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JIHADISM EXPANSION IN EGYPT AFTER 2011 ON THE EXAMPLE OF ANSAR BAYT AL-MAQDIS, SINAI PROVINCE AND OTHER STRUCTURES

INTRODUCTION

The escalation of terrorist attacks in the Sinai Peninsula has gained widespread interest of the international community in recent years. However, this is not a new phenomenon, but only a manifestation of long-term growth of the role of extremism, perceived by marginalised communities as part of the fight against state power.

We can differentiate four major periods in the history of the proliferation of jihadism on the territory of the Sinai Peninsula. The first of them covers the years 2004–2011 in which sporadic terrorist attacks occurred, although resulting in numerous victims. This phase ended with the outbreak of the ‘Arab Spring’¹, as a result of which – after the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak – the power was taken over by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). Spectacular attacks gave way to smaller attacks on infrastructure targets. There was also an influx of terrorists through the Israeli-Egyptian border. The third period began in June 2012 after Muhammad Morsi, associated with the Muslim Brotherhood, was elected to the post of president. In August 2012 a military operation (Operation Sinai) was launched, resumed in

¹ Despite the disputes about the name itself, ‘Arab Spring’ commonly refers to mass demonstrations which started in December 2010 in Tunisia. In the majority of countries the situation remained at the level of protests and self-immolations, while in others the protests were accompanied by a change in the system of government. In some countries revolutions and civil wars broke out.

mid-2013². At the same time concerns about the safety of the state authorities increased, which was reflected in the assassination of General Mohamed el-Saeed, advisor of Interior Minister Mohammed Ibrahim, in January 2014³. We have observed the last stage since the overthrow of President Mohammed Mursi, that is since July 2013. In connection with the progressive persecution of Islamist groups, jihadism has begun to gain in importance, and groups identifying with this ideology and social movement have increased their operational capabilities, which is reflected in their increased activity outside the Sinai Peninsula.

Such an unstable situation requires constant enrichment of literature classifying the processes of destabilisation of the Middle East and describing regional armed conflicts, including interstate wars, internationalised internal conflicts and internal armed conflicts. The aim of the article is to present complex issues of expansion of jihadism in Egypt and its impact on the security in the national and international dimension. Egyptian jihadists direct their attacks on public infrastructure and security forces, cooperating with local communities, mostly Bedouins, who have developed aversion to the authorities because of many years of marginalisation⁴. However, the destabilisation of the state – located in a region where there is permanent destabilisation – also affects the security in the regional and global dimensions.

THE GENESIS OF EGYPTIAN JIHADISM

Several factors affect the growth of the attractiveness of Egypt as a suitable environment for the development of international jihadism. These include: poor control of security in border regions and insufficient security of movement of people across Egyptian borders, difficulties in the control of the Sinai Peninsula as well as long-standing policy of marginalisation of tribal communities by the state authorities.

² Taha, H. 2016. Militarisation and security challenges in Egypt. In: Hokayem, E., Taha, H. eds. *Egypt after the Spring. Revolt and reaction*. New York: Routledge, pp. 178–179.

³ Cunningham, E. 2014. Aide to Egypt's interior minister killed; ousted president Morsi appears in court. *The Washington Post* 28 January 2014. Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/aide-to-interior-minister-killed-ousted-egyptian-president-morsi-appears-in-court/2014/01/28/2773fbfe-8816-11e3-a5bd-844629433ba3_story.html [Accessed: 25 June 2015].

⁴ Taha, H., op. cit. In: Hokayem, E., Taha, H. eds., op. cit., p. 180.

The roots of Egyptian jihadism precede the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak, and later Mohammed Mursi. In fact jihadist activism in the Sinai Peninsula dates back to the early twenty-first century and is associated with the brutal suppression of all forms of terrorism by the Egyptian security forces. For decades, despite the activities of the Egyptian security forces, including the military intelligence forces (*Mukhabarat el-Harbeya*) tourists or international peacekeeping forces in the Sinai Peninsula have been periodically attacked by terrorists. Jihadism in Egypt has gained importance as a result of the marginalisation of tribal communities and their exclusion from development projects. Intensification of the attacks took place in 2004–2006, when a group of Bedouin and Palestinian militants carried out a series of high-profile attacks in the Red Sea resorts of Sharm el-Sheikh, Taba and Dahab, in which more than 120 people were killed and at least 350 were injured. After seven years, terrorism spectacularly returned to Egypt as a result of the massacre in Luxor which took place in November 1997⁵. As a result of these attacks thousands of people were arrested, most of them were Bedouins. Services inflicted torture, even against women and children, which deepened the aversion of tribal communities to the central authorities. In July 2005, there was another terrorist attack. In Sharm el-Sheikh 70 people were killed and 150 wounded. Al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad (TSJ)⁶ admitted to the attack, a group founded in 1997 by Khaled Mosa, Nasir Khamis el-Malahy and Salem Khedra el-Shanou, recruiting members in local mosques. The success of the group, however, was short-lived. Ruthless repression by the Egyptian regime crushed the jihadists of the TSJ, killing the leaders in 2005 and 2006, and the group has *de facto* disintegrated⁷.

Over the next years relative peace prevailed in the Sinai Peninsula. This stabilisation turned out to be only temporary. At that time the Gaza Strip was the area of the development of Salafi jihadism which spread to neighbouring territories, primarily to the Sinai Peninsula. With the outbreak of the ‘Arab Spring’⁸ and the destabilisation of the region, new jihadi groups were created,

⁵ On 17 November 1997 Muslim militants made an attack, killing 62 people, mostly foreign tourists at the entrance to the Temple of Hatshepsut in Luxor. The attack was probably carried out by Jemaah Islamiah, linked to al-Qaeda.

⁶ Alexandrani, I. 2015. Sinai: from revolution to terrorism. In: Rougier, B., Lacroix, S. eds. *Egypt's revolutions: politics, religion, and social movements*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 181–182.

⁷ Awad, M., Tadros, S. 2015. Bay’a remorse? Wilayat Sinai and the Nile Valley. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, vol. 8, issue no. 8. Available at: https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/CTC_Sentinel-Vol8Issue815.pdf, pp. 2–3.

⁸ More on 25 January 2011 revolution in Egypt in: Lipa, M. 2014. Arabska wiosna w Egipcie. Uwarunkowania, przebieg i skutki. [The Arab Spring in Egypt. Conditions,

among others,; Mujahideen Shura Council of Jerusalem, supporters of Jihad in the Sinai Peninsula, Soldiers of Allah or Ansar al-Sharia⁹.

Table 1

The leaders of Egypt in the years 1981–2015

Leader	Term of office	Post
Hosni Mubarak	X 1981 – II 2011	President
Mohamed Hussein Tantawi	II 2011 – VI 2012	The head of state as Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces
Muhammad Mursi	VI 2012 – VII 2013	President
Abd al-Fattah as-Sisi	3–4 VII 2013	Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces
Adli Mansur	VII 2013 – VI 2014	Temporary president
Abd al-Fattah as-Sisi	VI 2014 –	President

Source: own study.

Despite this, a factor conditioning the spread of jihadism in Egypt was the fall of Mubarak's regime in 2011. This event created chaos conducive to the increase of the role of jihadism. Fugitives who managed to escape from prisons, as a result of the chaos after the overthrow of the president, joined the groups professing this ideology. They were joined in turn by foreign militants, penetrating the poorly protected Egyptian borders from unstable countries, such as Libya or Mali. In particular the Libyan crisis contributed to their inflow, it facilitated the smuggling of weapons and the influx of militants, allowing for collaboration between jihadist groups, including in the form of training of new radicals.

Thus, among the factors that contributed to the deterioration of security in the Sinai Peninsula we should enumerate the following:

- the overthrow of Muammar al-Gaddafi which affected the intensification of the flow of forces and means from Libya to the Sinai Peninsula;
- the release of jihadists from Egyptian prisons by the transitional military government;
- relations between the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula;

course and consequences.] In: Szczepankiewicz-Rudzka, E. *Arabska wiosna w Afryce Północnej: przyczyny, przebieg, skutki*. [The Arab Spring in North Africa: causes, course, consequences.] Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka.

⁹ Awad, M., Tadros, S., op. cit., p. 3.

- cutting off smuggling routes from the Gaza Strip by the administration of Abd al-Fattah as-Sisi, which reduces the traditional Bedouin sources of income;
- the proliferation of jihadism ideology on the regional and global scale, including the activities of the Islamic State.

THE REBELLION OF ANSAR BAYT AL-MAQDIS

According to local sources, in 2011 a group of Palestinian jihadists joined TSJ establishing Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (Supporters of Jerusalem, *Anṣār Bayt al-Maqdis* – ABM). An emir of TSJ was Palestinian Hasham al-Saedi, who had fought in the ranks of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), and then in the Islamic State of Iraq – (ISI). The creation of the group was directly inspired by the organisational activity of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq¹⁰, showing a number of similarities, also in the ideological dimension¹¹. Drawing inspiration from Al-Zarqawi's activity, the leader transformed the ideological movement into an organised structure consisting of many cells. At that time the organisation maintained a close relationship with the Mujahedeen Shura Council of Jerusalem (*Majlis Shura al-Mujahedeen fi Aknaf Bayt al-Maqdis*), operation in the Gaza Strip. Just like other groups coming from the Sinai Peninsula, the Mujahedeen Shura Council wanted to weaken Hamas, accusing militants of this group of conspiring against Salafism¹².

Thus, the group Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis was created in 2011 after the overthrow of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The dictator ruled Egypt from 1981, creating an authoritarian political system that functioned with minor changes until early 2011¹³. As a result of protests, the leader decided not to apply for another term in the presidential election and power was taken by Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Armed

¹⁰ The founder and leader of an organisation called Jamaat al-Tawhid wa-l-Jihad (JTWJ) which later turned into al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI).

¹¹ Azoulay, R. 2015. *Islamic State franchising. Tribes, transnational jihadi networks and generational shifts*. CRU report. Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, Available at: http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/Rivka-Azoulay_Islamic_State_expansion_CRU_April2015.pdf, pp. 24–25.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 25.

¹³ See Lipa, M. 2013. *Autorytaryzm na arabskim Bliskim Wschodzie: Egipt w latach 1981–2010*. [Authoritarianism in the Arab Middle East: Egypt in the years 1981–2010.] Warszawa: Askon, Polska Akademia Nauk. Instytut Kultur Śródziemnomorskich i Orientalnych.

Forces. In 2012 Muhammad Mursi became the first democratically elected president in the history of the state. The new leader increased his prerogatives by means of decrees, which triggered another wave of protests, as the result of which the newly elected president was overthrown in July 2013. As a result of the coup, the military took power under the leadership of General Abd al-Fattah as-Sisi, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, who appointed Adli Mahmud Mansur for a temporary president of the country. In the face of these events, the former president, Muhammad Mursi, connected with the Muslim Brotherhood and the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), which in June 2013 with other parties formed the coalition National Alliance Supporting Legitimacy (NASL), called for a boycott of the government¹⁴. On the other hand, a large part of Egyptian society supported president As-Sisi, due to the economic recovery and the growing concerns about the increasing influence of extremist circles. Fearing worsening of the situation, a part of society accepts the limitation of rights and freedoms, and the militarisation of state structures.

The re-growth of violence in the Sinai Peninsula occurred after the overthrow of Muhammad Mursi in July 2013. Removal from office of the president connected with the Muslim Brotherhood contributed to the intensification of terrorist activity in the Sinai Peninsula. Since then, ABM and later Sinai Province have regularly admitted to the majority of the attacks targeting the military, police and other state structures in Egypt. Jihadists claim that this is the answer to the repression against Islamists and supporters of the president deposed by the army. In spite of the fact that Egyptian jihadists have not been enthusiastic about the political activity of the Muslim Brotherhood, equating it with democracy and nationalism, the removal from power of President Mursi gave them the opportunity to rebuild a networks of influence. Since then, ABM has expanded its attacks outside the Sinai Peninsula, including the capital of Egypt. Since 2013, in addition to direct attacks on Israel object in Egypt, including energy infrastructure, the group has expanded its attacks on the 'close enemy' – the apostate Egyptian regime. In order to project power outside the Sinai Peninsula, the subsidiary of IS must use operating forces of groups from the Nile Valley, but many of them remain connected with al-Qaeda.

The fight of the government with Islamists often causes death and destruction of civilian property. An example of this is the creation of a buffer zone near the border with the Gaza Strip, as a result of which houses of residents

¹⁴ In the second half of 2014 both the FJP and NASL were made illegal.

of Rafah were demolished, which was motivated by the fight against terrorism. The tribal society perceived it as a form of collective punishment, which deepened the aversion to the central government. Finally, in April 2014 the Egyptian government officially recognised Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis as a terrorist organisation¹⁵.

A PROVINCE OF THE ISLAMIC STATE IN THE SINAI PENINSULA

The Sinai Peninsula, which is part of Egypt, is administratively divided into two provinces (Matrouh Governorates): North Sinai and South Sinai. Due to its geopolitical importance, this territory was a battleground for each war between Egypt and Israel from 1948 to 1979. The territory was demilitarised after these states signed the peace treaty in 1979. For this reason, the Egyptian armed forces did not fully control this area.

The strategic importance of the Sinai Peninsula, mainly due to the border with Israel, had already been noticed by al-Qaeda, whose subsidiaries conducted their operations in the area. The peninsula also became a foothold for the activities of jihadists from Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis. Despite the lack of official oath of allegiance, the group seemed to have strong links with the network of al-Qaeda, whose leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, in official statements presented sympathy for the leadership of ABM. Despite this, in 2014 the organisation formalised relations with the Islamic State¹⁶ (IS), thus ending its informal cooperation with al-Qaeda. In November 2013, this group, with the help of Twitter, swore *bay'ah* (oath of allegiance) to the leader of the Islamic State – Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi¹⁷. Since that moment the organisation has used the name Wilayat Sinai, that is Sinai Province. It is also active in the territories bordering Israel and the Gaza Strip¹⁸.

¹⁵ Fahim, K., Thomas, M. 2014. Egypt flattens neighborhoods to create buffer zone along Gaza border. *The New York Times* 30 October 2014, p. A8; Taha, H., op. cit. In: Hokayem, E., Taha, H. eds., op. cit., pp. 183–186.

¹⁶ The Islamic State (IS) is a jihadist structure established on 29 June 2014 after the announcement of the creation of a self-styled caliphate. Its predecessor is the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), although the abbreviation ISIS is used in parallel, which is the acronym for the above-quoted name.

¹⁷ Kirkpatrick, D. D. 2016. Militant group in Egypt vows loyalty to ISIS. *The New York Times* 11 November 2014, p. A1.

¹⁸ Israel and Islamic State. The caliphate eyes the Holy Land. *The Economist* 23 January 2016.

The choice of IS could be associated with the genesis of the creation of ABM, inspired by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's activity. After the death of the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, in June 2006, which occurred as a result of US bombing, Egyptian Abu Hamza al-Muhajir took over the leadership. The Jihadist known as Abu Ayyub al-Masri, a close associate of al-Zarqawi, is considered one of the founders of the structure now referred to as the Islamic State¹⁹. Other leaders at the highest level and founders of ABM were also veterans of combats in Iraq, for example, Tawfiq Mohammed Faraj²⁰.

Also other factors contributed to the official association with the Islamic State. Firstly, as a result of the developing Syrian crisis and the fight against Islamism in Egypt, hundreds of people emigrated to Syria, where they came in contact with the ideology and practices of the Islamic State. According to some estimates, several thousand Egyptian militants fight in the ranks of IS. Secondly, due to the crisis in Libya the smuggling of weapons and fighters influx into Egypt became possible, which allowed for co-operation between jihadist groups, including in training of new fighters. Thirdly, the losses among executives also led to the oath to IS. Tawfiq Mohammad Faraj was killed as a result of fights with the Egyptian security forces between March and October 2014²¹. Therefore, it is possible that ABM swore allegiance to the Islamic State because of significant losses suffered as a result of the campaign conducted by the Egyptian armed forces, as well as because the operation of the group required both financial and operational support. Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis might have declared loyalty to the Islamic State also due to a desire to intensify the recruitment and strengthen the zeal to fight with the Egyptian army by referring to the success of IS in Iraq and Syria.

Whatever the motivation, the oath of allegiance to Islamic State divided ABM into two camps: the one which approved it and the other which negated the loyalty to the self-proclaimed caliphate. A considerable part of groups belonging to the latter camp, operating in the Nile Valley, support al-Qaeda, despite the lack of official affiliation to this global network. Therefore, the declaration of allegiance to IS contributed to an internal split, which initially – at the turn of 2014 and 2015 – weakened the operational ability of the Egyptian jihadist environment.

¹⁹ The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center. 2014. *ISIS: Portrait of a jihadi terrorist organisation*. Available at: http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art_20733/101_14_Ef_1329270214.pdf, p. 25.

²⁰ Azoulay, R. op. cit., p. 26.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

Despite the initial crisis, since swearing the oath to the Islamic State Egyptian jihadists have successfully continued attacks against the state administration. On 29 January 2015 they carried out a series of deadly bombings, mortar attacks and ambushes on objects and military and police officers in North Sinai. At least 40 people, including civilians were killed, and more than 100 injured in them²².

Sinai Province claimed responsibility for numerous attacks on objects of the security forces. Among them there were: a successful missile attack on an Egyptian patrol boat in July 2015 or the execution of a Croatian engineer working in Egypt, Tomislav Salopek, kidnapped in July 2015²³. IS militants from the Sinai Peninsula also claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on a Russian aircraft Boeing A321 in Egypt which took place on 31 October. 2015. This attack by IS supporters resulted in the highest number of casualties, next to suicide attacks on mosques al-Badr and al-Hashoosh in Yemen on 20 March 2015 and a series of suicide bombings and shootings in Paris on 13 November 2015²⁴.

Table 2

The list of terrorist attacks carried out by ABM/IS in 2015 on the territory of Egypt

Date	Place	Number of victims
24 November 2015	Al-Arish, North Sinai; attack on the hotel <i>Swiss Inn Resort</i>	at least 7 people killed and 10 injured
4 November 2015	Al-Arish, the Sinai Peninsula; suicide bombing	at least 4 people killed and 10 injured
31 October 2015	The Sinai Peninsula; bomb explosion in the Russian plane Boeing A321	224 people killed
11 September 2015	Rafah, the Sinai Peninsula; bomb attack	2 people killed

²² Eleiba, A. 2015. Security imperatives in Sinai. *Al-Ahram Weekly*, no. 1232 5 February 2015. Available at: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/10333/17/Security-imperatives-in-Sinai.aspx> [Accessed: 20 September 2015].

²³ The kidnapping was probably not carried out by Sinai Province. The employee was abducted by a criminal group which demanded a ransom, then transferred the prisoner to the IS subsidiary. Therefore, from the operational point of view, this event should not be seen as evidence of the increased presence of Sinai Province in Greater Cairo.

²⁴ Kalfod, M.A., Fahim, K., Schmitt, E. 2014. Militants linked to ISIS say they killed Yemenis. *The New York Times* 21 March 2014, p. A1.

Date	Place	Number of victims
26 August 2015	The Sinai Peninsula; attack on police officers near Al-Arish	2 people killed about 16 injured
12 August 2015	Decapitation of the Croatian employee – Tomislav Salopek because of Croatia's participation in the war with the Islamic State	1 person killed
11 July 2015	Cairo; explosion of a bomb in a car near the Italian consulate	1 person killed 4 injured
1–2 July 2015	North Sinai; attacks on checkpoints and police stations around the city of Sheikh Zuweid in North Sinai	21 people killed 9 injured
29 June 2015	Cairo; assassination of Hisham Barakat, Egyptian Attorney General, by the detonation of a remote controlled car bomb	1 person killed 4 injured
12 April 2015	North Sinai; attack on an armoured vehicle near the Sheikh Zuweid	6 soldiers killed 2 injured
12 April 2015	Al-Arish, North Sinai; bomb attack at a police station in Al-Arish	8 people killed 45 injured

Source: own study on the basis of media reports.

The attack on the Russian plane, carrying mostly tourists, shows that Egyptian jihadists pose a threat not only to the authorities they try to overthrow, but also to the international community. Despite such a spectacular attack, the tactical nature of the operation remains constant, as well as the targets, which for the most part are stationary checkpoints, patrols and convoys. Also, the preferred methods of attack are invariable. Jihadists use improvised explosive devices, mortars and guns. However, two particular trends become visible. The first is the intensification of attacks targeted at a group of private residences, using explosives and arson, though they are mainly directed at the security officials. The other is the increased use of anti-armour guided missiles.

Despite the fact that Sinai Province, created after swearing the oath of allegiance by Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis to the Islamic State, is the most active armed group in Egypt, the Egyptian government's counterterrorism campaign focuses on the Muslim Brotherhood which appears as the 'organisation-brain' of all terrorist activities. The government recognises the combat with the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters as a way to eliminate terrorism and

ensure security and stability in Egypt²⁵. However, the growth of influence of IS has contributed to the justification by the Egyptian authorities of both militarisation of state structures and fight with other structures which link their activities with Sinai Province. Through such activities As-Sisi creates the image of Egypt as an important ally in the fight against global jihadist movement. The leader says that the international coalition should direct its operations also against other Islamic extremists, led by the Muslim Brotherhood, thus seeking to legitimise operations against the opposition. The lack of a differentiated approach to the Islamist opposition increases the likelihood of radicalisation of subsequent structures excluded from the entirety of political life²⁶.

THE SOLDIERS OF EGYPT (AJNAD MISR) AND THE POPULAR RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (AL-'IQAB AL-THAWRI)

Despite the largest operational capabilities, Sinai Province is not the only jihadi structure functioning in Egypt. New armed groups opposing state structures are also formed.

At the end of 2013 a former member of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis – Humam Muhammed, known as Maged al-Din al-Masry, founded the group Soldiers of Egypt (Ajnad Misr). The group officially announced its formation in January 2014, and in May the Egyptian government officially recognised it as a terrorist organisation. The structure of the group is still not well known. However, the assassination of its leader, Hammam Attiyah, in April 2015 pushed Ajnad Misr in the direction of al-Qaeda. Some representatives of the security services define the group as an armed wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, although evidence for such an association is insufficient²⁷. The organisation carries out attacks mainly in and around the agglomeration of Cairo, where terrorist attacks have become part of everyday life of the residents. ABM/Sinai Province refers to the Soldiers of Egypt as 'brothers', but relations between the two structures are not well known either. Both groups attack state infrastructure, however, Sinai Province attacks primarily the armed forces, and

²⁵ See Burgrova, H. 2016. Insecurity in Sinai and beyond. Why the Egyptian counterterrorism strategy is failing. *DGAP Kompakt*, no. 1. Available at: <https://dgap.org/en/article/getFullPDF/27538> [Accessed: 02 February 2016].

²⁶ Taha, H., op. cit. In: Hokayem, E., Taha, H. eds., op. cit., pp. 193–194.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 187–188.

Ajnad Misr focuses on the police structures, most likely due to the lack of operational capabilities²⁸.

Another structure was established in January 2015 as a result of the merger of five entities which formed the Allied Popular Resistance Movement (APRM), composed of the Popular Resistance Movement (PRM), the Determination Movement, the Revolutionary Punishment Movement (RPM), Beni Suef Revolutionaries and the Execution Battalion. Despite the unification in the APRM, the level of autonomy of the individual structures is not clear. The RPM is the most organised of the above mentioned entities. Although the date of the creation of the group has not been specified, it conducted its first officially confirmed attack in February 2015. Since then, the group has carried out a series of attacks in many provinces. The militants direct most of their claims to the security personnel, government and private entrepreneurs affiliated with the authorities²⁹.

Ideologically the APRM focuses on revenge for the suppression of the revolution. The coalition directed its early action against the security forces. Only in mid-2015 a shift towards more diversified activities became visible. The group takes over the methods of operation of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, although it is uncertain whether this represents a real ideological change or a measure aimed at attracting new members and funds.

SUMMARY

In the nineties of the twentieth century Egypt fought with a wave of terrorism and bombings carried out by jihadi organisations. With the beginning of the new millennium, this wave weakened, although in 2004–2006 spectacular terrorist attacks occurred. However, the ‘Arab Spring’ led to the destabilisation of Egypt and brought a new wave of terrorism, much more extreme than the previous one. In the past four years endemic problems have grown, and sporadic terrorist incidents have evolved into a rebellion.

The scale of the links built by the Islamic State in Egypt results from the relative proximity in relation to its territorial units in Iraq and Syria. In addition to the Libyan cells, Sinai Province seems to be the most developing

²⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 186–187; Barnett, D. 2014. Ajnad Misr, Egypt’s latest jihadist group. *Long War Journal* 2 February 2014. Available at: http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/02/ajnad_misr_egypts_latest_jihad.php [Accessed: 20 October 2015].

²⁹ The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy. 2015. *Egypt’s rising security threat*. Available at: http://timep.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Tahrir_Report_FINAL_WEB.pdf, p. 26.

branch. However, it should not be overestimated, because its structures are not as advanced as those created in Mesopotamia, although certainly jihadists of IS are able to carry out effective terrorist attacks, which is confirmed by numerous aforementioned cases. With weak state control, marginalisation of tribal communities and rooted jihadist activism, Sinai Province seems to have a relatively large impact on the change of the local dynamics. Since its inception it has intensified its activities and generated new challenges to the security of Egypt, though we must not forget that next to this structure other extremist groups operate.

The main challenge for President Abd al-Fattah as-Sisi and the Egyptian security forces is the restoration of the stability of the state. The expansion of jihadism and an increase in the number of terrorist attacks, mainly in North Sinai, but also in other parts of the state prove that Egypt will have to fight a long war of attrition against Islamist and jihadist groups in order to achieve this goal.

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JIHADISM EXPANSION IN EGYPT AFTER 2011 ON THE EXAMPLE OF ANSAR BAYT AL-MAQDIS, SINAI PROVINCE AND OTHER STRUCTURES

Summary

Since the ‘January 25 Revolution’ the Egyptian territory has become a subject of increased interest of various jihadist structures. The Sinai Peninsula plays a special role in their development as it is an area of strategic importance because of its proximity to Israel and Cairo, one of the centers of the Arab world. Among such structures there is Sinai Province, which is a relatively new player on the scene of the Egyptian political violence, although now this entity has the greatest influence on this territory. The group derives from Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, a group that appeared in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula in 2011. In 2013 it transformed into a branch of the Islamic State. Despite significant operational capabilities, Sinai Province is not the only jihadi structure functioning in Egypt. New armed groups opposed to state structures are formed, which include Ajnad Misr or the Allied Popular Resistance Movement. The article aims to present the process of jihadism expansion in Egypt after 2011, tying it with destabilisation of the state’s internal structures, reflected by frequent changes of authorities.

EKSPANSJA DŻIHADYZMU W EGIPCIE PO 2011 ROKU, NA PRZYKŁADZIE DZIAŁALNOŚCI ANSAR BAJT AL-MAKDIS, PROWINCJI SYNAJ ORAZ INNYCH STRUKTUR

Streszczenie

Od „rewolucji 25 stycznia 2011 r.” egipskie terytorium w zwiększonym stopniu stało się przedmiotem zainteresowania dżihadystów z różnych struktur. Szczególną rolę w ich rozwoju pełni Półwysep Synaj, będący obszarem o znaczeniu strategicznym, ze względu na bliskość Izraela oraz Kairu, jednego z centrów świata arabskiego. Pośród tego rodzaju struktur znajduje się Prowincja Synaj, która jest stosunkowo nowym graczem na egipskiej scenie przemocy na tle politycznym, choć obecnie to właśnie ten podmiot posiada największe wpływy na tym terytorium. Grupa wywodzi się z Ansar Bajt al-Makdis, ugrupowania, które pojawiło się w północnej części Półwyspu

Synaj w 2011 r., w 2013 r. przekształcając się w filię Państwa Islamskiego. Pomimo znacznych możliwości operacyjnych, Prowincja Synaj nie jest jedyną strukturą dżihadystyczną funkcjonującą w Egipcie. Powstają również nowe zbrojne ugrupowania, przeciwstawiające się strukturom państwowym, do których należą Żołnierze Egiptu czy Zjednoczony Ludowy Ruch Oporu. Artykuł ma na celu przedstawienie przebiegu ekspansji dżihadyzmu w Egipcie po 2011 r., wiążąc ten proces z destabilizacją struktur wewnętrznych państwa, przejawiającą się m.in. w częstych zmianach władz.

ЭКСПАНСИЯ ДЖИХАДИЗМА В ЕГИПТЕ ПОСЛЕ 2011 ГОДА – НА ПРИМЕРЕ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ «АНСАР БЕЙТ АЛЬ-МАКДИС», «ПРОВИНЦИЯ СИНАЙ» И ДРУГИХ ГРУППИРОВОК

Резюме

Со времени «революции 25 января 2011 года» территория Египта стала в повышенной степени предметом заинтересованности со стороны джихадистов, образующих различные группировки. Особую роль в их развитии выполняет Синайский полуостров, являющийся районом стратегического значения из-за близости Израиля и Каира, одного из центров арабского мира. К подобным группировкам относится «Провинция Синай», которая является относительно новым игроком на египетской сцене насилия на политической почве, хотя в настоящее время именно этот субъект обладает наибольшим влиянием на данной территории. Группа берёт своё начало от «Ансар Бейт Аль-Макдис» – группировки, которая появилась в Северной части Синайского полуострова в 2011 году, а в 2013 году была преобразована в филиал Исламского государства. Несмотря на значительные оперативные возможности, «Провинция Синай» не является единственной группировкой джихадистов, функционирующей в Египте. Формируются также новые вооружённые группировки, противопоставляющие себя государственным структурам, к которым можно отнести Солдат Египта или Объединённое Народное Движение Сопrotивления. Цель данной статьи – представить процесс экспансии джихадизма в Египте после 2011 года, показывая его связь с дестабилизацией внутренних государственных структур, которая проявляется, в частности, в частой смене власти.