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Arianna Jules Robbins April 15, 2015

All Terrorism Is Local?
A Quantitative Analysis of Al Qaeda Affiliates and Civil Conflict

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Abstract

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Scholarship on Al Qaeda affiliates (AQAs) has focused largely on these groups' lethality or relationship to Al Qaeda's transnational structure. Instead of analyzing these groups as a monolithic unit, I disaggregate them in order to answer the questions: "What explains the variation in Al Qaeda affiliate (AQA) behavior? To what extent are AQAs motivated by local political aims versus the transnational jihad ideology espoused by Al Qaeda Central?" In this thesis, I examine the universe of violent Islamist groups that have affiliated with Al Qaeda, finding that there is unexplained variation in the focus of the groups' violent efforts: the local struggle versus the transnational jihad. This variation can be explained by establishing a typology of Al Qaeda affiliate groups (AQAs) in order to accurately assess their behavior as locally politically motivated or transnationally driven. Further quantitative analysis reveals that risk factors for civil conflict are likely to lead a group towards one of these behavior types. This supports the arguments that AQAs have differing motivations that determine their violent behavior, and that civil conflict is a key factor in determining those motivations.

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Introduction

In October 2002, a nightclub on the island of Bali was blown up, killing over 200 mostly Australian tourists. On Christmas Day 2009, a man named Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to detonate a bombed concealed in his underwear on a Detroit-bound plane (Stanford Mapping Militants). In the summer of 2014, the world watched as an Iraqi group calling itself the Islamic State moved almost 200 miles south in the span of three days, capturing territory stretching 200 miles north to Mosul and 200 miles west to the deserts of Anbar province, including Iraq's second largest city (NYT: Nordland & Rubin 2014). As I write this, Somali militants from a group called Al Shabaab hold hundreds of hostages on a university campus in Northern Kenya; sources report that at least 70 have already been killed (Reuters 2014).

These individuals, and the shadowy groups that create and support them, are connected across decades and continents by their affiliation with the global terrorist network Al Qaeda. At first look, it is that network that binds and motivates groups such as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Jemaah Islamiyah in the Philippines. However, this depth, breadth, and variable distribution of violence demands a more thorough investigation. Instead of analyzing these groups as a unit, I seek to disaggregate them in order to answer the questions: "What explains the variation in Al Qaeda affiliate (AQA) behavior? To what extent are AQAs motivated by local political aims versus the transnational jihad ideology espoused by Al Qaeda Central?"

In this thesis, I examine the universe of violent Islamist groups that have affiliated with Al Qaeda, finding that there is unexplained variation in the focus of the groups' violent efforts: the local struggle versus the transnational jihad. This variation can be explained by establishing a typology of Al Qaeda affiliate groups (AQAs) in order to accurately assess their behavior as

locally politically motivated or transnationally driven. Further quantitative analysis reveals that risk factors for civil conflict are likely to lead a group towards one of these behavior types.

The Strategic Logic of Affiliation

Why do groups become affiliated with Al Qaeda? The answer to this question is unclear. Some, like the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines and Lashkar-e-Taiba in India, are secessionist groups who have historically sought territorial change. Many are revolutionary groups who seek political change and use terrorism as a strategy to establish an Islamic state in their home countries. AQAs do not simply become cogs in the wheel of AQ Central's global jihad effort upon affiliation; some groups may profess to adhere to the lofty (and impossible to achieve) "far enemy" ideology espoused by AQ Central, while their goals remain parochial.

Much of the literature argues that the decision to ally with Al Qaeda is highly strategic. An alliance allows groups to aggregate capabilities, access technology and weaponry, and to train to develop tactical skills. Affiliation with AQ Central brings funding, training, weapons, alliances, and recruits to a group that takes on the famous Al Qaeda brand name. Costs of affiliation include alienating the local population and making the group a bigger target to the opposition or counterterrorism forces. Signing on to a radical Sunni global jihad ideology also limits the universe of groups that are eligible for affiliation. However, for those that fit the criteria and pursue affiliation, the alliance can pay off for both partners: AQ Central contributes resources, a deep network, a famous brand name, while the AQA that signs on to the global jihad ideology contributes to the constant Islamist insurgency that AQ Central demands.

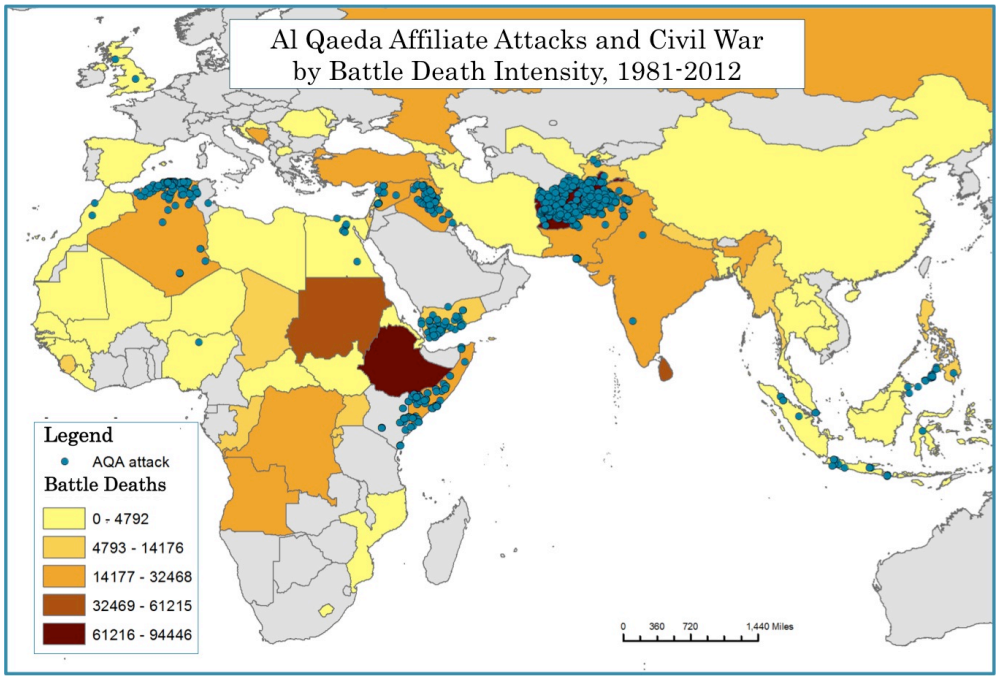
AQAs have chosen to utilize the strategy of terrorism in pursuit of their political goals. Rebel groups, including AQAs, use terrorism against civilian targets to coerce the government into granting concessions, to highlight the government's lack of monopoly on the use of

violence, and to intimidate the population into collaborating with the group. AQAs can thus also use the resources and skills gained from affiliation to more effectively attack civilians in a dialogue with their local government.

The Connection between Terrorism and Civil Conflict

Research also shows that most incidents of terrorism take place in geographic regions in which civil war is ongoing (Findley & Young 2012). Using GIS mapping, I also find that AQAs overwhelmingly operate in civil war contexts (Figure 1). The figure shows the results from using ArcGIS software to overlay data on AQA attacks from the Global Terrorism Database with a map of civil war zones where intensity indicates the number of battle-related deaths from UCDP/PRIO data. Note that this map aggregates data in an indirect way, and thus presents a basic overview of the relationship between areas afflicted with civil war and AQA attacks: in particular, the battle-related deaths data are available from 1981-2013 and the GTD data from 1976-2012 so the map displays aggregated data from only 1981-2012. From Figure 1, we can see that nearly all AQA attacks in this thirty-year period have occurred in countries experiencing civil war.

Figure 1:



The importance of this civil conflict context, combined with the strategic decisionmaking frame, yields the hypothesis that civil war indicators play a key role in determining the behavior of an AQA. This AQA-civil war connection has been alluded to in non-empirical work, but has yet to be quantitatively examined.

Assessing AQA Motivations Through Violent Behavior

In my theory, affiliated groups reveal their preferences through resource allocation to particular targets and types of violence, which enables navigation of the dichotomy between the ideology that each of these groups profess and unknowable actual intentions. It is rational for many groups to take the money, weapons, training, and brand recognition that Al Qaeda provides and funnel them into the struggle that most impacts their cost-benefit analyses: the local political fight. The choice of target and tactic used is constrained by resources and personnel, and groups inadvertently reveal information to their constituencies, rivals, and opponents about both their preferences and capability through these targeting and tactical decisions.

The Contribution of This Project

This thesis reassesses the received wisdom of ideology being the fundamental identifier and unifier of these Al Qaeda affiliates. AQAs do constitute a network, but that network's form is not one of a franchise-type model driven solely by the directives of "Al Qaeda, Inc." This project illuminates different types in this network: that of the "true believer," which does not reference a group's ideological or religious purity but rather the strength of its actual adherence to Al Qaeda directives, and the locally-driven "bandwagoner." These two ends of the spectrum constitute vital distinctions that should shape states' and the international system's assessments of and dealings with Al Qaeda and its affiliates. This distinction could yield differing threat levels toward "far enemy" countries, and different assessments of the groups' objectives in their

home territories. For example, a group on the bandwagoner end of the spectrum, in theory, poses a far lesser threat to Western states at home than it does to the local government. This research presents a contribution to both terrorism and civil war studies, and a rare quantitative assessment of AQAs.

To accomplish this goal, I develop a typology grounded in theory about the strategic use of terrorism by rebel groups in civil wars to identify where individual Al Qaeda affiliates fall on the spectrum from "true believers" who faithfully adhere to transnational Al Qaeda Central ideology and directives to "bandwagoners" who act primarily in their civil conflict-driven local interests. Second, I use a regression analysis to explore the relationship between civil conflict and the location of an AQA on this spectrum. To develop the theory, in this next section I discuss the ideology of Al Qaeda.

The Origins of "Far Enemy" Ideology: Background on Al Qaeda Central

The roots of the Al Qaeda organization lie in 1980s Afghanistan where thousands of radical Muslims from around the world converged to fight the Soviet occupation in a holy jihad. One of those fighters was Osama Bin Laden, who found a group of fellow *mujahideen* who shared his radical fundamentalist view of Sunni Islam. Forged and tested in the ultimately successful struggle against the Soviets, the group coalesced and began to advocate for violent struggle against those who did not adhere to its radical outlook, mostly "apostate" regimes in Muslim-dominated states. During the first Gulf War, Osama Bin Laden began to develop his enmity towards the United States further when the his native Saudi Arabia's leadership chose U.S. and allied support against Saddam Hussein over Bin Laden's offer of assistance from the *mujahideen*. Bin Laden believed that the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia was profaning

the most holy place for Muslims, thus this became a major source of grievance (Nelson & Sanderson 2011).

Bin Laden and the core group of what had become Al Qaeda (AQ Central) were banished to Sudan where they were offered safe haven from 1992-1996. During this period, the core group of Al Qaeda leadership tightened further. In 1996, the Al Qaeda leadership moved to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan where it was offered a safe haven. It was during this period, in the late 1990s, that Bin Laden shifted the organization's focus to the "far enemy" – America and its allies – from the "near enemy" of apostate Muslim regimes. It is important to note that the "far enemy" characterization has nothing to do with the physical distance of a target, but rather their country of origin. Bin Laden issued *fatwas*, religious edicts, in 1996 and 1998 calling on all Muslims to kill Americans, Israelis, and their allies whenever possible (Nelson & Sanderson 2011).

It is this far enemy ideology that persists to this day, advocated by the Al Qaeda leadership operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as many of the organization's adherents worldwide. Al Qaeda's most successful operation to date remains the deadly September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C.; both of which perfectly aligned with Al Qaeda's far enemy ideology. Since the killing of Bin Laden in May 2011 by American forces, Al Qaeda veteran Ayman al-Zawahiri has arisen as the head of the Al Qaeda organization. Though Zawahiri's dedication to the far enemy ideology is not as strong as Bin Laden's was (Gerges 2009), the official ideology of Al Qaeda remains focused on violence toward America, Israel, and their allies.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, Bin Laden worked to broaden the reach of his group. He built alliances with militant groups throughout North Africa and the Middle East, including

outfits in Egypt, Oman, Jordan, and Iraq. He also worked to forge ties with groups beyond the Arab world, aiding entities such as Jemaah Islamiyah in the Philippines and groups in Burma, Chad, Malaysia, Uganda, and others. Bin Laden's Al Qaeda organization trained thousands of militants in its camps in Afghanistan and provided varying levels of strategic, operational, and financial support to groups and plots around the world (Nelson & Sanderson 2011). What would a group of Saudis and Egyptians based in Afghanistan have to gain from jihadist violence in Burma, Mali, or Tajikistan? The answer lies in the radical fundamentalist Al Qaeda ideology, which envisions a caliphate of pure Muslim rule in the Middle East and part of Africa and Central Asia.

This goal is the central motivator for thousands of militants who pass through Al Qaeda's training camps, for adherents worldwide, and for those who pledge fealty to this strain of radical Sunni ideology. However, its sheer unattainability is a major detriment to the Al Qaeda organization: imagine a major corporation with a strategic plan that is next to impossible to execute – how will employees and financial backers stay committed to the organization? The answer lies in the affiliate/alliance network that Bin Laden has been building since the 1980s. Al Qaeda can draw on the constant militancy of these scattered outfits to show progress to its adherents. This unceasing action is vital to show that the organization is working towards its goal and progress is being made. Al Qaeda gains whenever a group that shares its ideology sows chaos in its name, even if the ideological link is only nominal. It appears that only when the Al Qaeda machine pauses do the chinks in the ideological armor show through. If instead we looked more deeply at the targets, tactics, and behaviors of affiliated groups themselves, would variation reveal the inconstancy of commitment to Al Qaeda, and perhaps a deeper understanding of the organization?

Literature Review

In the post-9/11 rush to understand more about the shadowy transnational organization of Al Qaeda, policymakers, journalists, and academics delved into the available information on Al Qaeda's militant jihadist ideology and network structure. A great deal of work focused on Al Qaeda's ideology and development from a group of former anti-Soviet fighters in Afghanistan drawn from all over the Arab world to a globally recognizable organization capable of threatening the strongest world powers at home (Gerges 2009, Cragin & Daly 2004, Hafez 2003). Other researchers from a variety of fields subsequently examined the Al Qaeda "brand's" diffusion through its network, and the advantages and disadvantages of that particular network (Duffield 2002, Eilstrup-Sangiovanni & Jones 2008, Helfstein & Wright 2011, Kenney 2007, Kilberg 2012, Sageman 2004, Siqueira & Sandler 2010).

AQAs: The Pursuit of Local Agendas

The most current information regarding AQAs' origins, ideologies, and current practices can be found in the many well-researched, comprehensive reports issued by policy-oriented think tanks such as RAND, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the American Enterprise Institute, the Congressional Research Service, and the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point. These reports are more policy-oriented than academic, and are not theory-driven. They incorporate primary source material, case-by-case discussions of AQAs that draw heavily from news sources, and counterterrorism recommendations for relevant policymakers, and thus provide the bulk of the most up to date and unbiased information about Al Qaeda affiliates.

Conspicuously, there is no uniform classification of "Al Qaeda affiliates." Thomas Joscelyn of the Long War Journal classifies AQAs as groups that have sworn the official oath of *bayat*, or loyalty, to AQ core, while others simply emphasize the diversity within the set of

formal and informal AQA-AQ alliances (Ibrahim 2014). Seth Jones (in congressional testimony, 2013) from RAND divides AQ's organizational structure into four tiers: AQ Central, affiliated groups that have become formal branches of AQ, allied groups that have established direct relationships with AQ but are not formal members, and inspired networks that have no direct contact with AQ. Nelson & Sanderson (2011) utilize a three-tiered framework in their report for the CSIS, effectively combining RAND's separate affiliated and allied tiers into one cluster they call "Al Qaeda affiliates and like-minded groups."

Remarkably, however, regarding the question of the AQAs' global versus local allegiances, most analysts argue that even though affiliating with Al Qaeda can yield new sources of funding, recruits, and other benefits, most AQAs continue to pursue largely local agendas (Hegghammer 2013, Nelson & Sanderson 2011, Jones 2013, Joscelyn 2013, Rollins 2010, Loidolt 2011, Chivvis & Liepman 2013, Mudd 2012). Countering or qualifying these assessments, some argue that it is dangerous to assume that AQAs are simply local groups nominally supporting the AQ "brand." In this alternative view, AQAs continue to serve AQ Central's goals and maintain strong ties to AQ Central through leadership and shared experiences in Afghanistan in the 1980s and Iraq (Kagan 2013, Joscelyn 2013). These reports relate case-by-case analyses of AQAs' locally based origins, motivations, and continuing violent actions, despite affiliation with AQ. Their arguments are often supported by analyses of internal AQ documents that have been seized and made available to the public (Lahoud et. al 2012). These arguments are almost entirely on a group-by-group basis, despite their claims about trends in the AQA network as a whole. Additionally, they focus on a few well-known cases or limit their analyses to particular regions of interest to policymakers.

What Motivates Terrorists?

The academic study of terrorism can be roughly categorized into two waves (Pape 2009). From the 1970s through the 1990s, research focused mainly on the causes of terrorism at the individual and societal level. This scholarship focused on the mostly leftist, revolutionary terrorists of the time, and emphasized the role of irrational factors in individual and group terrorism motivation and action (Rapoport 1971, Hoffman 1998, Crenshaw 1981). This work formed the vital basis for later terrorism scholarship, which is situated in the post-9/11 period. In this period, researchers have built on and in some instances countered prior work, using quantitative social science methods and more complex analytical tools (Byman 2006, Hafez 2003, Krueger 2007, Kydd 2006, Sageman 2004, Walter 2006). A major line of theory has developed around more rational, strategic explanations for terrorist behavior and decision-making (Kydd & Walter 2006).

As Charles Tilly writes, the terms "terror", "terrorism", and "terrorist" have been used by political scientists to "sprawl across a wide range of human cruelties" in a confusing and unscientific manner. He recommends a more fundamental definition: terror is the use of an imprecisely bounded political strategy. It is characterized by the "asymmetrical deployment of threats and violence against enemies using means that fall outside of the forms of political struggle routinely operating within some current regime" (Tilly 2004). Kydd and Walter use a similar definition: "the use of violence against civilians by nonstate actors to attain political goals" (Kydd & Walter 2006). Terrorism is, then, a strategy, not a designation for an actor or group. "Terrorist groups" are simply groups that have elected to use the strategy of terrorism to achieve their political or territorial goals.

The strategic model posits that terrorist violence is a form of costly signaling. Terrorists are too weak to impose their will directly through armed force, and normal communication is insufficient to achieve a group's aims in bargaining. Terrorist groups are treated as players in a game of strategy, making decisions based upon their perception of their opponents, political constituency, and other actors in order to maximize political returns and minimize costs. This body of theory acknowledges that individual terrorists have a variety of motives (rewards in the afterlife, financial payoffs, ideologically-motivated revenge), but treats terrorist groups as having directly political goals (Walter & Kydd 2006, Schelling 1960). In the strategic model, AQAs are individual, politically-motivated entities.

Alternative explanations of terrorist behavior include the psychological and organizational frames. Terrorism scholars utilizing the psychological frame seek to explain terrorist behavior through individual personality traits and background (e.g. Ross 1996), mental pathologies (Silke 1998), and other psychological models. The psychological framework tends to ignore significant variation in terrorists' social and cultural environments (McCormick 2003). The organizational frame, described below, runs in the opposite direction: it seeks to explain terrorist behavior through analysis of the terror group's structural traits.

Structural Explanations for Terrorist Behavior

In the organizational frame, terrorist behavior can be interpreted by examining the structure and makeup of the group itself. Religious ideology, group size, and strength of alliance ties have been shown to increase terrorist group lethality. Examinations of control of territory and state sponsorship as important structural factors have yielded equivocal findings (Asal & Rethemeyer 2008).

Political scientists who study group networks such as Al Qaeda argue that networks' fluid structures enables adaptability, resilience, capacity for rapid innovation and learning, and wide scale recruitment that make them formidable opponents for hierarchically organized states. (Raab & Milward 2003, Duffield 2002, Sageman 2004). Network structure (decentralized with decision making and action dispersed among largely autonomous local actors that share personal contacts) makes it easier for illicit organizations to survive, but harder for them to engage in concerted action – like planning a major attack. Essentially, illicit networks are forced to trade efficiency of communication, information-sharing, collective action, and learning for increased security Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Jones (2008).

Al Qaeda's most successful and spectacular operations, including the 9/11 attacks, occurred when Al Qaeda was hierarchically structured. In their new typological framework of terrorist groups through a business firms perspective, Zelinsky and Shubik (2009) argue that Al Qaeda has moved from a hierarchy model (centralized operations and resources), to a venture capital model (decentralized operations and centralized resources), to now a brand model (decentralized operations and resources). Gerges expresses this evolution most eloquently in *The Far Enemy*, writing that the Al Qaeda core is now "an ideological label, a state of mind, and a mobilizational outreach program to incite attacks worldwide" (Gerges 2009, p.49). Al Qaeda's transition to a brand model has been largely ignored by anti-terror policymakers, who continue to focus on AQ Central as a hierarchy or venture capital model, with a cohesive transnational agenda (Zelinsky & Shubik 2009). If Al Qaeda affiliated groups are indeed not operating on from a transnational perspective, their behavior - and our response - should be very different.

Civil Wars, Rebel Groups, and Terrorism

Research on Al Qaeda and its affiliates has overwhelmingly neglected the theories, terminology, and methods of civil war scholarship. Actors alternately referred to as dissidents, rebels, insurgents, terrorists, or revolutionaries in civil war contexts use different strains of violence but ultimately a similar strategic "terrorist" approach (Findley & Young 2012, Byman 2006, Kydd & Walter 2006). Countering this theory, Sambanis (2004) argues that terrorism and civil war are like water and ice – connected states but taking on different forms. The civil war element to AQA analysis has largely been alluded to in an anecdotal or qualitative manner. On a group-by-group basis, even AQAs that purport to be multinational or regional players operate almost exclusively at the state level. For example, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), claims to represent several North African countries when in fact it originated as an Algerian rebel group, remains largely focused on Algerian issues, and features homogenously Algerian leadership (Filiu 2009, Chivvis & Liepman 2013). While the connection between terrorism and civil wars has been broached, the bridge is far from built. This study aims to fill this notable gap between the research on terrorism and the extensive literature on rebel groups and violence in civil wars in exploring how terrorist groups behave and how this behavior relates to the context and causes of civil wars. To do so, I now move on to the theory.

From Theory to Typology

This study builds on Kydd and Walter's theories of rational, strategic decision-making by terrorist groups. AQAs are perceived first and foremost as terrorist groups, and are identified with the transnational organization of Al Qaeda. In addition, there is a tendency to conflate terrorist acts with terrorist networks, and to assume that Al Qaeda has built a multinational corporation with franchises that adhere to the same ideology and pose the same transnational

threat as AQ Central. Some AQAs adhere to this transnational ideology in theory and in practice, focusing their resources on the global jihad. However, many AQAs are complex entities based in civil war contexts that utilize terrorism as a strategy to achieve largely parochial political goals, despite their affiliation with the most infamous global terrorist organization in the modern era.

As noted earlier, the decision to ally with Al Qaeda is highly strategic in that affiliation with AQ Central brings funding, training, weapons, and recruits to a group that takes on the famous Al Qaeda brand name. Many AQAs originated as rebel groups in civil wars, and then made a series of strategic decisions that brought them into the universe of groups known as "Al Qaeda Affiliates." They have pursued a deep alliance or affiliation with Al Qaeda, motivated by the costs and benefits detailed above and a requisite similarity in professed ideology. They have also chosen to utilize the strategy of terrorism in pursuit of their political goals. Rebel groups, including AQAs, use terrorism against civilian targets to coerce the government into granting concessions, to highlight the government's lack of monopoly on the use of violence, and to intimidate the population into collaborating with the group. AQAs thus use the resources and skills gained from affiliation to more effectively attack civilians in what is actually a dialogue with their local government.

The dynamics of civil war play a major role in AQAs' ideology, motivations, and actions. The question is, to what extent? While some AQAs are truly attempting to enact the transnational, far enemy ideology espoused by the leadership in Pakistan, others focus their energy and resources on the local, civil conflict-stained context. Therefore, the set of Al Qaeda affiliates can be placed on a spectrum, with one end anchored by the "true believers" and the other by the "bandwagoners." True believers are pure of both motivation and action regarding AQ Central's ideology and directives. Their violent actions are meant to further the transnational

terror organization's aims of taking down the far enemy and defending the Muslim world from corruption. On the other end of the continuum lie the bandwagoners. These groups arose from civil wars and utilize the benefits of Al Qaeda affiliation solely to fuel their local struggles. By examining two categories of organizational characteristics: tactics and targeting, we can create the true believer-bandwagoner spectrum and place the AQAs on it in order to better understand their motivations and strategies.

True Believer Goals vs. Bandwagoner Goals

A group's "true" objectives fundamentally distinguish a bandwagoner from a true believer. While I will elaborate on measures to determine an AQA's "true" objectives in practice, first it is important to expand on the nature of these two dichotomous goal structures.

For true believers, the ultimate goal of terrorism is to defend the worldwide Muslim community against corruption and aggression by the United States and its Allies, the West, and apostate Muslims. Since this enemy is too vast to tackle head-on, true believers use terrorism to send messages to their enemy in a form of signaling behavior (Hoffman & McCormick). Terrorism also demonstrates a group's purity of purpose and action to its audience (Piazza 2009). The nature of this audience is an important distinction, as well; true believers claim to represent and defend a domestic and global Muslim community, but this relationship is both distant and essentially symbolic (Piazza 2009).

Bandwagoners have narrower aims: "liberation" of territory, secession, or the ouster of a specific government. Some, like the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines and Lashkar-e-Taiba in India, are secessionist groups seeking mainly territorial change. Many are revolutionary groups seeking political change, using terrorism as a strategy to establish an Islamic state in their home countries. Bandwagoners use terrorism to force concessions from the entities in power to

achieve these concrete, local goals. These goals are also classic motivators of rebel groups in civil wars. Because of the strong influence of civil war on AQA motivation and action, I would expect most AQAs to fall in the bandwagoner category with regard to goals. However, a group's "true" objectives cannot be easily separated from the propaganda of radical Islamist terrorism. A closer analysis of group-level factors explained by the true believer-bandwagoner framework will allow me to assess groups' place on the spectrum of true allegiance to AQ Central.

Though the differing goal structure of these two types of groups is their main distinguishing factor, it is difficult to assess "true motivations" through the fog of propaganda and lip service to AQ Central's transnational, far enemy ideology. When researchers can only access the propaganda or recruitment materials put out by a group and records of their successful attacks, motivations cannot be observed. Groups reveal their preferences through resource allocation to particular targets and types of violence, enabling us to navigate the dichotomy between professed ideology and unknowable, actual intentions. Assessing AQAs' tactics and targeting behavior reveals much more about a group's "true motivations."

Which Tactics Are Revealing?

AQAs and rebel groups use a wide variety of violent tactics to pursue their goals. These tactics can depend on the group's opponents, its constituency, and its temporal and spatial context. Since this study focuses on explaining the variation in the universe of AQAs, it will focus on two tactics that can reveal information about a group's true believer versus bandwagoner status: kidnapping and suicide bombings. These two tactics reveal the most about a group's local vs. global political motivations.

Kidnapping is a practice commonly used by rebel and terrorist groups for diverse reasons. Some groups partake in kidnapping for purely financial reasons; the practice can be incredibly

lucrative if the ransom is paid. Tourists and journalists are often easy prey for these groups, especially in war-torn or otherwise unstable theaters. Kidnapping can also be used as a weapon to achieve political or ideological goals; some groups take hostages and demand sweeping political or military action in exchange, such as troop withdrawals from a contested area. If and when these lofty demands are not met, a hostage's publicized execution sends clear signals to the target entity: the group is deadly serious about its demands.

True believers are likely to use kidnapping as a tactic in their overwhelming ideological war, as opposed to taking hostages purely for financial gain. Their first loyalty is to the ideology that compels them to wage defensive jihad, which often motivates kidnapping demands that involve Western powers' withdrawal from Muslim theatres. A recent, wrenching example is the execution of American journalist James Foley by the extremely radical group ISIS (AP 2015). Such groups may not in fact make any demands at all, but simply summarily execute hostages from an opposition group or target population. Thus, the outcome of a kidnapping or hostage-taking can help distinguish a true believer from a bandwagoner. True believer groups should execute hostages at higher rates than bandwagoners, because they are motivated far less by ransom and therefore do not need to keep captives alive for a payout.

Bandwagoners' chief motivation for kidnapping is to obtain funds to funnel to their own cause. As rebel groups in civil war contexts, kidnapping tourists and demanding high ransoms from their home countries is a common, and lucrative, tactic. There is a strong incentive to keep captives alive in this strategy; the goal is not to send a message with a gruesome, videotaped execution, but rather to receive the payout for a live hostage. This practice has long been documented among AQAs, specifically in the northern Sahara desert where Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb has kidnapped dozens of tourists for ransom in the past decade (Rollins 2010,

Ibrahim 2014). Bandwagoner groups should execute hostages at lower rates than true believers, due to the overriding incentive to receive the ransom payment.

Suicide terrorism is unmatched in its efficiency; a suicide attack costs about $150 and is generally more lethal than other types of terrorism (Horowitz 2010). In his evaluation of terrorist attacks from 1980-2001, Pape finds that though suicide terrorism made up only 3% of all of the attacks, it accounted for almost 48% of resulting deaths (Pape 2003). Suicide terrorism can also be executed with unparalleled precision and control. The perpetrators have a great deal of flexibility in timing the execution and impact of the attack to maximize or minimize casualties or alter locations (Hoffman 2003, Horowitz 2010). Suicide terrorism is perpetrated with unique lethality against civilian targets, making it a good barometer for the true believer-bandwagoner spectrum. Bandwagoners are dependent on the local population for support and resources, so they should utilize suicide less for fear of alienating civilians with this casualty-heavy tactic. True believers cater to a nebulous worldwide audience and fanatical in their devotion to a transnational jihad. Such groups are expected to utilize suicide terrorism more than bandwagoners, regardless of the resulting civilian toll.

Targeting Can Reveal AQA Type

A key differentiation between bandwagoners and true believers lies in their targeting choices. Bandwagoners are locked in civil conflict with their home government or local opposition groups. They are dependent on the local civilian population for support, resources, and personnel to fuel their struggle (Piazza 2009). As Kalyvas (2000) states, the fight these groups wage "must be conducted *through* the people." Thus, bandwagoner groups should focus violent attacks on military, police, or governmental "state" targets as opposed to civilian ones. Attacking local civilians would only alienate bandwagoner groups' constituency. True believers,

on the other hand, claim to serve a much broader, more vague constituency: the worldwide Muslim community and Allah. They subscribe to radical Sunni ideology that paints "apostate" Muslims as a threat, and promotes the persecution of other Muslims from rival sects and traditions. Deaths of fellow Muslims may be sought, as in the Sunni-Shiite violence in Iraq during the height of the sectarian conflict there, or deemed to be simply collateral damage in a global struggle. Therefore, true believer groups should target local civilians indiscriminately and focus less on state targets.

The final metric with regard to targeting is the "far enemy" target. As previously stated, AQ Central ideology since the late 1990s has focused on the far enemy as the main target of global jihad. This is described as the United States and its allies, specifically including Israel, and covers all individuals with those nationalities, regardless of their spatial location. Significant qualitative evidence has shown that, true to its "far-enemy" ideology, AQ Central strongly advocates for attacks on foreign interests, particularly American/Western interests (Nelson & Sanderson 2011). Some AQAs adhere to this targeting directive, such as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which has mounted three direct terrorist attacks on the United States (Stanford Mapping Militants). However, attacking far enemy targets requires a significant input of resources. AQAs motivated primarily by their local civil struggle have different, more parochial aims and targets. It is more rational for such groups to take the money, weapons, training, and brand recognition that Al Qaeda provides and funnel them into the struggle that most impacts their cost-benefit analyses: the local fight. Thus, bandwagoner groups should attack far enemy targets less (as a proportion of total attacks) than true believers. Because of the increased difficulty level of mounting an attack on a far enemy target, the proportion of far enemy attacks

relative to total attacks should reveal a group's motivations, as opposed to the absolute number of far enemy attacks.

PART ONE: AL QAEDA AFFILIATE TYPOLOGY

Research Design, Data, & Methods

To operationalize and test the theory presented above, I created a typology of Al Qaeda affiliates using principal components analysis, which allows the data on targets and tactics to define the relative positioning of various groups. The unit of analysis here is the group. The set of groups categorized as "Al Qaeda Affiliates" is drawn from Martha Crenshaw's list of 28 "Global Al Qaeda" groups from the Stanford Mapping Militants Project. Seven groups from the Stanford list were not found in the Global Terrorism Database, the primary data source for this project, and are thus not included in this project. An additional three groups were found to have no publicly declared or substantive Al Qaeda affiliation, and are also not included in this analysis. Several groups that are aliases or fronts for affiliates on the Stanford list were added to the project. After these omissions and additions, the final AQA list contains 25 groups, which can be viewed in the appendix.

This list contains the groups that have a publicly declared alliance with Al Qaeda or are widely believed to be operationally associated with Al Qaeda. This list includes all of the groups categorized as AQAs from the think tank reports and academic literature, as well as a set of other groups with strong demonstrated ties with AQ Central. Thus, it is taken as a comprehensive list of groups with a high degree of alliance or affiliation with AQ Central. The temporal domain is 1976-2012, which captures the origin years of the oldest groups, but reaches only to 2012 due to the availability of GTD data. The spatial domain covers the operational territory of the AQAs – the Middle East, Africa, Central and South Asia. The primary dataset used is the Global

Terrorism Database (GTD), an open-source database covering over 100,000 incidents of domestic and international terrorism from 1970 to 2012.

The GTD defines an incident of terrorism as: "the threatened or actual use of force or violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation." This definition fits with this paper's use of a rational-strategic definition of terrorism; the incidents included in the GTD have been perpetrated by a wide variety of groups, all of which used terrorism as a strategy to achieve certain goals. The GTD definition does not narrow the dataset by some assumed characterization of certain groups as "terrorist groups."

To place this section within the larger thesis project, note that this project proceeds in three parts. First, a typology of AQAs is developed in which five variables were created to serve as indicators of AQA tactics and targeting choices. Using principal components analysis, these indicators are sorted into components, which then measure the "spectrum" from true believers to bandwagoners. To the extent that there is separation between group observations along each of the two dimensions of targets and tactics, the data allow the groups to align themselves along the spectrum from true believer to bandwagoner. This is developed here in Part One. Second, each group's position along this spectrum will serve as a dependent variable in Part Two to see how factors that influence civil wars affect the extent to which an affiliated group resembles a true believer or a bandwagoner.

Indicator Variables

Three continuous variables capture the tactics concept: *propkilled*, *proprelease,* and *propsuicide*. *Propkilled* indicates the proportion of total kidnappings in a group-year that resulted in the killing of the hostage not during a rescue attempt. This data was obtained through the

GTD's *hostkidoutcome* variable, which codes kidnapping events with one of seven values to indicate the outcome of the event.[1] The proportion is used, rather than the sum or count of hostages released in the group-year, to account for variation among the groups and group-years in total number of kidnappings, which ranged from 1 to 59. The second independent variable to measure tactics is *proprelease*, the proportion of total kidnappings in a group-year that resulted in the release of the hostage or kidnap victim. This data was captured using value 2 of the GTD's *hostkidoutcome* variable, which indicates "hostage(s) released by perpetrators." *Proprelease* does not capture kidnapping outcomes in which the hostages were rescued or escaped, as this analysis focuses on the kidnapper group's intentional actions.

Propsuicide is a continuous variable capturing the proportion of a group's yearly attacks that were categorized as suicide attacks by the GTD. Suicide attack data were obtained from the GTD's *suicide* variable, which is a binary variable indicating if an event is a suicide attack (1) or not (0). 12% of all AQA events in the GTD were coded 1 for *suicide*, meaning "there is evidence that the perpetrator did not intend to escape the attack alive" (GTD).

Two continuous variables were used to assess the targeting portion of our theory: *propfetarg* and *propstatetarg. Propfetarg* is the proportion of yearly attacks in which the nationality of the target listed in the GTD (*natlty1*) matches that of a "far enemy" nationality. "Far enemy" nationalities were coded if the target/victim's nationality aligns with one of the 28 member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or Israel. Since only 57 of the 5859 total attacks perpetrated by AQAs had a target/victim nationality coded as unknown by the GTD, this operationalization accurately measures whether the far enemy or a national was targeted in over 99% of the data. The set of NATO member states and Israel were chosen as a

[1] It is worth noting that of the 728 incidents of kidnapping/hostage taking by AQAs coded in the GTD, 42% were coded a 7, indicating that the outcome of the event is unknown.
[2] The TKB® was created in 2004 and maintained through 2008 by the Department of Justice, the Department of

proxy for AQ Central's rather nebulous categorization of America's western allies and Israel as the "far enemy" (Gerges 2009).

Propstatetarg is the proportion of yearly attacks targeting representatives of the state: the government, police, or military. This targeting information was drawn from the GTD's coding of *targtype1* for government, police, military, or government-diplomatic categories. Attacks against agents of a foreign state are **not** counted in this measure, as this paper seeks to pinpoint violent actions against the local state apparatus. In order to exclude foreign state targets, observations (group-years) were eliminated from the coding of this variable if the nationality of the target listed in the GTD (*natlty1*) matched the "home base" state of the perpetrating AQA. "Home base" AQA countries were coded using the Stanford Mapping Militants Project's qualitative AQA profiles and the START TKB TOPs[2].

The two targeting variables, *propfetarg* and *propstatetarg*, do not directly capture an important element of the theory: targeting of local civilians, which should be characteristic of true believers who do not have to wage war through the local population. However, this characteristic is indirectly captured through by *propstatetarg* variable: the attacks not captured as "state targeting" through my coding qualify as civilian targeting. Inclusion of a civilian targeting variable as well as the state targeting variable covers too much of the variation in the data (since the two variables are near-perfect complements), rendering the principle components analysis ineffective. Thus, only the *propstatetarg* variable is included in the PCA, which should fully account for the targeting of civilians albeit indirectly.

[2] The TKB® was created in 2004 and maintained through 2008 by the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism. It is now made available through the University of Maryland's Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) website: http://www.start.umd.edu/tops/

The following table summarizes the indicator variables used in the AQA typology, their operationalization, and their sources.

Table 1: Typology Variables & Operationalization

Variable Type	Variable Name	Variable Explanation	Source	Coding Decisions
Tactics	*propsuicide*	proportion of yearly attacks that are suicide attacks	GTD	*suicide* == 1 (binary - suicide attack)
	propkilled	proportion of yearly kidnappings in which victim is killed	GTD	*hostkidoutcome* == 4 (hostage(s) killed, not during rescue attempt)
	proprelease	proportion of yearly kidnappings in which victim is released	GTD	*hostkidoutcome* == 2 (hostage(s) released by perpetrators)
Targeting	*propfetarg*	proportion of yearly attacks in which the nationality of the target listed in the GTD (*natlty1*) matches that of a "far enemy" nationality	GTD, NATO site	nationality of target - used *natlty1* "far enemy" nationalities: NATO member states + Israel
	propstatetarg	proportion of yearly attacks targeting entities of the state (local nationalities only)	GTD, original coding of AQA "home base" states based on GTD & START Terrorism Knowledge Base® TOPs	*targtype1* == 2(gov't), 3(police), 4(military), 7(gov't diplomatic) iff *natlty1*==home state ccode (see home state coding sources)

Analysis & Results – PART ONE

A principal components analysis (PCA) reveals the internal structure of the data on tactics and targeting by converting the data on observations into separate components that capture the variance in the data. In this analysis, the first two components together explain roughly half the variance in targeting and tactics. Since the methodological standard in principal components analysis is to use components that achieve an eigenvalue above 1, only the first two components were used in the subsequent analysis (Figures 1&2). Furthermore, these components align well with both targeting and tactics as seen in Figure 3.

Figure 2: Principal Components Analysis

```
. pca propfetarg propstatetarg propkilled proprelease propsuicide

Principal components/correlation                  Number of obs    =        182
                                                  Number of comp.  =          5
                                                  Trace            =          5
    Rotation: (unrotated = principal)             Rho              =     1.0000
```

Component	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Comp1	1.18645	.0499042	0.2373	0.2373
Comp2	1.13655	.171244	0.2273	0.4646
Comp3	.965302	.0539603	0.1931	0.6577
Comp4	.911342	.110981	0.1823	0.8399
Comp5	.800361	.	0.1601	1.0000

Figure 3:

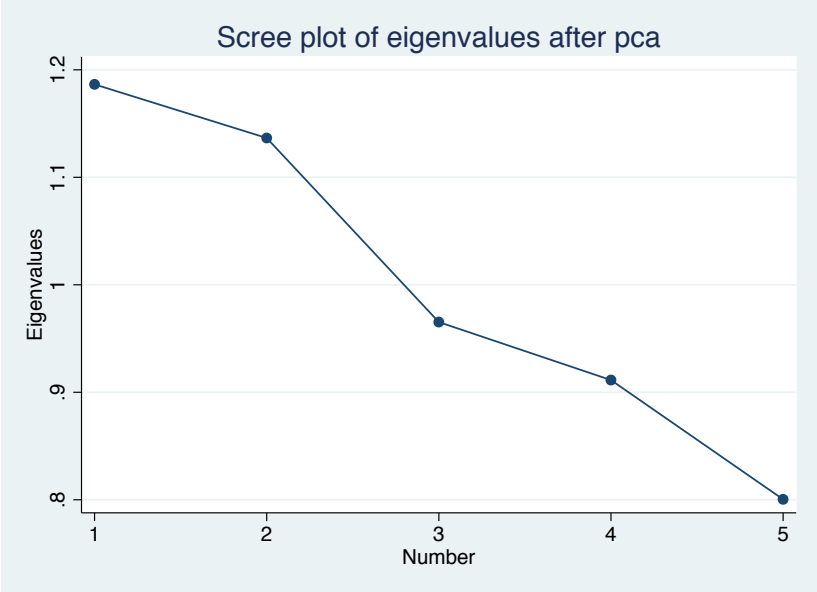


Figure 4: PCA Component Loadings

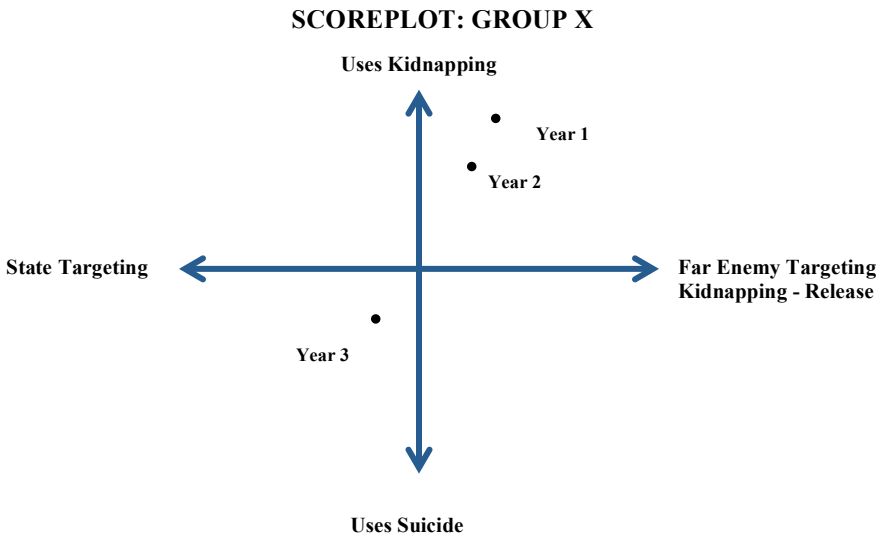
Principal components (eigenvectors)

Variable	Comp1	Comp2	Comp3	Comp4	Comp5	Unexplained
propfetarg	0.5793	0.0528	0.2358	0.7351	-0.2562	0
propstatet~g	-0.5743	-0.0308	-0.3632	0.6727	0.2911	0
propkilled	-0.2901	0.4406	0.7845	0.0572	0.3209	0
proprelease	0.4460	0.5416	-0.3802	-0.0593	0.5998	0
propsuicide	0.2271	-0.7133	0.2290	0.0156	0.6220	0

Component 1 shows targeting behavior: C1 is strongly negatively correlated with state targeting (*propstatetarg*), and strongly positively correlated with far enemy targeting and kidnappings resulting in release of the hostage (*propfetarg, proprelease*)**. Component 2 shows a group's preference for particular tactics**: C2 is strongly negatively correlated with use of suicide attacks (*propsuicide*) and positively correlated with both killing and releasing kidnapping

victims, which is essentially the use of kidnapping as a tactic (*propkilled, proprelease*) (Figure 3).

To visualize these results for each group-year observation, components 1 and 2 were plotted on a scoreplot in order to observe a group's placement in terms of its targeting and tactics. An example scoreplot is below where the x-axis shows Component 1 scores: more negative scores reflect state targeting, and positive scores reflect far enemy targeting and release of kidnapped hostages. The y-axis shows Component 2 scores: more negative scores reflect use of suicide tactics, and positive scores reflect use of kidnapping as a tactic. Each point on the scoreplot is a group-year observation.



In the hypothetical example above, Group X uses kidnapping and targets the far enemy in years 1 and 2, where the points are both in the top-right quadrant. Group X uses suicide and targeting the state more in year 3, where the point is located in the bottom-left quadrant.

To see each group's targeting and tactics over time, and to assess how this relates to what is known about each group, the correspondence between the individual backgrounds of each group and its respective scoreplots are explored below. This allows for analysis of each group's tactics and targeting over time before moving on to Part Two, in which the component scores of each group-year observation become the dependent variables in a regression analysis.

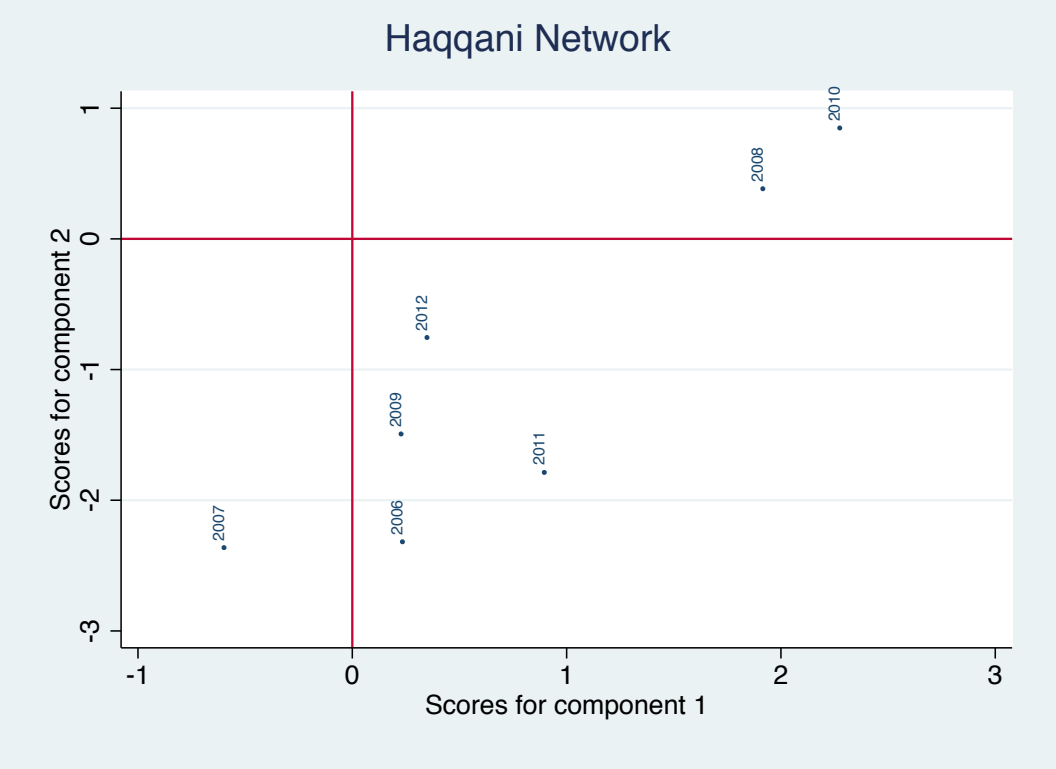
1. Haqqani Network

The Haqqani Network arose in 1973 in opposition to Soviet-backed Afghan President Daoud Khan, and has developed into a large, centralized, and violent militant group. The group's professed goals are to secure a nationalist, Shariah-based Afghanistan and eject the U.S.-led coalition. Many of the group's estimated 10,000 members are tied to the Taliban and/or Al Qaeda in Afghanistan or Pakistan (Stanford Mapping Militants). Given this profile, one might expect this group to target representatives of the Afghan state, and also foreign nationals during the period of the U.S.-led coalition's presence in Afghanistan. The group's nationalist focus should lead it to utilize suicide less than kidnapping, for fear of alienating local supporters due to high civilian casualty rates. Though the Haqqani Network has been active for over 40 years, the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) contains data on only 62 attacks perpetrated by this group from 2006-2012.

The Haqqani Network scoreplot (Figure 4) shows that in terms of targeting (C1), the group focused on the far enemy, especially after 2007. In terms of tactics (C2), the Network focused primarily on suicide attacks, only utilizing kidnapping as their main tactic in 2008 and 2010. This targeting behavior fits with the expectation that the group would target the far enemy

after the U.S.-led coalition's invasion increased foreign presence in Afghanistan. However, the Haqqani Network's heavy use of suicide attacks does not fit with the expectation of a locally-focused, primarily nationalist group's tactics.

Figure 5:



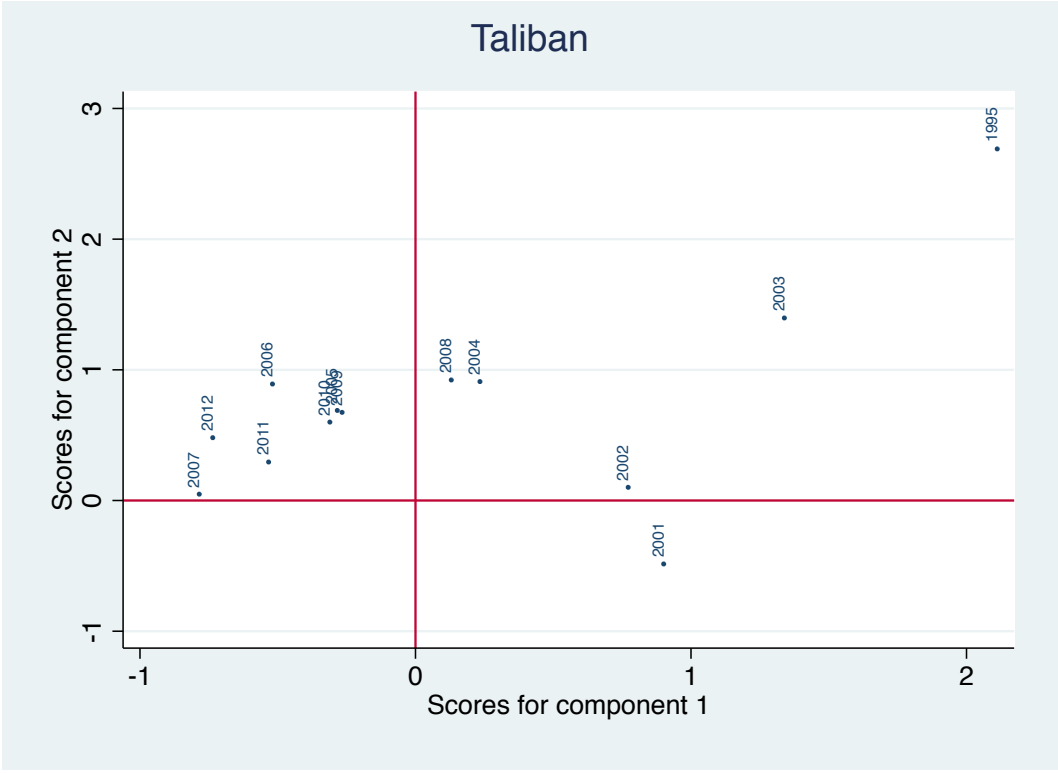
2. Taliban

The Taliban arose in the early- to mid-2000s, comprised of ethnic Pashtun tribesmen from Afghanistan who found refuge in Pakistan and mobilized in madrassas there. The group enjoyed significant support from the Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence agency (ISI), which was seeking a foothold in Afghanistan. In 1996, the Taliban took control of Afghanistan and established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, where they held power and enforced strict Shariah law until the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan by a U.S.-led coalition. The Taliban notably

provided a safe haven to Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden from 1996-2001, during which time bin Laden established training camps throughout Afghanistan for Al Qaeda militants (START TKB, Stanford Mapping Militants). This group might present like a locally-focused bandwagoner group due to its ongoing efforts for political and territorial control in Afghanistan. Such a group would target the state and use kidnapping. The Taliban is the most prolific AQA featured in the GTD, with 2,420 attacks from 1995-2012 contained in the dataset.

The notable trend on display in the Taliban scoreplot (Figure 5) is a shift from targeting the far enemy to almost exclusively targeting agents of the state, particularly after 2004. Tactically, the group focused on kidnapping after 2002, not suicide attacks. These patterns are consistent with bandwagoner behavior, which depicts a predominantly locally focused rebel group.

Figure 6:

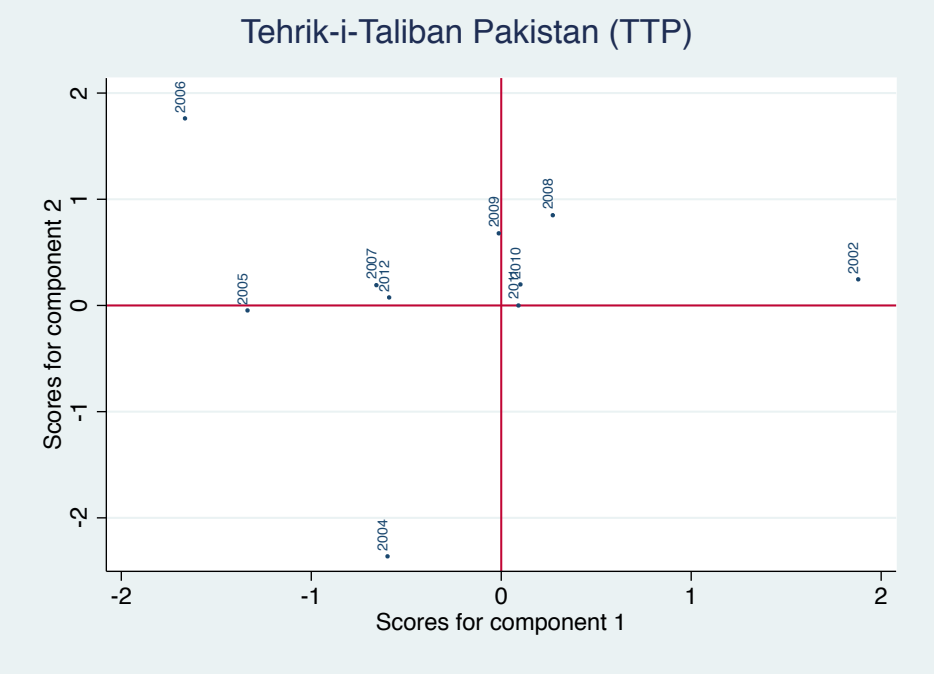


3. Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

The TTP, formed in December 2007 as an extension of the Afghanistan-based Taliban, is the largest militant group in Pakistan. Its professed aims include targeting NATO coalition forces in Afghanistan and the Pakistani government. The group has not only controlled territory, but also governed in Pakistan's Swat Valley and parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Region in the northwest. The TTP allegedly trains with and receives funding from Al Qaeda (Stanford Mapping Militants). The GTD contains data on 752 attacks perpetrated by this group, spanning the decade from 2002-2012.

The TTP scoreplot (Figure 6) shows early targeting of the far enemy, in 2002, followed by a focus on state targets in 2004-2007, and then a mixture of targets from 2008-2012. The TTP are also shown to rely the use of kidnapping or mixed tactics, only utilizing suicide as their tactic of choice in 2004. This result shows a group on the border between true believer and bandwagoner types, but the mixed results do not reveal a clear categorization of the TTP as one type or the other.

Figure 7:



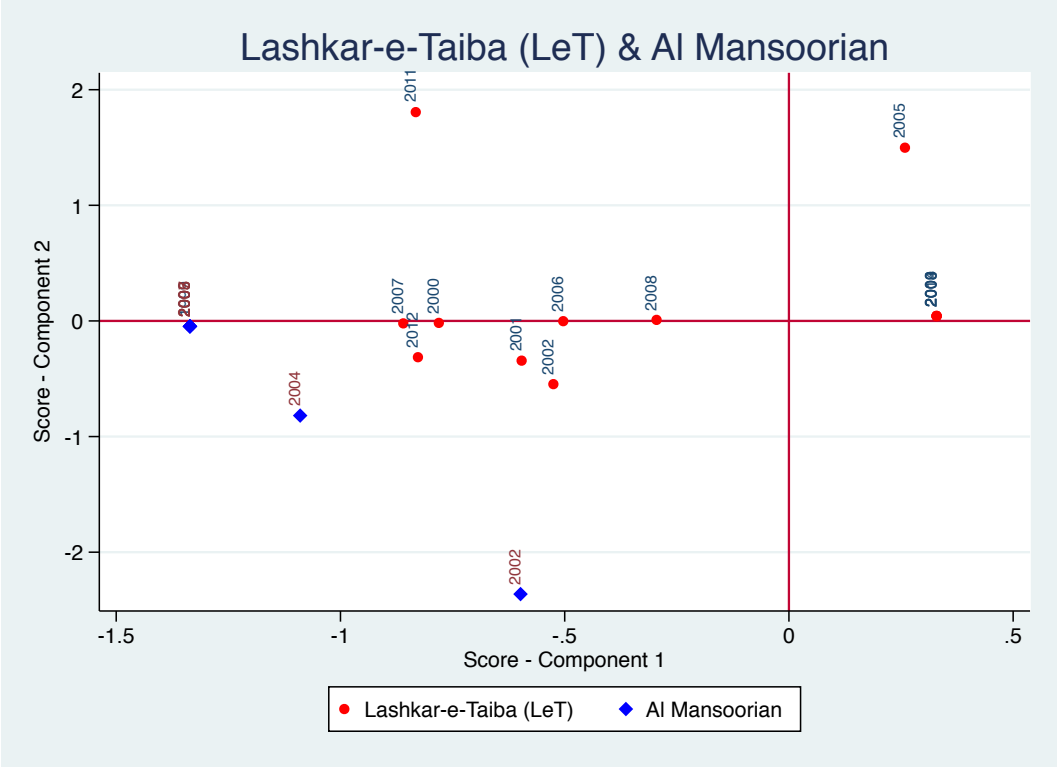
4. Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) & Al Mansoorian

Lashkar-e-Taiba was formed in 1990 as the militant offshoot of a religious missionary and charity organization in Pakistan and became active in 1993 in Indian-controlled Kashmir. LeT has actively allied with Al Qaeda since the early 1990s, even giving safe haven to Arab Al Qaeda leaders (Stanford Mapping Militants). Al Mansoorian was formed in 1993 and is believed to be a front for LeT, one of many that arose since the U.N. banned the group. Al Mansoorian is also a Kashmiri separatist group that opposes Indian control (START TKB). Due to their overlapping relationship, the data from LeT's 106 attacks in the GTD (1999-2012) and Al Mansoorian's 16 attacks in the database (2002-7) are plotted on the same scoreplot (Figure 7).

There is an evident difference between Al Mansoorian's exclusive state targeting and LeT's years of targeting the far enemy (2003-2005, 2009-2010). In terms of tactics, LeT appeared to utilize both suicide and kidnapping, apart from 2005 and 2011 which are shown to be kidnapping-heavy. Al Mansoorian is shown to favor suicide in 2004 and 2002, in which 1/1 and 1/3 attacks, respectively, featured that tactic.

Al Mansoorian's behavior fits with that of a bandwagoner, though Lashkar-e-Taiba's use of suicide and far enemy targeting places that group on the true believer side of the spectrum. Al Mansoorian's motivations or constituency may differ from LeT in some meaningful way to cause the two groups to diverge within this typology.

Figure 8:



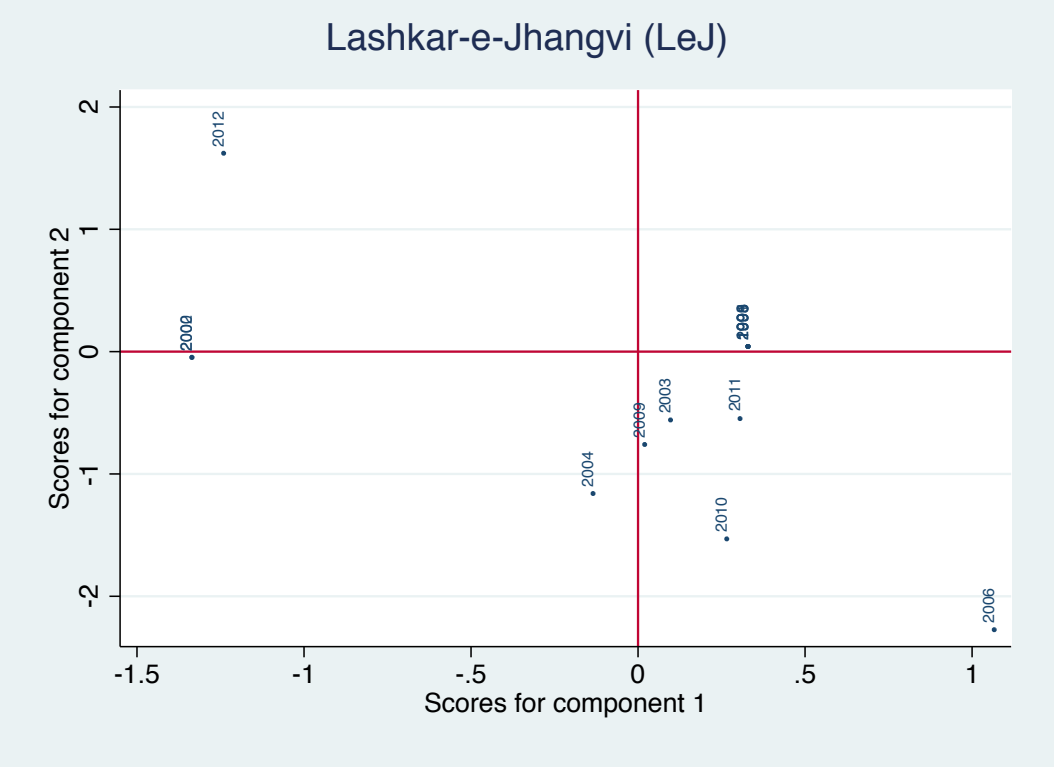
5. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ)

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi began in the mid 1990s in Pakistan as a militant, anti-Shiite offshoot of Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi was supported for years and then disavowed by the Pakistani central government, and has confirmed links with Al Qaeda (Stanford Mapping Militants, START TKB). 61 of the group's attacks, from 1996-2012, are featured in the Global Terrorism Database.

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Figure 8) has a trend towards targeting the far enemy, though in 2004 and 2012 the group fell firmly on the state targeting side of Component 1. Tactically, the group used mostly suicide, with a notable outlier in 2012. That year's low proportion of suicide attacks is attributable to an unusually total attack rate (29 as opposed to a previous rate of about 3 attacks

per year) occurring while the number of suicide attacks and the group's kidnapping behavior remained static. Overall, this group's behavior fits with the expectations of a bandwagoner.

Figure 9:



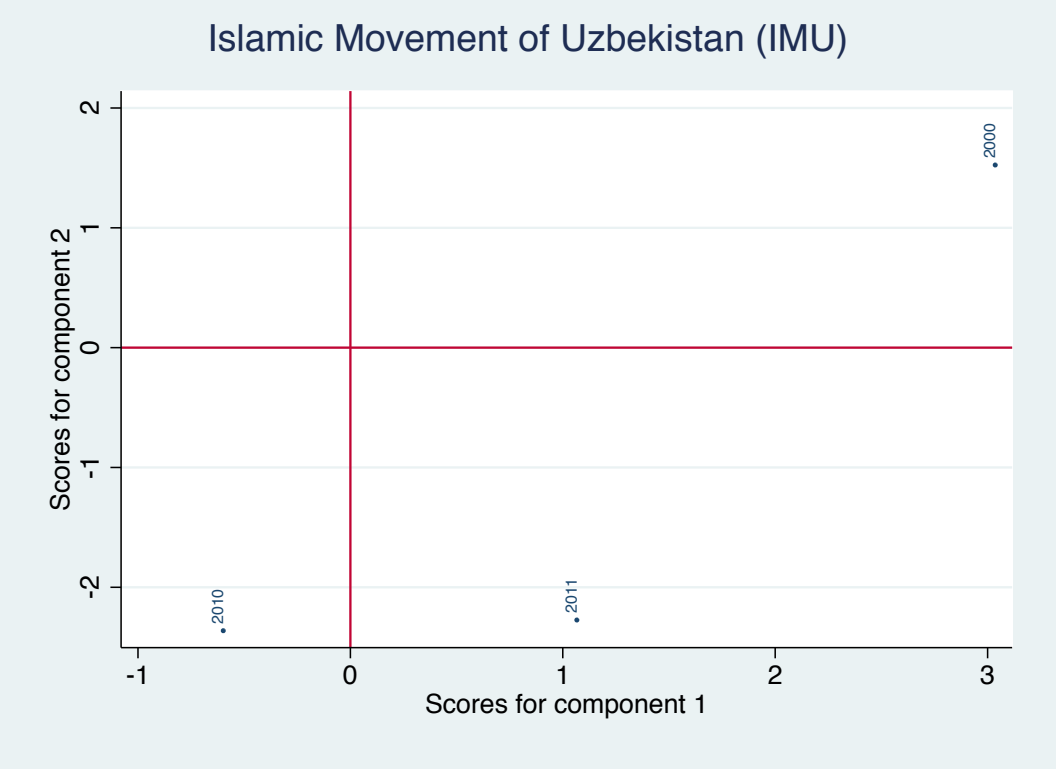
6. Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)

The IMU was created in 1998 with the goal of instituting an Islamist regime in Uzbekistan, which later expanded to a vision of forging an Islamist state across Central Asia. The IMU grew increasingly close to Al Qaeda in ideology and action, mounting attacks against Afghanistan's Northern Alliance on behalf of AQ Central and the Taliban. The group has received funding from Al Qaeda and safe haven from the Taliban (START TKB). Four attacks perpetrated by the group, in 2000, 2010, and 2011, are included in the GTD.

In viewing the IMU scoreplot (Figure 9), there is a marked shift in both targeting and tactics. The group moved from far enemy targeting in 2000 to state targeting in 2010, with a less

dramatic shift back towards a far enemy focus in 2011. A change in tactics is even more evident: from kidnapping to suicide in the first decade of this century. However, there is no data from 2001-2009 on IMU behavior, so it is difficult to say what the group did during that time – failed attacks, for example, are necessarily missing from this dataset. From the data we do have, the group appears to have shifted from bandwagoner to true believer behavior in recent years.

Figure 10:



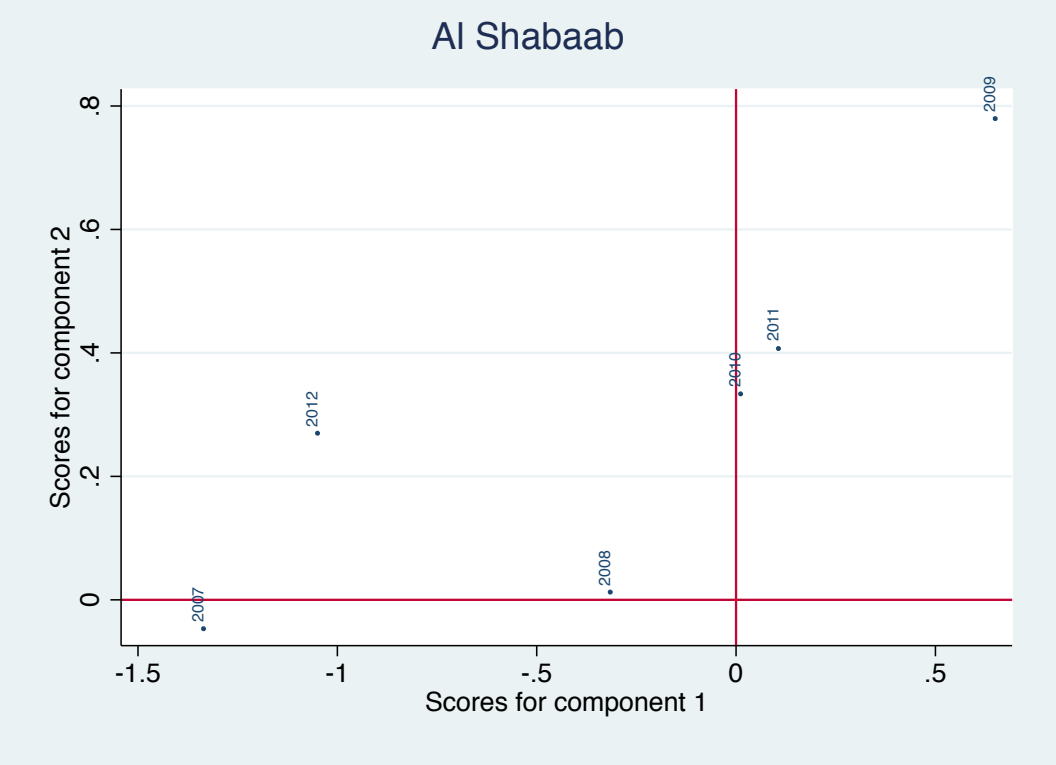
7. Al Shabaab

Al Shabaab was formed in 2004 as a military wing of the Islamic Court Union (ICU), which controlled central and southern Somalia from June through December 2006. After the ICU's ejection from Somalia, Al Shabaab, meaning "the youth" in Arabic, became the leading militant group in opposition to the transitional government in Somalia (Stanford Mapping Militants). It was shortly after this exile that the group's ties to AQ Central became more clear (Rollins 2010). Given this history of local political focus and only recent declaration of Al Qaeda

loyalty, Al-Shabaab might be expected to show bandwagoner behavior in using kidnapping and targeting Somali state targets. 549 attacks perpetrated by Al Shabaab are included in the GTD, spanning from 2007-2012.

The group's scoreplot (Figure 10) shows a start targeting state entities in 2007, trending to far enemy targets by 2009, and then transitioning back towards state targeting in recent years. Al Shabaab uses kidnapping over suicide, and this trend increases over the years covered. The group's tactics are in line with bandwagoner behavior, though its position in the typology based on targeting is less clear. The shift towards far enemy targeting after 2007 may reflect Al Shabab's exile from Somalia during that time.

Figure 11:

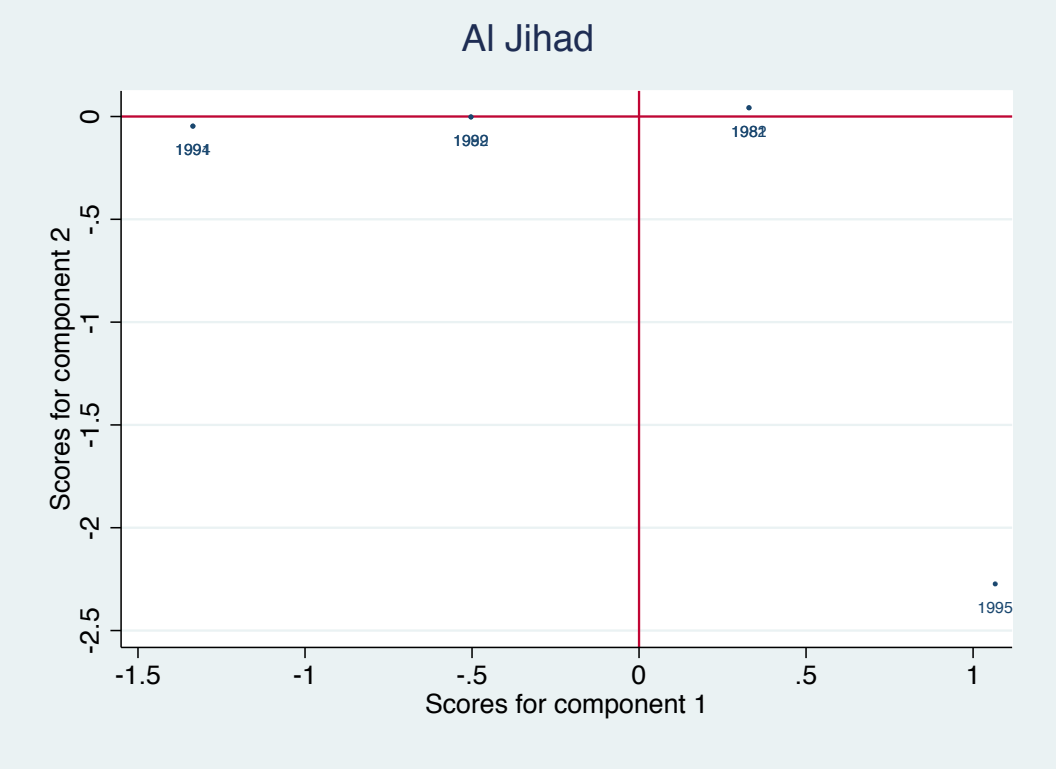


8. Al Jihad

Al Jihad is an alias for the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), an extremist group that formed in the late 1970's and merged with bin Laden's Al Qaeda in June 2001. The original Al Jihad was responsible for assassinating Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981 (START TKB). Al Jihad perpetrated 10 attacks, from 1981-1995, that are included in the GTD.

The group has targeted both agents of the state and the far enemy (Figure 11). In terms of tactics, it utilized suicide particularly in 1995 (against the far enemy), but otherwise used both suicide and kidnapping in its attacks. Al Jihad's mixed targeting and tactics prevent us from placing it firmly on either side of the bandwagoner-true believer spectrum.

Figure 12:

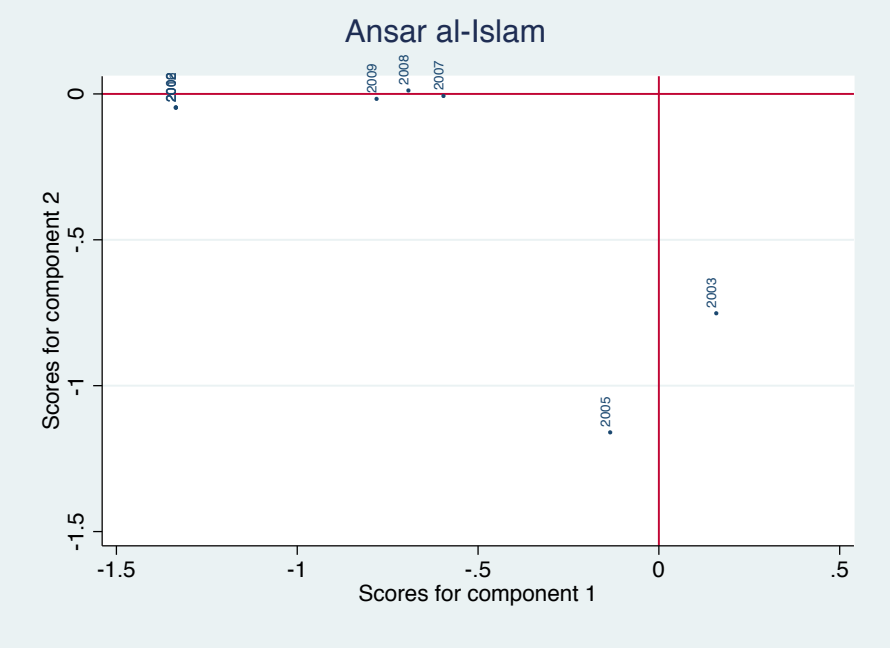


9. Ansar al-Islam (AI)

Ansar al-Islam formed in December 2001 as a successor/merger to pre-existing groups. Ansar al-Islam is a Sunni group made up primarily of Iraqi Kurds seeking a Salafi, Shariah-governed state in Iraq. Ansar al-Islam's ties to Al Qaeda reach back to some of its members' experiences fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan alongside later AQ leaders, and Al Qaeda has shown its support financially and ideologically. Ansar al-Islam provided safe haven to AQ members who fled Afghanistan in 2001, though the two groups have competed for influence periodically (Stanford Mapping Militants). The GTD contains 26 attacks by Ansar al-Islam, perpetrated from 2002-2012.

As shown on the Ansar al-Islam scoreplot (Figure 12), this group primarily targeted the state in all years except 2003. This fits with bandwagoner behavior and indicates a local focus. Tactically, the group tended to use both kidnapping and suicide, though years 2003 and 2005 fall on the suicide side of Component 2. This suggests that Ansar al-Islam has some of a true believer's proclivity for suicide attacks. This could well be the result of sectarian divisions in Iraq; the Sunni group may have few qualms about Shiite civilian casualties.

Figure 13:

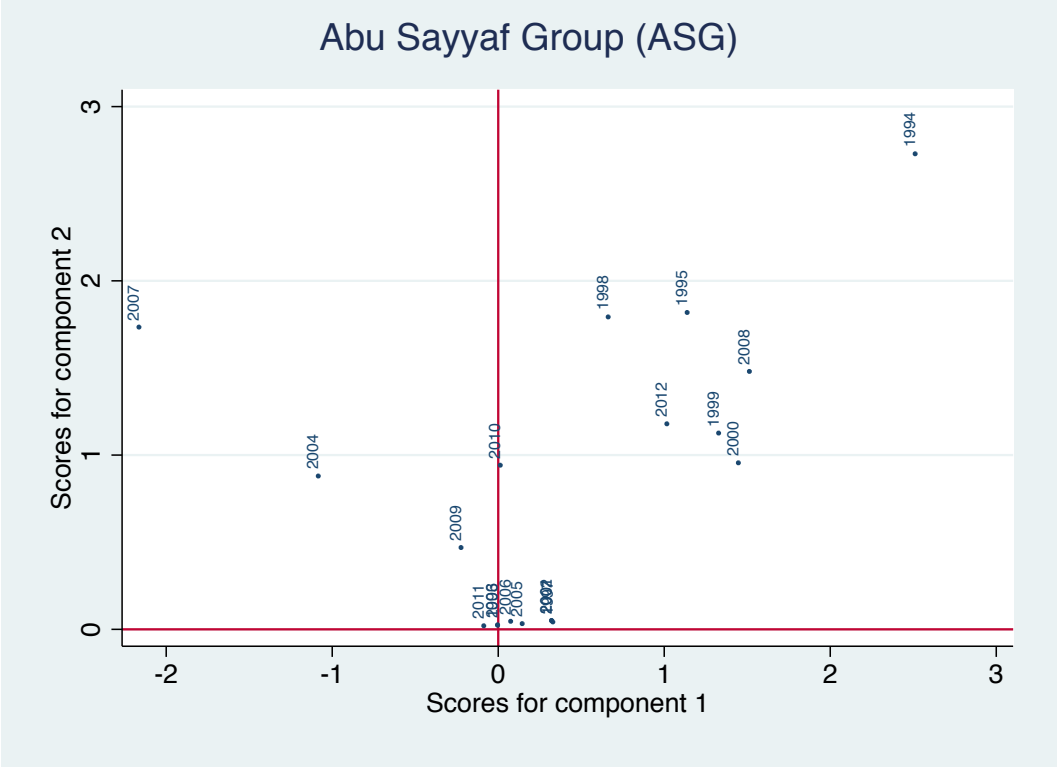


10. Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)

The Abu Sayyaf Group is an Islamic extremist group based in the Southern Philippines and Malaysia. Its professed goal is to institute an Islamic state in the Bangsamoro region (Stanford Mapping Militants). The group was founded in 1991 after it broke away from another radical group in the Phillippines that had begun to negotiate with the Filipino government, an action to which ASG diehards objected. Abu Sayyaf committed itself to bin Laden's war against the far enemy in February 1998. Many ASG members have trained in AQ camps in Afghanistan, and the group received funding from AQ Central as well as operational guidance from Al Qaeda fighters seeking refuge in or passing through the Philippines. The ASG-Al Qaeda relationship has allegedly weakened since 9/11, however (START TKB). 222 of Abu Sayyaf's attacks, from 1994-2012, have been captured in the GTD dataset.

The scoreplot (Figure 13) for this group yields varied conclusions. The group attacked both the far enemy and agents of the state, but there is a notable trend from far enemy to state targeting from the 1990's to 2007 (in 2007, four out of ASG's five total attacks were perpetrated against state targets), and thereafter the group appeared to target both entities, more so the far enemy. In terms of tactics, the group used both kidnapping and suicide, but favored kidnapping in 11 out of the 19 years shown. The use of kidnapping over suicide reflects bandwagoner behavior, though the targeting variability does not.

Figure 14:

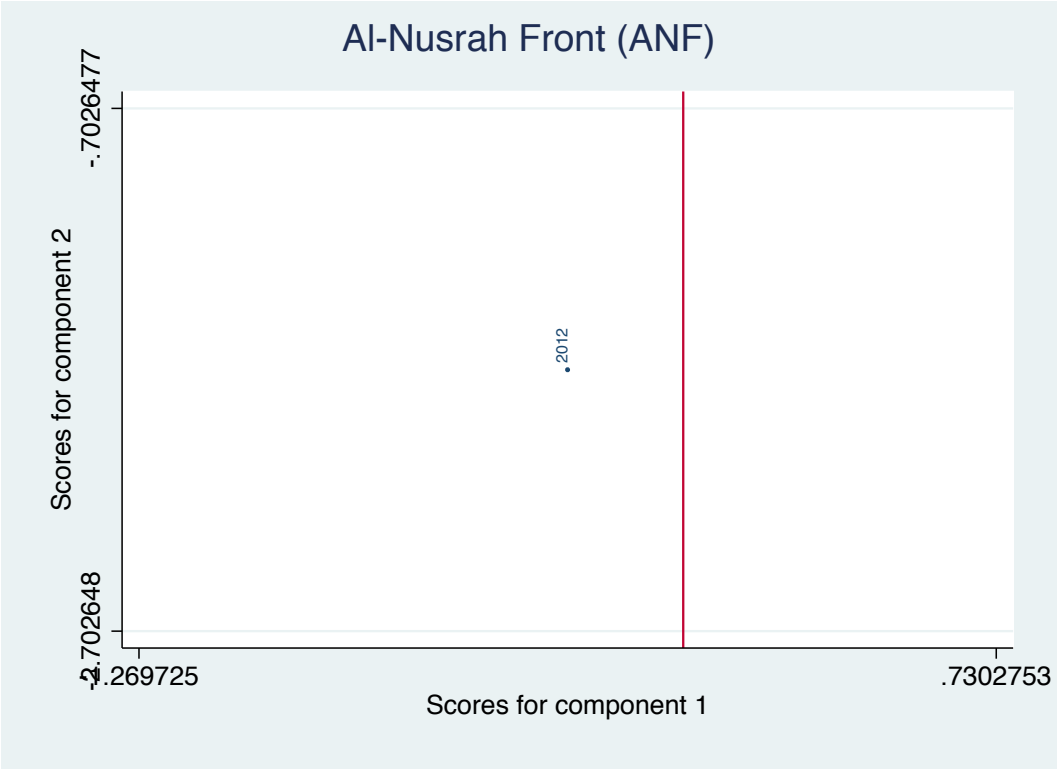


11. Al-Nusrah Front

The Al-Nusrah Front was created in late 2011, when Al Qaeda in Iraq leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi sent a contingent to Syria to organize a violent rebel operation there. The group is well-organized and funded, and found success on the battlefield and respect from many Syrians. In 2013, Baghdadi claimed the Al-Nusrah Front would merge with Al Qaeda in Iraq to create the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). After initial acceptance, Al-Nusrah leadership rejected this merger in favor of loyalty to AQ Central leadership. The group continues to fight the Syrian regime and ISIS, though it maintains complicated relationships with other rebel groups in Syria (Stanford Mapping Militants). 22 attacks by this group are listed in the GTD, all occurring in the most recent year of the dataset: 2012.

In that year, the scoreplot (Figure 14) indicates the group's slight preference for state targets and notable focus on the use of suicide as a tactic. These behaviors align with the bandwagoner type.

Figure 15:



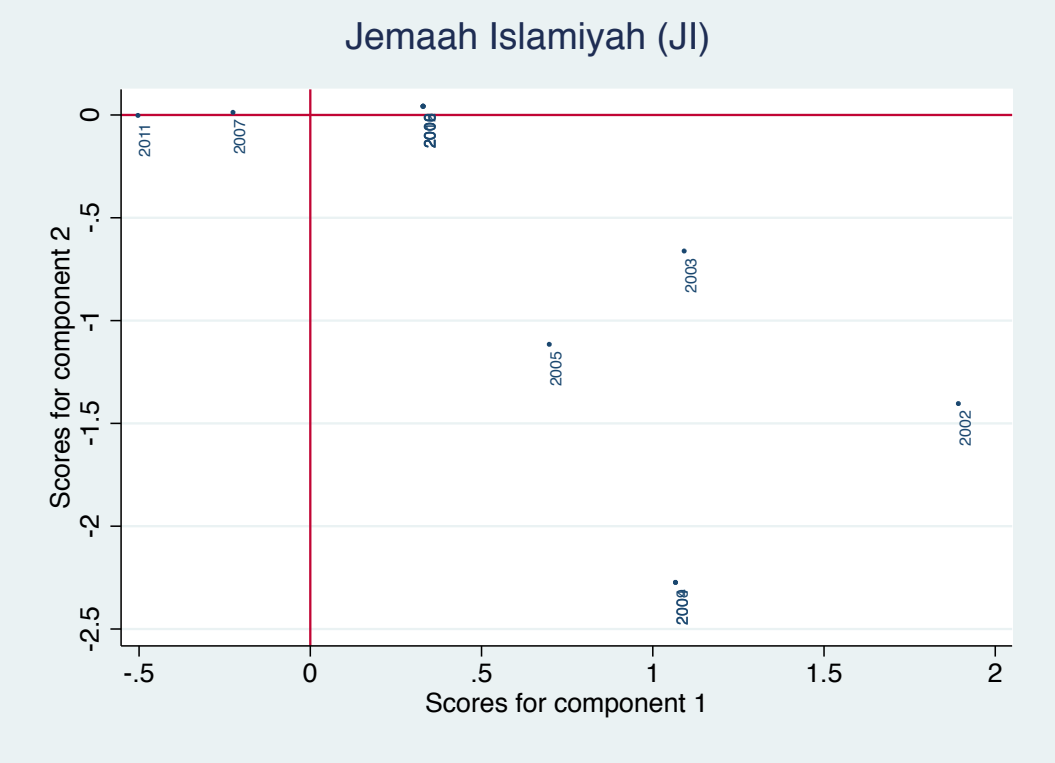
12. Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)

JI coalesced in 1993 as an extremely violent group in the tradition of an established Indonesian militant movement called Darul Islam. The group's professed goals include creating an Islamic state in Indonesia, and eventually in all of Southeast Asia (Stanford Mapping Militants, START TKB). JI and Al Qaeda have reportedly been linked since the 1990s, and more recently the Indonesian group aided two of the 9/11 bombers (Stanford Mapping Militants). This group's interest in projecting its force abroad indicates that it might fall into the true believer type (targeting the far enemy and utilizing suicide attacks). There are 74 JI attacks in the GTD,

covering the years from 2000 to 2012. 45 of those attacks occurred in 2000, with the subsequent years accounting for between just 1 and 6 attacks per year.

The group's scoreplot (Figure 15) displays an emphasis on far enemy targeting, except for the years 2007 and 2011. One notable outlier falls far to the far enemy side of C1: in 2002, JI allegedly plotted the attack on a nightclub on the predominantly Hindu island of Bali, resulting in 202 deaths of mostly Australian tourists. This far enemy focus fits with true believer behavior. The casualty-heavy targeting of Australians in the infamous Bali bombing is perfectly characteristic of a true believer attempting to inflict maximum pain on the far enemy. In terms of tactics, the group utilized more suicide tactics in the years 2002-5 and both suicide and kidnapping thereafter, with the exception of suicide-heavy 2009. This use of suicide aligns with the true believer characterization. Jemaah Islamiyah's addition of kidnapping tactics after 2005 indicates bandwagoner tendencies or potentially a gravitation towards the lucrative practice of kidnapping for ransom while the group maintains its suicide attack preferences as well.

Figure 16:



13. Harakatul Jihad-e-Islami (HuJI), Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HuM), Harkat ul Ansar, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)

These four groups have a complex tangle of relationships, histories, and rivalries. All are Pakistani extremist groups with origins in the jihad against the Soviets in Afghanistan that ended in 1989. After their participation in that struggle, the groups mobilized in Pakistan and elsewhere in Central Asia while maintaining ties to the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Harakatul Jihad-e-Islami (HuJI) is a Pakistan-based group that aims for the secession of Jammu and Kashmir from India. Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HuM) emerged in 1985 in the Punjab region of Pakistan as a splinter group that split from HUJI due to ideological differences, also participating in the jihad against the Indian government in Jammu and Kashmir. In 1993, HuM rejoined with HuJI to form a new group, Harkat ul Ansar (HuA). However, after its designation as a foreign terrorist organization by the U.S. in 1997, HuA changed its name back to HuM.

JeM was formed in 2000 by a former leader of Harakat ul-Mujahidin. The split was along ethnic lines, with JeM's leader taking a following of Punjabis to his new organization. JeM has reportedly received financial support from AQ Central, and was supported by Pakistan's ISI prior to 2002 (Stanford Mapping Militants).

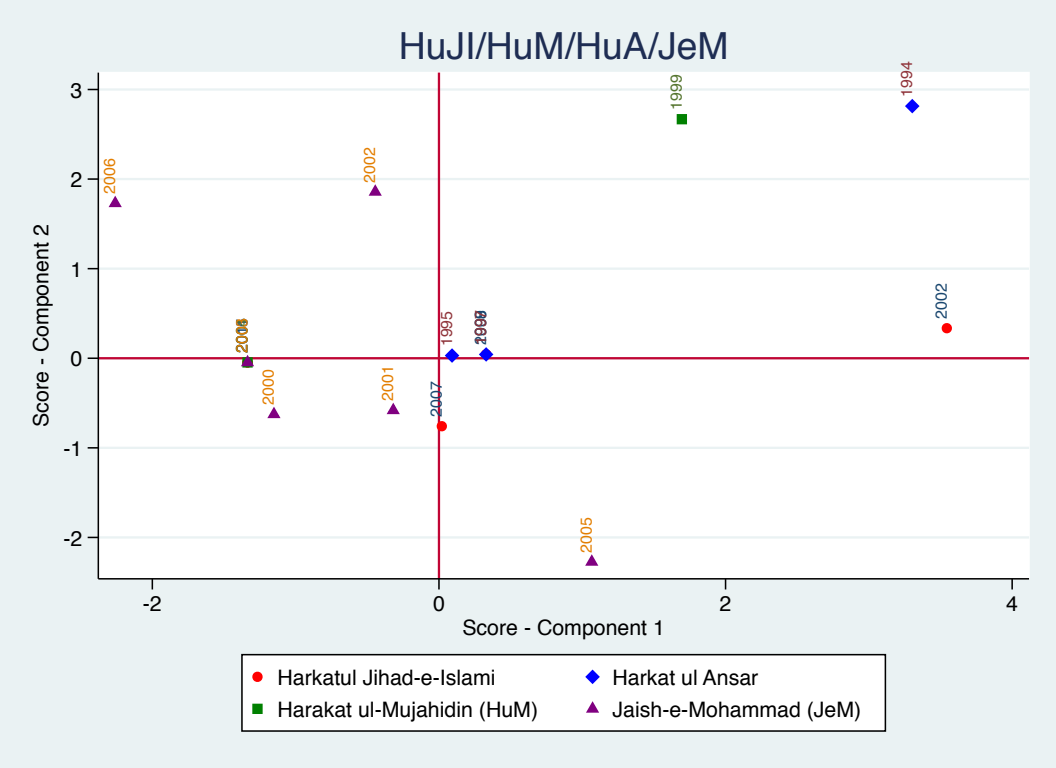
All four of these groups are featured in the Global Terrorism Database to varying degrees:

- HuJI: 12 incidents, 1999-2011
- HuM: 3 incidents, 1999-2004
- HuA: 11 incidents, 1994-1997
- JeM: 22 incidents, 2000-2006

This scoreplot (Figure 16) contains a great deal of information. HuJI targeted the far enemy (particularly in 2002) and the state while using both suicide attacks and kidnapping. HuM targeted the far enemy and used kidnapping in 1999, and then shifted to state targeting with mixed tactics by 2004. HuA targeted the far enemy, especially in 1994. That group focused on kidnapping in 1994, then moved to mixed tactics in 1995 and 1997. JeM tended to target the state and used both suicide and kidnapping. The evolution of these groups' tactics and targeting can tell us important additional information about why they may have split, and the results of those breakups and mergers. However, it is worth noting that the GTD is missing data on the first decade of HuJI and HuM's operations, though there is attack data from throughout the operational lifetime of the successor groups, HuA and JeM.

When HuM split off from HuJI, it focused on the far enemy and kidnapping at first in a break from HuJI's mixed targeting and tactics. This could show that a desire to focus the group's resources on far enemy attacks and kidnapping was a reason for the HuJI-HuM split. HuA, the re-merged group comprised of HuJI and HuM operatives, appears to have taken on HuM's behavior at the time of the new group's creation: targeting the far enemy and use of kidnapping around 1994. This aligns with the understanding of HuA to be a re-branding of the existing groups, not a wholly new entity. At the time of JeM's split from HuM in 2000, both groups targeted the state with mixed tactics. This could show a change in the prevailing political context, or potentially an evolution in HuM's capabilities and motivations from its earlier focus on far enemy targeting and kidnapping. It seems to support the contention that JeM's split was based on ethnic divisions as opposed to major operational disagreements.

Figure 17:



14. Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia, Al Qaeda in Yemen

Al Qaeda in Yemen emerged in 2000 in opposition to American involvement in Yemen, perpetrating the bombing of the U.S.S. Cole in the Aden Harbor. The group seemed to crumble after its leader's arrest in late 2003, but was resurrected in February 2006 when 23 of its members tunneled out of a Yemeni prison (Stanford Mapping Militants). The group called Al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia was formed in 2003 or 2004, inspired by bin Laden's mid-nineties fatwa to expel the infidels from the Arabian peninsula. It reportedly consists of fighters associated with Al Qaeda, though its degree of autonomy from AQ Central is unclear (START TKB). In January of 2009, the merger of Al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia and Al Qaeda in Yemen was announced, resulting in the creation of the umbrella organization "Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula." The

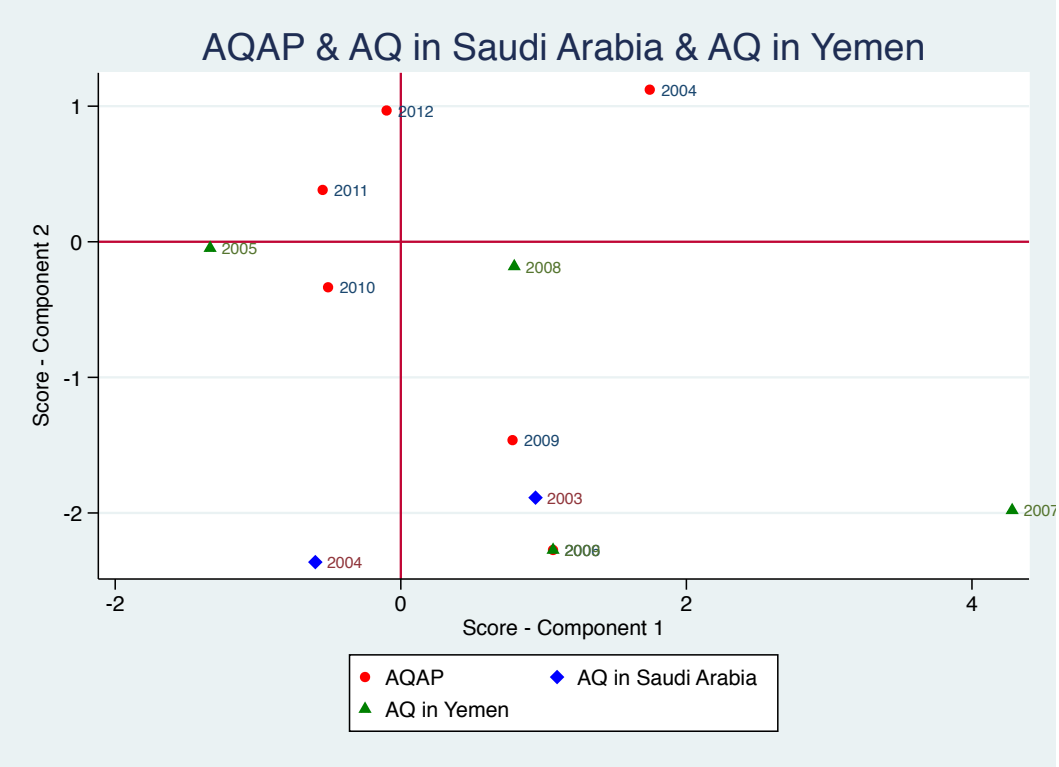
group was acknowledged by bin Laden deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri (Stanford Mapping Militants). AQAP, Al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia, and Al Qaeda in Yemen are all seemingly motivated by foreign invasion onto Muslim land, and by bin Laden's far enemy ideology in general. Thus, one might expect them to show true believer behavior in targeting the far enemy over state entities and heavily using suicide tactics.

The GTD contains the following data on the three entities:

- AQAP: 328 incidents from 2004-2012
- AQ in Saudi Arabia: 7 incidents from 2003-2004
- AQ in Yemen: 12 incidents from 2005-2009

The combined scoreplot (Figure 17) shows that AQAP targeted the far enemy through 2009, and then pursued state targets from 2010-2012. AQAP utilized both kidnapping and suicide, using a high amount of suicide tactics in 2006. Al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia targeted the far enemy in 2003 and the state in 2004, and used suicide tactics. Al Qaeda in Yemen targeted the far enemy with the exception of 2005, and focused primarily on suicide as opposed to kidnapping tactics. These findings are consistent in showing the three groups to be true believers in this typology, though the merger group AQAP is shifting towards state targets in the most recent years.

Figure 18:



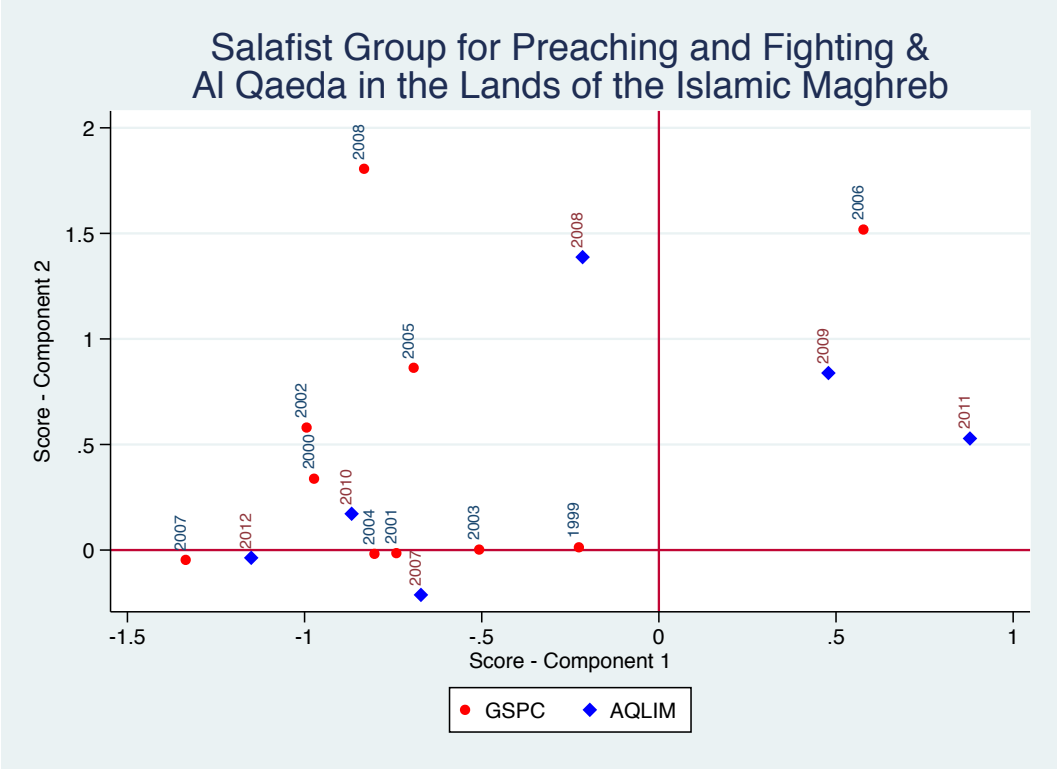
15. Salafist Group for Preaching and Fighting (GSPC) & Al Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQLIM)

The group known today as AQLIM began as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Fighting (known by its French acronym, GSPC). GSPC was formed in 1998 when it broke away from an Algerian insurgent group active in the bloody 1992-2000 conflict there. GSPC publicly and officially pledged allegiance to AQ Central in 2003, the merger was approved by Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2006, and the group changed its name to AQLIM in February 2007. AQLIM now operates across northern Africa, though it remains rooted in Algeria (START TKB). Numerous think tank reports highlight AQLIM as the epitome of the locally-focused AQAs; one would expect the group to show up as a bandwagoner group in this typology (Filiu 2009, Chivvis &

Liepman 2013, START TKB). GSPC has 214 incidents in the GTD, from 1999-2008. AQLIM is the perpetrator in 191 events in the GTD from 2007-2012.

From the scoreplot (Figure 18), it is evident that both groups tended to target entities of the state and use kidnapping, though there is evidence of mixing tactics over the years. These tactical and targeting choices are typical of a bandwagoner group. There is no notable difference in tactics or targeting between GSPC and AQLIM, supporting the idea that this rebel group did not change motivations or behavior after affiliation with AQ Central in 2003.

Figure 19:



16. Al Qaeda in Iraq, Islamic State of Iraq, Tawhid and Jihad

Tawhid and Jihad was formed by Abu Musab al Zarqawi in the late 1990s/early 2000s with the aim of establishing an Islamic state in Iraq. It has focused primarily on forcing the U.S.-led coalition out of Iraq, and on violently opposing Iraqi government and security institutions. In

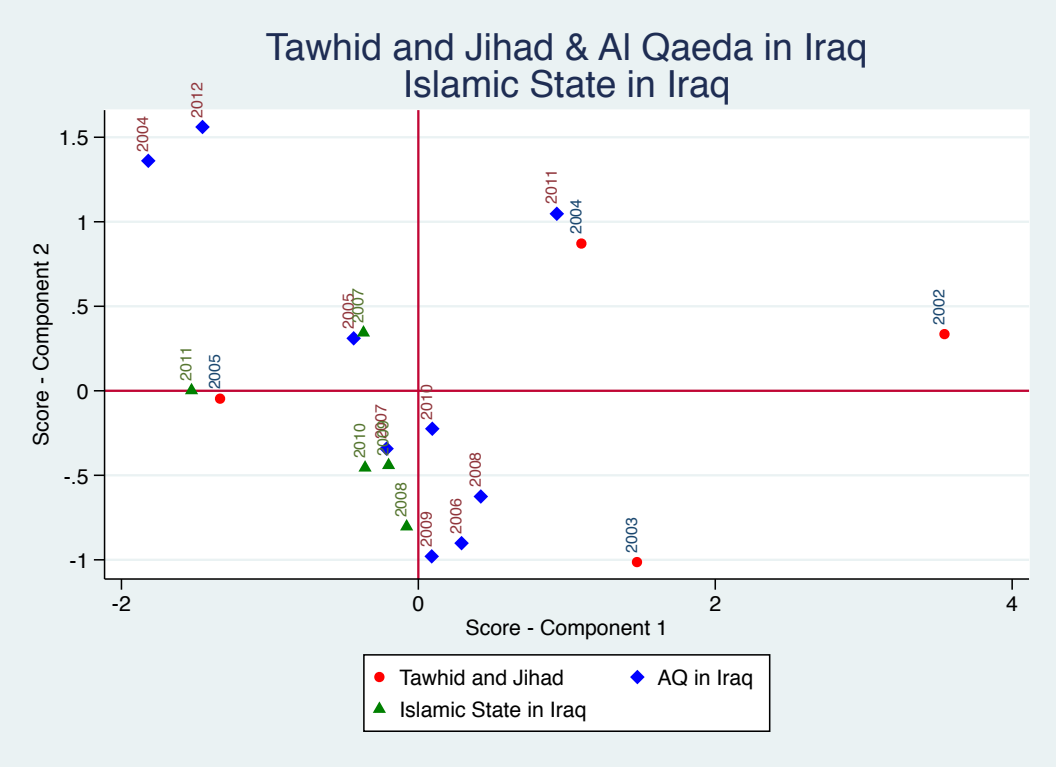
2004, Tawhid and Jihad pledged loyalty to AQ Central and Osama bin Laden, and subsequently changed its name to Al Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers – commonly known as Al Qaeda in Iraq (START TKB). That group faced fierce opposition from coalition forces and was on the decline until the onset of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, when it reinvented itself as the Islamic State of Iraq (also known as the Islamic State, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, ISIS, ISIL) (Stanford Mapping Militants).

The GTD contains the following data on the three entities:

- Tawhid and Jihad: 49 incidents, 2002-2005
- Al Qaeda in Iraq: 542 incidents, 2004-2012
- Islamic State of Iraq: 144 incidents, 2007-2011

The combined scoreplot (Figure 19) tells a complex story. The origin group, Tawhid and Jihad, had a clear progression from targeting the far enemy to targeting the state in 2005, utilizing both kidnapping and suicide tactics. AQI, the official Al Qaeda affiliate, targeted both the state and far enemy, and mixed tactics. The behavior of these two groups defies a clean typological categorization. The Islamic State targets the state, and uses more suicide than kidnapping. This behavior shows a bandwagoner's focus on political and territorial control in Iraq.

Figure 20:



This principle components analysis method allows me to examine the behavior of these AQAs without imposing my own concepts of the importance of the variables or how they should be grouped. The major benefit to this analytical technique is that the data were sorted into the typology with minimal manipulation, and aligned along two dimensions: tactics and targeting. Plotting the group-year data onto these dimensions enabled us to analyze each group's tactical and targeting behavior as a whole and over time – an important aspect, as most of the groups' scoreplots showed changes in behavior over time. For example, Al Shabaab targeted the state in 2007, shifted to far enemy targets by 2009, and then transitioned back towards state targeting in recent years.

As a whole, targeting behavior aligned well with local vs. transnational expectations of true believer and bandwagoner groups. Tactics appeared to be more complicated, with many

groups utilizing both suicide and kidnapping regardless of their targeting-based type. This could show one of two things: that groups of true believer and bandwagoner types utilize both kidnapping and suicide for reasons other than their type, or that the theory-based indicators to differentiate true believers from bandwagoners based on tactics are innately flawed.

A disadvantage of this analysis involves gaps in the data; it is difficult to know if a shift from one group-year point to another five years later represents an actual progression in behavior or simply missing data. However, with this variability from year to year we get to see potentially important variation that can be evaluated in its historical context. In combination with qualitative evidence about each group, we can assess whether the known history and received wisdom about each group is borne out in its tactical and targeting choices. The results show that most of the seemingly locally-focused groups are in fact targeting the state over the far enemy, and many use kidnapping over suicide: bandwagoner behavior. Groups maintaining very strong bonds with and/or high proximity to AQ Central, such as AQAP and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, tend to target the far enemy and favor suicide attacks more. Shifts in tactical and targeting behavior were likely associated with external factors such as invasion or exile, and not with dates of affiliation with Al Qaeda Central. This implies that the group's history and current context influence its behavior more than formal ideological adherence.

PART TWO: AL QAEDA AFFILIATES AND CIVIL CONFLICT

Theory and Research Design

Given the results from Part One, one can ask what factors affect where a group is positioned along the two dimensions – what affects whether a group behaves more like a true believer or more like a bandwagoner? Since a group's choice may be due to its genuine motivations to participate in a civil war, or to align itself with AQ, each group's position can be used as a dependent variable in a regression to study how risk factors for civil war affect whether a group acts as a true believer or bandwagoner. If the theory is correct, one should expect that factors that increase the risk of civil war should also increase the chances that a group behaves as a bandwagoner. Note, however, that the causes of civil war are debated in the literature. Thus, I draw from two major theoretical traditions in the civil war literature to examine how factors that measure the opportunity and willingness of a group to launch a civil war affect AQA behavior. I also include several controls discussed below, and ask whether a group's founding in a country with a pre-existing civil war affects that group's future behavior.

The unit of analysis is the group-year (AQA-year), which allows us to capture group-level as well as temporal variation in an AQA's behavior. As in the PCA, the set of groups is the 25 groups derived from Crenshaw's list of "Global Al Qaeda" groups that are found in the primary dataset, the Global Terrorism Database. The temporal domain is 1981-2012. The spatial domain covers the operational territory of the AQAs – the Middle East, Africa, Central and South Asia. There are 182 group-years in our dataset.

The theory suggests that civil war conditions and grievances should motivate a rebel group to affiliate with AQ Central in order to reap the material benefits of that alliance, while in reality behaving as a locally-focused bandwagoner. True believers are drawn to the fold by

global political ideology, not these parochial aims. Risk factors for civil war should, therefore, be positively associated with bandwagoner behavior and negatively associated with true believer behavior.

This theory is tested using three categories of independent variables: civil conflict origin, opportunity, and willingness. In testing these three concepts, we can examine what factors that affect the risk of civil war in turn also affect the risk that an AQA will behave more like a true believer of a bandwagoner. In testing them together, we can assess the extent to which civil conflict risk factors in general affect an AQA's violent behavior.

The dependent variables of interest are *c1FE* and *c2kidnap*, which correspond to Components 1 and 2 from scores the principal components analysis[3]. In simpler terms, the first dependent variable is a group-year's tendency to target the far enemy. The second dependent variable is a group-year's tendency to utilize kidnapping tactics.

Independent Variables: Risk Factors for Civil War

Pre-Existing Civil War Grievance

In some countries, a civil war was fought before a group was established. These pre-existing conditions for civil war may have created an environment in which rebel groups and insurgencies were more likely to form. Joining the Al Qaeda network would give these groups material benefits that they desired to continue their civil conflict while maintaining their own parochial focus. Such groups depend on local support and financing, and thus are unlikely to utilize suicide tactics, and more likely to engage in kidnapping for profit.

[3] Component 1 reflects targeting: positive scores indicate far enemy targeting, and negative scores indicate targeting of state entities. Component 2 reflects tactics: positive scores indicate the use of kidnapping, and negative scores indicate the use of suicide attacks.

Groups without historical roots in civil conflict are more likely to be "pure" of intention regarding Al Qaeda's transnational ideology, and thus will focus their energy and violence on aims aligned with AQ Central, with less regard for local support and financing. Given these behavioral expectations, any AQA-year with a pre-existing historical civil war should be, ceteris paribus, less likely to target the far enemy (more likely to target the state), and less likely to use suicide attacks (more likely to use kidnapping). This is stated in Hypotheses 1a and 1b.

H1a: AQA-years with a civil war grievance are less likely to target the far enemy.

H1b: AQA-years with a civil war grievance are more likely to use kidnapping tactics.

To the extent that I find support for H1a and H1b, this AQA-year resembles a bandwagoner.

To test this, I created a dummy variable called *cwgrievance*, which is coded 1 if a civil war was fought in the AQA's home state in the decade prior to the group's founding, and 0 if not. Data on civil conflict incidence and location were drawn from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset.

Willingness

Since the literature on civil war indicates that grievances are a motivator that increases the rebels' willingness to fight in a civil war, my theory suggests that AQAs who behave like a bandwagoner may be motivated centrally by grievances that affect the willingness to engage in insurgency. While on the other hand, AQAs who are true believers should be motivated less by such grievances. To assess the effects of willingness on tactics and targeting, I utilized three widely replicated operationalizations: a country's level of democracy, economic inequality, and ethno-linguistic fractionalization. These variables were chosen because both political grievances

and economic and social inequalities foment resentment that leads groups to rebel (Gurr 1993 & 2000, Horowitz 1985). Additionally, ethnic/religious diversity can lead to inter-ethnic grievances that contribute to civil conflict (Horowitz 1985). Increased grievance should make a group more willing to rebel.

To briefly recap, willingness should cause groups to rebel and bandwagon on to AQ Central while maintaining parochial aims, making them less likely to target the far enemy and more likely to kidnap. The opposite should hold for true believers.

The theory argues that AQAs in autocratic states are more likely to be bandwagoners, because the stifling of legitimate protest and electoral competition incites groups to rebel. These groups will tend to target entities of the state in their rebellion, and are likely to use kidnapping tactics to fund their efforts. AQAs in more democratic states do not hold these local political grievances, and are therefore more likely to target the far enemy – they are true believers. As such, they are more likely to engage in suicide tactics and thus are less likely to kidnap. This gives hypotheses H2a and H2b for targeting and tactics, respectively.

H2a: AQA-years with a more democratic home state are more likely to target the far enemy.

H2b: AQA-years with a more democratic home state are less likely to utilize kidnapping tactics.

To the extent that I find support for H2a and H2b, this AQA-year resembles a true believer.

To test H2a and H2b, I utilized the Polity IV Project's dataset on political regime characteristics and transitions. Specifically, I used the *polity2* variable, which is a continuous value from -10 to 10. Because postestimation with multiple imputations in STATA does not

allow for negative variable values, 10 was added to the *polity2* score. A score of 20 indicates a strongly democratic regime, and a score of 0 indicates a strongly autocratic regime.

Further, high levels economic inequality in a state will lead to civil war based on grievances related to competition between groups and lack of economic opportunity. Therefore, AQAs in states with high economic inequality are more likely to be bandwagoners, leading them to target the state and use kidnapping. AQAs in states with lower economic inequality do not share this grievance, and are more likely to be true believers who target the far enemy and use suicide over kidnapping tactics. This gives hypotheses H3a and H3b.

H3a: AQA-years with higher economic inequality in the home state are less likely to target the far enemy.

H3b: AQA-years with higher economic inequality in the home state are more likely to use kidnapping.

To the extent that I find support for H3a and H3b, this AQA-year resembles a bandwagoner.

To measure economic inequality, Solt's Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID) was utilized, which uses a multiple-imputation algorithm to standardize observations from many indices and statistical offices from around the world to yield the most comprehensive economic inequality data available (Solt 2014). When merged with the data, however, even the SWIID was incomplete: 66 group-year observations were unmatched, reflecting eight AQA home base states missing from the SWIID. Since these missing observations constituted 37% of our entire dataset, multiple imputations in STATA were used to generate 1000 imputations of the missing values for use in the regressions.[4]

[4] Solt's data contains 100 imputations for each country-year covered. For each missing country-year, I ran 100 imputations for each of Solt's imputations, took the mean of the 100 we produced, and used that value to replace the missing value in Solt's original data. I then repeated this 100 times in order to yield 100 imputations for each country year. The result is 100 economic inequality measure imputations for each country-year in our dataset.

The third measure of willingness is ethnic/religious diversity within an AQA's home state. Previous researchers have theorized that heterogeneity of this type can lead to ethnic or religious tensions manifesting in civil conflict (Fearon & Laitin 2003, Horowitz 1985, Cederman et. al 2013). In such contexts, AQAs are expected to behave like bandwagoners, motivated primarily by their local grievances. Such groups should target entities of the state, not the far enemy, and should utilize kidnapping as opposed to suicide tactics. I do not expect to see AQAs targeting the far enemy or using suicide tactics in true believer fashion. In measuring ethnic/religious heterogeneity, data from the ethnolinguistic factionalization (ELF) index was used, which is based on and expanded from data from *Atlas Narodov Mira* 1964. The continuous ELF value gives the probability that two randomly selected individuals in a country are from different ethnolinguistic groups (Fearon & Laitin 2003). AQA-years in more heterogeneous home states should be less likely to target the far enemy and more likely to utilize kidnapping tactics. This gives hypotheses H4a and H4b for targeting and tactics, respectively.

H4a: AQA-years with higher ELF scores in the home state are less likely to target the far enemy.

H4b: AQA-years with higher ELF scores in the home state are more likely to use kidnapping.

To the extent that I find support for H4a and H4b, the AQA-year resembles a bandwagoner.

Opportunity

While the historical focus of this literature found that grievances were the primary cause of civil wars, in recent years many scholars have argued that such grievances are ubiquitous and

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Subsequent regressions were run using the mi estimate command in STATA, in order to use information from all 100 imputations for the regression analysis.

irrelevant in explaining why we see civil war in some cases and not others. Instead, greed, opportunity, and state weakness have been forwarded as the key motivators for rebel groups in civil wars. Advocates of this frame argue that civil conflict is due to opportunistic individuals who seek lootable goods, or entities facing low opportunity costs to insurgency, and weak states (Fearon & Laitin 2003, Collier & Hoeffler 2004, Collier, Hoeffler, & Roher 2009). In the bandwagoner-true believer spectrum, it is expected that if these opportunity or state weakness indicators indeed cause a civil war, they should also indicate where locally politically motivated groups – bandwagoners are more likely rather than true believers. True believers are unlikely to be motivated by pure greed or diminished local state capacity, as they are driven primarily by global political ideology. Four widely agreed upon variables were used to operationalize to rebel group opportunity: GDP per capita, oil production, mountainous terrain, and population size.

GDP per capita is a proxy for several indicators related to opportunity and state capacity. First, it can serve as a proxy for state capabilities; more wealth means the state is more likely to have stronger institutions and capacity to counter rebellion (for example, a better-funded police and military). More developed countries tend to have stronger transportation infrastructure, meaning that it is easier for agents of the state to seek out and target insurgent groups (Fearon & Laitin 2003). Additionally, lower per capita income means that rebel recruits have lower opportunity costs of joining an insurgency and few better opportunities. All of these factors point to higher GDP per capita being associated with lower structural motivations for rebellion and insurgency. If we see Al Qaeda affiliates operating in such contexts, we hypothesize that they are true believers: not motivated by a lack of alternative financial prospects or lured by weaker state capabilities. These groups are more likely to target the far enemy and use suicide tactics, not kidnapping. Thus, AQA-years in which the home state has a higher GDP should be more likely

to target the far enemy, and less likely to kidnap. The GDP data are from the World Bank; the variable is called *wb_gdppc* (World Development Indicators, the World Bank). This gives hypotheses H5a and H5b for targeting and tactics, respectively.

H5a: AQA-years with higher GDP per capita in the home state are more likely to target the far enemy.

H5b: AQA-years with higher GDP per capita in the home state are less likely to kidnap.

To the extent that I find support for H5a and H5b, the AQA-year resembles a true believer.

Oil production can also be used as a proxy for state weakness leading to civil war; a state deriving at least one-third of its export revenues from fossil fuels more than doubles the country's odds of civil war, even when a dummy variable for the MENA region is included (Fearon & Laitin 2003). Countries that fit this profile are more likely to have weak state apparatuses due to increased corruption, rent-seeking, and low investment in the state by political elites (Choudhry 1989, Karl 1997, Wantchekon 2000). Oil revenues also grow the prize of controlling the state, creating an incentive for rebellion. In general, natural resources invite rent-seeking and looting, which is attractive to rebel/insurgent groups (Collier & Hoeffler 2004, Collier, Hoeffler, & Kohner 2009) and would likely attract bandwagoner AQA groups. Such groups are likely to target entities of the state over far enemy targets, and to use kidnapping over suicide tactics.

To capture this concept, a dummy variable, *oil*, was coded 1 if a state derived at least one-third of its export revenues from fossil fuels in a given year and 0 if it did not. The data for *oil* was drawn from Colgan's 2014 dataset on oil, democracy, and civil war (Colgan 2014). The few missing country-years were filled in using World Bank data on fuel exports (World Development Indicators, the World Bank).

H6a: AQA-years in which the home state derived at least one-third of its export revenues from fossil fuels are less likely to target the far enemy.

H6b: AQA-years in which the home state derived at least one-third of its export revenues from fossil fuels are more likely to use kidnapping tactics.

To the extent that I find support for H6a and H6b, the AQA-year resembles a bandwagoner.

The presence of mountainous terrain is an indicator of both state weakness/capacity and rebel group opportunity; rough terrain can allow even small insurgencies to thrive away from the state's reach (Fearon & Laitin 2003). Such terrain should be conducive to bandwagoner groups who seize the opportunity afforded by the state's limited capacity in order to form an insurgency. Such groups should avoid costly far enemy targets and tend to use kidnapping tactics.

H7a: AQA-years with higher proportions of mountainous terrain in the home state are less likely to target the far enemy.

H7b: AQA-years with higher proportions of mountainous terrain in the home state are more likely to use kidnapping tactics.

To the extent that I find support for H7a and H7b, the AQA-year resembles a bandwagoner.

For this continuous variable, *mtnest*, Fearon & Laitin's data was used for the proportion of the country that is mountainous. This variable does not account for other types of rough terrain.

The final Opportunity variable is population. Higher population in a state means a larger pool of potential recruits for the given targeted levels of income. Population size has been found to have a significant positive effect on civil conflict incidence (Fearon & Laitin 2003). Bandwagoner groups, which draw their material support and personnel locally, are expected to be more reliant on larger population sizes. True believer groups recruit globally; at the moment,

hundreds of fighters every month are streaming into Syria from around the world to fight in this most recent jihadi cause. Higher population size should be associated with locally-motivated bandwagoner groups, which target the far enemy less and use kidnapping tactics more than true believer groups.

H8a: AQA-years with higher population levels in the home state are less likely to target the far enemy.

H8b: AQA-years with higher population levels in the home state are more likely to kidnap.

To the extent that I find support for H8a and H8b, the AQA-year resembles a bandwagoner.

I obtained data for this continuous variable from the World Bank (World Development Indicators, the World Bank); the variable is called *WB_pop*.

Controls

Two main controls were used to account for the availability of far enemy targets within a country, and characteristics of the AQA itself. First, the availability of far enemy targets is controlled for using the variable *fpres*. It is possible that a group appearing to focus on far enemy targeting simply operates in a location with more available foreign nationals. In order to control for this availability, we included a binary variable called *fpres* in our models, which is coded 1 if there is a foreign military or peacekeeping presence in a given country-year and 0 if not[5].

Second, the group itself must be considered. Could a group's behavior be dictated primarily by its organizational characteristics, as literature on illicit networks and terrorism suggests (Asal & Rethemeyer 2008, Helfstein & Wright 2011, Kilberg 2012, Siqueira & Sandler

[5] Data for the *fpres* variable was sourced from Mullenbach's Third-Party Peacekeeping Missions Data Set (Mullenbach 2013) and the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Version 4 - 2013(Themner & Wallenstein 2014).

2010)? Since the AQAs are all part of the same decentralized network of groups and profess similar ideas, alliances, ideology, and group structure cannot explain bandwagoner-true believer variation. However, there is significant variation in group capabilities, and strong theoretical basis to argue that this factor can dictate a group's violent behavior (Asal & Rethemeyer 2008). Essentially, stronger groups are more lethal and have a greater capacity to project force.To measure such group characteristics, a continuous variable for group age was included as a control (*gage*). Group age is used as a proxy for a group's strength (Asal & Rethemeyer 2008).

Risk Factors for Civil War and Effects on AQA Behavior

To test these hypotheses, several models were run. First, univariate regressions were run to look at the effects of each risk factor for civil war on the probability that the far enemy was targeted (rather than the state), and *separately*, the probability that an AQA exhibited a preference for kidnapping tactics (rather than suicide tactics). Table 1 presents each of these sets of risk factors individually. The results are discussed further below.

Second, a multivariate regression is used to test the effects of each set of risk factors for civil war on *both targeting and tactics simultaneously*. These results are in Table 2, and discussed further below.

Third, and finally, the inclusion of all risk factor variables are included in *full univariate models* (presented individually in columns 1 and 2) *and the full multivariate model* (presented in columns 3 and 4) in Table 3. In other words, this tests whether the results from individual sets of variables that capture the effects of specific concepts are robust to the inclusion of alternative explanations.

Table 2: Univariate Regression Results

CONCEPTS	**Civil War Grievance**		**Willingness**		**Opportunity**		**Controls**	
VARIABLES	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics
CW grievance	0.188	0.764**						
	(0.373)	(0.361)						
Polity			0.0313	0.0263				
			(0.0214)	(0.0200)				
Gini			-0.0218	0.00668				
			(0.0300)	(0.0274)				
Ethno-linguistic fractionalization			0.410	-1.234**				
			(0.629)	(0.585)				
GDP per capita					-8.29e-05	4.05e-06		
					(6.24e-05)	(6.10e-05)		
Population					-2.03e-09	-2.89e-09**		
					(1.48e-09)	(1.45e-09)		
Mountains					-0.000829	-0.00692		
					(0.00571)	(0.00558)		
Oil					-0.210	-0.638**		
					(0.301)	(0.294)		
Foreign Presence							0.290*	-0.00204
							(0.168)	(0.166)
Group Age							-0.000823	-0.00847
							(0.0120)	(0.0118)
Constant	-0.179	-0.726**	0.204	0.119	0.405	0.680**	-0.0972	0.0809
	(0.364)	(0.352)	(1.157)	(1.058)	(0.341)	(0.334)	(0.148)	(0.146)
Observations	182	182	182	182	182	182	182	182
R-squared	0.001	0.024			0.031	0.034	0.016	0.003

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3: Multivariate Regression Results

	Civil War Grievance		Willingness		Opportunity		Controls	
VARIABLES:	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics
CW Grievance	0.188	0.764**						
	(0.373)	(0.361)						
Polity			0.0313	0.0263				
			(0.0214)	(0.0200)				
Gini			-0.0218	0.00668				
			(0.0300)	(0.0274)				
Ethno-linguistic Fractionalization			0.410	-1.234**				
			(0.629)	(0.585)				
GDP Per Capita					-8.29e-05	4.05e-06		
					(6.24e-05)	(6.10e-05)		
Population					-2.03e-09	-2.89e-09**		
					(1.48e-09)	(1.45e-09)		
Mountains					-0.000829	-0.00692		
					(0.00571)	(0.00558)		
Oil					-0.210	-0.638**		
					(0.301)	(0.294)		
Foreign Presence							0.290*	-0.00204
							(0.168)	(0.166)
Group Age							-0.000823	-0.00847
							(0.0120)	(0.0118)
Constant	-0.179	-0.726**			0.405	0.680**	-0.0972	0.0809
	(0.364)	(0.352)			(0.341)	(0.334)	(0.148)	(0.146)
Observations	182	182			182	182	182	182
	0.001	0.024			0.031	0.034	0.016	0.003

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4: Opportunity and Willingness Effects on AQA Behavior				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	
	Univariate Model	**Univariate Model**	**Multivariate (Simultaneous) Model**	
VARIABLES	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics	far enemy targeting	kidnapping tactics
CW Grievance	-0.433	0.447	-0.433	0.447
	(0.457)	(0.443)	(0.457)	(0.443)
Polity	0.0178	0.00948	0.0178	0.00948
	(0.0249)	(0.0244)	(0.0249)	(0.0244)
Gini	0.0330	0.0623	0.0330	0.0623
	(0.0434)	(0.0444)	(0.0434)	(0.0444)
ELF	3.081***	-1.370	3.081***	-1.370
	(1.073)	(1.067)	(1.073)	(1.067)
GDP Per Capita	-0.000198**	-2.29e-06	-0.000198**	-2.29e-06
	(7.97e-05)	(8.23e-05)	(7.97e-05)	(8.23e-05)
Population	-7.01e-09**	-8.78e-11	-7.01e-09**	-8.78e-11
	(2.70e-09)	(2.65e-09)	(2.70e-09)	(2.65e-09)
Mountains	-0.0205**	0.0198*	-0.0205**	0.0198*
	(0.0104)	(0.0101)	(0.0104)	(0.0101)
Oil	-0.888**	0.0878	-0.888**	0.0878
	(0.427)	(0.414)	(0.427)	(0.414)
Foreign Presence	-0.353	-0.151	-0.353	-0.151
	(0.279)	(0.274)	(0.279)	(0.274)
Group Age	-0.00672	-0.0206	-0.00672	-0.0206
	(0.0150)	(0.0144)	(0.0150)	(0.0144)
Constant	-0.498	-2.366	-0.498	-2.366
	(1.531)	(1.550)	(1.531)	(1.550)
Observations	182	182	182	182

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Civil War Grievance

Tables 2 and 3 show civil war grievance to be positive and significant at the 5% level for kidnapping, supporting the hypothesis that an AQA is more likely to kidnap if formed in a civil war context (H1b). The coefficient is positive but not significant for civil war grievance and far enemy targeting, yielding no definitive support for H1a. The opportunity and willingness

combined model (Table 4) shows no significant results for civil war grievance, likely due to this variable's relationship to the other variables in the full model. Civil war grievance is strongly correlated with the other variables, which are potential indicators of civil war, rendering civil war grievance redundant in the full model.

Willingness

The willingness category of civil war risk factors performs poorly in all of the models. Levels of democracy, economic inequality, and ethnolinguistic fractionalization (ELF) are not significant in relation to AQA targeting and tactics (H2-4). The only exception is ethnolinguistic fractionalization, which is negative and significant at the 5% level in Table 2. When the grievance variables are tested alone, the models show that AQAs are less likely to use kidnapping if ethnic divisions are stronger in the home state in a given year. Further, in the kidnapping and willingness model seen in Table 4, this variable is positive and significant at the 1% level. This indicates that an AQA is more likely to target the far enemy (and less likely to target the state) when ethnic divisions are stronger in a given country-year. This finding directly counters H4a and the idea that ethnic divisions increase civil war-type violent behavior in AQAs.

Opportunity

Four variables: GDP per capita, population, mountains, and oil dependence were used to capture the opportunity/state weakness frame of civil conflict's potential relationship to AQA behavior (H5-8). When tested in isolation from the other concept variables and the controls, only population and oil dependence are significant, and only in relation to kidnapping. The univariate and multivariate models show that AQAs are less likely to use kidnapping tactics when operating in states with larger populations or oil dependence, contrary to H6b and H8b.

However, all four opportunity/state weakness variables are significant and negative in the full opportunity and willingness model in relation to far enemy targeting, and mountains are significant and negative (at the 5% level) with regard to tactics. AQAs are less likely to target the far enemy (and more likely to target the state) when GDP per capita, population, and mountain coverage are high in their home states, and when those states are dependent on oil production. The population, mountain, and oil results support the hypotheses (H6a, H7a, H8a) that link weaker state apparatuses and infrastructure with increased rebel group behavior – targeting entities of the state. The GDP result, showing that wealthier AQA-years tend to target the state, does not support H5a.

In terms of tactics, only the mountains variable has a significant effect in the opportunity and willingness full model (Table 4). AQAs are more likely to use kidnapping as a tactic when their home states are more mountainous, supporting hypothesis H7b. There is evidence that mountainous terrain is conducive to AQAs that utilize kidnapping over suicide tactics.

Controls

When the controls are tested alone, foreign presence is shown to have a positive effect on far enemy targeting at the 10% significance level. This confirms the expectation that the presence of foreign troops or peacekeepers in an AQA's home state increases attacks on far enemy targets (as opposed to state targets) in a given year. Group age, which is used as a proxy for group strength, is shown to have no relationship to either tactics or targeting. In the full model, both controls are found to be negative (as seen across all the columns in Table 4), however neither are significant. Thus, neither the availability of foreign targets nor the sophistication of an affiliate group maintain their effects on the targeting and tactics of an affiliate group once additional risk factors for civil war are taken into account.

Discussion

How do risk factors for civil conflict correlate with the targeting and tactics of an AQA? This examination of Al Qaeda affiliates began from the theory that AQAs need to be separated from their usual aggregation under the umbrella "Al Qaeda groups" characterization, and examined more closely to determine their strongest motivations and how those may influence AQA behavior. With the creation of the bandwagoner-true believer typology and two-dimensional spectrum, I identified violent behaviors associated with the "ends" of the spectrum: far enemy or state targeting, and use of kidnapping or suicide tactics. Using prominent civil conflict literature, I created eight variables to capture the impact of civil conflict motivators and indicators on an AQA's use of these tactics and targets in a given year, as well as two controls.

The results show three things. First, targeting of the state (rather than the far enemy) is made more likely when rebel groups have more opportunity (operating in a state with weaker infrastructure and more available recruits and lootable resources). This fits with the bandwagoner type: groups that are locally motivated by greed or opportunity, and reflect these inclinations in their choice of targets. The true believer groups will pursue the more costly far enemy targets even when the risks are high. This result is present in the full willingness-opportunity model only (Table 4), and not in Table 2 or Table 3, indicating that it is robust to the inclusion of alternate mechanisms.

Second, little support was found when examining an AQA's choice of tactics. Regressions in tables 2 and 3 show that all variables used to measure the opportunity-related risk factors for civil war reduced the use of kidnapping and increased the use of suicide attacks. This runs counter to the theory that civil war-motivated groups have stronger ties to their local constituencies and would thus avoid the indiscriminate casualties of suicide attacks while

favoring lucrative kidnapping tactics. This result regarding tactics was found only when the willingness and opportunity variable groups were regressed separately; no significant results regarding tactics were reached in the opportunity and willingness combined model with controls included. Thus, this finding does a good job of explaining variation when the opportunity and willingness variable groups are viewed in isolation, but is not robust to the inclusion of alternate mechanisms. Since suicide attacks are so cost-effective and kidnapping is so lucrative, true believers and bandwagoners alike may be engaging in these tactics for their own material benefit.

Third, the presence of grievances, or "willingness" of a group to rebel, was unrelated to AQA behavior. This is interesting given the ongoing debate in civil war literature about the importance of grievances versus greed in civil war onset (Cederman et. al 2013). The willingness indicators are generally shown to be unrelated to AQA behavior, suggesting that grievances are ubiquitous among all types of Al Qaeda groups or are otherwise unimportant in predicting AQA behavior.

Conclusion

The theory presented and tested in this paper is that variation exists among Al Qaeda affiliates between locally politically motivated rebel groups that bandwagon on to Al Qaeda for material benefits that they funnel to their parochial struggle, and "true believer" groups that are primarily focused on waging the transnational jihad that AQ Central espouses. We can examine AQAs' "true" motivations by assessing their resource allocation to particular targets and types of violence. To test this theory, I created a typology using a data-driven approach that examined the targets and tactics of AQAs. The results of this analysis in Part 1 showed that targeting was

indeed a good mechanism to differentiate bandwagoners from true believers. A number of AQAs exhibited bandwagoner targeting behavior by consistently targeting entities of their home states over far enemy targets, while others showed true believer tendencies by targeting the far enemy over state representatives. In terms of tactics, most of the AQAs in the analysis showed mixed approaches, utilizing both kidnapping and suicide attacks at various points in their operational lifetimes. This finding indicates that both locally and globally focused groups are using these tactical approaches in pursuit of their goals.

Second, this typology allows us to ask a deeper question in Part Two of this project: what leads an AQA to act like a bandwagoner or a true believer? I theorized that risk factors for civil war would a group to behave like a bandwagoner, using the benefits of Al Qaeda affiliation for local, civil conflict-related aims. In drawing from concepts outlined in the literature on civil war, I tested whether a group's willingness to rebel, its opportunity for successful rebellion, or its origin amidst civil conflict might explain the group's place in the bandwagoner-true believer typology created in Part One. The results in Part Two showed that AQAs are more likely to target the state when opportunity is greater (the state is weaker and there are more available lootable resources and recruits), supporting the theory that bandwagoner AQAs have civil conflict-related aims. Additionally, risk factors for civil war were not good predictors of AQAs' choice to kidnap or use suicide tactics; it is unclear what motivates groups to utilize these tactics so frequently and variably. Finally, civil war-related grievances or willingness to rebel were not good predictors of AQA behavior.

Together, the theory and evidence show that not all AQAs are the same. Groups exhibiting bandwagoner behavior seize the opportunity to rebel against their governments and affiliate with Al Qaeda to support these local efforts. True believer-type groups use their

resources to attack the far enemy regardless of their risks and rewards at home. These groups are making strategic decisions regarding the distribution of their resources, and revealing important information about their preferences in the process.

More importantly, this research offers a theoretical bridge between studies of civil war and terrorism. In examining AQAs as a particular set of rebel groups frequently operating in civil war contexts, the theory is able to incorporate theories of civil conflict onset in combination with the strategic frame of terrorist behavior to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of these groups. This research fills a necessary gap in the literature wherein much of the research on Al Qaeda examines an aggregation of the network and neglects the universe of Al Qaeda affiliates. Studies encourage monolithic characterizations of Al Qaeda as one many-headed beast or a decentralized scattering of loosely affiliated groups. This study shows definitively both that not all AQAs are the same, and that AQAs are systematically different given the context in which they operate.

Given the results of this project, the typology model of analyzing Al Qaeda affiliates could be very valuable to future research. This method of deriving the typology in Part One is a valuable contribution in that it is data-driven, but free of many biases that could enter other typological methods. More questions can be asked and investigated regarding the data that informs the typology itself; since targeting was a good differentiator of group type while tactics was not, what other indicators could be used to sort the groups in the typology? Other questions can be asked about what affects AQA behavior, such as “Does AQ Central’s strength or ideological focus at the time of an AQA’s affiliation matter in the development of the affiliate?” Since this project revealed unexplained variation in the use of suicide and kidnapping tactics by AQAs, further work should be done to investigate this variation. For example, recent reporting

by the New York Times seems to show that the outcome of kidnappings (releasing the hostage for ransom versus killing the hostage for propaganda purposes) may depend on the nationality of the hostage, and whether or not the hostage's home state habitually pays ransom to terrorist kidnappers (NYT: Yourish 2015). An analysis of this type could be expanded to include non-Al Qaeda affiliates groups, to assess the relative strength of the AQ network in coordinating tactics such as kidnapping for ransom.

The attack data used in this study is not comprehensive, but it has allowed me to take an empirical look at a network that thrives in the shadows. Continued efforts must be made to make use of data such as this, and to gather more data at the group level in order for further research to be conducted. Only with further study and a willingness to cross disciplinary borders can a more comprehensive assessment be conducted on these groups that command so much attention and resources today.

Though this analysis focused largely on external predictors of group behavior, the group age variable was included to address potential predictors relating to a group's organizational structure and capacity. Group age was ultimately of no significance in this analysis, but more variables relating to this concept should be included in subsequent analyses. Group-level data on organizational structure, size, and other factors relating to group capacity was not available or not within the scope of this paper. However, the strength of the existing work on organizational structure and capabilities suggests that this is an important area for further investigation on variation among AQAs.

This project, particularly the typology portion, exhibited an unanticipated degree of dynamism in AQA behavior. Groups were shown to evolve from year to year in their use of particular tactics and choice of targets. Though the group-year unit of analysis allowed for the

regression analysis to be responsive to this dynamism from year to year, the theory presented in this paper does not adequately explain the phenomenon. In order to explain this dynamism, the theory must be expanded. AQAs do not appear to be entities that remain static in their behavior, so what explains their shifts in tactical and targeting choices?

The literature on institutional evolution can offer some guidance in answering this question. Recent work on path dependence has examined the dynamic processes that sustain institutions in the long term, in a break from earlier work that focused on more static flashpoints and processes (Pierson 2000). These scholars argue that the factors that allowed an institution to originate may differ from those which sustain it for a long period of time (Mahoney 2000). Institutions are the product of historical turning points whose fallout shapes the subsequent development of an institution (Collier & Collier 1991). These turning points can be exogenous or endogenous (Thelen 2004). When applied to this study, the theories on path dependence and historical turning points could help to explain the dynamism evident in AQA behavior. For example, the September 11, 2001 attacks and the Arab Spring were both formative shocks to the international system and specifically Al Qaeda, and may offer an avenue for explaining some of the variation evident in this project's results. Does the type of civil war context (separatist, religious, etc.) in which an AQA operates affect its violent behavior?

Further examination of Al Qaeda from a franchise perspective could also enrich the analysis and address the variation in AQA behavior. How do ideas diffuse from AQ Central through the network of Al Qaeda affiliates? Which projects does AQ Central "invest" in or monitor, and which behaviors does it excuse when falling outside of the prevailing doctrine? These are questions that can be investigated through franchise literature. An expansion of this

study along these lines can offer a powerful look at the relationship between Al Qaeda and its affiliates.

A further method for explaining the dynamism revealed by this study involves delving more deeply into the social, political, and historical contexts of each AQA studied here. The relative simplicity of the typology and other methods when applied to immensely complex groups with convoluted histories can leave much lost in translation. However, this leads us to a crucial dilemma: navigating between parsimony and complexity in focused empirical work. The aim of this project was to cut through some of the confusion surrounding academic and policy work on Al Qaeda affiliates, in order to offer a data-driven explanation for these groups' behavior. The dynamism and complexity revealed by my methods seem to point back in the direction of idiosyncrasy. It is vital to navigate these two extremes to produce work that does not shy away from nuance or sub-categorization. However, using empirical, data-driven methods should still allow for some broader conclusions to be reached that can inform thought and policy. The theory must anticipate and the methodology must reflect this effort to walk the fine line between parsimony and complexity.

This study offers a bridge between the fields of civil conflict and terrorism. Scholarship on the Al Qaeda network has neglected empirical focus on the universe of Al Qaeda affiliates, resulting in an aggregation of this network that looses much in the way of nuance. This bleeds into the policy realm, encouraging simplistic analyses of AQAs that harm our understanding of how to deal with these groups. They are not all of one mind, origin, or behavior, and it is dangerous to base policy or academic inquiry on that assumption.

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Appendix: Coding of AQA Affiliation Dates

Group Name (GTD)	Affiliation Date	Source
Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)	2/1/1998	START Terrorism Knowledge Base® Terrorist Organization Profiles
Al-Nusrah Front	4/1/2013	Jihadist Terrorism: A Threat Assessment p.34
Al-Qa`ida in Iraq, Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), Tawhid and Jihad	10/20/2004	CSIS A Threat Transformed p.8, START TKB TOP
Al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al-Qa'ida in Saudi Arabia, Al Qaida in Yemen	1/20/2009	CSIS A Threat Transformed 8, Stanford Mapping Militants
Al-Qa`ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQLIM), Salafist Group for Preaching and Fighting (GSPC)	9/11/2006	CSIS A Threat Transformed 8, Stanford Mapping Militants Rollins - Al Qaeda and Affiliates: declared allegiance 2003, unity 2006
Al-Qa'ida in Yemen	1/1/2009	Stanford Mapping Militants
Al-Shabaab	2010	Rollins - Al Qaeda and Affiliates: declared allegiance 2003, unity 2006
Ansar al-Islam	2003	Long War Journal
Al Jihad	6/1/2001	(Egyptian Islamic Jihad) Stanford Mapping Militants, START TKB TOP
Haqqani Network	1968	CTC Haqqani Report
Harkatul Jihad-e-Islami, Harkat ul Ansar, Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HuM), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)	1998	Signed on to jihad against America - NYT
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)	1999	link
Jemaah Islamiya (JI)	1999	Stanford Mapping Militants, START TKB TOP
Lashkar-e-Jhangvi	2001	Frontline Pakistan p.96-98; loose alliance began earlier but 9/11 was impetus for more formal adherence
Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Al-Mansoorian	2001	link
Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)	unknown	
Taliban	1996	START TKB TOP