Why the Tuareg went from Nomadic pastoralism to being involved with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb?

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ABSTRACT

For the nomadic group, the Tuareg, history has played a vital role for where they are today. This thesis sheds light on how the history have influenced the lifestyle of the Tuareg and led them to become affiliated with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Time and events before the French colonialism provide us with an idea about how the Tuareg originally were living, following the history in the colonial times indicates how the Tuareg started to lose their freedom and status.

The Tuareg's frustrations are clearly expressed in 1962, when the first Tuareg rebellion begun. They felt mistreated and that continued with the new Malian government, who was upholding many of the old "tradition" from the colonial times, and the Tuareg still felt that they were considered as second rank citizens. During the rebellion, the government troops were tough and brutal, creating even more mistrust between them and the Tuareg. After the first rebellion Mali was hit by effects of the climate change such as damaging droughts. This complicated the situation for the Tuareg. The relationship with the government was still in a bad condition and there was very little support from the government, which was especially needed during and after the droughts. Many Tuaregs were forced to migrate in order to survive. Some ended up in Libya, where they became part of the Libyan regime, under which part of them undertook military training. When the Tuareg returned to Mali, it was with new skills and knowledge on how to fight and with new weapons, a valuable asset, in particular when the second rebellion erupted in 1990. During the second rebellion there was a coup resulting in replacing the old president with a new. This also meant that the government's opinion on the Tuareg altered. It became more positive, however internal power struggles started to occur amongst the Tuareg. Between various groups there was lots of mistrust and these power battles led to building alliances.

In 2007 yet another rebellion started and then the cooperation between certain Tuareg groups and AQIM was getting closer and more visible. The history played an important role for the outcome. Although, the Tuareg and AQIM did not share the same values and ideas, they did have enough in common to join forces and work together in order to get to their own respective goals. When France and the United Nation moved into Mali and the Sahel region, both the Tuareg and AQIM were given a common enemy to fight, leading to even more conflict in the region and destabilization.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Democratic Alliance for Change
AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission in Mali
AQIM	Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
ARLA	Revolutionary Liberation Army of Azawad
ATNMC	Alliance Touarègue du Nord Mali pour le Changement
AU	African Union
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FIAA	Arab-Islamic Front of Azawad
FPLA	Popular Liberation Front of Azawad
GIA	Armed Islamic Group
GSPC	Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat
HQ	Headquarter
IR	International Relations
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MNA	National Movement of Azawad
MNJ	Niger Movement for Justice
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MPA	Popular Movement of Azawad
MPLA	Mouvement Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad
MUJAO	Mouvement pour l'Unicité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PFLACS	Popular Front for the liberation of the Arab Central Sahara
POW	Prisoner of war
US	United States

Introduction

Roughly 19 years ago, on Tuesday 9th of September 2001, Al Qaeda launched a massive attack against the Unite States. That day the world learned the name Osama bin Laden, the founder of the terror organization Al Qaeda.

Four planes were hijacked by 19 terrorists and almost 3000 people from more than 70 countries died from the attacks, which were all planned to hit targets the United States (US)[1]. The Western world, with the US in the lead started the war against terrorism, a war which still take place at different locations in the world[2]. After the intense war on terrorism in the Middle East, terror networks started to be more active in other areas and regions.

The Sahel region provided some great opportunities for these groups. The region that was already under a lot of pressure, suffering from effects of climate change, civil wars and old history among other things. The unsafe situation in the Sahel region provided terror organisations with plenty of chances to establish themselves in the region. Furthermore, there was a good breeding ground for new recruitment and corporations with other groups already fighting in the local areas. This complex situation with combination of my professional experience created an interesting topic to analyse.

My personally background is over 10 years as a professional soldier, which includes deployment to the front line in Afghanistan, this has of course played an important role in this thesis. I have first-hand experience on how terror organisations work and fight.

On a daily basis, I was in contact with local people, who one way or another were influenced, involved or affected by violent terror organisations, such as Taliban or Al Qaeda. Talking to the locals made it clear that there was a major difference between the violent groups, whether it was local groups and foreign fighters.

Listening to the stories about people being forced to attack troops from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in order to save themselves or their families, raised my curiosity. I wanted to invest time to analyse what is driving the individuals or local groups to join forces with what we, in the Western world, consider as extreme terror organisations.

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[1] Paust, Jordan J. "War and Enemy Status After 9/11: Attacks on the Laws of War". *The Yale Journal of International law* 28 no 2 (2003): 325, Ilardi, Gaetano J. "The 9/11 Attacks – A Study of Al Qaeda's Use of Intelligence and Counterintelligence". *Studies in Conflict & Terroris,* 32 (2009): 171, 175

[2] Paust, Jordan J. "War and Enemy Status After 9/11: Attacks on the Laws of War". *The Yale Journal of International law* 28 no 2 (2003): 325

I was looking to work with something I can relate to. But at the same time, it was important to me, to explore a new area, where I haven't been personal involved in.

While working on a project about special forces in the Sahel region, the case of Mali where the nomadic people, known as the Tuareg tribe became affiliated with Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM), caught my attention.

Several issues regarding the complicated relationships between the Tuareg and AQIM seemed familiar to what I observed in Afghanistan. On the other hand, there was abundance of new aspect to analyse, such as the development, rebellions and military interventions in the Sahel region.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Approach and research questions

This thesis focuses on the nomadic people, known as the Tuareg and why they became affiliated with Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM). A historical approach is used, which sheds light on a series of events, that all can be brought together to why and how the Tuareg became affiliated with AQIM.

Looking at the history of the Tuareg, it becomes clear that the past played a vital role and cannot be neglected in what we see today. To understand why they fight for their own land, one has to look at the history. There was a time when the Tuareg used to live more "freely" in most of the Saharan regions of North Africa. However, all this started to change around the colony time in the end of the 1800's.

To answer my main research question:

- Why the Tuareg went from Nomadic pastoralism to being involved with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb?

Several sub-questions need to be answered:

- Who are the Tuareg?
- Where are the Tuareg from?
- How did the situation in the region evolved over time?
- Why did the Tuareg rebelled?
- What happened during the French colonialism?
- Where did they get military training and equipment from?
- Who had interest to train the Tuareg?
- What were the international interventions in the region?

Understanding who they are and where the Tuareg are from, is crucial for the understanding of why they rebelled against the Malian government and what they wanted to achieve by doing so. Therefore, I looked at the history of the Tuareg and highlighted important historical events, which have had an impact on how the situation has evolved over time. It is not one single act that has led

to the outcome that we see in today's Mali, which makes it necessary to understand the historical process.

The Tuareg is an old tribe, and in many ways, they live according to their own rules and norms. Often, they are not part of what can be described as the governmental society, a society which is led and steer by the government. It is shown in this text that they were involved in several rebellions against the government. So, another question appears on why they got military training and who had interest to equip them. Further, for some years now, international security and anti-terror forces have been present in Mali and the Sahel region. This can be part of a stronger link between the Tuareg and various terror-organisations. Again, the historical links are important to understand the influence of a foreign military power in the country.

In my approach to answer my research questions, I have gathered and analysed publicly available sources. Unfortunately, collecting first-hand information on the Islamist groups such as AQIM and rebel networks such as the Tuareg has not been possible within the available time and due to the current situation in the Sahel region. I am aware that the first-hand information would have allowed me to get a better understanding regarding the situation in the region, together with the possibility of asking and analysing questions directly from the source but because of the already mentioned limitation, I have chosen to use the already existing material.

With the limitation of not using first-hand information, I had to rely on other people's research, which leaves room for misinterpretation, which could influence the result. To prevent this, I include more sources, and I stay aware of the interpretation of those sources by, for example, cross-referencing. Another problem when using second-hand information, besides not getting the data directly from the involved persons, can be that some links might be missing. Still, by using several sources on the same matter, this problem should be avoided.

It is essential to bear in mind that due to the fact that there were relevant events happening simultaneously, it was difficult to keep the chronological order and the timeline might sometimes seem to be unorganised. However, it is necessary to describe these events in order to have the proper information, where it is needed.

My research questions helped me to structure my thesis as follows: in the first chapters, I focus on the history related to the Tuareg and point out how history has played a significant role for the Tuareg and their way of living. Moreover, I discuss the reasons leading to the conflicts and the Tuareg rebellions itself. The following chapters focus on AQIM and their involvement in the region. This will be pointing to why the Tuareg and AQIM have become affiliated, ending with a discussion and conclusion.

Use of sources and citations

My choice of sources covers several selected authors, however, I have used some authors more than others, e.g. Kalifa Keita, who is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army of the Republic of Mali. I have chosen to use Keita for his first-hand knowledge and involvement in Mali's conflicts. He joined the army in 1975 and took part in the Mali-Burkina War (1985-86)[3]. Later he was involved in the Tuareg rebellion, where he had both a leading role in the military and a civilian leadership role. Furthermore, Keita was also engaged in the activities which contributed to the ending of the second Tuareg rebellion. His inside knowledge provides valuable information for this thesis. The facts coming from a man, who has been deeply involved in the conflict between the Tuareg and the government. Although Keita's view rest on the government, his opinion and first-hand knowledge on the matter provide reasoning which can be used to understand the complex situation in the region. Obviously, one has to be aware that Keita was on one side of the conflict but combining his expertise with other sources, provides an excellent foundation.[4]

Keita's views were balanced with analysis coming from scholars such as Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute. Their articles helped identifying differences and other angles on the matter why did the Tuareg decide to become affiliated with terrorists, AQIM. Lecocq is a professor of African History, a specialist in contemporary history and politics in the Central Sahara and Sahel region. Lecocq has conducted fieldwork in the Sahel region, where he spent time among the Tuareg and other tribes in the region. [5] Lecocq's fieldwork with the Tuareg, provided a completely different perspective than

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[3] Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): iii, http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

[4] Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): iv, http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

[5] Baz Lecocq, *Disputed Desert.* (Brill, 2010): 16, https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004139831.i-433

the one of Keita. Furthermore, Lecocq's historical background created an opening to the historical aspect of this thesis.

Klute, who is a professor of anthropology, has worked together with Lecocq and have also conducted fieldwork in the Sahel region. He has done research projects with nomad groups including the Tuaregs. Klute also brings first-hand knowledge and a view from the Tuareg side as well. The anthropological aspect gives yet another angle on the complicated situation that was surrounding the Tuaregs.

Furthermore, other scholars have been used in this thesis as well. However, not as extensively as the above-mentioned. In order to ensure as accurate information as possible other sources, such as newspapers and documentaries have been used.

History and International Relations Theory

In this thesis I used history as my main source, but I combined it with International Relations (IR) theory. Therefore, I believe it is essential to explain the link between these two. The relation between history and IR theory like most long-running interdisciplinary relations has taken many different forms. History has always been a core element of the international relationships but the use of it differs. Some use history for its own sake and some uses the past to support or reject hypothesis.

Peter Burke made an attempt to simplify this liaison between the IR and the history in his book from 2005. He was reflecting on how ambiguous history is. The word history can be related to past events in general. Still, it can also be referred to a series of events connected to a singular place, culture, person or something similar.[6] One has to be aware that historical analysis can come in many shapes, like chronicles, stories, narratives or even statistical analysis.

Today, history is often seen as something truthful and sometimes even scientific, but it can also be seen as something artistic or novelistic.[7] According to T. Smith, history can be the centre of events, economic traces or trends, and it can cover broader social and cultural events and trends. Furthermore, it can be present as happenstance or determined, covering over discrete periods.[8]

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[6] Peter Burke. *History and Social Theory, second edition.* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005): 1.
[7] Thomas W. Smith. *History and international Relations*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1999): 8, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203201244.
[8] Ibid

It is important to remember that historians use theory for different reasons, in the same way, that theorists use history for various reasons. T. Smith has noted,[9] that between the two fields, differences often fade. As an example, a postmodern theorist would have more in common with a social historian than with another theorist, such as a liberal theorist.[10] This view also shows that it is difficult, if not impossible, to "box" social scientists and historians, since they rarely narrow themselves to that box.

The use of theory and history have different limitations and possibilities and therefore, can supplement each other.

Peter Burke explains it in the following way:

> "Historians and social theorists have the opportunity to free each other from different kinds of parochialism. Historians run the risk of parochialism in an almost literal sense of the term. Specializing as they usually do in a particular region, they may come to regard their "parish" as completely unique, rather than a unique combination of elements each one of which has parallels elsewhere. Social theorists display parochialism in a more metaphorical sense, a parochialism of time rather than place, when they generalize about "society" on the basis of contemporary experience alone or discuss social change without taking long-term processes into account." [11]

When history is used as the foundation for analysis, one has to bear in mind that studying the past gives a unique knowledge and understanding of what has happened. A knowledge that would have been valuable retrospectively for the ones living in the past time. After a certain amount of time, we have more facts and a broader perspective, as well as a different set of technology. Therefore, it can be easier to see why something went the way it did, why it went wrong or why it went well. When history is used, one way to get the facts correct is to use a chronological timeline, simply find the evidence and fill out the gaps. However, this method

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[9] Thomas W. Smith. *History and international Relations*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1999): 9
https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203201244.
[10] Ibid
[11] Peter Burke. *History and Social Theory, second edition.* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005): 1.

requires that only facts for which the evidence exists are used and that unreliable sources giving wrong results are cast aside.

Leopold von Ranke, one of the pioneers within history, and referred to, accordingly to P. Koslowski, as the "father of the objective writing of history" or the "founder of the science of history,"[12] says that history is not only collecting facts, but we need to understand the context of the past and also that we have to narrate the past "es eigentlich gewessen" or "as it really was".[13] Finally, he points out that people should never judge the past by the standards of the present.

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[12] Peter Koslowski, *The Discovery of Historicity in German Idealism and Historism,* Springer, (2006): 40
[13] Anthony Grafton, *The footnote: a curious history*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, (1997): 69.

BACKGROUND FOR THE ANALYSIS

Who are the Tuareg?

The Tuareg are among the oldest tribes in North Africa,[14] descendants of ancient Berber natives. With a rich history that can be traced back to a population who occupied significant parts of northern Africa and the Sahel region. The long-lasting historical connection to the Sahel region with no specific country on their own, have given the Tuareg a special relationship with the region. Comparing with other groups in the area, the Tuareg are small in number, somewhere between 1,5 – 3 million.[15] Still, they have played a vital role in the Sahel region due to already mentioned their long history and especially their involvement in several rebellions, wars and uprisings.[16]

The Tuareg did not have a specific place or area they called home, which made them live up to their original name, "Imohag", meaning "free man". In the past, the Tuareg were in control of the trading routes in the whole region, but over time, the Tuareg tribe lost more and more land (see figure 1). Ironically, the name Tuareg, is an Arabic term meaning "abandoned by God". [17]

Figure 1 Trade routes map. Important trade routes in Africa used by Tuareg merchants.[18]

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[14] Francis Rodd, "The Origin of the Tuareg", *The Geographical* 67 no 1 (1926): 27, https://doi.org/10.2307/1783387.

[15] Encyclopædia Britannica, "Tuareg". *Encyclopædia Britannica*., Accessed May 23, (2020) http://www.britannica.com/topic/Tuareg.

[16] Stephen A. Harmon, *Terror and Insurgency in the Sahara-Sahel Region: Corruption, Contraband, Jihad and the Mali War of 2012-2013*. (London and New York: Routledge, (2014): 1.

[17] "The Tuareg of the Sahara, An age old occupation", *Brandshaw foundation*, accessed May 23, (2020) www.bradshawfoundation.com/tuareg/index.php.

[18] Ibid.

Over time, the areas where The Tuareg are present have changed. Before the sixteenth century, they were in control of large areas, stretching from Borny, towards Kawar, from Algeria to Timbuktu.[19] They were inhabiting the Central Saharan mountain ranges – The Ajjer, Hoggar, Aïr and Adagh n Ifoghas. Occupying the area around the southern edge of the desert, where the Sahal- Saharan plains are located.[20]

Figure 2 Map of the Tuareg regions.[21]

Nowadays as a result of postcolonial state-making in North Africa, the Tuareg are spilt between five states: southern Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, and Niger (see Figure 2). [22]

Although the Tuareg are spread over several countries, they all speak the same language, a Berber language called Tamashek. There are only small differences in the dialect.[23]

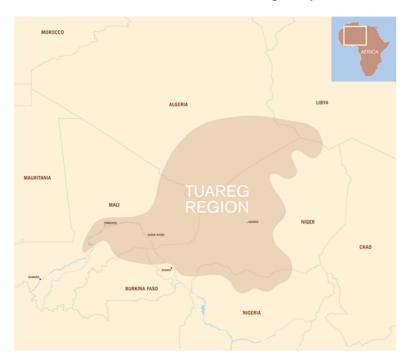[19] Francis Rodd, "The Origin of the Tuareg", *The Geographical* 67 no 1 (1926): 29, https://doi.org/10.2307/1783387 and Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 425, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.
[20] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 425, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.
[21] Oadeye, "Queen Tin Hinan: Founder of the Tuaregs", Think Africa, accessed May 25, (2020) https://thinkafrica.net/tin-hinan/.
[22] Lecocq and Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", 424 & Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): 105, http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.
[23] Francis Rodd, "The Origin of the Tuareg", *The Geographical* 67 no 1 (1926): 33, https://doi.org/10.2307/1783387.

There are other names used for the Tuareg that identify some of their characteristics, such as: hommes de nulle part (men from nowhere), and chevaliers du désert (knights of the desert) or "Blue People" for the indigo dye coloured clothes they traditionally wear.[24]

The Tuareg are characterised as a nomadic pastoralist group, mainly living of camels and cattle. Historically camels have been the primary source of income, and also an essential part of the Tuareg national sport, especially popular amongst their nobles. However, during colonial times, France put a stop to the game.[25] In the nomadic lifestyle the weather, elements as temperature and precipitation, is extremely important. Thus climate change, directly affecting these elements, has played a vital role for the Tuareg and their livelihood. For the Tuareg droughts caused by climate change, had a huge and damaging impact on their animals and thereby their livelihood. This is further described later in the next sections.

APPROACHING REBELLIONS

Several times, the Tuareg have attempted to gain their own land through rebellions against the Malian government. The time and events leading up to, and these rebellions itself, provided valuable information and knowledge on why and how the Tuareg became affiliated with AQIM. It is therefore explained in the next chapter and further AQIM becoming an active player and the consequences are discussed.

French colonialism

In the pre-colonial period, the Tuareg moved freely through the North and West Africa. The Tuareg managed trade routes for gold, ivory, salt, and black African slaves (see Figure 1) and provided services to trade caravans throughout the Sahel.[26]

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[24] Merise Jalali, "Tuareg Migration: A Critical Component of Crisis in the Sahel," *Migration Policy Institute*, modified May 30, (2013), accessed May 23, 2020, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/tuareg-migration-critical-component-crisis-sahel.
[25] Francis Rodd, "The Origin of the Tuareg", *The Geographical* 67 no 1 (1926): 30, https://doi.org/10.2307/1783387.
[26] Merise Jalali, "Tuareg Migration: A Critical Component of Crisis in the Sahel," *Migration Policy Institute*, modified May 30, (2013), accessed May 23, 2020, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/tuareg-migration-critical-component-crisis-sahel.https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/tuareg-migration-critical-component-crisis-sahel.

This changed when France conquered nearly all of North and West Africa in the late 1800s.[27] France started to take control over Mali in 1892, and it lasted until Mali was given independency in 1960. The colonization began by taking land, piece by piece. In 1894, a Tuareg town - Timbuktu located in the northern part of Mali felled. Next, another Tuareg town - Gao located about 300 kilometres East-Southeast of Timbuktu, was taken in 1898. French military crushed any resistance that was met on the way conquering the region.[28]

In colonial time Mali was considerably larger than it is today, which included parts of contemporary Mauritania, Senegal, Niger and Burkina Faso.[29] Eventually, the French authorities gained control, despite the Tuareg's resistance and Mali started to be known as "French Sudan".
France was exploiting the African territory, using it for its own needs. France started to produce various goods, such as cotton. Later, it became a problem for the Tuareg's nomadic lifestyle, and the cotton industry took away crucial areas for herding.[30]

At the same time, France was paying little attention to its colony – French Sudan. France had difficulties controlling the area, partly because of the large area, and partly because there were hardly any people living there. This situation was unstable and led to France ruling their colony from Paris.[31]
The approach changed in the 1930s when France made an attempt to boost the local cotton industry. It meant that there had to be stronger and direct involvement in the area. In order to get the cotton industry up and running, an irrigation program was established. This, however, led to the displacement of people, among other Tuaregs, living in villages close to the Niger River Valley.[32]

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[27] Merise Jalali, "Tuareg Migration: A Critical Component of Crisis in the Sahel," *Migration Policy Institute*, modified May 30, (2013), accessed May 23, 2020, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/tuareg-migration-critical-component-crisis-sahel.

[28] Palash Ghosh, "Mali: When France Ruled West Africa", *International Business Times*, modified January 15, (2013,) accessed May 23, 2020 *https://www.ibtimes.com/mali-when-france-ruled-west-africa-1015854*.

[29] Ibid

[30] William G Moseley, "Recovering from livelihood insecurity and political instability in northern Mali: Bouncing back", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 442, http://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505435.

[31] Palash Ghosh, "Mali: When France Ruled West Africa", *International Business Times*, modified January 15, (2013), accessed May 23, 2020 *https://www.ibtimes.com/mali-when-france-ruled-west-africa-1015854*, & Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): 103. http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

[32] Ibid & Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): 103. http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

The tension between the Tuareg and the state - the first Tuareg rebellion

After 72 years of being a French colony, Mali gained independence in 1960 (the neighbouring Niger also became independent at the same time). Modibo Keïta became the first president, running a one-party Socialist government. He wanted to make his country more modern while developing it through an authoritarian regime with a radical foreign policy.[33] The Tuareg were part of the population occupying mainly the North of the country. However, the new Malian government did not appreciate the lifestyle of the Tuareg, who kept to their original nomadic lifestyle. With the government still having the old fashion colonial idea about the Tuareg, the government were still seeing the Tuareg as second or third-class citizens.[34] The new government tried to make the Tuareg more "civilized" in order to integrate them as a part of the "normal" Malian society. In the attempt to do so, several concepts were imposed on the Tuareg. Concepts, which were very uncommon for the Tuareg, this included things like change of work ethics, learn about cultural aspects, such as gender roles and sending their children to school.[35]

The governmental changes and oppression resulted in tension between the state and the Tuareg. Some scholars, such as Y. Ronan argues that the Tuareg saw the new government as "a new form of colonialism".[36] Other scholars, such as B. Lecocq and G. Klute argue that the government underfunded and neglected the northern part of Mali, and that was the main generator for turmoil in the region.[37]

What finally accelerated the violence in northern Mali was the murder of a Tuareg man in 1962, who was executed by a police officer. This incident started the first Tuareg rebellion, and a group of

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[33] Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): 103. http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

[34] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 28, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[35] Ibid

[36] Yehudit Ronen, "Libya, the Tuareg and Mali on the eve of the "arab Spring" and in its aftermath: an anatomy of changed relations", *Journal of North African Studies* 18 no 4 (2013): 549 https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2013.809660.

[37] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 30, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

just two hundred Tuaregs began to fight against the government.[38] But it was not an equal fight, the Tuareg were poorly equipped, with old weapons, and they had no proper means of communication. The Malian army, on the other hand, was much better equipped and they were very determined to hold their ground to keep their influence in the region. They struck very hard against anyone who rebelled and from the beginning, there was no tolerance towards the rebellion. With no other option, many Tuaregs fled, crossing the border to Libya and Algeria.[39]

Even though the Tuareg were fighting a modern and much better-equipped army, they did have some advantages that they used to their benefit. The Tuareg fighters of whom many were local had a knowledge and the recognition of the terrain which they could use to their advantage. It was difficult for the military to follow the Tuareg and to use their equipment in the hash mountain areas.[40] The Tuareg manoeuvre triggered the government to use more brutality against the civilian population by the government.[41] This led to even more Tuaregs fleeing to Niger and Algeria like their countrymen had done earlier.[42] Consequently, there were not many Tuareg men left to overtake the Malian army. Thus, the government managed to gain control over the rebels by the end of 1964.[43]

Climate change effects - the ground for the second rebel

Although the second Tuareg rebellion did not start before 1990, problems leading up to it started long before. In the 1970s and 1980s, the region experienced pressures caused by droughts which led to the Tuareg emigrating from the affected areas. The two big droughts that hit the area (in 1968

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[38] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 108, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

[39] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 108, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221. & Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 28, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[40] az Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 28, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[41] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 120, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221 & Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 28, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[42] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 109, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221

[43] Ibid

and 1974) influenced the nomadic way of living of the Tuareg. The dry periods had a considerable impact on the Tuareg livestock, and the animals were significantly weakened or in the worst case they died. The livestock was a crucial part of the nomad's livelihood, and it was a massive hit for the Tuareg to lose a big part of the herd.[44] Time was needed to recover from such a natural disaster, and the region suffered another drought, in both 1980 and 1985. As previously, it brought damaging consequences forcing many, including the Tuareg to migrate. Some of them found new living grounds in more populated south areas or in refugee camps.[45]

The few Tuaregs that remained in the region had to change their way of living, as a consequence of droughts, some adapted from pastoralism to a more agricultural lifestyle,[46] others were forced to move to the urban environments. These changes did not only happen in Mali but also in the neighbouring countries.[47] For those who kept their old lifestyle, the periods after the droughts were extremely hard, their livestock lost value and was difficult to replace. That left many families with minimal income. While the Tuareg were struggling without help from the Malian government, they were forced to find other ways to stay alive.[48]

Military training for the second Tuareg rebellion

Although the Malian government had not provided support to the Tuareg, the Libyan regime had. In 1979, the regime offered to support the Tuareg. Colonel Gaddafi who governed Libya wanted to extend his influence towards the south, and his regime helped the Tuareg to hold a conference, where the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arab Central Sahara (PFLACS) was formed.

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[44] Sara Randall & Alessandra Giuffrida, "Forced Migration, Sedentarization and Social change: Malian Kel Tamasheq", in *Nomadic Socienties in the Middle East and North Africa,* Ed. Dawn Chatty
(Brill, 2006): 435 https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047417750_017 & Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 109, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221
[45] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 110, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221
[46] Victoria Van der Land, *The West African Sahel: Why Capabilities and Aspirations Matter*, (New York, Routledge, 2018): 13-15.
[47] William G Moseley, "Recovering from livelihood insecurity and political instability in northern Mali: Bouncing back", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 439, http://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505435.
[48] Nelson Cronyn, "*Global Change and Livelihood adaptations among The Tuareg of Niger."* (PhD diss., The University of Arizona, 2012): 27.

B. Lecocq and G. Klute point out that the group should be seen as a more significant part of the Libyan regime's plan, to unite the Sahara as an "Arab space", under Libyan management, an idea Gaddafi brought up, to ban Berber or other cultural differences.[49] After the conference, Libya offered the PFLACS military training, and roughly one thousand Tuaregs took part in the training. The training started in December in 1980, and some Tuaregs took it as preparation for new uprising back in Mali. However, late 1981 the military camps were closed, and PFLACS was disbanded. Those who had received training were offered to join the Libyan army, others could join a volunteer force, who helped the Palestinians in Lebanon. When they returned, they had valuable combat experience, which later would prove useful for the Tuaregs' own battle over Azawad.[50]

The second Tuareg rebellion started at the end of June in 1990 when a group of Tuareg rebels attacked the town of Menaka in the northern part of Mali, close to the border of Niger.[51] According to scholar G. Klute, who did field studies in the region between 1990 and 1998, the rebellion started when Algeria and Libya sent roughly twenty thousand Tuareg migrants back to Mali and Niger. In this group were a few hundred Tuaregs who had been part of Libya's Islamic Legion, and those individuals had created secret associations amongst the migrants.[52] After the return to Mali, the migrants were put in refugee camps, where members of the secret groups were arrested by the Malian Army.[53] Other Scholars such as K. Keita points out that the missing support, from the government, during and after the droughts could be seen as an accelerator for the rebellion.[54]

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[49] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 30, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[50] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 31, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.& Georg Klute, "From Friends to Enemies: Negotiating nationalism, tribal identities, and kinship in the fratricidal war of the Malian Tuareg," *L'Année du Maghreb* VII (2011): 5, https://doi.org/10.4000/anneemaghreb.1191.

[51] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 426.

[52] Georg Klute, "From Friends to Enemies: Negotiating nationalism, tribal identities, and kinship in the fratricidal war of the Malian Tuareg," *L'Année du Maghreb* VII (2011): 5 https://doi.org/10.4000/anneemaghreb.1191.

[53] Ibid

[54] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 110, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

The Tuareg used standard Guerrilla warfare tactics,[55] when they attacked governmental posts in the northern region, in an attempt to get their demand for an autonomous region met.[56] The Malian Army struck back hard, first by declaring a state of emergency in the North and then trying to establish the strong-arm as they had been doing during the first Tuareg rebellion. The army reinforced in the North. However, their targets were civilians from the Tuareg and Maure nomadic groups. As more innocent women, men and children were killed, the Tuareg rebels gained more popularity amongst the civilian population in the region, and young people joined the Mouvement Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad (MPLA).[57]

According to K. Keita, it is clear that during the rebellion, the Tuareg was supported by someone from the outside. Something the Malian government was not. It could be that due to lack of similar support, the Malian Army fighting together with Gendarmerie and the National Guard had many casualties, or it could be due to the Guerrilla warfare tactics used by the Tuaregs. In any way, it is impossible to be conclusive about that.[58]

The hard fighting and many losses made the Malian President Moussa Traoré suffer financially, which created space for a growing domestic opposition.[59] President Traoré signed a ceasefire with the MPLA at the beginning of 1991.[60] He was removed from power by Col. Amadou Toumani Touré

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[55] Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*,Monthly (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961).

[56] Sara Randall & Alessandra Giuffrida, "Forced Migration, Sedentarization and Social change: Malian Kel Tamasheq", in *Nomadic Socienties in the Middle East and North Africa,* Ed. Dawn Chatty
 (Brill, 2006): 438 https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047417750_017.

[57] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 425, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431, Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 112, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221, Sara Randall & Alessandra Giuffrida, "Forced Migration, Sedentarization and Social change: Malian Kel Tamasheq", in *Nomadic Socienties in the Middle East and North Africa,* Ed. Dawn Chatty (Brill, 2006): 438. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047417750_017 and Yehudit Ronen, "Libya, the Tuareg and Mali on the eve of the "arab Spring" and in its aftermath: an anatomy of changed relations", *Journal of North African Studies* 18 no 4 (2013): 550 https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2013.809660.

[58] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 112, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221

[59] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 32, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[60] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 112, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221 & Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 32, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

on March 26 1991, after a massive protest in Bamako[61]. The removal of Traoré gave Mali a democratic government and a new president, Alpha Oumar Konaré. Konaré, who signed a new peace agreement (also known as Tamanrasset Accords) in the spring of 1992, which created a brokered by France and Mauritania breakthrough.[62] The new agreement addressed several crucial issues, from the integration of former insurgents into the Malian military and government. It also incorporated locals and regional councils with a real devolution of power to the allocation of resources for national development. One of the most (remarkable) results from the Tamanrasset Accords was that a temporary security force was created in the North with soldiers both from the Malian Army and from the rebels.[63] The peace agreement was an important accomplishment for both the government as well as for the Tuareg. However, even though an agreement was in place, the violence and attacks continued in northern Mali.[64]

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[61] Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel," 112., and Lecocq and Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger," 32.

[62] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 427, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[63] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 114, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

[64] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 49, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

Post rebellion changes and mistrust in the region

In general, the Tuareg fight against the Malian government had been successful. However, internal clashes amongst the Tuareg had developed. These internal conflicts in the Tuareg rebel group, happening from 1991 to 1994, had a clear effect on the power dynamics within the Tuareg society.[65] In late 1990, other nomadic groups created their own organisation, the Arab-Islamic Front (FIAA). Moreover, the MPLA movement reorganised itself, gathered what was left of the organisation and changed its name to the Popular Movement of Azawad (MPA).

It was essentially MPA fighting against the Revolutionary Liberation Army of Azawad (ARLA) and the Popular Liberation Front of Azawad (FPLA).[66] Alliances were made, and with help from the Malian Army, MPA went victorious from the battlefield and gained full control over the northern region.

B. Lecocq, G. Klute and also K. Keita, all talk about the mistrust among people in the area after the peace agreement was signed. Some communities feared attacks from the Tuareg and had their own self-defence groups, who then in 1994 joined forces and became Ganda Koy.[67] This resulted in thousands of Tuaregs fleeing the country.[68] The organisation was quickly accused of attacking the Tuareg, thus escalating the violence in the North. Eventually, negotiations amongst all of the ethnic groups in northern Mali to stop the fighting took place. The Bourem Pact was signed, and initiatives, such as regulating the access to water, and the local markets, for all ethnic groups in the area around Bourem were introduced. Around northern Mali, similar ideas and initiatives started to show up in order to create a more peaceful society.[69]

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[65] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 426, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[66] Ibid 427.

[67] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 115, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221 and Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 427, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[68] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 115, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221

[69] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 427, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

Returned conflicts in Mali and Niger - the third Tuareg rebellion

Almost ten years after the second Tuareg rebellion ended, conflicts once again arose in Mali and Niger. According to B. Lecocq and G. Klute, in their article from 2013, ARLA and MPA started to have internal power struggles in 2006, which again started the conflicts in Mali and Niger.[70] The struggle led to the creation of a new movement, the Democratic Alliance for Change (ADC) in May of the same year.[71] According to S. Emerson, the rebellion started when 60 Tuaregs deserted the Malian army. Under former Lieutenant colonel Hassan ag Fagaga, the rebels began to attack the government's outposts in the north-east of Mali.[72]

S. Emerson also describes how the attacks were part of a plan to gain weapons and other supplies needed for the fight.[73] The rebels established themselves in an old stronghold in the Tigharghar Mountains, close to the border to Algeria.[74] President Amadou Toumani Toure chose a different approach than his predecessor in previous rebellion. Instead of attacking the rebels, he tried to reach a peaceful agreement instead. President Toure used the words:

"… I am a soldier of peace. My role is not to pour oil on the fire…".[75]

A peace deal was created, which addressed the Tuareg concerns about the lack of local empowerment and economic development. The deal was signed in February 2007. The peace agreement seemed to work, and the disarming of rebels was slowly beginning.

While the situation was stabilising in Mali, focus changed to Niger, where Tuaregs had attacked a government position. A Tuareg group under the name Niger Movement for Justice (MNJ) claimed

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[70] Lecocq and Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali," 429.

[71] Olivier J. Walther, & Dimitris Christopoulos, "Islamic Terrorism and the Malian Rebellion," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 no 3 (2015): 502, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.809340 and Lecocq and Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali," 428.

[72] Stephen. A. Emerson, "Desert insurgency: lessons from the third Tuareg rebellion," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22 no 4 (2011): 674, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2011.573406.

[73] Ibid 673.

[74] Ibid

[75] "Government strikes new peace deal with Tuareg rebels," The New Humanitarian, last modified July 5 (2006), accessed May 23, 2020, http://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2006/07/05/government-strikes-new-peace-deal-tuareg-rebels?fbclid=IwAR2H1EboiNMw_EPrGVdaw25shSR4TOPhTSeRtT8B1wYYi-UjZuVd-2P2sBA.

responsibility and said that the reason for the attack was the Nigerian government. They did not believe that the Nigerian government had the ability to adequately address the continued Tuareg political and economic grievances.[76] According to the group, the government had not been able to create enough jobs, nor provide schools or drinking water for the Tuareg in Niger.[77] As a result, the fighting in Niger intensified over the next months and got more violent. The rebels started to use anti-vehicle mines to disturb traffic around essential areas, attack power plants, and the airport in Agadez was also attacked.[78]

At the same time in Mali, riots began to occur again, and the rebels started to unite under the leader Ibrahim ag Bahanga, who was a former lieutenant of the Malian Army. The rebellion started in a similar way as it had been seen earlier, where ag Bahanga's groups started by attacking governmental outpost, supply convoys and by kidnaping Malian Soldiers. By the end of 2007, the Tuareg insurgency gained strength and more territory.[79]

New movements and divided Tuaregs

Mali National Assembly adopted the peace agreement, and ADC was then slowly disarmed. According to S. Emerson, not all members of the ADC agreed with the terms in the agreement, this led to split, and the formation of Alliance Touarègue du Nord pour le Changement (ATNMC),[80] who took over from ADC.

B. Lecocq, G. Klute and S. Emerson claim that the ATNMC continued the fight. However, they were not very popular among civilians, not even within the Tuareg society.[81] It was primarily due to their

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[76] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 40, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7 & Stephen. A. Emerson, "Desert insurgency: lessons from the third Tuareg rebellion," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22 no 4 (2011): 674, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2011.573406.

[77] Stephen. A. Emerson, "Desert insurgency: lessons from the third Tuareg rebellion," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22 no 4 (2011): 674, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2011.573406.

[78] Ibid 674.

[79] Ibid 675.

[80] Muna A. Abdalla, "Understanding of the natural resource conflict dynamics: The case of Tuareg in North Africa and the Sahel," *Institute for Security Studies* 194, (2009): 6 and Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 429, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[81] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 429, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

use of landmines and the fact that they took prisoners of war (POW), also within the Tuareg community that was problematic and not well seen by the civilian.[82]

The Malian army had a special unit, led by Lieutenant Colonel Elhajj Gamou, a former Tuareg rebel, who was allowed to choose and recruit his own unit, which he did by selecting only Tuareg soldiers. The unit have been involved, together with the French army, soldiers from Mali, Niger and Chad, in the battles against the ATNMC and was part of the attacks on 20 January 2009.[83] They launched an attack on the ATNMC's main base, located near the border to Algeria. The attack was hard on ATNMC and ag Bahanga, who together with what was left of ATNMC, fled over the border, first to Algeria and next to Libya and later he became a mercenary for Gaddafi.[84]

Creation of the new state Azawad

In Mali, the Tuareg formed yet another group, the National Movement of Azawad (MNA). Who demanded the autonomy of Mali, but the demands were not met by the government, and two of the MNA leaders were arrested.[85]

When returning to Mali, some of the Tuareg fighters joined the Malian army, while others joined the MNA, where they formed the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). As an organisation, MNLA had both a military and a political group, which were very active on different media platforms.[86] On the internet, the group made their goals and demanded clear, even in several languages, such as French, Arabic and English. In November 2011, the MNLA had serval

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[82] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 429, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[83] Olivier J. Walther, & Dimitris Christopoulos, "Islamic Terrorism and the Malian Rebellion," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 no 3 (2015): 514, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.809340 & Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 429, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[84] Peter Gwin, "Former Qaddafi Mercenaries Describe Fighting in Libyan War," *The Atlantic*, last modified August 31, (2011), accessed May 24, 2020 https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/08/former-qaddafi-mercenaries-describe-fighting-in-libyan-war/244356/?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share.

[85] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 41, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[86] Mouvement National de Liberation de l'Azawad, accessed May 24, 2020, www.mnlamov.net & Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 430, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

demonstrations in northern Mali, and as the first Tuareg separatist organisation, they declared publicly that their aim was an independent state of Azawad.[87]

In Mali, there was a fear that the free availability of weapons in the Libyan arsenals would fall into the hands of the wrong persons or groups, such as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), this concern was reinforced, when Algerian security forces found weapons near the border.[88] The lack of security within the country created more tension especially in the northern part, which was greatly enhanced by the pressure from both France and the United States. As a result of this pressure, the Malian government deployed more troops in northern Mali. The MNLA's reacted in launching a series of attacks and sieging all towns and villages in the North. Thus, defeating and forcing the Malian Army back. The MNLA succeeded and on 6 April 2012, they declared the independence of northern Mali and at the same time announced the creation of the new state Azawad.[89]

B. Lecocq and G. Klute mention two reasons to have played a vital role in the MNLA and their success in the North. The first reason was that MNLA staged a coup d'etat, thus ousting President Amadou Toumani Toure on 21 March 2012.[90] The second reason, also recognised by May Ying Welsh, an award-winning reporter that the success could be found in the alliances which MNLA made with other Islamist-oriented armed groups in northern Mali.[91] Although MNLA fought alongside Islamic groups, it is important to remember, that other Tuaregs, including fighters that had returned from Libya, continued to fight together with the Malian government.

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[87] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 430, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[88] Angelia Sanders and Erin Foster-Bowser, "Security Threats in the Sahel and Beyond: AQIM, Boko Haram and al Shabaab," *Civil-Military Fusion Centre Mediterranean Basin Team* (2012): 3 and Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 430, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[89] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 430, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[90] Bassou, By Abdelhak and Guennoun, Ihssane. (2017). The Sahel faced with Al Qaeda and Daesh trends: What are possible, pp 1-12. *Policy Brief* January, OCP Policy Center: 4 and Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 430, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[91] May Ying Welsh. "Making sense of Mali's armed groups." *Aljazeera*. Last modified January 17, 2013, accessed May 24, 2020, https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/01/20131139522812326.html?fbclid=IwAR2cElbHwXb6NPeDGbn2OoDG25FiZ2kzstxOJ3NnbLoTAzJpg12-VAz6dKM and Lecocq and Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali," 430.

Furthermore, M. Welsh and Y. Ronen explains that MNLA joined forces with Islamist-oriented groups to achieve their own goals. Something that was clearly seen in the case of the claim of the new state of Azawad, where MNLA became allied with Ansâr ud-Dîn, who were interested in joining the fight in order to spread the word of Islam in the region, and where MNLA was fighting for their own state.[92]

For some time, the groups were able to live more or less in peace, but in September 2012, MNLA was forced out of the new capital of Azawad, Gao. The battle for the town was hard and bloody, and in the end, a group, which was a fragment of AQIM, known as the Mouvement pour l' Unicité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (MUJAO), took over the city.[93] MUJAO consisted mainly of Islamists of Mauritanian origin, but also some Malian and other smaller groups from the Sahel region. However, there were no Tuaregs among them. J. Huckabey explains in her article from 2013, how the loss of Gao tarnished the MNLA reputation, and many only saw them as soldiers with no discipline, who were stealing, raping, plundering and occupied territories wherever they came.[94] Although MNLA successfully won the battle for their own land, Azawad, the joy was short and only lasted for about six months. They were not able to build up a proper administrative structure, administer justice or secure peace and order. In the end, MNLA tried to leave Mali, at the same time, Ansâr ud-Dîn together with their allies MUJAO and AQIM attempted to impose a specific mode of Islamic societal organisation.[95]

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[92] Yehudit Ronen, "Libya, the Tuareg and Mali on the eve of the "arab Spring" and in its aftermath: an anatomy of changed relations", *Journal of North African Studies* 18 no 4 (2013): 555 https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2013.809660.

[93] Theodore Kouts, "Illicit Financial Flows: The Role of Al Qeada and its Affiliates in the Islamic Maghreb." *OECD Development CO-Operation Working Paper* 63 (2019): 9, https://doi.org/10.1787/22220518.

[94] Jessica M. Huckabey, "Al Qaeda in Mali: The defection connections," *Orbis* 57 no 3 (2013): 468, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2013.05.008 And Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 431, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

[95] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 432, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431

AL QAEDA IN THE ISLAMIC MAGHREB

Background and followers of Al Qaeda

When Al Qaeda was formed in 1988 in Pakistan, they had little or no interest in Africa. At that point, their main focus was on the Middle East and Afghanistan.[96] However, these were to change in 1990, when Saudi Arabia asked for a large US military deployment to scare and stop the Iraqi threat in Kuwait. Osama Bin Laden, the founder of Al Qaeda, was not pleased about the decision, causing problems between him and the Saudi ruling family. Bin Laden was exiled to Pakistan in 1991, but already later the same year, he was invited to Sudan by the Islamist dictatorship. While living in Sudan, bin Laden's and Al Qaeda's main focus still remained on the Middle East, with recruitments of activists from Algeria, Egypt or Yemen.[97] Changes came in 1992 when the US began the military operation in Somalia, Operation Restore Hope. When the US entered Somalia, Al Qaeda started to launch attacks against them. The attacks were not because Bin Laden found a new interest in Africa, but it was a great chance to strike against the "infidels" (literally meaning "unfaithful").

Al Qaeda had limited success in Somalia as the main player, but they did manage to create an underground network of support and intelligence, operating from neighbouring countries. With his limited success in Africa, Bin Laden did not focus much of his attention in the region, after he was expelled from Sudan in 1996. Only three out of fourteen focus areas were in Africa.[98] Despite the fact that Bin Laden had left Africa, there was still an Al Qaeda network present, who launched attacks in Kenya's second-largest town, Mombasa in 2002. The attacks killed mostly Kenyan people and the group had to redraw to Somalia, where they found a new allied in Al Shabab, who already were helping Islamic Courts Union (ICU) against the internationally-backed transitional government.[99]

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[96] Jean-Pierre Filiu, "Could Al-Qaeda Turn African in the Sahel?," *Carnegie Papers*. 112. (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010): 2.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid 3.
[99] Ibid 2.

Algeria went into a long civil war, which lasted almost ten years. The war started in 1992, where Algeria was supposed to become an Islamic republic, transiting from authoritarianism to democratic pluralism. During this process, a military coup took place and started the yearlong war.[100] Islamist military groups were fighting against the Algerian state. Namely, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) fought hard in their attempt to overthrow the government and transforming Algeria into an Islamic state.[101] In their battle, they lost the support of the civilian people. This caused GIA to split, and the Algerian militant group known as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSCP) was formed. Unlike GIA, GSCP wanted to expand their reach further than the Algerian border.

In 2006, in Islamic Maghreb, GSPC joined forces and merged with an Islamic militant group in Algeria, Al Qaeda. They took the name Al Qaeda and declared France as an enemy. Along with this statement, they made it clear that they would fight against French and American interests in the region.[102] Using the name of Al Qaeda increased the online attention, giving the group thousands of Jihadists followers online, and now many have seen GSPC fighting as part of Al Qaeda.

Modus operandi of Al Qaeda

AQIM operated and still operates in North Africa, and the majority of their followers came from Algerian Islamists groups. By then, the organisation had expanded into the Sahel region, stretching south of the Sahara Desert.[103] Besides the followers from Algeria, members joined from Mauritania, Senegal, Niger, as well as from Mali. According to A. Adeyemi and M. Musa. AQIM's high ranking leaders are believed to have had training and war experience from Afghanistan, fighting against the Soviet Union in 1979-1989. Here they were a part of a voluntary group of people from North Africa,

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[100] Richard P. Chelin, "From the Islamic State of Algeria to the Economic Caliphate of the Sahel: The Transformation of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (Routledge, 2018): 1, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1454316.

[101] Ricardo R. Larémont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4 no 4 (2011): 243, https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.628630.

[102] Adebayo E Adeyemi & Mahmoud N Musa, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Terrorist Networks infiltrate Northern Mali," *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: C Sociology & Culture* 14 no 5 (Global Journals Inc. 2014): 2.

[103] Olivier J. Walther, & Dimitris Christopoulos, "Islamic Terrorism and the Malian Rebellion," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 no 3 (2015): 499, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.809340 and Angelia Sanders and Erin Foster-Bowser, "Security Threats in the Sahel and Beyond: AQIM, Boko Haram and al Shabaab," *Civil-Military Fusion Centre Mediterranean Basin Team* (2012): 2.

known as "Afghan Arab", and upon their return to Africa, they started to radicalise people into joining the Islamist movements.[104]

In the beginning, AQIM still used the traditional Al Qaeda tactics, such as suicide bombings and attacking foreign institutions. However, in order to keep the support from the local people and always be able to recruit new members, they slowly changed their tactics.[105] In Algeria, the pressure on the group had grown, and the group had to find another place to operate from. They fled to nearby Mali, where they were relatively safe. In 2013 France started its military operation under the name "Opération Serval" in Mali. With France present and operating in the region, terror attacks went down. However, along with that, there was a slow and steady increase in kidnapping of foreigners, holding prisoners for ransom, and the smuggling of drugs, other contrabands and human trafficking. This showed a change in the modus operandi of AQIM.[106]

From 2009 to 2011 Al Qaeda and their activities were noted and registered in more than 20 various areas in Africa including Algeria, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Puntland, Somalia, Somaliland, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda.[107] Around these countries, different terror groups started to get more and more involved with Al Qaeda. Some member even went on training camps, e.g. members from Boko Haram who got military training from Al Shabab. They became allied with AQIM and when they launched their first suicide attacks in Nigerian in 2011. It was a great success for Boko Haram, and an agreement with Al Qaeda followed it.

At the same time, as terror organisations grew stronger and alliances were made. Also, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the US, the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU)

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[104] Adebayo E Adeyemi & Mahmoud N Musa, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Terrorist Networks infiltrate Northern Mali," *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: C Sociology & Culture* 14 no 5 (Global Journals Inc. 2014): 2.
[105] Richard P. Chelin, "From the Islamic State of Algeria to the Economic Caliphate of the Sahel: The Transformation of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (Routledge, 2018): 1, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1454316.
[106] Jean-Pierre Filiu, "Could Al-Qaeda Turn African in the Sahel?," *Carnegie Papers*. 112. (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010): 2.
[107] Hans Krech, "The growing influence of Al-Qaeda on African continent," *Africa Spectrum* 46 no 2 (2011): 132, https://doi.org/10.1177/000203971104600205.

forces grew in size.[108] This substantial increase of troops in the African countries were part of a plan to fight AQIM on the national, regional but at the same time also on the international front. A joint Headquarter (HQ) for Major operations in Sahara against AQIM was established in spring, 2010 in the south of Algeria. Four countries, Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, were involved in the HQ and deployed each several thousand soldiers to the mission.[109] Although the four countries worked together in the HQ, they had different approaches. The group of nations operating, which were led by Algeria did not want to work together with France or the US on any other Defence operations against AQIM, which then led to Mali having little trust in Algeria and its abilities to carry out their tasks. Opposite Algeria, Morocco had no issues working close together with the French, Spanish and US troops. These joint forces had led to other African countries to realise the security threat that Al Qaeda poses, and they are starting to take measures to fight back against the Al Qaeda organisation.[110]

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ISLAMIST AND REBELS

AQIM in Africa had three main strategic objectives. The first one was to gain power in Algeria and overthrow the government. Their second objective was to create a safe haven among the Tuareg tribes at cross borders, into Mali, Niger and Mauritania, where they also encouraged the Tuareg rebels to join in. Lastly, the third objective was to attack Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, and Spain by planning and carrying out bombings to hurt the states and scare the civilian population. These attacks were planned in cooperation with AQIM allies in Europe.[111]

AQIM had been able to increase their activities in the Sahel region, thanks to their safe haven in Mali were especially the Tuareg were helping by providing these areas, making operations much easier for AQIM.[112] Al Qaeda used similar tactics in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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[108] Stephen Burgess, "Military Intervention in Africa: French and US Approaches Compared," *ASPJ Africa & Francophonie* 2 no 2 (2018): 80.

[109] Hans Krech, "The growing influence of Al-Qaeda on African continent," *Africa Spectrum* 46 no 2 (2011): 134, https://doi.org/10.1177/000203971104600205.

[110] Ibid

[111] Ricardo R. Larémont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4 no 4 (2011): 245, https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.628630.

[112] Adebayo E Adeyemi & Mahmoud N Musa, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Terrorist Networks infiltrate Northern Mali," *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: C Sociology & Culture* 14 no 5 (Global Journals Inc. 2014): 12.

The connection between AQIM and the Tuareg were very similar to those seen between the Pashtuns in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In both of the cases, from south Asia and the Sahel region, the government had lost power in areas dominated by Al Qaeda and AQIM respectively, providing local "government" with greater powers. For the countries in the Sahel region, one of the main issues was that AQIM was starting to take over control and created its own acting government, in the more remote areas of the countries.

AQIM government was able to collect taxes from the local tribes in the area. Furthermore, they could uphold their own law and justice. By keeping the countries government away, they gained full control over territories, either alone or in collaboration with the Tuareg or other tribes in the region.[113]

Financing of the Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

In order to have enough money to operate in the Sahel region, AQIM runs several forms of illegal businesses to keep their economy running, stretching from drugs, such as cocaine, hashish and counterfeit cigarettes.[114] Especially the drug market in Europe has been a good business. Over a 10-year period from 1998-2008, the market has doubled from 2 million users to over 4 million. The EU has said, that there are three main drug routes to Europe oversea, one of them goes from South America to West Africa from where it spreads out to Europe through Spain and Portugal.[115]

At first, AQIM only dealt with hashish and cigarettes, but knowing that the income would significantly increase if handling cocaine, AQIM went into business with South American drug cartels. With their new connection, they gained not only money but also new knowledge and methods on how to handle contrabands.

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[113] Ricardo R. Larémont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4 no 4 (2011): 247, https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.628630.

[114] "Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, last modified October 2007, accessed May 23, 2020, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Cocaine-trafficking-Africa-en.pdf and Angelia Sanders and Erin Foster-Bowser, "Security Threats in the Sahel and Beyond: AQIM, Boko Haram and al Shabaab," *Civil-Military Fusion Centre Mediterranean Basin Team* (2012): 3.

[115] Europol *Cocaine,* EMCDDA-Europol. (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2010): 20, http://www.europol.europa.eu/index.asp?page=publications&language=.

Furthermore, together with the cocaine, AQIM had now access to a new weapon supplier.[116] Another income for AQIM came from human smuggling, smuggling undocumented workers from sub-Sahara, bringing them towards North Africa and then further on to Europe. But one of AQIM most valuable business is was kidnapping of foreign people in exchange for ransom has proven to be very beneficial. Over a period of 5 years, 2006-2011, it is claimed that different governments across Europa have paid up to 150 million Euros in ransom to AQIM, for the 63 Westerners who were kidnapped during that period.[117]

Beside ransom AQIM also had other demands, depending on the hostages. In September 2010, five French citizens were kidnapped near the uranium ore in Arlit in northern Niger, and AREVA, a French state-owned company ran the mine. AQIM demanded a full redrawing of French troops in Afghanistan. Kidnappings like these were often supported and well-received among the Tuareg. The mine was located on Tuareg's land. However, the Tuareg had received very little, or none of the profit from the mine and additionally. The area got densely populated and damaged.[118]

Change of power

When the civil war in Libya started in February 2011, it destabilised the region. According to scholar R. Larémont, before the war, the Gaddafi's regime had a stabilising effect on the region and especially on Al Qaeda. However, when the Libyan regime lost control and power during the war, it created a vacuum for Al Qaeda, giving them the chance to expand and take more control in the region.[119] Although, Al Qaeda had been active in the Sahel region for a long time, the collapse of the Libyan regime together with other factors, such as the Arab Spring, created enough chaos to boost their operations.

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[116] Mohamed Al Moustapha Toure, "*What is The Extent of Al Qeada in the Islamic Maghreb and Where Does it Derive Its Strenght in the Sahalian-Saharan Region: A Case Study of Nortern Mali*". (Master thesis, Kansas: Fort Leavenwort, 2012): 41 and Ricardo R. Larémont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4 no 4 (2011): 251, https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.628630.

[117] Mohamed Al Moustapha Toure, "*What is The Extent of Al Qeada in the Islamic Maghreb and Where Does it Derive Its Strenght in the Sahalian-Saharan Region: A Case Study of Nortern Mali*". (Master thesis, Kansas: Fort Leavenwort, 2012): 5., Angelia Sanders and Erin Foster-Bowser, "Security Threats in the Sahel and Beyond: AQIM, Boko Haram and al Shabaab," *Civil-Military Fusion Centre Mediterranean Basin Team* (2012): 2 and Ricardo R. Larémont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4 no 4 (2011): 254, https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.628630.

[118] Hans Krech, "The growing influence of Al-Qaeda on African continent," *Africa Spectrum* 46 no 2 (2011): 128, https://doi.org/10.1177/000203971104600205.

[119] Ricardo R. Larémont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4 no 4 (2011): 256, https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.628630.

After the fall of Gaddafi, Tuareg warriors returned to Mali heavily armed. In 2012 yet another Tuareg rebellion erupted, where the Tuareg warriors from Libya formed alliances with AQIM.[120] According to scholar R. Chelin, AQIM saw this opportunity to recreate their image as a group with a focus on the political aspect of creating an Islamic state in Northern Mali. The Malian government had failed to create structure in the region and was therefore unable to gain control. This, together with the rebellion started by the Tuareg, gave AQIM the ideal opportunity to accomplish their goal, to extend the Islamic caliphate.[121]

In 2012 several meetings were arranged to create a common governance platform and at the same time unite the different groups operating in the Sahel region. In charge of the meeting was AQIM's Emir of the Sahara, Abu Yahya al-Hammam. According to M. Guidère, this meeting was of very high value, because it would mean a fusion of all groups and members of AQIM into one under the new name, the Islamic State of Azawad.[122] The new unit had a Tuareg, Iyan Ag Ghali, appointed as the leader, who was also a founder of the Ansar Eddine group.[123]

According to Guidère and the Timbuktu letters, the Board of AQIM was not thrilled about the new arrangement in the Sahel region and accused Mokhtar Belmokhtat, the man who fostered the idea to have an independent branch of Al Qaeda in the Sahel, for having no link to Al Qaeda, except for the name.[124] This led to the situation that Belmokhtat asked to separate from AQIM "Emirate of the Islamic Maghreb" and to become "Emirate of the Sahara".[125] Belmokhtat kept insisting on a more independent role, which was made very clear on 2 April 2012, when AQIM attacked Timbuktu and took over control of the town. The victory was celebrated, by invitation send by Iyan Ag Ghali to the

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[120] Caitriona Dowd, and Clionadh Raleigh, "The Myth of global islamic terrorism and local conflict in mali and the sahel," *Africa Affairs* 112 no 448 (2013): 506, https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adt039.

[121] Richard P. Chelin, "From the Islamic State of Algeria to the Economic Caliphate of the Sahel: The Transformation of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (Routledge, 2018): 12, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1454316.

[122] Jamie Forbes, "Revisiting the Mali al-Qa`ida Playbook: How the Group is Advancing on its Goals in the Sahel," *CTC Sentinel* 11 no 9 (2018): 18 and Mathieu *Guidère*, "The Timuktu letters: New Insights about AQIM," *Res Militaris* 4 no 1 (2014): 10

[123] Mathieu *Guidère*, "The Timuktu letters: New Insights about AQIM," *Res Militaris* 4 no 1 (2014): 10.

[124] Ibid 11.

[125] Ibid

leaders of the jihadist movement. The celebration also included further discussion on the strategy of the region. Belmokhtat allied with several groups, including groups that did not support AQIM. As a result, in early 2013, the AQIM Command decided to focus mainly on Libya and Tunisia, leaving the Sahel region mostly to Belmokhtat and Iyan Ag Ghali.[126]

The alliance of AQIM, MNLA, MUJAO and Islamist Ansar al-Dine began to win more and more land in the northern part of Mali, Sharia law was implemented, and training camps for new fighters were established.[127] Slowly AQIM and their allies also started to implement their own economic system. This was enforced through income-generating activities and recruitment of fighters, guides, drivers, medical staff, diggers (informers) and everything needed to run a proper supply chain.[128]

O. Walther and D. Christopoulos have been analysing the leading figures in the Sahel region, which have led to the conclusion that the local alliance in the region are very fragile. It was built on the person such as, Iyad Ag Ghaly, who was a former commander of the Tuareg rebellion in 1990 and the late 2000s, later he was part of MNLA, where he did not manage to gain leadership.[129] He left the group in order to form the Islamist Ansar al-Dine. Another example is Oumar Ould Hamaha, who also changed his alliance from the Malian military to Ansar al-Dine, where he became a commander.[130] Walther and Christopoulos explain why some of these changes occurred, which is that often family or tribal value are more important than formal organisational allegiance. Furthermore, it gives clear indications that the Tuareg is not a homogeneous group, but is split into several individual tribes, living by their own political agenda and competing among each other.[131]

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[126] Olivier J. Walther, & Dimitris Christopoulos, "Islamic Terrorism and the Malian Rebellion," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 no 3 (2015): 509, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.809340 and *Guidère*, "The Timuktu letters," 13.

[127] Jamie Forbes, "Revisiting the Mali al-Qa`ida Playbook: How the Group is Advancing on its Goals in the Sahel," *CTC Sentinel* 11 no 9 (2018): 19 and Richard P. Chelin, "From the Islamic State of Algeria to the Economic Caliphate of the Sahel: The Transformation of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (Routledge, 2018): 12, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1454316.

[128] Richard P. Chelin, "From the Islamic State of Algeria to the Economic Caliphate of the Sahel: The Transformation of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (Routledge, 2018): 12, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1454316.

[129] Scott Shaw, "Fallout in the Sahel: the geographic spread of conflict from Libya to Mali," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 19 no 2 (2013): 202, https://doi.org/10.1080/11926422.2013.805153.

[130] Olivier J. Walther, & Dimitris Christopoulos, "Islamic Terrorism and the Malian Rebellion," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 no 3 (2015): 507, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.809340.

[131] Ibid 509.

The Coup in Mali

As mention earlier, a conflict erupted in January 2012, where the Tuareg started a rebellion in northern Mali, and the government was beginning to lose control over the country. As a result, a military coup occurred on 21 March.[132] One of the reasons for the coup was to replace the ruling President Amadou Toumani Toure, who had not managed to get any positives results on the Tuareg rebellion. Toure was removed from power by Captain Amadou Sanogo, Chairman of the National Committee for the Restoration of Democracy and State.[133] After the coup, governmental institutions were dissolved, and the constitutional rule was suspended. Toure was temporarily replaced by an interim civilian government that was led by President Dioncounda Traore.[134]

According to Adeyemi and Musa, the coup in Mali was an accelerating factor for the total collapse of the northern region, which provided even better conditions for groups like Ansar al-Dine and AQIM to operate in the area. This led to the possibility to declare the independence of the Tuareg state of Azawad.[135]

MILITARY INTERVENTION AND PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA

The French response

With groups like AQIM, MNLA, MUJAO and Ansar al-Dine all operating in the northern region of Mali, expanding their territory, and attracting foreign fighters, both Mali and neighbouring countries started to worry.[136] After the military coup in Mali, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) suspended Mali from taking part in all the community's activities and appointed Burkina Faso's President, Blaise Compaoré, to mediate in the crisis. This led to the agreement among ECOWAS, on their Extraordinary summit in March 2012, that 3000 regional soldiers could be

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[132] Scott Shaw, "Fallout in the Sahel: the geographic spread of conflict from Libya to Mali," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 19 no 2 (2013): 201, https://doi.org/10.1080/11926422.2013.805153.

[133] Adeyemi, Asebayo and Musa, Mahoud N. (2014). Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Terrorist Network inflitrate Northern Mali. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: C Sociology & Culture* Vol.14 (5) pp. 13.

[134] Bassou, By A. and Guennoun, Ihssane. (2017). The Sahel faced woth Al Qeada and Daesh trends: What are possible, pp. 1-12. *Policy* Brief January (1). OCP Policy Center, pp. 4.

[135] Adebayo E Adeyemi & Mahmoud N Musa, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Terrorist Networks infiltrate Northern Mali," *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: C Sociology & Culture* 14 no 5 (Global Journals Inc. 2014): 13.

[136] Stig J. Hansen, "*Horn, Sahel and Rift, Fault-lines of the African Jihad,*" (London: Hurst & Company, 2019): 78

deployed, helping Mali against the Tuareg rebellion if the rebellions did not agree on a final, appropriate and peaceful solution of the conflict.[137]

A peaceful agreement was not found, and on 20 December 2012, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2085 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The Resolution was to authorise the deployment of a regional intervention force, an African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), which had orders to deploy in September 2012.[138] Although that AFISMA was ordered to be ready for autumn 2013, France answered a request from the Malian interim president, Dioncounda Traoré by sending 4500 troops and air support on 11 January 2013, under already mentioned before "Operation Serval". The operation had several objectives: to win back the land from the terror organisations, to neutralise the threat from them, and furthermore to protect French citizens in the region and free the ones, which were being held hostages by AQIM.[139] Shortly after France started their mission, they were reinforced by troops from Benin, Chad, Nigeria and Togo.[140] France and their allies were winning terrain in northern Mali, or at least it seemed so. According to S. Hansen, this led to, AQIM, Ansar al-Dine and other groups in the region merely changing their approach and spreading more out.[141] With France reducing their forces in the region, the best they could do was to disrupt AQIM's businesses, such as drug trafficking and tax collection.[142] Not all agreed that it had an effect. T. Kouts claims that AQIM's financial network did not appear to have been damaged in any way that mattered for the organisation.[143]

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[137] Adebayo E Adeyemi & Mahmoud N Musa, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Terrorist Networks infiltrate Northern Mali," *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: C Sociology & Culture* 14 no 5 (Global Journals Inc. 2014): 15.

[138] Stig J. Hansen, "*Horn, Sahel and Rift, Fault-lines of the African Jihad,*" (London: Hurst & Company, 2019): 79 and Adeyemi & Musa, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM," 15.

[139] Theodore Kouts, "Illicit Financial Flows: The Role of Al Qeada and its Affiliates in the Islamic Maghreb." *OECD Development CO-Operation Working Paper* 63 (2019): 10, https://doi.org/10.1787/22220518.

[140] Stephen Burgess, "Military Intervention in Africa: French and US Approaches Compared," *ASPJ Africa & Francophonie* 2 no 2 (2018): 69., Stig J. Hansen, "*Horn, Sahel and Rift, Fault-lines of the African Jihad,*" (London: Hurst & Company, 2019). pp. 79 and Adebayo E Adeyemi & Mahmoud N Musa, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Terrorist Networks infiltrate Northern Mali," *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: C Sociology & Culture* 14 no 5 (Global Journals Inc. 2014): 15.

[141] Stig J. Hansen, "*Horn, Sahel and Rift, Fault-lines of the African Jihad,*" (London: Hurst & Company, 2019): 81.

[142] Ibid

[143] Theodore Kouts, "Illicit Financial Flows: The Role of Al Qeada and its Affiliates in the Islamic Maghreb." *OECD Development CO-Operation Working Paper* 63 (2019): 10, https://doi.org/10.1787/22220518.

Although France did pull out some troop of Mali, they spread troops over a larger area covering five countries in the Sahel region in an attempt to create more stabilisation and put more pressure on groups like AQIM, Ansar al-Dine and Boko Haram instead.[144] Besides the French soldiers who were deployed in various places across the Shale region, France also played a role in rebuilding the Malian army. They started with a training program for the Malian Army, a project they later delegated to the EU.[145]

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

Although France still had troops in Mali and still had Operation Serval, which later was replaced by Operation Barkhan in 2014,[146] it was not enough to stabilise the country. The UN Security Council established The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) on 25 April 2013. The rules of MINUSMA were to support the political processes in Mali, together with several security tasks. The focus for the operation was supposed to be on security, stabilisation and protection of the civilian.[147] UN Security Council had on 10 November 2014 a meeting regarding MINUSMA because no other peacekeeping missions had a higher number of fatalities since Somalia in 1994. For the time period MINUSMA had been running, 35 soldiers had been killed and 138 wounded in attacks from terror groups in the region.[148] Moreover, the mistrust from some of the involved partners did not make the MINUSMA mission easier.

According to A. Boutellis, the armed groups, including the Tuareg, were suspicious and doubting MINUSMA, believing them to be partial to the government. The government noted that UN was legitimising groups, if only they started to implement stabilisation projects proving basic services such as electricity and water, however, these were groups, which the government had been fighting

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[144] Christopher Griffin, "Operation Barkhane and Boko Haram: French Counterterrorism and Military Cooperation in the Sahel," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 27 no 5 (2016): 897, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2016.1208283.
[145] Ibid 905.
[146] Theodore Kouts, "Illicit Financial Flows: The Role of Al Qeada and its Affiliates in the Islamic Maghreb." *OECD Development CO-Operation Working Paper* 63 (2019): 10, https://doi.org/10.1787/22220518.
[147] UN. "About MINUSMA," United Nations, accessed May 24, 2020, https://minusma.unmissions.org/en/about-minusma.
[148] Arthur Boutellis, "Can the UN stabilize Mali? Towards a UN-stabilization doctrine?," *Stability* 4 no 1 (2015): 1, http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.fz.

against before. Furthermore, there was a mistrust from the civilian, who claimed that the UN did not do enough to prevent the armed groups in the region.[149]

As a peacekeeping mission, MINUSMA had many restrictions, which made it difficult to operate. One of the issues was the lack of an executive policing mandate, giving them the right to stop and search vehicles. It was especially important in Gao, where one of the main junctions connecting the southern part of West Africa to North Africa and Europe are located. It is also a place which was well known for being a gateway for smuggling anything from humans, drugs or weapons.[150]

Furthermore, as mentioned, MINUSMA is a peacekeeping force, meaning that use of force is only allowed in case of self-defence. MINUSMA troops are not allowed to use offensive force but have to rely on the French anti-terror unit in the region, which is part of Operation Barkhane.[151]

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[149] Arthur Boutellis, "Can the UN stabilize Mali? Towards a UN-stabilization doctrine?," *Stability* 4 no 1 (2015): 6, http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.fz.
[150] André Sonnichsen, "Udfordringerne i Mali," *Udenrigs* 3. (2015): 83.
[151] Ibid

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The history of the Tuareg tells the story of a group of people, who used to live freely in Northern Africa, being in control of most of the trading routes in the region.

However, much of this changed when European came to the region. In 1880 France decided to build a railway across the Sahara Desert.[152] By not involving the local inhabitants in the region, the foundation for success was limited. However, the Tuareg offered to guide them through the desert, but instead of doing so, they led the Frenchmen deeper and deeper into the desert, where they poisoned them. The ones that survived the poisoning attempt suffered a horrible walk out of the desert. Many were killed either by other survivors in order to get food or died in the harsh environment. The approach from the Frenchmen was disrespectful and unfriendly, and the reaction from the Tuareg was a clear signal, that they would defend what was theirs. The rumours about the Tuareg spread quickly, and it would take two decades before any European went back to the Tuareg land.[153] This episode proves that the Tuareg were determined, and not interested in "sharing" their land. Not surprisingly the Tuareg were willing to go far for defending what they believed was theirs. An attack on their land was an attack on their freedom, independence on basic human rights and needs. Their right and freedom to live, work, feed their families, have a shelter, education, simply their home. When people are under oppression and their home is under fire they fight back, they are willing to sacrifice their legacy, their rules, morality their whole lives for something they believe belongs to them. The Tuareg tended to view the African leadership of their countries with resentment and contempt for their culture and way of life. They have been witnessing their home and values being destroyed by outsiders and they were not willing to accept that.

During the French colonialism, the Tuareg resisted foreign occupation at first but were crushed by the French authorities. The relationship with France did not improve when large areas of land were forcibly taken from the Tuareg. The land which the Tuareg had been able to use previously, and where they could move freely, was now restricted for them and was used to produce various goods for the French. Forcing people away from "home" with no legitimate reason most certainly resolves

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[152] Jeremy Keenan. "The Tuareg: The Blue-Veiled Desert Warriors (Morocco & Algeria – Full Documentary)," YouTube video, 00:30, Tracks, May 4, 2018 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7SL8-uNrIk&t=361s.
[153] Ibid 01:30.

in a reaction, some sort of revolt from the wronged party. With the continued and strengthen pushing from France, a contra-reaction seems inevitable.

Later in the 1930s, when France expanded their industry, many Tuaregs were forced to move and ended up as displaced people. Just looking at these few facts, it seems obvious that the Tuareg were self-aware of who they were, and they were under pressure and wanted to have their "own land", freedom and way of living back. Thus, the first Tuareg rebellion was unavoidable.

As K. Keita points out, the new president of Mali, after the French colonial time, wanted to follow French footsteps.[154] By doing so, the Tuareg were once again left out and saw no other way to get their demands heard than to start a rebellion. From a historical point of view, this is interesting, especially considering the history, this is also a clear example of what Leopold von Ranke said "es eigentlich gewessen". Judging from the outcome, the Malian government, at the time, did not take the Tuareg history and culture and how "it really was" into consideration. Furthermore, looking at other sources, for example, K. Keita article, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", what comes to mind is that history has had some effect among the people of Mali. Awareness of the history starts to play a more critical role, as it is for example seen during the second Tuareg rebellion, where the new president of Mali, Konaré, who tries to in cooperating the Tuareg in the Malian system, in a new and different way than earlier. History of the Sahel region has played a very important role on how the country of Mali was shaped and has developed over time. The same as everywhere else, neglecting the history and peoples' identity lead to protests, frustrations and wanting to change this situation thus rebellion. The Tuareg perceived the government aiming at destroying their culture and they were aware that they were not valued as citizens. So many unjust inequalities against this unique group, the Tuareg, together with long and bitter history of insurgency generated hatred on both sides. History and ethnography of the inhabitants is extremely important and it has to be respected so the other side does not feel undermined. But before it is respected it has to be unfold and understood and this is not always in the interest of the leaders.

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[154] Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): 103. http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

After colonial times French had become the official language in Mali. Still, the Tuareg had their own language, which according to Rodd and Keita, is part of what connected the Tuareg across borders of several countries they were living in. Additional to the language, the Tuareg were keeping on to their own culture as a way to keep their identity and sense of belonging to a society, their own society. The government failed to address underlying grievances and inequalities between the Tuareg and the Malian people. The Tuareg felt excluded and not valued as citizens. They needed their original way of living, their norms to be respected. The need to belong to something bigger, like a society is part of the human nature everywhere. This feeling of belonging to a society, through the culture, was another thing that the new president wanted to change, in an attempt to integrate the Tuareg with the rest of society in Mali. Clearly, the attempt of replacing the ancient culture created even more mistrust to the government.

Moreover, Keita mentions, the Tuareg was often seen as lazy by other West Africans.[155] The basis for that could be because of their way of living, not taking part in the common social activities and not following the general norms in the country. However, the real reason to create such a stereotype of the Tuareg could be to deeper the differences and justify further actions aiming at undermining the Tuareg and their culture.

As also Y. Ronen points out, the governmental attempts, to incorporate the Tuareg, could easily be seen as a new form of colonialism,[156] or even neo-colonialism where the economics, globalisation, cultural imperialism, and conditional aid are used to influence a country or in this case a certain group, such as the Tuareg. However, in the case of France involvement in Mali, some would say that the French foreign policy is changing away some aspects of neo-colonialism, this is supported by scholars such as Catherine Gegout.[157] As it has been seen countless times around the world, forcing people to fit in, in a specific group has never ended with a success. The government failed addressing the Tuareg frustration when there was a time to do it. Instead, the government has been using its power forcing the Tuareg to change their traditional lifestyle and to adapt to the others. At the same time neglecting the region they were living in, not providing the necessary services and

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[155] Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): 103. http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.

[156] Ronen, Yehudit. Libya, the Tuareg and Mali on the eve of the "arab Spring" and in its aftermath: an anatomy of changed relations. pp. 544-559. *Journal of North African Studies* Vol. 18 (4) (2013): 549.

[157] Gegout, Catherine."Realism, Neocolonialism and European Military Intervention in Africa" in *Fear and uncertainty in Europe: the return to realism?,* eds. Roberto Belloni, Vincent Della Sala & Paul Viotti, Palgrave, (2019): 265

infrastructure. The way of handling the situation, by the government made the situation tense. It was clear that the government seem themselves as superior, deciding on the Tuareg future and therefore the Tuareg must do as told. If the government really wanted to make a change, the respect and the cultural history should had played a crucial part in their plan in integrating the Tuareg in Malian society. If only the government was willing to respect the identity of the Tuareg, it would had showed the Tuareg that the government was interested in making them part of the society. Instead the government chose to press and used the role as the colonial powers had showed earlier and that did not bring positive feelings. As K. Metz explains, back in time, in late 1790, France made an attempt to edit history in Europe in order to create a "new history", but they failed because Europe already had knowledge of their own history and culture.[158] There was a foundation to build on, not a bare ground where one could start from scratch. As it turned out in Mali, Metz's words were correct, and the Tuareg already had a strong foundation to stand on.

Climate change and droughts have been another setback for the Tuareg and especially their way of living. The Malian government has been blamed by international interest groups to withhold food from the Tuareg. It is believed that this was done in order to weaken their position in the region or get them to leave altogether.[159] Some Tuaregs moved to areas where they were able to get some aid or find other ways to survive, some even created small settlements. According to Shreya Mitra, a situation like this is bound to end up with a bigger conflict, as she says, "Conflicts breads other conflicts[160]". Furthermore, she says that to prevent an escalation of a situation like the one in Mali, matters need to be taken. Especially when the economy is heavily depending on natural resources as it was for the Tuareg. Up to 80% of the livelihood for the Tuareg is dependent on land and water for their animals and farming.[161] With the continuation of the climate change problem, this issue needs attention in the future as well.

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[158] Karl H Metz, "Historiography as Political Activity: Heinrich von Treitchke and the Historical Reconstruction of Politics", in *The Discovery of Historicity in German Idealism and Historism*, ed. Peter Koslowski, (Springer, 2006): 103.
[159] Kalifa Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no 3 (1998): 110. http://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221.
[160] Shreya Mitra. "Mali's climate security trap – how drought and heavy rains impact violence and migration," Youtube video 00:43, Berlin, Adelphi, November 22, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baTV65soXnY.
[161] Mitra. "Mali's climate security trap," 01:05.

Climate security plays a massive role in Mali and after the two droughts in 1968 and 1974 and then again in 1980 and 1985, it is clear that this issue should have been addressed and solutions or plans developed. Devastating droughts, combined with unpredictably heavy rains, had affected traditional herders and wiped out agricultural livelihoods. As a result, pastoralists could not feed their animals and were forced into the valleys where conflicts often arise with farmers, namely the original Malian people, over land and water. According to Aliou M. Dia, it is vital to look at the climate situation in the region in order to secure peace and stability not only in Mali but in the entire Sahel region.[162] As mentioned, climate change will be part of future problems, with a damaging impact on the livelihood for many people, including the Tuareg. If this problem is not taken seriously by the governments, groups like the Tuareg are forced to find help elsewhere. An undermined group of people in need will go a long way to get the help they need. And in the end, they will not be critical from whom or where the support comes from. The most important is to be able to protect themselves and their homes. When the aid was offered by the terror groups, it was a good solution for the Tuareg. They got help in fighting for their rights and it also provided them some kind of stability, in form of jobs. The Tuareg could often relate to the terror organisations, since they had a common enemy, a government who alienate and neglect them. The terror organizations were aware that a group being contempt for decades is determined to fight back. These organizations just had to direct the existing anger and frustration. Situations like this provide various terror organisations with a good foundation to establish themselves in such a region and expand terror.

S. Randall and A. Giuffrida explain that in 1988 the government did a study on sedentarisation, coming to the conclusion that there was an increasing appreciation of the socio-cultural significance of a nomadic lifestyle.[163] But as soon as the aid was finished, people had to leave the settlements in order to survive. The government disregarded them, with minimal or no support from the government, many were forced to leave the country. Understandably, this resulted in resentment, since first the right to the land was taken from the Tuareg and then they were left to themselves with no help to survive.

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[162] Aliou M. Dia, "Mali's climate security trap – how drought and heavy rains impact violence and migration," Youtube video 01:40, Berlin, Adelphi, November 22, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baTV65soXnY.

[163] Sara Randall & Alessandra Giuffrida, "Forced Migration, Sedentarization and Social change: Malian Kel Tamasheq", in *Nomadic Societies in the Middle East and North Africa,* Ed. Dawn Chatty
 (Brill, 2006): 437 https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047417750_017.

According to several scholars, such as B. Lecocq, G. Klute, and N. Cronyn, necessary and missing aid from Mali was provided to the Tuareg by Libya. Libya had a great interest in gaining more control in the Sahel region. By providing aid, Libya was getting support from the Tuareg.[164] Some of the Tuareg who left Mali received military training from the Libyan regime. The Tuareg also had access to military education, which some did take, and that would prove valuable for the rebellions to come.[165] The Tuareg involvement with the Libyan regime can be seen in different aspects. One, of course, being able to receive help in order to survive, another can surely be to get military training and combat experience in order to fight their own battles back in Mali, trying to win the right to their own land. Another sign, showing the military training was not only for the Libyan regime, can be seen in the development of some of the groups. Starting PFLACS, which was formed in Libya, received military training, saw combat and then later disbanded. When the Tuareg were invited to Libya, they were not given much, but it was better than what the Malian government was offering. Although that Ghaddafi did not treat the Tuareg the same way as the Arabs, the outcome was significantly better, and they felt welcomed in the country.[166] Coming from a background as the Tuareg, a nomadic people, in the past being free to move between regions and countries, to be "locked" in by borders and orders. And then not being welcomed in their "own" country, forced to live after certain rules they could not relate to which not leave much room for their own culture. It is not surprising that some found it attractive to join the Libyan regime. Although they were not treated as equal in the beginning, the benefits outweighed the negatives. Furthermore, some would have seen the opportunity for the military training as a chance to gain crucial knowledge for the Tuareg's own battles back in Mali.

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[164] Grégory Chauzal, and Thibault van Damme, "*The roots of Mali's conflict, Moving beyond the 2012 crisis*." CRU report. Netherland's Institute of International Relations, Clingendael. (2015): 44.

[165] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 30, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7, and Nelson Cronyn, "*Global Change and Livelihood adaptations among The Tuareg of Niger.*" (PhD diss., The University of Arizona, 2012): 27.

[166] Vice. "*Libya's Quiet War: The Tuareg of South Libya*," YouTube video. 04:00, Vice news, February 17, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4X-ps7QyBjI&t=244s.

When the second Tuareg rebellion started in 1990, the group MPLA had grown in numbers, and many of the members were Tuaregs returning from Libya.[167] As it was seen during the first Tuareg rebellion, the Malian government was quite hard against the rebels, but also against the civilian population in the area. This kind of violence made even more people to join the rebel groups and turn against the government. Furthermore, K. Keita brings up the fact that the rebellion was supported from outside Mali. The government was brutal, first neglecting and later killing civilian men, women and children in a specific part of the country.[168] It is not hard to understand why someone would help the rebels against what clearly was a harsh and unfair government. The government that was deliberately mistreating an ethnic group, with strong connections to other countries and groups in West Africa and especially in the Sahel region.[169]

President Moussa Traoré was removed from power and replaced by Alpha Oumar Konaré that came together with a democratic government. In prolonging the service period of the new president, a peace agreement was also established, along with several initiatives to integrate the Tuareg with the rest of the population successfully. It all started to look much brighter for the Tuareg, though internally among the Tuareg, there were troubles.[170] It might not be so surprising considering that the Tuareg were heterogeneous and had several rebel groups, family branches and in general, a very spread society. Different groups started to fight internally about the power in the Tuareg

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[167] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 426, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431, Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 112, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221 and Yehudit Ronen, "Libya, the Tuareg and Mali on the eve of the "arab Spring" and in its aftermath: an anatomy of changed relations", *Journal of North African Studies* 18 no 4 (2013): 550 https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2013.809660.

[168] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 425, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431, Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 112, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221, Sara Randall & Alessandra Giuffrida, "Forced Migration, Sedentarization and Social change: Malian Kel Tamasheq", in *Nomadic Societies in the Middle East and North Africa,* Ed. Dawn Chatty (Brill, 2006): 438 https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047417750_017 and Ronen, "Libya," 550.

[169] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars &* Insurgencies 9 no 3, (1998): 112, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221 & Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali and Niger", In *Secessionism in African politics*, Eds. Lotje de Vries, Mareike Schomerus, and Pierra Englebert, (Palgrave macmillan, 2019): 32, http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90206-7.

[170] Baz Lecocq and Georg Klute, "Tuareg Separatism in Mali", *International Journal* 68 no 3 (2013): 426, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702013505431.

society. This created mistrust among the part of the Tuareg society that was not involved in the power battle.

After ten years of peace, the violence escalated again, from a historical point, it is not surprising. However, a peace agreement was made in 1992; many of the issues discussed in the earlier chapters, such as the Tuareg history and culture were still not addressed and not solved. In the same time, the Islamic groups had also grown in the country, and with AQIM becoming a more significant player in the region, the Tuareg saw some opportunities to benefit themselves. The hard conditions in northern Mali had left the region with a bad economy and money was needed,[171] both in order for the civilian population to survive. Still, money was also indeed required to run operations against the Malian government and other rebel groups. And despite the fact that the Tuareg and AQIM did not have the same goals, they still had a common interest in the region, and this bonded them together. The collaboration between AQIM and the Tuareg was beneficial for both partners, where AQIM had a safe haven, and an ally and the Tuareg had an ally as well, who helped gaining control over northern Mali from the government, leading the Tuareg towards their goal of an independent state.[172]

Mali asked the United Nations for help in 2012, which the UN accepted. Also, France sent help to Mali. The support the UN and France sent was very different: where France sent combat troops in order to fight the terror organizations, the UN sent peacekeeping soldiers.[173] By accepting help from France, both the Tuareg and AQIM was given a new "target" and a common enemy. Although France managed to push the groups to more remote areas, it was only for a short period and although the

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[171] Kalifa Keite, "Conflict and conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali", *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 9 no 3, (1998): 120, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319808423221 and Yehudit Ronen, "Libya, the Tuareg and Mali on the eve of the "arab Spring" and in its aftermath: an anatomy of changed relations", *Journal of North African Studies* 18 no 4 (2013): 551 https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2013.809660.

[172] Ricardo R. Larémont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4 no 4 (2011): 247, https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2011.628630.

[173] André Sonnichsen, "Udfordringerne i Mali," *Udenrigs* 3. (2015): 81 and Theodore Kouts, "Illicit Financial Flows: The Role of Al Qeada and its Affiliates in the Islamic Maghreb." *OECD Development CO-Operation Working Paper* 63 (2019): 10, https://doi.org/10.1787/22220518.

attacks from AQIM themselves decreased, since 2012 the attacks from AQIM affiliates have only increased in Mali.[174]

The UN peacekeeping mission is putting quite a lot of limitations on the UN troops, making it difficult to operate in the region. Since the UN troops are only allowed to defend themselves, they have to rely on cooperation with other units in the region,[175] who have the mandate to interfere when the Islamists engage in combat. UN's biggest weapon is negotiation and sanctioning. The effectiveness of such a mission is questionable, and together with the high cost, one could think why the UN is still in the region and what the real focus of the mission should be. Should MINUSMA support counterterrorism and stabilization in the region or instead focus on politics?

Is it sufficient that Mali would not immediately collapse or break down, but would continue its slow process of destabilization? A very relevant question is how to move the mission, Mali and the Tuareg forward? Terror organizations need to be stopped, but a peacekeeping mission is not sufficient. A harder line is necessary. However, France might not be the solution to this problem due to their historical, damaging involvement in the region and even though that it was on request from the Malian government, that France is an oppressor and this involvement works against them.

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[174] Richard P. Chelin, "From the Islamic State of Algeria to the Economic Caliphate of the Sahel: The Transformation of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (Routledge, 2018): 12, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1454316.

[175] André Sonnichsen, "Udfordringerne i Mali," *Udenrigs* 3. (2015): 83.

CONCLUSION

Why the Tuareg and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb became affiliated? A short conclusion is that a series of historical events led the affiliation. By losing their land and freedom, together with being overlooked and treated like second-hand citizens, led to a need to claim, what the Tuareg believes is theirs. AQIM were able to provide help, to gain those goals and wise-versa.

By using publicly available sources, this thesis outlines, from a historical point of view, why the Tuareg ended up becoming affiliated with AQIM. The Tuareg share some similarities with other pastoral groups in Africa, such as the similar cultural and ecological environment. However, very few of them share a similar modern history as the one for the Tuareg, and they are not spread over a large area as the Tuareg are. The Tuareg history is filled with evidence of a tough and hard life, created by droughts, rebellions and connections to Islamic extremists.

From colonial times, Tuaregs have been pushed aside and been seen like second rank people by the Malian government. Furthermore, they have been forced away from large areas in northern Africa, especially in the Sahel region, they used to call home. The Tuareg felt neglected, which led to the first Tuareg rebellion. During the first rebellion, the government answered with military power in order to restore peace in the region. The military solution was brutal and did not take any of the issues of the core matters into account. When order was restored in the region, the government kept the military present to prevent any follow-up attempts.

After the first rebellion, the Tuareg did not manage to get their voice heard by the government, leaving the situation unsolved. Not long after the rebellion ended, Mali was struck by droughts creating a series of new problems and once again, it was clear that the government was not interested in helping the Tuareg. Many Tuaregs were forced to migrate to other areas in order to survive, and many young people used the situation to seek adventures and material benefits. With so many leaving the region, the ones staying behind were left with even bigger mistrust towards the government.

The second Tuareg rebellion started in 1990, one of the important reason for the outbreak was the poor treatment of Tuaregs who returned from Libya, and the government lack of interest in the Northern part of the country. The Malian government did not try to find a solution with the Tuareg, taking into account the historical aspect. Another important factor was the help provided from the outside. It is doubtful that the rebellion would have had such a strong impact without help from the outside. The new president of Mali, Konaré, took several measures in order to find a solution for the problems in the country. Together with his government, he made a reform, where power got more decentralised in order to give the local communities the possibility to have a much bigger influence on local matters. Another essential part of the reform was the prioritising of financial means in Mali, where before northern Mali had been bypassed for the majority, finally now more budget has been received to develop and solved other issues such as resettlement of refugees. Moreover, the military presence in the northern part of Mali was reduced in an attempt to get the nomads to feel more secure. Furthermore, more former rebels were given positions in the security forces and civil service. Although the government had launched a series of measures to secure the peace, internal troubles within the Tuareg created new riots and mistrust, eventually leading to yet another Tuareg rebellion.

In that period, the cooperation between certain Tuareg groups and AQIM became closer. Although the Tuareg and AQIM did not share the same goal, they did have enough in common, to work together in order to get to their own respective goals. There seem to have been interconnections through some strong leaders, who have either have been changing groups from rebels to radical or vice versa. Apart from that, family or tribe connections have played a role in the alliances as well as economic benefits. The network inside Mali is made out of a few very well-connected rebels and Islamists, who are in charge of the coordination between the different groups.
It seems clear that the ideological ties and goals shared by the rebels and the Islamists allow them to overcome any other differences they might have.

Looking at history, it is not surprising that the Tuareg find allies in order to gain their objective. As a community, the Tuareg have been pushed aside for years. Whenever they have tried to speak up, they have either been overlooked, pushed away or ended up in heavy battles all the way up till

2012, where they proclaimed the state of Azawad and after many years of fighting finally had their own land again. However, the joy was brief and already in 2013 MNLA renounced its claim of independence for Azawad.

Although the Tuareg had proclaimed the independent state of Azawad, the riot did not stop, resulting in the Malian government asking the UN for help to gain control in the region. The request was answered by both the UN and France, but in two very different ways. France, who responded first, sent combat troops to the region, while the UN sent peacekeeping soldiers. France presence in Mali and the Sahel region does provide a target, both for AQIM and the Tuareg. However, since France is present with the operation Serval and later operation Barkhane, an anti-terror operation, compared to the UN's MINUSMA operation, France has the mandate to use force in their operations.

In a conflict area like Mali, and in general the Sahel region, it is vital that the military forces have the opportunity to attack or search their objective and in case of coming under enemy fire, that they can fight back, beyond only defending themselves. When fighting terrorist and rebel groups, it is often challenging to see who an enemy is and often there is little time to react to an attack or threat, as in the case of Mali. France has the opportunity to make a difference, where MINUSMA is much more restricted. The MINUSMA operation is a peacekeeping mission. However, it is complicated to keep the peace when the region is not peaceful. With the mandate that MINUSMA has, they are only allowed to defend themselves in case of attacks, making it much more challenging to interfere and react, when something happens.

It is clear, that the government of Mali or any other government dealing with the similar situation, should take the history of the region and of the Tuareg into account. Only then a peaceful and stable solution to the violence can be found. It is also vital for the peace, to stop the various terror organisations in the region and again here, it is very important to remember the history. Asking France for help will not be the answer, there is simply too much of mistrust and a bad history between the Tuareg and France. An independent actor should get involved.

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