

STRATEGICKÁ KULTURA GLOBÁLNÍHO POVSTALECTVÍ

STRATEGIC CULTURE OF GLOBAL INSURGENCY

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Abstrakt

Džihádistický terorismus je možné chápat jako vojenský nástroj k dosahování politických a vojenských cílů aktérů mezinárodních vztahů. Předkládaná studie rozvíjí koncept globálního povstalectví dle Davida Kilcullena. Autor operuje s argumentem, že globální povstalectví představuje specifického aktéra s osobitou strategickou kulturou. Autor analyzuje strategickou kulturu globálního povstalectví z několika úhlů dle Grayova rámce sedmnácti dimenzí strategie. Autor předkládá hypotézu, že globální povstalectví funguje na různých úrovních strategie s vysokým stupněm soudružnosti a rozdílnými formami strategické kultury.

Abstract

Jihadi terrorism may be understood as a military tool used for political and military purposes of an actor in international relations. This article develops the concept of the Global insurgency, formulated by David Kilcullen. It is argued that Global Insurgency is a specific single actor with a distinctive strategic culture. The author examines the strategic culture of global insurgency from various angles through Gray's framework of seventeen dimensions of strategy. It is argued that the Global Insurgency operates on multiple levels of strategy with a high degree of coherence and with distinct strategic culture.

Klíčová slova

Al-Káida; Islámský stát; povstalectví; strategická kultura; strategie; terorismus.

Keywords

Al-Qaeda; Islamic State; Insurgency; Strategic Culture; Strategy; Terrorism.

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, terrorism has gained increased attention throughout the academic community. There is also a serious body of literature concerning Al-Qaeda, the so-called Islamic State (IS) and regional complexes with terrorist organisations involved. Nevertheless, a global point of view from a strategic perspective, concerning the terrorist organisations as one single phenomenon is surprisingly relatively under-researched. Most authors explain the jihadi terrorism itself as a phenomenon and examine its roots in religion, social problems or political situation. However, it could be argued that organisations, groups and even individuals using terrorism as a military tool for jihad represent “an actor”, a power present and acting in the international arena, pursuing own goals, having global aspirations and behaving in a certain manner.

The author follows up on the concept of “Global Insurgency” (GI) introduced by David Kilcullen¹ and adopts the idea of global jihadi movement representing a global Islamist insurgency against the established secular or (post) Christian world order and further develops its idea of interconnectedness of GI stating that it represents a very specific, but a single actor in international relations. Furthermore, it is argued that GI has got its own unique strategic culture. The article aims to demonstrate that it is possible to apply the concept of strategic culture to GI.

The article is divided into two sections. In the first one, the author describes terrorism as a tactical tool, further elaborates the Kilcullen’s concept and offers an explanation of GI as an independent actor. In the second section, the article uses a theory of strategic culture to analyse the strategic framework of GI. The concept of strategic culture is applied to the GI, and then the author outlines a unique and distinct strategic culture of GI.

TERRORISM AND GI

Most definitions of terrorism agree that terrorism is a violent act or activity, politically motivated and causes fear and intimidation or has other psychological effects.² Terrorism is among other definitions a military tool. The armed groups, individuals or semi-states³ use terrorism to achieve political or military objectives against a stronger opponent. Many theorists, especially from the military circles, connect terrorism with the insurgency. Hughes defines the terrorism in connection with insurgency as “*paramilitary and subversive effort waged by an irregular armed faction, or factions, to overthrow a state’s government, to secede from a state, or (in the case of Hamas regarding Israel) to destroy*

¹ KILCULLEN, David J. Countering global insurgency. *Journal of Strategic Studies*. 2005, Vol. 28, No. 4, p. 597 - 617.

² GANOR, Boaz. Defining Terrorism: Is One Man's Terrorist another Man's Freedom Fighter? *Police Practice and Research* [online]. 2002, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 290.

³ See HONIG, Or - Ido YAHIEL. *A Fifth Wave of Terrorism? The Emergence of Terrorist Semi-States*. Terrorism and Political Violence. 2017, p. 1-20.

the state.“⁴ Neumann and Smith conducted an analysis of the dynamics of terrorism and concluded that “*those who utilize a campaign of terrorism seek to attain their ends through military means.*”⁵ Terrorism is either a tool of the weaker, who does not have enough force to confront his enemy directly or tactics perpetrated in an environment, where conventional warfare is impossible or disadvantageous.

It is, therefore, necessary to transcend the narrative of terrorism as a threat and move forward towards the questions who perpetrate terrorist acts and why. Terrorism itself is not a threat to national or international security, but those who adopt it to achieve their political goals, are. Francis Fukuyama pointed out that “*terrorism is only a means to an end; in this regard, a war on terrorism makes no more sense than a war on submarines.*”⁶ For understanding terrorism, it is necessary to examine those who adopt it as a tool.

Perpetrators of Terrorism

To define the perpetrators of terrorist strategies, a brief analysis has been conducted. The University in Maryland provides in its Global Terrorism Database the largest and most complete dataset of terrorist attacks. If we consider the terrorist attacks perpetrated between 2014 and 2016 around the globe, which were apparently terrorist attacks (and not crimes or accidents) and were highly lethal - led to more than 10 casualties - we obtain 1565 cases. Focusing on their perpetrators, we can connect 1397 attacks to radical Islamist groups - 89 %. Overall, 45482 people have been killed in these attacks, from which the Islamists have killed 37936, more than 83 %. Most terrorist attacks in this rank were conducted by IS and its affiliates - 491, radical and very violent African Islamist Salafi group Boko Haram - 279 and by Afghani Islamic extremist group Taliban - 212. Together these three groups are responsible for more than 30 000 victims of these attacks. Together 34 countries at four continents have suffered from a highly lethal terrorist attack, conducted by radical Islamists. If we also countless deadly attacks and attempts, we will reach more than 45 000 incidents in the observed period.⁷

If we do the same analysis for the period 2000 - 2003, we can observe “only” 315 terrorist highly lethal attacks. Radical Islamist groups are responsible for 112 of them, which makes only slightly more than 35 %. In this period, also containing the attacks of 9/11 and subsequent events, 10578 people have been killed, and Islamists have been responsible for 5454 fatalities, less than 52 %. Counting less deadly terrorist attacks would display more around 6000 incidents, almost eight times less than in the period between 2014 - 2016.⁸

⁴ HUGHES, Geraint. *The military's role in counterterrorism: examples and implications for liberal democracies*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2011., p. 20.

⁵ NEUMANN, Peter R. a M. L. R. SMITH. *Strategic terrorism: The framework and its fallacies*. Journal of Strategic Studies [online]. 2007, Vol. 28, No. 4, p. 590.

⁶ KILCULLEN, David J. Countering global insurgency. *Journal of Strategic Studies*. 2005, Vol. 28, No. 4, p. 597.

⁷ Basic dataset obtained from: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). Global Terrorism Database, 2017, [cit. 05-11-2017]. Available from:

<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

⁸ Ibid.

It is evident that terrorism as a tactical tool became widely used and jihad represents an actor on the rise. The number of highly lethal terrorist attacks grew for 400 % in the last fourteen years. Radical Islamist groups started to use terrorism as a method of warfare much more often than before. The number of jihadi and other Islamist groups conducting terrorist attacks has also grown very significantly.

Global Insurgency

As we have seen in the brief analysis above, the groups standing behind most attacks are representing movements adherent to radical forms of Islamist teaching. David Kilcullen uses the term GI to describe the global Islamist violent movement. GI is in his conceptualisation a movement of resistance against the world dominated by western values of enlightenment, secularism and humanism. GI is an insurgency of Islamists with various motivations connected in their refusal of contemporary world order. This insurgency's operation radius is not isolated in a single country but spread all over the world.⁹ GI is united by a radical ideology of Sunni Islam jihad. Violence, including terrorist practices, is accepted and even demanded as an inherent part of Mujahedeen's behaviour and aspirations. David Kilcullen points out that the two major wars in the War on Terror - War in Afghanistan and War in Iraq - are not separate conflicts, but two theatres of one war against GI. He sees GI is one, relatively coherent actor in international relations, stating "*Although Al Qaeda does not use the term itself, in essence, the global jihad represents a federated virtual state.*"¹⁰

STRATEGIC CULTURE

Strategic Culture as a Concept

Strategic Culture is a theoretical concept for studying the strategic thinking of an actor in the sphere of security, defence and war. The founder of this approach, Jack L. Snyder, was the first modern author in the field of strategic studies which pointed out that no actor in international relations is a pure rational game-theory thinker. On the contrary, he claims that every state is embedded into its own culture, history, modes of thought and patterns of behaviour, which heavily influence the decision-making process. Two different actors would act differently when put into the same situation because their decision makers are socialised in different strategic cultures.¹¹

Strategic culture goes beyond rationality of actors, but it does not deny it. Theoreticians of strategic culture like Snyder or Gray didn't reject the rationality but tried to create a complementary explanation. Jack L. Snyder during the study of Soviet behaviour in the Cold War concluded that the realist/rationalist research does not explain the Soviet decisions, because it is often "*abstract from life*".¹² To keep up the strategic studies in contact with a real strategic policy, it is necessary to know and understand the enemy

⁹ KILCULLEN, David J. *Countering global insurgency*. *Journal of Strategic Studies*. 2005, Vol. 28, No. 4, p. 597-617.

¹⁰ KILCULLEN, David. *Counterinsurgency*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 200

¹¹ SNYDER, Jack L. *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*. Santa Monica: RAND, 1977.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 2

rather than observe. Pure observance, though with precise data, may not replace understanding. The Gray states that it is always easier to count the enemy's tanks and missiles than to understand him.¹³ Taking into consideration the constructivist element based on understanding, rather than explanation¹⁴, may put the rationality into context and return it from the ivory tower of game-theory modelling into the reality. The strategic culture does not provide an exact framework for prediction of enemy's actions but may provide us with the knowledge for critical assessment of the enemy, when applying the rational models of thought.

Historian and strategic thinker Colin S. Gray defines American strategic culture as:

“referring to modes of thought and action with respect to force, derives from perception of the national historical experience, aspiration for self-characterization (e.g., as an American, what am I?, how should I feel, think, and behave?), and from all of the many distinctively American experiences (of geography, political philosophy, of civic culture, and “way of life”) that characterize an American citizen.”¹⁵

Strategic culture is an intersubjectively shared set of beliefs, patterns, cultural traits, historical experiences, codes of conduct and modes of action, which heavily influences the decisions of the given actor. To know the strategic culture of the enemy is an essential step towards understanding his behaviour and finally, towards defeating him.

There are several methodological approaches within the strategic cultures. Alastair Ian Johnston divides the authors using strategic culture into three generations.¹⁶ The first generation is a generation of narrative, searching for national experience, its distinctive “style,”¹⁷ second generation is adopting the frameworks and methods from critical theory¹⁸, the third generation then adopts more rigorous methods and sees strategic culture as an independent variable, which may be used as one explanatory factor, when studying a decision-making process.¹⁹ The first generation brings into play the history, religion, ideology, culture and many other forms of self-expression to create a broad picture of the actor's thinking. On the other hand, it is still closely connected to the military practice. The authors follow Clausewitz' rejection of scientism and instead bring

¹³ GRAY, Colin S. Out of the Wilderness: Prime Time for Strategic Culture. *Comparative Strategy*. Vol. 26, No 1. 2006, p. 15 - 16.

¹⁴ BARŠA, Pavel - Ondřej ČÍSAŘ. *Anarchie a řád ve světové politice*. Praha: Portál, 2008, p. 296.

¹⁵ GRAY, Colin S. National style in strategy. *International Security*. 1981, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 22.

³¹ JOHNSTON, Alastair Iain. Thinking about Strategic Culture. *International Security*. 1995, Vol. 19, No. 4.

¹⁷ Cf. HART, Liddell B. H. *The British Way in Warfare*. London, Faber & Faber limited. 1932; WEIGLEY, Russell Frank. *The American way of war: a history of United States military strategy and policy*. Indiana University Press paperback ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973.

¹⁸ Cf. MORRISSEY, John. *Architects of Empire: The Military-Strategic Studies Complex and the Scripting of US National Security*. Antipode. 2011, Vol. 43, No. 2; KLEIN, Bradley S. Hegemony and strategic culture: American power projection and alliance defence politics. *Review of International Studies*. 1988, Vol. 14, No. 2.

¹⁹ See SCOBELL, Andrew. Soldiers, statesmen, strategic culture and China's 1950 intervention in Korea. *Journal of Contemporary China*. 1999, Vol. 8, No. 22.

together the military practice and cultural traits in a historical context. The second generation is based on critical theory, bringing together the critical theory with an accent to language, symbols and narratives to enlighten the power and material relations concerning the sphere of strategy. The third generation turns towards a scientific approach. The variables are set and precisely defined by the researcher. The research is based on a rigorous methodology that sets the conditions for the given variables. The authors of the third generation (mostly A. I. Johnston) claim that their understanding of strategic culture as a conceptual framework for rigorous research differs the strategic culture from “unfalsifiable” story-telling of the first generation.²⁰ The first generation then replies that the attempts to measure history and culture might bring the scientific results, but it would distort the reality, by reducing complex problems into a falsifiable variable.²¹

From the three generations outlined above, for studying the strategic culture of GI, the first generation is the one most applicable. It is because the GI is a relatively new actor, does not have one single developed bureaucracy for decision making and most importantly is itself based on a narrative. It is not possible to study GI in a particular manner, it has to be examined in its complexity, or it would always be misunderstood. The first generation of thought on strategic culture provides a framework suitable for studying a new actor in this manner. As we have no account of defining the strategic culture of GI, the broad understanding of strategic culture drawn by Colin S. Gray could provide a first basic framework for further research. Last, but not least, the third-generation approach seems to be unsuitable for an actor, which lacks proper decision-making process, adequate structure and other traits, which could be examined in a scientifically rigorous way.

The Dimensions of Strategic Culture

One of the leading authors from the first generation of strategic culture scholars Colin S. Gray offers a framework for tracing the strategic culture of a given actor. Gray connects strategic culture to the strategy itself. He understands the strategic culture in a Clausewitzian way as indivisible from practical strategy decisions and from the actual war and battlefield. The GI would be observed as an actor waging war and making specific decisions, necessary in war, which are influenced by the strategic culture.

In his books he proposes 17 dimensions that constitute the strategic culture²²:

- People
- Society
- Culture
- Politics

²⁰ JOHNSTON, Alastair Iain. Thinking about Strategic Culture. *International Security*. 1995, vol. 19, No. 4, p. 57.

²¹ GRAY, COLIN S. Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back. *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 49-69.

²² GRAY, Colin S. *Modern strategy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 23-44; GRAY, Colin S. *Strategy and History: Essays on Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge, 2006, p. 154.

- Ethics²³
- Economics and Logistics
- Organization
- Military Administration
- Information and Intelligence²⁴
- Strategic Theory and Doctrine
- Technology
- Military Operations
- Command
- Geography
- Friction, Chance, and Uncertainty
- Adversary
- Time

Those 17 dimensions together constitute the strategic culture of a given actor. The dimensions are designed in a way to encompass the behaviour of the actor deductively from the general characteristics to particular issues.

STRATEGIC CULTURE OF GI

People

GI is comprised of various groups of people. First, they culturally differ, ranging from Sub-Saharan Africa through the Maghreb, Mashriq to Afghanistan, Pakistan to Indonesia. GI has also penetrated Western societies and inspired many Muslims to convert and join.

Second, GI has many layers of its human capital. The core of GI is recruited from the Mujahedeen who once went to Afghanistan to fight against the Soviets. From this core the first groups were born, most notable of all Al Qaeda.²⁵ There are fighters trained in national armies (like the disbanded Iraqi army) who went through training camps in Afghanistan, Iraq and others. Many desperate, frustrated or bored Middle Eastern young men joined the GI to fight, attracted by romantic visions, religious promises or financial motivations. The leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi managed to attract in three years more than 25 000 fighters.²⁶ There are Wahhabi preachers from Saudi Arabia and other parts of the Gulf²⁷, local conservative preachers and preachers in Europe and the United States. There are also many Muslim people that came to aid from different

²³ Connected to Clausewitzian understanding of "Will".

²⁴ Closely connected to the Sun Tzu's understanding of "Deception".

²⁵ MCCORMICK, Ty. Al-Qaeda Core: A Short History. *Foreign Policy* [online]. 2014, [cit. 2017-11-26]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/1Jsv1Ec>

²⁶ GERGES, Fawaz A. *ISIS: A History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016, p. 67.

²⁷ BURKE, Jason. *Al-Qaeda: the True story of Radical Islam*. Rev. ed. London: I. B. Taurus, 2005, p. 285.

reasons, but mostly due to social circumstances. GI also called for Muslims from all around the world to come and join, and some have actually joined, others became radicalised at home. There they became the sleeping cells or individuals acting on their own. The GI embraces them all.

Society

GI is deeply rooted in Islam. Islam is the only thing giving sense to GI and constituting the telos of its existence. There are two basic aspects of the GI's society - the society of people who have decided or had to join one of the GI groups and the relationship between GI and other societies, mainly Islamic.

The society of GI is based on a radical and rigid reinterpretation of Sunni Islam. There are differences, due to cultural boundaries. However, the main modes of living are prescript in Quran and Hadith.²⁸ The ideas of jihad, martyrdom, purity of faith²⁹ and adherence to rigid rules are bringing order into the society, providing basic social security for its members. GI has therefore often for its people social dimension, including payments to the widows and orphans, who were left by those who died for GI.³⁰

The existence of GI challenges the existing Muslim and other societies, providing alternatives. Barak Mendelsohn developed this argument further and claimed that radical Islamism provides an alternative version of globalisation.³¹ GI manages to take advantage of frustrations, injustices and tragedies in Muslim societies and Muslim minorities in other parts of the world. GI intentionally inflicts chaos, support frustration and then offers solutions, alternatives and religious way-out.

Culture

GI's culture is based on the Quran and Hadith, and therefore it is mostly culturally indifferent. Al-Qaeda's "Inspire" and IS' "Dabiq" became worldwide known journals written in English bringing information about Islamist ideology³², "jihadi culture"³³, successful operations³⁴ and many other topics. This cunning and successful propaganda is not only proliferating the ideas of GI but also uniting the jihadist from all around the world. Editors create a discourse that there is only one true Muslim - the one aligning with GI's groups - regardless of culture, origin or location. This type of propaganda, also appearing in leaflets, posters, books, YouTube videos, Twitter messages and even songs

²⁸ TIBI, Bassam. *The Sharia state: Arab Spring and democratisation*. New York: Routledge, 2013, p. 57.

²⁹ Including punishments of apostasy.

³⁰ See for example: *Al Qaeda in Iraq makes online appeal for funds for widows and orphans*. The National [online] 2011 [cit. 2017-11-26]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2BwByz5>

³¹ MENDELSON, Barak. *Sovereignty under attack: the international society meets the Al Qaeda network*. Review of International Studies. 2005, Vol. 31, No. 1.

³² See Dabiq. *Islamic State*, 2014 (1436), Vol. 1, No. 10, p. 50-66 or Dabiq. *Islamic State*, 2014 (1436), Vol. 1, No. 9, p. 50-66.

³³ See Dabiq. *Islamic State*, 2014 (1436), Vol. 1, No. 8, p. 28-39 or Dabiq. *Islamic State*, 2014 (1436), Vol. 1, No. 11, p. 09 -11.

³⁴ See Inspire. Al-Qaeda, 2015 (1436), No. 14, p. 34 - 36.

(ar. “nasheeds”)³⁵ is fostering the society GI and promote the feeling of unity and common cause and most of all common identity.

The promoters of jihadi culture are aware of being a global actor. Thomas Hegghammer claims that Jihadis groups are using slogans, dressing, Quran citations, sports, festivals, weddings and funerals, special vocabulary, stories and even dream interpretation to create a *global jihadi culture*.³⁶ The (Sunni) jihadi culture is intertwined with the GI, as it is characterised and developed in this paper. The work of Hegghammer and his colleagues illuminates the basic aspects of jihadi culture from habits and practices to cinema and music. Hegghammer however himself claims that there should be more work done on the connection between the culture and the warfare because his work focuses mostly on the description of jihadi cultural traits. The author in this paper develops his thoughts further, and it is argued that it is the culture that plays a significant role in GI’s war. It is the “jihadi culture”, which brings the narratives important for proliferating the jihadi worldview and its interpretation of the current state of affairs. The narratives then allow the GI to radicalize individuals, motivate the members of the groups, provide own explanations and most of all manifest the “right cause”. The strategy of the GI relies heavily on the attractiveness of their culture for a certain audience. Various GI branches and individuals put a significant effort into spreading the culture. The culture is a GI’s weapon, and it seems that without defeating and eradicating the “jihadi culture” the GI itself could not be defeated.

Politics

The politics of GI is elaborated on the global level by the most prominent leaders of the jihadi core, like Abdullah Azzam, Osama Bin Laden or Ayman al-Zawahiri. The politics of GI has global ambitions and global reach. GI wages a perpetual and total war against the unbelievers and apostates. The war is led on every possible stage. In this war, there is no compromise, no possible peace, only truce. The politics of GI could be divided into the two stages - first, defeating apostate regimes and freeing the Muslim world and second, establishing a world Caliphate.

The first steps are described in the important jihadi book and IS political manual *Management of Savagery* by Abu Bakr Naji (al-Magdisi).³⁷ He claims that first, the foreign soldiers (American, Russian) have to be expelled and then the nationalist and secular governments or collaborating governments (Gulf states) should be defeated.

After the Americans are expelled, there should be another stage, when the jihad and the word of true faith shall expand to other parts of the world.³⁸ As Karsh Efraim explains, the idea of worldwide Caliphate is very old and reflects the ambition of Islam as a universalist religion.³⁹ The famous division between “near” and “far” enemy became

³⁵ SAID, Behnam. Hymns (Nasheeds): A Contribution to the Study of the Jihadist Culture. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. 2012, Vol. 35, No. 12, p. 863-879.

³⁶ HEGGHAMMER, Thomas. *Jihadi culture: the art and social practices of militant Islamists*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2017, p. 172 - 199.

³⁷ NAJI, Abu Bakr. *Management of Savagery: the most critical stage through which the umma will pass*. Institute for Strategic Studies, Harvard University, 2006, p. 31.

³⁸ GERGES, Fawaz A. *ISIS: A History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016, p. 37.

³⁹ KARSH, Efraim. *Islamic imperialism: a history*. Updated ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007, p. 64.

important. The far enemy has become central to the thinking of people around Osama bin Laden.⁴⁰ Osama bin Laden proposed to fight against Americans and Jews and their helpers all around the world.⁴¹ Other groups, like Al-Nusra front or Ahrar al-Sham in Syria, have focused on the “near” enemy, in this case, the regime of Bashar al-Assad.⁴² However, these two adversaries are in the jihadi thinking intertwined.

Ethics

The ethics of GI's is rigorous and comes from a specific understanding of Islam. The crimes committed by Boko Haram or IS are explained as the will of God. Killing disbelievers, apostates and traitors are allowed, because it is the will of Allah. Another critical factor is the adherence to the extremely rigid interpretation Shariah law. The GI is rooted mainly in the Islamic Hanbali school of Islamic law, which rejects any interpretations.

GI's recognised form of Islam has been developed by Ibn Taymiyyah in the 13th century⁴³, whose thesis was then developed by Sajjid Qutb, who stated that all life in the society is governed either by Allah and pure faith or the Devil. He brings back the old term „Jahili“, the cursed place, without true faith, ruled by Devil, where is no place for the love of Allah. Qutb claims: „Islam knows only two kinds of societies, the Islamic and the Jahili“⁴⁴ There are hundreds of writers, preachers and Muslim scholars, who develop those ideas and use them for the interpretation of everyday issues.

Economics and Logistics

There are several basic sources of income for GI⁴⁵:

- Illegal activities and money laundering. Illegal activities include kidnapping, theft, human trafficking, but also prostitution, drug dealing or cultivating poppy;
- Grey economy, covering also false or semi-false charities, which were set up all around the globe;
- Investments and legal businesses;
- External funds. Mainly from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Pakistan, but also Iran;
- Military capture of sources. GI also collects taxes (zakat and jizya) in occupied territories;

⁴⁰ The Foundation of the New Terrorism. The 9/11 Commission report: final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. 1st ed. New York: Norton, 2004, p. 47.

⁴¹ Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders: World Islamic Front Statement. In: *Federation of American Scientists* [online]. [cit. 2018-12-20]. Dostupné z: <https://bit.ly/2hz1zpl>

⁴² LABROUSSE, Cedric. The new face of the Syrian rebellion. In: *The Arab Chronicle*. 2014. [2017-11-26]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2rMhuEn>

⁴³ MICHAEL, Doran. The Pragmatic Fanaticism of al-Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in Middle Eastern Politics. *Political Science Quarterly*. 2002, Vol. 117, No. 2, p. 179.

⁴⁴ QUTB, Sajjid. *Milestones*. United Kingdom: Maktabah Booksellers and Publishers, 2006 (1966), p. 106.

⁴⁵ See CLARKE, Colin P. *Terrorism, inc.: the financing of terrorism, insurgency, and irregular warfare*. Santa Barbara, California: Praeger. 2015, p. 132- 171 - Author uses in this article slightly different classification.

- Traditional ways. GI also uses the old traditional system of transfer and obtain money from supporters - the Hawala system.

GI has made a very developed network of fake accounts, cooperating persons, fake companies, illegal and semi-illegal groups and political and economic contacts around the globe. Through this network, the GI is able to conduct recruitment, training, buying and smuggling weapons and necessary goods and paying the logistics.

GI is also able to wage war with relatively low funds. GI is leading irregular warfare, without open battles, defending critical infrastructure, protecting the population, etc. Without all these assets, the war is far cheaper. Al-Qaeda spent roughly \$500 000 for the 9/11 attacks⁴⁶, while the US spent \$1 200 000 000 000 for the War on Terror.⁴⁷

Organisation

GI is organized in a different pattern than other actors in international relations. It does not fulfil any of the Krasner's famous attributes of sovereignty.⁴⁸ GI is not a criminal network either, because criminal networks do not have central religion and ideology, common visions and political goal and are set up for profit and work in the current world order. GI on the other hand wage war against the current world order.

United States recognises 42 radical Sunni Islamist organisations⁴⁹, which together constitute the GI. It should be mentioned that there are hundreds of smaller affiliated other groups. Some operate locally, others on a national level and some have a global impact. These groups together create an anarchical structure. There is no single leader, although there are respected chiefs of groups.

The organisation is fluid. Some groups merge, others divide. Sometimes the groups even fight each other. Nevertheless, GI aims to establish a Caliphate, a hierarchical organisation. The members of the groups are often bound with the Islamic pledge of allegiance - *bayah* - to their leaders. The leaders than often swear bayah to other, greater or older leaders. The groups are intertwined through the bayah oaths. The system of bayah creates in an invisible network of allegiances, authorities and respect.

The individual groups are on the other hand often very hierarchical with the developed political and military structure. The structure itself is hidden but manages to communicate and give orders. Bigger groups have deeper specialisations and more complex structures. There are also individual supporters and sleeping cells, which adhere to one of the groups and obtain orders from time to time. Sometimes, individuals became radicalised and obtain orders "online". The role of individually radicalised adherents of jihad became significant. Former US President Barrack Obama stated in 2011 that the lone-wolf terrorists are a greater threat to the US than a coordinated attack

⁴⁶ 9/11 panel: *Al-Qaeda planned to hijack 10 planes*. CNN. 2004 [2017-11-26]. Available from: <https://cnn.it/2T58NAP>

⁴⁷ BELASCO, Amy. *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*. In: *CRS Report for Congress*. 2011 [2014-02-23]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/MKvMhH>

⁴⁸ KRASNER, Stephen D. *Problematic sovereignty: contested rules and political possibilities*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, p. 6-12.

⁴⁹ US Department of State: Bureau of Counterterrorism. *Foreign Terrorist Organizations*. 2017 [2017-11-27]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2m3KICL>

of a traditional jihadi group.⁵⁰ The individuals mostly radicalise, learn and act themselves or with friends. Sometimes they manage to contact the groups or their local representatives. In that case, they obtain orders online or in their mosques or local religious circles.

Military Administration

Military administration differs among the groups. The most important and the most illustrative are the two most developed - in Al-Qaeda and the so-called Islamic state. Al-Qaeda has many branches. The leading one, Al-Qaeda Core, has developed a complex military structure and chain of command. Under the leadership of Emir Ayman al-Zawahiri and his secretariat and deputies is the military committee, which serves as general staff. There are military units composed of jihadi combatants with different ranks and responsibilities divided into different geographical areas. Directly under the military leadership serves the special operations unit, which also gives the command to sleeping cells and individuals overseas. Furthermore, there are units responsible for logistics, supplies, training and recruitment.⁵¹ The leadership uses various methods of giving orders, from straight meetings to secret messages, or via the internet.

IS had a somewhat similar structure. The Caliph was leading the organisation as well as its military part. The Caliph personally supervised mainly three councils - the Shura Council, the Military Council, and the Security and Intelligence Council. The Caliph himself appoints members of these councils. „*The Military Council consists of the head of the council and three members. It oversees the military commanders in the various wilayat—provinces—that make up the Islamic State (...)*.”⁵² IS supervise several armies and groups, which obtain orders from Military council only when it is possible and often operate autonomously.

There are many military administrations like these among GI, and most of them operate on their own, in their region and compliance with others. Jihadi groups also proved very resilient in this area and managed to deal with decapitation or to change of a residential area. The groups seem to be very adaptive to changes in politics and on the battlefield.

GI does not require a sophisticated military administration. The strategy of lone-wolf terrorists is based on individual decisions. Many hard decisions of any military, like the choice of targets, the usage of military means, timing, coordination etc., are superfluous when the lone-wolf attacks.

Information and Intelligence

Bigger groups, like IS or Al-Qaeda, have their own intelligence units with many sources of information. The most important is the information from the local population, to which the insurgency often have much better access than local or foreign authorities. Sometimes

⁵⁰ PICART, Caroline. Jihad Cool/Jihad Chic”: The Roles of the Internet and Imagined Relations in the Self-Radicalization of Colleen LaRose (Jihad Jane). *Societies*. 2015, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 354-383.

⁵¹ GUNARATNA, Rohan - Aviv OREG. Al Qaeda's Organizational Structure and its Evolution. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* [online]. 2010, Vol. 33, No. 12, p. 1054-1062.

⁵² HASHIM, Ahmed S. *From Al Qaida Affiliate to the Rise of Islamic Caliphate: The Evolution of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS)*. RSIS: Nanyang Technological University, p. 8.

the groups win the hearts and minds of locals; sometimes they use terror and violence.⁵³ Another key source is the foreign fighters, which bring the information with them from other countries. The GI also sets up a large variety of madrasas, mosques and community centres, where the intelligence is gathered from students, believers or local people.⁵⁴ The groups also exchange information. The flow of information via the combination of traditional and modern ways is one of the key elements of success.

Strategic Theory and Doctrine

David Kilcullen has reached the conclusion that the wave of Islamic terrorist attacks fills the criteria for an insurgency. The insurgency has a different strategy than the terrorists. Unlike the terrorists, it has the political ambition to gain the power. Insurgency is competing with the ruling authority over the population's inclination.⁵⁵ This conceptualisation explains the developed propaganda. Gaining local population is crucial for obtaining money, intelligence, shelter, logistical support and political power. Winning population overseas may result in deadly and unexpected attacks in the middle of the enemy's soil. GI's conducts psychological operations alongside military operations to create a balance between sowing fear in the enemy's hearts (by executing extremely brutal acts, attacking civilians, attacking unexpectedly) and winning the population (by ideology, preaching, charity, social programs, etc.).

The military strategy for waging war with the enemy may more or less differ from one group to another. In the training manual of Al-Qaeda, we may find common strategic tools for guerrilla organisation, like kidnapping or assassinating enemy personnel or using explosives at enemy's centres of gravity.⁵⁶ Al-Qaeda's strategy is typical for insurgency - clandestine terrorist and military actions, avoiding open battle, remain hidden and work with the population. The Strategy of IS was different. Kilcullen described it accurately: „ISIS was acting more like a conventional army than a guerrilla organisation: (...) It was moving openly, in large groups, by day, in uniform, fielding heavy weapons (mortars, rockets and heavy machine guns). Its tactics combined urban terrorism and clandestine reconnaissance with mobile columns, snipers, roadside bombs, suicide attackers and terrorist cells, showing a level of sophistication well beyond that of AQJ in 2006-7.”⁵⁷ As we have stated above, the GI is fluid. Its organization and strategy are able to adapt to the environment.

Technology

It might be said that GI does not have relevant technology in comparison to a state. On the other hand, compared to other terrorist groups like IRA, ETA or Shining path, the GI uses very sophisticated technological means. Al-Qaeda (and several other GI groups) uses the internet, professional web pages, magazines and even video games, movies,

⁵³ KILCULLEN, David. *The accidental guerrilla: fighting small wars in the midst of a big one*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

⁵⁴ BYMAN, Daniel. Fighting Salafi-Jihadist Insurgencies: How Much Does Religion Really Matter? *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* [online]. 2013, Vol. 36, No. 5, p. 353-371.

⁵⁵ KILCULLEN, David. *Counterinsurgency*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 184-190.

⁵⁶ Al-Qaeda. *Al-Qaeda's training manual: English translation*. 2005., p. 13.

⁵⁷ KILCULLEN, David. *Blood Year: Islamic State and the Failures of the War on Terror*. United Kingdom: C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers), 2016, p. 81.

professional YouTube presentations, social media and software programs.⁵⁸ However, the military means used by Al-Qaeda and most GI's jihadi groups are relatively simple. The most important are IEDs, hand weapons, hand grenades, RPGs and most of all human factor (suicide attacks). This "primitive" equipment proved to be successful even against the highly technologically advanced armies like the US Army.⁵⁹ Like an insurgency, GI is waging a small war and applies military approach, which is taking advantage of local terrain and population. IS managed to capture the enemy's equipment, mainly from regular Iraqi and the Syrian army. Both groups tried to obtain and use WMD, but fortunately, they never managed to do so. Due to the adaptability stated above, it seems probable that the technology may change over time and the insurgency would adjust its strategy accordingly. The individuals around the globe, radicalised online, are able to use very simple means in order to conduct a terrorist attack, like knives or axes, including originally non-military means like cars. Self-radicalised native citizens, which were not involved in suspicious activities before, using non-military means to commit mass murder, are tough to detect and their actions are almost unpredictable.

Military Operations

GI due to be waging a total and global war conducts a large number of military operations. There were tens of thousands of attacks conducted by GI with the usage of terrorist methods. IS, Jabhat al-Nusra and other affiliated groups are waging almost regular war in Syria and Iraq. The military operations may be divided into 3 types, which are intertwined.

Regular military operations, using armed groups conducting open operations, major attacks and conquer.

Terrorist attacks in the region, consisting of assassinations, armed attacks, suicide bombings, vehicle and motorbike borne IEDs, sniping, bombing, knife attacks and burning houses.⁶⁰ The attacks worsen the overall situation, destabilise the government and intimidate the population unwilling to cooperate.

Terrorist attacks overseas, consisting of suicide attacks, bombings, hitting groups of people with vehicles, armed attacks, knife attacks, etc. Some of those attacks were conducted by people, who were not under the command of GI, but were inspired and influenced by GI's psychological operations. These operations intimidate the population of the enemy and encourage current or potential supporters.

The victories achieved with classical military operations conducted by GI may last only shortly, but the terrorist operations tend towards intimidating and wearing down the enemy and fostering the morality of supporters and win potentially the support of the local population, either because of fear or because of admiration.

⁵⁸ BRACHMAN, Jarret M. *High-Tech Terror: Al-Qaeda's Use of New Technology*. The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs. 2006, Vol. 30, No. 2, p. 139-162.

⁵⁹ GROSSMAN, Nicholas. *Robotics and the Future of Asymmetric Warfare*. Maryland, 2013. Dissertation. University of Maryland, p. 125-231.

⁶⁰ BILGER, Alex. *ISIS Annual Reports Reveal Metrics Driven Military Command*. In: *Backgrounder*. 2014. [cit. 2017-11-29]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/1D3q7pB>

Command

The commanders play an important role in GI. However, they are replaceable. During the War on Terror, many of them died, including Zarqawi, Osama bin Laden, Muhammad Atef or Abu Muhammad Al-Adnani.⁶¹ All of them have been replaced, and the insurgency continued in its activity, without serious impact on its potency.

Nevertheless, the leaders, how replaceable they are, do their crucial in the life of GI. They have two roles, real and symbolic. In their real role, they give orders and directions and define the overall political heading.⁶² However, they are often hiding or reside in remote areas (e.g. Al-Qaeda Core in FATA region) and therefore they have limited possibility to issue orders on a daily basis. The more important is their symbolic role. The leaders appear on video messages, in journals and other forms of propaganda, symbolising the continuing struggle.⁶³ Even if the leaders die, their image is appearing over and over again. The leadership is intertwined through pledges of allegiance; however, the loyalties vary in time. Anita Perešin described the radicalisation of individuals abroad and their jihadi activities as “*leaderless jihad*”.⁶⁴ The jihadi groups are able to recruit and use the destructive potential of the individuals worldwide, without issuing specific orders or connecting them into the chain of command.

Geography

The GI operates in such a vast area that geography cannot overall play a crucial role in the overall strategy. Nevertheless, terrain plays a very important role in local or regional conflicts. Insurgents are taking advantage of the difficult rural and mountainous terrain, often hostile population and harsh conditions. When the US and international coalition fought in Afghanistan, they couldn't effectively hunt the insurgents in the difficult areas and had problem patrolling the villages and work with the population.⁶⁵ In Iraq, Al Qaeda and later IS took advantage of urban warfare. The cities are vulnerable to suicide bombings, car bombs and sudden attacks from motorbike or vehicle.⁶⁶

⁶¹ NAKHLAWI, Razzan. The kill list: Islamic State leaders taken off the battlefield. In: *Los Angeles Times* [online]. 2016 [cit. 2017-11-29]. Available from: <https://lat.ms/29eQ8Ao>; *Top 10 al Qaeda Leaders killed since 9/11*. Before Its News. 2013 [2017-11-29]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2ExcX0h>

⁶² WRIGHT, Robin, et al. *The Jihadi Threat: ISIS, al-Qaeda and Beyond*. United Nations Institute of Peace. 2017, p. 5.

⁶³ KEPER, Gilles. *Beyond terror and martyrdom: the future of the Middle East*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2008, p. 17.

⁶⁴ PEREŠIN, Anita. Al-Qaeda Online Radicalization and the Creation of Children Terrorists. In: *Medij. istraž.* Vol. 20, No. 1. 2014. p. 87-88.

⁶⁵ JONES, Seth G. *In the graveyard of empires: America's war in Afghanistan*. 1st pbk pub. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010, chapter 9.

⁶⁶ BILGER, Alex. ISIS Annual Reports Reveal Metrics Driven Military Command. In: *Backgrounder*. 2014 [cit. 2017-11-29]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/1D3q7pB>

Friction, Chance and Uncertainty

There are constant friction and uncertainty in GI's action. It should be mentioned that many GI's attacks are actually unsuccessful.⁶⁷ Even major attacks with years of planning have been foiled or thwarted. It seems that the GI counts with uncertainty, friction and chance. Like an insurgency, it is continuously wearing down the enemy. The GI does not need to conduct every attack successfully. Even, when a member of GI fails in a suicide attack, he may be used in propaganda as a martyr. GI is adapted into being unsuccessful, which brings success in the long-term perspective.

Adversary

GI declared as its enemy the disbelievers, apostates and the foreign troops "occupying" the Middle East. Most of the GI is targeting the near enemy primarily, due to the logistics, costs and feasibility. Most of the victims of GI are Muslims.⁶⁸ The GI's leadership carefully planned some major attacks overseas; however, most of the attacks overseas are conducted by members of sleeping cells, individuals or persons inspired by GI without direct orders.

Another important question is the role of civilians. Civilians make up most of the victims of GI attacks, and most of the attacks are aimed at civilians. It is due to the holistic approach of GI in this matter. GI understands civilians as the base of the enemy's regime. On the other hand, GI understands the importance of winning the population in order to win the war. The GI, therefore, attacks mostly civilians in places with a number of "disbelievers" (in the Western world, Shia quarters, diplomatic quarters etc.) or "collaborates" like civil servants, rich people etc.

Time

The GI and especially its leadership and preachers have deeply rooted eschatological thinking. The old belief of Apocalypse has been revived. The idea of returning Mahdi became popularised by GI's propaganda. When "The Hour" of judgement comes, the famous imam Mahdi shall come back on earth and fight the devilish nations, which are being described by GI as the Jews and Americans (or Christians), and their helpers - the apostates. In the end, the Devil and his allies shall be defeated, and God shall return. Only true Muslim shall recognise Mahdi; others would fight him.⁶⁹ The GI considers itself as a preparation for its coming. Sometimes the leader is portrayed as the Mahdi himself. Osama bin Laden has been understood as Wahhabi Mahdi.⁷⁰ This understanding gives

⁶⁷ See ASTHAPPAN, Jibey. The Effectiveness of Suicide Terrorism. *Journal of the Washington Institute of China Studies*, 2010, Vol. 5, No. 1, p.16-25 or SMITH, Brent, et al. *Temporal Sequencing, Incident Sophistication, and Terrorist Outcomes*. START Research Centre. Maryland, 2015.

⁶⁸ National Counterterrorism Center: Annex of Statistical Information. In: *U.S. Department of State*. Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism [cit. 2017-11-30]. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2rLgiD2>

⁶⁹ FILIU, Jean-Pierre. - M. B. DEBEVOISE. *Apocalypse in Islam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

⁷⁰ BURKE, Jason. *Al-Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam*. California: University of California Press, 2011, p. 39.

the war for Caliphate a new sense. The war for establishing a worldwide caliphate may be logical when it is understood as a part of the divine struggle.

In the war theatres, the GI proved to be very resilient against time factors. The insurgency in Afghanistan lasts with several breaks (during the Taliban rule) since the Soviet invasion until now. The insurgency in Iraq began after the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 and lasted until today. Boko Haram operates since 2002. The insurgency does not wage a trench war or Blitzkrieg, but it wages a war of attrition. The GI believes that the tempo does not matter, because, in the eschatological sense, they are the winners.

CONCLUSION: UNDERSTANDING THE STRATEGIC CULTURE OF GI

Applying Gray's framework illuminated the following characteristics of GI:

- GI is an octopus-like an organisation with many rigid groups of the diverse level of an organisation connected in a complex worldwide system of allegiances, fluid and highly adaptable;
- GI is united through common rigid and selective interpretation of Islam rooted in eschatological and apocalyptic visions, creating a global jihadi culture and collective identity;
- GI is waging perpetual and global war with absolute aspirations combining military, political and theological ends;
- GI is waging a war of attrition with both the near and far enemy, focusing on gaining the population, combining intimidation and attraction;
- There is no possible peace, truce or negotiation with the GI because the GI itself is incompatible with the system of international relations;
- GI is exceptionally adaptive, able to deal with various societies, terrains, decapitation, own faults and loss and prepared to wage small (but global) war on the much stronger enemy;
- GI targets the enemy holistically, from officials and "apostate" population and disbelievers in the Muslim countries to population overseas in order to intimidate and wear down the enemy and to get attention and possible supporters.

The GI is an actor in international relations *sui generis*. It is unified by a radical and extremely rigid understanding of Islam. The religion justifies the war, heightens and strengthens the morality of GI's members.

There is no possibility to make peace with GI, to negotiate, to reach an agreement or sign a treaty. The war with GI may end only by the end of the GI or by establishing a worldwide caliphate. The war on the current world order with no possibility for peace, negotiations or treaties together with global aspirations and global recruitment and reach may be presented as some sort of mythological struggle. The GI adopted and further developed the idea of Islam being the greatest and maybe the only challenger to liberal democratic and/or capitalist world order. The mythologised history of Osama Bin Laden and his companions fighting in Afghanistan against Soviet communists led to a narrative of Islam defeating the secular ideologies. The extensive use of massive force by the Soviets gave then birth to the narrative of defeating the highly technologically advanced adversary

with heart and beliefs. This narrative became fostered during the long-lasting War on Terror. The romantic appeal of this story plays a crucial role in recruiting new sympathisers.

The war is also waged for the hearts and minds of the people. The target population are mainly the Muslim people in the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia, which should be by either attraction or intimidation persuaded to join the GI, to aid the GI or at least to resist their governments. The GI is also appealing on the Muslims minorities all around the world via internet, social media, books, preachers and charities. Their radicalisation allows the GI to strike within the enemy territory, without investing large sums of money and effort.

The GI brings chaos and chaos is inherent for the strategic culture of GI. Chaos, uncertainty and fear create favourable condition for the insurgency. The GI recruitment aims at psychically weak, frustrated and disoriented people. The propaganda is filled with social sensitivity and eschatological preaching.

The GI operates outside the commonly known military *modus operandi*. Due to the internet and the “global jihadi culture,” it is able to recruit and train adherents worldwide and to conduct terrorist attacks without a strong chain of command, with very limited resources, simultaneously and without proper planning.

The most important asset of GI is its diversity and complexity and the ability to adapt. The GI is composed of dozens of groups from very small to very large like IS or Boko Haram. Nobody knows really, how many men are working or fighting for the GI, where are they and when they appear. The octopus is extremely adaptive in terms of strategy and tactics. The fluid organisation and methods allow it to accustom to different conditions. The GI is able to replace leaders, to change place, to change strategy and if necessary, even to change ideology. The GI’s strategic culture stands beyond the never-ending War on Terror.