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Norah Miriam Aamoum

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Terrorism Comes to Africa: The Spread of Radical Islamic Terrorism into Algeria and Nigeria

Norah Miriam Aamoum

naamoum@fordham.edu

Global Affairs/International Track

Senior Thesis

Advisor: John P. Entelis

entelis@fordham.edu

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to show how radical Islamic terrorist organisations like Al-Qaeda and ISIS have been able to infiltrate African societies and exploit their conflict in order to spread their own ideology. This paper looks at Algeria and Nigeria, two major countries on the African continent that have been plagued by terrorism since the late 20th century, and how the terrorist groups known as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram, and the Islamic State West Africa (IS-WA) came to be in their respective nations. It was a combination of internal and external factors that allowed insurgent groups and later terrorist organisations to take hold of these two nations with the internal factors revolving around the political and economic development of Algeria and Nigeria. However it is impossible to tell the causality of these factors, as one does not cause the other. These factors include high unemployment rates, lack of state capacity, poverty, corruption, religion, and institutional weakness. The combination of these factors is what ultimately allowed radical Islamic terrorism to gain a foothold in the North and Western regions of Africa.

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Introduction

In the 1950s and onwards, when African countries began to gain their independence back

from the Europeans, many of these nations experienced major conflicts and wars. This was

particularly the case for Nigeria and Algeria, whose people suffered through decades of unrest

and unstable governments. Both Nigeria and Algeria saw numerous regime changes in the last

half of the 20th century, and the leadership vacuums created by this instability contributed in a

major way to the emergence of radical Islamic terrorist organisations in the destabilized region.

In Algeria, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) was born, while Nigeria was

plagued by Boko Haram and later the Islamic State West Africa (IS-WA). The causes of these

insurgencies are linked to internal and external factors. The first and most important external

factor is the clash between the West and Islam. While socio-economic and political internal

factors played a significant role in explaining how these groups came to power, the connection

between Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is what truly allowed these

organisations to gain their strong footholds in their respective countries. Al-Qaeda and ISIS were

able to manipulate the domestic turmoil that led to the initial creation of these groups. They used

their influence and strength that they had garnered in the Middle East to spread their network

into Algeria and Nigeria, nations already weakened by the fallout from colonisation and

subsequent attempts to build stable governments. The uncertain state of governance in these

nations left made them vulnerable to the spread of terrorism.

According to Adesoji O. Adelaja, terrorism is "the premeditated use or threat to use

violence by individuals or sub-national groups in order to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of their immediate victims (Adelaja 35). Terrorists act outside the regular structure of society through illegal means or actions and the goal of their actions tend to divide the state or groups within the state. In general, the root causes of terrorist organisations (and what allows their ideology and power to spread) can be found by looking at the government of the nations in which they operate. Terrorism often stems from socio-economic, political, and religious elements (Adelaja 35). In the case of Africa, while these factors have had a major effect on terrorist's rise to power, it was also a culmination of external factors, particularly the discordance between Islam and the West. Radical Islamic terrorism began in the Middle East with the creation of Al-Qaeda and ISIS and slowly but surely, it was able to seep down into Algeria and Nigeria.

Algeria and Nigeria are two major African countries in which terrorism has infiltrated. In terms of land mass, Algeria is the largest country in Africa, while Nigeria is home to the largest economy and population. They are both major oil producers and members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This being said, these two major actors on the continent have never been analysed together as one would assume they would or should have been. While glaringly different, they share a multitude of similarities, such as the role Islam plays in their societies, colonisation, etc. Their common development is the instability within themselves that has facilitated terrorist movements from the Middle East to come in. Algeria and Nigeria's importance to the African continent and international relations is why terrorist groups were interested in these two countries to begin with and what led to their subsequent infiltration.

Purpose / Methodology

This paper analyzes how radical Islamic terrorist organisations have been able to take advantage of African conflicts in order to aggressively spread their agenda. I examine how Islamic terrorist groups have infiltrated African society, focusing mainly on Algeria and Nigeria. There are a number of factors that explain how terrorist organisations have been able to so easily gain a foothold in these regions and spread their ideology. These factors include high unemployment rates, a lack of state capacity, institutional weakness, widespread poverty, and state and local corruption. Together, these conditions have allowed terrorist organisations to thrive in Algeria and Nigeria. This paper will explore the effects of each of these local conditions and the role that each has played in the growth and success of three terrorist organisations: Boko Haram, Islamic State West Africa (IS-WA), and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). By looking at these groups collectively and in terms of their origins in Algeria and Nigeria, I will be able to better show how terrorism in the Middle East was able to spread into North and West Africa, something is lacking in current literature on the subject. This will be done through the analysis of journal articles, newspapers and articles within Algeria and Nigeria, and surveys of the local population. While particular focus will be given to Algeria and Nigeria, I will also make reference to their neighboring countries of Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Boko Haram, IS-WA, and AQIM operate extensively in these countries as well and have had significant and sustained success spreading their ideologies and influence there.

In order to understand the spread of radical Islamic terrorism from the Middle East into Africa, it is crucial to understand the origins of global radical Islamic terrorism. The origins of

Islamic terrorism in the Middle East help to show the way that terrorism has been able to spread into Northern Africa and the Sahelian countries. Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) are the two of the largest and deadliest terrorist organisations currently in operation. In the cases of Boko Haram, IS-WA, and AQIM, they were either splinter groups of these organisations or pledged allegiance to one of them after their inception. Al-Qaeda and ISIS were extremely successful in spreading their radical Islamist ideology not only throughout the Middle East, but to many regions in Africa. By looking at the factors on the ground in these African nations, I will be able to examine the initial similarities and differences between Al-Qaeda/ISIS and Boko Haram/IS-WA/AQIM at the beginning of their insurgencies, the traction they have gained in the last decade and the reasons behind it, and the future of terrorism in Algeria and Nigeria.

Literature Review

The majority of literature on this topic examines the root causes and effects that Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and ISIS West Africa have had on each region and/or specific country. However, the literature covers the two incompletely, never looking at Algeria and Nigeria together. My research hopes to expose and present the need to discuss these two countries together. This will help improve people's understanding of the why Islamic terrorist groups were able to so easily infiltrate two major countries, without completely decimating their regimes. The majority of the authors that I highlight in what follows discuss the origins of the organisations and the paths each took to secure power. In the terms of the roots of Islamic terrorism, I focus primarily on research and literature pertaining to the outbreak of conflict in the

Middle East in the 19th century, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan. These two countries are the birthplace of Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Shmuel Bar, a former member of the Israeli intelligence community, discusses the religious-ideological motivation behind radical Islamic terrorism, looking at how terrorism in general has become synonymous with radical Islam and Islamic fundamentalism. Islamic fundamentalism was a movement in the 20th century in response to the way in which some Muslim countries or societies were ruled under modern Islam (Bar 28). For Islamic fundamentalists, there is no separation of religion and politics. This fusion of religion and politics is where the tie between Islamic fundamentalism and radical Islam begins to take shape. Radical Islamists have a view of Islam that is not historical and within the group they are often divided. They believe only in the ways of the Prophet and the events that occurred during his time (Bar 29). This belief pits a negative view on those countries or societies that are not ruled by Islam and encourages violence against them.

The concept of jihad or holy war plays a major role in Islam, but particularly in radical Islam. Modern radical Islam has taken the concept of *jihad* and changed it into this mentality of "bello ergo sum (I fight therefore I exist)" in order to popularise themselves and their jihads (Bar 30). The connection between Muslim fundamentalism and radical Islam shows why Al-Qaeda and ISIS were able to gain a lot of followers. Although their ideology was extremely radical, they were able to twist some of the beliefs of fundamentalists so that it was as if radicalisation was the only way.

Globalisation is another of the overarching factors that has led to an increase in terrorism. It has shifted the focus from state-centered to security threats involving non state actors such as terrorist organisations. Days before the 9/11 attacks, Paul Pillar at the Brookings Institute

published a paper in which he discusses the idea of globalised terrorism and how it became so widespread. Pillar identified factors that allowed terrorism to become a globalised phenomenon: The accessibility and visibility of targets, technological advancements in communication and information, and mobility (Pillar).

Terrorists can reach more people than ever using modern technology and communication. They are able to do so through online methods and through the increasing ease of travel (Pillar). The internet is by far the greatest tool used by terrorists. It allows them to spread propaganda and radicalise individuals through the images and videos they view on their smartphones. The goal of terrorists is to radicalise the maximum number of people in order to fight against their enemy. In this case, the enemy of radical Islamic terrorists is the West and those who do not adhere to the strict and falsely manufactured Islamic law that they do.

In addition, it is easier to radicalise a group that wants something that you can provide, which is why people living in extreme poverty have an even higher vulnerability to radicalisation by terrorists. Terrorist's ability to appeal to the needs of the public is one of the main causes behind their foothold in many African nations. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is working on research into the personal motivations of extremists, and examining why Africa has been particularly vulnerable to extremism and terrorism. Mohammed Yahya, the Regional Programme Coordination at UNDP Africa, is one of the primary people working on this research. His research shows that the vulnerability of African nations is due to weak government institutions and the large portions of ungoverned territory (Yahya). These conditions on the ground have made it ripe for terrorism to grow.

Additionally, the failure of the government in overseeing the rich diversity of people in the nations, coupled with the growing unemployment rates in youth, has created a potent environment that allows terrorism to thrive (Yahya). These factors have been brought up repeatedly as the reason for the spread of radical Islamic terrorism and its numerical and territorial growth across Africa. The lack of government presence and aid in many of the rural areas in these regions has provided the perfect breeding ground for radical Islamic ideology to spread and for groups to form without anyone to stop them. The lack of government and security means the population is vulnerable. A vulnerable population ignored by the government looks for help in other places. In this case, citizens from African nations are turning to terrorist organisations who are vehemently anti-government. Because these citizens are prone to distrust their own governments, terrorist groups operating in Africa are able to indoctrinate the people more easily.

The most successful and deadliest of the three terrorist organisations I discuss in this paper is Boko Haram. Boko Haram operates primarily in Nigeria, but also has factions and militants carrying out attacks and living in Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. The primary focus of Boko Haram, according to Ufo Okeke Uzodike and Benjamin Maiangwa, is their anger towards to government of Nigeria and their failure to govern. Their article focuses on the contextual factors that led to the rise of the group. They note that there is one major difference that Boko Haram has in comparison to IS-WA and AQIM. Which is that Islamist activism and protests against the state in Nigeria have been prevalent since before colonial times (Uzodike 92). The long history of Islamic activism in the country has always existed, particularly with the country being divided into the Muslim North and the Christian South, however it never escalated and

mutated into Islamic extremism until the late 20th century. Their paper shows how this change

was made between the two and how the creation of Boko Haram came to be through a "cocktail

of bad governance" (Uzodike 95). Boko Haram is the result of many factors, including

corruption and the abuse of power, poverty and unemployment, as well as the complete

underdevelopment of the North (Uzodike 95).

State failure is the most common root cause of terrorism, which means it is important to

understand the power of the state. Uzodike presents the power of the state as a double edged

sword. A state's power should be used to provide basic rights and protection to its people,

however it can also do the exact opposite (Uzodike 96). The state has free reign to do things that

would inevitably harm the people, which is often the case with government institutions that are

corrupt. The failed state is seen through "three main sources: economic dislocation, political

instability, and loss in Nigeria" (Uzodike 96). These are precisely the case in Nigeria. In

addition, Uzodike et al. cite a 2011 report by the world bank that found that 54.7% of Nigerians

live in extreme poverty (Uzodike 98). The year of this study is extremely relevant, although

seven years old. It was between 2011 and 2013 that Boko Haram was at its peak in Nigeria and

controlled the most territory. This terrorist organisation was at its most powerful when the

majority of people in the country were at their weakest. This is no coincidence: terrorism thrives

under a weakened state.

Like Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) came to power at a time

when state capacity and strength of government was at an all-time low. In a paper published in

the 2015 Africa Review, Alta Grobbelaar and Hussein Solomon examine the origins of terrorism

in Algeria, the birthplace of AQIM. The group was created during the Algerian civil war in the

1990s and stemmed from an insurgent Islamist movement known as the GIA or Armed Islamic Group. The GIA was against the secular leadership in Algeria at the time and wanted to create an Islamic state in Algeria. The group used the failure of the state much like Boko Haram in order to gain power in Algeria. During the turmoil of the civil war, the GIA became extremely divided, particularly in the late 1990s. The division was due to the increased attacks on civilians, which to many went against their Islamic code. The GIA then turned into the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) in 1998, taking over as the primary anti-government group in Algeria (Grobbelaar 150). Leading up to the year 2000, the GSPC gained the support of Al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden which is when the group officially became AQIM. By the mid 2000s, the group was garnering even more support across Algeria and began spreading their ideology and breadth of attacks into other nations (Grobbelaar 153).

The relationship between Al-Qaeda and AQIM can be seen more closely by examining the nature of their affiliation and the strategic element of the relationship. One source argues that the alliance between the two terrorist organisations strengthened both of groups and were seen as a portrait of Islamist success during the time, which increased their popularity (Rosato 118). The 2000s were a regrouping period for Al-Qaeda; Afghanistan no longer was a safe haven for the organization following the 9/11 attacks. At the same time, the GSPC were unsuccessful in overthrowing the Algerian government, thus their alliance with Al-Qaeda came at an extremely convenient time. The creation of the new group under Al-Qaeda's label was a turning point towards joining the global jihad (Rosato 118).

Under the influence of Al-Qaeda, AQIM was able to expand from Algeria into Mali, Mauritania, Chad, and Niger and introduce new tactics in spreading ideology and carrying out

attacks. In her research about AQIM, Dr. Dalia Ghanem-Yazbeck, an Algerian researcher on Jihadism and the radicalisation process, looks at the conditions on the ground that allowed AQIM to grow. She cites the socioeconomic conditions, poverty, poor governance, crime, and ethnic conflicts as the root causes of the development of the terrorist organization (Ghanem-Yazbeck). In regards to the poor/weak governance and state capacity, the fall of Gaddafi in 2011 played a massive role in the rise of AQIM. When Gaddafi was ousted, AQIM was able to procure weapons more easily as well as increase their recruitment tactics and numbers (Ghanem-Yazbeck). The scale of corruption within the government and elites also greatly impacts the success of the organization. AQIM orchestrates many kidnappings, which has earned them $4.5 million per hostage and illegal smuggling which has earned them almost $100 million (Ghanem-Yazbeck). These funds have allowed AQIM to buy the loyalty of entire communities, including military forces. It is particularly easy for the terrorist organisation to buy people's loyalty due to the high poverty rates in the country. The people would rather support or join a terrorist organisation if they are getting something in return, particularly if their current government is failing to provide basic necessities and services. It is natural to turn to another source for help. In terms of counterterrorism efforts against AQIM, there is a general lack of funds, resources, a strong security sector, and poor coordination among countries affected that has made it difficult to defeat the organisation (Ghanem-Yazbeck).

The Islamic State West Africa or IS-WA is a faction of Boko Haram that came into existence in 2016. At the time, Abubakar Shekau was the leader of Boko Haram and the successor of Mohammed Yusuf, the group's founding father who was captured and killed in police custody in 2009 . According to analysts at the Congressional Research Service, under

Shekau's leadership, Boko Haram began to carry out attacks on Muslim civilians and use child suicide bombers, which is what caused the division of the group (Blanchard and Cavigelli). The leader of the new group was Abu Musab al Barnawi, the son of Mohammed Yusuf. Under Barnawi, the faction rejected Yusuf and Boko Haram's attacks on Muslims, choosing to focus on government and security as the group's number one targets (Blanchard and Cavigelli). By mid 2016, the group had been officially recognised by ISIS, acknowledging Barnawi as Shekau's replacement, however, Shekau and Boko Haram continue to be allies of ISIS (Blanchard and Cavigelli).

There is a lot less literature and research on the actions and progress of IS-WA due to the common misconception that the names are interchangeable and IS-WA refers to Boko Haram. The United States' government has declared Barnawi's IS-WA as a terrorist organisation that is separate to Shekau's Boko Haram. According to a report in February 2018 by the U.S. Africa Command, IS-WA is a more long term threat than Boko Haram will be (Blanchard and Cavigelli). The Congressional Research Center believes that the root causes of the group's rise can also be tied to the heavy hand that the Nigerian military forces have used in an attempt to defeat the group. Their research has shown that military force has led to an increase in recruitment (Bukarti).

IS-WA has taken an alternate approach to gaining support, rather than using the failing government as a tactic to recruit and gain supporters, they are using the people's fear of Boko Haram (Miller). According to the Arab Weekly, IS-WA is protecting local communities from Boko Haram's attacks. This tactic by IS-WA is in fact a double edged sword of sorts. By giving protection to rural communities against Boko Haram, they are also undermining the government.

IS-WA gives the people protection against a force that their own governments and militaries have failed to provide, while continuing to be a threat to Boko Haram. Additionally, the lack of support for former Boko Haram or IS-WA prisoners and defectors is extremely discriminatory (Blanchard and Cavigelli). It is extremely difficult for them to reintroduce into society due to the stigma and prejudice they receive as a result. It is expected that it would be difficult for defectors to find a place in society, however it is easier for them to remain with the terrorist group than to risk everything attempting to return to their community, only to be shunned. However, there are a number of programs that are dedicated to the rehabilitation and de-radicalisation of Islamic terrorists in the region, but they are still quite new and will take time before the graduates of the programs are successfully reintegrated into society.

Another important factor that is increasing the flow of terrorism into Africa and helping it succeed are the recent failures of the Islamic State in the Middle East. As the group's caliphate in Syria and Iraq begins to crumble, they look to Africa as a place to seek asylum and maintain a foothold. Foreign terrorists are beginning to move into the country, continuing to recruit young people at increasing rates. A report by Audu Bukarti at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change shows that IS-WA is attempting to exacerbate the religious and ethnic tensions in Nigeria in order to spread their violent campaign. Nigeria in particular has a long history of ethnic and religious conflict between the Muslim North and the Christian South. The Christian farmers and the Muslim herdsman have had a massive increase in conflicts within the last year, and these conflicts can now be linked to IS-WA (Wakili). The aggravation of these tensions by the group has caused an increase in rhetoric, spreading even to politicians, which has resulted in extreme accusations coming from both sides (Bukarti).

Roots of Islamic Terrorism

The emergence of Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan is an essential part of the birth of radical Islamic terrorism. We can better understand the reasons for the growth and expansion of radical Islamic terrorism by looking at the history of Al-Qaeda, because its history... A central reason for the birth of Al-Qaeda was a deeply-rooted disdain for the West that was shared by many groups across the nation, including those who had been involved in the US-Russian proxy war in Afghanistan. Added to this general attitude was the desire for an Islamic State, which was antagonistic to any Western presence. So the US invasion of a nascent Islamic nation in 2001 was greeted with hostility, and the conflict was seen by Al-Qaeda prospective recruits as a fight between Islam and the West. Al-Qaeda began as a simple network during the Afghan War that was put in place to support Muslims in their fight against the Soviet Union (Britannica). The Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan in order to implement a communist government as part of their Cold War agenda. In 1989, the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan. Their withdrawal led to the somewhat dispersal of Al-Qaeda as it had served its primary purpose. However, the group continued to take action against two things: corrupt Islamic regimes and foreign presence (Britannica).

Al-Qaeda's crusade was under the banner of Islam. The group was able to gain the majority of support and grow their network under the Taliban militia in Afghanistan in the 1990s. As Al-Qaeda continued to broadcast their anti-West ideology to the rest of the Islamic world, their support began to grow. They merged with a number of other growing militant Islamist organisations throughout this time, which led to the creation of training camps focused on jihad and executing terrorist attacks on places associated with the West (Britannica). The

most famous of these attacks was the September 11th, 2001 attack on the Twin Towers in New York.

It was the United State's response to these attacks that led to the spread of Al-Qaeda farther into the Muslim world. In 2001, the United States invaded Afghanistan with plans to dismantle Al-Qaeda and expel them from the country. They planned to do this by toppling the Taliban government from power and destroying the "communication, operational, and financial linkages between Al-Qaeda leadership and its militants" (Britannica). However, the invasion of American troops ended up causing more harm than good. It led to an innate organisational shift that would change the way Al-Qaeda operated. Instead of operating under centralised leadership like they had before under the protective Taliban government, they used their newfound reach in order to take over independent groups that would do their bidding (Britannica). This new type of militancy that the United States had inadvertently created would be more difficult to confront. The next ten years can be described as the peak of the Al-Qaeda militancy, as they were connected to attacks in dozens of other countries across Europe, Asia, and Africa (Britannica). Even the death of Osama bin Laden, the group's founder and long-time leader, could not slow their spread.

The slow and steady rise of Al-Qaeda in the Middle East can be seen as a guiding light for the emergence of other prevalent terrorist organisations. AQIM in particular, as opposed to Boko Haram and IS-WA, was influenced by Al-Qaeda. The group's origins started can be traced back to similar dates as the founding of Al-Qaeda. It is clear after a study of AQIM's history of the role that Al-Qaeda played in the group's rise to power and their subsequent allegiance.

Case Studies

I will use case studies of Algeria and Nigeria in order to show the origins of the AQIM and Boko Haram/IS-WA and how the groups spread from these two countries into the rest of the regions. When we think about the radicalisation of groups in Africa, it is different than that which occurred in the Middle East. The spread of terrorism into North Africa and the Sahel is less understood. When one thinks of terrorism, Africa is often overlooked. Examining Algeria as the first example and case study of this spread shows how terrorism is able to surface and maintain power.

The question is, how can we explain terrorism popping up in places outside of the Middle East? The initial rise of radicals and their power over these regions occurred due to the economic marginalisation of the people and political authoritarianism. The people wanted to have their voices heard and their rights protected by their government and felt as though extremism was the only way in which this would occur. The histories of Nigeria and Algeria allow us to see how these terrorist organisations came to be. The constant splitting of smaller organisations and finally their alliance with Al-Qaeda allowed AQIM, Boko Haram, and IS-WA to rise to the level of power they did. The split of groups is particularly clear in the case of Algeria. Peaceful movements against the government transitioned into violent extremism, before spreading downwards into the rest of the region.

Algeria

World War II led to incredible change in the boundaries of Africa. Anti-colonial

movements began to break out and spread across the continent, particularly in Algeria that was

colonized by the French. This was due to France's failure to maintain their own sovereignty

during WWII. The movement began with creation of the National Liberation Front (FLN)

through the merge of smaller political parties. From 1954 to 1962, the FLN would implement

their political and military campaign against the French troops in Algeria, before finally driving

them out and gaining independence. Following their independence, the FLN "controlled all

facets of the government from the interior to the army" and had "promoted a socialist agenda"

that "relied heavily on oil revenues" (Smith 63). However, the group that began as a party for the

people, by the people, began to lose its way.

The fall of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in late 1980s meant the return of many

Algerians that had joined the network of Muslims who had gone to fight for their religion in the

Middle East. Smith gives a recount in his paper of the impact these men felt at the time of their

return:

> Serving alongside other devout Muslims in Afghanistan had a profound and lasting
> impact on these men. They began to see the Algerian government as rife with corruption
> and noted the lack of religion in daily life. Political parties, such as the Islamic Salvation
> Front (FIS), were not making progress on reforms and these veterans were quickly
> growing frustrated. Most returnees from Afghanistan had been thoroughly indoctrinated
> in the Afghan philosophy of jihad until either victorious or the achievement of
> martyrdom (Smith 63).

That same year, Algeria fell into an economic crisis due to the plummeting price of oil, which

was the country's main export. The economic crisis led to rioting and protesting of the

government. The rising Islamic movement in the country used the people's anger in order spread their Islamic ideology, stating that the reason for the country's economic failures was due to the abandonment of Islam and Islamic law within the government (Mellah 4). The magnitude of these rebellions against the government led to negotiations. Reforms and the establishment of multiparty elections were put in place. At this point, Islamist radicals now were now part of the FIS. In 1990, the group won the majority, however they were unprepared for the role. Their victory over the government was short lived however, as they began to experience differences within the hierarchy of the group.

During the 1992 Parliamentary elections, the Algerian military stopped the process and arrested a number of the FIS leaders. This intervention led to utter chaos within the group and the subsequent creation of two separate paramilitary organisations known as the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA) and the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). The two groups continued to have issues with one another. It was the belief of the GIA that the previous FIS had been too lenient in terms of Islamic rule. The MIA ended up allying with the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) which was supported by the FIS, which resulted in the GIA declaring war on them (Mellah 4).

The GIA was led by Djamel Zitouni, who described the group as an "anti government guerilla organisation" (Smith 64). The group was made up primarily of the mujahideen fighters that had returned to Algeria from fighting in the Afghan War. It was their belief that in order to follow the teachings of Islam, Muslims had to come together and make jihad. This act would secure their land as an Islamic state. It was at this time where the transformation of the GIA went from an Algerian Islamist focused group into what can be described as an international franchise and sect of Al-Qaeda. From 1994 onwards, the GIA committed an increased number of attacks

such as bomb, massacres and assassinations. Their goal was to terrorise and control the civilians that they suspected to be sympathizers of the FIS and make it known to both the local and international community that they would go after anyone who was against or refused to join the GIA (Mellah 4). These attacks reached their peak towards the end of the 1990s during which the GIA's killings were non discriminatory. Villages were burned to the ground and their inhabitants, including women and children, were brutally murdered.

Although the GIA's goal of establishing an Islamic State in Algeria was one that many civilians agreed with, their barbaric methods led to a decrease in support. In April of 1999, 700 Salafists left the GIA and created the Groupe Salafise pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC) (Krech 126). The creation of the GSPC was due to the outrage of many members over the mass civilian casualties that had been lost throughout the Algerian Civil War. The front runners of this breakaway group were Hassan Hattab and Amari Saifi. These men issued a *fatwa*, which was an Islamic ruling given by a recognised person of authority in Islam, that asked the GIA to stop harming civilians and created the GSPC (Smith 65). The primary goals and reason for the creation of the GSPC was to focus on overthrowing the government and creating a new Islamic government in the country (Isaacs 3). However, it was clear that the Algerian-centric focus would not last, as it had not the previous times either.

In order to organise themselves, the GSPC moved to the borders of Algeria, particularly to the Northern and Southern border of the country. The move allowed them to establish training areas, smuggling routes, and the freedom of movement while perfecting their strategy (Smith 65). Under the leadership of Hattab and Saifi, the GSPC planned their first large scale attack on the Algerian military in the beginning of 2000. They received help from Mokhtar Belmohktar, an

Algerian who had fought the Soviets in Afghanistan and who had put together his own small

faction of arm smugglers from the surrounding countries of Niger, Libya, and Chad. With the

three men working together, the group successfully attacked the Algerian military and had

secured large portions of territory under which they were able to train and significantly grow

their influence and establishment of an Islamic State. At this point, the GSPC began to veer away

from the other groups across the country and begin to assimilate themselves with other Islamic

insurgencies across the globe (Smith 66). With Al-Qaeda's 9/11 attacks looming , the GSPC

began to make the switch from a small insurgency within Algeria to a major part of the global

jihad nexus: Al-Qaeda.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

The 9/11 bombings were a significant event for the GSPC. The attacks in the United

States brought attention to other growing terrorist organisations around the world. Although most

terrorist organisations across North Africa had been focused their anti-west ideology on their

enemies to the North (Europe), Al-Qaeda saw this as an opportunity to increase its global reach.

In 2002, Al-Qaeda sent delegates to the GSPC (Smith 67). Hassan Hattab was still in control of

the group at the time and renounced the idea that the group would completely join Al-Qaeda.

Although Hattab was in favour of a relationship with Al-Qaeda, he wanted the GSPC to remain

first and foremost an Algerian group and independent (Botha 64). In the view of Al-Qaeda, this

meant that Hattab needed to be replaced. This displacement was done through the creation of

internal conflict.

Nabil Sahraoui and Abdel-Malek Droukdel were two members of the GSPC that were in

support of the allegiance with Al-Qaeda and believed that the struggle was larger and that they

needed to be fighting in defense of Islam in general rather than simply domestically in Algeria.

This ideology gained the support of other members and resulted in the resignation of Hattab from

his position as Emir of the GSPC. Sahraoui was appointed as the new Emir of the GSPC. It was

under his leadership that Al-Qaeda's influence became more prominent in the group's ideology.

In October of 2003, Sahraoui told Muslims to "raise the flag of jihad for Allah, be it in Palestine,

in Afghanistan under the banner of Mullah Omar … and under the banner of the al-Qaeda

organisation in the emirate of Sheik Osama bin Laden" and "We strongly and fully support

Osama bin Laden's jihad against the heretic America as well as we support our brothers in

Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Chechnya" (Botha 64).

In addition to these statements supporting Al-Qaeda and urging other Muslims to support

them, Sahraoui made it clear what the GSPC's intentions were: "The Salafist Group for Combat

and Preaching decides … to declare war on everything that is foreign and atheistic within

Algeria's borders, whether individuals, interests, or installations" (Botha 76). Sahraoui was the

Emir of the GSPC for a short time, as he was killed in 2004. However, in that short period he

made significant changes to the way in which the GSPC operated, specifically his tactics in terms

of recruitment. It was under Sahraoui that the GSPC began to look outwards of Algeria. He

actively recruited Jihadists from Tunisia and Libya and trained them in Afghanistan, moving the

group closer to its merge with Al-Qaeda.

After his death, Abdel-Malek Droukdel took over as the new Emir. In his mind, all that

was left for the GSPC was to align with Al-Qaeda. The group was losing steam, just as the

previous groups before had. "Momentum was lost as ordinary Algerian people became 'sick and

tired' of violence … as groups before, [the GSPC] began to lose less committed foot soldiers"

(Botha 65). This gave the Algerian leadership time to begin collecting itself against the group. In order to continue its campaign, the GSPC basically forced to align formally with Al-Qaeda, which they did in January of 2007. They took on the name Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), becoming a transnational terrorist organisation. This alliance introduced a new security threat, not only to Algeria, but the entire region.

The relabeling of the GSPC to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is what ultimately allowed the group to gain more support in Algeria and outspread into the neighbouring countries. The group morphed from participating in elections, to an insurgency, and finally into a full fledged ally of Al-Qaeda. Under Al-Qaeda's leadership, the organisation has conducted kidnappings and murders of Western hostages, launched innumerous attacks in the Maghreb and Sahelian countries, as well as aided budding militant groups in the region.

Nigeria

South of Algeria, with just Niger separating them, lies Nigeria. Nigeria has the largest population and economy on the continent. However, despite the country's vast economic wealth, more than half of the population lives below the poverty line. In addition to the county's crippling poverty levels, the country has become destabilized by the terrorist organisation known as Boko Haram. Nigeria is made up of 36 distinct states with clear ethnic lines. The North of the country is made up primarily of Muslims, while the South and Middle Belt of the country is predominantly Christian. The population itself is relatively evenly split between Muslims and Christians. This evident religious split in the country has been a cause for conflict since the country's independence from the British in 1960.

The aftermath of colonisation in Nigeria was brutal. The differences within the country in terms of the vast ethnicities and different religions came into focus once the British had left the country. Due to this polarisation, a crisis ensued. This lead to military intervention and a devastating civil war from 1967 to 1970, during which five million people were killed (Ikerionwu 7). The military was in charge of the country until the 1990s, however during that time, Nigeria suffered from multiples coups and harsh military rule. In May of 1999, civil rule returned to Nigeria. However, this led to the creation of a number of violent movements by different ethnic groups around the country that felt threatened by the new leadership. The main goal of these militants was to disrupt the exploration of oil, particularly in the Niger Delta region of the country, so as to put a strain on the country's economy that relied heavily on the oil industry (Ikerionwu 7). Following this, twelve states implemented Sharia law into their justice systems in the year 2000, unknowingly paving the way for radical Islamists and later, Boko Haram.

Boko Haram

Boko Haram was founded in Maiduguri, Borno State in Northeast Nigeria in 2002. The history of Borno state is important in understanding the religious and ethnic ties that com with the territory. Islam is a defining cultural factor of the Kanuri people, Borno State's largest ethnic group and 8% of Nigeria's population (Searcy). During colonial times, it was made clear to Nigerians that the British had negative views of Islam. In the Muslim North, colonial administrators separated Muslims into 'good' and 'bad' Muslims, putting those that were deemed 'good' into positions of power (Searcy).

> The Western influence of British colonialists caused a division among the people of Northern Nigeria, who were once united by Islam. This division saw, on one side, the

so-called 'civilised' — by Western standards — elite who were used by the British as agents of colonisation; and on the other side, the commoners, who vehemently resisted Western influence in the region (Owolade).

In the 1940s, there were multiple Islamic uprisings in the North by the movement known as the Talakawas, led by Aminu Kano, a Muslim socialist politician (Owalade). Aminu Kano's criticism was not solely towards the British rule, but also on the role some Nigerians played in their rule. The goal of Talakawas was to create a "northern Nigerian Society of Social Justice, Economic Prosperity, and Fairness," which would uses politics and religion in order to get rid of the Western influence (Owolade). The distaste for Western influence began to spread, leading to the emergence of Islamist fundamentalists in the region during the 1970s and 1980s.

The most prominent group was the Yan Tatsine led by Mohammed Marwa, a radical Islamic preacher. He was given the nickname Maitatsine, meaning *the one who curses*, due to the profane speeches he gave regarding the Nigerian state (Buchanan-Clarke). He viewed it as corrupt and believed it was a puppet of the West. Marwa was completely against Western education, Western technology, and contemporary Muslim teachers/teachings. As his following began to grow, so did the violent clashes. In his paper, Owolade quotes a BBC news report regarding one of the attacks that occured in December of 1980:

> They were extrajudicial killings everywhere. …. There were hundreds of them, innocent people." The report went on to say, "Heretical seems to be the only word to describe him [*Maitatsine*]… he had millennial ideas of the end of time. … There was a certain fanaticism [by *Maitatsine'*s rebels] which overwhelmed the attempt to deal with them… I saw a lot of dead bodies everywhere. Everywhere was filled with dead bodies. Road blocks were mounted… everybody was living in absolutely fear. People were living with their hearts in their mouth." In the aftermath of the uprising, it was reported that, "It took the police three days to get the bodies off the street. An estimated 4,000 people were killed in the week-long uprising (Owolade).

By 1980, the Nigerian Army became involved as the attacks became more frequent. That year, they apprehended and killed Marwa.

Boko Haram is often described as "a spawn of the Maitatsine riots" and the Yan Tatsine (Owolade). The Northerners were marginalised from the rest of Nigeria, particularly those that were from lower socio-economic standings. This feeling of alienation was used by the lower class Northerners in order to carry out riots which they described as ones for social justice and an Islamic government (Owolade). It was their belief that economic opulence would follow the implementation of an Islamic government. However, this was not the case.

In 1999, Nigeria went through a massive political change from a military run state into a democracy after lengthy elections. The country then put into place a new constitution. Although similar to the past constitutions of the country, it was closest to that of the United States's system of federalism (Matfess 3). Under the new democracy, states were given more power, which meant that in the Muslim North, there became increasingly more debates on whether or not it would be feasible to implement sharia law, especially as politicians in favor of sharia were elected into state offices (Matfess 3). This led to a shift in the debate regarding the implementation of Islamic law. Differences between what the people believed sharia law would look like if implemented began to create a divide between the Muslims, which brought into question the validity of politicalization of the religion. Now, the issue in the North was not only the newly democratic system of government, but also the growing and changing religious-political landscape. The role of religion, Islam in particular, began to dominate politics in the North. In order for politicians to win elections, they needed religious support, which meant campaigns were focused on making promises such as implementing sharia law (Matfess 3). This

intensified the need for religious groups to define what they believed "true" sharia law was, thus creating deeper divisions within the Muslim community. One of the more popular sharia advocate groups was the Yan Izala, a Salafi Muslim group. It was their belief that sharia law would level out the social disparities and that "nobody should command respect only because of his wealth" (Matfess 4).

The social differences between members of society was increasingly problematic throughout the whole country and the transition into a democracy was supposed to help reduce the gap between rich and poor through increased economic success. However, communities across Nigeria continued to be plagued by poverty, especially in the Northern states whose economies depended on agriculture rather than the oil rich southern states. Matfess argues that democratization made the divide between the classes even wider (Matfess 4). The capital of Borno State, Maiduguri, is the perfect example of this divide, with its mansions home to politicians and other notable people at a stark contrast to the sprawling overpopulated slums of the rest (Matfess 4). It was here that Boko Haram was founded.

As the religious-political landscape of the North became driven by the need for sharia law, frustrations within many Islamic groups became prevalent, and the popularity of one preacher, Mohammed Yusuf began to escalate. Before his popularity spiked, Yusuf was the member of a group called the "Izala B." This was a subset of a larger Muslim group of young men who had little power and were frustrated with the lack of professional opportunities available to them. Yusuf broke away from this group, when he realised that it would do nothing for him. He formed his own community where he was able to preach his own interpretation of the scripture and share his own, now increasingly radical ideas. Yusuf's sentiments mirrored

those of many Northerners, they "had grown increasingly suspicious as the months and years wore on that the political enthusiasm for sharia had been little more than a ploy for temporarily buying their support" (Matfess 5).

Yusuf wanted to create a following of young impressionable men that had also struggled at the hands of the government and were against the current system in which the elites were the only ones that were favoured. Yusuf preached two main ideas, the first was that Western education was forbidden (in terms of the Qur'an) and the second was working for the government was also a sin. His condamnation for the Western education is where the name Boko Haram stemmed from. The name 'Boko Haram' loosely translates to "Western education is a forbidden." The official name of Yusuf's group was the People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad or Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad. However, in addition to his belief that Western education was a sin, Yusuf also preached the concept of *Al-wala' wa-l-bara'* (Matfess 7). This was the idea that one should turn away from those considered to be non-believers and that there should be an exclusivity to be loyal only to other Muslims (Matfess 7). In the case of Boko Haram, they took this to mean that rejecting all things relating to other religions and the West were a quintessential part of what it meant to be a Muslim.

Yusuf preached his teachings in his own mosque, Ibn Taymiyyah Masjid, which acted as a place of worship for him and his followers, and also as a place of community mobilisation and assistance (Matfess 6). Aside from providing the traditional services of a mosque, such as marriages, counselling, etc., it also had its own religious police and farm that gave jobs to the many of the unemployed members (Matfess 6). As the group began to grow, Yusuf was able to

travel to other parts of the region, gaining popularity in other rural states. His ability to reach

many different groups of people, made his followers extremely diverse. The members were from

a number of different ethnic and religious groups, contrary to popular belief that the members

were mainly of the Kanuri ethnic group. Although the members were primarily those from the

lower socio-economic class, there were still members of the elite that took an interest in Yusuf's

mosque and teachings. Yusuf was able to secure land and monetary funds for the group from

respected members of society, some even believed the then-governor of the Borno state was a

sponsor (Matfess 6). Nevertheless, in a study done by the Council of Foreign Relations in 2001,

the majority of the Boko Haram's members were Islamic students, young professionals, clerics,

and university students, with most being unemployed (Owolade). He was able to gain more

followers and recruits by calling out the government's failure in providing jobs for the country's

youth due to corruption and vast socio-economic disparities. Yusuf went from being a reformist

in a well respected Salafi mosque to a violent extremist and enemy of the Nigerian State.

From the beginning, Yusuf greatly admired Al-Qaeda. He often preached that Osama bin

Laden was one of the "four pure Salafists," and that Muslims should follow him (Zimet). In the

early 2000s, when Boko Haram was still in the process of solidifying themselves, Yusuf sent

many of his followers to train with AQIM in Algeria and Mauritania in order to help them

succeed in their jihad (Zimet). Yusuf made many speeches in which he praised the work of

Al-Qaeda in terms of AQIM and the work that they were doing to establish pure Sunni Islamic

sects. In 2009, Mohammed Yusuf was killed by the Nigerian police. Following his death, many

of Boko Haram's members left to join AQIM and Abubakar Shekau took over leadership of the

group. Shekau was a much harsher leader than Yusuf. His leadership focused less on preaching

and more on doing. He was significantly more violent and carried out sophisticated attacks on both civilians and the police/military. In the beginning, Shekau solidified the relationship between Al-Qaeda and Boko Haram through his partnership with AQIM's then Emir, Droukdel (Zimet). They received both financial support and weapons from Al-Qaeda.

In 2010, Goodluck Jonathan was elected as President of Nigeria. Shortly after his election, Boko Haram began to increase their violent activities. They were enraged that the country was now under the leadership of a Christian southerner, who had previously been accused of ethnic factionalism (Owolade). By the end of the year, Boko Haram had waged a full fledged war against the Nigerian government. Violence that had predominantly been encased in the Northeastern region of the country began to spread South. On June 7th, 2011, the attacks began in Abuja, the country's capital, with the bombing of the Police Headquarters. In the neighboring state of Niger, a Christian Fellowship Church was bombed. One month later on the 16th of August, the United Nations building in Abuja was bombed. The increasing frequency of the attacks led to the closure of the University of Maiduguri in Borno State. This action by the University Authority was a clear sign of the horrors that were occuring. Places of education such as schools and universities were deemed as security concerns. The most famous of these school closings was the one that led to the kidnapping of the over 200 Chibok girls on April 14th, 2014, the same day an Abuja bus station bombing killed one hundred people (Felter). Since 2011, Boko Haram has been linked to countless attacks that have led to the deaths of over 37,000 people (Felter). Half of those people were militants while the remaining majority were civilians.

As Boko Haram grew more and more deadly, their relationship with Al-Qaeda began to dwindle. Shekau's approach to jihad began to drift from that of AQIM and Al-Qaeda as his

attacks were indiscriminate in that they targeted Muslims as much as Christians. The spiritual

leader of AQIM issued a *fatwa* or Islamic ruling that condemned the killings of the group

(Zimet). It said that, "Targeting schools to kill young students is impermissible, since they have

not yet joined the ranks of the apostate military yet…This will give the enemies of the religion

and Western media the opportunity to exploit these scenes to prove to Muslims that the

mujahedeen are far from Islam" (Zimet). At this point, Al-Qaeda wanted nothing more to do

with Boko Haram's incessant killings. However, their disagreement over *jihad* with Al-Qaeda

led to their partnership with another, more gruesome organisation, the Islamic State of Iraq and

Syria (ISIS). Boko Haram's adoption of guerilla warfare tactics were more in line with ISIS and

in March of 2016, Shekau pledged the group's allegiance to ISIS and leader, Abu Bakr

al-Baghdadi (Zimet).

Islamic State West Africa

Shortly after Shekau pledged allegiance to ISIS, divides within the group began to

emerge. Mohammed Yusuf's son, Abu Musab al Barnawi, started a new faction in which he

renounced Boko Haram's attacks on civilians, particularly Muslims. The goal of this new faction

was to focus all their attacks on the Nigerian government and police/military forces. Towards the

end of 2016, ISIS recognised Barnawi as the leader of this new group and it became known as

Islamic State West Africa (ISWA). The two now separate groups are often confused as one

single group (Boko Haram) due to their shared history, however according to the U.S. Africa

Command, IS-WA seems to be a more long term threat than Boko Haram (Blanchard and

Cavigelli 1).

IS-WA is estimated to have nearly double the amount of fighters as Boko Haram's 1,500. However while Boko Haram gets most of their financial support from criminal activities, such as kidnappings, theft, and extortion, IS-WA gets theirs from ISIS. In the past year, IS-WA has claimed 23 attacks, many of which included multiple ones on Nigerian military bases in Borno State (Mahmood). A Nigerian journalist who has been researching and following the relationship between IS-WA and Boko Haram, Omar Mahmood, believes that IS-WA's most recent attacks and hostage-takings are showing a shift in the group's tactics (Mahmood). IS-WA has increased their attacks, while Shekau's Boko Haram has to some extent decreased its frequency, particularly of the suicide bombings on civilians (Mahmood). There seems to be no reconciliation in sight however for these two groups, as Barnawi continued to denounce Shekau's ideology.

Analysis of Factors

The emergence of the AQIM, Boko Haram, and IS-WA comes from the festering impulses of extremists within Algeria and Nigeria. The groups themselves can be seen as an effect rather than a cause. They are a symptom of "decades of failed government and elite delinquency finally ripening into social chaos" wrote analyst Chris Ngwodo (Felter). There have been many studies regarding the root causes of terrorism and as mentioned previously, the primary ones are economic, social, religious, ethnic, and political and will be examined more in depth in regards to both of these countries.

Socio-Economic Factors

Multiple studies done by security agencies have shown that people that are economically deprived are more likely to resort to violence than those who are not. The violence is used as a way to show their government that they are unhappy, after all high rates of poverty and unemployment are linked to governance. Thus, we are right in assuming that unemployment rate and poverty can be tied to terrorism. Nigeria has the largest population in Africa, and the largest economy as well, however according to The World Bank, roughly 55% of its people live in poverty (Uzodike 98). The large and ever growing number of people living on less than one dollar a day has resulted in people that are unhappy with the role their government has paid in providing them with basic human rights and necessities. In addition, it is not only the uneducated people who are suffering from poverty and turning to violent acts as a means of showing their anger, but also those that are highly educated. A study has shown that even highly educated people are likely to partake in terrorism if they have suffered at the hands of their government (Adelaja 37).

In general, unemployed youth are the most susceptible to radicalisation. In countries where economic opportunities are limited and economic freedom is hard to come by, specifically for those living below the poverty line, terrorists group offer jobs and opportunities to fight a system that has failed them. In a study done by David et al. he said that provided evidence showing that, "socio-economic indices such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, economic underdevelopment, low education, inter alia, underlie the emergence and persistence of Boko Haram" (David et al). Joining groups such as Boko Haram and IS-WA provide the unemployed members of society with a job. The same is seen in Algeria. The unemployment rate for youth in Algeria is roughly 28% for 2018 and the poverty rate is roughly 23% (Ye). The country also suffers from high economic inequality in which consumption rates between the upper and lower class are separated by 27.7% (Ye).

The regional socio-economic conditions in the Maghreb and the Sahel offer the perfect environment for the growth of militant groups, in this case, AQIM. The vastness of seemingly ungoverned territory, dispersed populations, and extreme poverty levels leave these lands susceptible to cross-border crime and insurgency. In addition, there are countless opportunities for smuggling and other illegal activities that these organisations take part in and the regional powers' capacities for combating them is extremely limited.

Political Factors

Political factors that have allowed terrorism to spread are corruption, poor governance, and government instability, three factors that both Algeria and Nigeria suffer from. In this sense, the ideologies of AQIM, Boko Haram, and IS-WA line up. The organisations use the failures of the state as a primary reason behind their actions. In a 2008 interview with Droukdel, the Emir of AQIM, he stated that the goal of his group in conjunction with Al-Qaeda was to "rescue our countries from the tentacles of these criminal regimes that betrayed their religion, and their people " (An Interview With Abdelmalek). The perceived failure of the government in providing for its people can be seen as the primary drive for these extremist organisations. Both Boko Haram and IS-WA fall into line with this ideology. In a survey conducted by Adesoji O. Adelaja et al. in the eleven most Northern states in Nigeria where the groups operate, four of the top six public perceived causes of terrorism were due to political factors (Adelaja 41). Those interviewed agreed that Boko Haram finds the Nigerian government and political system unequivocally incompetent. 62% even believed that terrorism was created by politicians in order to stay in power and that democracy has given room for terrorism to take hold of the country and neighbouring regions (Adelaja 41).

Post-colonisation in Algeria and Nigeria led to regime and power changes throughout the years as the two countries struggled to put together stable governments. Both countries faced multiple military coups between their independence in the 1960s to the late 1990s. Nigeria faced eight military coups with democracy prevailing for only a brief period from 1979-1983. For most of these years, Nigeria was ruled under a military government. The constant threat of military coups and the unpredictability of a political system run by the Army made for an unstable country. This is seen particularly clearly in the North where Boko Haram and IS-WA originated. The groups grew out of the people's distaste for a government that failed to provide basic rights and opportunities for its people.

Whilst Algeria only faced three successful coups, there were multiple military coups late 1980s and early 1990s that denied parliamentary elections and led to the creation of insurgency armies. In fact, there is a direct line between the military coup of 1992, in which the military wing of the Salvation Army started an insurgency army, and the emergence of terrorism in Algeria. The coup led to suspending the country's constitutions and the imprisonment of thousands, before the AIS armed wing would retreat to the countryside and begin their insurgency. As discussed, after several name changes and splinter groups this insurgency would later transform into Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb.

Religious Factors

Religious tensions and fundamentalism are causes of terrorism. Religion is the most important aspect of Boko Haram, IS-WA, and AQIM as they use their religious ideology as a basis for the crimes which they commit. The goal of all three groups is to promote their version of Sharia Law and to create an Islamic State. These goals have turned their religious views into

an attack on the West and the westernization of their countries as they believe that the West is against Islam and vice versa.

In the case of Nigeria, ethnic tension plays a large role in the cause of terrorism in the country. Nigeria is made up of 36 distinct states with clear ethnic lines. The North of the country is made up primarily of Muslims, while the South and Middle Belt of the country is predominantly Christian. The population itself is evenly split between Muslims and Christians. This evident religious split in the Nigeria has been a cause for conflict since the country's independence in 1960. The Muslim north has always been more resistant to authority than the South, which meant that while the country was colonised, the South received more resources and investment than the North. Following independence, the divide continued to grow, especially as Southern-Christians began to win elections and take control of the country. Wealth redistribution became extremely uneven. As discussed above, regarding the want for Sharia law to be implemented in the North, their religion gave them feelings of hope and that it would improve their circumstances. Violent radicalism began to spread amongst the religious people, thus leading to the success of groups like Boko Haram and IS-WA.

For Algeria, the need for an Islamic state under Sharia law was the original ideological goal of AQIM. Their goal was to remove the government and put in place an Islamic government that followed their interpretation of Islam and Sharia law. Algeria did not suffer from the same divisions as Nigeria did, because their population is 97% Sunni Muslim, however within the religion there were divisions regarding the interpretation of Islamic law. The group and its leaders used religion as a way to garner support. They marketed themselves as devout Muslims, establishing relationships with religious teachers and persuaded them to teach AQIM's version of

Islam. They were able to use pre-existing cultural importance that Islam held in society to their own advantage. The same can be said for Boko Haram and IS-WA in the Muslim North of Nigeria and the surrounding Lake Chad region.

Conclusion

AQIM, Boko Haram, and IS-WA are the perfect examples of insurgencies that began indigenously, before becoming affiliated with Al-Qaeda and ISIS. As Al-Qaeda and ISIS began to expand their global network of terrorism and succeed in taking over territory, they became powerful influences for the leaders of these African extremist groups. The conditions on the ground in Algeria and Nigeria provided the perfect breeding ground for terrorism to fester and multiply. The insurgencies were able to exploit the instability of their nation's governments in order to gain popularity and recruit members not only from their nations, but across North Africa and the Sahelian/Lake Chad regions. The inability of Algerian and Nigerian governments to provide basic necessities resulted in extreme poverty and rapidly rising unemployment rates in the expanding young population of the countries. The conditions in these nations after the independence movements meant the two countries were already equipped with vulnerable and unstable governments, which only led to the outbreak of further violence and civil unrest. The combination of these factors in conjunction with the poor wealth redistribution of these nations ensued deep marginalisation, thus creating the perfect conditions for radicalisation to occur.

Algeria and Nigeria share many of the same factors that provided a fertile environment for radical Islamic terrorism to grow. In addition to the socio-economic, political, and religious factors that tie these two nations together, they are both major players in the international arena.

Due of this role, Al-Qaeda and ISIS developed an interest in them. In spite of this, these regimes were never overthrown. The complete destabilisation would have had a devastating global impact. While terrorism does have power, the states have shown resilience and capacity to sustain itself in the face of radical Islamic terrorism. Algeria and Nigeria have not completely collapsed and having gone through all of this, the countries are still operating. Future research should look into how and why the states have managed to stay in power while portions of the countries have been infiltrated and overrun by terrorist organisations.

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