice," in Origins of Terrorism : Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind, ed. Walter Reich (London: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 11.

[34] Matthew J. Morgan, "The Origins of the New Terrorism," *Parameters* (Spring 2004): 31. In the quotation, the name al-Qaeda is not mentioned, but Al-Qaeda is the most powerful and dangerous example of today's terrorists and that's why the quotation is related to al-Qaeda directly.

Spain in March 2004.[35] The main bone of contention here is whether the goal derived from the rational calculation done for the specific action is achieved or not and if it is not achieved, the action is irrational. In this sense, the most popular example is 9/11 and the subsequent bad consequences for al-Qaeda. The 9/11 attacks were based on rational calculations in terms of al-Qaeda, but it is true that what the organization expected after 9/11 did not materialize in the short run and it has really suffered from many organizational losses, which will be explained in the third chapter. However, the complete information of alternatives and outcomes is impossible and miscalculations are unavoidable.[36] Moreover, as Amitai Etzioni states, "one need not be crazy to be wrong"[37]. However, despite all the assumptions pointing out 9/11's irrationality; given the consequences in the long run, it is what al-Qaeda wanted exactly because radicalization of many ordinary Muslims due to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the economic, political and humanitarian destructions in the region, emergence of disappointed masses, etc. have been creating the advantageous consequences which enable al-Qaeda to live longer. Put differently, it is necessary to measure rationality according to the results in the long run, along with those in the short run.

As mentioned above, al-Qaeda's usage of violence is based on rational calculation. Violence is the 'sole way'[38] to achieve its declared goals. One can ask: What kinds of functions does violence take on in the way leading to those goals? The first function of violence is that it enables the enemy to take the actor seriously. It is an important success for a terrorist organization to be taken seriously by its enemy; otherwise it is impossible for al-Qaeda to be able to force its enemy to act in a particular way. In this sense, the embassy bombings in 1998, the USS Cole attack in 2000, and 9/11 attack particularly put al-Qaeda in a position which enables it to affect the US foreign policy deeply.

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[35] Brynjar Lia and Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi Strategic Studies: The Alleged Al Qaida Policy Study Preceding the Madrid Bombings," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:27, No:5. (2004): 355. For example, it is said as an important advice to the jihadists in Iraq in the document that if the jihadists can cause some countries in the coalition to withdraw their forces from Iraq, the US will shoulder a heavy financial weight which she cannot withstand in the long run. Lia and Hegghammer, "Jihadi Strategic Studies: The Alleged Al Qaida Policy Study Preceding the Madrid Bombings," 361.

[36] Crenshaw, "The Logic of Terrorism: The Terrorist Behaviour as a Product of Strategic Choice," 9.

[37] Amitai Etzioni "Rational Actors: Neither Mad nor M.A.D.: The Meanings of Rationality, Rogue States and Terrorists," *Defense and Security Analysis* Vol:26, No:4. (December 2010): 432.

[38] Al-Qaeda declared that it accepts the peaceful methods also as proper methods during the Arab Uprisings, but this was a tactical move not to become estranged from Muslim masses.

The second function is attrition. In war of attrition, the terrorists aim to convince the enemy that they are capable of inflicting heavy damages if the enemy sustains its current policy.[39] This is a function operating effectively in the long term and the fight against the occupation forces in Afghanistan and Iraq is an example of it and even it can be maintained that this type of war became successful due to the withdrawal of the US forces from Iraq. Moreover, as mentioned above, the Obama Administration's reluctance to use foot soldiers in Syria is another indication of the effect of al-Qaeda's war of attrition.

The third function is intimidation. Through intimidation, the terrorists seek to persuade the target people that they have the capacity to punish the non-compliance and their government is incapable of preventing them; therefore, they should act according to terrorist's desires.[40] Terror is an instrument which makes ordinary life of ordinary people who are regarded as enemy extraordinary and in this sense; it causes fear among the target audience. As Mark Juergensmeyer says, "terrorism without its horrified witnesses would be as pointless as a play without an audience"[41]. Put differently, the target of al-Qaeda's violence through intimidation is to create a devastating psychological effect on people who are not killed, but witness the atrocity. The most known successful examples of intimidation are that the withdrawal of Spanish forces after Madrid bombings in 2004 and withdrawal of Philippino forces after a Philippino truck driver was kidnapped in Iraq in 2004.

The fourth function is provocation. Through provocation, it is sought to cause the government to react with extreme force so that the government would be considered as the culprit of extremism, not the terrorists.[42] In this sense, 9/11 attack is the most successful example of provocation. There is also an advantageous side effect of provocation. If the oppression is not effective and cruel enough, the rest of moderates may be radicalized and if they begin to believe that it is useless to stay within the status-quo anymore, they may take part in the terrorist organization.[43] For example, given the post-invasion Iraq, Shia majority

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[39] Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security* Vol:31, No:1. (Summer 2006): 51.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2000), 139.

[42] Peter R. Neumann and M.L.R. Smith, *The Strategy of Terrorism: How It Works and Why It Fails* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 40.

[43] Ibid., 43.

in the government, de-Baathification processes in public institutions, the dissolution of army, etc. left no incentives for ordinary Sunni people to remain in the system and they defected to al-Qaeda immediately.

The fifth function is polarization. Through polarization, it is sought to divide the people and make the government illegitimate.[44] The main example of it is that Zarqawi sought to de-legitimise Iraqi government and drag the US into a war which it cannot cope with in Iraq by creating a civil war through his Shia-first strategy.

As can be seen, violence takes on five rational functions in the way aiming to achieve the declared goals and it is used in accordance with a rational political strategy. However, it does not necessarily mean that violence should have those five functions at the same time.

While al-Qaeda's long-run aims are determined by its ideology, i.e. al-Qaedaism, it acts as a rational actor in accordance with necessities of realpolitik in the short-run.[45] In this sense, that my enemy's enemy is my *temporary* friend is a strong tradition in al-Qaeda. The collaboration with the US against Soviets in Afghanistan and the collaboration with Iran and former Baath people against the US in Iraq are some examples of this tradition. For example, some top level al-Qaeda members went to Iran and then Lebanon to be trained in explosives and intelligence in 1993.[46] As a result of this rational character, al-Qaeda does not hesitate to get involved in the illegal economic activities to be able to finance its long-term religious goals. This is not a problem for it because those activities are for the greater good of all the Muslims. For example, in the lack of central governmental authority, al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) provides the smugglers with shelter and tax the trade due to its members who knows the territory very well.[47]

Al-Qaeda chooses the timing and target of the terrorist attack rationally 'as much as possible'[48] to increase its expected benefit from the action. For example, the embassy

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[44] "Chapter One: The Strategies of Terrorism," *Adelphi Papers* Vol:47, No:394. (2007): 17.

[45] Michael Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of al-Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in the Middle Eastern Politics", *Political Science Quarterly,* Vol:117, No:2, (2002): 182.

[46] The 9/11 Commission, *The 9/11 Commission Report,* Washington D.C.: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004, 61.

[47] J. Peter Pham, "The Dangerous "Pragmatism" of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb," *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* Vol:2, No:1. (2011): 21. The numbers of examples can be increased.

[48] As a terrorist organization, it is in al-Qaeda's favour to carry out as many terrorist attacks as possible and in this sense, it is impossible practically to choose the timing and the target specifically.

bombings were carried out on August 7, 1998, the eighth anniversary of the entrance of the US forces to Saudi Arabia. The Istanbul bombings on November 20, 2003 were on the same day when Bush-Blair meeting took place in London. Al-Qaeda attempted to attack the New York metro system on September 9, 2009, the eighth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. As for the symbolic importance of the targets; the most important example is the 9/11 attack. By attacking the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the 9/11 attacks made the sole economic and military superpower touchable.

Lastly, it can be said that al-Qaeda does not hesitate to exploit any technological devices to increase its influence. As will be shown in the third chapter, as an instrument to make up for its organizational losses, al-Qaeda has used the Internet to inspire the Muslims in places where it cannot reach with its organizational links. Moreover, by posting texts and encyclopedias which include important information about how to fight in the urban environment, how to make a bomb, etc. to the Internet, it has increased would-be jihadists' ability to carry out a terrorist attack in the 9/11 security environment in the West.

CHAPTER 3

AL-QAEDAISM

One of reasons that Al Qaeda has succeeded in surviving until today is that it turned itself into an ideology- Al-Qaedaism- which has an ability to inspire a lot of Muslims around the world toward the organizations' goals. With regard to this point, John Turner says that its transformation to ideology can give it a status of eternity.[49] Even the President George W. Bush admitted that the organization has an ideology.[50]

According to Petter Nesser, al-Qaedaism[51] refers to the ideology which has its roots in salafism *[one faction in salafism]* and aims at both toppling apostate regimes and cleaning all non-Muslim effect in the Muslim world.[52] In other words, al-Qaedaism is a religious ideology which radically interprets Islam from Sunni perspective and is of the elements encouraging Muslims to commit violence. Al-Qaedaism is a broad ideology and therefore, it does not consist of fatwas of only Abdallah Azzam, Osama Bin Laden, and Ayman al-Zawahiri only because it has the word Al-Qaeda in its brand name. Those three Salafi-jihadists played a significant operational role along with their religious role and made a name as a strategist in the organization. In this sense, the examination of only Bin Laden and Zawahiri's fatwas *[along with that of Azzam]* is not a good way to comprehend the ideology of organization in depth since they have been written to make a call for jihad without detailed justifications generally.[53] This is not to say that the fatwas are worthless in

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[49] John Turner, "From Cottage Industry to International Organisation: The Evolution of Salafi-Jihadism and the Emergence of the Al Qaeda Ideology," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:22, No:4. (2010): 542.

[50] "They kill in the name of a clear and focused ideology, a set of beliefs that are evil, but not insane." "President Discusses Global War on Terror," September 5, 2006, https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060905-4.html (accessed November 19, 2017).

[51] He prefers using the term *jihadi-salafism* instead of al-Qaedaism.

[52] Petter Nesser, "Abu Qatada and Palestine." *Welt Des Islams* Vol:53, No:3-4. (2013):417. Italics is mine.

[53] Hendrik Hansen and Peter Kainz, "Radical Islamism and Totalitarian Ideology: A Comparison of Sayyid Qutb's Islamism with Marxism and National Socialism," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* Vol:8, No:1. (2007): 57. Italics is mine.

terms of al-Qaedaism. What I mean is that along with the fatwas, al-Qaedaism has its own interpretations of the Islamic concepts such as jihad, takfir, and jahiliyya etc. which have been contemplated for centuries by the theologians and some key figures such as medieval age theologian Taqi ud-Deen Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah and contemporary scholar Sayyid Qutb, whose interpretations deserve to be explored even further.

It becomes much more difficult to deal with Al Qaeda after its transformation to a religious ideology because any attempt made to struggle the organization is accused of destroying Islam and this helps the organization to propagate the idea that Islam was attacked globally by non-Muslims and nominal Muslims. As John Turner said, the more it transforms itself into an ideology, the more it is tough to fight it.[54]

Al-Qaedaism is not an ideology which completed its evolution and not irrelevant to international relations and the Middle East politics. As long as the new terrorist organizations such as ISIL and Boko Haram which have its roots in al-Qaedaism break out and the new terrorist attacks continue anywhere in the world, al-Qaedaism will continue to evolve according to the new political conditions. In this sense, al-Qaedaism will continue employing new scholars and tacticians who interpret the contemporary conditions from the perspective of al-Qaedaism. Does al-Qaedaism encourage the terrorist organizations to carry out new attacks or do the new terrorist attacks facilitate al-Qaedaism spread easily? Which one? Both? This is a vicious circle. It is something like a chicken and egg situation. However, in today's world where anyone can reach anybody with one click through the computers, the sphere of influence of ideology is much more than any organization. Thus, knowing al-Qaedaism is the first step to overcome al-Qaeda. In this sense, I will begin with the four crucial Islamic concepts for al-Qaedaism.

3.1. Key Terms

3.1.1. Jihadism

There is a consensus in the literature that jihad is an Islamic concept which has been contemplated by many scholars, but still there is no agreement on it about what exactly it means. The main reason is that there is no direct relationship between what it means in

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[54] John A. Turner, *Religious Ideology and Roots of the Global Jihad: Salafi Jihadism and International Order* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 104.

Qur'an and what it means for people.[55] In other words, like any other Islamic concepts, discussions about jihad's meaning in Qur'an are based on the interpretations of scholars, ideologues etc. and these interpretations are connected to political conditions directly. As Quintan Wiktorowicz says, the jihadist discussions are much more about how the Islamic rules are applied to modern circumstances than changing rules in Islam.[56] Paul L. Heck explains this point in his article *Jihad Revisited* by giving some examples from history. His main argument is that jihad is conceptualized according to what the conditions necessitate. For example, during the Umayyad period, jihad turned into an obedient instrument to the state and was used to increase state control.[57] Its meaning changed during the Crusaders period again: instead of an instrument used to expand the territory to the new areas, it was interpreted as a defense against non-Muslim invader.[58] As can be seen, while the jihad was interped for offensive purposes in Umayyad Dynasty period, it was used for defensive purposes in Crusaders period. The reason behind the definitions of jihad as a changing concept throughout Islamic history is to show that the discussion revolving around the meaning of jihad in the present is not new. Regardless of their tactics, goals, and names, many Islamic groups ranged from the terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram etc. to political parties such as Muslim Brotherhood are said to make the jihad. Additionally, Muslims who have no political commitments and perform only their religious duties claim to make jihad.

It is no doubt that although the jihad has been used in a variety of senses throughout Islamic history, the term jihad has become the centre of focus in the western academic literature and media and they have concentrated on the term much more since the 9/11. This point can be seen from the search made by Thomas Hegghammer to learn when the term was used in the newspapers first. While New York Times used the term firstly in 1999 and 2000, it was used in Washington Post in 2002.[59] Since jihadism has become a central concept in the western

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[55] This point is explained very well in the article Christina Hellmich, "Al Qaeda: Terrorists, Hypocrites, Fundamentalist? The View from Within", *Third World Quarterly,* Vol:26, No:1, (2005): 39-54.

[56] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:28, No:2. (2005): 76.

[57] Paul L. Heck, "Jihad Revisited," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* Vol:32, No:1. (2004): 107.

[58] Ibid., 114.

[59] Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi-Salafis or Revolutionaries? On Religion and Politics in the Study of Militant Islamism," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 246.

literature, it becomes necessary to define what jihadism is as an influential term in international relations in early 21st century according to al-Qaedaism?

The jihad means that struggle to satisfy *Allah*- act according to rules defined in Qur'an, Sunnah (the Prophet's deeds) and hadith (literature consisted of the Prophet's words and actions)[60] as opposed to the general view that it is only the use of violence to please God. When this definition was interpreted with a hadith[61], it can be seen that the jihad is actually divided into two parts: lesser jihad (*jihad al saghir)*[62] and greater jihad *(jihad al kabir)*. They can be defined like this: jihad is both a continuous struggle against deception and degeneration *(greater jihad)* and a collective task of the whole ummah for the defense of the religion *(lesser jihad)*.[63] In other words, while the greater jihad is defined as a spiritual struggle, the lesser jihad is a defense against the enemy, which has the connotation of violence.[64] However, al-Qaeda does not accept that division by saying that the hadith which laid the groundwork for the division was fabricated.

According to al-Qaeda, it can reach its objectives only through weapons. It does not matter whether you find the inner peace as long as you can kill the enemy. In this sense, the thoughts of Abdallah Azzam, dubbed as "the Imam of Jihad"[65] by Thomas Hegghammer and explained in the second part in a detailed way, are a clear-cut example showing the frame of al-Qaeda's thinking. There is a famous saying attributed to Azzam: "Jihad and the rifle alone; no negotiations, no conferences, and no dialogues"[66]. In Azzam's view, jihad is more significant than other Islamic compulsory duties such as pilgrimage and fasting because jihad is related to defense of Muslim community while others are in individual's

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[60] David A. Charters, "Something Old, Something New...? Al Qaeda, Jihadism, and Fascism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:19, No:1. (2007):71.

[61] After an attack, the Prophet is believed to say that "we have now returned from the smaller jihad to the greater jihad". After asked its meaning, he said that "the jihad against oneself". Shireen K. Burki, "Jihad or Qatal? Examining Al Qaeda's Modus Operandi," *Defense and Security Analysis* Vol: 29, No:3. (2013): 238.

[62] Lesser jihad is also defined as jihad of the sword (*jihad bil saif)*. Both of them refer to the same thing.

[63] Charters, "Something Old, Something New...? Al Qaeda, Jihadism, and Fascism," 71. Italics is mine.

[64] David Cook explains lesser-greater jihad division in a detailed way by drawing on Arabic sources in his book, *Understanding Jihad.*

[65] Thomas Hegghammer, "Abdallah Azzam, the Imam of Jihad" in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 81.

[66] Andrew Mcgregor, "'Jihad and the Rifle Alone': 'Abdullah 'Azzam and the Islamist Revolution," *The Journal of Conflict Studies* Vol:23, No:2. (2003): 92.

interest.[67] As can be seen, Azzam had a clear view of the method to be used while making jihad.

It is necessary to look at the emphasis of al-Qaeda on lesser jihad in a detailed way. It is not enough to explain al-Qaeda's approval of lesser jihad only in terms of its terrorist nature. Al-Qaeda makes a rational analysis explaining the reason why the lesser jihad is necessary and this rational analysis has political and religious dimensions. In this sense, there are three reasons for its support for lesser jihad.

Firstly, al-Qaeda sees Islam under the threat of extinction. According to John A. Turner, Islam's Hobbessian roots emanating from heavy effort to be able to survive during initial stages of Islam impacted the interpretation of jihad by Salafi-jihadists.[68] In this sense, Al-Qaeda draws a comparison between the difficulties that the Muslims faced in the early period of Islam and the conditions of Muslims in the present, and argues that threatening political, military, economic, etc. influences for all Muslim communities can be felt in anywhere in the Muslim world. To show how al-Qaeda regards the threat that Muslim community has to face, it is useful to quote from Zawahiri:

> They [the western forces and Russia] have adopted a number of tools to fight Islam, including the United Nations; the servile rulers of the Muslim people; multinational corporations; international news agencies and satellite media channels; international relief agencies and nongovernmental organizations, which are used as cover for espionage, conspiracies, proselytizing, and arms smuggling.[69]

As can be seen from the quotation, Zawahiri argues that enemy has any means that can damage Muslim presence in every sense. For this reason, like early Muslims who fought to death to keep Islam alive, al-Qaeda has to fight enemies of Muslims to keep Islam alive and this fight can be achieved only through weapons.

The second reason, which is related to the first one, is the organizational objectives of al-Qaeda. That is, how it interprets the jihad is connected to its organizational goals directly. Therefore it is essential to learn its goals: *Return to the right form of Islam exercised by the Prophet and his early followers *Destroy lax Muslim regimes *Clean all western forces

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[67] Muhammad Hanif Hassan, *The Father of Jihad: Abdallah Azzam's Jihad Ideas and Implications to National Security* (London: Imperial College Press, 2014), 105.

[68] Turner, *Religious Ideology and Roots of the Global Jihad*, 107.

[69] Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Knights under Prophet's Banner (Excerpt)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 193.

particularly in Saudi Arabia and generally in all Muslim countries *Found the caliphate.[70] As can be understood, al-Qaeda aims at challenging not only the political structure in the Middle East but also the military presence of non-Muslim countries in the region. According to its perspective, the existing political, religious, and military structures are the main targets which should be wiped out. To be able to accomplish even one of those objectives, there is no way except applying violent tactics.

The third reason is that Salafi-jihadists consider revelations of Qur'an regarding the jihad as evolutionary and for this reason; they claim that revelations prohibiting fighting against indifels which were revealed during Mecca period were negated by the revelations allowing fighting against indifels which were revealed during Medina period. This point was explained very well by Reuven Firestone in his book, *Jihad: Origins of Holy War in Islam*. Firestone divides the revelations about jihad into four stages: non-confrontation, defensive fighting, initiating attack allowed but within the ancient strictures, unconditional command to fight all unbelievers.[71] The logic behind the abrogation of the first revelations is that: When the Prophet encountered a problem in his difficult time during the initial stages of his mission in Mecca, God directed him by revealing his message, which is about the solution of problem. During Medina period, when Muslim community gained strength, conditions became normal. Therefore, the later revelations were regarded as objective as opposed to the first revelations.[72]

The world is divided into two parts according to al-Qaedaism: Dar al-Harb (non-Islamic territories) and Dar al-Islam (Muslim countries)[73]. This plays an important role in separating the lesser jihad into two parts. Defensive jihad refers to the fight to expel infidels who invaded any part of Dar al-Islam. The invasion of a Muslim country means the invasion of the whole Dar al-Islam and for this reason; it becomes an individual duty for all Muslims to join the defensive jihad, no matter where they live.[74] On the other hand, offensive jihad aims

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[70] Jeffrey Haynes, "Al Qaeda: Ideology and Action," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* Vol:8, No:2. (2005): 182.

[71] Reuven Firestone, *Jihād: The Origin of Holy War in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 51-65.

[72] Ibid., 49-50.

[73] I will not give the details about this division because of its theological characteristic and their english meanings in the parantheses are simplification to facilitate the understanding.

[74] Shireen K. Burki, "Jihad or Qatal? Examining Al Qaeda's Modus Operandi," *Defense and Security Analysis* Vol: 29, No:3. (2013): 236

at expanding the Islamic influence toward Dar al-Harb and is not a compulsory task. Moreover, there should be a fatwa issued by a legitimate scholar or ruler to be able to wage the offensive jihad in Dar-al Harb.[75] This division is crucial because when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan and the US invaded both Afghanistan and Iraq, the defensive jihad was applied countless times in Al Qaeda's fatwas to get Muslim support and persuade them to join the jihad. For example, Abdallah Azzam wrote a fatwa with the title 'Defense of Muslim Territories Constitute the First Individual Duty' after Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1989. As can be seen, he refers to the defensive jihad directly in the title. As another example, he called for help from all Muslims by saying "Islam, come to our aid"[76] in his fatwa, Join the Caravan.

3.1.2. Hijra

The importance of hijra for al-Qaedaism emanates from its ability to create a perception that al-Qaeda imitates the early Muslims. In Islamic history, hijra means that early followers of the Prophet and then the Prophet himself were forced to go to Yathrib (Medina) from Mecca in 622. I said that they were forced to go because the Islam challenged political, economic, religious, and cultural etc. status-quo in Mecca[77]. The importance of this event can be understood from that the Islamic calendar begins with the hijra.

Before Islam was revealed, there was no central authority among the tribes because as Shayed Khatab puts it, the bloodshed was so common that it caused the tribes to operate in various territories independently without a high authority and the allegiance of Arabs was to their tribes.[78] Thanks to hijra, the first Muslim community- *ummah*[79]- was founded in Medina and as John L. Esposito puts it, the foundation of ummah stopped feuds among tribes, bringed them together, and determined the religion instead of tribe as a unifying factor of society.[80] That is, hijra signals the birth of a right Muslim community. In this

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Abdallah Azzam, "Join the Caravan (Excerpt)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 119.

[77] John L. Esposito explains this challenge very well in his book, *Unholy War: Terror in the name of Islam*

[78] Sayed Khatab, *The Political Thought of Sayydi Qutb: The Theory of Jahiliyyah* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 13.

[79] Ummah is an Islamic concept that considers the whole Muslims as one community by ignoring the all artificial borders.

[80] John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam (*New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 39.

sense, Al-Qaeda regards itself as a foundation of a right Muslim community in the present when almost all Muslims lost their religious characteristics by identifying going to Afghanistan to make the jihad with hijra. Micheal Doran puts it in other words: it considers its conditions as similar to those of the Prophet when he fought the enemies and claims to take on the same role which the followers of the Prophet played. In this sense, it regards its members as a handful of true believers.[81] In other words, hijra concept strengthens the belief of members of al-Qaeda that they are the sole true believer group in the present. Moreover, by conceptualizing the *hijra* like this, Al Qaeda seeks to provide religious foundation for its violence apart from trying to get much more Muslim support. In view of Al Qaeda, violence will constitute a new beginning in Islam by wiping out the pagan regimes just as the Prophet started the new age by beating the enemies in Mecca and putting an end to *jahiliyya*.[82] There is one more thing that I should mention. Hijra is not a concept which was applied for only the specific needs of jihad in Afghanistan. It is more than that. For a Salafi-jihadist, going to anywhere jihad was necessary is a hijra. In this sense, while it meant going to Afghanistan in the 1980s, it meant going to Iraq in early the 2000s and Syria in the 2010s. In other words, as long as the jihad exists, hijra will exist, too. As Emmanuel Sivan says, "hijra in this perspective is just an instrument not a goal, a stage not an end, a sort of *reculer pour mieux sauter.*"[83] In other words, hijra is a tool serving a higher good, not an ultimate aim.

3.1.3. Salafism

The salafism is not a homogeneous community although it is identified with only al-Qaeda today. As Quintan Wiktorowicz says, there are various people ranged from Osama Bin Ladin to the religious leader of Saudi Arabia in the salafism[84], which they belong to different groups in the same community. That is, al-Qaeda is not a sole representative of the salafism. The main goal in this part is to show the place of al-Qaeda in the salafism,

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[81] Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of al-Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in the Middle Eastern Politics", 181.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 87. The literal definition of 'reculer pour mieux satuer' is "the withdrawing in order to improve one's chances of subsequent progress or success; making use of a withdrawal or setback in such a way as to advance further." "Reculer Pour Mieux Satuer," Definition of Reculer Pour Mieux Satuer in US English by Oxford Dictionaries, Oxford Dictionaries, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/reculer_pour_mieux_sauter. (accessed May 24, 2018).

[84] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:29, No:3. (2006): 207.

however, the other two factions will be explored in a detailed way to make a comprehensive understanding of the salafism. Although each group criticizes the other two groups one way or another, there are some common tenets which all agree. Before explaining those tenets, there is one more thing that I have to say about the reason why I use the term the 'salafism' instead of the 'wahhabism'. The salafism began to be used for people who are called Wahhabi because the term wahhabism creates a perception that Wahhabis espouse the thoughts of the created, Muhammad Ibn Abd-al Wahhab, instead of those of creator.[85] That is, the salafism and wahhabism are not the different categories which refer to different contents and I preferred the term Salafism because of its much more objective appearance.

The word 'salafi' comes from the Arabic word 'salaf'. "The "righteous ancestors," or *salaf,* are usually considered to be the first three generations of Muslims, including the immediate companions of the Prophet".[86] Due to the closeness of those generations to the Prophet, Salafis think that they are of the right form of Islam. The following thoughts are said to be doctored by the novelties and factionalism, which led Muslims to deviate from the right path.[87] What is more is that there are two precipitating factors in the distortion of Islam. First reason is the integration of some new habits taken from strange cultures into Islam. As Quintan Wiktorowicz says, although there were already some deviations, those were strengthened by local cultural habits when Islam met with various cultures during the conquests.[88] Therefore, the salafis have strong prejudices against any culture. In this point, Wiktorowicz says by quoting Olivier Roy that getting rid of local habits and cleaning all specific cultural influences on Islam to be able to reach pure religion constitutes one of the main goals for Salafis; that is, 'deculturation'.[89] The second reason is the confusion on religious matter because official religious institutions lost the control on the interpretation of Islam. As Christina Hellmich says, it is hard to tell what Islam includes accurately because various individual religious interpretations which are different from the traditional opinions

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[85] Jarret M. Brachman, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2009),24.

[86] *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World,* s.v. "Salafiyya," ed. Richard C. Martin, (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2003), 608.

[87] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," *Middle East Policy* Vol:8, No:4. (2001): 20.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Wiktorowicz, Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," 210.

increase.[90] As another common principle, any ideology that challenges to enforce Sharia[91] such as capitalism, liberalism, secularism, etc. should be refused and eradicated in view of the Salafism.[92] That is, the salafis opposes any ideology and type of government, which are man-made except Islam, which is God-made. As a result, the salafis want to return the Islam practiced by the Prophet and those first three generations, which was already prescribed in Qur'an and Sunnah.

The salafis have a perception of the romanticized past in their thoughts. It is the past as if it contains all remedies for all problems that today's Muslims face. They have a different type of reading the history. Due to this obsession with the magnificent Islamic history, they believe that they should replicate the past for the present. In other words, as Richard Whelan says, the sole model society for Muslims is the one which was built in the first decade which the Prophet fought against the enemies and united the peninsula[93] and that model should be re-built in the present societies. What is more is that the mission given by Allah to the Prophet and pursued by the caliphs is valid for Salafi-jihadists *[follower of Al Qaeda]* also.[94] As for the result of this line of thinking for al-Qaeda, not only non-Muslim countries but also Muslim looking countries- apostate regimes- constitute the modern *jahiliyya* [which will be explained later] because they deviated from ideal type of society and that is why they should be destroyed. As can be seen, al-Qaeda is a religious revivalist groups mentioned in previous chapter because it defines a glorious past, accuses the society with being in the wrong side and describes itself as the actor capable of saving the rest of the world.

The question is that 'how will the salafis go back to the splendid past?' Which methods will be used in this journey to the past? After asking these questions, the factions can be seen in the salafism. In this sense, although all Salafis claim there is no pluralism due to the oneness

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[90] Christina Hellmich, "How Islamic Is Al-Qaeda? The Politics of Pan-Islam and the Challenge of Modernisation," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* Vol:7, No2. (2014): 247.

[91] Islamic type of management in politics, economy, culture etc.

[92] Brachman, *Global Jihadism*, 25.

[93] Richard Whelan, *Al-Qaedaism: The Threat to the Islam, the Threat to the World* (Dublin, Ireland: Ashfield Press, 2005), 120.

[94] Walid Phares, *Future Jihad,* 50. Italics is mine

of truth in Islam[95], the irony is that each faction differs on the Islamic method. In other words, while they agree on the diagnosis of problem, they have different remedies for it.

There are four methods derived from variations in interpretations: 1) Propagation 2) Advice 3) Non-violent actions 4) Violent actions.[96] As I said above, the factions are derived from the question which method will be used to return the past. I found two categorizations in the literature. The first one is the categorization of Quintan Wiktorowicz: the purists, the politicos, and the jihadis.[97] The second one is the categorization of Dr. Tariq Abdelhaleem mentioned by Jarret M. Brachman: "the establishment salafists, madkhali (or jami) salafists, albani salafists, scientific salafists, salafist ikhvan (Muslim Brotherhood), sururis, qutubis, and global jihadists"[98]. I do not tend to use the second categorization because there are no definite distinctions among the categories to be used academically about the takfirism, jihad, democracy etc. For example, while the establishment, albani and scientific salafists own the same opinion on the takfirism, the sururis, qutubis and global jihadists agree on the rejection of democratic practices.[99] Unlike the second one, the first categorization has workable distinctions academically among three categories.

3.1.3.1. Purists

The purists (embodied as the religious community-ulama- in Saudi Arabia) support the propagation and the advice as the method of struggle and their religious legitimacy emanates from their reference to the Prophet. According to them, the Prophet preferred the peaceful means such as preaching during the early years of Islam.[100] By imitating that way of struggle, they are interested in disseminating the salafism and cleaning heresy rituals mainly just like the Prophet did against human desire and reason.[101] Both the purists and

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[95] Wiktorowicz, Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," 207.

[96] Quintan Wiktorowicz and John Kaltner, "Killing in the Name of Islam: Al-Qaeda's Justification for September 11," *Middle East Policy* Vol:10, No:2. (Summer 2003): 78.

[97] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:29, No:3. (2006): 207-239.

[98] Brachman, *Global Jihadism*, 26.

[99] The details of examples and more examples can be found in Jarret M. Brachman's book, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice*

[100] Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," 30-31.

[101] Wiktorowicz, Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," 217.

jihadis (embodied as al-Qaeda in this thesis) make a reference to the Prophet and they claim that the Prophet's way of struggle should be copied. But the difference is that the Prophet used the different methods in Mecca and Medina. In this sense, while Mecca is valid for purists, the jihadis take Medina as an example.

Unlike al-Qaeda, the goal of purists to promote the salafism has no connotation about politics and violence. Their goal is reduced to the religion itself. In other words, they give importance to 'homogenization of Islam in terms of its rituals' according to salafi principles. The important reason of it is that purists believe that they are not in charge of any field such as politics, economy etc. except religion and they should adhere to the decisions made by politicians in those matters.

There is a person among the purists that I have to mention specifically: Muhammad Ibn Abd-al Wahhab.[102] He is a well-known person with his agreement with Muhammad Ibn Saud in 1774, which founded the first Saudi state, the forerunner of Saudi Arabia. The first and foremost thing that one can say about him is that Wahhab is not a pro-violence man personally. In this sense, his understanding of Qur'an and hadith can be given as an example. While jihadis lay the religious foundation for their violence by making reference to the verses in Qur'an and hadiths literally, Wahhab opposed the application of the verses and hadith, which was revealed centuries ago, to the conditions in his day directly. According to Wahhab, the one can know the intention of the deed only by comprehending the context of the verses and hadith.[103] Like all purists, Wahhab was interested in the homogenization of rituals in Islam. In this sense, he rejected the building of and visit to tombs and shrines strictly.

As for his understanding of jihad, he considered the jihad in a limited way. He puts the limitations about who will wage the jihad, whom and how it will be waged. It is not a concept which can be applied always by anyone against anyone in all circumstances. For example, Wahhab had three conditions: the jihad should be proclaimed by religious leader; should be legitimate in terms of Islam; should be applied only for defensive goals.[104]

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[102] Muhammad Ibn Abd-al Wahhab does not fit into the purist category completely because unlike the purists, he accepted the jihad as a violent option. However, he always refrained from applying it and aimed at cleaning Islam from false beliefs. That's why he deserved to be in the purists.

[103] Natana J. Delong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press: 2004), 48.

[104] Ibid., 202-203.

Moreover, unlike jihadis, Wahhab never gave carte blanche to topple the leader violently.[105] Lastly, Wahhab did not ignore the jihad as a violent option but tried to avoid it as much as possible. As Natana J. Delong-Bas puts it, Wahhab always searched the opportunity to reach an agreement with enemy because he regards the jihad as a means for obedience to Muslim, not for the extermination of the enemy.[106]

The main criticism of the purists about the politicos is their political activism made through political parties: Because of the working style of political party based on improving its political power, the benefits of the party begin to outweigh the rules of God and this spoils the Islamic method.[107] As can be seen, the purists worry about the possibility that people accept the politics' own rules by disregarding the divine rules.

With regard to the criticism about the jihadis, the purists divide their criticism into two parts. Firstly, they find the jihadis method wrong by submitting two reasons. As a first reason, today's Muslims are not enough mature to wage the violent jihad because they are not organized and deviated from the salafi creed.[108] As a second reason, it is believed that if Muslims attempt to make the jihad without the purification of ummah, the status-quo responds so tough that the even simple religious duties cannot be practiced, a situation which is banned.[109] Secondly, they emphasize the lack of official religious education of jihadis. For example, Osama Bin Laden was a civil engineer; Ayman al-Zawahiri, his right hand man, was a doctor; Muhammad abd-al-Salam Faraj [will be explained later] was an electrical engineer. That is, the purists argue that people who do not have enough religious background cannot wage the jihad.

3.1.3.2. Politicos

The politicos accept all kind of political activism such as the strike, the march, party politics, etc. as a proper method. There are two important examples for the politicos in Muslim world: the Muslim Brotherhood founded by Hasan al-Banna in 1928 and Jamaat-i Islami founded by Mawlana Mawdudi in 1941. However, because the relevance of the

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[105] Ibid., 198.

[106] Ibid., 236.

[107] Wiktorowicz, Anatomy of the Salafi Movement,"220.

[108] Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," 30.

[109] Ibid., 31.

Muslim Brotherhood to contemporary Middle East politics is much more than the latter and the criticism is directed against the Muslim Brotherhood by the jihadis, the representative of the politicos in Muslim world is taken as the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas-its branch in Palestine- in this thesis. In addition, although Hamas applies the violent jihad against Israel, it ascribes the legitimacy to the parliamentary system by participating in the elections, which is a very problematic for the jihadis, and it proclaims itself as a sole representative of Palestine by depending on its electoral success, unlike al-Qaeda. That is, Hamas tries to separate itself from al-Qaeda. In this sense, for example, thanks to the electoral successes in Palestine and Egypt, Essam el-Erian, an official in the Muslim Brotherhood, said that there are two ways to reinforce Islam: applying the means within the system, which has been useful, and outside the system, which has not.[110]

For the politicos, the effort to clean Islam from false rituals has no remedy for the problems that today's Muslims have to deal with. In this sense, while the purists obsessed with rules of worships, Muslims were crushed by the apostate regimes, the Israelis, the Americans, the Russians, and the Indians all around the world.[111] Unlike the purists, the politicos claim that Islam should be used to resolve the difficulties of Muslims. That is why the reasons and cures of the problems should be searched in the politics and Muslims should not shy away from the politics. Moreover, the politicos give religious meaning to the politics in order to increase its reputation among Muslims and to show it as the sole solution. For instance, Mawdudi regards the politics as the sole instrument to practice Islam correctly and to demonstrate Islamic devotion, a position which equates political activism with piety, purity with political freedom.[112] Lastly, the politicos have no revolutionary worldview which aims at destroying the political, economic etc. status-quo. The recognition of politics as a legitimate method and working with the instruments within the system lead them to have an understanding to resolve the problems step by step in an evolutionary way.

The purists and politicos search the basis of being the authority in the different areas. While the purists emphasize their religious perfection, the politicos consider their ability to make the political analysis as a sign of superiority. The politicos claim that due to the purists'

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[110] Marc Lynch, "Islam Divided between Salafi-Jihad and the Ikhwan," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:33, No:6. (2010): 470-471.

[111] Wiktorowicz, Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," 223.

[112] Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 59.

isolated way of life, they suffer from the lack of political knowledge, which make their fatwas about political matters wrong.[113] In this sense, the politicos prove their argument with the fatwa which sanctioned the American troops to stay in Saudi Arabia issued by Saudi ulama.

The main problem between the politicos and the jihadis is the political rivalry about who represents Muslims. In this point, Hamas is the main rival of al-Qaeda and the advantage of Hamas is its electoral success. In this sense, it can be said that Hamas constitutes an alternative to al-Qaeda by challenging its denial of democracy due to its achievement in the elections.[114] Moreover, that Hamas give the legitimacy to the democratic practices is not the sole problem for al-Qaeda. At the same time, Hamas intends to capture the leadership of Muslim world by ascribing the central position to Palestine. It can be said that neither al-Qaeda ignored Palestine nor Hamas disregarded Afghanistan and Iraq since their foundations. But the truth is that the each organization has only one home. If whose home is at the center in Muslim's thinking the owner of that home becomes the leader of Muslims. Hamas effort can be read from this perspective.

3.1.3.3. Jihadis

Al-Qaeda is a terrorist organization which believes the power of violence in their struggle and applies the violent jihad against not only Muslim regimes but also Western powers.[115] Thomas Hegghammer identified three specific characteristics about the jihadis by scanning the literature. In this sense, they are known with their more extremist and uncompromising behaviours; they are inspired from the salafism instead of ideology of Muslim Brotherhood and writings of Sayyid Qutb[116]; they are regarded as much more hostile to the West and transnational compared to the other groups.[117]

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[113] Wiktorowicz, Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," 223.

[114] Reuven Paz, "Salafi-Jihadi Responses to the Hamas's Electoral Victory," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* Vol:4. (2006): 46.

[115] Because the thesis itself is about al-Qaeda, only the criticism of al-Qaeda against the purists and the politicos will be mentioned in this section instead of explaining what is al-Qaeda in a detailed way.

[116] The statement that al-Qaeda does not use the writings of Sayyid Qutb is false. Qutb is a significant part of al-Qaedaism, which will be shown in later sections. But even so, he deserves to be quoted due to the accuracy of the rest of his identifications.

[117] Hegghammer, *Jihadi-Salafis or Revolutionaries? On Religion and Politics in the Study of Militant Islamism,* 253-254.

The main problem which the purists pose to the jihadis is their fatwas against the al-Qaeda's terrorist attacks. For this reason, it is necessary to attack the religious legitimacy of those fatwas from al-Qaeda's perspective. The jihadis claim that the purists are not independent of the state. In this sense, the jihadis mock them with humiliating words such as "palace lackeys", "the corrupt ulama", and "the ulama who flatter".[118] The goal is to show that they cannot issue any fatwa against the state due to their relationship based on mutual interest with the state, which damages the legitimacy of fatwas. The fatwa authorizing the American troops to stay in Saudi Arabia is a clear example since Saudi Arabia was in need of those troops against Saddam. What is more is that, they argue by relying on the fatwas issued against al-Qaeda after 9/11 that the purists use their authority to issue the fatwa against the interest of Muslims: "Legally incriminating the one who carried out the operations and expelling him from Islam is also regrettable, as is giving the Crusaders the green light to exact revenge on Muslims."[119]

It can be argued that for those reasons, the purists' fatwas are not binding for Muslims. This line of reasoning gives the answer partially for the question why all kind of terrorist attacks continue to be carried out despite all the fatwas against them since the jihadis do not judge themselves according to a fatwa which they do not recognize the authority of the owner of the fatwa. In addition, as Jalil Roshandel and Sharon Chadha says, due to the absent of the status of the intermediary person in Sunni Islam like the ayatollah in Shiism, anyone feeling to own religious expertise has a free hand to issue a fatwa in any matter[120]. In other words, for jihadis, there is nothing inconsistent with Islam.

As for the criticism against the politicos; the jihadis compare the Muslim Brotherhood with non-Muslims by calling it 'apostate' in order to attack its religious legitimacy. According to Zawahiri, compared to infidels, it is more dangerous to tolerate apostates among Muslims due to their closeness to Islam.[121] In addition, al-Qaeda aims at pulling Hamas to its way of

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[118] Wiktorowicz, Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," 227.

[119] "A statement from qaidat al-jihad regarding the mandates of the heroes and the legality of the operations in New York and Washington," April 24, 2004, https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/4796/QAE20020424.pdf (accessed October 13, 2017).

[120] Jalil Roshandel and Sharon Chadha, *Jihad and International Security* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 57.

[121] Meir Hatina, "Redeeming Sunni Islam: Al-Qa'ida's Polemic against the Muslim Brethren," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* Vol: 39, No: 1. (2012): 106.

struggle by trying to prevent Hamas from acting independently. According to Salafi-jihadists, Hamas should both debate with the Salafi-jihadists in its choices and accept the sole legitimate method, violent jihad, against Israel.[122]

However, the strongest criticism came from Ayman al-Zawahiri in his book, *Bitter Harvest*. This book is a clear-cut example which uncovers the rivalry that who will lead the Muslims between the two groups obviously. For the jihadis, democracy is synonymous with the Satan and Muslims have to stay away with democracy.[123] In this sense, the most serious sin of the Muslim Brotherhood is to espouse democracy as a way of struggle. According to Zawahiri, due to the Muslim Brotherhood's recognition of the legitimacy of democratic organizations, the apostate dictators acquired an opportunity to charge the jihadis with illegitimacy.[124] In addition, Zawahiri maintained that the Muslim Brotherhood made an agreement with each leader in Egypt's history since its foundation. In this sense, the political leaders in Egypt exploited the Muslim Brotherhood to counter much more dangerous enemies in the country. That is, the Muslim Brotherhood has always been instrumentalized by the apostate leaders provided that the Muslim Brotherhood got an opportunity to flourish. That is, the Muslim Brotherhood has always followed its organizational interests instead of reinforcing Islam in the country. As can be seen, Zawahiri derives the religious legitimacy of Muslim Brotherhood from its political choices and says that Musim Brotherhood as an apostate actor is far more dangerous than infidels. Lastly, by making a reference to the Muslim Brotherhood's wealth, Zawahiri asked the question that how can it enjoin the good and prohibit the wrong while people want to get a membership in the Muslim Brotherhood to earn more money?.[125] In other words, the Muslim Brotherhood surrendered the worldly desires in place of practicing the divine rules.

3.2. Takfirism

There are two kinds of the enemy according to al-Qaedaism: the near enemy, which refers to apostate regimes and people in Muslim world, and the far enemy, which refers to the US,

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[122] Paz, "Salafi-Jihadi Responses to the Hamas's Electoral Victory," 50.

[123] This point will be explained in a separate section.

[124] Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Bitter Harvest: Sixty Years of the Muslim Broterhood (Excerpt)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 172.

[125] Ibid., 176.

Israel and their allies. There is a common opinion among the Salafi-jihadi scholars that the apostasy is much more dangerous than the far enemy although al-Qaeda proclaimed its main enemy as the far enemy.[126] For example, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, which is a well-known person among jihadi circles and used to had close ties to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the founder of al-Qaeda in Iraq, the forerunner of ISIL, said that the first priority is to combat against the apostates since the apostasy constitutes a more grave sin than being an infidel.[127] As another example, Abu Musab al-Suri, "the architect of the new al-Qaeda"[128], which refers to the new organizational methods begun to be used after 9/11, said that as both the state and individual, the apostates are abhorred much more than the infidels due to their assistance to the infidels in their fights against the true Muslims.[129] This line of thinking provides takfirism with religious groundwork.

Takfir, as a classical definition, is to declare a Muslim an apostate. To apply takfir can be extremely dangerous for the one who uses it.[130] There are also serious consequences which affect his/her whole life negatively for the one who takfir is used against.[131] What is more is that using takfir can cause disarray in the whole Muslim community, which is forbidden in Islam as can be seen from the Khawarij, the extremist sect whose members were used to be the follower of Ali, the son of the Prophet's uncle and his son-in law. In this sense, as Shireen K. Burki says, the fight among Muslims has no Islamic value and that is why the challenge against a Muslim leader by Muslims through jihad was denounced.[132] Al-Qaeda

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[126] Al-Qaeda declared in the fatwas 'Declaration of Jihad against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries (1996)' and 'World Islamic Front Statement Urging Jihad against Jews and Crusaders (1998)' that it would focus on the far enemy- the US- as a change of strategy.

[127] "This is Our Aqidah," *Khilafah Books* http://www.khilafahbooks.com/wp-content/ebook-download/english/aqeedah/This_Is_Our_Aqeedah_khilafahbooks_com.pdf. (accessed October 16, 2017), 65.

[128] Paul Cruickshank and Mohannad Hage Ali, "Abu Musab Al Suri: Architect of the New Al Qaeda," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:30, No:1. (2007): 1-14.

[129] Dmitry Shlapentokh, "The Intellectual and Political Exchange Among Jihadists: The Case of Mustafa Setmarian Nasar (Abu Musab al-Suri)." *Journal of Applied Security Research* Vol:7, No:3. (2012): 304.

[130] The hadith: "Whoever accuses a believer of disbelief, it is as if he killed him". Quintan Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:28, No:2. (2005): 77.

[131] "Social relations are broken off, marital ties severed, family members are given the cold shoulder, access the inheritence is blocked, people refuse to pray together with or behind a person accused of kufr, who is, moreover, denied the prayer for the dead and burial in a Muslim cemetery." "Introduction", in *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on Takfir*, ed. Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro, and Sabine Schmidtke (Leiden, the Netherland: Brill, 2016), 14.

[132] Burki, "Jihad or Qatal? Examining Al Qaeda's Modus Operandi," 241.

knows the importance of takfir in terms of both the individual and society, but they claim that their fight is not against Muslims and that this is the fight between true Muslims and apostates. In other words, takfir is a means to differentiate true believers from apostates including lax Muslims who espouse various religious rituals that does not exist in al-Qaedaism.[133] That is, al-Qaeda as the sole authority capable of applying takfir is interested in making the community of true believers far more pure. It is presumed that the one who uses takfir should be the true Muslims and in this regard, al-Qaeda aims at reinforcing its belief that they constitute the true Muslims through takfir.

Despite the insistence on takfir, al-Qaeda does not want to be called as 'takfiris' because of its connotations of the Khawarij. The Khawarij was so extreme that they declared even Ali, the son of the Prophet's uncle and his son-in law, as apostate and for this reason, they are considered as the first group who caused the chaos in the Muslim community. According to Khawarij, any behavior inconsistent with their interpretation of Islam is a serious sin which leads the sinner to be excommunicated and that sinner as an apostate should be killed.[134] Even though al-Qaeda does not liken itself to the Khawarij since it does not regard itself as a source of chaos, the Khawarij can be said to constitute the forerunner of al-Qaeda centuries ago in terms of using takfir particularly and its whole worldview generally. However, as I said above, al-Qaeda does not use the word takfiri since it is harmful on its reputation to be associated with the Khawarij.

As for the question according to what rules takfir is applied; it is necessary to understand 'al-Wala wal-Bara' (loyalty and disavowal) doctrine. As can be understood from the name, it consists of two parts: In accordance with the loyalty and disavowal, Muslims should like everything that comes from Sharia by showing strong devotion to God and Muslims should deny anything that is inconsistent with Sharia including people who espouse those things.[135] These two should be practiced inseparably and for this reason, the doctrine leads people to behave in a particular way. The silence in the face of a falsehood is tantamount to committing that sin and the breach of the doctrine according to al-Maqdisi. In this sense, he emphasizes the necessity to show enmity, which is embodied as using takfir, toward that falsehood as a requirement of loyalty and disavowal doctrine by making a reference to

[133] Abdulbasit Kassim, "Defining and Understanding the Religious Philosophy of *Jihādī-Salafism* and the Ideology of Boko Haram," *Politics, Religion & Ideology* Vol:16, No:2–3. (2015): 177.

[134] Esposito, *Unholy War,* 42.

[135] Brachman, *Global Jihadism*, 22.

Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Muhammad. If Ibrahim and Muhammad did not raise their voices against the falsehoods in their times, did not oppose their deities, and did not show a clear hostility against the enemies of Islam, they would have been rewarded and have never experienced the severe difficulties; however, they never chose this option because of their loyalty to Allah.[136] Apart from behaving in a particular way, as can be understood from the broad scope of the doctrine, it determines what kind of a life a Muslim should live by defining what is legitimate in Islam ranged from the friends that he/she owns to the school that he/she studies, the job that the/she does and the place that he/she lives etc. If a Muslim does not comply with the criteria of the doctrine, takfir will be used against him/her. This doctrine explains partly the reason why the Salafi-jihadists are so uncompromising against everyone except themselves.

As can be seen from above, the doctrine places Salafi-jihadists at a position of religious authority. In this regard, the doctrine gives Salafi-jihadists the opportunity to describe the criterion of being Muslims and to name people who defy Salafi-jihadists as non-Muslim.[137] In this regard, the conditions which make a Muslim person and regime as apostate were contemplated very much by jihadi circles. In the book, 'Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice', there is an example which includes detailed conditions:

> *Imitating non-Muslims in dress, language, morality or eating (…)
> *Living in the lands of non-Muslims (Dar al-Harb) and not immediately moving back to the lands of the Muslims (…)
> *Muslims who aid or support non-Muslims in any way that injures other Muslims, be it militarily, economic or even speaking well of disbelievers (…)
> *Seeking aid, comfort or assistance from non-Muslims (…)
> *Observing the holidays, festivities or celebrations of non-Muslims, merely congratulating them (…)
> *Asking forgiveness for non-Muslims, or praying for them in any way (…).[138]

These conditions give Salafi-jihadists the opportunity to declare any Muslim person and regime an apostate. Although Wahhab is not a Salafi-jihadist, he also identified ten conditions which make a person and a regime an apostate automatically:

> 1)Polytheism (associating others with God in worship)
> 2)Using mediators for God (for example, praying to saints)

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[136]"Millat Ibrahim (The Religion of Ibrahim)," *Kalamullah*
https://www.kalamullah.com/Books/MillatIbraheem.pdf. (accessed October 13, 2017), 37-39.

[137] David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 141.

[138] Brachman, *Global Jihadism*, 48.

3)Doubting that non-Muslims are disbelievers
4)Judging by non-Islamic laws and believing these are superior to divine law
5)Hating anyting the Prophet Muhammad practices
6)Mocking Islam or the Prophet Muhammad
7)Using or supporting magic
8)Supporting or helping non-believers against Muslims
9)Believing that someone has the right to stop practicing Islam
10)Turning away from Islam by not studying or practicing it[139]

It can be said that through these conditions al-Qaeda both draws the border of being a Muslim person and a Muslim regime and has a powerful weapon that can be used against any opponent.

The main importance of takfir and al-Wala wal-Bara doctrine for contemporary political conditions is their negative attitude towards democracy and democratic practices since democracy damages the belief of tawhid, oneness of God. As Maqdisi puts it, the theoretical acceptance of tawhid should be reinforced by the deeds and the first deed is to declare those who have the false faith as apostate.[140] Democracy is the most important sign of the false faith. In this regard, Salafi-jihadists express great displeasure against democracy.

Democracy is regarded as a religion. The Salafi-jihadists accuses Muslims living in a democracy[141] of replacing Islam with democracy due to that type of conceptualization of democracy. In other words, they are accused of replacing the owner of Islam, God, the creator with the owner of democracy, the people, the created and this is a crucial reason to apply takfir.

The three reasons are given to apply takfir against democracy as a type of government by Joas Wagemakers. The first reason is that democracy considers the people instead of God as the sole root of sovereignty.[142] Namely, democracy gives God the secondary position compared to the people, which is a clear violation of Islam. Secondly, democracy depends on the view of majority regardless of whether it is right or not in Islam and forces the rest of

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[139] Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam,"81.

[140] Nelly Lahoud, "In Search of Philosopher-Jihadis: Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's Jihadi Philosophy," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* Vol:10, No:2. (2009): 212.

[141] It is not important the quality of democracy. It is enough to have the elections, parliaments, and secular law one way or another.

[142] Joas Wagemakers, "The Kafir Religion of the West: Takfir of Democracy and Democrats by Radical Islamists," in *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on Takfir*, ed. Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro, and Sabine Schmidtke (Leiden, the Netherland: Brill, 2016), 329.

people to obey the majority opinion.[143] Thirdly, people living in a democracy have the same rights[144] regardless of their religions, races, and genders. The players in democracy such as the representatives and electors also are not exempted from takfir because "obedience in legislation is also an act of worship"[145]. The rationale behind this with simplification is that Muslims obey God because God is the creator of them and if Muslims abide by a legislation which is implemented by a person, the created, Muslims declare him/her as God automatically and this is the breach of oneness of God. This hostile religious attitude against democracy due to its political elements such as its sovereignty understanding, institutions and equality of people is an important example for the close relationship between the politics and Islam. Moreoever, as Maqdisi puts it, the word 'religion' means everything which contains any practice and regulation which people obey instead of Sharia.[146] As can be seen, the understanding of religion of Salafi-jihadists does not include only the divine rules. In this regard, even obeying a text which has systemic rules about anything is a sufficient reason to be declared an apostate. As a result, since there is an electoral system, parliament and secular law one way or another in any country regardless of where Muslims live, and their responsibilities are to the state, not Sharia, all Muslims can be targeted by takfir.

3.3. Ideologues[147]

3.3.1. Taqi ud-Deen Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328)

In the literature with regard to al-Qaedaism, it is claimed that Taymiyyah is an influential figure in al-Qaedaism. Taymiyyah is respected as a crucial theorist of modern Salafi-jihadi

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[143] Ibid., 330-331.

[144] Ibid., 332.

[145] "Democracy: A Religion," *Kalamullah* https://www.kalamullah.com/Books/DemocracyReligion.pdf, (accessed October 10, 2017)

[146] Ibid.,

[147] There are many unknown idealogues who write fatwas about jihad, takfir, etc. and they can be evaluated in terms of al-Qaedaism. However, i identified three idealogues who accepted violent jihad and there is an English literature on them as well. These names are Ibn Taymiyyah, Sayyid Qutb, abd al-Salam Farag. On the other hand, i did not analyze Hassan al-Banna and Mawlana Mawdudi although they wrote about the jihad because both figures can be describes as politicos. As for Abdallah Azzam and Ayman al-Zawahiri; they were important tacticians in the organizationa apart from their ideological roles. For this reason, i think that it is better to analyze those two names in the organizational evolution of al-Qaeda chapter.

thought.[148] This approach is problematic. There is a truth that Azzam, Ladin, Zawahiri, etc. said that they have a lot of respect for him. For example, Ladin and Zawahiri called him as "the sheikh of Islam"[149]. They made the references to Taymiyyah in their fatwas and re-interpreted his writings in accordance with the contemporary political, military etc. contexts. That is why it is necessary to explain Taymiyyah in this chapter, al-Qaedaism. However, it is not fair to describe Taymiyyah as the deliberate theorist of the al-Qaeda which was founded almost 600 years after his death. In this point, Christina Hellmich made the necessary warning with a reference to Yahya Michot by saying that as Michot shows us, Taymiyyah should be understood with his historical context.[150] In this sense, Taymiyyah is the product of the unique historical period in Islamic history that he lived in. The writings of Taymiyyah should be read from this perspective, but al-Qaeda has no such worry of course and reads Taymiyyah literally.

Taymiyyah witnessed the Mongol invasion period and it was such a period that it is not possible to be exempted from its effects. The Abbasid Caliphate was destroyed completely, the caliph was killed, and Islamic world was dragged into chaos. As David Cook puts it, except European colonialism period, the sole example that the main territories of Islam were run by non-Muslims is the Mongols.[151] Moreover, it was even expressed that Islam was under the existential threat in that period. With regard to this point, Paul L. Heck says that compared to the damages inflicted by the Crusades, the Mongols were so destructive that the some worried that Islam was at the end of the road.[152] The current situation was disgraceful for Muslims because enlightened Muslims living in the capital of Islamic civilization, Baghdat, began to be controlled by the pagan and nomadic people coming from uncivilized areas, Asian steppe.[153] Taymiyyah was affected by the whole situation in Islamic

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[148] Turner, "From Cottage Industry to International Organisation: The Evolution of Salafi-Jihadism and the Emergence of the Al Qaeda Ideology," 547.

[149] Osama Bin Laden, "The Companions' Den (Excerpt)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 49. and Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Loyalty and Seperation: Changing an Article of Faith and Losing Sight of Reality (Excerpt)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 207.

[150] Christina Hellmich, "Creating the Ideology of Al Qaeda: From Hypocrites to Salafi-Jihadists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:31, No:2. (2008): 115.

[151] Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 52.

[152] Heck, "Jihad Revisited,"113.

[153] Roshandel and Chadha, *Jihad and International Security*, 49.

world surely but he suffered from the invasions personally also. His family had to go to Damascus due to the Mongol invasion and his refugee experience left the mark on his thoughts against the Mongols.[154] Here it is the unique historical period in which Taymiyyah popularized takfir concept against the Muslim leaders.

The problem about the fight against the Mongols emerged after they converted to Islam because its main adversary was the Muslim Mamluks. As Emmanuel Sivan says, the question that ulama had to answer was that whether the fight against the Mongols was jihad or just a war between two Muslims states.[155] This question was significant because the mainstream Islam was against the war among Muslims as I mentioned above. For example, the teacher of Taymiyyah, Ibn Hanbal said that:

> You should obey the government and not rebel against it. If the ruler orders something which implies sin against God you should neither obey nor rebel. Do not support the fitna (strife) neither by your hand nor by your tongues[156].

However, Taymiyyah conceptualized the Mongols in such a way that it became a religious obligation to apply takfir against them and declare them as the legitimate target of the jihad. In this sense, his writings with regard to Mongols are the obvious example of a 'war theology'.[157]

Taymiyyah identified a new criterion to become a true Muslim ruler and this was so broad that the ruler can be excommunicated from the community of Islam due to his/her any little mistake: If a leader fails to apply Sharia to all fields in the life, he will lose his right to govern.[158] This criterion means that the ruler does not only lose its right to govern but also he is defined as a person outside of the Islam. After he put this normative rule, he began to interpret the Mongols and counted the un-Islamic characteristics of the Mongols. For example, the Mongols were tantamount to polytheists in the pre-Islamic period since they continued to adhere to their own societal rules in place of Sharia.[159] Taymiyyah went further by saying that because their allegiance was to the Mongol state, not to the Islamic state, they

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[154] Esposito, *Unholy War,* 45.

[155] Emmanel Sivan, "Ibn Taymiyya: Father of Islamic Revolution," *Encounter* (May 1983): 42.

[156] Ibid., 44.

[157] Johannes J. G. Jansen, *The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Hurst and Co, 1997), 34.

[158] Michale G. Knapp, "The Concept and Practice of Jihad in Islam," *Parameters*, (1998): 84.

[159] Esposito, *Unholy War,*46.

became apostates.[160] Moreover, they could not fight in favour of Islam because the army of Mongols was consisted of the Christians, the pagans, and Shia along with Sunni people.[161] In other words, it is impossible for any army which did not comprised of the true believers to fight for Islam. The result is that the state which had no loyalty to Islam and did not espouse Sharia despite converting to Islam should be declared as apostate and the jihad should be waged against it. According to Taymiyyah, the jihad is the most valuable action in the Islam and in this regard, the pilgrimage, fasting, prayer and the other religious duties are placed in the secondary position compared to the jihad.[162]

As can be seen, the medieval age version of the Salafi-jihadists' negative attitude against the contemporary political rulers because of their insistence on democracy instead of Islam can be found in the writings of Taymiyyah. By comparing the context in which Taymiyyah lived in with the contemporary context, the modern Salafi-jihadists interpret the contemporary Muslim regimes in the same way Taymiyyah did against the Mongols. Doran explains the Al Qaeda's line of thinking by saying that the main enemy is not George W. Bush but nominal Muslim political leaders such as Hosni Mubarak, King Fahd, and Pervez Musharraf[163] who are unfamiliar with Islam, representative of western culture and work for their Western bosses.[164] By drawing on *takfir* like this, Al Qaeda can define those regimes and people who work for those regimes as a legitimate target because apostates are a legitimate target in al-Qaedaism.

3.3.2. Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966)

Sayyid Qutb has been one of the most respected figures among the Salafi-jihadists and in accordance with that, he has been studied by the western academics so much. There are a lot of similar descriptions pointing out his importance for the Salafi-jihadists in the literature. Paul Berman described him as "the philosopher of Islamic terror"[165]. According to John L.

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[160] Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 65.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam," 83.

[163] The equivalent of these names can be found in the Middle East now.

[164] Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of al-Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in the Middle Eastern Politics", 180.

[165] Paul Berman, "The Philosopher of Islamic Terror," *The New York Times Magazine*, March 23, 2003, http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/23/magazine/the-philosopher-of-islamic-terror.html?mcubz=3. (accessed October 29, 2017).

Esposito, "he is the godfather and martyr of Islamic radicalism"[166]. He had this reputation with his writings and life story. That is why it is better to begin with his life story as a first step.

Qutb's ideological evolution is divided into two parts: the period before 1954 and the period between 1954 and 1966 when he was at the prison and was hanged finally by the regime.[167] In other words, there are two different portraits of Qutb. The difference between the two portraits is his radicalization in the second period. In the early years of his first period, Qutb was interested in the literature generally, the poetry particularly much more than the politics. However, he was not indifferent to the politics completely. He took part in the activities of nationalist Wafd party and criticized the monarchy openly.[168] While he was working in the Ministry of Education, he was sent to the US. He studied at Colorado State Collage to get a Master's degree in Education between 1948 and 1951. It was an extraordinary experience for a man like Qutb. His hatred of Americans can be understood from his criticism written in his book, called as 'Milestone'. He lambasted the way of life of Americans by giving the example such as using alcohol, and the freedom in sexuality, which shows their moral decadence. John C. Zimmerman explains the importance of that criticism against the US for the Salafi-jihadists by saying that the Salafi-jihadists can find religious legitimacy for Salafi-jihadi thoughts from Qutb because he witnessed cultural decadence in the US personally.[169] Especially after 1996 and 1998 fatwas placing the US at the position of the main enemy, the significance of Qutb's criticism increased. As a personal effect of the experience in the US, it played a precipitating factor in his Islamization because he joined the Muslim Brotherhood when he returned to Egypt in 1951.

Due to his opposition to the monarchy, he collaborated with Gamal Abdel Nasser to overthrow the monarchy. For example, before the military coup in 1952, Nasser reportedly met with Qutb in Qutb's house to acquire his support.[170] In return for his support, he worked for the Revolutionary Command Council after the coup for a while. However, it was

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[166] Esposito, *Unholy War,* 56.

[167] Haynes, "Al Qaeda: Ideology and Action," 183

[168] Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones* (Birmingham: Maktabah Bookseller and Publishers, 2006), 7.

[169] John C. Zimmerman, "Sayyid Qutb's Influence on the 11 September Attacks," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:16, No:2. (2004): 224.

[170] Berman, "The Philosopher of Islamic Terror," March 23, 2003.

impossible to sustain this alliance because of their opposite ideological orientations. As known, Nasser was an ardent supporter of Arab nationalism, which is inconsistent with the Muslim Brotherhood completely. In 1954, Nasser exploited the failed assassination attempt to neutralize the Muslim Brotherhood and imprisoned thousands of members of it along with Qutb. This moment points out the second period of his life, the real origin of his reputation, and the cornerstones of this life signifying his radicalization are two books written in the prison, 'In the Shade of the Qur'an' and 'Milestone'[171].

As will be explained, Qutb did not create a new Islamic concept or did not use an Islamic concept which was not used by the preceding scholars/theologians. There are three reasons for his reputation. The first is that he denied apologizing to the government to be freed despite the severe torture. According to Roxanne L. Euben, the torture was so intense that he suffered two heart attacks and was taken to hospital for the illness from his chest and heart.[172] With regard to this reason, since he regarded himself as the defender of Islam, the torture was made to Islam itself according to him. In such a situation, if he accepted the offers, it would have been defeat to the enemies of Islam. Secondly, he has a unique way of writing. As Gilles Kepel says, his writings were easy to understand compared to ulama's complicated fatwas filled with unnecessary details and outspoken to disseminate his thoughts easily.[173] Lastly, he was hanged by the government, which was considered as the enemy of Islam. Due to this, he was regarded as a martyr, a destination that all Salafi-jihadists want to reach.

Before analyzing Qutb, there is one more thing that I should mention. As mentioned above, Qutb's thoughts were not unique completely and in this regard, his source of inspiration is Mawdudi. 'Jahiliyya' concept and the comprehensive understanding of Islam which constitute the cornerstones of Qutb's political thoughts were inspired by Mawdudi. According to Mawdudi, the contemporary world and Muslim rulers became infidels by giving priority to their sovereignty instead of that of God and that is why almost all the

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[171] The analysis of Qutb is based on 'the Milestone' as a principal source in this thesis because it was impossible to read 'In the Shade of the Qur'an' with its thirty volumes for the author of thesis.

[172] Roxanne L. Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 60.

[173] Barry Cooper, *New Political Religions, or An Analysis of Modern Terrorism* (Columbia: University of Missouri press, 2004), 122-123.

world was in a state of jahiliyya, the characteristic of pre-Islamic period.[174] That is, Mawdudi used the term for contemporary world by de-linking the term from its historical context. His understanding of Islam is like this:

> Islam is not merely a religious creed or a set of rituals but it is a comprehensive system that tends to annihilate all tyrannical and evil systems in the world and to enforce its own reformation programme which it deems best in the interest of mankind[175].

He made Islam has a political agenda instead of reading it in terms of religious spirituality. By keeping those two points in mind, I can analyze Qutb now.

The political analysis of Qutb consisted of three parts: jahiliyya as an ailment of contemporary communities, the foundation of the sovereignty of God on earth as a remedy, the jihad as a way of implementing of remedy.[176] In this conceptualization of contemporary political community, the duty that Qutb took on is to legitimize uprising in terms of traditional Sunni opinion.[177] Qutb lambasted anything political, economic, cultural, etc. in his time not to reform but to destroy it completely. The term jahiliyya carries central importance in his criticism. He conceptualized the jahiliyya in a different fashion like Mawdudi. The term defines the corrupt situation of Arab society before Islam was revealed in Islamic history. However, it is not accurate to say that the term refers to only specific period in Islamic history in the usage of Qutb.

> Jahiliyyahh, to whatever period it belongs, is Jahiliyyahh; that is, deviation from the worship of One God and the way of life prescribed by Allah Almighty. It derives its system, laws, regulation, habits, standards and values from a source other than Allah Almighty.[178]

It is no doubt that the jahiliyya includes non-Muslims but along with non-Muslims, Muslims also are included in the term.

> We classify them [Muslim societies] among Jahili societies not because they believe in other deities besides Allah or because they worship anyone other

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[174] Joshua T. White and Niloufer Siddiqui, "Mawlana Mawdudi," in *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics*, ed. John L. Esposito and Emad el-din Shahin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 147.

[175] Mawlana Mawdudi, *Jihad in Islam* (Lahore, Pakistan: Islamic Publications Ltd., 1980), 15.

[176] Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror:Islamic Fundamentalism and Limits of Modern Rationalism*, 56-57.

[177] Sivan, *Radical Islam*, 92.

[178] Qutb, *Milestones*, 146. Sayyid Qutb has a distinctive type of writing. Therefore i will quote from him directly.

than Allah, but because their way of life is not based on submission to Allah alone.[179]

Sometimes it appears in the form of a society in which Allah's existence is not denied, but His domain is restricted to the heavens and His rule on arth is suspended. Neither the Shari'ah nor the values prescribed by Allah Almighty and ordained by Him as eternal and invariable find any place in this scheme of life.[180]

While he referred to the Muslims who have not applied the Islamic law to their life completely in the first quotation, he criticized the secular way of life in the second quotation. As can be understood from the quotations, he defined the jahiliyya in such a way that it became almost impossible to find any single state, society or person fitting into the category of true Muslim given the contemporary political, economic, societal etc. affairs. Due to those definitions, Qutb decries the democratic type of governments, all western ideologies including nationalism, socialism, secularism playing a role in Muslim state institutions in one way or another and western cultural habits spreading among Muslim youths explicitly. On this base, the jahiliyya is based on the all things that do not emanate from God. From this perspective, Qutb acquired the authority to declare all Muslim countries as jahiliyyah. As can be seen, Qutb is an anti-status-quo person entirely. Al-Qaeda also is against the status-quo with its organizational purposes as mentioned above. That is, it can be said that al-Qaeda took on the responsibility to annihilate the jahili systems.

Qutb's solution is Islam, as an antidote to the jahiliyya.

This religion (…) is a declaration that sovereignty belongs to Allah alone and that He is the lord of all the worlds. It means a challenge to all kinds and forms of systems which are based on the concept of sovereignty of man; in other words, where man has usurped the Divine attribute.[181]

Like Mawdudi, Qutb furnished Islam with a political vision and aimed at building all aspects of life according to Islamic precepts and eliminating all obstacles in this way in order to take the sovereignty from people in the name of God.

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[179] Ibid., 93.

[180] Ibid., 106.

[181] Ibid., 67.

"Jahiliyya is the hakimiyya (sovereignty) of humans; Islam is the hakimiyya of God"[182]. Namely, Islam is the exact antithesis of the jahiliyya. They are like black and white. This stark contrast can be seen at Qutb's attitude against jahiliyya: "Either Islam will remain or jahiliyyah: Islam cannot accept or agree to a situation which is half-Islam and half-jahiliyyah".[183] There is a situation of perpetual war between the two and no option to live together peacefully. This uncompromising attitude is seen at the struggle against the jahiliyya.

Any struggle against the jahiliya is called as the jihad. Qutb enumerates the reasons for the jihad like this:

> to establish Allah's authority in the earth; to arrange human affairs according to true guidance provided by Allah Almighty; to abolish all the Satanic forces and Satanic systems of life and to end lordship of one man over others (…)[184].

Actually, these reasons cause a tough fight against jahiliyya which has no end in sight. As Barry Cooper puts it rightly, Qutb laid the foundation for unending fierceness against non-Muslims and apostates, which means everyone who has not been death yet in practice.[185] It is an obligation to use the essential method in this struggle to be able to succeed. "In this situation *[refers to the material power that jahiliyya has]*, mere theoretical efforts to fight it cannot even be equal, much less superior, to it".[186] In other words, Islamic faith can be built by force, not intellectual discussions on religious texts. Al-Qaeda is the leading actor in this stage and it interprets the force as violent means and Qutb himself made it much easier for al-Qaeda to employ violent methods in the name of the jihad by saying that "indeed, people are not Muslims, as they proclaim to be, as long as they live the life of Jahiliyyah"[187]. This was what Al Qaeda wants exactly. This is to give an authorization to Al Qaeda to apply violence freely against those in jahiliyya.

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[182] William E. Shepard, "Sayyid Qutb's Doctrine of Jahiliyya," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol:35, No:4. (2003): 525.

[183] Qutb, *Milestones*, 146.

[184] Ibid., 81.

[185] Cooper, *New Political Religions, or An Analysis of Modern Terrorism*, 126.

[186] Qutb, *Milestones*, 57. Italics is mine.

[187] Ibid., 154.

Qutb answers the question that who has the mission to make the jihad in the name of Islam against those jahiliyya states. The jihad, according to Qutb, is not based on mass movement and it can be carried out by only a handful of true believers. "Only those whose hearts are so purified will come together to make a group and only such a group of people (…) can start a Muslim community".[188] People who will make the jihad should be got rid of negative effects of jahiliyya so that they can lead the ummah. This is another reason of using hijra discourse, which was mentioned above. That is, going anywhere that the jihad is necessary is the way to dispense with corrupt effects of jahiliyya and to join the vanguard. As I said, the position of the vanguard is filled with al-Qaeda and its clear-cut evidence can be found in Azzam's word:

> Every principle must be supported by a vanguard, which clears a path for itself toward society, at the price of vast efforts and heavy sacrifices. There is no creed [aqida], whether earthly or heavenly, that can dispense with such a vanguard, which spends all it has to cause this dogma to triumph. (…) the vanguard represents the solid base of the society we hope to create[189].

It can be deduced from this quotation that Azzam attributes a semi-sacred role to Al Qaeda because any state, society or people except Al Qaeda cannot defend Islam. He talks as if supporting the Al Qaeda is a precondition of being Muslim. The inevitable corollary of this vanguard argument is that they have assumed the responsibility to struggle for the good of the whole humanity. Since they perceive themselves as the true believers, they regard the rest of the world as a place that should be saved by them. Qutb conceptualizes the jihadists in such a way that opposing them was identified with opposing God itself. According to him, all jihadists get the status of God's representative, which means that they all are great persons, by combatting the evil.[190] As a last point, Qutb's understanding of the jihad as an offensive action should be mentioned. "Any country which fights the Muslim because of his belief (…) is Dar-ul-Harb (…); and any country where the Islamic faith is dominant (…) is Dar-ul-Islam (…)".[191] The defensive jihad can be carried out in only Dar al-Islam but there is no Dar al-Islam since all societies in the world belong to jahiliyya. Therefore, that the jihad is reduced to the defensive war is to neutralize it according to Qutb.

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[188] Ibid., 90.

[189] Abdallah Azzam, "The Solid Base (Excerpt)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 140.

[190] Hansen and Kainz, "Radical Islamism and Totalitarian Ideology: A Comparison of Sayyid Qutb's Islamism with Marxism and National Socialism,"63.

[191] Qutb, *Milestones*, 141.

3.3.3. Muhammad Abd al-Salam Farag (1954-1982)

There is not enough information about Farag's life story. He was an electrical engineer and the member of the Jihad Group. The Jihad Group carried out the assassination to Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt on 6 October 1981 and Farag, as the ideologue of the group, was found guilty and executed in 1982 in his thirty-seven. The main document which associated Farag with the assassination was 'the Absent Obligation'. In other words, the reason of his fame in Salafi-jihadi circles was the ideological role that he played in Sadat's assassination.

The political context in which Farag lived played a vital role in his thoughts.[192] The Pan-Arab nationalism which created euphoria among Arabs and came to power in significant Arab countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Iraq since 1950s could not fulfill its goals and came to an end in the end of 1970s. Along with the failures in economic sphere, the most important reason in this failure was that the Arabs were defeated four times in four wars by Israel, which was their main enemy, in twenty five years. This was shameful for Arabs and as Nelly Lahoud says, given the deficiency of the Arab regimes against the enemy, the people began to hold the regimes responsible for the defeats.[193] The rage of people was felt in Egypt most severely since Egypt which used to be the leader of Pan-Arab nationalism during Nasser period signed a peace agreement with Israel by making a U-turn in Sadat's period. This catastrophic event from the Salafi-jihadi perspective turned into an advantage for them because as David Cook says, owing to the negotiations with Israel, it became easier for Salafi-jihadists to declare the Egyptian regime and ulama who upheld the agreement as apostate.[194] Here this was the essence of political climate which Farag wrote the Absent Obligation.

The Absent Obligation was consisted of verses from Qur'an, the hadiths, and Taymiyyah's fatwas and Farag read the religious texts very literally. Unlike Taymiyyah and Qutb, he could not write enough books and fatwas to be able to deserve the characterization 'Islamist thinker/scholar'. The Absent Obligation was his sole booklet. Farag has no intellectual depth in religious matters and this was what he wanted exactly. As Michael W.S. Ryan says, his audience target was ordinary Muslims who had no formal religious training and were not

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[192] Nelly Lahoud, *The Jihadis' Path to Self-Destruction* (London: Hurst and Co, 2010), 120.

[193] Ibid., 121

[194] Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 107

content with Sadat's agreement and the bad condition of society.[195] The importance of his sole booklet comes from Farag's goal to find the religious justifications of a tyrannicide, the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat.[196] Namely, this was a booklet which served an operational purpose: the killing of Sadat.

Farag displayed disdain attitude to knowing the knowledge and did not accept the superiority given by the knowledge. According to Farag, the knowledge is not strong enough instrument to eradicate the infidels.[197] In this sense, he argued that the sword is superior to the knowledge with a reference to Islamic history by saying that from early times of Islam to the recent ages, Allah has captured the vast territories through the fighters who did not prioritize to learn religious knowledge.[198] In this sense, he criticized the ulama first. Despite regarding the jihad as a sole way for Islamic revivalism, the scholars have ignored the jihad intentionally.[199] While trying to find the reason of that ignorance, it will be useful to remember the criticism of the jihadist against the purist mentioned above.

As can be seen, the jihad had no meaning except violence against the enemies of Islam. Violence is the sole form of the jihad. Because of this zealous attitude, he assumed the responsibility to answer people who interpret the jihad through non-violence means. Non-violent methods are counted like this: "*charity organizations *obedience, education and intensive worship *chasing good professions *giving Da'wah alone *the migration *busy with seeking knowledge"[200]. These are waste of time and cannot produce the intended results for Muslims in a quick way. He argued that some extremist means should be applied while making jihad as well. For example, even if enemies of Islam exploit the Muslim prisoners as shields, the fight cannot be abandoned with the fear of murdering those Muslims for the goodness of whole Muslims.[201] What is more is that he maintained that

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[195] Michael W. S. Ryan, *Decoding Al-Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle against America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 41.

[196] Danny Orbach, "Tyrannicide in Radical Islam: The Case of Sayyid Qutb and Abd al-Salam Faraj." *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol:48, No:6. (2012): 969.

[197] Muhammad Abd al-Salam Farag, *The Absent Obligation* (Birmingham: Maktabah Al Ansaar Publications, 2000), 48.

[198] Ibid., 47-48.

[199] Ibid., 14.

[200] Ibid., 38-48.

[201] Ibid., 72.

even children of enemies of Islam can be killed because the war rules applied for apostates and infidels can be used for their children. These interpretations have been dominating the Salafi-jihadists' thoughts for years and especially were used as the justifications for the 9/11 by al-Qaeda. Taymiyyah and Qutb did not issue a fatwa or write a book directed against killing civilians although their writings are interpreted for that purposes by Salafi-jihadists. In this sense, as Johannes Jansen puts it in an interview rightly, "as such, you might if you want call it the first systematic Muslim defence of killing innocent bystanders"[202]. In other words, it can be said that Farag is the pioneer of supporting extremist methods against civilians.

As for the main target which the jihad should be waged; Farag wrote his book in a political atmosphere which the Muslim regimes were considered as the culprit of embarrassment against Israel as mentioned above and before al-Qaeda made a call for the global jihad. In accordance with this climate, the main threat was the near enemy for him. According to Farag, the existing imperialism in Islamic world is due to the lax Muslim rulers and therefore, it is a vain effort to fight the imperialists and it becomes necessity to target those rulers to be able to replace the un-Islamic leadership with the Sharia.[203] In this way, Farag imitated the Taymiyyah's way of thinking for contemporary Muslim leaders and draw the same conclusion: Muslims have a compulsory duty to fight Muslim leaders like their ancestors did against Mongols because those leaders did not implement the Sharia like Mongols.[204] This fight is the best thing that a Muslim can do for Islam because the apostates are more crucial threat to Islam than the infidels owing to their closeness to Islam.

3.4. Violence

In an unconventional war between a regular army and a terrorist organization, not only the combatants but also the civilians can be targeted. However, unlike the combatants, the civilians have a different status in Islam and are protected from violence in the war. For this reason, al-Qaeda has to explain the reasons why its attacks against civilians are not prohibited actually according to Islam[205] in order to protect its reputation in the eyes of its

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[202] Johannes J. G. Jansen, "Faraj and 'The Neglected Duty'," Interview by Jean-François Mayer. *Religioscope,* January 15, 2002, https://english.religion.info/2002/01/15/faraj-and-the-neglected-duty-interview-with-johannes-jansen/. (accessed November 3, 2017).

[203] Farag, *The Absent Obligation*, 51.

[204] Ryan, *Decoding Al-Qaeda's Strategy*, 41.

[205] According to its own interpretation of Islam, al-Qaedaism.

supporters among Muslims when it kills the civilians who just want to live their life and have nothing to do with the jihad, Al Qaeda and so on. In this sense, after 9/11, the terrorist attack which claimed thousands of civilians, al-Qaeda issued a statement which accounted for the religious legitimacy of the attack.

The Salafi-jihadists have an unwonted way of thinking: firstly identify the rule and then specify the exceptions. However, it is not a strange situation because al-Qaeda as the sole group of true believers has a monopoly on defining what both the rules and exceptions are. In this sense, al-Qaeda believes that what it says does not contradict with Islam because its remarks are Islam itself and for this reason, what it says cannot be distortion. According to al-Qaeda, the prohibition of killing civilians is not an unconditional and some specific conditions which negate the prohibition exist.[206] In this sense, al-Qaeda identifies seven exceptions. The first exception is that if infidels attack the Muslim civilians, Muslims can respond to infidels in the same way, which is the requirement of reciprocity.[207] Bin Laden often mentioned the principle of reciprocity: "Just as they're killing us, we have to kill them so that there will be a balance of terror"[208]. Through this exception, al-Qaeda can make the reference to Muslims' suffering in anywhere in the world. The second exception is that if there is no chance to distinguish civilians from combatants during an attack against infidels, civilians can be killed.[209] The responsibility of differentiate themselves from the combatants is on the shoulder of the civilians completely. According to this line of thinking, if 'the protected ones'* choose to stay with their men, they are no longer civilians and become legitimate target.[210] The third exception is that if infidel civilians support the enemy in deed,

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[206] "A statement from qaidat al-jihad regarding the mandates of the heroes and the legality of the operations in New York and Washington," April 24, 2004, https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/4796/QAE20020424.pdf (accessed October 13, 2017).

[207] Ibid.

[208] http://edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/south/02/05/binladen.transcript/index.html

[209] "A statement from qaidat al-jihad regarding the mandates of the heroes and the legality of the operations in New York and Washington," April 24, 2004, https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/4796/QAE20020424.pdf (accessed October 13, 2017).

*The term refers to the woman, children, and elderly people. The term is used to describe the male civilians as well.

[210] Wiktorowicz and Kaltner, "Killing in the Name of Islam: Al-Qaeda's Justification for September 11," 87.

word, mind, and so on, Muslims can kill those civilians.[211] This exception can be interpreted so broad that anyone in the world becomes a target and therefore, this exception has potential for making the rest of exceptions unnecessary. The fourth exception is that if there is a necessity to attack the enemy with the aim to weaken and subdue it, infidel civilians can be killed.[212] The fifth exception is that if Muslims use the heavy weapons which have no ability to differentiate infidel civilians from the fighters, those civilians can be killed.[213] The sixth exception is that if infidels exploit its civilians as human shield, those civilians can be killed.[214] The last exception is that if the civilians of enemy which is the side of a treaty breach the treaty, those civilians can be killed to make them learn a lesson.[215]

As can be understood, al-Qaeda does not regard its attacks as part of terrorism. As Jeffrey Haynes says, al-Qaeda believes that it applies to violence as a last resort in a battle to save its culture, religion, and society attacked by West heavily and it is reasonable to use violent tactics in these circumstances.[216] For example, according to Imam Samudra, *[the perpetrator of bombing a nightclub in Bali, Indonesia in 2002, which killed two hundred people],* the nightclubs in Bali are a clear indication of western cultural attack on Islam.[217] Consequently, the scope of targets is extended so much that there is no white area for any civilians and all people can be target. The logic is that either you are with the Al Qaeda or you are enemy. It is actually the George W. Bush's logic. In other words, Al Qaeda uses its enemy's logic.

3.5. Suicide Terrorism

Suicide is damned as a reason to cause a person to go to hell and is never regarded as a legitimate instrument to any end even if it brings the victory because it is believed that how

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[211] "A statement from qaidat al-jihad regarding the mandates of the heroes and the legality of the operations in New York and Washington," April 24, 2004, https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/4796/QAE20020424.pdf (accessed October 13, 2017).

[212] Ibid.

[213] Ibid.

[214] Ibid.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Haynes, "Al Qaeda: Ideology and Action," 187-188.

[217] Ibid., 187. Italics is mine.

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long a person lives in the earth is decided by Allah.[218] As can be seen, suicide is forbidden in Islam strictly and Salafi-jihadists also agree to this. However, they believe that the death of people who apply violence against apostates and infidels in the name of Islam is not like that of people who commit suicide for any reason. In this sense, which word it is used is important since the term used to define the action affects directly whether the action is permissible in Islam.

Raphael Israeli opposes to use the term 'suicide bomber' since it has connotations of suicide. He argues that the perpetrator does not possess suicidal characteristics and invents a new term 'Islamikaze' by finding similarities between the action and 'kamikaze'[219]. According to Raphael Israeli, unlike a normal suicide, the motivation is to kill the target perceived as enemy in the Islamikaze; the perpetrator is prepared by his chief and so he/she does not bear the responsibility for the action alone.[220] Moreover, since the Islamikaze is programmed thoroughly, there is no unexpected death.[221] However, the Salafi-jihadists do not employ that term and they use the term 'martyrdom operation' by making a reference to Qur'an. This term has additional importance because a martyr has a special status in Qur'an and therefore Salafi-jihadists see the martyrdom from this perspective. Richard Whelan describes what the martyrdom means according to a Salafi-jihadist by saying that "it's like going on the pilgrimage. It's like paying your alms, which every Muslim has to do".[222] The term 'suicide operations' is invented deliberately by Jews to deter Muslims from doing such actions.[223] "Martyrdom or self-sacrifice operations are those performed by one or more people, against enemies far outstripping them in numbers and equipment, with prior knowledge that the operations will almost inevitably lead to death".[224]

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[218] Shireen Khan Burki, "Haram or Halal? Islamists' Use of Suicide Attacks as 'Jihad'," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:23, No:4. (2011): 583.

[219] Japanese soldiers whose purpose is to detonate themselves with the enemy were adhered to the country and emperor. They are called as kamikaze, Spirits of Gods, and harmed American troops in the Pacific War. Raphael Israeli, "Islamikaze and Their Significance," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol: 9, No:3. (1997): 97.

[220] Israeli, "Islamikaze and Their Significance," 104.

[221] Ibid.

[222] Whelan, *Al Qaedaism*, 122.

[223] "The Islamic Ruling on the Permissibility of Martyrdom Operations," *Religioscope* https://www.religioscope.com/pdf/martyrdom.pdf. (accessed October 15, 2017), 2.

[224] Ibid.

There are two criteria while determining whether the action is Islamic or not: the mental situation of the perpetrator and the purposes of the action. With regard to the first criterion, it is said that the suicide emanates from unbelief while the martyr chooses the death because of his strong faith.[225] As for the second criterion, the perpetrator should have four goals: "seeking martyrdom, inflicting losses [on the enemy], encouraging Muslims to attack, demoralizing enemy, showing them that if one can do this, what will the totality be capable of".[226]

Along with the religious legitimacy of the action, two main practical requirements necessitate this type of action. One of them is the military and economic imbalance between the US-and its allies- and al-Qaeda.[227] Martyrdom operations have been trying to eliminate this imbalance by inflicting damage on the enemy very much with little cost. For example, Assaf Moghadam shows the efficiency of the method with numbers: 20,603 people were killed and at least 48,209 people were wounded in 1857 suicide attack *[from 1981, the introduction of method to 2007]*.[228] The other practical necessity is to exploit the psychological effect of the action on the target people, which is unique. Bruce Hoffman describes the fear that the action creates very well: "First you feel nervous about riding the bus. Then you wonder about going to a mall. Then you think twice about sitting for long at your favorite café. Then nowhere seems safe"[229].

3.6. Anti-Shiism, Anti-Americanism, and Anti-Semitism

As a last point in the first part, it can be maintained that Al-Qaedaism has also three components: The anti-Shiism, anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism. Shiism has been regarded as a deviant sect from the perspective of al-Qaedaism. The negative attitude against Shiism was turned into violence by Abu Musab al-Zarkawi, founder of al-Qaeda in

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[225] Ibid., 14.

[226] Ibid., 7.

[227] This shows the other face of al-Qaeda, which means that they are also rational decision makers. I mean, while al-Qaeda describes itself with religious terms, it also makes its decisions according to current political and military situation.

[228] Assaf Moghadam, "Motives for Martyrdom: Al-Qaida, Salafi Jihad, and the Spread of Suicide Attacks," *International Security* Vol:33, No:3. (Winter 2008/09): 49. Italics is mine.

[229] Bruce Hoffman, "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *The Atlantic*, June 2003, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2003/06/the-logic-of-suicide-terrorism/302739/. (accessed November 9, 2017).

Iraq- the forerunner of ISIL. The attacks against Shia pilgrims in Baghdad and Karbala which killed 180 Shia and the bomb attack in Imam Ali Mosque which killed 125 people in 2004 are just two examples that show the cruelty of Zarkawi. He describes his hatred against the Shiite like this: "[They are] insurmountable obstacle, a lurking snake, a crafty and malicious scorpion, a spying enemy and a moral venom"[230]. Furthermore, Zarqawi sees Shiism as a more dangerous and insidious enemy than the US. According to Zarqawi, there are two enemies: while the one is obvious because of its infidelity, the other is tougher because it masquerades as a friend but double-cross in reality.[231] In addition, the political changes in favour of Shiite in Iraq after the US-led invasion in 2003 are another reason for this hatred against them. For example, in the name of de-Baathification, all Sunnis are purged in the public service; the army which consisted of Sunnis was dissolved, Shiite won the majority in the transitional government and etc. All these also fueled the anti-Shiite feelings among Sunnis. Even Zawahiri and Bin Laden did not use such harsh terms against Shiite and therefore, Zarqawi was a pioneer in anti-Shiism.

After 1996 fatwa which defined the US as the main enemy, anti-Americanism becomes an indispensable part of almost all al-Qaeda fatwas. The culprit of all difficulties which Muslims suffer is seen as the US. In this sense, anti-Americanism emanates from the political decisions of the US. The American troops staying in Saudi Arabia-the land of two holy places-, its unconditional support for Israel in its fight against Palestinians, its invasion of Iraq, tortures in Abu Gharip prison are the common themes in the fatwas. The anti-Americanism can be seen in Salafi-jihadists hatred of American culture as well. The main indicator that the US is Satan is its culture which dominates everywhere and can be seen in different forms such as TV, clothes styles, and ignorance of religion.[232] However, anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism cannot be separated from each other and term 'Jewish-Crusader alliance' used in al-Qaeda's fatwas points out the collaboration among them. The term Jewish-Crusader alliance has been used so much that it has become a motto to describe the enemy. With regard to this, by making a reference to historical traumatic event, Crusader invasions, in Islamic history and emphasizing the religious identity of enemy, this term also seeks to strengthen the Islamic characteristics of al-Qaeda. However, while the US

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[230] Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, "Letter to Bin Laden and Zawahiri (Excerpts)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 253.

[231] Ibid.

[232] Whelan, *Al Qaedaism*, 125.

is an actor on the stage, it is thought that Israel exists behind the US. The US is perceived as a tool serving Israel. For this reason, Israel is always a usual suspect in the eyes of a Salafi-jihadist. For example, according to Bin Laden, along with the economic and religious purposes, the US seeks to support Israel and prevent people from focusing Jerusalem *[in the first Gulf War]*.[233] However, there is a difference between the two: hostility against Israel is a propaganda instrument for al-Qaeda because *[both]* attacks on Israel are not important that much[234] and the main enemy is the US.

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[233] Osama Bin Laden, "World Islamic Front Statement Urging Jihad against Jews and Crusaders," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 54. Italics is mine.

[234] Charters, "Something Old, Something New...? Al Qaeda, Jihadism, and Fascism," 85. Italics is mine.

CHAPTER 4

ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION OF AL-QAEDA

4.1. 1986-1991[235]

While tracing the early days of al-Qaeda, which there was no al-Qaeda at that time as a hierarchical organization although I use the word al-Qaeda to facilitate the understanding and the fighters at Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1989) were called as the mujahideen- people making jihad-, in organizational sense, it is not surprise to see two important persons, Abdallah Azzam (1941-1989) and Osama Bin Laden (1957-2011). The importance of Azzam emanated from its deep religious knowledge and ability to use it as a tool for mobilizing Muslims for Afghan jihad. He succeeded in popularizing jihad among Muslims. It is no doubt that his background on religion played an important role on this success. Azzam studied Sharia in the Damascus University as an undergraduate student and then got his MA and PhD in Sharia from Al-Azhar University, which is regarded as a center of traditional Islam in Islamic world. This official religious background gave his words religious legitimacy. As a Palestinian, the first priority of Azzam was to fight against Israel and he fought for almost two years; however the jihad idea against Israel at that time began not to satisfy him in religious sense. Due to the military might of Israel and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)'s dominance on the fight as a secular organization, Azzam considered the Afghan war as a new chance to make a good change for downtrodden Muslims[236] and dedicated himself to it.

While conceptualizing the jihad, Azzam behaved in two separate characters: as a religious scholar and a tactician. As a religious scholar, he depicted the Afghan war as a defensive jihad and argued that it was an individual obligation to participate in it. As a tactician, which

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[235] Christina Hellmich, in its book, *Al Qaeda: From Global Network to Local Franchise,* divided the evolution of al-Qaeda into four periods. I used the same four periods by drawing on Christina Hellmich. In addition to this, I use the term 'Post-Arab Uprisings Period' to describe the fifth period.

[236] John C. M. Calvert, "The Striving Shaykh: Abdullah Azzam and the Revival of Jihad," *Journal of Religion and Society* Supplement Series 2. (2007): 89.

this role was more important, by taking the necessities of Afghan jihad into consideration, he sought to resolve the lack of finance and people, which were two crucial problems in Afghan jihad. For example, in his fatwa *Join the Caravan*, he said it was an obligation for Muslims to sacrifice their wealth and safety for jihad and otherwise the whole Muslims except muhajideens would become sinners until all territories were liberated from the infidels[237]. As another example, Azzam argued that Afghanistan was more important jihad area than Palestine to be able to attract more Muslims and while mentioning its reasons, he did not avoid lying, which is a sin: while main supporter of Palestinians was Soviets, which they were left in a very desperate situation later, the muhajideens did not accept any offer to assist from infidel states[238], which was a huge lie as will be shown. Moreover, he argued with an impressive rhetoric that it was not necessary to get permission from anyone to come to Afghanistan for jihad[239].

Osama Bin Laden was from a family belonging to the elite part of society in Saudi Arabia. His father Muhammad Bin Awad Bin Laden owned the construction company, Saudi Bin Laden Group, which controlled billions of dollars[240] and had contacts with influential members including the King Faisal himself from Saudi royal family and ulama. Unlike Azzam, Bin Laden studied management in King Abdulaziz University and took some Islamic lecturers from Muhammad Qutb, the brother of Sayyid Qutb, in the university. In other words, he had a bright future; however he formulated another future plan for himself. There is no Bin Laden portrait whose life began to be Islamic and life was dedicated to the jihad with Afghan war suddenly. In other words, he has already started using his personal fortune for political purposes before Afghan war. For example, he provided financial

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[237] Azzam, *Join the Caravan (Excerpt),* 122.

[238] Abdallah Azzam, "The Defense of Muslim Territories Constitutes the First Individual Duty (Excerpt)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 108.

[239] For instance, some people are walking along the sea shore and amongst them is a group of good swimmers. They see a child about to drown. It shouts "save me!", and nobody moves towards him. One of the swimmers wants to move to save him but his father forbids him. Can any scholar in this day and time say that he must obey his father and let the child drown?

This is the example of Afghanistan today. She is crying out for help, her children are being slaughtered, her women are being raped, the innocent are killed and their corpses scattered, and when sincere young men want to move to save and assist them they are criticized and blamed: "how could you leave without your parents' permission?" Calvert, "The Striving Shaykh: Abdullah Azzam and the Revival of Jihad," 96.

[240] When his father was dead, he left 11 billion dollars to his fifty children. Bruce Riedel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology and Future* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 40.

support with Syrian branch of Muslim Brotherhood in its fight against the Syrian regime in early 1980s. In Afghanistan, for example he used the construction tools of family company to assist the mujahideens in their effort to build road, tunnel, etc. and financed some training camps. That Bin Laden came to Afghanistan by leaving his future career as a successful businessman and spent his money generously furnished him with prestige among the muhajideens.

> He not only gave us his money, but he also gave himself. He came down from his palace to live with the Afghan peasants and the Arab fighters. He cooked with them, ate with them, dug trenches with them. This is Bin Ladin's way.[241]

As for the relationship between Azzam and Bin Laden, it was something like two jigsaw pieces complementing each other. Like Borum and Gelles said, Bin Laden's management skills with his money completed Azzam's religious leadership[242]. They embodied this cooperation by establishing Maktab al-Khidamat (MAK) - *the Services of Office/ Afghan Bureau/ Office Bureau/ Service Bureau* as the other names- in Peshawar in 1984. It was in charge of making the coming of volunteers to Pakistan easier and distributing those to various activities such as battle, training, health-care for Afghan jihad[243]. It is necessary to say that the role played by Bin Laden in this relationship should not be exaggerated since the strategic choices were still made by Azzam although Bin Laden controlled the money. Moreover, Bin Laden was not a person known with good fighting skills. However, despite all these, he had a special role in Afghan jihad. His deep contacts to Saudi royal family and wealthy persons in the kingdom together with his money made him enough valuable not to die for the jihad[244]. Put differently, many muhajideens ready to die can be found for the jihad but there was one Bin Laden.

There was also an international relations dimension of Afghan jihad helping Azzam and Bin Laden. At that time, a legitimate sense of revenge against Soviets existed in the US administration and there was no policy option except exploiting the Afghan war against Soviets since it was impossible to forget the assistance of Soviets to North Vietnamese. Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Adviser of the President Jimmy Carter and the

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[241] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda*, 20

[242] Randy Borum and Michael Gelles, "Al-Qaeda's Operational Evolution: Behavioral and Organizational Perspectives," *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* Vol:32. (2005): 469.

[243] Hegghammer, *Abdallah Azzam, the Imam of Jihad,* 93.

[244] Thomas R. Mockaitis, *Osama Bin Laden: A Biography* (Oxford: Greenwood, 2010), 40.

mastermind of that policy, described that sense of revenge very well in one sentence: "We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War"[245]. Given how Bin Laden troubled the US later this choice can easily be regarded as a mistake in retrospect, but it was a policy without a cost at that time. The decisions in international relations should always be thought in its context and the context was with regard to the Cold War between the two super-powers. As Fawaz A. Gerges puts it, since the priority was the fight against the Soviet Union, the US did not hesitate to support the mujahideens and ignored the possible militarization of the politics and young Muslims who had capability to damage present order.[246]

When it comes to the reasons why Muslim states such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, etc. championed Afghan jihad, they can be summarized like this: to satisfy their boss, the US; to keep possible jihadists away from the country; to increase their legitimacy in the eyes of public through their support to jihad[247]. Gilles Kepel identified the reasons why they encouraged the volunteers especially to go to Afghanistan with example of Saudi Arabia, the second most important supporter of Afghan jihad: Afghan jihad was an opportunity to register the possible troublemakers in the country; to prevent them from struggling against the regime and its allies in the region; to protect them from negative effect of Iran[248]. Apart from all those reasons, Pakistan had also one special reason with regard to the regional power balance: as Monte Palmer and Princess Palmer puts it, while Soviets had so intimate relations with India, India would have constituted a serious threat to Pakistan if a communist government was established in Afghanistan as well because more than half of Pakistani borders would have been controlled by India in that situation.[249] In short, supporting Afghan jihad was a win-win strategy in that time, in short run at least.

As for how the support was delivered to the mujahideens; the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was the main actor but it could not act alone. Despite the willingness of supporting

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[245] Mockaitis, *Osama Bin Laden*, 36.

[246] Fawaz A. Gerges, *Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 73.

[247] Ibid., 68.

[248] Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 315.

[249] Monte Palmer and Princess Palmer, *Islamic Extremism: Causes, Diversity, and Challenges*, (Maryland: Rowman &Littlefield Publishers, 2008), p. 129.

the mujahideens, the plan of the Carter Administration was based on tangible deniability[250] because of not giving any propaganda instrument to Soviets. That is why the CIA needed an influential actor in the Afghan field. At that time, the neighbors of Afghanistan- Iran, Soviets and China- did not get along with the US and the sole option was Pakistan, which meant the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Pakistani Intelligence Service, to deliver the support to the mujahideens[251]. In the literature, there is a consensus that the CIA supported the Afghan jihad by providing weapon and money, but apart from those, it made important contributions about which military tactics should be applied and what kind of weaknesses the enemy had, which were crucial points in a guerrilla fight. As Mohammed Yousaf, the director of Afghan Bureau in ISI, and Mark Adkin put it, through the CIA's satellite photographs, *[which showed all details in the field that the mujahideens needed]*, it became easier to plan the operation; to choose the most suitable targets for the attack and to formulate diverse escape routes[252]. However, if there was a mistake in the US policy toward the Afghan jihad, it can be said that it did not get involved in how those weapons and money were distributed to which groups. ISI made all those decisions in distribution process and it distributed all aids to the Islamist groups in the Afghan jihad. In this picture, there is something that should be clarified. Azzam and Bin Laden had revulsion to the US like they hated Soviets and knew that it supported them for its interests. However, they were so realistic that he saw that the shortcomings in the field could be complemented only by the help of outside forces and they did not hesitate to lie about whether the mujahideens accept the foreign aid or not. This was an important sign that Bin Laden and Azzam were so rational actors that they acted in accordance with the practical necessities of the situation, not the religious practices.

In the literature, the contradictory opinions with regard to the played by MAK in the fight against the Soviets have existed. The different opinions can be given by quoting from Rohan Gunaratna and Lawrence Wright respectively, which both are regarded as authority on al-Qaeda.

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[250] Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden* (New York: The Free Press, 2001), 68.

[251] Ibid.

[252] Mohammad Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *Afghanistan The Bear Trap: The Defeat of a Superpower* (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 2001), 103. Italics is mine. This book explains the all details of the support delivered by the CIA to the muhajideens.

As an organization staffed and managed by the *muhajidin*, it played a decisive role in the anti-Soviet resistance. In addition to recruiting, indoctrinating and training tens of thousands of Arab and Muslim youths from countries ranging from the US to the Philippines, MAK disbursed 200m dollars of Middle Eastern and Western, mainly American and British, aid destined for the Afghan jihad.[253]

Bin Laden provided twenty-five thousand dollars a month to keep the office running. The house also served as a hostel for Arab mujahideen and the headquarters of Azzam's magazine and book publishing efforts. The Services Bureau was essentially a repository for the money that the two men were sweeping in through their intensive fund-raising efforts.[254]

Given two opposite views from two respectable authors, it seems that it is almost impossible to know exactly what kind of role it played against Soviets, but it is undeniable truth that MAK was an important jihadist institution. Like Christina Hellmich puts it, MAK is believed to be the pioneer of al-Qaeda despite the debates about it[255] because the networks established through MAK among mujahideens facilitated the evolution toward al-Qaeda.

Similarly, there have also been contradictory opinions with regard to the role played by Afghan Arabs- Arab volunteers coming from various parts of the world- in the fight against Soviets. For example the Palmers argue that Afghan-Arabs as courageous fighters took on important responsibilities in communications and supplying through mosques being gathering places.[256] However, there is information to disprove that. For instance, many Arab Afghans coming from Muslim countries including Bin Laden could speak neither Pashtun, the language spoken by the Afghan tribes, nor Urdu, the language of Pakistan[257]. This was an important factor which prevented them from integrating into the local Afghans and thereby playing an influential role in the fight. Moreover, many local Afghans tried to keep Arab Afghans away from their units since they were courageous in level of madness and preferred dying as a martyr instead of fighting[258]. These two examples are enough to have an opinion about the fighting abilities of Arab Afghans[259].

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[253] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda*, 18

[254] Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 103.

[255] Christina Hellmich, *Al-Qaeda: From Global Network to Local Franchise* (London: Zed Books, 2011), 26.

[256] Palmer, , *Islamic Extremism*, p. 131.

[257] Mockaitis, *Osama Bin Laden*, 41.

[258] Michael Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama Bin Laden, Radical Islam and the Future of America* (Washington: Potomac Books, Inc., 2006), 108.

Actually, in reality, it does not matter who really defeated the Soviets; the important one is effect of Afghan War on the Arab Afghans. In this sense, it can be seen that there were two effects of it on them: the one was illusion, but had real consequences though and the other was real. The jihadist's victory against Soviets became a cause célèbre and led the jihadists to think that they could not be defeated thanks to their belief.[260] Bin Laden exploited this imaginary victory sense among the Arab Afghans more than anyone to give them self-confidence. According to Bin Laden, the US had become a sole super-power due to the efforts of the Arab Afghans that caused the Soviets to disintegrate eventually[261]. This arrogant line of thinking which saw itself bigger than it was implied that the power, the Arab Afghans, which put the US at that position had also the power which could bring it down. In Bin Laden's rhetoric, the help of Allah replaced the money and weapon delivered from the infidels and apostates such as the US and Saudi Arabia. As a real consequence of illusion, it can be said that this exaggerated assessment would lead Bin Laden to downplay the strength of the US while changing its strategy toward the far enemy after almost a decade, which will be examined later. Furthermore, that assessment missed three points: First one is that it was a war waged by Afghan ethnic groups with nationalistic goals in its essence against Soviet invasion; the second one is that the huge weapon and money support coming from the US and Saudi Arabia were overlooked; the third one is that the Soviets had already began to lose its hard power due to reforms launched by Mikhail Gorbachev[262].

As for the real effect, there was a reality that cannot be ignored. A strong tradition has existed in jihadist circles since the jihad started in the 1970s in the Middle East and that was to attack the secular regimes in the Muslim world -near enemy- which is called as apostate regimes. However, by undermining operational domination toward near enemy among

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[259] As a specific example: "Despite his bravado, neither bin Laden nor his Arab mujahedeen performed well on the battlefield. On April 17, 1987, he led 120 of his men in a raid on an Afghan government outpost near the town of Khost, not far from the Lion's Den. Despite artillery support from Afghan insurgent commander Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the operation went poorly. The Arabs had made insufficient logistical preparation, so their attack force had to wait for ammunition, rockets, and mortars to be placed in position. Hungry soldiers found that their leaders had also neglected to pack sufficient quantities of food. At the last minute, they also realized that no one had brought the electrical wire to connect their rockets to the detonators. Finally, a single Afghan soldier spotted their clumsy preparations and held off the assault with a single machine gun." Mockaitis, *Osama Bin Laden*, 42.

[260] Glenn E. Robinson, "The Four Waves of Global Jihad, 1979-2017," *Middle East Policy* Vol:24, No:3. (Fall 2017): 73.

[261] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 22.

[262] Phares, *Future Jihad*, p. 114

jihadists and laying groundwork for globalism, Afghan War challenged the tradition[263] since it was a war against an outsider occupying a Muslim country. Afghan war turned into the first step of jihadist road going to New York, Madrid, etc. in the form of transnational jihadism.[264] Moreover, according to mujahideens, the fight against the Soviets was a holy war but on the other hand, the same war meant money because the war turned into a job for them as well. That is why many mujahideens lost its opportunity to make money after the end of war. Moreover, these people spent last ten years of their life by fighting in extra ordinary circumstances of mounts of Afghanistan. They lost its ability to get used to an ordinary life and many of them were prevented from coming back to their countries. Like Gerges puts it, it was first time that Muslims from various countries such as Algeria, Yemen, Sudan, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Lebanon, etc. came to the same place to fight against the same enemy.[265] This was an unemployed transnational army which did not know what to do. However, it can be said from different perspective that they were really valuable due to their fighting ability. In this sense, "in 1989, he formed al-Qaeda as a vehicle to maintain contacts and coordinate actions among the muhajideens who had fought in Afghanistan and then returned to their native countries"[266]. But it is necessary to say in order to prevent a misunderstanding that al-Qaeda at that time was not an organization and it was just a database which registered all mujahideens to be able to reach them in case of necessity. Put differently, it was an investment for future jihadist activities. That is why the Afghan War was a first step toward transnational jihadism.

While all these happened, the relationship between Azzam and Bin Laden was changing because Bin Laden wanted to take on much more responsibility and refused to stay on the shadow of Azzam. He knew that it is not enough to finance the fight in order to be the leader of the mujahideens. He should have proved his military competence. In this sense, Bin Laden established a military unit consisted of only Arabs. Bin Laden was not a successful commander as mentioned above but the importance of this event for Bin Laden emanated from challenging Azzam's dominant role. Despite Azzam's objections, the main factor which facilitated building of the unit was his financial power and he never hesitated to use that power to get what he wanted in his jihadist career.

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[263] Gerges, *Far Enemy*, 86.

[264] Ibid.

[265] Ibid., 82.

[266] Whelan, *Al Qaedaism*, p. 154

Apart from Bin Laden, Azzam had problems with also Ayman al-Zawahiri. Like Bin Laden, Zawahiri was also a member of a well known family[267] in Egypt. And like Bin Laden again, his expertise was not about the religion. He got his BA and MA degrees from the medicine. It is irony that the first and second in command of al-Qaeda- Bin Laden and Zewahiri- who declared the jihad against the US and apostate regimes as the representatives of all Muslims for all things which Muslims have suffered from belonged to the lucky minority among Muslims who has suffered from nothing personally and they had no official religious background. Zawahiri has been the member of jihadist underground cells since he was 15. For him, the sole target was the Egyptian government as an apostate regime, which shows that he embraced the near enemy strategy. Even his motivation to participate in the Afghan War was with regard to the near enemy strategy. He regarded Afghanistan as a ground for his Islamic Jihad fighters to improve their fighting, political and organizational abilities[268]. In other words, his priority was to continue the jihad in Egypt in a more strong and experienced way. Afghanistan was something necessary to be able to start more important attempt, which means the jihad in Egypt. Moreover, he wrote in an essay even in 1995 *which was on the eve of 1996 fatwa* that 'Jerusalem will not be liberated unless the battle for Egypt and Algeria is won and unless Egypt is liberated' which showed its devotion to near enemy strategy[269]. It is important to know his commitment to near enemy strategy until 1996 to be able to understand his transformation toward far enemy strategy.

The main difference between Azzam and Zawahiri was about the possible type of action after the Afghan War. Azzam realized that the fight against Soviets became a training ground for the mujahideens to learn various military tactics useful to other Muslim countries under occupation[270]. In other words, Azzam saw the Afghan jihad as a first step of a greater effort to save Muslim countries from the hand of infidels. As mentioned above, Zawahiri

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[267] "His grandfather, Sheikh Al-Ahmadi Al-Zawahiri, was the Imam of Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo. His father, Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri, was a professor of pharmacology at Ein Shams University who passed away in 1995. His maternal grandfather, Abd Al-Wahab Azzam, was a professor of Oriental literature and president of Cairo University as well as the Egyptian ambassador to Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and was so well known for his piety that he was referred to as 'the devout ambassador'. His grandfather's brother, Abd Al-Rahman Azzam [pasha], became the first Secretary General of the Arab League." Nimrod Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch-Terrorist," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:14, No:4. (2002): 2.

[268] Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch-Terrorist," 7.

[269] Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 35. Italics is mine.

[270] Calvert, "The Striving Shaykh: Abdullah Azzam and the Revival of Jihad," 90.

insisted on attacking the secular regimes in the Middle East, which meant extra new recruits for his organization, Islamic Jihad, operating in Egypt. However, Azzam regarded the takfir of Muslims *[the concept which see secular regimes as apostate and support to attack them]* is source of *fitna*, infighting among Muslims and argued that it would undermine the ummah[271]. Moreover, Azzam objected the offers made by Zawahiri to target civilians by saying that it would damage the prestige of the mujahideens[272]. As can be seen, there was power struggle among them and both represented the totally separate poles.

Among all those debates, Azzam was killed with a remote control bombing in 1989 by leaving some doubts that he was death because of power struggle among mujahideens. This created a suitable environment that led Bin Laden and Zawahiri get closer; however, real close relationship between the two could not established until 1996 since Zawahiri's priority was still his Islamic Jihad. Azzam represented a novelty in the jihadist tradition focusing on the near enemy. He changed the focal point of the jihad from the secular regimes to foreign enemy and re-articulated the cause of jihad: invasion of a Muslim country by infidel country.[273] *By doing that* he opened the door for transnational jihad by laying groundwork for Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda's war against Jewish-Crusader alliance.[274] Put differently, the first steps of a new type of jihadism focusing on the far enemy introduced by Bin Laden after almost a decade were taken at that time.

Bin Laden returned to Saudi Arabia when the Afghan War was over. Bin Laden's military prestige was formed from only rumors but rumors were enough to create a strong illusion.[275] In this sense, Bin Laden was re-invented as a war hero. In Saudi Arabia he was given many gifts and was asked to speak in many areas. Over 250,000 cassettes recording his speaking were sold out quickly.[276] His posters were hung in Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries and he was regarded as a new Saladin defeating the invaders.[277] However, this popularity was a source of anxiety for Saudi Arabia. On the one hand, there was Saudi Arabia which argued

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[271] Robinson, "The Four Waves of Global Jihad, 1979-2017," 74. The paranthesis is mine.

[272] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 44.

[273] Hegghammer, *Abdallah Azzam, the Imam of Jihad,* 99.

[274] Ibid.,101.

[275] Mockaitis, *Osama Bin Laden*, 43.

[276] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 123.

[277] Palmer, *Islamic Extremism*, p. 131-132

that it represented the right form of Islam; on the other hand, Bin Laden with his powerful image emanated from a victory against a godless state existed. It was turning into a situation like Saudi Arabia versus Bin Laden gradually. Saudi Arabia realized that Bin Laden with his popularity would hang over every foreign and domestic policy decisions of the state like a sword of Damocles. In case of conflict of interests; Bin Laden would attack the legitimacy of Saudi Arabia and it was no doubt that it could attract many people with his popularity. In this sense, Bin Laden turned into both religious and security problem. That is why it wanted to keep him under control. For example, Bin Laden asked permission from Turki al-Faisal, Director of Saudi Intelligence Service, who he had close relationship during Afghan jihad, to finance the insurgency in South Yemen against the communist government, but he was rejected. Nevertheless, he got involved in that insurgency. Due to his disobedient behaviours, Prince Nayif Bin Abdulaziz, Minister of Interior, told him to stop his jihadist activities and took his passport. This was a sign showing that the regime would not allow him to operate autonomously but he did not understand. As can be seen, the tension between the two started before the Gulf War, but Bin Laden did not put the regime at the target list yet.

When Iraq occupied Kuwait Saudi Arabia worried that Iraq could attack it. Bin Laden made an offer Saudi Arabia to fight against Iraq with his mujahideen army[278] to protect the country from any possible attack. As can be seen, Bin Laden gained self-confidence, dedicated himself to the jihad completely and looked forward to find a new place for the jihad. However, Saudi Arabia rejected the offer to be able to acquire American financial and military support. They were sure that after fighting against Iraqi army, the mujahideens would aspire to acquire the political power and that is why they could not let it happen[279]. The coming of Americans with their military power to Saudi Arabia was a turning point for Bin laden's thoughts about Saudi Arabia. He described it in 1996 fatwa like that: "the greatest disaster to befall the Muslims since the death of the Prophet Muhammad"[280].

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[278] There are various numbers about the army was consisted of how many mujahideens. Rohan Gunaratna mentioned 5,000 mujahideens. Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda*, 28. Thomas R. Mockaitis mentioned more than 100,000 mujahideens. Mockaitis, *Osama Bin Laden*, 73. As it is always done in situations like this, it is reasonable to put the number somewhere close to 5,000.

[279] Gerges, *Far Enemy*, 148.

[280] Lawrence, *Messages to the World,* 25.

After realizing that he had no chance to operate in the kingdom, he went to Afghanistan in April 1991. However, there was infighting among the various Afghan factions for political power since the collapse of communist government in Kabul. He sought to become a mediator among those factions to stop the infighting. This mediator role was a sign that he was accepted as a trustworthy person among various factions. By the way, the National Islamic Front (NIF), which seized the power in 1989 in Sudan, sent a letter inviting Bin Laden to Sudan. This was an unexpected but golden opportunity for Bin Laden. While he was accepting the invitation, he had some reasons to do that. Firstly, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had close relationship because of the Pakistani soldiers coming to the kingdom for the protection of Saudi royal family at that time. Moreover, Bin Laden financed two failed assassination attempt against Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto. Secondly, the mujahideens around Bin Laden were restless because of the stagnation after retreat of Soviets and they wanted to go with the belief that they would fight[281]. Thirdly, in an environment where Muslims fought against Muslims for political power, it was impossible to declare the jihad without getting involved in this infighting and that would punish his reputation. Going to Sudan was the beginning of a new and strong tradition. Like al-Qaeda repeated many times in the future, the tradition to find a new safe base in case of crisis began with Sudan.

4.2. 1992-1996

Sudan was a good choice for a jihadist to come at that time since as Bruce Riedel puts it, all types of extremist were welcomed by Sudan in early 1990s[282]. Moreover, Bin Laden always sought to find alternative safe havens for his operations although he relocated to Sudan and in this sense; he tried to utilize the unstable environment caused by Bosnian civil war. Bin Laden sent his prominent Sudanese fighter- Jamal Ahmed al-Fadl- to Zagreb with the aim of debating the current situation with al-Qaeda representatives Arab-afghan leaders in Bosnia[283]. Bin Laden's purpose was to find a safe place to be able to attack the US in Europe[284]. However, he realized that it was difficult to establish a durable base capable of attacking the US in European security environment surrounded by loyal allies to the US. On the other hand, Bosnia led the Arab-Afghans who have not come to Sudan yet stay active

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[281] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 30.

[282] Riedel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda*, 49.

[283] Evan Kohlman, *Al-Qaeda's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 18-19.

[284] Ibid., 19.

before Bin Laden put together the Arab Afghans under his leadership in Afghanistan. As a result, Sudan was the best option he had.

Both Sudan and Bin Laden always explained their willingness to work together thanks to the common Islamic ideals but the reality was different. It was not the same radical Sunni tendencies which led Sudan to invite Bin Laden to the country. In reality, it was expected that he would come with his fortune, thus investing in the poor economy of Sudan[285]. Hassan al-Turabi, the leader of NIF, wanted to exploit his money for cash-strapped economy in Sudan. However, this relationship was not one-sided. The relationship between Sudan and Bin Laden was 'give and take' situation in all sense. First of all, Bin Laden did his best to reconstruct the economy and created the countless job opportunities for Sudanese people. It would exceed the scope of this thesis to explain his business activities in Sudan in a detailed way, but it can be explained in the most useful and summarized way for this thesis like this:

> The first business was Wadi al-Aqiq, a trading company that had dispensation to ship anything it wanted. Other enterprises followed: another trading company, Ladin International Company; Al-Hijra Construction (owned jointly by Bin Laden and the Sudanese government), which built road and bridges and employed more than six hundred people; and the Al-Themar agricultural company, which had four thousand employees working at its one-million acre Al-Damazine farms, which manufactured sesame oil and grew peanuts and corn. According to the U.S. State Department, one of Bin Laden's companies, Taba Investment Ltd., 'secured a near monopoly over Sudan's major agricultural exports of gum, corn, sunflower, and sesame products. Taba also traded in sugar, bananas, canned goods, and soap. The Blessed Fruits company grew fruits and vegetables, while AL-Ikhlas produced sweets and honey. Bin Laden also set up a trucking company, Al-Qudurat; a leather company, Khartoum Tannery; a bakery; and a furniture- making concern.[286]

What is more is that he built the highway between Khartoum and Port Said, which were crucial to transporting the goods to hinterland of the country. Peter L. Bergen found a very well phrase to express this complex economic structure of al-Qaeda 'Holy War, Inc.'[287]. Bin Laden established a great network including the President, and various ministers along with al-Turabi to consolidate his presence in the country and put 50m dollars at a bank which was associated with Sudanese elite[288]. These were his contribution to economy sector. Apart

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[285] Hellmich, *Al-Qaeda*, 40.

[286] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 80.

[287] Ibid., 79-80.

[288] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 32.

from this, NIF was fighting against the Christian militias whose aim was to become independent in Southern Sudan and needed military assistance. In this sense, Ladin accepted to train the NIF militias in his training camps and to make contribution with his fighters to the battle against Christian militias[289]. Given his economic activities, it was almost impossible to say an exact number about how much he spent, but it was for sure a several hundred million dollars[290].

Given Bin Laden's contribution to Sudan in various aspects, he was a god-sent for al-Turabi and he had to give his best. The main requirement to establish a safe haven for an organization was the land for training, shelter, and planning the operations etc. In this sense, as Gunaratna puts it, Al Qaeda members acquired the training opportunities in the lands which the government granted them to establish training camps[291]. In addition to this, the members of al-Qaeda got a chance to keep their fighting skills fresh by joining the battles against Christian militias with NIF militias. As can be seen, Bin Laden owned two separate identities in Sudan: a terrorist and a businessman[292]. Actually, this dual role was valid for the other al-Qaeda members who worked in high positions in the companies. Put differently, they were loyal terrorist to Bin Laden under the clothes of businessman. In this sense, they should have not been caught in nominal business trips. For this reason, in return for military equipments such as rifles, radio etc. that al-Qaeda bought to NIF, it was given two hundred Sudan passports to make business trips of terrorists safer[293]. Moreover with regard to this dual role, the businessman identity made the military operations easier. When the planes laden with sugar went to Afghanistan, they came back with weapons[294].

Apart from al-Qaeda's 'give and take' relationship with Sudan government, the name al-Qaeda began to be heard in this period very much. While operating in Sudan, some important terrorist attacks which were attributed to al-Qaeda happened. It is impossible to say exactly that the attacks were executed by the order of Bin Laden since his operational

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[289] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 137.

[290] Lawrence Wright mentioned 350m dollars. Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 168. Abdel Bari Arwan mentioned 300m dollars. Hellmich, *Al-Qaeda*, 40.

[291] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 32.

[292] Ibid., 31.

[293] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 79.

[294] Ibid., 81.

activities in this period were controversial totally. However, he managed to exploit even the attacks which it emerged later that he did not order successfully. That is why it is important to examine the attacks and their effects.

When the US sent its troops as a humanitarian mission of the UN to feed Somalia people in the beginning of December in 1992, the event was not related to al-Qaeda at first sight. However, Bin Laden saw it in a different perspective and regarded the humanitarian operation as a first step of the US to dominate the region and attack Sudan[295]. As a response to the US and the first attack attributed to Bin Laden, a hotel in Aden, Yemen which hosted American soldiers whose aim was to go to Somalia was attacked with a bomb on 29 December, 1992 and it was tried to kill American soldiers staying in the hotel, but it was a failed attempt. As another controversial issue with regard to Somalia, it is a bone of contention that whether al-Qaeda got involved in Mogadishu fight in 3-4 October, 1993 which two Black Hawk helicopters were shot down, 18 American soldiers were dead, and the US forces were forced to retreat from Somalia. On the one hand, that two helicopters were shot down was shown as a proof that al-Qaeda members fought against the US with Somalia fighters in Mogadishu. According to John Miller, Bin Laden sent his fighters when the US forces came to Sudan, and they used their skills which they specialized in during Afghan War to target American helicopters[296]. Peter L. Bergen also points out the collaboration between Somalia fighters and members of al-Qaeda by saying that according to a US official, the ability necessary to be able to shoot down the helicopters was not something that can be learnt alone[297]. On the other hand, there was some having the opposite idea. According to Jason Burke, journalist working in Mogadishu during the battle had little evidence showing al-Qaeda linkage[298]. Moreover, Somalia fighters denied any al-Qaeda linkage.

Despite all of these controversial statements, the retreat of the US forces from Somalia was a more important issue for the future of al-Qaeda than the debate about whether al-Qaeda was in Mogadishu or not. Somalia turned into an example which Bin Laden used frequently

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[295] Hellmich, *Al-Qaeda*, 42.

[296] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 146.

[297] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 82. This allegation may be true because the Arab-Afghans became really expert on targeting the Soviet helicopters. According to Peter L. Bergen, Arab-Afghans managed to shoot down 269 Soviet planes and helicopters through nine hundred Stingers allocated to them. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 74.

[298] Hellmich, *Al-Qaeda*, 43.

to prove his idea that the US was a weak power in its essence and this assessment played a critical role on changing the target to the far enemy -the US- from the near enemy –apostate leaders in the region- in the following period. According to Abu Jandal, *[Bin Laden's bodyguard]* al-Qaeda deduced from Somalia that the US was laden with the weapons but it did not own soldiers[299]. While talking about Somalia, he said in an interview:

> The youth were surprised at the low morale of the American soldiers and realized more than before that the American soldier was a paper tiger and after a few blows ran in defeat. And America forgot all the hoopla and media propaganda ... about being the world leader and the leader of the New World Order, and after a few blows they forgot about this title and left, dragging their corpses and their shameful defeat.[300]

That is why it can be said that the Somalia experience had a tangible effect on evolution of al-Qaeda toward transnational jihadism.

As a second important event for al-Qaeda's evolution, Ramzi Yousef and Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman detonated a truck which was full of ammonium nitrate in the car park under the World Trade Center in 1993, which claimed six lives and wounded hundreds of people. Rohan Gunaratna implied that Bin Laden had plausible linkage with the attack by saying that Ramzi Yousef was provided with financial support by him[301]. However, there are several reasonable reasons to think that Gunaratna may be wrong. First of all, the main source of angry was Saudi Arabia at that time although the US was hated. Secondly, after Bin Laden had just found a new safe place for the organization to be able to reorganize and regroup, he would have not endangered this opportunity. Thirdly, al-Qaeda did not execute so determined far enemy strategy that it could attack the US in its territory at that time. As Gerges puts it, al-Qaeda as a centralized and hierarchical organization capable of transnational jihad *[which means targeting the US]* has not existed yet in early 1990s[302]. The assessments like this are based on the information that emerged after 9/11 because of the growing interest for al-Qaeda, but it was impossible to know those in 1990s. That is why al-Qaeda began the first option that came to mind in any terrorist attack regardless of who the

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[299] Michael Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 90. Italics is mine.

[300] Osama Bin Laden, "Greetings America, My Name is Osama Bin Laden," Interview by John Miller. *PBS,* February 1, 1999, https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/binladen/who/miller.html (accessed November 14, 2017).

[301] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 36.

[302] Gerges, *Far Enemy*, 55. Italics is mine.

real perpetrator is due to the lack of knowledge about its organizational capacity and this served to make it more popular among Muslims.

The same thing was valid for Riyadh and Khobar Towers in 1995 and 1996 respectively. Bin Laden always applied the rule: the propaganda was more effective than the truths. On 13 November, 1995, a bomb attack was carried out in Saudi National Guard Center used by both Americans and Saudis in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, and five Americans were killed. On 25 June, 1996, a truck filled with bomb detonated in Khobar Towers military complex and nineteen American soldiers were killed. Even though there was no plausible link proving that those attacks were carried out by al-Qaeda, it was treated as if it did. The first option that springs to mind began to be Bin Laden when a terrorist attack happened as mentioned above. In this way, a myth started emerging about al-Qaeda's operational capacity, which was what he wanted exactly. This myth was also an intangible benefit for Bin Laden and his mujahideens. In this sense, it was an important example of the fact that the term benefit should be interpreted from various angles as mentioned in the second chapter because al-Qaeda has not been a hierarchic and organized terrorist organization at that time yet, but that myth was a step for al-Qaeda to establish a psychological superiority in the jihadist movement. After a while, it does not matter what the truth is. For example, it emerged in 2001 that the Khobar Towers attack was carried out by Saudi Hezbollah; however, al-Qaeda could not be prevented from exploiting the attack by the truth that emerged five years later.

In this period, al-Qaeda started a new attempt as dangerous as a terrorist attack. The members of al-Qaeda began to write their experiences during the Afghan war. For example, the *Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad* gives detailed information about how to use weapons including American Stingers in eight hundred pages and how to carry out a terrorist attack in two hundred and fifty pages. In addition to this, a book also was written in the name of *Military Studies in the Jihad Against Tyrants*.[303] Al-Qaeda would reach Muslim in the West who it could not reach with operational networks through those books and they were very influential books in post-9/11 period especially.

While staying in Sudan, Bin Laden made preparations for the jihadist activities in the future and began to establish African cells. For example, Bin Laden dispatched El-Hage, a close aide to Bin Laden, to Nairobi, Kenya and El-Hage introduced himself to local people as

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[303] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 84.

jewel trader and formed an NGO, 'Help Africa People'[304]. It can be understood from that Bin Laden wanted their emissaries to get used to daily life in the place where they were sent that he made his plans in the long run. In this sense, the African cells were used in embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, which means that the cells were used after four years.

In this period, the relationship between Bin Laden and Saudi Arabia were getting worse and both sides attacked each other in various ways. The Saudi's first and toughest move was believed to be the attempt to assassinate Bin Laden. Gunaratna argues that the Saudi intelligence tried to assassinate Bin Laden in February 1994 but failed[305]. Then it picked the relatively soft measures. For example, it repealed his Saudi citizenship in March 1994 and confiscated his assets. Moreover, it sought to undermine his prestige through his family. His brother, Bakr, announced through Saudi media that he did not find what he did right. Bin Laden retaliated against the Saudi regime with establishing 'Advice and Reform Committee (ARC)' in London in July 1994, which was turned into a main instrument of propaganda war that he launched. In this period, the dissident religious scholars made a block against the regime under the name of Sahwa (Awakening) and they sent a critical letter, 'Memorandum of Advice', which complained about the un-Islamic practices of the regime, to the King Fahd. The impact of the letter was so worried that seventeen members of ulama was fired because of their rejection to condemn the letter and the sahwa was suppressed by incarcerating its main members including Safar al-Hawali and Salman al-Auda, the leaders[306]. Bin Laden aimed at exploit this dissident political climate emerging newly and as part of the propaganda war against the Saudi regime, he issued the first letter, 'Betrayal of Palestine'[307] addressed to Bin Baz, the leader of ulama in Saudi Arabia, in December 1994 through ARC.

In this letter, Bin Laden accused Bin Baz of legitimizing what the regime wanted to do and expressed those issues one by one. In the letter, the replacement the law of God with the man-made laws such as legitimizing the usury; allow the Jewish-Crusader to enter the country; protecting the hypocritical attitude of regime; legitimizing the torture made by the

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[304] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 139.

[305] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 34.

[306] Lawrence, *Messages to the World,* 3.

[307] Ibid.

regime against Sahwa scholars were explained in a detailed way as the sins of Bin Baz. But, the most important objection to Bin Baz was with regard to his fatwa legitimizing the Oslo Accords signed in 1993 between Israel and PLO. He said in the letter:

> And it seemed as if you were not satisfied with abandoning Saudi Arabia, home of the two Holy Sanctuaries, to the Crusader-Jewish forces of occupation, until you had brought another disaster upon Jerusalem, the third of the Sanctuaries, by conferring legitimacy on the contracts of surrender to the Jews that were signed by the traitorous and cowardly Arab tyrants[308].

Bin Laden made a religious assessment in this letter by quoting from the hadith and Ibn Taymiyyah and attacked the religious legitimacy of the Saudi regime. This letter was an obvious example of the religious threat he posed to the regime as mentioned in the first period. In another letter, 'Invasion of Arabia'[309] issued in 1995/1996, he targeted the Saudi government directly by mentioning Jewish-Crusader entrance to Saudi Arabia again. He explained that 'the occupation' should be resisted by the whole society and the political leadership in Muslim world allied with this alliance lost its legitimacy. Given the letters, as mentioned in the first period, the traumatic effect can be seen in Bin Laden's thinking and as a result, the ties between two sides were severed.

As for Zawahiri in this period; he was still an independent actor relatively and was motivated by the near enemy strategy. In this sense, he was searching a new safe base for his future operations against Egypt and Sudan was the best option for him like for Bin Laden. Sudan was the most suitable country for paramilitary attacks against Egypt due to the long and unprotected border[310]. However, it was necessary to deal with the lack of finance to be able to launch a military campaign and for this reason; he went to Iraq, Yemen, and the US and he even contacted with the Sudanese government without Bin Laden's knowledge and permission. The Sudanese government furnished him with ten thousand dollars provided that he carried out ten attacks against the Egypt[311]. It can be seen in this period that Zawahiri regarded himself as a more powerful actor than Bin Laden and sought to put Bin Laden under the service of Islamic Jihad with terrifying attacks against Egypt which he planned to execute instead of pledging his loyalty to Bin Laden.

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[308] Ibid., 9.

[309] Ibid., 15.

[310] Riedel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda*, 54.

[311] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 52.

Zawahiri developed a new strategy called as 'the flee and the dog' and according to this strategy, his Islamic Jihad organization made the regime kneel down in the long run through his uninterrupted military campaign like the flee did the same thing to the dog by sucking his blood continuously[312]. Within the framework of this strategy, the important assassination attempts were carried out. The target was the Minister of Interior and the Prime Minister in 1993 and 1994 respectively, but both attempts ended in failure. Another failed move was the attempt to detonate a bus filled with Israeli tourists in touristic place, Khan al-Khalili but the 107 suspects were arrested[313]. As can be seen, Zawahiri was a fiasco totally in terms of operational success. This operational failure against the near enemy played an important role in changing the strategy toward the far enemy, which will be shown in subsequent period. As an example of a successful attack, Islamic Jihad detonated a bomb in Egyptian Embassy in Pakistan in 1995; however, this increased the international pressure on Sudan, which led Bin Laden to leave Sudan eventually.

Given the Sudanese government formed deep contacts with Bin Laden in many ways as mentioned above, it would be useful to analyze the relationship between Bin Laden and al-Turabi[314], the leader of the government. Both Bin Laden and al-Turabi were so strong characters that one cannot bow to another. In this sense, despite the so-called brotherhood of Islam, tough rivalry existed between them. For example, according to al-Bahri, personal bodyguard of Bin Laden:

> Al-Turabi himself exerted a great deal of pressure on sheikh Osama to make him leave Sudan. He visited him for three consecutive days, holding long meetings and heated discussions with him, until late at night, to convince him to leave Sudan.[315]

With regard to this point, he argued that the there existed a fight for political power between them:

> Maybe he was afraid sheikh Osama would take over the leadership of Sudan someday in the future, at his own expense, especially because Bin Laden was

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[312] Steven Brooke, "Jihadist Strategic Debates before 9/11," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:31, No:3. (2008): 211.

[313] Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch-Terrorist," 12.

[314] He graduated from the University of Khartoum and got a Phd from the Sarbonne. He can speak English, German and French. Like Bin Laden, he had no official religious education. Despite supporting militancy, he did choose the parliamentary way of struggle. His political origin was based on the Muslim Brotherhood.

[315] Gerges, *Far Enemy*, 108.

at that point looking at Sudan as the backbone of the International Islamic movement (…).[316]

According to Michael Scheuer, as an intelligent scholar, al-Turabi was always lying about his so-called ideals to widen Islamic territory deliberately in order to prevent him from understanding that al-Turabi saw just 'money' in Bin Laden[317]. However, it is doubtful whether Bin Laden was aware of it or not since Sudan was a relatively comfortable place for Bin Laden who had nowhere to go at that time. That is why he would have ignored even if he realized the situation. In this sense, the question 'who used whom' is pointless because both sides gave each other what they have needed for four years.

As for the reason why Bin Laden left Sudan; three reasons can be given. Firstly, the main reason was the international pressure on Sudan. Actually, that almost all kinds of extremists were welcomed in Sudan made it a target for international public opinion, but the last straw was the assassination attempt to Hosni Mubarak during an official visit to Ethiopia in June 1995. It was carried out Gamaa Islamiya, another jihadist organization operating in Egypt apart from Zawahiri's Islamic Jihad and Sudan refused to hand over the suspects to Ethiopia and then the ınternational pressure reached its peak. According to a resolution passed in UN Security Council in April 1996, UN called on Sudan to abandon its supporting activities for terrorist organizations; to expel terrorist entities from the country; to organize its international relations according to the international law[318]. In August 1996, another resolution implementing a global prohibition on Sudan Airways was passed[319]. Sudan was left with no choice except convincing Bin Laden to leave the country. In this sense, al-Turabi personally took on the responsibility to convince Bin Laden as mentioned above, and the conflicting characters and interests played a role in leaving the country. Secondly, the Saudi regime, which was one of the main financer of NIF along with Qatar, was uneasy about Bin Laden's intense criticism and living in Sudan[320]. That is, Sudan had to choose either money or brotherhood of Islam and it picked money. Thirdly, he was exposed to two failed assassination attempts in Sudan.[321] Those attempts could continue. Moreover, apart

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[316] Ibid., 108-109.

[317] Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden,* 102.

[318] Mockaitis, *Osama Bin Laden*, 80.

[319] Riedel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda*, 55.

[320] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 156.

[321] Ibid., 155.

from his personal bodyguards, if the Sudanese intelligence officials whose aim were to protect Bin Laden was bribed to ignore any attempt, new attempts could have been carried out successfully. For those reasons; he went to Afghanistan on 18 May, 1996. The tradition to find a new safe place in order to heal the organization in case of crisis has continued.

If it is asked that whether Sudan was a failure or a success, I can say that it included much more success compared to the failures. It was a success because Bin Laden rounded up vagabond Afghan-Arabs under his leadership. For example, Bin Laden made the three hundred Arab-Afghans come to Sudan from Pakistan by paying their travel costs in 1993.[322] Furthermore, he opened the door to other Afghan Arabs who have not come to Sudan yet. In addition, he protected his prestige because he did not get involved in infighting among Muslims in Afghanistan, which would serve him to form a network in Afghanistan. Lastly, he sow the seeds of African cells in this period, which were the perpetrator of the embassy bombings in 1998, the first staggering attacks of the new far enemy strategy. On the other hand, the sole failure was his financial loss because he lost millions of dollars in Sudan. He had to left the all those companies mentioned above.

4.3. 1996-2001[323]

When Bin Laden came to Afghanistan in May 1996, he settled in Jalalabad where he stayed during the Afghan jihad. His goal was to sustain the jihad in Afghanistan, but he had no clear plan to achieve that goal initially. However, Taliban helped Bin Laden to resolve the problem. In fall of 1996, Taliban put an end to the civil war which has continued among various afghan factions in Afghanistan since the collapse of communist government in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, in 1992 and brought relative stability to the country. Mullah Omar, the Leader of Taliban, sent a committee to Bin Laden and offered him protection of Taliban. This was a critical decision for Taliban since according to the West; he was a terrorist who was expelled from Sudan by the international pressure and Taliban had just seized the political power and needed the international legitimacy. From this perspective, the decision to protect Bin Laden was a risk. Michael Scheuer, the official being in charge of a unit about fighting against Bin Laden in the CIA between 1996 and 1999, sought to answer the question why that decision was made and identified three reasons.

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[322] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 90.

[323] The year 2001 refers the 9/11 attacks.

Firstly, according to Taliban, Bin Laden was the embodiment of sacrifice for the jihad. For example, the committee told him that they knew how he fought devotedly during the Afghan jihad.[324] Put differently, Taliban wanted to protect him in return for everything he has done for Afghan people during the Afghan jihad. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the former prime minister before Taliban, indicated this point by saying nobody in Afghanistan could force him to leave the country or give him to any third party because the people would not approve that.[325] As can be seen, there was a positive Bin Laden portrait among Afghan people as a legacy of the Afghan jihad, no matter whether it was real or fictitious. Secondly, keeping the guest safe regardless of who he/she is compulsory for Taliban because it is both moral and Islamic duty.[326] Given the Pashtun tribes constituted societal foundation of Taliban and the guest had a special place in the customs of tribes, this reason could not be ignored although it can be regarded as un-scientific at first sight. Thirdly, as the most apparent reason, Bin Laden provided Taliban with a good amount of money.[327] In this sense, Bin Laden never hesitated to use his financial power to take advantage of the lack of money of Taliban like in Sudan. However, it would make us to overlook the details if his contribution to Taliban was summarized only as 'money'. Apart from his direct cash contribution, his military support to Taliban was also important. Moreover, the presence of Bin Laden in Afghanistan increased the religious legitimacy of Taliban regime. As a result, it would be naive to think that the close relationship between two sides emanated from common radical tendencies. In this sense, in addition to the favorable legacy of the Afghan jihad, as a more important point, Bin Laden again guaranteed his existence in the country by establishing 'give and take' relationship with the political leadership in Afghanistan like in Sudan.

As mentioned above, Bin Laden lost a huge amount of money in Sudan and needed to increase his financial power. In this sense, not only his family members in Saudi Arabia but also many sympathizers from the Gulf region continued to send money to Bin Laden.[328] Bin Laden's positive image for supporters of jihadist movement created by various speculations about himself and the organizational capabilities of his organization during Sudan period as

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[324] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 167.

[325] Ibid., 164.

[326] Ibid., 168.

[327] Ibid., 169.

[328] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 102.

mentioned above had an impact on his ability to collect money. Moreover, his insistence to sustain the jihad after leaving Sudan also made him valuable in the eyes of financial contributors.

As for how Bin Laden used the money in his relationship with Taliban; it would be more explanatory to give some important examples. For example, he granted 3m dollars to Taliban while dissident fighters were preparing to bring down Taliban in 1996.[329] Furthermore, he also paid officials in customs, the police and the military not to have a problem in passages of organizational stuff to the country.[330] He became an opportunity for ordinary officials in the country to earn more money, not to mention the top-level officials. In other sense, he created a crowded group in the state who was dependent on himself financially. The financial contribution of members of Al-Qaeda to daily life also made them acceptable in the eyes of Afghan people. According to Ahmad Zaydan, a journalist in the country, people in Kandahar was content with high rents and incomes generated by them, which healed the poor economy.[331] Due to al-Qaeda, Taliban had an opportunity to take money from third parties. For example, the Saudi regime paid more than 200m pound to both al-Qaeda and Taliban in return for not carrying out any attack in Saudi Arabia.[332]

As an example for military assistance, Bin Laden established a guerilla unit called as 055 Brigade which consisted of 1,500- 2000 Arabs and combined with Taliban fighters to help them in its battle against Northern Alliance.[333] Moreover, by order of Bin Laden, two al-Qaeda members went to Ahmad Shah Massoud, the leader of Northern Alliance, by being disguised as the journalist who wanted to interview with him and when they came close to him, they killed Massoud by detonating their bombs on 9 September, 2001. As a result, Bin Laden spent more than 100m dollars for Taliban between 1996 and 2002 totally.[334]

Lastly, Bin Laden assisted Taliban to deal with the lack of legitimacy. Mullah Omar declared himself as *Amir al-Mu'minin*, which means the leader of the whole Muslims, in

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[329] Ibid., 162.

[330] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 61.

[331] Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden,* 125.

[332] Richard Bonney, *Jihad: From Qur'an to Bin Laden* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 360.

[333] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 40.

[334] Don D. Chipman, "Osama Bin Laden and Guerilla War," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol:26, No:3. (2003): 165.

1996. However, this important status would mean nothing for Muslims if it was not accepted by the prestigious Muslim leaders. Given Bin Laden's positive image in Afghanistan, he was the right person to be able to give the legitimacy to that status of Mullah Omar. In this sense, Bin Laden increased Taliban's Islamic prestige by swearing allegiance to him and calling him with honorable titles.[335]

As for the Taliban's contribution to al-Qaeda; it did its best in return for everything Bin Laden did. *The 9/11 Commission Report* gives important details in this matter. The member of al-Qaeda could go to anywhere in the country without inspection; brought any military stuff to the country and owned the official licence plates; exploited state's airlines to bring al-Qaeda's money to the country and did not need any visa to enter and quit the country.[336] Owing to this close relationship, al-Qaeda had a sanctuary to be able to train its fighters, make networks with various jihadist groups, and plan terrorist attack securely.[337] Moreover, when Bin Laden was exposed to assassination attempts while living in Jalalabad, Mullah Omar invited him to Kandahar, Taliban's stronghold, to keep him safe. Taliban continued to protect al-Qaeda by endangering itself. As will be explained in a detailed way later, even when al-Qaeda focused the far enemy- the US- and began to attack it, Mullah Omar carried on to provide al-Qaeda with a safe haven to operate securely despite the strong criticism in Taliban. This was the biggest contribution to al-Qaeda. As a result, Taliban became an important facilitator for al-Qaeda to organize itself as a hierarchical and robust organization.

This five years period in Afghanistan also witnessed a crucial breaking point in terms of organizational evolution of al-Qaeda. This was so important that it determined its organizational future. This was to alter the focal point from the near enemy- apostate regimes- to the far enemy- the US. This strategic decision was made by Bin Laden himself and that is why Paul Kamolnick regards the far enemy strategy as a sign that "Bin Ladenism"[338] became dominant power in al-Qaeda. According to this decision, instead of fighting apostate regimes- secular regimes in the Middle East- one by one, it would be more useful to focus the sole enemy. As Steven Brooke puts it, "[but] the decision to target the

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[335] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 170.

[336] The 9/11 Commission, *The 9/11 Commission Report,* 66.

[337] Ibid.

[338] Paul Kamolnick, *The Al-Qaeda Organization and the Islamic State Organization: History, Doctrine, Modus, Operandi, and U.S Policy to Degrade and Defeat Terrorism Conducted in the Name of Sunni Islam* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College, 2017), 27.

West- *the US particularly-* was not an ex-nihilo development".[339] Bin Laden made this decision as a result of a rational analysis. In this sense, there were two main and three facilitator reasons for this change.

The first main reason is that Islamic Armed Group (GIA) in Algeria and Gamaa Islamiya and Islamic Jihad in Egypt had failed in the jihad against the their regimes and lost their popular support among people in the middle of 1990s. In Algeria, the parliamentary election in 1992 was cancelled when Islamic Salvation Front got the majority of parliament and the regime clamped down the Islamic movement in the country. This was a breaking point because GIA began its violent campaign against the regime for the sake of jihad. However, the important one in terms of the near enemy strategy, GIA killed much more civilians compared to officials by applying takfir concept loosely. For example, according to GIA, just because schools were under the control of the regime, they were institutions which were against Islam. In this sense, 30 teachers and school directors were slaughtered and 538 schools were bombed in last two months in 1994. At the same year, 142 teachers were killed totally.[340] While the percentage of civilian casualty was %10 in 1992, it increased to %84 in 1997.[341] While these were happening, the regime became tougher against the jihadists in the country. As a result, GIA's type of action caused itself to lose popular support, not to mention undermining the regime.

In Egypt, two jihadist organizations failed in all attempts to strike the regime as mentioned above. Apart from many failed attempts, a little girl, Shayma, were killed in an assassination attempt executed by Islamic Jihad against the prime minister in 1994. This was a critical point for the future of jihadist movement in Egypt because as Montasser al-Zayyat puts it, killing Shayma, along with murdering the sole eyewitness, Sayyid Yehia, caused widespread fury against the jihadists in the country.[342] Even successful attacks increased the people's anger against the jihadists due to their negative impact on economy. The most significant one among these attacks was that 62 tourists were murdered by Gamaa Islamiya fighters at Luxor Temple. The Egyptian regime left no room for two organizations to operate in the country and Gamaa Islamiya declared that it ended its violent campaign in

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[339] Brooke, Jihadist Strategic Debates before 9/11," 212. Italics is mine.

[340] Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," 28.

[341] Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam,"88.

[342] Montasser Al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda: The Story of Bin Laden's Right-Hand Man*, trans. Ahmed Fekry (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 65.

1997 finally. It was believed that the jihadists could not win the struggle against the apostate regimes.[343] The near enemy strategy lost its function in all sense and became out of date. In this sense, Fawaz A. Gerges describes Bin Laden's strategy change toward the far enemy like this: "a desperate effort to keep a ship from sinking by altering its direction".[344] In other words, Bin Laden led the jihadist movement to rise from its ashes.

The second main reason was based on Bin Laden's political analysis. According to this analysis, the US existence in the Gulf region was in the apostate regimes' favour. It was the main factor that made the political leaders in the region hold the power in their hand.[345] As can be seen, the present political context began to be read from different perspective. The secular regimes used to be regarded as the first and sole target because they were not applying Sharia in accordance with the jihadist's criterion. However, the new enemy emerged. The secular regimes were still in the list of target, but it was thought that the US's support for those regimes was the real reason why the jihadists could not bring down them. That is why it was necessary to focus the root of problem, the far enemy.

The first facilitator reason was that the Afghan Arabs obtained a new transnational sensitivity which could make them more susceptible to Bin Laden's new strategy[346] because Arab Afghans fought against a non-Muslim enemy in both Afghan jihad and subsequent Bosnian civil war, not a apostate regime. These experiences had a transformative impact on Arab Afghans in favour of transnational jihad. The accounts of Al-Bahri, who lived his first jihadi experience in Bosnian civil war in twenty-one years old, can be given as an example for that transformative impact.

> (…) the ideology of the ummah began to evolve in our minds. We realized we were a nation [ummah] that had a distinguished place among nations. Otherwise, what would make me leave Saudi Arabia-and I am of Yemeni origin- to go and fight in Bosnia?[347]

The most of participants to Afghan jihad and subsequent jihadist struggles were people who had no jihadist experience in an organization before and they had honest religious motives

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[343] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 73-74.

[344] Ibid., 69.

[345] Anthony Celso, *Al-Qaeda's Post-9/11 Devolution: The Failed Jihadist Struggle Against the Near Enemy and Far Enemy* (Bloomsbury: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc., 2014), 37.

[346] Gerges, *Far Enemy*, 60.

[347] Ibid., 63.

since the official religious authority in their countries described participation to jihad as a religious duty at those times. However, those regimes laid the groundwork for those people to transform ideologically and become a source of recruit for Bin Laden unintentionally by encouraging them to join the jihadist struggle to get rid of them as mentioned above. Put differently, the win-win strategy in the short run turned into a disadvantage for those regimes' security in the long run.

The second facilitator reason was the desire to attract much more media attention. As Michael Scheuer puts it, attacking the US was an instrument to advertise al-Qaeda and according to Salih Salamah, the member of al-Qaeda, the huge media attention acquired by targeting the US would eliminate people's suspicions about the organization's abilities.[348] The West can ignore the jihadist movement easily by describing the situation as infighting among Muslims in case of the near enemy strategy. That is why Bin Laden wanted the West to pay attention to al-Qaeda by targeting the West directly.

The last facilitator reason was that Afghanistan was the more suitable place for a guerilla war against a conventional army compared to Sudan. Sudan's flat land could be monitored by the US satellites easily compared to Afghanistan's mountainous geography. Sudan was loaded with the officials of adversary neighbors *[which could make a trouble for the jihadists]*. Lastly, Sudan had enough capability to check the jihadist activities in the country.[349]

There were two fatwas which embodied the far enemy strategy. The first one is 'Declaration of Jihad against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries' issued on 23 August, 1996. In this fatwa, Bin Laden declared the defensive jihad against the US by saying that: "Men of the radiant future of our umma of Muhammad, raise the banner of jihad up high against the Judeo-American alliance that has occupied the holy places of Islam".[350] The detail which should be mentioned with regard to this defensive jihad is that the target was the military personnel: "And who is occupying it? The armies of the American Christians and their allies."[351] In addition, this fatwa included a political criticism

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[348] Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes,* 188.

[349] Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden,* 116.

[350] Lawrence, *Messages to the World*, 29.

[351] Osama Bin Laden, "Declaration of Jihad against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries (Excerpts)," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 48.

against the Saudi regime and in this sense; Bin laden explained the regime's sins: running the country with man-made laws, the failure to grant legal rights to its citizens, allowing the US to come the country, incarcering the dissident scholars.[352] Bin Laden sought to attack the regime's legitimacy with that analysis and by doing that, he aimed at attracting much more young people from Saudi Arabia where was regarded as a source of recruit. The last point about this fatwa is that the fatwa was part of the propaganda activities of al-Qaeda. Bin Laden sought to address a very broad geography in the fatwa by saying that "your blood has been split in Palestine and Iraq (…) The massacres that have taken place in Tajikistan, Burma (…) Somalia, Eritrea, Chechnya, and Bosnia-Herzegovina (…) stir up our passions."[353] Bin Laden's aim with addressing this broad geography was to give the message that al-Qaeda was responsive to Muslim's suffering in everywhere and it took on the responsibility to fight on the whole Muslims behalf, no matter whether it was really active in those countries. By doing this, it claimed to represent the leadership of whole jihadist movement.

The second fatwa is 'World Islamic Front Statement Urging Jihad against Jews and Crusaders' issued on 23 February, 1998. The defensive jihad was declared against the US in this fatwa again. The question why the jihad against the US was necessary was answered in this fatwa as a different point from the first fatwa and three main reasons were identified. Firstly, the US has occupied two holy places in Saudi Arabia, been exploiting the wealth in the Gulf region, insulting Muslims, and using its base in the Saudi Arabia to fight Muslim neighbors. Secondly, in spite of the whole destruction caused by embargo on Iraqi people, the US sought to do worse destruction with declaring war against Iraq. Thirdly, with all activities in the region, the US aimed at strengthening Israel and legitimizing its occupation in Jerusalem.[354] The most important point was that the target audience was widened from the military personnel to civilians.

> To kill the Americans and their allies- civilians and military- is an individual duty incumbent upon every Muslim in all countries, in order to liberate al-Aqsa Mosque and the Holy Mosque from their grip, so that their armies leave all the territory of Islam (…).[355]

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[352] Lawrence, *Messages to the World*, 28.

[353] Ibid., 25.

[354] Ibid., 59-60.

[355] Ibid., 61.

In addition, given the signatories[356] of the fatwa, it was aimed to show the solidarity of jihadist movement against the far enemy despite the whole controversy over the new strategy, which will be explained in a detailed way later. Given the signatories, its content, its way of writing and focusing only the US, this fatwa was the most embodied face of the new far enemy strategy and a clear declaration of war against the US. Bin Laden was impatient for applying the new strategy and as will be explained in detail, he embodied the new strategy with two remarkable attacks against the US targets until 9/11. Firstly, the bombs were detonated in US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam on 7 August, 1998 and more than two hundred people were killed. The embassy bombings were al-Qaeda's first serious attempt to be recognized by the US as a threat. Two years later, USS Cole destroyer was attacked with a boat loaded with the bombs in Aden, Yemen on 12 October, 2000 and seventeen soldiers were killed.

Given one of the signatories of 1998 fatwa was Ayman al-Zawahiri, it can be deduced that he changed his mind about the priority of the near enemy and the question how he agreed with Bin Laden about the far enemy strategy is important. Montasser al-Zayyat identified the reasons of this change. The first reason was the operational fiasco of Islamic Jihad in Egypt[357], whose details was explained above. The second reason was that much more members of the organization, even the members of dormant cells began to be jailed due to the failed operations.[358] Even Zawahiri was detained by Russian officials in Dagestan, but released because the officials could not recognize him. Put differently, safe places for Zawahiri and his organization was disappearing quickly at those times. The third reason was that the Islamic Jihad has suffered from lack of cash to finance its activities ranged from operations to daily expenses.[359] This reason was important especially because Zawahiri always tried to find alternative independent financial sources to be able to sustain the operations in Egypt within the framework of near enemy strategy until joining to Bin Laden completely; however, he failed. The fourth reason was that Zawahiri was influenced heavily by Gamaa Islamiya's decision to terminate the violent actions[360]. Due to this decision, the

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[356] Osama Bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri (Islamic Jihad in Egypt), Sheikh Mir Hamzah (the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan), Abu Yasir Rifa'i Ahmad Taha (Gamaa Islamiya in Egypt), Fazlur Rahman (Jihad Movement in Bangladesh)

[357] Al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda*, 64.

[358] Ibid., 65.

[359] Ibid.

[360] Ibid., 70.

sole focal point for the regime was the Islamic Jihad and it had no operational and financial power to afford that. Last reason was Bin Laden himself.[361] Bin Laden recommended that Islamic Jihad should put an end to its violent campaign in Egypt and focus the far enemy. Actually, this was an order in the clothes of advice. Bin Laden knew that Zawahiri was in a difficult situation because of the reasons mentioned above and had to comply with him. As a result, the sole way for Zawahiri to sustain the jihad was the alliance with Bin Laden.

Although Zawahiri espoused the near enemy strategy until the alliance with Bin Laden, he adapted the far enemy strategy very quickly and became Bin Laden's right hand in al-Qaeda. Zawahiri's transformative impact on Bin Laden in this relationship was an issue mentioned frequently in the literature and in this sense; Zawahiri was described as the real brain in al-Qaeda with characterizations like "the man behind Bin Laden".[362] On the other hand, there is a fact that it was Bin Laden who made Zawahiri, who always failed in his jihadist attempts, have today's status in the jihadist movement. Bin Laden gave him a chance to continue his existence in the jihadist movement by making him his right hand in al-Qaeda. As a result, it is not possible to argue who influenced whom much more since they left their mark on each other's thinking extremely as Bruce Riedel puts it.[363]

The far enemy strategy became a bone of contention among jihadist circles because it dared to change the near enemy tradition which has existed since the beginning of the jihadist movement and this tradition was unfamiliar with the new strategy. "Before Bin Laden, transnational jihad *[Fawaz A. Gerges prefers using this term instead of far enemy]* had not been in the jihadist lexicon".[364] As another reason to oppose the far enemy strategy, it was believed that the jihadists were not capable of fighting the US militarily.[365] In accordance with this opposition, for example, Taha who signed the 1998 fatwa on behalf of Gamaa Islamiya had to issue a statement that he did not sign the fatwa actually five months later due to the pressure of leadership of the organization. Moreover, it asked their fighters to

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[361] Ibid., 68.

[362] Lawrence Wright, "The Man Behind Bin Laden," *The New Yorker*, September 16, 2002, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/09/16/the-man-behind-bin-laden (accessed January 15, 2018).

[363] Riedel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda*, 24.

[364] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 66. Italics is mine.

[365] Gerges, *Far Enemy*, 47.

obey the organization's decision to stop the violent campaign and not to participate in the World Islamic Coalition.

When the new strategy was declared, Zawahiri was in a more difficult situation compared to Bin Laden. Unlike Zawahiri, Bin Laden did not belong to any jihadist tradition and was not known by the jihadist circles until the Afghan jihad. On the other hand, Zawahiri has been in the jihadist movement since the age of fifteen and he was devoted to the near enemy strategy with his operations and writings. That is why Zawahiri was exposed to much more criticism due to changing of his mind compared to Bin Laden. For example, he was charged with imperiling the existence of jihadist movement by his colleagues.[366] Moreover, he was mocked with humiliating words. According to former colleagues, while Islamic Jihad transformed from an organization working for the foundation of an Islamic state in Egypt to an ordinary branch of al-Qaeda, Zawahiri become just a helper to Bin Laden.[367] In accordance with this harsh opposition, dissident voices began to rise in Islamic Jihad and some important figures including Zawahiri's brother, Muhammad Zawahiri quit the organization due to his uncompromising attitude. Islamic Jihad merged with al-Qaeda in June 2001 and al-Qaeda's official name changed as Qaedat al-Jihad although everyone called it as al-Qaeda.

Due to the academicians' increasing interest to al-Qaeda after 9/11, al-Qaeda began to be described in a strict frame to facilitate the understanding and tried to explain al-Qaeda as if it has existed as a hierarchical and transnational organization since Afghan jihad, which was a mistake. The reality was different. As Fawaz A. Gerges puts it, there were few persons from Bin Laden's colleagues recalling the name al-Qaeda and the name also was not mentioned in *Encyclopedia of Jihad* written between 1991 and 1993.[368] Moreover, there was no hierarchic and organizaed terrorist organization before 1998 and there were anly Bin Laden and his mujahideens although the name al-Qaeda was used in previous periods to facilitate the understanding of al-Qaeda. In this sense, 1998 fatwa was the real birth certificate of al-Qaeda as an organization which had broad organizational attack capacity in the framework of the far enemy strategy. Put differently, the year 1998 pointed out the fact that a new terrorist organization which began to act in a hierarchic and organized way, had

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[366] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 35.

[367] Al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda*, 95.

[368] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 50.

members from various countries and the capacity to attack transnationally emerged. From 1998 fatwa on, Al-Qaeda became an organization which had a specific department for each function and organized in a hierarchical way. In this hierarchy[369], the Emir-Bin Laden- was at the top position and it was followed by Shura Majlis- Consultative Council-. There were four departments which were interested with military, financial, religious and media issues. In this formal structure, there were also important informal practices. As Rohan Gunaratna says, although it is given importance to merit and competence, the assignments and promotions were based on nationality and personal relations.[370] Although this informality can be seen as a weakness at first sight, that was an effective instrument to prevent the leaks and infiltrations of enemy intelligence services because the loyalty and credibility were the most important ones than anything. In al-Qaeda, despite Zawahiri's right to speak about the formulation of the strategy, the organization was under the total control of Bin Laden. According to his former associate, there is no chance for anyone to disagree with Bin Laden because the opposition was not welcomed.[371]

As mentioned above, al-Qaeda was organized in a centralized and bureaucratized way and this type of organization had an important impact on how the terrorist attacks were carried out. In this sense, the first point that should be mentioned that unlike the rumours about whether al-Qaeda did the terrorist attacks in previous period, the embassy bombings in 1998 and the USS Cole attack in 2000 was executed by order of the leadership of al-Qaeda directly. For example, Bin Laden sent his second in command before Zawahiri, al-Banshiri, to Kenya, which showed also the importance given to the operation.[372] In USS Cole attack, Bin Laden himself picked the target and the perpetrators, and gave the money necessary to buy explosives.[373] That is why it can be said that unlike the previous periods, "the

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[369] In this thesis, the technical issues like which departments al-Qaeda was consisted of, who administered those departments, what kinds of duties the departments had will not be explained because those issues were the details about the daily operations of al-Qaeda, which are not the subject of this thesis. The strategy of al-Qaeda has been formulated by the leadership, which means two persons- Bin Laden and Zawahiri, which that strategy was the main subject of this thesis.

[370] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 57.

[371] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 91.

[372] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 106.

[373] The 9/11 Commission, *The 9/11 Commission Report,* 190.

representation through action"[374] began to be introduced. Al-Qaeda knew that the extraordinary attacks had a lot of benefits for the organization. Those types of attacks attract media attention; raise the morale in the organization, and function as a propaganda material to give a message that the organization is mighty.[375] In other words, the targets were chosen rationally.

Secondly, it was not easy to attack hard targets such as embassy, military base etc. and necessary to design and execute the plan without any mistake. Therefore, it took too long to carry out the attack. For example, al-Qaeda could succeed embassy bombings at the end of five years.[376] This long process was also true for the USS Cole attack and 9/11.

Third point is that the US was still underestimating al-Qaeda's operational capacity at this period despite the embassy bombings. Nine months ago before the USS Cole attack, al-Qaeda tried to carry out a terrorist attack with a boat loaded with explosives on January 2000, but it failed because the boat sank due to the excessive weight. However, it succeeded in executing the USS Cole attack with the same tactic.

Fourthly, al-Qaeda sought to both show its strength and give a symbolic message with the attacks. Its strength was measured by the number of death people and the target. In this sense, more than two hundred people in the embassy bombings and seventeen US soldiers in the USS Cole attack was killed and two hard targets of superpower which were thought to be untouchable were destroyed. As for the symbolic message, the date of embassy bombings was 7 August, 1998, which means the eighth anniversary of arrival of the US in Saudi Arabia. Put differently, the date was chosen by al-Qaeda specifically to give a symbolic message to the far enemy.

As for how the US reacted to these attacks; after the embassy bombings, the US sent missiles to some training camps in Afghanistan where they thought that Bin Laden was there, but it failed. This showed that the US began to attach importance to al-Qaeda because as Anthony Celso puts it, "prior to the embassy bombings, OBL *[Bin Laden]* was more of

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[374] Omar Saghi, "Osama Bin Laden, the Iconic Orator," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 23.

[375] Angel Rabasa et al., *Beyond Al-Qaeda: Global Jihadist Movement* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2006), 26.

[376] Ibid., 64.

an annoyance than a real threat".[377] However, as an unintended consequence of it, that the US saw Bin Laden as a rival was al-Qaeda's favour. Put differently, the sole superpower recognized al-Qaeda's importance. As Rohan Gunaratna says, Bin Laden became one of the most famous jihadists among Islamist circles due to the failed missile attacks overnight.[378] In addition to that, the missile attack could not cause a permanent damage on al-Qaeda's training camps and leadership cadre. Just a few local people and ordinary militant were killed and it was simple to re-construct the camps made of stone, wood, and clay.[379] In case of the USS Cole attack, the US did not retaliate due to the possible negative effect on the presidential election one month later.[380]

Bin Laden began his attempts to establish a media branch of al-Qaeda capable of confronting the counter-media attacks of the West and the apostate regimes after coming to Afghanistan.[381] In accordance with these propaganda activities, he continued to exploit the operational myth created in previous period. In this sense, he sought to create a robust organization image by claiming the responsibility of attacks which he did not order. For example, Bin Laden described the Riyadh and Khobar Towers attacks in 1995 and 1996 respectively, which the real perpetrators was found a few years later, as "warning signs"[382] in 1996 fatwa if al-Qaeda did. The reality was that when al-Qaeda continued to describe as an omnipotent and omnipresent organization, the western media and states adopted this image and shaped its perception about al-Qaeda in accordance with that image. The name Bin Laden began to be the guarantee of success of television programs, books, etc. and legitimized various foreign policy decisions.[383] Bin Laden was aware of the power of his name and never hesitated to exploit the media's need for his name. As Omar Saghi says, an unwritten agreement was reached between al-Qaeda whose survival was dependent on images and the media which can publish anything to increase the ratings.[384] In this sense, he

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[377] Celso, *Al-Qaeda's Post-9/11 Devolution*, 46.

[378] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 47.

[379] Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.*, 122.

[380] Celso, *Al-Qaeda's Post-9/11 Devolution*, 48.

[381] Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden,* 115.

[382] Lawrence, *Messages to the World*, 27.

[383] Kepel, *Jihad*, 313.

[384] Saghi, *Osama Bin Laden, the Iconic Orator*, 27.

was interviewed by the leading journalist in the West such as Robert Fisk, John Miller etc. and his interviews were published in CNN, ABC News, Fox News, Al Jazeera, etc. The whole these were an instrument to introduce Bin Laden much more people and a propaganda activity without cost. Although those media outlets and journalists did not intend to advertise Bin Laden, what they did served to that purpose. The more interviews and videos the media published, the more popularity among jihadist cadres Bin Laden reached. The member of Taliban pointed out the popularity created by the US and the media by saying that:

> I think America has made Osama a supernatural being. Wherever the terrorism occurs, right away they think of him. I don't think he has such influence, or such control and resources. Osama bin Laden has become a symbol for the whole Islamic world. (…) Yes, he is a hero to us, but it is America itself who first made him a hero.[385]

As for the relationship between Bin Laden and Taliban; the similar situation can be seen the similar situation like in Sudan. Put differently, Bin Laden turned into a dominant actor in the relation which he joined as little partner. He always gave the message that he got along with Taliban and the common Islamic ideals led them to cooperate publicly by using a very diplomatic language. For example, in 1996 fatwa, he said that "it is a relationship based on piety and righteousness. We feel completely comfortable with cooperating with the Taleban".[386] However, the reality was so different and the relations were getting strained. The most important controversy was about Ladin's ardent interviews and al-Qaeda's attacks against the US. According to dissidents in Taliban, it became Bin Laden who determined the foreign policy of government instead of Taliban itself and especially his interviews cost Taliban economically and politically and so, the whole Arab Afghans should be expelled from Afghanistan.[387] On the other hand, Bin Laden who was aware of the difficulties Taliban faced portrayed protection of himself as a religious responsibility for Mullah Omar as *Amir al-Mu'minin* to insure his existence in the country against the dissidents. Apart from this debate among two sides, given realization of 9/11 attack without informing Taliban, and subsequent invasion of Afghanistan and collapse of Taliban, it was Brian Jenkins who

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[385] Peter L. Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of of al-Qaeda's Leader* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 227-228.

[386] *Compilation of Usama Bin Ladin Statements 1994- January 2004* (Washington, DC: Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 2004), 33.

[387] Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 61.

described the situation of al-Qaeda in the relationship with Taliban in the best way: "Al Qaeda was the guest who ate the host".[388]

As a last point in this period, it is necessary to mention 9/11 attack, which was the deadliest terrorist attack in the history. The main point which should be explained in this period with regard to 9/11 is about whether Bin Laden anticipated the excessive reaction of the US to the attack. According to Rohan Gunaratna, al-Qaeda did not guess that the US could occupy Afghanistan because that the US withdrew from Beirut in 1983, Aden in 1992, and Somalia in 1993 was a strong indicator.[389] It is the fact that al-Qaeda was influenced by those examples and it really thought that the US was a paper tiger. However, it did not lead al-Qaeda to think that the US did not dare to invade the country. Instead, when the occupation occurred, the US could be dealt with by al-Qaeda because of its weaknesses and be forced to retreat easily.

There were some reasons leading al-Qaeda to think like that. Firstly, an infidel occupation in a Muslim country would increase the financial resources and recruits by leading Muslims to associate the occupation with the Crusaders. Secondly, it was easier to kill Americans in Afghanistan and due to the death of more Americans, the opposition in the US would begin to raise their voices and led the US to retreat finally. Thirdly, after defeating the US in the Middle East, al-Qaeda could wipe out Israel and apostate regimes and deal with the Shia. Fourthly, Bin Laden believed that al-Qaeda could confront with the US only by making much more Muslims get involved in anti-US jihad due to the invasion of the US. [390] Whether all those happened is or not another issue, but given Bin Laden's goals, it can be said that the reaction of the US was what al-Qaeda wanted. Put differently, the 9/11 was not carried out only to kill infidels; on the other hand, it was based on a rational calculation. It was such an attack that al-Qaeda had the leadership of jihadist movement all around world and the actors targeting the near enemy either joined to al-Qaeda or to retreat. A sheikh mentioned this point in his conversation with Bin Laden by saying that "hundreds of people

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[388] Jamie Glazov, "Symposium: Diagnosing Al-Qaeda," *Frontpage Magazine* August 18, 2003, http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=16756 (accessed November 13, 2017).

[389] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda,* 229.

[390] Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden,* 117.

used to doubt you and few only would follow you until this huge event happened. Now hundreds of people are coming out to join you".[391]

4.4. The Post-9/11 Period[392]

Although the invasion of Afghanistan was what al-Qaeda wanted because of the reasons mentioned above, the invasion itself and the Global War on Terror launched after the invasion caused al-Qaeda to be exposed to many negativities. Firstly, the Taliban regime, al-Qaeda's protector in Afghanistan, collapsed quickly. Secondly, unlike pre-9/11 period, its training camps were destroyed to an extent it could not repair. Given the importance of the training camps for the organization, the magnitude of damage can be understood. As Thomas Hegghammer puts it, they created an environment which pushes the volunteers toward applying violence; the recruits can improve their ability to combat and the camp life makes them bond with each other; Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri can instill the ideology, al-Qaedaism, into the recruiters easily and therefore they made the recruiters feel a part of *ummah,* whose goal was to fight against the Jewish-Crusader alliance.[393] The rest of training camps were not capable of functioning properly. Due to the continuous attempts to eradicate the camps, the volunteers can be trained in only elementary level and they have to escape if the camp is discovered in post 9/11 period.[394] Put differently, al-Qaeda lost its function to be a training base for any jihadist organization which sent their fighters to become an expert on a particular ability or improve their combat skills. Thirdly, almost eighty percent of al-Qaeda core members *[who have been planning, organizing and executing the terrorist attacks in pre-9/11 period]* have been killed or arrested. [395] Fourthly, the cooperation between the governments and the security measures against the jihadists have increased under the name of the Global War on Terror. Unlike Bin Laden's expectations, 9/11 attack did not create euphoria among Muslims and instead, it was impossible to find any single

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[391] *The Telegraph,* "Transcript of Osama Bin Laden Video," December 13, 2001, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1365202/Transcript-of-Osama-bin-Laden-video.html (accessed January 2, 2018).

[392] This period refers the time between the 9/11 attacks and Arab Uprisings.

[393] Thomas Hegghammer, "Global Jihadism After the Iraq War," *Middle East Journal* Vol:60, No:1. (Winter 2006): 14.

[394] Michael Zekulin, "Endgames: Improving Our Understanding of Homegrown Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:39, No:1. (2016): 54.

[395] Rohan Gunaratna, "The Post-Madrid Face of Al Qaeda," *The Washington Quarterly* Vol:27, No:3. (2004): 93. Italics is mine.

Muslim who did not condemn the attack. The governments in the Middle East furthered their campaign against the jihadists easily by exploiting that feeling of discontent. As a result, all of those factors prevented al-Qaeda from fulfilling its organizational functions. In other words, all those meant that al-Qaeda lost its organizational capability in Afghanistan which made the organization execute the terrorist attacks. However, the sole unsuccessful point in this successful campaign against al-Qaeda was that Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri managed to escape, which was important for the organization to re-organize later.

Given the operational capacity to strike broadly which took years to build and the annihilation of many experienced core members and the training camps, it was easy to be optimistic about the destruction of al-Qaeda. This optimism can be seen from the impetuous statements of US officials such as "they are being hunted down, their days are numbered"[396]. This impetuous optimism leads the officials to overlook al-Qaeda's resurgence ability and the power to adapt to the new circumstances emanating from al-Qaeda's ability to make rational decisions. In this sense, due to many rational organizational changes, Al-Qaeda has adapted to the post-9/11 circumstances so well that it began to include many operational trends in its organizational evolution. As a result, as will be shown in a detailed manner later, both al-Qaeda leadership has continued to live and has started its attempts to re-organize quickly, and a myriad of al-Qaedas have begun to spread and operate in various parts of the world without the control of al-Qaeda's core members. Put differently, the threat which al-Qaeda has posed did not decreased, but its form changed.

Before making the essential operational changes to adapt to the post-9/11 circumstances, al-Qaeda felt the necessity to give a message that it was still alive despite the invasion of Afghanistan and its destructive effects on the organization. For this reason, in early post-9/11 period, a few terrorist attacks occurred. Some of those attacks were the Djerba Synagogue bombing in Tunisia in April 2002; the nightclub bombings in Bali, Indonesia in October 2002; Mombasa Paradise Hotel bombing in November 2002; the bombing of two synagogues, British consulate and HSBC Bank in Istanbul in November 2003 which killed nineteen people, two hundred tourists, fifteen people, sixty people respectively. These attacks were carried out by associate organizations such as Jemaah Islamiyah which cooperate with al-Qaeda unofficially, not by al-Qaeda core members directly. However, as Marc Sageman says, all perpetrators were trained in al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan

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[396] Bruce Hoffman, "The Global Terrorist Threat: Is Al-Qaeda on the Run or on the March?," *Middle East Policy* Vol:14, No:2. (Summer 2007): 45.

and were controlled by the al-Qaeda leadership, and were assisted financially.[397] This was the signature of al-Qaeda leadership on those attacks. However, these kinds of attacks directed by the al-Qaeda core members were not sustainable in early years of post-invasion period and therefore, al-Qaeda made some important organizational changes.

The destructive consequences of invasion of Afghanistan and Global War on Terror on al-Qaeda were explained above and it was said that the US targeted the al-Qaeda core members particularly. Micheal Kenney emphasizes the undesirable result of eliminating leader cadre by utilizing the experiences of fighting against drug cartels in Colombia: killing core members in the organization can turn the organization into an entity which has the ability to attack without central leadership. That is, it can create a new and fragmented organizational structure which is harder to be dealt with.[398] It can be said by keeping in mind the negative effects of destruction of training camps, safe houses, etc. that Micheal Kenney described transformation which al-Qaeda was exposed to exactly. Marc Sageman defines this transformation in post-9/11 period as "leaderless jihad"[399]. This transformation consisted of five stages.

Firstly[400], while Bin Laden and his experienced core members made important operational decisions in pre-9/11 period, the organization had to relinquish its authority to decide and control the attacks due to loss of its experienced core members, which means de-centralization.[401] This was an obligation to ensure the security of core members including Bin Laden because it was too risky to contact with those members under the heavy surveillance. This was also an organizational necessity because the leadership lost its touch with the groups in the field. In other words, the decision such as how and when the attack

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[397] Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia, Pa. : University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 137.

[398] Angel Rabasa et al., *Beyond Al-Qaeda: Global Jihadist Movement* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2006), 32.

[399] Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia, Pa. : University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)

[400] It is not necessary for all the terrorist attacks in post-9/11 period to fit into all organizational changes, which will be explained step by step here. Like any terrorist organizations, Al-Qaeda exploits any opportunity to execute a terrorist attack and does not have to follow any organizational trends mentioned here. The organizational changes mentioned here are the changes which are generalized by looking the details of a great number of terrorist attacks in this period.

[401] Randy Borum and Michael Gelles, "Al-Qaeda's Operational Evolution: Behavioral and Organizational Perspectives," *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* Vol:32. (2005): 475.

was carried out against which target has not been made by the leadership in Afghanistan until the al-Qaeda core has re-grouped and acquired the ability to carry out a terrorist attack.

Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, prominent al-Qaeda theorist, contemplated on the de-centralization issue and argued that al-Qaeda should change its way of carrying out attacks in post-9/11 period. The terrorist attacks whose details were planned by the al-Qaeda leadership were not easy to execute in the post-9/11 security environment. The solution was the "jihad of individual terrorism"[402], which is the result of first operational change mentioned above. Due to this way of fighting, more ordinary Muslims can shoulder the burden of making the jihad. In other words, al-Suri supports to turn the jihad into mass movement as well as de-centralization.[403] However, the disadvantage of this way of attacking is the shortage of technical expertise due to al-Qaeda's loss of control on the attacks.[404] That is why the percentage of success is low in this type of attacking. The figures show this reality obviously: In the first two and a half years of post-9/11 period, at least 100 attacks were prevented in various stages.[405] To be trained by al-Qaeda core members in the training camps is an important factor which improves combat skills such as planning, organizing, executing etc. extraordinarily, but the perpetrators of 'jihad of individual terrorism' do not have that opportunity. As Marc Sageman says, those perpetrators are organized in autonomous cells and are not known by al-Qaeda leadership.[406]

Secondly, the role played by al-Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan turned from tactical control to inspirational role due to the post-9/11 security environment.[407] When the issue comes to the leaderless jihad, the inspirational role was also important along with de-centralization. Al-Qaeda had the capacity to inspire Muslims by formulating its ideology, al-Qaedaism, which was explained in the second chapter, in the post-9/11 period. That is why it managed to inspire Muslims who it could not reach through its organizational ability for its jihadist purposes in a period when the organization was under heavy pressure. These Muslims

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[402] Brynjar Lia, "Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralized Jihadi Training – Part 1," *Terrorism Monitor* Vol:5, No:1. (2007): par.5, https://jamestown.org/program/al-suris-doctrines-for-decentralized-jihadi-training-part-1/

[403] Brynjar Lia, "Doctrines for Jihadi Terrorist Training," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:20, No:4. (2008): 533.

[404] Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad*, 140.

[405] Gunaratna, "The Post-Madrid Face of Al Qaeda," 93.

[406] Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad*, 140.

[407] Borum and Gelles, "Al-Qaeda's Operational Evolution: Behavioral and Organizational Perspectives," 476.

inspired by al-Qaeda constitute the al-Qaeda networks who live in various parts of the world and had no tangible relationship with the leadership in Afghanistan but are willing to execute the terrorist attack in the name of al-Qaeda's radical goals according to Bruce Hoffman.[408] For example, in the murder of Theo Van Gogh in November 2004 in Netherlands, no operational link between Mohammed Bouyeri, the murderer, and al-Qaeda core members was found. When he was asked why he committed to this attack, his accounts can be defined as the proof that al-Qaedaism was an inspiration to Bouyeri: "What moved me to do what I did was purely my faith. I was motivated by the law that commands me to cut off the head of anyone who insults Allah".[409]

Al-Qaeda is a terrorist organization, but one of the important factors which made it unique compared to the rest of the terrorist organization is that it turned itself into a social movement in post-9/11 period while retaining its organizational existence. An important consequence of being a social movement is that from that time on, al-Qaeda leadership has lost its authority to decide the membership criteria. Put differently, the volunteers are unknown for al-Qaeda leadership and the organization is aware of those volunteers only after they carry out a terrorist attack.[410] Al-Qaeda's door is open to anybody who claims to espouse al-Qaedaism and be ready to execute a terrorist attack in this period. Furthermore, the terrorist attacks in various parts of the world carried out by these volunteers in the name of al-Qaeda give the organization an omnipresence image.

Thirdly, owing to the destruction of training camps in Afghanistan, it was compulsory for al-Qaeda to find alternative ways to be able to train new jihadist generation.[411] It was more difficult for a leaderless jihad network to execute a terrorist attack compared to al-Qaeda affiliate organizations [which will be explained later] which have either training camps or various opportunities to train their fighters in the countries such as Yemen, Syria etc. where

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[408] Hoffman, "The Global Terrorist Threat: Is Al-Qaeda on the Run or on the March?," 48.

[409] Alex S. Wilner & Claire-Jehanne Dubouloz, "Homegrown Terrorism and Transformative Learning: An Interdisciplinary approach to understanding radicalization", *Global Change, Peace & Security,* Vol:22, No:1. (2010): 41. As more examples for leaderless jihad attacks which had no operational link with al-Qaeda core, Dean C. Alexander gives twenty cases inspired by al-Qaeda or al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula- the affiliate organization- from the United States. Dean C. Alexander, "Al Qaeda and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula: Inspired, Homegrown Terrorism in the United States," *Journal of Applied Security Research* Vol:6, No:4. (2011):467-482.

[410] Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad*, 136.

[411] Rabasa et al., *Beyond Al-Qaeda*, 41.

they operate. The leaderless jihad networks had no such broad opportunities and therefore, it was necessary to make some changes in this matter. Al-Suri explains the change by saying that de-centralization should be implemented in training issues, and any place such as house, village etc. should be used for training purposes.[412] In this sense, military training activities have been arranged in the guise of sport activities not to be detected. For example, the group called Supporters of Shariah trained the volunteers in the UK through outdoor sports such as parachuting, scuba diving, map reading, paintball etc.[413] Apart from al-Suri, Abu Bark Naji, another al-Qaeda theorist, pointed out another dimension of the change in this period. Naji stressed the refreshing effect of fight and claimed that the volunteers can be trained in the best way only through participation in the combat.[414] Put differently, there is no opportunity to train the volunteers in a detailed way before sending them to the fight in post-9/11 period due to the reasons mentioned above. For this reason, it was decided to utilize the instructive effect of the fight. Moreover, as can be seen in the leaderless jihad, the number of people who wanted to carry out a terrorist attack for al-Qaeda's goals increased because of the organization's inspirational role in this period and these volunteers were not educated with great efforts by spending money. In other words, they became the cheap labour force for al-Qaeda and it was not a problem for al-Qaeda that they can be killed easily and quickly in the fight. As can be seen, those theorists formulated their ideas as a rational tactician, not a religious man and suggested increasing the amount of violence.

With regard to the second and third changes, the role of the Internet should be explained. According to Gilles Kepel, the Internet became the main source of knowledge and communication by taking the place of mainstream media.[415] The Internet has three functions: * many jihadist texts and magazines can be found in online libraries *the radical preachers *[such as Anwar al-Awlaki]* can reach Muslims by posting their sermons to the Internet *the followers can communicate with each other easily through online forums, chat rooms etc. and therefore, the Internet become a platform to discuss important issues.[416] Due

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[412] Lia, "Doctrines for Jihadi Terrorist Training," 533.

[413] Petter Nesser, "How did Europe's Global Jihadis Obtain Training for Their Militant Cause?," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:20, No:2. (2008): 242.

[414] Lia, "Doctrines for Jihadi Terrorist Training," 529.

[415] Lawrence Wright, "The Terror Web," *The New Yorker,* June 20, August 2, 2004, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/08/02/the-terror-web (accessed December 29, 2017).

[416] Martin Rudner, "Electronic Jihad: The Internet as Al Qaeda's Catalyst for Global Terror," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:40, No:1. (2017): 13. Italics is mine.

to these three functions, the Internet became an important instrument which facilitated al-Qaeda to inspire Muslims. In other words, the Internet played a functional role in pushing would-be jihadists toward action in accordance with al-Qaeda's goals. Moreover, the Internet made the volunteers receive the jihadist training through texts and videos about using weapon, bomb making, basic guerilla tactics, etc. in the post-9/11 security environment which made impossible to go and receive the training in Afghanistan and return to home due to the strict travel rules, surveillance and fly lists. In this sense, the jihadist encyclopedias were posted on the Internet. For example the Encyclopedia of Preparation includes English and Arabic-language various texts and documents amounting to 10,000 pages and consisted of five chapters: Guns, Home-made devices, Guerilla tactics, Conventional warfare, Some English books.[417] The Internet became a platform for the basic jihadist training. For example, in *Inspire,* al-Qaeda's magazine, there was information about bomb making under the name of 'How to make a Bomb in the Kitchen of your Mom'.[418] As another example, in al-Battar Camp, another al-Qaeda magazine, it was said that "in order to join the great training camps you don't have to travel to other lands. Alone, in your home or with a group of your brothers, you too can begin to execute the training program (…)".[419] As can be seen, an ordinary person had an opportunity to make a bomb due to the Internet.

Fourthly, the soft targets *[nightclubs, shopping mall, etc]* which are populated much more instead of hard targets *[embassy, military base etc.]* began to be attacked[420] because as Prem Mahadevan puts it, how many people were killed is an important measure for the success in international jihadist environment which al-Qaeda has dominated.[421] In this issue, Zawahiri said that "be sure to inflict maximum casualties on the enemy, kill the greatest number of people, for this is the language understood by the West (…)"[422]. Both hard targets have been protected strictly and there have been so many soft targets, all of which cannot be protected. This organizational change is valid for both leaderless jihad networks and other terrorist

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[417] Anne Stenersen, "The Internet: A Virtual Training Camp?," *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol:20, No:2. (2008): 218.

[418] Rudner, "Electronic Jihad: The Internet as Al Qaeda's Catalyst for Global Terror," 16.

[419] Stenersen, "The Internet: A Virtual Training Camp?," 224.

[420] Borum and Gelles, "Al-Qaeda's Operational Evolution: Behavioral and Organizational Perspectives," 478. Italics is mine.

[421] Prem Mahadevan, The Glocalisation of Al Qaedaism," in *Strategic Trends 2013: Key Developments in Global Affairs*, ed. Oliver Thränert (Zurich: Center for Security Studies, 2013), 86.

[422] Al-Zawahiri, *Knights under Prophet's Banner (Excerpt),*203.

attacks affiliated with al-Qaeda core members. In this sense, the Djerba Synagogue bombing in Tunisia in 2002; the nightclub bombings in Bali in 2002; synagogue, consulate and bank bombings in Istanbul in 2003; Madrid and London train bombings in 2004 and 2005 respectively both claimed hundreds of lives as mentioned above and were soft targets.

Fifthly, the planning period of associate groups' terrorist attacks *[in early post-9/11 period]* has shortened.[423] For example, the nightclub bombings in Bali were executed in eight months.[424] However, this change is valid also for both leaderless jihad attacks and other attacks affiliated with al-Qaeda core members. Al-Qaeda could execute its attacks in a long process in pre 9/11 period because there was no heavy surveillance over them. However, this type of attack was not sustainable for a terrorist organization whose popularity and even survival was dependent on its ability to execute the terrorist attack frequently in post-9/11 security environment while the advantages of spectacular attacks are clear as mentioned above.

Peter Bergen uses the term "Al-Qaeda 2.0"[425] to emphasize the whole organizational changes, implying the new version of al-Qaeda. In terms of leaderless jihad trend, significant terrorist attacks occurred such as the murder of Theo Van Gogh, Istanbul, Madrid and London bombings; on the other hand, as shown with the figures above, many terrorist attacks were prevented such as an attempt to detonate two trains in Germany by two Lebanese students in 2006. However, an important point is that not many successful terrorist attacks are necessary in order to sustain leaderless jihad trend. Put differently, in every single terrorist attacks, hundreds of people do not have to die like in Madrid bombings. The difficulties to guess how and when the attack can happen, which causes fear that is hard to deal with in target society and its character which makes almost all Muslims in the West usual suspects make the leaderless jihad a special phenomenon. Moreover, this trend is unlikely to be eradicated completely because its roots are related to political, economic, military etc. circumstances in the Middle East directly.

It is an undeniable fact that al-Qaeda experienced the transformation as Marc Sageman says. With regard to leaderless jihad concept, Jason Burke explains the transformation of al-

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[423] Rabasa et al., *Beyond Al-Qaeda*, 66. Italics is mine.

[424] Ibid.

[425] Peter L. Bergen, *The Longest War: The Enduring Conflict between America and al-Qaeda* (New York: Free Press, 2011), 197.

Qaeda with more assertive words and unlike Sageman, argues wrongly that there is no al-Qaeda core anymore.

> The good news is that this al-Qaeda *[referring to al-Qaeda core]* does not exist. The bad news is that the threat now facing the world is far more dangerous than any single terrorist leader with an army, however large, of loyal cadres. Instead, the threat that faces us is new and different, complex and diverse, dynamic and protean and profoundly difficult to characterize.[426]

However, these leaderless jihad assessments shed light on one part of the reality and in this sense, Bruce Hoffman strongly opposes the idea that al-Qaeda is represented only by leaderless jihad attacks anymore. According to Hoffman, it was argued in leaderless jihad assessments that Bin Laden was sidelined from the movement and his fighters, volunteers etc. while staying in a distant cave and he lost his ability to control the movement's future direction.[427] This assessment was wrong for Hoffman. The leaderless jihad attacks alone were not capable of sustaining al-Qaeda's organizational existence and were not powerful enough to pose a durable threat in the long run. Moreover, those kind of attacks point out the strength of al-Qaeda's social movement, not its organizational strength. That is why along with the leaderless jihad attacks, hierarchic and organized way of fight was necessary for al-Qaeda to retain its organizational existence and the leadership position in the jihadist movement. According to Hoffman, al-Qaeda began to overcome the difficulties caused by Global War on Terror and set about carrying out terrorist attacks again.[428] For example, the train and bus bombings in London on July 7, 2005 which claimed 52 lives and wounded hundreds were ordered by al-Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan. It was found out that the ringleader Muhammad Sidique Khan and his aide Shehzad Tanwer went to the training camps in Pakistan before the attacks. As a proof of it, al-Qaeda released a video that Khan read his last will two months after the attack and Tanwer's video a year after the attack. As another example, a new attempt was made on July 24, 2005 but failed. It was again found out that Mukhtar Said Ibrahim, the ringleader, went to Pakistan before the attack. On September 9, 2009, the eighth anniversary of 9/11 attacks, the train system in New York was attempted to be detonated. Najibullah Zazi, the ringleader of the group, admitted that he along with his two friends was taught in Pakistan by al-Qaeda core.[429] On 25 December,

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[426] Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam* (London ; New York : I.B. Tauris, 2004), 1.

[427] Bruce Hoffman, "Al Qaeda's Uncertain Future," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:36, No:8. (2013): 637.

[428] Hoffman, "The Global Terrorist Threat: Is Al-Qaeda on the Run or on the March?," 44.

[429] Hoffman, "Al Qaeda's Uncertain Future," 638.

2009, the passenger plane from Amsterdam to Detroit was tried to be detonated, but failed. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the perpetrator, admitted that he was trained in Yemen[430], which meant that al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula-affiliated organization-, which has operated in Yemen, not al-Qaeda core, had ordered the attack. However, it was an organized and hierarchic attempt made by an organization which carries al-Qaeda's flag. Therefore, it was in al-Qaeda's core favour. As a last example, Faisal Shehzad tried to detonate a bomb at Times Square in May 2010, but failed. He was employed by associate group of al-Qaeda, the Tehrik-e-Taliban and was trained in its camp for this duty.[431] All these terrorist attacks proved that al-Qaeda core still had a capability to strike. As a result, Bruce Hoffman describes the whole transformation which al-Qaeda has experienced in post-9/11 period:

> It is not an "either/or"-phenomenon: There are both new cells inspired by al-Qaida and actual al-Qaida terrorists active today. That is why I think al-Qaida is more dangerous than it was on 9/11. Because you have now a vast sea of self-radicalized Muslims in many places in the Muslim world that aren't necessarily connected with al-Qaida but willing to act. So you still have an al-Qaida organization that is operating on its own but is also seeking to tap into that pool of unhappiness and disaffection.[432]

Unlike the organizational evolution of al-Qaeda as mother organization and its strategies, the organizational evolution of any affiliate organization or associate organization is not explained in this thesis. However, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQ-I) led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi differed from the rest of affiliate/associate organizations in four points. Firstly, AQ-I was the sole example which managed to overshadow al-Qaeda core through its terrorist attacks. Secondly, AQ-I was an important example to be able show the pros and cons of the affiliate strategy which al-Qaeda core launched in this period. Thirdly, al-Qaeda's new strategy- the strategy to keep in with local people which will be explained in the subsequent period- was influenced heavily by AQ-I's actions in Iraq. Fourthly, AQ-I was the forerunner of ISIL/IS which dominated the jihadist movement as an independent organization in post-Arab Uprisings period. For all these reasons, it is necessary to explain AQ-I in a detailed way.

Before explaining AQ-I, it is useful to explain what the invasion of Iraq meant for al-Qaeda. The invasion of Afghanistan was justified as a legitimate reaction to 9/11 by Muslims

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[430] Hellmich, *Al-Qaeda*, 127.

[431] Hoffman, "Al Qaeda's Uncertain Future," 638.

[432] Bruce Hoffman, "Al-Qaida is More Dangerous Than it Was on 9/11," interview by Yassin Musharbash. *Spiegel Online,* October 10, 2006, http://www.spiegel.de/international/interview-with-terrorism-expert-bruce-hoffman-al-qaida-is-more-dangerous-than-it-was-on-9-11-a-441695.html (acccessed January 12, 2018).

because al-Qaeda which managed to attack the US in its territory was targeted through the invasion. However, unlike Afghanistan, it was impossible for the invasion of Iraq to be justified in the same way. It was a part of a grand strategy to design the region in accordance with the US's interest and there was no legitimate reason for the invasion. That is why the invasion of Iraq gave Bin Laden an opportunity to form a broad jihadist campaign against the US, which far more Muslims would support and Bin Laden did not hesitate to exploit it. For example, Bin Laden said just before the invasion that

> do not think that the war will be between the United States and Iraq or between Bush and Saddam. It is between you, all our Muslim brothers, and us on the one side and the Crusaders and the Jews on the other.[433]

From this perspective, the invasion was what al-Qaeda wanted exactly. First of all, Iraq turned into an instrument to divide the focus of the US's military and deflect its attention while al-Qaeda has gained its strength.[434] Put differently, the invasion of Iraq decreased the heavy pressure on al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and created a relative relaxed environment which made al-Qaeda re-gain its capability to strike. For example, the CIA official Gary Schoren who worked in Afghanistan in early days of invasion points out this by saying that

> as early as March 2003 the US military began to withdraw many of the key units involved in the effort [to hunt bin Laden] in order to allow them to regroup and train in preparation for the coming war with Iraq.[435]

Secondly, the invasion of Iraq without a legitimate reason justified Bin Laden's idea that Jewish-Crusader alliance had devilish goals in the Middle East such as establishing the Greater Israel, etc. which were mentioned in 1996 and 1998 fatwas frequently. Thirdly, the US led invasion of Iraq in 2003 destroyed all Iraqi state institutions including army and police forces but could not re-establish those. In this mess, Iraq became a place where new training camps were established and un-experienced fighters could get the fighting ability. For example, according to the CIA report, Iraq is likely to become a much more effectual training field for jihadists compared to Afghanistan because it gives them an opportunity to

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[433] Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden,* 139-140.

[434] Hoffman, "The Global Terrorist Threat: Is Al-Qaeda on the Run or on the March?," 54.

[435] Bruce Riedel, "The Return of the Knights: al-Qaeda and the Fruits of Middle East Disorder," *Survival* Vol:49, No:3. (2007): 110.

learn urban combat.[436] This invasion radicalized even ordinary Muslims and they turned into a source of recruit for al-Qaeda in the long run. Given all these three factors, Iraq is an efficient instrument to be utilized by al-Qaeda for propaganda and recruitment purposes in transnational jihad's favour.[437]

Al-Qaeda leadership began to describe Iraq as a new Afghanistan where all Muslims should go and join the jihad in there. Iraq was a new field to fight against the Jewish-Crusader alliance and therefore, al-Qaeda leadership canalized its propaganda activities to the jihad in Iraq mostly. In this sense, Thomas Hegghammer identified three main reasons in al-Qaeda's texts which describe Iraq as the most crucial jihadist field. Firstly, Iraq is the best exemplar of all misery which Muslims has experienced due to the US.[438] Secondly, Iraq is the most crucial jihadi field in the fight between Jewish-Crusader alliance and Muslims due to Iraq's importance in Islamic history culturally and politically[439] and if the fight is lost, the Greater Israel will be established.[440] Thirdly, the chance to win the fight against the Jewish-Crusader alliance is higher in Iraq compared to other jihadi fields due to the US's excessive spending for the occupation of Iraq.[441]

The invasion of Iraq made a new jihadist leader emerge: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi[442]. Zarqawi was born in Jordan in 1958. Unlike Bin Laden and Zawahiri, Zarqawi was not born in a prestigious and wealthy family. He did not graduate from a university, not to mention his lack of official religious education. Unlike Bin Laden and Zewahiri again, Zarqawi was not predisposed to the religion in his early ages. Zarqawi was first jailed in 1984 due to ordinary crimes such as having drug and sexual harassment[443] unlike many jihadists who were put

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[436] Douglas Jehl, "Iraq May Be Prime Place for Training of Militants, C.I.A. Report Concludes," *The New York Times,* June 22, 2005, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/22/world/middleeast/iraq-may-be-prime-place-for-training-of-militants-cia.html (accessed January 10, 2018).

[437] Bruce Hoffman, "The Changing Face of Al Qaeda and the Global War on Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:27, No:6. (2004): 555.

[438] Hegghammer, "Global Jihadism After the Iraq War," 22.

[439] Ibid.

[440] Ibid., 23.

[441] Ibid.

[442] His real name is Ahmad Fadil Nazzal al-Khalayla.

[443] George Michael, "The Legend and Legacy of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *Defence Studies* Vol:7, No:3. (September 2007): 339.

into jail for their illegal jihadist activities. Until the invasion of Iraq, Zarqawi was one of the ordinary commanders in the jihadist movement. In the last years of Afghan jihad, he went to Pakistan and then returned to Jordan. In Jordan, he was again incarcerated in 1994 and was released owing to the amnesty in 1999. He then went to Afghanistan and began to operate one of the al-Qaeda camps in Heart, a place close to Iranian border. After the invasion of Afghanistan, he escaped to Iraq through Iran. In 2001, there were some preparations in Iraq for the possible invasion. For example, Ansar al-Islam was established as an umbrella organization in late 2001 and Zarqawi was one of the commanders in this organization, but he did not still have any reputation which led the jihadist movement pay attention to him. However, the US again created the devil with its own hands. In this sense, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said in the UN Security Council while legitimizing the invasion that "Iraq today harbors a deadly terrorist network headed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an associate and collaborator of Osama Bin Laden and his al-Qaeda lieutenants."[444] The US used Zarqawi as an excuse related to al-Qaeda to legitimize the invasion of Iraq on paper, but the US exaggerated the importance of Zarqawi by citing his name as an unintended result and therefore, it was a godsend opportunity for Zarqawi and his name gained importance in the jihadist movement overnight. To exploit this opportunity, Zarqawi established his own organization, al-Tawheed wal Jihad, before the invasion.

Unlike Bin Laden and Zewahiri who were both ideologue and strategist, Zarqawi was just a strategist. He made a rational political analysis about post-invasion Iraq and launched its terror campaign shortly after the invasion within the framework of his analysis. As Bruce Riedel puts it, Zarqawi divided its strategy into two parts. Firstly, it was sought to leave the US alone in the field and he reached his first goal through continuous terror campaign, particularly attacking the UN headquarters and Jordanian embassy in Iraq in 2003. Due to the death of Sergio Vieira de Mello, the representative of the UN in Iraq, international organizations began to withdraw its representatives from Iraq in a time when the US and Iraq required them very much. Secondly, the sectarian tension between Sunni and Shia was targeted to create a civil war and by doing this, Zarqawi sought to drag the US into insoluble war in Iraq.[445] For the second part of the strategy, Shia people were targeted violently and continuously.

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[444] Michael, "The Legend and Legacy of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," 341.

[445] Bruce Riedel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology and Future* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 99.

In this two staged strategy, the fight against Shia was prioritized. As mentioned in the second chapter, Zarqawi was the one who expressed the negative attitude against Shia with savagery. The US as a foreign force in Iraq could be dealt with one way or another; however, Shia was more dangerous because they were part of Iraq. Zarqawi told his ideas about what should be done in Iraq to Bin Laden in a letter. As Loretta Napoleoni puts it, it was compulsory to stop Shia and Sunni from coalescing within the framework of secular national resistance for Zarqawi. Otherwise, the jihadist as a foreigner would be sidelined in the field.[446] As can be seen, the goal of Zarqawi was to create polarization between Sunni and Shia people in Iraq. Moreover, according to Zarqawi, the Shia majority in both Iraqi Governing Council created by the US shortly after the invasion and the government after 2005 election and de-baathification which meant the liquidation of Sunni in public life etc. were the proof that Shia collaborated with the enemy-the US. This was another reason that they should be attacked.

Zarqawi was carrying out his Shia-first strategy with extreme violence. For example, Imam Ali Mosque was detonated on August 29, 2003, in which 125 Shia including Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim, leader of Shia political party-the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq- were killed. As another important example, Great Mosque of Samarra, a crucial pilgrimage place for Shia people, was bombed on February 22, 2006. Apart from these two shocking attacks, many Shia shrines in Najaf, Baghdad, Karbala, Samarra etc. was attacked with suicide bombings until his death on June 7, 2006. In these attacks, Zarqawi used the suicide bombing technique excessively and this as a cost-free technique for a terrorist organization explained Zarqawi's extreme violence along with the beheadings. The figures of suicide attacks rose from 133 to 411 between 2004 and 2005, the most of which were carried out by Zarqawi's organization.[447]

While using extraordinary violence, Zarqawi always propagated this violence. In this sense, Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan argue that "(…) he *[al-Zarqawi]* was the first to see the potential of interweaving horrific ultra-violence and mass media"[448]. For example, the video showing that Zarqawi beheaded Nicholas Berg, American journalist, in 2004 was posted on

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[446] Loretta Napoleoni, *Insurgent Iraq: Al Zarqawi and the New Generation* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005), 160.

[447] Michael, "The Legend and Legacy of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," 343.

[448] Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror* (New York: Regan Arts, 2016), 32. Italics is mine.

the Internet and this represented a novelty in jihadist propaganda activities. Weiss and Hassan defined this situation as "televised beheadings"[449]. Given that ISIL/IS, successor of AQ-I, beheaded many people and posted the video to the Internet, it can be said that Zarqawi introduced a new and strong propaganda technique which would be used for years.

It was this ultra-violence which made Zarqawi famous in the jihadist movement and attracted young people. According to Loretta Napoleoni, while Ladin was staying in Afghanistan, Zarqawi became the new face of the jihad, a jihadist magnet for would-be jihadists.[450] The example of Zarqawi was unique in that he became so famous that he overshadowed Bin Laden in a short period. In this sense, he created his own personal cult in the jihadist movement. As Paul Kamolnick puts it, Zarqawism was defined with three characteristics: excessive sectarianism, extraordinary violence, and goal to establish Islamic State to re-create the Caliphate.[451] These three features would continue to become the founding principles of ISIL/IS.

In this period, al-Qaeda core launched the strategy to diffuse its organizational entity to various countries by finding affiliate organizations, which will be explained in a detailed way. Zarqawi's al-Tawheed wal Jihad was the first and foremost example in terms of this new strategy because Zarqawi became the leader of the jihadist fight against the US in this period as mentioned above; on the other hand, al-Qaeda core had to interfere with Zarqawi's capture of leadership of jihadist movement. Moreover, al-Qaeda sought to give the message that it still led the jihadist movement by spreading its organizational entity to Iraq which became the most important battlefield of jihadist fight. On the other hand, Zarqawi as a tactician required the religious legitimacy to garner the support of Sunni people and only Bin Laden could grant it to Zarqawi.[452] This alliance included advantages along with the possible disadvantages. On September 19, 2004, Zarqawi officially gave his pledge to Bin Laden and the official name of the organization was changed as Qaedat al-Jihad in Mesopotamia, but it was known as al-Qaeda in Iraq.

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[449] Ibid.

[450] Napoleoni, *Insurgent Iraq*, 161.

[451] Paul Kamolnick, *The Al-Qaeda Organization and the Islamic State Organization: History, Doctrine, Modus, Operandi, and U.S Policy to Degrade and Defeat Terrorism Conducted in the Name of Sunni Islam* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College, 2017), 77.

[452] Napoleoni, *Insurgent Iraq*, 162.

The negotiations between two sides lasted eight months. Zarqawi was not willing to begin to operate under the name of al-Qaeda unconditionally. Put differently, Zarqawi was not in need of al-Qaeda's leadership desperately and he had the power which made al-Qaeda core accept his demands. This can be seen from his letter to Bin Laden:

> *If* you agree with us on it, *if* you adopt it as a program and road, *and if* you are convinced of the idea of fighting the sects of apostasy, [*then*] we will be your readied soldiers, working under your banner, complying with your orders, and indeed swearing fealty to you publicly and in the news media . . . *If things appear otherwise to you*, [*then*] we are brothers, and the disagreement will not spoil [our] friendship. [This is] a cause [in which] we are cooperating for the good and supporting jihad. Awaiting your response . . .[453]

As can be seen, there was arrogance in the clothes of modesty in the letter and Zarqawi saw himself powerful enough to challenge the rules of al-Qaeda core.

Zarqawi's violence was unlimited and apart from the US and Shia, he added Sunni to his target list gradually. Moreover, the suicide attacks against Shia civilians were at such an extent that even sectarian Sunni people got angry. This caused Zarqawi to lose his public support and to isolate in the field quickly. This is an important disadvantage of al-Qaeda's affiliate strategy. Bin Laden opposed Zarqawi's Shia first strategy for three reasons: Firstly, it would distract the jihadists' attention to the US; secondly, in a fight with Shia supported by Iran, the sole supporter of the jihadists would be the Sunni tyrants who were seen as apostate by al-Qaeda for military, financial etc. assistance; thirdly, Arab regimes would accuse AQ-I of being sectarian and thereby cause it to lose Muslim's support.[454] Bin Laden and Zawahiri had no sympathy for Shia people and agreed with Zarqawi. On the other hand, they knew that it was not a profitable tactic to attack Shia because, as mentioned above, public support for AQ-I was lessening and excessive violence used by AQ-I was damaging Al-Qaeda's interests in Iraq. However, al-Qaeda core did not own any coercive force which made AQ-I accept its target selection and strategy, and therefore, it could not force Zarqawi to act in accordance with what al-Qaeda core wanted. Moreover, al-Qaeda leadership could not afford the estrangement of Zarqawi from the leadership at that time. For these reasons, al-Qaeda core had to bear the cost of the actions of AQ-I, its affiliate organization, which it did not approve.

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[453] Kamolnick, *The Al-Qaeda Organization and the Islamic State Organization*, 74.

[454] Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden,* 142.

Al-Qaeda core tried to push AQ-I toward complying with the orders. For example, in 2005, Zawahiri wrote a letter to Zarqawi, which gave crucial clues about the new strategy-the strategy to keep in with local people- in post-Arab Uprisings period. This letter was written in a very kind fashion without any accusing word because al-Qaeda core knew that it cannot afford the negative consequences if Zarqawi got angry and decided to act much more independently as mentioned above.

According to Zawahiri, jihadist movement in Iraq had to accept the four-staged plan. Firstly, drive the US from Iraq; secondly, establish an Islamic state to control the territory and to prepare being a powerful actor in Iraq; thirdly, spread jihad to neighboring apostate countries; fourthly, fight against Israel.[455] In the letter, Zawahiri emphasized over and over again with different sentences that the public support was indispensable to be able to carry out the plan successfully. He said that the most effective trump card to be able to achieve particularly first two stages is the public support of Muslims all around the region including Iraq.[456] It was emphasized that support of various sections in the society was important. Last but not least, the attacks against Shia people were implied to be a waste of time, resource, etc. and Zawahiri preferred implying this by asking polite questions:

> (…) Or, is it something can be put off until the force of the mujahed movement in Iraq gets stronger? (…) And is the opening of another front now in addition to the front against the Americans and the government a wise decision? Or, does this conflict with the Shia lift the burden from the Americans by diverting the mujahedeen to the Shia, (…).[457]

In the same year, al-Qaeda core sent another letter to Zarqawi and the same topics were raised, but the register of the letter was a little bit critical and it emphasized that Zarqawi should know his limits. However, despite all the warnings, Zarqawi continued to execute his way of fighting until his death on June 7, 2006 and his successor continued his strategy. It was a strange situation because there was an affiliate organization which operated under the name of al-Qaeda, but did not accept its strategy. The more interesting point was that Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) was established on October 15, 2006 shortly after the death of Zarqawi as an umbrella organization, in which AQ-I was included. This was a problem because AQ-I gave its pledge to another organization, ISI, without permission of al-Qaeda

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[455] "Letter from al-Zawahiri to al-Zarqawi," *Federation of American Scientist*, 2005, https://fas.org/irp/news/2005/10/letter_in_english.pdf (accessed February 11, 2018).

[456] Ibid., 4.

[457] Ibid., 8.

core. For all these reasons, the first seeds of tension between al-Qaeda core and AQ-I were sown in this period and this tension reached its peak in 2014, which resulted in the separation of al-Qaeda and ISIL, the successor of ISI, which will be explained in a detailed way in the subsequent period.

The reasons behind AQ-I's loss of Sunni tribes' support[458] in Iraq which it has had since the early days of the invasion heavily influenced al-Qaeda core's new strategy- the strategy to keep in with local people- in the post Arab Uprisings period. Al-Qaeda core deduced from AQ-I's experiences in Iraq that it should change its way of operating while communicating with local people, and therefore, al-Qaeda core is more likely to endure the difficulties in post Arab Uprisings period compared to ISIL/IS, which will be explained in following pages.

Andrew Philips identified three main reasons to explain why Sunni tribes in Anbar, where Sunni Awakening against AQ-I started, began to fight against AQ-I. Firstly, AQ-I members tried to marry with tribes' women to be part of the local people but the tribes opposed it because marriage with a man from outside was banned. When AQ-I threatened the tribes through violence, some armed conflict emerged between the two sides. Secondly, AQ-I interfered in the illegal economic activities of the tribes such as banditry, smuggling, etc. which have been controlled by the tribes for years.[459] Thirdly, AQ-I tried to impose its strict Salafist way of life on local people and tried to regulate social life in accordance with its ideology, and it forced the tribes to obey its political strategy.[460] Instead of satisfying the local concerns, AQ-I defined people who disagreed with itself as apostate by using the takfir.[461] Put differently, AQ-I saw itself as a more powerful actor compared to the tribes and thought that it could force them to act in accordance with what it wanted through violence and intimidation. By crossing the tribes' red lines, it left the tribes with no alternative except for fighting against AQ-I. Moreover, it was proclaimed that the Islamic

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[458] The reasons that the Sunni tribes supported AQ-I were related to the US policy in the post-invasion Iraq directly and Zarqawi's attempts to garner the support of the tribes constitute the secondary importance. That's why it was not related to al-Qaeda's organizational evolution. Conversely, AQ-I was responsible for the loss of that support directly although the US had an impact on the change of tribes' attitude. That's why the reasons of the loss of that support will be explained here.

[459] Andrew Philips, "How al Qaeda lost Iraq," *Australian Kournal of International Affairs* Vol:63, No:1. (2009): 72.

[460] Ibid., 73.

[461] Ibid., 78.

State of Iraq was established on October 15, 2006 in Anbar. This meant that it announced its political desire to take the place of central government and tribes through ISI as a new political entity.[462] This was also threatening in terms of political future of tribes.

All these reasons point to the fact that AQ-I created such a wrath among the tribes that they began to cooperate with the US temporarily against the ISI, which became the common enemy, and this organized movement of tribes was named as Anbar Awakening in September 2006. The cooperation between the tribes and the US was very successful in the fight against AQ-I and as opposed to AQ-I's thoughts, the tribes showed that they were a game-changer in the field.

> The Coalition Forces has the very strong military ability. The civilians and the tribes, they have a difference that the Coalition Forces doesn't have. It's that they're local -they found and knows who comes from outside. They know who are the insurgents and who are al Qaeda in general, such that there is no more al Qaeda or anything else. You wouldn't believe me. I'm not exaggerating that in two months, in two months everything was finished.[463]

At the same time, the US deployed tens of thousands of soldiers to Iraq within the framework 'surge' strategy. Moreover, 'Sons of Iraq' program was launched in Diyala and Baghdad by General Petraeus as an attempt to export the success of Anbar Awakening and people from the tribes were employed as militia to fight AQ-I with a view to integrating them to police forces later.[464] For these reasons, ISI was losing its strength increasingly and the number of leaderless jihad attacks was decreasing. At first sight, everything was good from perspective of the US and this led the top level US officials to make impetuous statements which overlooked al-Qaeda's resurgence ability again. For example, Juan Zarate, National Security Advisor said that end of al-Qaeda as a transnational danger was "visible" and "foreseeable".[465] The aim of the US in Iraq was to leave the country without assuming any responsibility as much as possible by making Iraqi people-especially Sunni people- to shoulder the burden, but the US did not reward them for their efforts to fight al-Qaeda. For

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[462] John A. McCary, "The Anbar Awakening: An Alliance of Incentives," *The Washington Quarterly* Vol:32, No:1. (2009): 47-48.

[463] Ibid., 51.

[464] Najim Abed Al-Jabouri and Sterling Jensen, "The Iraqi and AQI Roles in the Sunni Awakening," Prism 2, no. 1 (December 2010): 14.

[465] Alex Spillius, "Demise of al-Qa'eda in sight, US official says," *The Telegraph,* May 15, 2008, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/democrats/1957428/Demise-of-al-Qaeda-in-sight-US-official-says.html (accessed February 10, 2018).

example, vacant positions in the Ministry of Interior were not given to the Sunni young employed in the Sons of Iraq program and the domination of Shia in the politics was increasing. In other words, despite all their efforts, the marginalization of Sunni in politics continued to increase and this created a large disappointed crowd which ISI would exploit to revive itself again.

As mentioned above, one of the al-Qaeda's solutions to adapt to post-9/11 security circumstances was to transform itself into a social movement while retaining its organizational entity. Put differently, al-Qaeda sustained its existence through both leaderless jihad attacks and the attacks ordered by al-Qaeda core directly. In addition to this, the invasion of Iraq was another factor increasing al-Qaeda's resilience. However, al-Qaeda was not satisfied and launched a new strategy in this period: the strategy to diffuse its organizational entity to various countries through affiliate organizations. Affiliate strategy meant that a terrorist organization recognized the authority of al-Qaeda leadership and changed its name by using the word 'al-Qaeda', and the relationship between two organizations was formalized.[466] *[The reaction of the US to]* the 9/11 widened the battlefield in an extent that al-Qaeda could not afford it alone and pursuing the jihad both in the West and the Middle East caused a great pressure on the organization.[467] In other words, al-Qaeda core sought both to ease the pressure on the leadership through affiliate organizations in various countries and to continue to attract media attention due to the terrorist attacks carried out by affiliate organizations operating under the name of al-Qaeda. This strategy differed from leaderless jihad in two points. Al-Qaeda's organized and hierarchic power would increase and it would have the opportunity to reach far more training camps in many safe havens. These two differences were at the same time among the advantages of the strategy. From this perspective, affiliate strategy was important in terms of the continuation of al-Qaeda's organizational existence. Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQ-I) in 2004; al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2006; al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in 2009; al-Shabaab in Somalia in 2010; Jabhat al-Nusra in 2013 became affiliate organization.

As for the advantages of this strategy; apart from two advantages mentioned above, firstly, it would lessen the pressure on the al-Qaeda leadership as mentioned above because the area of fight against the al-Qaeda widened through the affiliate organizations. Secondly, because

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[466] Daniel Byman, "Buddies or Burdens? Understanding the Al Qaeda Relationship with Its Affiliate Organizations," *Security Studies* Vol:3, No:3. (2014): 434-435.

[467] Barak Mendelsohn, "Al-Qaeda's Franchising Strategy," *Survival* Vol:53, No:3. (2011): 40. Italics is mine.

of the affiliates owning the al-Qaeda label, al-Qaeda can continue to describe itself as the leading actor of the jihadist movement in the Islamic world.[468] Al-Qaeda sought to give the message that it was wherever Muslims needed it. With regard to this point, AQ-I was an important example because it operated in Iraq which became the most important battlefield at that time. As another example, Jabhat al-Nusra has been operating in Syria, which became the leading battlefield in the post Arab Uprisings period. Thirdly, due to the affiliate organizations, al-Qaeda made itself visible in many battlefields where otherwise it could not operate on its own. For instance, AQIM has been operating in Niger, Mali, and Mauritania.[469] Fourthly, it is useful for the affiliate organization to take the name of mother organization *[al-Qaeda]* because that name brings the affiliate organization a ready audience.[470] Although this advantage is important for all affiliate organizations, it constitutes a significant importance for the affiliates such as AQIM whose sphere of influence was on the periphery of the jihadist movement because all would-be jihadists aim to go to important jihadist battlefields such as Iraq and Syria; however, the name 'al-Qaeda' would be a crucial incentive for people of the region to stay. For example, according to the US, twenty percent of suicide attacks in Iraq were carried out by Algerians,[471] which showed the size of ready audience which AQIM could have.

However, this strategy was not cost-free and there were some disadvantages. Firstly, the flow of information from affiliates to al-Qaeda core is slow and insufficient, which causes troubles for al-Qaeda core if a problem which needs leadership's quick intervention emerges in affiliates.[472] The daily contact between two sides is impossible because it is too risky to use any electronic communication tool due to the post-9/11 security measures. However, other communication ways are not risk-free. For example, the person who was responsible for delivering the letter written by Zawahiri to Zarqawi in 2005 mentioned above was caught. For this reason, it is really difficult to deal with these disadvantages. Secondly, while al-Qaeda core is the target of military campaign, its affiliates can get an opportunity to

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[468] Byman, "Buddies or Burdens? Understanding the Al Qaeda Relationship with Its Affiliate Organizations," 453.

[469] Ibid., 448.

[470] Ibid., 442. Italics is mine.

[471] Jean-Luc Marret, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb: A "Glocal" Organization," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:31, No:6. (2008): 545.

[472] Mendelsohn, "Al-Qaeda's Franchising Strategy," 42-43.

operate autonomously and therefore, the leadership could not force them to act in accordance with its strategy and target preference.[473] For this reason, to get an affiliate means that al-Qaeda core is responsible for affiliates' both successes and failures.[474] In this sense, for instance, despite all its efforts, al-Qaeda core could not deter Zarqawi from executing his Shia-first strategy and it could not do anything while Zarqawi's actions in Iraq were affecting al-Qaeda label negatively. Thirdly, when a local organization failed in its fight against apostate regime, a tendency to join al-Qaeda to repair its image emerges in the organization, and therefore, al-Qaeda core buys a notorious goods.[475] In this sense, al-Qaeda core was unwilling to accept The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) as an affiliate initially because of the slaughter carried out against the civilians by its predecessor, the Islamic Armed Group (GIA).[476] Fourthly, if the affiliate organization espouses the global jihad more than needed after being an affiliate, it will allocate less resource to local issues, which is a risk for the affiliate.[477] This can cause some members in the organization who are much more interested in the local jihad to oppose. For example, while GSPC was trying to convince al-Qaeda core to be an affiliate between 2005 and 2007, some people called Algerianists, who were giving importance to jihad in Algeria, left the organization.[478]

Another operational change made by al-Qaeda to be able to adapt to the post-9/11 security circumstances is "the ideological hybridization of jihadi groups"[479]. By using this term, Thomas Hegghammer meant the fusion of revolutionary jihadism, which has been targeting the apostate regimes-near enemy- and has been living since the beginning of jihadist movement, and transnational jihadism, which has been targeting the US and its western

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[473] Ibid., 43.

[474] Ibid.

[475] Byman, "Buddies or Burdens? Understanding the Al Qaeda Relationship with Its Affiliate Organizations," 456-457.

[476] Adib Bencherif, "From Resilience to Fragmentation: Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Jihadist Group Modularity," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2017): 4. GSPC would be AQIM after being an affiliate.

[477] Byman, "Buddies or Burdens? Understanding the Al Qaeda Relationship with Its Affiliate Organizations," 455.

[478] Bencherif, "From Resilience to Fragmentation: Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Jihadist Group Modularity," 9.

[479] Thomas Hegghammer, "The Ideological Hybridization of Jihadi Groups," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* Vol:9. (2009): 26-45. Thomas Hegghammer uses the term for all jihadist groups, but i quote the term for al-Qaeda.

allies- the far enemy- and has been launched in 1996 and 1998 fatwas. Briefly, the far enemy strategy was cancelled and the attacks began to include both far enemy and near enemy targets in the post-9/11 period. For example, apart from Madrid, London, and Istanbul attacks, there were terror attacks in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Indonesia. This was actually a mandatory operational change to be able to carry out much more attacks easily because it was more difficult to attack far enemy targets during the post-9/11 period due to the increasing security measures despite important successful attacks. As another reason for this change, according to Hegghammer, problems of finding new recruits emerged and therefore, it was thought that recruits may increase by addressing much more people through mixture of far and near enemy strategies.[480] Moreover, the mergers between al-Qaeda core and local organizations *[affiliate strategy]* have precipitated the hybridization[481] because all affiliates had their own local targets list apart from the common global targets list. In this sense, Zarqawi's attack against both the US and its allies, and Shia and Iraqi security forces was an exemplar of hybridization. As another example, while AQAP was fighting against Yemeni security forces, it plotted to attack against a passenger plane on December 25, 2009 at the same time. Lastly, AQIM attacked both UN office in Algeria and Constitutional Court building simultaneously on December 11, 2007.

As a last word in this period, it should be asked that whether 9/11 and subsequent events are a success. This is a matter of perspective in the final analysis but there are some realities as well. There was no single individual who did not hear anything about Bin Laden or al-Qaeda after 9/11. "The 9/11 attacks made al Qaeda a household name".[482] Put differently, 9/11 enabled the organization to climb the leadership position in the international jihad. The 9/11 attack was also a success in tactical sense. Al-Qaeda managed to attack two well-known places simultaneously in the enemy's territory, The World Trade Center and The Pentagon. Moreover, the attack which al-Qaeda executed by spending 500,000 dollars cost the US economy 500b dollars.[483] Due to the War on Terror launched after 9/11, more than 5,000 soldiers of the US and its allies lost their lives along with thousands got injured.[484] As

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[480] Ibid., 27.

[481] Ibid., 38.

[482] Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda*, 431.

[483] Bergen, *The Longest War*, p. 91

[484] David Von Drehle, "How the U.S. Finally Got Its Man", *Time*, May 20, 2011, http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2069571,00.html, (accessed January 21, 2018).

a result, the 9/11 attacks served al-Qaeda to establish a psychological superiority in the jihadist movement and this was an intangible benefit for the organization.

On the other hand, as Max Abrahms explains, after 9/11 the US cemented its relations with Muslim countries [*apostate regimes*] and Israel; consolidated its forces in the Persian Gulf; encouraged military interventions which caused many Muslims to be death.[485] Moreover, the training camps and al-Qaeda's transnational operational power to strike were destroyed widely and the many core members of al-Qaeda were killed as mentioned above. As can be seen, the measurement of success is not a black and white issue. However, there is one thing that cannot be denied and it is that the world has radicalized much more due to the Global War on Terror since 9/11[486]. In this sense, it is not important to Al Qaeda that many Muslims have been killed or Muslims have been exposed to miserable conditions in especially Iraq and Afghanistan in the post-9/11 period. All these lay the foundations for al-Qaeda to live longer and unfortunately that is an accomplishment for al-Qaeda unfortunately. Put differently, although al-Qaeda was exposed to many negativities in the short run after the 9/11 attacks, the destruction the US caused in the region as an excessive reaction to 9/11 attacks created suitable conditions for al-Qaeda to live longer. In this sense, something which is seen as against al-Qaeda's interests in the short run can be in al-Qaeda's favour in the long run. For this reason, the situation in the post 9/11 period was an important example of that the benefit should be interpreted in the long term. In addition, al-Qaeda re-organized itself and began to operate with much more violent tactics in post-9/11 period. Al-Qaeda transformed itself into a social movement while retaining its organizational existence. "The distributed social movement that is al-Qai'da is multi-generational, without geographic center, transnational in nature, virtual to design and exceptionally difficult to target effectively."[487] It can be said that there is no one al-Qaeda and many al-Qaedas consisting of affiliated groups and leaderless jihad networks spreading various parts of the world have begun to exist in post-9/11 period. Consequently, al-Qaeda managed to sustain itself thanks to many organizational changes and the ability to inspire people through al-Qaedaism.

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[485] Max Abrahms, "Al Qaeda's Scorecard: A Progress Report on Al Qaeda's Objectives", *Studies in Conflict &Conflict,* Vol:29, No:5, (2006): 509-529, p. 517-518. Italics is mine.

[486] Hellmich, *Al Qaeda,* 59.

[487] Combating Terrorism Center, "Al-Qa'ida's Five Aspects of Power," *CTC Sentinel* Vol:2, No:1. (January 2009): 1.

4.5. The Post-Arab Uprisings Period[488]

The years 2010s began with two important events which can be regarded as negative for al-Qaeda at first sight: The Arab Uprisings and the death of Bin Laden. However, contrary to the expectations, these two events did not cause difficulties which were hard for al-Qaeda to deal with and it can even be said that it was al-Qaeda which exploited the post-Arab Uprisings circumstances most, which will be explained in a detailed way later. However, these two events created baseless optimism about the future of al-Qaeda in the US administration and the US officials made impetuous statements again without waiting how al-Qaeda would respond to those events. For example, Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta said that "We're within reach of strategically defeating al Qaeda."[489] Even the President Obama said that "the goal that I set – to defeat al Qaeda and deny it a chance to rebuild- is now within our reach."[490] Time has shown that the US administration was wrong again.

As for the possible effects of death of Bin Laden on the fate of al-Qaeda; it was a fact that nobody in the jihadist movement had the legitimacy as much as that Bin Laden had and therefore, nobody was capable of being the leader like Bin Laden. Whoever succeeded Bin Laden was always be compared with him. In this sense, even Zawahiri was a controversial leader compared to Bin Laden despite his long years in the organization. Fawaz A. Gerges points out this controversy over Zawahiri by saying that he never owned unchallenged allegiance of the jihadists and was regarded as a belligerent person who always discussed with other jihadists about theological and political issues.[491] Moreover, it can be said that Zawahiri was born to be second in command mentally because he failed in his all attempts as the leader of Islamic Jihad. However, al-Qaeda has not been controlled only by the leadership since the previous period and the leadership also made important rational operational changes which enabled organizational entity and al-Qaeda threat to outlast the lives of the al-Qaeda core members as mentioned above. This was a factor which made al-

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[488] In the literature, apart from the term 'Arab Uprisings', Arab Spring or Arab Winter is used also. I prefer using the term Arab Uprisings because of its objective appearance.

[489] Elisabeth Bumiller, "Panetta Says Defeat of Al Qaeda Is 'Within Reach'," *The New York Times*, July 9, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/10/world/asia/10military.html (accessed January 7, 2018).

[490] Peter Bergen, "Time to Declare Victory: al Qaeda is Defeated," *CNN Security Clearance*, June 27, 2012, http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/27/time-to-declare-victory-al-qaeda-is-defeated-opinion/ (accessed January 11, 2018).

[491] Fawaz A. Gerges, *A History: ISIS* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 242.

Qaeda unique in the jihadist movement. That is why it was naive to think that the death of Bin laden would have fatal effects on al-Qaeda.

When the Arab Uprisings began in last days of 2010 in Tunisia, it was impossible to predict that those uprisings would impact the whole region heavily. In a region where there is unfamiliarity with the popular movements, the uprisings spread to Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria quickly and the Zine El Abidine Ben Ali-the president of Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak- the president of Egypt were forced to resign. The character of the uprisings, the protester's economic, political etc. demands and quick resignation of two dictators created euphoria among the experts studying the region. This prevented the researchers from foreseeing the future events in the Middle East correctly. In this sense, the experts began to write about the obituary of al-Qaeda eagerly at that time. Despite some dissident voices, the analysis with the titles such as "Why Arab Spring could be al Qaeda's fall"[492] and "The Arab Spring Threatens Al Qaeda"[493] were popular and even Fareed Zakaria, a prominent journalist writing about international relations issues, said that "Al Qaeda is irrelevant".[494] Those analyses have proven to be wrong.

It is a fact that the Arab Uprisings had important points contradicting with al-Qaeda's ideology, i.e. al-Qaedaism and its way of struggle, which was the reason of those assertive statements. Firstly, it was seen that the dictators could be overthrown without al-Qaeda leading Muslims as a vanguard.[495] Secondly, the protesters' peaceful methods contradicted al-Qaeda's idea that the change could be achieved only by jihadist violence.[496] Thirdly, al-Qaeda's rhetoric was damaged due to the resignation of the apostate dictators because its rhetoric depended on the dictators' degeneration to be able to offer its Islamist government

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[492] Paul Cruickshank, "Analysis: Why Arab Spring could be al Qaeda's fall," *CNN* February 21, 2011,http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/02/21/arab.unrest.alqaeda.analysis/index.html (accessed February 11, 2018).

[493] Ian Bomberg, "The Arab Spring Threatens Al Qaeda," *Center for American Progress* May 11, 2011, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2011/05/11/9684/the-arab-spring-threatens-al-qaeda/ (accessed February 11, 2018).

[494] Fareed Zakaria, ''Fareed's Take: Al Qaeda is irrelevant,'' *CNN*, March 7, 2011, http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2011/03/07/al-qaeda-is-irrelevant/ (accessed February 11, 2018).

[495] Donald Holbrook, "Al-Qaeda's Response to the Arab Spring," *Perspectives on Terrorism* Vol:6, No:6. (December 2012): 5.

[496] Ibid.

as an alternative.[497] Fourthly, while al-Qaeda was preaching an Islamic state, the activists had secular and modern goals such as democracy, right to speak, and etc.[498]

Despite all those contradictions, it was not possible to declare that al-Qaeda was at the end of its life because of its enduring resurgence ability. Al-Qaeda had a game plan which enabled it to deal with the difficulties caused by the Arab Uprisings. This game plan had five stages. Firstly, al-Qaeda core stated that it supported the protesters because the organization could not afford the estrangement of Arab masses from al-Qaeda. Bin Laden said that "we follow along with you this great historical event. We share with you the joy and happiness and the delight and gladness. We rejoice for your joy, and we grieve for your distress".[499] Secondly, it was aimed to describe the foes of two sides as the same by associating al-Qaeda's fight against apostate regimes with the Arab Uprisings.[500]

> The popular Arab uprisings proved to have an Islamic orientation in its greater part, and they rose up and raged against America's agents (…) and those who have turned their countries into stations of torture, detention, and persecution within the Zionist-Crusader system.[501]

That is, al-Qaeda claimed to be on the same side with the protesters by interpreting the Arab Uprisings within the framework of transnational jihad which it has waged for years. Thirdly, al-Qaeda by acting as a top authority sought to formulate a road map for the protesters with regard to what should be done after the protests. In this sense, al-Qaeda core stated that the Islamic governance should be found in place of overthrown regimes: "(…) Muslims (…) must not suffice with merely removing the tyrant whose removal is an obligation, but rather they must continue their Jihad and struggle until an Islamic government is established which guarantees justice, freedom, and independence."[502] In other words, as long as the Islamic

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[497] Ibid.

[498] Juan C. Zarate and David A. Gordon, "The Battle for Reform with Al Qaeda," *The Washington Quarterly* Vol:34, No:3. (2011): 108.

[499] Usama Bin Laden, *The Speech by the Martyr of Islam (As We Consider Him),* The Global Islamic Media Front, April 2011, https://ia800504.us.archive.org/6/items/the-martyr-of-islam-last-speech-to-his-muslim-nation-imam-osama-bin-laden/he-martyr-of-islam-last-speech-to-his-muslim-nation-imam-osama-bin-laden.pdf (accessed January 8, 2018).

[500] Alex S. Wilner, "Opportunity Costs or Costly Opportunities? The Arab Spring, Osama Bin Laden, and al-Qaeda's African Affiliates," *Perspectives on Terrorism* Vol:5, No:3-4. (September 2011): 55.

[501] Holbrook, "Al-Qaeda's Response to the Arab Spring," 9.

[502] Ayman al-Zawahiri, *A Message of Hope and Glad Tidings to Our Fellow Muslims in Egypt (4),* The Global Islamic Media Front, 14 April 2011, https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/ayman-ae1ba93-

governance was not established, the resignation of the dictators caused by the uprisings would not provide any permanent success. Al-Qaeda core knew that the more expectations uprisings caused, the more disappointment Arabs experienced when the expectations did not materialize.[503]   It was naive to expect that Arabs who have lived in the dictatorship for centuries could digest the democratic practices overnight. In this sense, as Juan C. Zarate puts it, al-Qaeda planned to exploit the frustration in the post-uprisings situation to refresh itself.[504] That is why al-Qaeda made its call to establish the Islamic government although it knew that the protesters would not comply with that call. By doing this, al-Qaeda wanted to exploit all failures in any type of government except Islamic government established in post-uprisings period. It tried to create an atmosphere of 'I told you'. Al-Qaeda sought to create an opportunity to describe itself as an alternative by saying that 'you were disappointed because you did not listen to me'. Fourthly, al-Qaeda launched its own propaganda campaign against the idea that al-Qaeda is not relevant anymore. In this campaign, firstly, it focused on disproving the idea that al-Qaeda opposed the peaceful methods as a way of struggle. For example, Yahya Ibrahim, the editor of *the Inspire* said that al-Qaeda admitted the peaceful methods for the regime change as a way of struggle, but was against the idea that violence should be excluded totally.[505] Moreover, it was claimed that the removal of dictators would be in al-Qaeda's favour. Anwar al-Awlaki, famous AQAP ideologue, argued that those dictators were the agents, who were defending the US's interest in the region, but now it was necessary for the US to endeavor much more to be able to find new partners, which would distract the US and this was an advantage for al-Qaeda.[506] Fifthly, al-Qaeda would use a modern and secular rhetoric addressing important problems such as the unemployment, malpractice, etc. by launching the strategy to keep in with the local people in this period and this is an indication that al-Qaeda takes lessons from the uprisings. Apart from these five factors, wherever there is the risk of instability, al-Qaeda is there to exploit that instability. In this sense, al-Qaeda has benefited from the post-Arab

e1ba93awc481hirc4ab-e2809cfourth-installment-of-a-message-of-hope-and-glad-tidings-to-our-people-in-egypte2809d-en-gimf.pdf (accessed January 8, 2018).

[503] Wilner, "Opportunity Costs or Costly Opportunities? The Arab Spring, Osama Bin Laden, and al-Qaeda's African Affiliates," 57.

[504] Juan C. Zarate, "Al Qaeda Stirs Again," *The New York Times,* April 17, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/18/opinion/18Zarate.html (accessed February 10, 2018).

[505] Florian Flade, "Al-Qaida Celebrates Middle East Revolutions," *Jih@d*, March 30, 2011, https://ojihad.wordpress.com/tag/tsunami-of-change/ (accessed February 12, 2018).

[506] Ibid.

Uprisings' instabilities and civil wars in Libya, Yemen, and Syria through AQIM, AQAP, and Jabhat al-Nusra respectively, which will be shown in a detailed way.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi[507] was born in 1971 in Samarra, Iraq. He had a PhD in Islamic Jurisprudence, which gave him religious legitimacy necessary for a jihadist leader. That is, Baghdadi's official religious background is stronger than that of Zawahiri; a situation which was effective in Baghdadi's denial of Zawahiri's religious authority.[508] Unlike Zawahiri, Baghdadi, according to accessible sources, was not in the jihadist movement at his early ages and had ordinary career goals. Hisham al-Hashimi, an ISIL expert, described Baghdadi in 1990s: "(…) he was extremely shy and did not speak much. He was interested in religious studies (…). His ambition was limited to obtaining a government job within the Islamic endowment ministry."[509] However, the invasion of Iraq marked a watershed in his radicalization according to those who recognized him.[510] As mentioned above, the invasion radicalized many ordinary Muslims and the most important person among those radicalized was Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the time will show. He established his organization- Jaish Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaah- in 2003 shortly after the invasion. He was jailed in the prison 'Camp Bucca' operated by the US in 2004. Ex-prisoners described Camp Bucca as an al-Qaeda factory manufacturing the jihadists quickly.[511] In other words, it can be said that Camp Bucca experience accelerated his radicalization. After ten months, he was released from the prison and joined Islamic State of Iraq in 2006 and, Baghdadi became the closest aide to Abu Omar al Baghdadi, the leader of ISI, quickly. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became an arrogant jihadist now. Like Zarqawi, according to Baghdadi, only jihadists loyal to him were on the right path. When the issue comes to jihadists disloyal to him, Baghdadi was clear: "Fighting them is more of a priority than fighting the Americans".[512] This arrogant line of thinking which equates his own position with the religious accuracy explains ISIL/IS's violent campaign against the other jihadist groups in the field in Syria partly and also this

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[507] His real name is Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai.

[508] I compare Baghdadi with Zawahiri because shortly after Baghdadi took the leadership in ISI, Bin Laden was killed in a raid by the US soldiers on May 2, 2011. Moreover, the jihadist conflict resulted in the separation of al-Qaeda and ISIL in 2014, which will be explained, was between Baghdadi and Zawahiri.

[509] Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS,* 112.

[510] Gerges, *A History*, 131.

[511] Ibid., 133.

[512] Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS,* 114.

arrogance was one of the reasons of the separation of al-Qaeda and ISIL in 2014. When Abu Omar al Baghdadi was killed in April 2010, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became the leader of ISI. As can be seen, he climbed the jihadist ladder quickly and became the leader of the organization he had joined just four years ago.

His first goal in the organization was to consolidate his leadership.[513] In this sense, some core members of the leadership regarded as a threat to his leadership were killed by order of Baghdadi. As Charles Lister puts it, he by forming the leadership cadre personally created a group of commanders who had undisputed loyalty to him.[514]

Secondly, it was necessary to re-gain its operational strength and ameliorate its image in the eyes of Iraqi Sunni people. In this sense, 'Breaking the Wall' military campaign was launched in 2012 and ISI rescued the important jihadists from Iraqi prisons. And then, 'Soldiers' Harvest' military campaign was launched in 2013 and continuous attacks were started against the Iraqi security forces, which were consisted of Shia people. These were important signs of that ISI's operational strength to hit increased. In terms of fixing the ISI's image, Nouri al-Maliki, the Prime Minister of Iraq from 2006 to 2014, was ISI's closest assistant because of his sectarian policies. After the US left Iraq, Iran began to influence Iraq much more and Sunni majority was getting marginalized increasingly. Despite its notoriety, ISI became the sole ally of Sunni people again and began to improve its relationship with local people. Moreover, especially after the withdrawal of the US forces from Iraq, due to the lack of central authority in the Sunni parts of the country, ISI increased its territory gradually.

While Baghdadi was increasing its military power and ameliorating its image, a new battlefield was gaining importance day by day in the jihadist movement: Syria. As Seth G. Jones says, Syria was turning into a new Afghanistan as ideological and military training area for would-be jihadists[515] due to the civil war. Baghdadi decided to operate in this new

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[513] The organizational evolution of ISI/ISIL/IS is beyond the scope of this thesis. The aim is to be able to compare al-Qaeda with ISIL/IS and explain the competition between two sides. Therefore, important points to fulfill the aim will be explained.

[514] Charles Lister, "Assessing Syria's Jihad," *Survival* Vol:56, No:6. (2014): 91.

[515] Seth G. Jones, "Syria's Growing Jihad," *Survival* Vol:55, No:4. (2013): 53. In jihadist culture, it is common to make a reference to Afghanistan when something new emerges because Afghanistan has a special importance. On the other hand, Syria can be likened to Iraq a decade ago also.

war theater and Jabhat al-Nusra[516] was established in October 2011 as a Syrian branch of ISI whose main operation area was Iraq. This was a new situation in the history of al-Qaeda because this new entity in Syria was not an official affiliate which gave its pledge to al-Qaeda core. Al-Nusra was a military entity of an affiliate organization. Although it began to operate, it was proclaimed officially after almost one year and the more important one was that it was not declared that al-Nusra was a military branch of ISI until Baghdadi himself declared it on April 8, 2013 because both ISI's notoriety in Iraq could damage al-Nusra's image at the beginning and Syrian opposition had doubts about any outsider forces. That is why al-Nusra has attached special importance to emphasizing its Syrian roots since the beginning. According to Mohamed Ali Adraoui, al-Nusra's strategy to emphasize its Syrianness is the result of political and military conditions in Syria which necessitate pragmatism and flexibility.[517]

Within the framework of this strategy, al-Nusra sought to show its Syrian identity through military success in the fight against the regime. As Adraoui puts it, from the outset, al-Nusra's target has been the regime, its friends *[such as Hezbollah]* and the proxies *[such as Shabiha- militia groups of the regime]* in the field.[518] This was an important strategic move because it was aimed both to ease the Western reaction and portray itself as a Syrian entity due to its contribution to Syrian opposition groups' fight against the regime. Moreover, the first condition to survive in this battlefield was to get Syrian opposition groups' support and the sole way to get that support was to assist in their fight against the regime. From November 2011 to December 2012, al-Nusra carried out almost six hundreds attacks[519] and this frequency has continued to rise. That is, al-Nusra showed its military strength in the fight against regime in such a short time and proved that it was valuable for the opposition groups. For instance, when the US declared Jabhat al-Nusra as a terrorist organization on December 10, 2012, al-Nusra was supported by Syrian opposition strongly. The opposition groups decried the decision and called on their followers to fly al-Nusra's flag by saying

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[516] From now on, the name 'al-Nusra' is used.

[517] Mohamed Ali Adraoui, "The Case of Jabhat Al-Nusra in the Syrian Conflict 2011-2016: Towards a Strategy of Nationalization," *Mediterranean Politics* (2017): 5.

[518] Ibid., 3. Italics is mine.

[519] Charles R. Lister, *The Syrian Jihad: Al-Qaeda, Islamic State and the Evolution of an Insurgency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 98.

that "we are all al-Nusra".[520] What I try to mean by explaining al-Nusra's military success in Syria[521] is to facilitate to understand Baghdadi's decision which was resulted in the most serious split in the jihadist movement.

On April 8, 2013, Baghdadi declared through ISI's media wing, al-Furqan Media that Jabhat al-Nusra was ISI's military branch in Syria:

> We laid for them the plans, and drew up for them the policy of work, and gave them what financial support we could every month, and supplied them with men who had known the battlefields of jihad, from the emigrants and the natives. They did well alongside their brothers from the sons of the Levant, and the influence of the Islamic State extended to the Levant.[522]

Also Baghdadi declared that ISI and Jabhat al-Nusra were united under the name 'Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant'. Al-Nusra was overshadowing ISI, its mother organization, due to its military success in the newest battlefield of jihad. In other words, Baghdadi sought to claim credit for al-Nusra's success in Syria with this move. On April 10, 2013, Abu Muhammad al-Julani, the leader of Jabhat al-Nusra, verified its ties to ISI, but refused the unification under the name of ISIL; instead of it, he gave his pledge to Zawahiri directly.

> (…) I respond to the invitation of al-Baghdadi, (…) and I say: This is a pledge of allegiance from the sons of the al-Nusra Front and their supervisor general that we renew to the Sheikh of Jihad, Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, may Allah preserve him.[523]

This was a wise decision because Julani managed to protect both organization's independency and his leadership in the organization. He gave the message that the success in Syria was his own achievement, not Baghdadi's. In addition to these, Al-Julani knew that they had different style of operating. As Hassan Abu Hanieh says, while al-Nusra was trying to embed itself in local people by acting pragmatically, ISI was obsessed with Sunni

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[520] Bill Roggio, "Al Nusrah Front Imposes Sharia in Eastern Syrian Town," *Long War Journal,* January 30, 2013, https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/01/al_nusrah_front_impo.php (accessed February 13, 2018).

[521] These explanations about Jabhat al-Nusra's military success will be repeated for the sake of completeness of the thesis while explaining al-Qaeda's 'strategy to keep in with local people'.

[522] Rita Katz and Adam Raisman, "Special Report on the Power Struggle Between al-Qaeda Branches and Leadership: Al-Qaeda in Iraq vs. Al-Nusra Front and Zawahiri," *SITE Intelligence Group*, June 25, 2013, https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Articles-Analysis/special-report-on-the-power-struggle-between-al-qaeda-branches-and-leadership-al-qaeda-in-iraq-vs-al-nusra-front-and-zawahiri.html (accessed February 13, 2018).

[523] Ibid.

sectarianism by acting ideologically.[524] However, Julani complicated the situation further with his move and drag al-Qaeda leadership into the problem. As an answer to Julani's move, Baghdadi also called on Zawahiri to resolve the dispute, but at the same time, Baghdadi implied what kind of decision Zawahiri should make in his letter: "We believe that any support for what this traitor has done, even tacitly, will lead to a great fitna, which will thwart the program for which the blood of Muslims has been shed."[525] It can be deduced from this sentence that Baghdadi would not obey Zawahiri's orders in case of an unwanted decision. Until this moment, the problem was an intra-movement issue which required al-Qaeda leadership to get involved in.[526]

On May 23, 2013, Zawahiri issued his decisions in a detailed way. It is necessary to quote those decisions:

a) Sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was in error in his announcement of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham without seeking our order, consulting us or even informing us. *[In this decision, Zawahiri reminded Baghdadi that he was still an affiliate of al-Qaeda and therefore, he should ask al-Qaeda core while making an important decision.]*

(…)

c) The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham is cancelled, and work continues under the name of Islamic State of Iraq.

d) Jabhat al-Nusra is a separate entity for Jamaat Qaedat al-Jihad, following the general leadership. *[Al-Qaeda core accepted Julani's pledge with this decision.]*

e) The realm of Islamic State of Iraq is Iraq.

f) The realm of Jabhat al-Nusra li Ahl al-Sham is Syria.

 (…)

k) The two parties are to desist from any enmity in speech or deed against the other party. *[In this decision, it was aimed to prevent ISIL from subduing al-Nusra]*[527]

These decisions were beyond what Julani wanted. As I said over and over, al-Qaeda had to find new jihadist areas to sustain itself. In this sense, any place/country has an expiration

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[524] Hassan Abu Hanieh and Mohammad Abu Rumman, *The Islamic State Organization: The Sunni Crisis and the Struggle of Global Jihadism* (Amman: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Jordan & Iraq, 2015), 187.

[525] Tricia Bacon and Elizabeth Grimm Arsenault, "Al Qaeda and the Islamic State's Break: Strategic Strife or Lackluster Leadership?," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (2017): 8.

[526] Tore Refslund Hamming, "The Al Qaeda-Islamic State Rivalry: Competition Yes, but No Competitive Escalation," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2017): 5-6.

[527] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad,* 141. Italics is mine.

date. For instance, Afghanistan reached its the expiration date with the invasion on October 7, 2001. Iraq's popularity as a jihadist battlefield lasted from the invasion in 2003 to the civil war in Syria. Zawahiri's decisions should be seen from this perspective. Zawahiri made al-Nusra, a jihadist organization which gained prestige and military success in Syria, an al-Qaeda affiliate without making any effort and by doing this, Zawahiri made al-Qaeda visible in Syria which became the most important jihadist area in the post-Arab Uprisings period. As Ed Husain says, al-Qaeda would become a part of political regulations in the region with this move again.[528] Moreover, al-Nusra was a new opportunity for al-Qaeda to refresh its image which was damaged by AQ-I. That is why it can be said that Zawahiri's way of resolving this dispute is the sign of his political cunning. Moreover, it shows that the affiliate strategy started in previous period has continued.

Baghdadi stated that he would not obey the decisions on June 14, 2013.

> The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant remains as long as we have a pulse or an eye that blinks; it remains, and we will not bargain with it or back down from it until Allah the Almighty raises it above or we die without it.[529]

Moreover, although whole Muslims constitute one community -ummah- regardless of national borders in the jihadist culture, Zawahiri made reference to national borders of Syria and Iraq. This was criticized strongly by ISIL as a reason not to comply with the decisions. In this sense, on June 19, 2013, ISIL's spokesperson, Abu Mohammad al-Adnani said that

> Creating a rule that is only divided by the borders of Sykes-Picot that are imposed on our Ummah, is support to such ominous borders, which tore apart the body of the Ummah and divided its people and made them imagine that this geographical drawing is a revealed law from heaven from which no one can deviate. Islam doesn't recognize drawn borders to be limited by (…).[530]

Baghdadi's bold move not to comply with Zawahiri's instructions and even to accuse him of dividing ummah is a sign of both his confidence in his organization's strength and self-confidence. The situation can be explained better like this: Baghdadi, a jihadist whose jihadist past has been limited and who has had no international jihadist success until that moment accused Zawahiri, another jihadist who has been in the jihadist movement for almost thirty years and the leader of al-Qaeda, the pioneer of transnational jihadism of

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[528] Ed Husain, "Syria: Why al-Qaeda is Winning," *National Review* August 23, 2012, https://www.nationalreview.com/2012/08/syria-why-al-qaeda-winning-ed-husain/ (accessed 21 February 2018).

[529] Katz and Raisman, "Special Report on the Power Struggle Between al-Qaeda Branches and Leadership,"

[530] Ibid.

dividing ummah. As Hanieh puts it, this oral fight sparked the deep-rooted crisis *[which can be dated back to 2005 letter written by Zawahiri to Zarqawi]* between al-Qaeda core and its affiliate.[531]

ISIL sought to prove its military strength with its own resources in Syria and in this way, the rival jihadist organizations were on the target list along with the regime. Baghdadi's attitude against those who did not support him was hostile as mentioned above and he embodied this hostility with violence. The bloody infighting began in the jihadist movement. For example, ISIL killed Abu Sayyed al-Hadrami, al-Nusra's leader in Raqqa in the fall of 2013. In early days of 2014, ISIL killed Abu Rayyan, the commander of Ahrar al-Sam- another effective jihadist organization in Syria. Shortly after this, it killed Abu, Muhammad al-Fateh, al-Nusra's leader in Idlib. As the leader of Ahrar al-Sham says, "(…) There's no doubt that this wrong-headed organisation, the criminal gang of [Abu Bakr] al-Baghdadi, wants to be the only one on the [battle-] field."[532] Unlike ISIL, al-Nusra has sought to cooperate with the opposition groups in the field, which shows the difference in the ways of operating between the two organizations. On the other hand, Syrian regime sought to exploit this growing infighting. According to many al-Nusra members, the regime avoided shelling ISIL targets in Raqqa between 2013 and 2014.[533] Due to this move, the regime killed two birds with one stone. It both attacked the opposition and enabled the infighting to continue by bombing the strong side.

Along with the armed infighting which ISIL caused, it created also an ideological infighting and in this sense, ISIL has been exposed to severe criticism. As an example of one of the most severe criticisms, Abu Qatadah, a prominent Salafi ideologue, called ISIL as Khawarji due to its battle against al-Nusra and his non-compliance with Zawahiri's instruction,[534] which the negative meaning of the name 'Khawarji' was explained in the second chapter. However, ISIL answered the criticism more severely. It accuses those ideologues of being passive in the jihad and insulted them. ISIL argues that the actions are more important than the words.

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[531] Hanieh and Rumman, *The Islamic State Organization,* 192. Italics is mine.

[532] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad,* 206.

[533] Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS,* 158.

[534] Hamming, "The Al Qaeda-Islamic State Rivalry: Competition Yes, but No Competitive Escalation," 9.

> Do not let their famous reputations deceive you, even if they have a long history of writing and authorship, for they neither left the laps of the tawaghit [tyrants], nor marched forth to jihad. They spent their entire lives remaining behind with the women in their rooms, (…). They have never fired a single bullet for the cause of Allah, nor have they witnessed a single scene or episode on the battlefield with the mujahideen.[535]

While the jihadist infighting was continuing with its fierceness and the regime regarded as un-Islamic was continuing to exploit the infighting, an important risk emerged for al-Qaeda. The name 'al-Qaeda' has had the power to be a refuge for many Sunni people in the Middle East's unstable conditions and to mobilize Muslims, and therefore, protecting this positive image of al-Qaeda has been one of the concerns. Despite the dispute between two organizations, there was no official split and although ISIL did not recognize the authority of al-Qaeda leadership practically, ISIL was still one of the affiliates of al-Qaeda on paper. That is why the name 'al-Qaeda' was being affected by the negative consequences of ISIL actions. In other words, the effort to preserve the name 'al-Qaeda' was an important reason for the split. As John Turner puts it, "had he not done so, al-Zawahiri would have risked suffering a loss of authority over the al Qaeda brand (…)."[536] Secondly, Baghdadi's resistance to Zawahiri's orders publicly in a time Zawahiri was criticized by many jihadists can be given another reason for al-Qaeda to sever its ties with ISIL.[537] Another reason which should not be forgotten was the religious motive. According to al-Qaeda, although Baghdadi gave a pledge of loyalty to Zawahiri, he violated his religious pledge due to his refusal to comply with Zawahiri's instructions, and therefore, ISIL has been a deviant group.[538] Apart from all of these factors, Tricia Bacon and Elizabeth G. Arsenault approached the issue from a different perspective and argued that Zawahiri as a person played an important role in the split. Put differently, they speculated that Bin Laden would never have severed the links with ISIL by analyzing Bin Laden's ways of resolving the difficulties in his time. In this sense, the authors argued that despite Zarqawi's disobedience to Bin Laden's orders insistently, which was mentioned above, he never thought to split with AQ-I and always

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[535] Gerges, *A History*, 234.

[536] John Turner, "Strategic Differences: Al Qaeda's Split with the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* Vol:26, No:2. (2015): 210.

[537] Turner, "Strategic Differences: Al Qaeda's Split with the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham," 212.

[538] Aaron Y. Zelin, "The War Between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement," *WINEP*, No:20, June 2014, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/ResearchNote_20_Zelin.pdf (accessed 20 January, 2018), 6.

preferred softening the relationship with Zarqawi. Apart from this, the authors gave two reasons. Firstly, Zawahiri's decision to split was against Bin Laden's uncompromising principle to provide unity, which he regarded as a tactical and religious obligation.[539] Secondly, Zawahiri made reference to national borders implemented by Sykes-Picot agreement in his decisions, which Bin Laden always expressed his negative thoughts about these borders.[540]

As a result, al-Qaeda stated on February 3, 2014 that it severed its tie with ISIL:

> The Qaedat al-Jihad Group announces that it is in no way connected to the group called the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham. We were not informed of its creation. It did neither await our orders, nor were we consulted. (…) Therefore, [ISIS] is not a branch of the Qaedat al-Jihad Group and there is no organizational link connecting them, and the group is not responsible for its actions.[541]

This was al-Qaeda's first move to protect its prestige and position in the jihadist movement. ISIL responded on April 17, 2014:

> *The leaders of Al-Qaeda deviated from the right methodology,* (…). Verily Al-Qaeda today has ceased to the base of jihad, rather its leadership has become an axe supporting the destruction of the project of the Islamic State and the coming Caliphate. They have altered the methodology, they became suspicious, they accepted the bay'a of the dissidents, they split the ranks of the mujahideen, and they began war with the Islamic State, which was established upon the blood and skulls of the Monotheists.[542]

As can be seen, ISIL regards itself as genuine successor of Bin Laden's al-Qaeda.[543] ISIL declared the Caliphate on June 28, 2014 and changed its name as Islamic State (IS). The

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[539] Bacon and Arsenault, "Al Qaeda and the Islamic State's Break: Strategic Strife or Lackluster Leadership?," 15.

[540] Ibid., 16. The reasons which the authors gave are reasonable, but what they did was speculation. They may be right or wrong. On the other hand, there are many differences between Bin Laden's time and that of Zawahiri. For example, Syria was not a jihadist battlefield yet. Moreover, there was no alternative organization to ISI such as al-Nusra, which could end al-Qaeda' dependency to ISI in the field. Anyway, their approach is useful, which is the reason why I mentioned them in this thesis.

[541] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad,* 201.

[542] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad,* 215-216. I make these quotations directly despite their length to be able to show the magnitude of the split.

[543] Zelin, "The War Between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement," 5-6.

declaration of Caliphate turned the dispute into inter-movement issue because the dispute was not between al-Qaeda and its affiliate anymore.[544]

Al-Qaeda core has learnt the right method to communicate with local people through the experiences of its affiliates, especially AQ-I. In this sense, affiliates have turned into society-focused insurgent organizations which have had the capability to both fight with regular armies and create a firm control over territory[545] in the post-Arab Uprisings period. Al-Qaeda began to realize that patience is the key to overcome social and political fights along with the military fight in the jihadist struggle.[546] In other words, permanent success can be acquired only in the long run and the sole way is to get the public support, and this necessitates a relatively 'soft' jihad, at least in appearance. That is, al-Qaeda prefers long term benefits to short term benefits. As previous experiences shows over and over, whenever al-Qaeda implements its strategy obviously, it is highly probable for local people to resist.[547] Moreover, the civil wars in especially Yemen and Syria in post-Arab Uprising period created vast areas which the state could not control and local people at those areas needed an actor which could protect themselves more than ever. That is why the strategy to keep in with local people was formulated. This strategy was al-Qaeda's second move to protect its prestige and position in the jihadist movement and the key to al-Qaeda's durability compared to IS. The point that should not be forgotten is that al-Qaeda does not refuse to use violence in this strategy, but it aims to use violence 'accurately'. As can be seen, al-Qaeda has an ability to make rational decisions and modify its decisions according to the lessons taken from the past.

Although this strategy began to be implemented in early days of post-Arab Uprisings period, 'General Guidelines for Jihad' issued by Zawahiri in September 2013 includes important instructions within the framework of new strategy. It consisted of seventeen provisions, but especially four provisions constitute importance in terms of new strategy. In fourth provision, it says that refrain from killing people from deviant sects as long as they do not fight against you and if they attack you; you should direct your reaction to only those who

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[544] Hamming, "The Al Qaeda-Islamic State Rivalry: Competition Yes, but No Competitive Escalation," 1.

[545] Charles Lister, "Jihadi Rivalry: The Islamic State Challenges Al-Qaeda," *Brookings Doha Center Analysis Paper,* no. 16, January 2016, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/en-jihadi-rivalry-2.pdf (accessed February 10, 2018), 10.

[546] Turner, "Strategic Differences: Al Qaeda's Split with the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham," 217.

[547] Sarah Philips, "Al-Qaeda and the Struggle for Yemen," *Survival* Vol:53, No:1. (2011): 107.

fight against you.[548] In fifth provisions, it says that refrain from interfering in the life of non-Muslim people in the Islamic territory.[549] In seventh provision, it says that avoid killing civilians such as women and children and even if their fathers/husbands fight against you, do not attack those civilians. In eighth provision, it says that avoid damaging Muslims through bombing, human trafficking, or exploiting their possessions.[550] As can be seen, Zawahiri's concern was to be able to get along with local people and also these instructions were the sign that al-Qaeda has learnt from its faults. Zawahiri realized that al-Qaeda's efforts toward establishing pan-Islamic state without taking social and political concerns of local people into consideration did not work until that time.

Moreover, Zawahiri temporarily gave up al-Qaeda's main goal to drive the US, its allies, and their social, cultural, economic etc. influence out of the region to be able to establish a pan-Islamic state, which is a mission impossible. In this sense, along with the aim of getting public support, he espoused another goal which was compatible with practical circumstances within the framework of this strategy: to establish Islamic order wherever jihadists are in control and do not wait until the main goal is achieved. In other words, the project 'one Islamic state/emirate in each country' was launched. This did not mean that Zawahiri abandoned al-Qaeda's main aim forever. The new strategy was a different way to achieve the main goal. As Katherine Zimmerman puts it, al-Qaeda tries to islamicize local people from Mali to Yemen and each victorious step in this way makes al-Qaeda closer to its main goal.[551] In terms of this strategy, there are two successful and one unsuccessful example.

In terms of carrying out new strategy, AQIM did not have broad and advantageous civil war environment which al-Nusra and AQAP had in Syria and Yemen respectively. It acquired one chance to perform the new strategy, but it failed. Due to the armed uprisings in North Mali in 2012, AQIM had the chance to consolidate its control in that territory and chose to impose its Sharia system to local people by declaring an Islamic state quickly. For example,

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[548] Ayman al-Zawahiri, "General Guidelines for Jihad," *Jihadology*, Sep. 14, 2013, https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/dr-ayman-al-e1ba93awc481hirc4ab22general-guidelines-for-the-work-of-a-jihc481dc4ab22-en.pdf. (accessed February 22, 2018).

[549] Ibid.

[550] Ibid.

[551] Katherine Zimmerman, "AQAP Post-Arab Spring and the Islamic State," in *How Al Qaeda Survived Drones, Uprisings, and the Islamic State* ed. by Aaron Y. Zelin, June 2017, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus153-Zelin.pdf, 51.

the local cultural habits such as alcohol, cigarette, and music were banned and strict punishments were applied, therefore, local people became estranged from the jihadists.[552] Moreover, moral police began to enforce punishments such as amputation etc. publicly and historical tombs were demolished and libraries were plundered. As a result, AQIM's overbearing policies altered the nature of its relationship with local people "from mutual acquiescence to *[unilateral]* control"[553] and when French troops entered into Mali in January 2013, Islamic state collapsed, but the more important one is that the soldiers were greeted as liberators happily.[554]

AQIM has been still trying to make old style jihad. In this sense, its operational strength has been strong, but only violence has not been enough to get public support. As Grobbelaar and Solomon put it, despite AQIM's capability to carry out terrorist attacks, it is highly improbable for the people in Algeria who are fed up with violence due to civil war in 1990s to espouse its ideology.[555] In terms of soft jihad, the leader of AQIM Abdelmalik Droukdel sent a famous letter about the organization's current jihad style to his commanders in Mali before French operation, and this letter was one of the most important documents describing the new strategy very well:

> One of the wrong policies that we think you carried out is the extreme speed with which you applied Shariah, not taking into consideration the gradual evolution should be applied in an environment that is ignorant of religion. Our previous experience proved that applying Shariah this way, without taking the environment into consideration, will lead to people rejecting the religion, and engender hatred toward the mujahedeen, and will consequently lead to the failure of our experiment. (…) The aim of building these bridges is to make it so that our mujahedeen are no longer isolated in society. If we can achieve this positive thing in even a limited amount, then even if the project fails later, it will be just enough that we will have planted the first, good seed in this fertile soil (…), so that the tree will grow more quickly.[556]

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[552] Sergei Boeke, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism, Insurgency, or Organized Crime?," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* Vol:27, No:5. (2016): 926.

[553] Ibid., 925. Italics is mine.

[554] Boeke, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism, Insurgency, or Organized Crime?," 926.

[555] Alta Grobbelaar and Hussein Solomon, "The Origins, Ideology and Development of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb," *Africa Review* Vol:7, No:2. (2015): 152. The same situation is valid for also other countries in the region where AQIM operates.

[556] *New York Daily News*, "Al Qaeda Manifesto Detailing Terror Network's Plan for Africa Discovered in Mali," February 14, 2013, http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/al-qaeda-manifesto-found-mali-article-1.1264406. (February 17, 2018).

That is why it should begin to show its 'soft' jihadist face to be able to embed itself in local people.

Unlike AQIM, AQAP is a successful example in terms of new strategy. It is a fact that the lack of authority due to the civil war conditions in Yemen in post-Arab Uprisings period played an important role in AQAP's success. As Zimmerman puts it, the collapse of Yemeni state was regarded as an opportunity that should not be missed by AQAP to establish an Islamic state.[557] However, only civil war conditions are not enough to be successful for an insurgent organization which seeks to be alternative to the state. AQAP had to find an ally to be able to both facilitate its operations in Yemen and acquire public support and those two goals can be achieved only through the tribes. It was impossible to operate in Yemen without their consent. As Daniel Green says, unlike Afghanistan and Iraq, the tribal structures are ossified much more in Yemen and tribal leaders are more experienced in administering their territories.[558] That is why it was necessary to get tribal leaders' consent for AQAP which has used tribal territories to travel because the outsiders are seen with mistrust and contempt.[559] In this sense, AQAP sought to soften its global jihadist image and prove its Yemeni identity. In other words, it sought to prove that it was an indigenous entity. As a first step toward this goal, AQAP established Ansar al-Sharia (Supporters of Sharia), as its branch, in Yemen in April 2011.[560] The organization's name was chosen specifically because it was aimed that there was no connotation of al-Qaeda, an organization which is viewed as an outsider force due to its global objectives. Moreover, when al-Mukalla -an important port city in Yemen- was captured in April 2015, flying al-Qaeda's flag in the city was not permitted.[561] These are the signs that AQAP began to take the local people's concerns into consideration.

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[557] Zimmerman, "AQAP Post-Arab Spring and the Islamic State," 45.

[558] Daniel Green, "Al-Qaeda's Soft-Power Strategy in Yemen," *WINEP,* Policy Watch 2021, January 23, 2013, *http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/al-qaedas-soft-power-strategy-in-yemen* accessed February 10, 2018).

[559] Bryce Loidolt, "Managing the Global and Local: The Dual Agendas of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:34, No:2. (2011): 110.

[560] After foundation of Ansar al-Sharia, ISI established Jabhat al-Nusra as its military branch in Syria similarly. However, unlike Ansar al-Sharia example, the factor which makes Jabhat al-Nusra example as a new situation in the history of al-Qaeda is that ISI entered a new battlefield-Syria- through Jabhat al-Nusra, but AQAP has already been in Yemen for years. AQAP's goal is just make-up of its image. AQAP sought to show its soft face to Yemeni people.

[561] Zimmerman, "AQAP Post-Arab Spring and the Islamic State," 47.

Yemeni people are not content with AQ's strict interpretation of Salafism and piety which run counter to their daily needs of surviving and customs.[562] In this sense, AQAP knows that it is almost impossible for AQAP and tribes to cooperate with each other due to the ideological closeness. That is why AQAP has focused to find practical similarities to be able to cooperate with the tribes instead of trying to impose its strict ideology on the tribal people. This necessitates to compromise on AQAP's ideological rigidity. For example, AQAP overlooks the un-Islamic behaviors of the tribes which shield it.[563] Barak Bafi calls AQAP's efforts for compromise as "choosing pragmatism over ideology"[564]. Moreover, AQAP has sought to increase the cooperation by proving its value for the tribes' daily needs. In this sense, according to Bryce Loidolt, the employment of AQAP fighters as a teacher in some schools by the tribes is the sign of organization's popularity among local people.[565] As another example, in some areas which have suffered from lack of water and famine, the tribes have employed Ansar al-Sharia fighters to drill for water, build irrigation system, etc.[566] These have deepened the cooperation and enabled AQAP fighters gain the trust of ordinary Yemeni people. Moreover, as a feature peculiar to only AQAP, even before the new strategy was launched, it began to use a more society-focused rhetoric, which becomes a necessity of the new strategy in the post-9/11 period, along with its usual religious rhetoric:

> the people of Yemen are suffering from the decline of living standards, the rise of costs, and the discriminatory practices with which the government deals with them in employment, the distribution of wealth and its looting, the misappropriation of lands, and the absence of someone to defend their rights.[567]

As can be seen, instead of religious concepts such as Jewish-Crusader alliance, un-Islamic regime, etc. which are nothing to do with Yemeni people's daily problems, it criticizes corrupt political and economic structures.

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[562] Philips, "Al-Qaeda and the Struggle for Yemen," 105.

[563] Barak Barfi, "AQAP's Soft Power Strategy in Yemen," *CTC Sentinel* Vol:3, No: 11-12. (November 2010): 5.

[564] Ibid., 4.

[565] Loidolt, "Managing the Global and Local: The Dual Agendas of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," 114.

[566] Christopher Swift, "Arc of Convergence: AQAP, Ansar al-Shari'a and the Struggle for Yemen," *CTC Sentinel* Vol:5, No:6. (June 2012): 3.

[567] Philips, "Al-Qaeda and the Struggle for Yemen," 112.

Another successful example of the new strategy is Jabhat al-Nusra which has been operating in Syria, where became the most important battlefield in the jihadist movement. Like in Yemen, the civil war conditions in Syria gave al-Nusra an advantageous environment to execute the new strategy. Firstly, like AQAP, al-Nusra has sought to create an image that it is a Syrian entity, and therefore, the link with ISI was not declared. The need to prove its Syrian roots has shaped its military strategy in Syria also. In this sense, al-Nusra focused the regime and its friends in the field as mentioned above. In a short time, it was picked out among the opposition groups with its military capability and this made al-Nusra's size increase along with enabling it to prove its Syrianness. While there were 300-400 fighters in al-Nusra in early days of its operations in Syria, the number rose to 6000 in two years, which meant nine percent of opposition forces.[568] As another part of al-Nusra's military strategy in the field, as Charles Lister puts it, fighting against the regime took precedence over founding Islamic governance in Syria, which is the main goal and al-Nusra made common cause with almost all groups in the field to overthrow the regime.[569] In this sense, al-Nusra has been cooperating with the groups such as Ahrar al-Sham in the field unofficially since the beginning, but this cooperation was formalized in March 2015 under the name of Jaish al-Fateh. This coalition includes six other organizations which restricts itself to only Syria, oppose the transnational jihad, and speak for the vast majority of opposition.[570]

Secondly, it was necessary for al-Nusra to attach importance to its image in the eyes of Syrians and in this point, religious flexibility was the indispensable condition. In terms of religious flexibility, al-Julani describes the attitude of al-Nusra very well: "Beware of being hard on them. Begin with the priorities and fundamentals of Islam, and be flexible on the minor parts of religion."[571] In addition to that, al-Nusra's daily contacts with local people are important in creating a positive image. For example, while fighting in Aleppo, al-Nusra enabled bakeries to continue to make bread; those were sold free of charge, and it did not

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[568] Adraoui, "The Case of Jabhat Al-Nusra in the Syrian Conflict 2011-2016: Towards a Strategy of Nationalization," 3.

[569] Lister, "Jihadi Rivalry," 12.

[570] Charles Lister, "Al-Qa'ida Plays a Long Game in Syria," *CTC Sentinel* Vol:8, No:9. (September 2015): 13. Ahrar al-Sham, Jund al-Aqsa, Liwa al-Haqq, Jaysh al-Sunna, Ajnad al-Sham, Faylaq al-Sham. Lister, "Al-Qa'ida Plays a Long Game in Syria," 13.

[571] Hassan Hassan, "Jihadis Grow More Dangerous As They Conquer Hearts in Syria," *The National,* March 6, 2013, https://www.thenational.ae/jihadis-grow-more-dangerous-as-they-conquer-hearts-in-syria-1.450481 (accessed February 14, 2018).

force people to act according to Sharia.[572] Charles Lister describes al-Nusra's strategy in Syria very well: "strong emphasis on localism, gradualism, and controlled pragmatism (…) paired with its military preeminence".[573]

Thirdly, fierce violence used by the regime causes bleakness among local people which al-Nusra exploits to be able to receive public acceptance.[574] In other words, unlike the Yemeni regime, the Syrian regime's capacity to wreak havoc on civilians is important in executing the strategy successfully.

Zawahiri repeated the principles of the strategy in his letter to al-Julani in the early days of 2015: *continue to cement the relations with local people *continue to increase the cooperation with opposition groups (…) *refrain from attacking western targets to continue the fight against the regime with full capacity.[575] Within the framework of this strategy, al-Nusra went one step further and severed its ties with al-Qaeda core on July 28, 2016 and changed its name as Jabhat Fateh al-Sham. However, this move was planned in advance with the consent of al-Qaeda core. This was another move aiming to prove al-Nusra's Syrianness.

As a result, neither AQAP nor Jabhat al-Nusra/ Jabhat Fateh al-Sham abandoned its main goal to establish an Islamic emirate in their areas, but they revised their methods. In this

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[572] Turner, "Strategic Differences: Al Qaeda's Split with the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham," 217. As mentioned over and over, i seek to explain al-Qaeda and its affiliates' strategies formulated to deal with the crises and the examples in the thesis are picked according to this purpose. However, like any terrorist organization, al-Qaeda is not a homogenous entity. Put differently, many factors such as conflict of interests in the organization, the stubborn commanders' autonomous actions in the field and etc. cause the organization to act in the way which contradict the strategy. For example, al-Nusra fighters in town of Mayadin ordered to remove naked mannequins, banned women from wearing pants, and alcohol was prohibited. Roggio, "Al Nusrah Front Imposes Sharia in Eastern Syrian Town."

As another example, al-Nusra fighters slaughtered 20 Druze people, which is inconsistent with Zawahiri's instructions issued in September 2013. Patrick Cockburn, "Syrian Civil War: Jabhat al-Nusra's massacres of Druze Villagers shows They're just as Nasty as ISIS," *Independent,* June 13, 2015, http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/syrian-civil-war-jabhat-al-nusras-massacre-of-druze-villagers-shows-the-group-is-just-as-nasty-as-10318348.html (accessed February 15, 2018).

[573] Charles Lister, "The Dawn of Mass Jihad: Success in Syria Fuels al-Qa'ida's Evolution," *CTC Sentinel* Vol:9, No:9. (September 2016): 15.

[574] Lister, *The Syrian Jihad,* 68-69.

[575] Adraoui, "The Case of Jabhat Al-Nusra in the Syrian Conflict 2011-2016: Towards a Strategy of Nationalization," 4.

sense, Charles Lister's statement for al-Nusra is also valid for AQAP: "the group is a wolf in sheep's clothing."[576]

Lastly, as for the comparison between al-Qaeda and IS; it is useful to give some details about IS. After the declaration of Caliphate on June 28, 2014, it began to control the vast territories in Syria and Iraq including Raqqa and Mosul. In this sense, its territorial breadth of IS became equivalent to the UK. Although IS's claim to be a state was dubious, its success to be able to control 670 square kilometers was beyond the modern jihadi norms.[577] IS turned into the mighty organization which consisted of 25,000 fighters in its ranks in a short time.[578] Moreover, along with its capacity to hit regionally, it could carry out transnational terrorist attacks also. For example, IS killed 130 people by executing spontaneous attacks in five different points in France on November 13, 2015.

Like AQ-I,its predecessor, IS's excessive violence was important in its increasing popularity. Moreover, IS uses the extreme violence through some rituals specifically such as beheading, burning, crucifying and mass execution to increase the brutality. Apart from increasing brutality, it was aimed to both frighten the enemies and attract young Sunnis and Muslims from all over the world who yearned for adventure, blood and revenge.[579] By creating and directing violence, IS sought to exploit it. As Jytte Klausen puts it, violence diffused through Twitter is a recent instrument of psychological warfare.[580] As a Chinese proverb says, 'kill one, frighten ten thousands'. In this sense, IS aimed to increase the psychological effect by propagandizing violence. This psychological effect is both sided: both it terrorizes the enemy as mentioned above and it increases the morale of its followers by giving the message that it is formidable. At the same time, IS began to launch the affiliate strategy, which was introduced by al-Qaeda in previous period, and widened its organizational capacity through various groups in various countries. Ansar Bait al-Maqdis in Egypt and Islamic Youth Shura Council in Libya gave their pledge to IS in September and October 2014 respectively. Moreover, nine members of al-Qaeda core defected to IS in

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[576] Lister, "Al-Qa'ida Plays a Long Game in Syria," 13.

[577] Lister, "Jihadi Rivalry," 5.

[578] Lister, "Assessing Syria's Jihad," 89.

[579] Gerges, *A History*, 232.

[580] Jytte Klausen, "Tweeting the Jihad: Social Media Networks of Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* Vol:38, No:1. (2015): 13.

March 2014. Boko Haram pledged its loyalty to IS in March 2015. Lastly, IS was also beyond the jihadist standards economically. For example, the organization earned 50m dollars a month by selling crude oil in 2015,[581] not to mention ransom, smuggling, and drug. The reason why I explained IS briefly is to show that IS became strong and popular in an extent that it overshadowed al-Qaeda in a short time. That is why while comparing al-Qaeda with IS, it can be said firstly that two organizations fight against each other to get the leadership in jihadist movement.[582]

Secondly, despite the rivalry between two organizations, both organizations embrace the almost the same religious concepts. The main ideological difference is that while IS is based on the conflict between Shia and Sunni, al-Qaeda always warned its fighters not to attack Shia.[583] Another ideological difference is that according to al-Qaeda, the circumstances need to mature in order to establish the caliphate, which means the destruction of foes and foundation of wealthy Islamic state.[584] On the other hand, IS declared the caliphate four months after separation of al-Qaeda and ISIL.

Thirdly, it is necessary to correct a mistake about al-Qaeda while comparing it with IS. According to Fawaz A. Gerges, while al-Qaeda is described as global and borderless group, IS succeeded in embedding itself in local communities and operating as a state.[585] The main problem in this statement is about al-Qaeda because it overlooks al-Qaeda's new goals to get public support, control territory, and draw a geographic border for itself within the framework of the strategy to keep in with local people in the post-Arab Uprisings period. In this sense, the statement defining al-Qaeda as borderless does not fit into new al-Qaeda in post-Arab Uprisings.

Fourthly, IS implemented the leaderless jihad concept and affiliate strategy which were introduced by al-Qaeda first. Put differently, IS applied tactics of al-Qaeda, which it has competed with. How IS performed affiliate strategy was mentioned above. When IS was

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[581] Hamza Hendawi and Qassim Abdul-Zahra, "ISIS is making up to $50 million a month from oil sales," *Business Insider* October 23, 2015, http://www.businessinsider.com/isis-making-50-million-a-month-from-oil-sales-2015-10 (accessed February 16, 2018).

[582] Zelin, "The War Between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement," 1.

[583] Gerges, *A History*, 223-224.

[584] Ibid., 226.

[585] Ibid., 223.

subjected to coalition airstrikes in Iraq and Syria, it urged its followers to carry out terrorist attacks in the West in September 2014:

> If you can kill a disbelieving American or European—especially the spiteful and filthy French—(…) waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be. (…) Kill the disbeliever whether he is civilian or military, for they have the same ruling. Both of them are disbelievers. …[586]

Fifthly, IS's ability to learn from past faults is very limited compared to al-Qaeda because AQ-I's negative experiences in Iraq caused by its use of excessive violence had no influence on IS's approach to violence. Put differently, the brutality which made IS an important actor in the jihadist movement in the short run would make it more vulnerable in the long run compared to al-Qaeda. For example, that IS as an independent organization overshadowed al-Qaeda with its savagery turned into an advantage for al-Qaeda. Its slaughter of Druze and Yazidi people gave al-Qaeda an opportunity to seem as a 'good boy'. Its addiction to violence affects its relationship with local people negatively. Aaron Y. Zelin describes IS's style of communicating with local people as "forcing it down people's throats"[587]. This would cause it not care its residents' concerns and isolate from the public support in the long run.

Sixthly, IS's use of frightening methods did not incite al-Qaeda to increase the level of violence or react to IS in the same way.[588] Al-Qaeda's this attitude is related to the strategy to keep in with local people directly. Although al-Qaeda's this new style of operating seems to be counter to its interests at first sight, it is highly likely to make al-Qaeda more durable compared to IS in the long run because al-Qaeda lets IS to exhaust itself through this style of operating. In other words, al-Qaeda preferred the benefits in the long term instead of those in the short term. Moreover, as can be seen from Zawahiri's letter to al-Julani in 2015, Zawahiri warned al-Julani not to attack western targets to both focus the fight against the regime at full capacity and not to attract the Western's attention. While IS has become the main actor of the global fight against the terror in a short time, which this gave al-Qaeda an

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[586] Lister, "Jihadi Rivalry," 22. As mentioned above, it is highly unlikely to eradicate the leaderless jihad concept because it is related to the economic, political, military etc. conditions- the invasions, civil wars, etc.- in the Middle East directly. The organization which applies the leaderless jihad concept can change but as long as the poor conditions which the jihadists can exploit exist, the danger will continue to exist.

[587] Zelin, "The War Between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement," 6.

[588] Hamming, "The Al Qaeda-Islamic State Rivalry: Competition Yes, but No Competitive Escalation," 4.

opportunity to take a breather, al-Qaeda does not want to spoil it. In other words, al-Qaeda applies the Napoleonic principle: 'Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake.'

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Firstly, I sought to show that the essence of al-Qaeda's power to survive until today is its ability to formulate a new strategy which enables it to cope with the crisis, find a way to revitalize itself, and gather public support. This is the sign of al-Qaeda's durable resurgence ability. Secondly, due to al-Qaedaism, al-Qaeda became an intangible entity, which makes the fight against itself harder, along with its tangible organizational existence. Thirdly, thanks to interviews with famous journalists and its own propaganda tools, al-Qaeda succeeded in creating an indestructible organization image. Fourthly, al-Qaeda has a capability to establish temporary alliance against the common enemy. The cooperation with the US against the Soviet Union during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the cooperation with former baath members and Iran against the US were important examples for that capability. Lastly, al-Qaede makes its decisions as a result of a rational analysis, but this is not to say that al-Qaeda does not suffer from the negative consequences of its decisions. The rationality is never an obstacle to the bad consequences.

As for the fate of Jabhat al-Nusra/ Jabhat Fateh al-Sham operating in Syria which became the most important jihadist battlefield; any possible failure of Jabhat al-Nusra/ Jabhat Fateh al-Sham in Syria does not mean the failure of al-Qaeda totally. It is possible that al-Qaeda can become a powerful actor with another affiliate in Syria. On the other hand, it is wrong to focus only Syria to measure al-Qaeda's success and failures because al-Qaeda has been operating in Yemen, Libya, Sahel region along with Syria and been seeking to sow its seeds in those countries. Moreover, as mentioned above, every jihadist battlefield has an expiration date and that is why if a new civil war in any country or a new failed state in the region emerge, it is no doubt that al-Qaeda would be ready to exploit it.

Al-Qaeda is not a problem-free organization and I think that one of the biggest challenges for al-Qaeda would be the position of subsequent leader in the organization. The current leader of al-Qaeda, Zawahiri, is sixty-seven years old now and the question that who will succeed Zawahiri should be answered clearly to be able to retain the organizational

existence and not to disintegrate. The legitimacy of Zawahiri who has been the right-hand of Bin Laden for years comes from his closeness to Bin Laden. Despite this, contrary to Ladin, Zawahiri could not be an undisputed leader in the eyes of jihadists. In this sense, it can be said that it is more difficult for the subsequent leader to have the legitimacy and acquire the jihadists' support and he would have an important positive or negative effect on the organization's future. For example, infighting in the organization may emerge and some core members may leave and establish a new organization, which would be disaster for al-Qaeda's reputation for its leadership in the jihadist movement. As another prospect, the subsequent leader may prefer increasing the level of violence through various means such as affiliates, networks, etc. to consolidate its leadership in the organization.

I explained that the strategy to eradicate al-Qaeda threat should be based on two interrelated ways: the armed struggle against its organizational existence and the fight against its ideological existence through civil means. In addition to this, the destruction of the threat is related to political, military, economic, etc. conditions in the Middle East directly and it is necessary to change those conditions positively not to cause new disappointed masses that are inclined to radicalization. As Robert Nalbandov says, "the only way a show would end is when the audience would stop buying tickets".[589] In this sense, it is likely that Jabhat al-Nusra/ Jabhat Fateh al-Sham disappears, but the important one is that what kind of political solution to the civil war in Syria will be prepared, which would affect the fate of jihadist movement in Syria directly. For example, a political solution which prioritizes a religious group/sect over another group/sect like in the post-occupation Iraq would be exploited by al-Qaeda for sure and in this situation, it would not be surprise that al-Qaeda revitalize itself in Syria. On the other hand, in a region like Middle East where a lot of actors whose interests contradict those of each other exist, al-Qaeda always retains its potential to be useful for some actors. That is why it is highly likely that al-Qaeda continue to become one of important issues in terms of both regional and international politics.

Every terrorist organization has radicalized its own generation and this radicalized generation is so get involved in the crime, killing people, etc. that it loses its ability to adapt to ordinary life and plays an important role in radicalizing in subsequent generation. As Thomas Hegghammer says about the possible negative effect of the jihad in Iraq in 2006:

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[589] Nalbandov, "Irrational Rationality of Terrorism," 35.

What is certain, however, is that the consequences of the war will be long-lasting. Let us not forget that the current leaders of the global jihadist movement joined the first Afghan War as young recruits more than 20 years ago.[590]

Given the emergence of ISIL almost a decade after these words, it can be said that the region would suffer from the jihadist violence for a long time and al-Qaeda would continue to be the most powerful and durable player in this violence.

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[590] Hegghammer, "Global Jihadism After the Iraq War," 32.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY

El-Kaide, Usame Bin Ladin tarafından kurulmuş olan; ideolojik kökleri, Salafism olarak adlandırılan islamın radikal Sünni yorumunda bulunan; uzun dönemli temel amacı İslam coğrafyasında halifelik kurmak olan; ve dünyanın çeşitli ülkelerinde faaliyet halinde bulunan bir terörist örgüttür. En temel özelliği, ne zaman bir kriz ile karşılaşsa, bu krizden kurtulmasını sağlayacak yeni bir strateji geliştirebilme yeteneğidir ki bu onun, uzun dönemdeki başarısında kilit faktördür. Ayrıca El-Kaideism olarak isimlendirilen örgüt ideolojisi aracılığıyla El-Kaide, örgütsel bağlantılar ile ulaşamadığı Müslümanları, terör eylemlerine teşvik etme gücüne erişebilmektedir.

El-Kaide'yi anlamada başvurabileceğimiz iki temel teorik perspektif vardır. İlki, 'gerçek inanan' perspektifi ve ikincisi ise, 'akılcı aktör' perspektifidir. Gerçek inanan perspektifini kullanmamın sebebi, El-Kaide ile mücadele edebilmek için, onu, kendisini algıladığı şekilde algılamanın gerekliliğine inanmamdır. Bu, örgütün terör eylemlerine olumlu bir değer atfetme anlamına gelmemektedir. Aksine, tehdit ile mücadele edebilmenin birinci koşuludur. Bu perspektife göre, El-Kaide, kendisini, tek gerçek Müslüman topluluk olarak görmektedir. Ayrıca dini, siyasal bağlam çerçevesinde değerlendirerek, her siyasal, ekonomik, askeri vb. krizde, dinin yeni bir anlam kazanmasını sağlamaktadır. Ayrıca, kendisini tek gerçek Müslüman topluluk olarak algıladığı için, kendi dini yorumu üzerinden, Müslüman coğrafyadaki devletlere ve bireysel olarak Müslümanlara, dini görevler yüklemektedir. Örneğin, kâfir olarak gördükleri ABD ile savaşmak, ABD askerlerini ve sivillerini öldürmek vb. El-Kaide'nin vaaz ettiği dini görevlere örnektir.

Kendisini tek gerçek inanan topluluk olarak görmesinin, bir sonucu olarak, geri kalan tüm Müslümanları, kendileri tarafından kurtarılması gereken, yanlışlık içinde bulunan bir kitle olarak görmektedirler. Dahası romantik bir geçmiş algıları vardır ve bu geçmişi, gelecekte tekrardan kurmak istemektedirler. Yani, islamın en doğru formu olarak gördükleri Peygamberin kâfirlere karşı savaştığı ilk on yıllık dönemin siyasal, toplumsal, vb. özelliklerini gelecekte tekrardan oluşturmak istiyorlar ki, bu düzen, halifelik olmaktadır.

Akılcı aktör perspektifi ise, El-Kaide'yi açıklamada birtakım eksikliklere sahip olsa da, mevcut teorik perspektifler içerisinde, örgütü açıklamada en faydalı teorik çerçeve olduğu söylenebilir. Örneğin, fayda/kazanç kavramını, daha gevşek şekilde ve uzun dönem/kısa dönem, soyut/somut kazanç şeklinde çok boyutlu şekilde değerlendirmek önkoşuluyla, El-Kaide'nin, terör eylemleri ile, örgütsel hedefleri çerçevesinde en yüksek faydayı/kazancı sağlamayı hedeflediği söylenebilir. El-Kaide'nin şiddete başvurmasının sebebine gelince; örgüt, Müslüman Kardeşler'in sistem içi aygıtları kullanarak gerçekleştirdiği mücadele yönteminin başarısız olduğunu ifade etmektedir ve bu anlamda şiddetin tek doğru mücadele yöntemi olduğunu ifade etmektedir. Ancak daha da önemlisi, örgüt, şiddet kullanımını, kendi örgütsel ve ideolojik mantığı çerçevesinde değerlendirildiğinde, gayet akılcı bir çerçeveye de oturtmaktadır. Bu anlamda, örgüt, statükoyu, her yönden radikal şekilde değiştirip yeni bir dini düzen kurmayı hedeflediği için, şiddet, bunun tek yolu olarak görülmektedir. Şiddetin, uzun dönemli amaçları elde etme de üstlendiği beş temel işlev olduğunu ifade edebiliriz. Bunlar; düşman tarafından tanınma, düşmanı yıpratma, göz korkutma, provakasyon, kutuplaştırmadır.

Akılcı analiz yeteneği anlamında, El-Kaide, kararlarını, geçmişteki hatalarından aldığı derslere göre revize edebilmektedir. Yakın düşmandan uzak düşmana geçiş, 9/11 saldırısı sonrası örgütsel değişiklikler, vb. bu akılcılığı gösteren örneklerden sadece birkaçıdır. Ayrıca uzun dönemde ideolojik karakteri belirleyici olsa da, kısa dönemli eylemleri, sahadaki pratik siyasal koşullar tarafından dikte edilmektedir.

El-Kaideism, Salafism içindeki 'jihadis' olarak ifade edilen bir gruba dayanan, bölgedeki sözde Müslüman olarak gördüğü rejimleri devirmeyi ve İslam dünyasındaki tüm kâfir etkisini silmeyi amaçlayan bir ideolojidir. El-Kaide, örgütsel varlığının dışında, kendisini ideoloji olarak sunmaya devam ettikçe, örgüt ile mücadele de boyut değiştirmektedir; zira, örgüt bu şekilde kendisini, sadece silahlar ile mücadele edilemeyecek şekilde soyut bir varlığa dönüştürmektedir ve bu da, El-Kaide tehdidi ile mücadeleyi daha çetrefilleştirmektedir.

Bu ideolojinin temel kavramlarına bakmak gerekirse; jihat kavramı en temel kavramdır. İslamiyette, büyük jihat küçük jihat ayrımı vardır ve ilki, insanın kendi nefsine karşı verdiği mücadeleyi ifade ederken; ikincisi ise, dinin, düşmana karşı savunulması anlamına gelmektedir. Ancak örgüte göre bu ayrıma temel sağlayan hadis, sahih hadis değildir ve bu sebeple, esas jihat, düşmana karşı dinin savunulmasıdır ve El-Kaide'ye göre esas jihat,

İslam düşmanlarına karşı dini şiddet ile gerçekleştirilen mücadeledir. Dahası, Abdullah Azzam'a göre jihat; hac, oruç, namaz vb. İslami farz eylemlerinden daha hayırlıdır.

El-Kaide'ye göre, İslam, büyük bir yok olma tehlikesi altındadır ve bu sebeple, onu, güçlü kafir düşmanlara karşı ayakta tutabilmek ancak silah yoluyla olabilir. Dahası, yukarıda bahsedildiği gibi, statükoyu kökten değiştirmeyi amaçlayan örgütsel hedefleri gerçekleştirebilmenin tek yolu, şiddete başvurmaktır. Ayrıca, yine örgütün değerlendirmesine göre, Kur'an'ın jihat mesajı, evrimseldir ve bizzat dini kitap, şiddeti başvurmayı salık vermektedir.

El-Kaideism'e göre, jihat, defansif ve ofansif olmak üzere ikiye ayrılmaktadır. Defansif jihat, herhangi bir Müslüman toprağının, bir kafir tarafından işgal edilmesi durumunda, tüm İslam alemi işgal edilmiş sayılır ve nerede olursa olsun tüm Müslümanlar için, jihat zorunlu hale gelir. Ofansif jihatta ise, İslami nüfuzu, kâfir topraklarına yaymayı hedefler ve bu sebeple, Müslümanlar, bu yönde teşvik edilse de, jihata katılma yönünde kolektif bir zorunluluk yoktur.

İkinci temel kavram, hicrettir. El-Kaide, hicret konsepti üzerinden, Afganistan'a, Irak'a veya jihata her nerede gerek varsa oraya gitmeyi, Peygamberin ve takipçilerinin, Mekke'den Medine'ye gitmesine benzetmektedir. Bu şekilde örgüt, İslam adına tarihsel bir misyon üstlendiğini ifade etmektedir ve kendisine katılanlara da, bu tarihsel ve dini misyonun parçası olmayı vaat etmektedir.

Üçüncü temel kavram, Salafismdir. Salafism'e göre, doğru İslam, Peygamber dönemindeki islamdır ve sonrasında dine eklenen birtakım alışkanlıklar, ritüeller, vb. islamı yozlaştıran yeniliklerdir. Salafism'e göre, insan düşüncesine dayanan her türlü ideoloji, sistem vb. ni reddetmektedir ve Şeriat, Müslümanların içinde yaşaması gereken tek doğru sistemdir.

Salafism, kendi içinde, görkemli geçmişe geri dönüşün hangi metodlar ile yapılması tartışması üzerinden 3 gruba ayrılmaktadır: purists, politicos, jihadis. Puristslere göre, propaganda ve tavsiye, meşru mücadele yollarıdır ve bu anlamda, en büyük kaygıları, islamı, yanlış rütellerden, alışkanlıklardan kurtarmaktır. Diğer bir tabirle, islamı dini anlamda homojenleştirmek istemektedirler. Politika, işin uzmanlarına bırakılması gereken bir alandır. Politicos grubu, her türlü barışçıl siyasal aktivizm yöntemini benimsemektedir. Bunlara göre, islamın ritüel anlamında temizlenmesi, Müslümanların yaşadığı ekonomik, siyasal vb. zorlukların hiçbirisine fayda sağlamayacaktır. Tüm sorunların çözümü, siyasette aranmalıdır ve bu anlamda bu grup, mücadelenin evrimsel bir süreç içerisinde adım adım

gerçekleştirilmesini savunmaktadır. Jihadis grubu ise, ki El-Kaide bu grubun en kuvvetli temsilcisidir, aşırıcı ve tavizsiz yöntemleri ile, batıya karşı olan düşmanlıkları ile tanınırlar.

El-Kaideism'e göre, iki düşman türü vardır: İslam alemindeki sözde Müslüman rejimleri ifade eden yakın düşman ve kâfirleri ifade eden uzak düşman. Selefi-jihatçı düşünce akımında, yakın düşman, islama olan yakınlığı sebebiyle her daim daha tehlikeli bir düşman olarak görülür. Bu düşünce tarzı, tekfir konseptine temel vermektedir.

Tekfir, bir müslümanın, İslam dışı ilan edilmesi, popüler tabirle aforoz edilmesidir. Tekfirin hangi kurallara göre uygulanacağı konusunda 'al-Wala wal-Bara konsepti uygulanmaktadır. Buna göre, Allah'ın emrettiği her şey koşulsuz yerine getirilirken, şeriat ile bağdaşmayan her şey ile irtibat kesilmedir. Bu, Müslümanlara belli bir hareket tarzı sunmaktadır ve bu çerçevenin dışına çıkan ise, tekfir ile cezalandırılmaktadır. Kendisini tek gerçek inanan olarak gören El-Kaide, bu şekilde, Müslüman olmanın kriterlerini belirleme fırsatına sahip olmaktadır. Birkaç örnek vermek gerekirse; kâfirler gibi giyinmek, kâfirlerin ülkelerinde yaşamak, vb.

Tekfir konseptinin, modern siyasal koşullar açısından en temel sonucu, demokrasiye, onun temsilcilerine ve içinde yaşayan insanlara karşı yarattığı negatif tutumdur. Demokrasi, Allah'ın kanunları yerine, insan kanunlarının takip edildiği bir din olarak algılanmaktadır. Demokrasideki herkesin eşitliği prensibi, halk egemenliği prensibi ve genelde çoğunluğun sözünün geçerli olması, demokraside yaşayanlara karşı tekfir uygulanmasının temel sebepleridir.

El-Kaideism çerçevesinde referans verilen ideologlara gelirsek; bunların başında Ibn Teymiye vardır. Teymiye, İslam tarihinin en kaotik döneminde, yani Moğol işgalleri döneminde yaşamıştır ve işgalden, kişisel olarak etkilenmiştir. Diğer bir ifadeyle, Teymiye'nin görüşleri, içinde bulunduğu tarihsel bağlam tarafından derin şekilde etkilenmiştir. Teymiye'ye göre, gerçek bir Müslüman lider, şeriatı, hayatın her alanında uygulamak zorundadır; aksi takdirde, hem yönetme ehliyetini yitirir, hem de İslam dışı ilan edilir. İşte Moğollar, bu perspektiften değerlendirilmektedir Teymiye tarafından. Ona göre, Moğollar, Şeriatı takip etmedikleri için; sadakatleri islama değil, Moğol devletinin kendisine olduğu için; ordusunda Müslüman olmayanları barındırdığı için gerçek Müslüman olarak nitelendirilemezler ve onlara karşı jihat dini anlamda meşrudur.

Bir diğer önemli ideolog, Seyyid Kutb'tur. Kutb'un önemi, 'cahiliye' kavramını, modern siyasal, ekonomik, vb. koşullar çerçevesinde yorumlamasından gelmektedir. Ona göre

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cahiliye, her ne dönemde olursa olsun, islamın doğru yolundan sapmaktır ve insan yapımı hukuk sistemi, kurallar, değerler vb. her şey, cahiliyenin örnekleridir. Cahiliye, Allah'tan kaynaklanmayan her şeydir ve buradan hareketle Kutb, tüm Müslüman alemini, cahiliye olarak nitelemektedir. Daha da önemlisi, cahiliyede yaşayanlar, Müslüman değillerdir ve şiddetin, meşru hedefidirler. Ayrıca, cahiliyeye karşı savaşı, bir avuç gerçek inanan öncü yürütecektir.

Bir diğer ideolog ise, Muhammed Faraj'dır. Faraj'a göre, jihat, İslam düşmanlarına karşı başvurulacak şiddet dışında başka bir anlama sahip olamaz. Bu anlamda, bilginin kendisine ve ulemaya yönelik olumsuz bir tutum takınmaktadır ve şiddetin, daha etkili bir silah olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Ayrıca yakın düşman-uzak düşman ayrımı yapmaktadır ve İslam aleminin içine düştüğü zorlukların temel sebebi olarak, sözde Müslüman liderleri görmektedir. Bu sebeple, yakın düşmana karşı savaşı öncelemektedir.

El-Kaide, şiddetin kullanımına dair yukarıdaki açıklamalar dışında, sivillerin de öldürülmesine dair, kendi dinsel yorumu çerçevesinde bir açıklama yapmaktadır. Örgüte göre, İslam, sivillerin öldürülmesini yasaklamasına rağmen, yedi tane istisna vardır ki bu durumlarda, siviller de meşru hedef haline gelirler. Ancak sorun, bu yedi istisna sonucunda, hedef kitle o kadar genişletilmiş oluyor ki, bütün siviller, hedef haline gelebilir oluyor. Bu anlamda, yedi istisnanın doğal sonucu, 'ya El-Kaide'yi desteklersin, ya da düşmansın' noktasına gelmektir.

İntihar eylemlerinin kullanılmasına gelirsek; belirtilmesi gereken ilk detay, El-Kaide'nin, 'intihar' kelimesi yerine 'şehit' kelimesini kullandığıdır. Zira El-Kaide'ye göre şehitlik, intihardan farklı olarak, kişinin, kendisini ümmet için feda edebilecek kadar sağlam imana sahip olduğunun göstergesidir. Ayrıca taktiksel olarak da, düşman ile El-Kaide arasındaki askeri ve ekonomik dengesizlik, bu eylem tarzını, bir gereklilik olarak ortaya koymaktadır El-Kaide açısından. El-Kaideism'e dair belirtilmesi gereken son ayrıntı, üç temel bileşene sahip olmasıdır: anti-Şiilik, anti-Amerikancılık, anti-Semitism.

El-Kaide'nin örgütsel evrimine bakarsak; 5 temel periyodun olduğunu görmekteyiz. İlki, 1986-1991 arası periyottur. Bu dönemde henüz hiyerarşik ve organize bir örgüt olarak El-Kaide kurulmamıştır; ancak Afgan jihadı ile oluşan çekirdek mücahit kadrolar, El-Kaide'nin ileride oluşmasında kilit rol oynayacaklardır ve lider kadroyu oluşturacaklardır. Bu dönemde, Abdullah Azzam, karizmatik bir figür olarak, 1979 da başlayan Afganistan'ın Sovyetler tarafından işgaline karşı, yukarıda bahsedilen defansif jihat fikrini

popülerleştirmiştir. Bu anlamda, ideolojik bir rolü ağır basmaktadır. Diğer taraftan, maddi gücü ile, Azzam'ı tamamlayıcı bir aktör olarak Usame Bin Ladin ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu iki kişi, 1984'te, Afganistan'a gelmek isteyen Müslümanların ülkedeki kalacak yerlerini, eğitimlerini, vb. organize eden Afgan Bürosu' sunu kuruyorlar.

Bu dönemde Afgan jihadı, hem Soğuk Savaş mantığı içinde hem de bölgedeki güç ilişkileri içerisinde önemli bir unsur oluyor ve Afgan mücahitler, ABD'nin Sovyetlere karşı yardım ettiği, Suudi Arabistan'ın ise, İran'a karşı yardım ettiği sahadaki vekil oluyorlar. En nihayetinde Sovyetler, geri çekilmek zorunda kalıyorlar; ancak bu zaferde, Ladin ve Azzam'ın başını çektiği mücahitlerin ne ölçüde önemli bir rol oynadıklarına dair literatürde tartışmalar bulunmaktadır. Ancak burada önemli olan, gerçeklik değildir; Afgan savaşının, mücahitler üzerinde yarattığı etkidir. Bu anlamda, Sovyetlerin yenilgisi, mücahitlere, yenilmezlik hissi kazandırmıştır. Bu kibirli hal, ileride ABD'e karşı savaşma stratejisinde önemli rol oynayacaktır; zira Ladin'e göre, ABD'i dünyanın tek süper gücü yapan, Sovyetleri yenen mücahitlerdir ve bu sebeple, mücahitler isterse, ABD'i de, bulunduğu pozisyondan indirebilir. Ayrıca, Sovyet savaşı bittiğinde, artık normal hayata adapte olma yeteneğini kaybetmiş ve belli bir seviyede savaşma kabiliyetine sahip, transnasyonel bir mücahit ordusu vardı. Bu kitle arasındaki iletişimi ve koordinasyonu devam ettirmek için 1989'da, El-Kaide isimli bir veritabanı oluşturuldu. Bu, ilerideki jihatçı eylemler için bir yatırımdı.

Sovyetlere karşı Afgan jihadı bittikten sonra, artık yeni hedefin ne olacağına dair sorular belirdi. Bu noktada Azzam, yeni hedef olarak bölgedeki sözde Müslüman rejimlere karşı savaşılmasına karşıydı. Yeni bir kâfir ordusuna karşı savaşılmalıydı. Diğer taraftan, mücahitler arasında giderek isminden söz ettiren Eymen El Zevahiri ise, tam tersi şekilde, bölgedeki laik rejimlere saldırmanın gerekli olduğunu söylüyordu.

Savaş bittiğinde, Ladin, Suudi Arabistan'a dönmüştü ve tam bir kahraman gibi karşılanmıştı. Halk arasında, dini ve askeri popülerliği artıyordu. Bu durum Ladin'de bir güç zehirlenmesi de yarattı; zira Saddam kuvvetleri, Kuveyt'i işgal ettiğinde, Suudi Arabistan'a, kendi mücahit ordusuyla Saddam kuvvetlerine karşı savaşma teklifinde bulundu. Ancak bu reddedildi ve ABD kuvvetleri, ülkeye davet edildi. Bu bir kırılma noktasıydı ve Ladin, Suudi Arabistan'da faaliyette bulunamayacağın ı anladı ve o dönemde uygun bir ortamın bulunduğu Sudan'a taşındı.

İkinci periyot, 1992 ile 1996 arasıdır. Bin Ladin, Sudan'daki siyasi, askeri, ekonomik elitler ile al-ver ilişkisi kurdu ve bu anlamda, rüşvet, ekonomik hibe ve askeri yardımlar yoluyla örgütün ülkedeki varlığını sigortaladı. Bu dönemde, El-Kaide'nin askeri eylem kapasitesine dair kesin yargılara varamasak da, örgüte atfedilen önemli terör eylemleri gerçekleşti. 1993'te Mogadişu'da 18 Amerikan askerinin öldürülmesi, yine aynı yıl Dünya Ticaret Merkezi'ne terör saldırısının gerçekleştirilmesi, Suudi Arabistan'da 1995 ve 1996'da sırasıyla Riyad ve Huber Kuleleri saldırıları, El-Kaide'ye atfedildi bu dönemde. İşin daha da önemli kısmı ise, El-Kaide, bu saldırılara dair herhangi bir yalanlama yayımlamadı ve örgüt hakkında kendiliğinden oluşan bu imajı olabildiğince kullanmaya çabaladı. Herhangi bir terör saldırısı olduğunda, insanların aklına artık ilk seçenek olarak Ladin gelmekteydi ve bu, Ladin'in tam da istediğiydi. Mogadişu'nun bir diğer önemi ise, Ladin, ABD'nin askeri kuvvetine dair izlenim elde etme fırsatı bulmasıydı. Ona göre, ABD, kağıttan kaplandı ve uzun dönemli savaşma iradesi yoktu. Bu izlenim, bir sonraki periyotta, ABD'e saldırı stratejisini formüle etmesinde rol oynayacaktı.

Bu dönemde Zevahiri ise, hala görece bağımsız bir aktördü ve Mısır'da eylemde olan İslami Jihat örgütünün eylemlerine odaklanmıştı. Bu dönemde bir yakın düşman stratejisi savunucusu olarak Zevahiri, Mısır'da çeşitli eylemler aracılığıyla, rejime diz çöktürebileceğini düşünüyordu. Ancak bütün eylemleri başarısızlıkla sonuçlandı ve hatta, 1994'te Başbakan'a yönelik suikast girişiminde, küçük bir kız ölmüştü ve bu, tüm ülkede, Zevahiri ve İslami Jihat'a karşı büyük bir nefret yarattı.

Bu dönemde Sudan'ın üzerindeki uluslar arası baskı arttı ve en sonunda ülkedeki siyasal liderlik, Ladin'in ülkeden gitmesine karar vermek zorunda kaldı. 18 Mayıs 1996'da, Ladin, tekrardan Afganistan'a gitti. Ladin'in Sudan'dayken, başıboş Afgan-Arapları kendi liderliği altında topladı. O dönemde Afganistan'da devam eden Müslümanlar arasındaki iç savaşa dahil olmayarak prestijini korudu. Ayrıca örgütün kuruluşunu ilan edeceği 1998'deki elçilik bombalamalarında kullanacağı Afrika hücrelerinin temelini attı. Diğer taraftan, bu ülkede büyük bir finansal kayıp yaşadığı da bir gerçektir. Ancak, Sudan periyodunun, Ladin açısından, başarısızlıktan daha fazla başarı içerdiğini söyleyebiliriz.

Üçüncü periyot, 1996 ile 2001 arasıdır. El-Kaide, bu dönemde aynı Sudan'da olduğu gibi, Afganistan'daki siyasal ve askeri liderlik-Taliban- ile, siyasal, ekonomik, vb. anlamda al-ver ilişkisi kurarak, ülkedeki varlığını sigortalamıştır. Bu dönemde, örgütün gelecekteki örgütsel gelişimi açısından çok kritik olan bir kırılma noktası da yaşanmıştır ve bu, uzak düşman stratejisine geçiş ile ABD'e karşı başlatılan mücadeledir. Bu strateji değişikliği akılcı

sebeplere dayanıyordu ve bu anlamda 2 temel ve 3 kolaylaştırıcı sebep vardı bu değişikliği gerektiren.

İlk temel sebep, Cezayir ve Mısır'da hükümete- yakın düşman- karşı yürütülen jihat, 1990'ların sonuna gelirken tamamen başarısızlığa saplanmıştı. İkinci temel sebep ise, Ladin'in siyasal analiziydi ve bu analize göre, bölgedeki sözde Müslüman rejimlerin ayakta kalmasının tek sebebi, ABD'den aldıkları destektir ve eğer ki ABD bölgeyi terk etmeye zorlanırsa, bu rejimler de kolay hedef olacaklardır. İlk kolaylaştırıcı sebep ise, Ladin'in kontrolünde olan Arap-Afgan kitlenin, zamanla hem Afgan jihadı hem de Bosna iç savaşında savaşmasından kaynaklı olarak yeni bir transnasyonel hassasiyete sahip olmasıdır. İkinci kolaylaştırıcı etken ise, medyanın daha çok dikkatini çekme isteğidir. Son kolaylaştırıcı etken ise, Sudan ile kıyaslandığında, Afganistan'ın coğrafi özellikler anlamında, ABD gibi bir güce karşı gayri nizami bir savaş yürütmede daha avantajlı bir yer olmasıdır.

Bu yeni strateji ise, 23 Ağustos 1996 ve 23 Şubat 1998 tarihli iki fetva ile dünyaya ilan edilmiştir. Aynı zamanda bu iki fetva, hiyerarşik ve organize bir terör örgütü olarak El-Kaide'nin doğum ilanıdır. Yeni stratejinin eyleme geçmesi ise, 7 Ağustos 1998'de Nairobi ve Darüsselam'da Amerikan elçiliklerine karşı gerçekleştirilen intihar eylemleri ile olmuştur. İki yıl sonra ise, Yemen'de USS Cole isimli bir savaş gemisine saldırı düzenlenmiştir. Bu saldırılar, bizzat El-Kaide çekirdek kadrosu tarafından emredilen, denetlenen ve gerçekleştirilen eylemlerdir.

Ladin'in uzak düşman stratejisine geçişte, Zevahiri'den de aldığı yardımı unutmamak gerekmektedir. Jihatçı harekete katıldığı küçük yaşlarından beri yakın düşmana karşı savaşmayı öncelik olarak belirlemiş Zevahiri'nin, uzak düşman stratejisini kabul etmesinin birtakım sebepleri vardır. Lideri olduğu İslami Jihad örgütünün Mısır'daki operasyonel fiyaskosu, örgüt üyelerinin tutuklanması, finansman yokluğu, ülkedeki diğer jihatçı örgüt olan İslami Cemaat'in ülke içindeki eylemlerini sonlandırma kararı ve bizzat Ladin'in, Zevahiri'ye Mısır'daki eylemleri bitirmesi tavsiyesi etkili olmuştur Zevahiri'nin kararında.

9/11 saldırısı, terör tarihindeki en kanlı eylemdir ve Ladin, bu eylem ile ABD'nin aşırı bir tepki vererek Afganistan'ı işgal etmesini umuyordu. Zira bu şekilde, daha çok Müslüman desteğini, kendi arkasında toplayabileceğini düşünüyordu. Bu saldırı ile El-Kaide, tüm jihatçı hareketin liderliğini eline geçirdi.

Dördüncü periyot, 9/11 saldırısı sonrası dönemdir. ABD'nin Afganistan'ı işgali sonucunda Taliban rejimi çöktü; Afganistan'daki eğitim kampları büyük oranda yok edildi; örgütün çekirdek kadrosunun büyük kısmı ya kaçtı ya da öldürüldü ve terörle mücadele kapsamında bölgedeki hükümetler, El-Kaide'ye karşı mücadelenin dozunu arttırdı. Ancak tüm bunlar, El-Kaide tehdidini yok etmekten ziyade, sadece tehdidin form değiştirmesine yol açtı zira örgüt, merkezi liderlik yönetimi olmadan çeşitli hücreler, ağlar aracılığıyla otonom bir şekilde işleyebilen bir varlığa dönüştü. Marc Sageman bu dönüşüme 'lidersiz jihat'demektedir.

Bu dönüşüme yol açan değişiklikleri şöyle sıralayabiliriz. İlk olarak, örgütün çekirdek üyeleri, eylemlerin zamanına ve yerine karar verme gibi operasyonel kararları sahadaki komutanlara devrettiler. İkincisi, Afganistan'daki El-Kaide liderliğinin eylemler üzerindeki taktiksel rolü, El-Kaideism aracılığıyla, ilham verme ve Müslümanları eyleme geçme yönünde teşvik etme rolüne dönüştü. Üçüncü olarak, Afganistan'daki eğitim kamplarının yok olması sonucu yeni üyeleri eğitmenin alternatif yolları bulundu ve paintball, doğa yürüyüşü, paraşütle atlama, vb. gibi çeşitli spor aktiviteleri ile yeni üyeler fiziksel olarak eğitilmeye çalışıldı. Dördüncü olarak, askeri bina, elçilik gibi zor hedeflerden, gece kulübü, AVM gibi korunması zor ve daha çok sivilin bulunduğu hedefler seçilmeye başlandı. Son olarak ise, bir terör eyleminin planlama ve eylemi uygulama süresi, olabildiğince kısaltılmaya çalışıldı. Theo Van Gogh cinayeti ve Madrid tren saldırıları bu dönüşüm çerçevesinde değerlendirilen önemli saldırılardan bazılarıdır.

El-Kaide'nin, Marc Sageman'ın bahsettiği bir 'lidersiz jihat' dönüşümü geçirdiği bir gerçektir; ancak 9/11 sonrası gerçeklik sadece bundan ibaret değildir. Bu noktada Bruce Hoffman, örgütün, Afganistan işgalinin ve Küresel Terörle Mücadele kampanyasının yarattığı yıkımın etkilerini birkaç yıl içinde atlatmaya başlayıp tekrardan örgütlenmeye başladığını ve hatta tekrardan terör eylemi gerçekleştirme kapasitesine ulaştığını söylüyor. Bu anlamda 2005 Londra saldırısı, 9/11 sonrası dönemde bizzat El-Kaide liderliği tarafından emredilen eylemlerden en önemlisidir. Yani El-Kaide'nin ikili bir yapıya evrildiğini; bir taraftan örgüt liderliğinin vuruş kapasitesini koruduğunu, diğer taraftan da liderlikten bağımsız ancak örgüt amaçları çerçevesinde hareket eden ağların oluştuğunu söylüyor Bruce Hoffman.

9/11 sonrası dönemde, en önemli gelişmelerden birisi de Irak işgali ve onun etkileridir. Afganistan'a kıyasla daha baştan Irak işgali, herhangi bir meşruiyetten yoksundu. Afganistan'daki örgüt liderliği üzerindeki baskıyı hafifletti. Ayrıca zamanla Irak, yeni bir

jihatçı eğitim alanına dönüştü. Bu sebeplerden ötürü, El-Kaide, Irak işgalinden sonuna kadar faydalanmaktan kaçınmadı.

Her kriz, kendi liderini yaratır ve bu anlamda, Ebu Musab El Zerkavi, hızlı bir şekilde Irak'taki yeni jihatçı sahanın liderliğini eline geçirdi. Zevahiri'nin temel stratejisi, bir yandan ABD'i ülkede yalnızlaştırmak ve müttefiklerinin ülkeden ayrılmasını sağlamak iken diğer yandan, Şii-Sünni iç savaşı yaratarak ülkeyi istikrarsızlaştırmayı ve ABD'i baş edemeyeceği bir savaşa dahil etmeyi amaçlıyordu. Ancak bu iki ayaklı stratejide, Şii'ler, ABD'e göre daha büyük bir düşmandı; zira Sünniler ile Şiilerin ulusal bir temelde birleşmesinin engellenmesi gerekiyordu jihatçıların Irak'ta varlık kazanabilmesi için.

Zevahiri, Şiilere karşı saldırılarını gerçekleştirirken, aşırı şiddet kullanma taraftarıydı ve bu anlamda, sayısız sivil Şii'yi öldürmekten kaçınmadı. Bu aşırı şiddeti, onu jihatçı çevrelerde ünlü birisi haline getirdi ve Zevahiri, giderek daha fazla Afganistan'daki El-Kaide liderliğini gölgeler hale gelmişti.

Bu dönemde örgüt liderliği, yeni bir strateji olarak örgütsel varlığını, çeşitli yerel örgütler aracılığıyla farklı ülkelere genişletme stratejisini formüle etti ve bu çerçevede ilk olarak 2004'te Zarkavi'nin Tevhit ve Jihat örgütünü kendi örgütsel şemsiyesi altına kattı ve örgüt, Irak'taki El-Kaide ismini aldı. 2006'da Mağrib El-Kaide'si, 2009'da Arap Yarımadası El-Kaide'si, 2010'da El-Şebab, 2013'te El-Nusra Cephesi, El-Kaide örgütsel şemsiyesi altına giren yeni örgütler oldular.

Bu dönemde, Zerkavi'nin aşırı şiddeti, yerel halkta tepkiler de yaratıyordu ve bu sebeple, örgüt liderliği, Zerkavi'yi daha sakin olması ve özellikle Şiilere saldırmaması yönünde yoğun şekilde ikna etmeye çabaladı. Zerkavi, hiçbir şekilde kendi stratejisi ve şiddet kullanımından taviz vermedi ve en sonunda Sünni aşiretler, ABD ile ortak düşman haline gelen Zerkavi'ye karşı geçici bir işbirliği kurdu. Aşiretler, yerel olarak o kadar kuvvetli bir aktördü ki, ABD'nin askeri ve finansal gücü ile birlikte, kısa sürede Zerkavi kuvvetlerine önemli kayıplar yaşattı.

9/11 sonrası koşullara adapte olabilmek için El-Kaide'nin gerçekleştirdiği bir diğer yenilik, ideolojik hibridizasyondur. Örgüt, benimsediği uzak düşman stratejisinin, 9/11 sonrası koşullarda, giderek daha zor uygulanabilir olduğunu gördü ve hedeflerini çeşitlendirerek, hem uzak düşman hedeflerine hem de yakın düşman hedeflerine odaklanmaya başladı. Bu anlamda, hem Madrid, Londra, İstanbul saldırılarını gerçekleştirirken, aynı zamanda Suudi Arabistan, Fas, Irak vb. de eylemler gerçekleştirmeye devam etti.

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9/11, bir başarı mı yoksa başarısızlık mı sorusuna şöyle cevap verilebilir: örgüt, dünyanın tek süper gücünü kendi evinde vurarak onu dokunulur kıldı ve yarattığı psikolojik yıkım dışında, büyük bir ekonomik kayıp da yaşattı ABD'e; diğer taraftan, ABD, 9/11 sonrası dönemde, bölgedeki varlığını güçlendirdi, İsrail ile ilişkilerini arttırdı ve daha çok Müslüman öldürdü. Ancak örgüt açısından, bu olumsuzluklardan daha önemli bir olumlu gelişme vardır ki o da, bölgede oluşan insani, ekonomik, vb. yıkım ve sıradan Müslümanların bile radikalleşmesidir. Bu, örgütün, uzun dönemde varlığını kuvvetlendirmesini sağlayan ana etkenlerdir.

Son periyot, 2010'un sonlarında başlayan Arap İsyanları sonrası dönemdir. Arap İsyanları olarak adlandırılacak eylemleri tetikleyen olaylar, Aralık 2010'da Tunus'ta başladıktan sonra, hızlı şekilde bölgedeki birçok ülkeye yayıldı ve Mısır ve Tunus'taki diktatörler beklenmedik şekilde devrildi. Gözlemciler, aceleci şekilde, eylemlerin, El-Kaide'yi etkisiz hale getireceğini, zira artık şiddet yöntemi yerine barışçıl eylemlerin, bölgede etkili sonuçlar yaratabileceği ifade edildi.

Öte yandan El-Kaide, kitlelerin kendisine yabancılaşmasını engellemek için büyük bir propaganda kampanyası başlattı ve ayrıca, isyanlar sonrası oluşacak yeni yönetimlerin hayal kırıklığına uğratacağı kitleleri, yanına çekebilecek şekilde kendisini ve söylemini konumlandırdı. Görüleceği üzere, El-Kaide, Arap İsyanları sonrasında oluşan istikrarsızlıklar ve iç savaşlardan, örgütsel varlığını ve imajını tekrardan tazelemek için fazlasıyla yararlanmıştır.

Bu dönemde Irak'ta yeni bir jihatçı lider ortaya çıkıyordu: Ebu Bekir el-Bağdadi. Bağdadi, 2010 yılında, Irak İslam Devleti olarak isim değiştiren Irak El-Kaide'sinin liderliğine geçince, öncelikle örgütün askeri kapasitesini arttırma ve yerel halkın gözündeki kötü imajı tamir etme görevlerini üstlendi. Bunlar olurken yeni bir jihatçı savaş alanı olarak Suriye giderek önem kazanıyordu. Bağdadi, bu sahada varlık göstermek gerektiğine karar vererek, örgütün Suriye'deki askeri kolu olarak Ekim 2011'de El-Nusra Cephesi'ni kurdurttu.

El-Nusra Cephesi, sahada, Suriyeli olduğu imajı yaratmak, yani uluslar arası jihatçı hareket ile bağlantısı olduğu izlenimi yaratmamak konusunda çok dikkatliydi ve sahadaki diğer muhalif silahlı örgütler için askeri varlığını kanıtlamaya uğraştı. Bu anlamda rejim kuvvetlerine ve onların sahadaki müttefiklerine karşı yüzlerce saldırı gerçekleştirdi. Kendini o kadar kabul ettirmişti ki, ABD, Aralık 2012'te terör örgütü olarak ilan ettiğinde, sahadaki, muhalif unsurlar kararı tanımadıklarını bile açıkladılar.

Bağdadi, Nisan 2013'te El-Nusra Cephesi'nin, kendi örgütün Suriye'deki uzantısı olduğunu açıkladı ve iki örgütü, Irak ve Şam İslam Devleti (IŞİD) adı altında topladığını duyurdu. Ancak El-Nusra Cephesi lideri, bu kararı tanımadığını açıkladı ve direkt olarak Zevahiri'ye bağlılığını duyurdu. Zevahiri ise, yaklaşık bir ay sonra açıkladığı kararında, Bağdadi'nin kararının yanlış olduğunu, iki örgütün ayrı ayrı Suriye ve Irak'ta faaliyette bulunması gerektiğini açıkladı ve El-Nusra Cephesi'nin bağlılık ilanı kabul etti. Bu, Zevahiri açısından akıllıca bir karardı zira hiçbir zahmete girmeden, El-Nusra Cephesi aracılığıyla, jihatçı hareket içindeki en önemli sahada varlık göstermiş olacaktı.

Bağdadi ise kendi kararından taviz vermedi ve Zevahiri'nin kararını tanımadığını açıkladı ve Zevahiri'yi, İslamın doğru yolundan sapmakla ve ümmeti bölmekle suçladı. Ardından kendi örgütsel kapasitesi ile Suriye sahasına girdi ve sahadaki diğer jihatçı örgütlere karşı kanlı bir savaş başlattı. Suriye'de jihatçı iç savaş başlamıştı. Bu dönemde kağıt üstünde de olsa Bağdadi, hala El-Kaide'nin örgütsel şemsiyesi altıdaydı ve eylemleri, El-Kaide ismine zarar veriyordu. Ayrıca, Bağdadi'nin, Zevahiri'ye yönelik suçlamaları çok ağırdı. En sonunda, Zevahiri, 3 Şubat 2014'te, El-Kaide'nin, IŞİD ile tüm örgütsel bağlarını kopardığını açıkladı. IŞİD ise, 28 Haziran 2014'te halifelik ilan ettiğini duyurdu.

Bu dönemde El-Kaide, geçmişteki hatalarından ders çıkartarak, yerel halkla daha doğru bir ilişki kurma tarzı benimsedi ve 'yerel halkla iyi geçinme stratejisini' benimsedi. Bu, yerel halka sert dini uygulamalar empoze etmektense, sabırlı şekilde uzun dönemli düşünerek, daha çok ortak noktalar üzerinden halkla ilişki kurma biçimiydi. Bu stratejinin uygulanmasında Mağrib El-Kaide'si pek başarılı olamazken, El-Nusra Cephesi ve Arap Yarımadası El-Kaide'si, bu stratejiyi başarılı şekilde uygulayan El-Kaide unsurları olmuşlardır.

Son olarak El-Kaide-IŞİD farklarına gelirsek; iki hareketin de, jihatçı hareketin liderliğini ele geçirmek için rekabet ettiğini söyleyebiliriz. Ayrıca, aralarındaki kanlı rekabete rağmen, ikisinin de neredeyse aynı dini konseptler kullandığını söyleyebiliriz. IŞİD, El-Kaide'nin kullanıma soktuğu lidersiz jihat ve çeşitli yerel örgütler aracılığıyla örgütsel genişleme stratejisini kullanmaktadır. IŞİD'in aşırı şiddet kullanımı, onu uzun dönemde kendisinin aleyhine işlemektedir zira El-Kaide'ye kendisini göreceli olarak 'iyi çocuk' olarak sunma fırsatı vermektedir. Bu anlamda, El-Kaide, IŞİD'e aynı derecede şiddet kullanarak cevap vermemiştir.

Sonuçta, El-Kaide, her ne zaman bir kriz ile karşılaşırsa, o krizi en az kayıpla atlatmasını sağlayacak bir strateji geliştirmeyi başarmaktadır. El-Nusra Cephesi'nin Suriye'de uzun dönemde muhtemelen yenilgiye uğratılacak olması, El-Kaide'nin yenilgisi anlamına gelmeyecektir. Örgüt, oluşabilecek yeni bir krizden faydalanacak şekilde kendisini hazır tutmaktadır. El-Kaide ile etkili mücadele, onun örgütsel varlığına karşı silahlı mücadele ve ideolojik varlığına karşı ise silahsız mücadeleyi aynı anda gerçekleştirerek olur. Ancak son kertede bakıldığında, çeşitli sebeplerden ötürü, uzun bir süre daha El-Kaide'nin, Ortadoğu'da varlık göstermesi kuvvetle muhtemeldir.

B. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

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<u>**YAZARIN**</u>

Soyadı : Aydıner

Adı   : Burak Günhan

Bölümü : Uluslararası İlişkiler

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : AL-QAEDA: ITS IDEOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

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