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**“The Failures of Foresight in the Management of Terrorist
Attacks: Charlie Hebdo and the Paris Attacks”**

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Problem outline

In 2015, France was the theatre of multiple terrorist attacks: the stabbing of three soldiers in Nice on February 3; a beheading attack in Grenoble on June 26, the Thalys attack on August 21 (Le Monde 2016). In addition, Paris suffered two large-scale attacks on January 6-9, 2017, known as the Charlie Hebdo and the Hyper Casher attacks, and another one on November 13, 2015, referred to as the Paris attacks (Le Monde 2016). 17 people have died and 20 were injured in January 2015, and the November 13, 2015 attacks killed 130 people and 493 were injured (Commission d'enquête 2016, 41; 61). Following those two attacks, French President Hollande and the government appeared united and determined to make changes and fight what Hollande called "a war". Moreover, the publication of the inquiry report that investigated into both attacks acutely undermined the legitimacy of the French intelligence sector. Indeed, the media pointed at both the DGSI (internal agency) and the DGSE (external agency), arguing that the attacks could have been prevented and that the multiplication of errors from their part resulted in the occurrence of both attacks. Nonetheless, it is not plausible that the French intelligence sectors neglected crucial information or strategic actions based on that information purposely. Therefore, the central research question of this thesis is stated as follows:

2. Research question

"What factors contribute to intelligence agencies being unaware of warning signals?"

In order to answer the research question, the thesis will explore two cases, that are the Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks. Those are two large-scale attacks, perpetrated by French nationals mostly, in a very short time frame. The concept of awareness as defined by Paltrinieri and Khan will serve to assess the level of awareness of the intelligence sector prior to the attacks (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14). The expectation is that the services were not in a state of awareness at the time. The second part of the analysis will therefore consist in theory testing. Erik Dahl's preventive action theory will be combined to Turner's seven common causal features to identify the factors that led to the intelligence services not being aware of those signals (Turner 1976, 388-391).

3. Academic relevance

In terms of academic relevance, the thesis is based on theory-testing. It will be focused on the seven common causal features of Barry Turner, but the two conditions of Dahl's preventive action theory –as precondition of awareness that the information available is in fact a warning signal so that action can be undertaken- will be integrated to Turner's framework. Because the intelligence sector was not aware of the warning signals in both cases, the theoretical framework described will help to identify the factors that led to the sector being unaware of the signals. In other words, the academic relevance lies the development of indicators of unawareness to explain the failure of intelligence. Moreover, France is under-researched in the academic field, mostly due to the language barrier. Overlapping with the societal relevance, some terrorist attacks are prevented, while some are not: it is therefore relevant to understand why not in this particular case.

4. Societal relevance

In terms of societal relevance, people tend to understand terrorist attacks as both a political and social failure, but those are hardly thought as crises that we can learn from to improve our institutions. The research will therefore assess the work of the intelligence sector before and during the 2015 attacks to identify the potential areas of improvement. Moreover, after the attacks, the legitimacy of the intelligence sector has been undermined by the fact that the media stated that they knew the shooters and their intention to conduct terrorist attacks. Nonetheless, the official reports are more nuanced about that point. Furthermore, although this thesis is focused on the intelligence sector, its findings allows for generalization. Therefore, it can be helpful in better understanding the (pre)-conditions to action in crises, in various sectors.

5. Reading guide

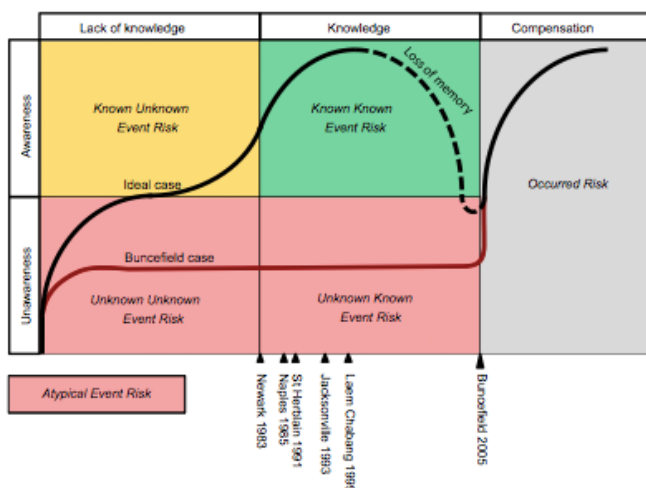
The thesis will be divided as follows: (1) the literature review is meant to give an overview of the academia on failure and success of crisis management, with a focus on the literature on intelligence. (2) The methodology includes the research design, a justification of the cases selected and the relevance of the theories used, as well as the operationalization of the key concepts. (3) The analytical part is based on the analysis of the two attacks, with a joint conclusion. (4) Finally, the thesis ends with the conclusion that includes the factors that

contribute to organizations being unaware of warning signals, as well as a reflection on the findings, and a discussion of the limitations of this research.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Conceptualization of early warning signals

Leaders, from organizations, companies or governments, are expected to protect us from crises, incidents and accidents. The literature therefore distinguishes “normal accidents” from “atypical accidents”, both have distinct implications when it comes to prevention. Accidents – or crises- are often preceded by warning signals. In the case of atypical accidents, organizations are usually not “aware” of the upcoming crisis insofar as the signals are not aligned with their culture of risk assessment, in other words, they are “not captured by hazard identification methodologies because deviating from normal expectations of unwanted events” (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 13). Therefore, information is the primary source organizations rely on when preventing and dealing with crises. According to Paltrinieri and Khan, managing crises, may they be normal or atypical, is related to both the “awareness” and the “availability” of information (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14). In a situation of normal crisis, it will take the organization few warning signals to go from an unaware condition to a condition of awareness of the risk (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14). But, in a situation of atypical crisis, the information available to the organization is “disregarded”, which allows for the unfolding of the crises, “despite the succession of related early warnings” (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14). For them, in times of atypical crisis, organizations only become aware of the threat when the crisis has occurred (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14). The table below illustrates their argument.



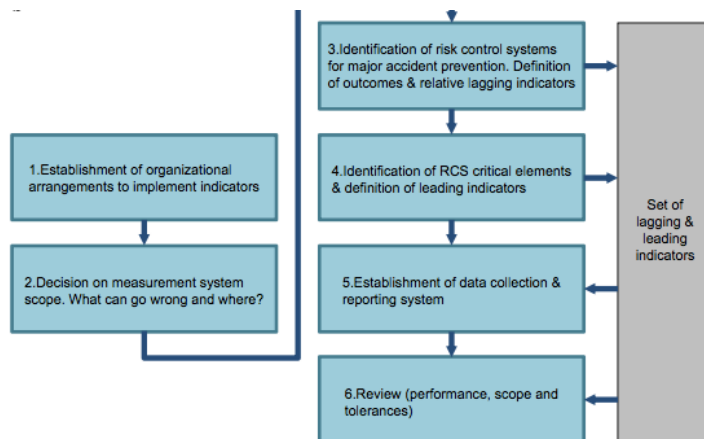
(Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 24)

Therefore, to increase awareness over atypical accidents, Paltrinieri et al. have produced a framework for the prevention of such events (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 22). According to them, there are two major factors that contribute to deal with those atypical crises: (1) “risk awareness” and (2) “effective knowledge management” (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 24). From those two factors, “warning indicators” are to be designed in order for the organizations to cope with those accidents (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 24). Indicators can be developed on the basis of two different methods: the resilience based early warning indicators (REWI) and the Dual Assurance Indicators (DAI).

- The REWI method is divided into three main steps:

- 1) The development of “contributing success factors” based on empirical evidence, as well as derived from the academic literature (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 25).
- 2) “General issues” that help to reach the first step of factors (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 25).
- 3) “Proposals for early warning indicators (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 26).

- The Dual Assurance method is divided into six steps, aiming at the development of indicators (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 26):



Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 26 (Fig. 4b)

Therefore, early warning signals are information that is available from the beginning by an organization. In times of normal crisis, those signals are “known unknowns”, meaning that agents recognize them as being alarming, whereas in times of atypical crisis, they are “unknown unknowns”, meaning that agents are not aware of them (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14). Put in other words, the early warning signals are part of what Turner calls the “incubation period”,

during which agents are confronted with an “accumulation of unnoticed set of events” –the early warning signals (Turner 1976, 381).

As argued by academics on warning signals such as Turner, and Paltrinieri and Khan, for organizations to become more resilient to crisis, they need to be aware of those warning signals. Therefore, drawing the lessons from past crises to develop factors or indicators to identify those signals is needed.

2. Conceptualization of crises

Traditional definitions

Roux-Dufort argues that crises are researched as single-case studies but that the academic field of crisis lacks theorization. (Roux-Dufort 2007, 107). Following Turner’s idea on organizational crises, Roux-Dufort defines crises as “a process of organizational weakening that degenerates until the point of disruption” (Roux-Dufort 2007, 108). Proponents of this definition tend to understand crises in terms of different stages from the “warning signals” to the “resolution” (Roux-Dufort 2007, 109); (Turner 1976, 381).

For instance, Turner acted as a precursor in acknowledging the idea that crises were indeed comparable, using three different events to design his framework on the development organizational crises (Turner 1976). On the same level of analysis, Boin’s definition of crisis, based on three components –threat, uncertainty and sense of urgency- allows a comparison between different crises (Boin et al 2006, 2). Crisis is therefore defined as a “serious threat to the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a system, which under time pressure and highly uncertain circumstances necessitates making vital decisions” (Boin et al 2006, 2). As argued by Boin, the uncertainty is caused both by the very nature of the crisis and the possible consequences of it (Boin et al 2006, 3). Therefore, uncertainty has consequences on the leader’s response to a crisis and can affect decision-making.

Consequently, this research will side with the literature that considers crisis as a process, giving up the idea that a series of identifiable factors resulted in the unfolding of the crisis (Boin et al 2007, 5). Consequently, crisis is understood in terms of a process from “warning signals” to “resolution”. The next sub section will summarize the traditional literature on crisis management, and introduce the main theories that the research will focus on.

2.1 Organizational crisis

Overview of B. Turner's grounded theory

Turner built his ground theory based on the in-depth analysis of three investigation reports of different disasters to identify the factors and conditions that lead to large-scale disasters (Turner 1976). After studying and classifying his findings, he was able to design a model in the form of a “sequence model of organizational failures” (Turner 1976, 378).

His analysis is based on the assumption that organizations that operate within “open systems” need to combat uncertainty creating “small areas of certainty which can be handled” (Turner 1976, 378). Because it is hard, and even impossible, to act under uncertainty, organizations design a “framework of bounded rationality” (Simon 1957, as quoted in Turner 1976, 378), in which they adopt general assumptions about potential threats and vulnerabilities (Turner 1976, 378). This framework allows agents to act upon pre-existing frames and to “ignore complex formulation” in a way that there is a reduction of uncertainty (Turner 1976, 379). Nonetheless, it is very difficult to assess which “aspects of the [...] problems [...] are prudent to ignore”, and it is unlikely that an organization will not face “unexpected difficulties” with this method (Turner 1976, 379).

Therefore, the main goal of Turner's research is to build a framework that makes it possible to understand the conditions that lead to “organizational failures of foresight” (Turner 1976, 379). Failures of foresight are thus defined as “the collapse of precautions that had hitherto been regarded culturally as adequate” (Turner 1976, 380). Therefore, Turner excludes a set of crises such as those which could have been prevented because problems were known in advance, but the lack of resources made the crisis unavoidable, and unpredictable crises (Turner 1976, 380).

Crises that fit Turner's model are characterized as follows:

“large-scale disasters that are potentially foreseeable and potentially avoidable, and that, at the same time, are sufficiently unexpected and sufficiently disruptive to provoke a cultural reassessment of the artefacts and precautions available to prevent such occurrences”

Based on the patterns identified by Turner, his research can be used to determine whether preconditions to the crisis existed before the crisis started (Turner 1976, 380).

The failures of foresight: sequence model

Stage 1	Notionally normal starting point
Stage 2	Incubation period
Stage 3	Precipitating events
Stage 4	Onset
Stage 5	Rescue and salvage
Stage 6	Full cultural readjustment

Turner's sequence model is designed in six different stages. The first stage suggests that there exist "culturally accepted beliefs about the world and its hazards" that organizations associated with norms, values and practices (Turner 1976, 381). Those are precautionary, designed to cope

with possible crises. The second stage, namely the incubation period is the "accumulation of an unnoticed set of events, which are at odds with the acceptable beliefs about the hazards and the norms of their avoidance" (Turner 1976, 381). This is during this period that possible "failures of foresight" can be identified. Indeed, he identified a set of seven factors that contribute to this failure during the incubation phase.

1. **"The rigidity in perception and beliefs in organizational settings"**: organizations are embedded in both "cultural and institutional factors" (Turner 1976, 388). Therefore, the way agents within the organization act is related to those cultural factors, but because they are used to operate within a certain framework, one can identify blind spots (Turner 1976, 388). As stated by Turner, organizations act in a "self-reinforcing circle" and some areas that are considered unproblematic are left alone (Turner 1976, 388).
2. **"The decoy problem"**: it is the case when a problem has been identified, and measures have been taken to cope with it, but nonetheless, agents' attention is distracted from other problems that may eventually cause the crisis (Turner 1976, 388).
3. **"The organization exclusivity: disregard of non-members"**: when individuals outside the organization ring the bell, but their opinion is not taken into account because they do not benefit from the "organization privilege" (Turner 1976, 388). Turner argues that this problem is often observed when small organizations try to warn bigger ones (Turner 1976, 388).
4. **"Information difficulties"**: when information has been lost in the middle of irrelevant information, or when there is "communication and information handling difficulties" (Turner 1976, 389). Sometimes, information that was supposed to act as a warning signals has been misinterpreted or distorted (Turner 1976, 389).

5. **“Involvement of strangers”**: it has to do with the presence of people that do not pertain to the organization on the ground, that may act in a way that will foster the crisis (Turner 1976, 390). As argued by Turner, those “strangers”, often the public, are very hard to brief in a situation of crisis, and it is difficult to target the right audience that will receive the right message (Turner 1976, 390).
6. **“Failure to comply with existing regulations”**: it can be the fact when the organization does not “realize that the regulation applies to the case” (Turner 1976, 390), or because regulations are not in phase with the reality anymore, - “out-of-date”- (Turner 1976, 390).
7. **“Minimizing emergent danger”**: it has to do with underestimating potential “hazards”, and failing to “anticipate accurately the scale of the possible [crisis] (Turner 1976, 391). When agents in the organization do not agree on the “status and significance” of the warning signals (Turner 1976, 391).

Then, the third stage has to do with the existence of a “precipitating event” (Turner 1976, 381). It is argued that this stage often gets the most attention, because its occurrence has “immediate characteristics” (Turner 1976, 382). The fourth stage is characterized by the “consequences of the failure” (Turner 1976, 382). The fifth stage is a stage of adjustments, when agents recognize the “features of the failure” (Turner 1976, 382). The final stage is characterized by in-depth cultural adjustments related to norms and beliefs (Turner 1976, 382).

3. Crisis management: traditional frameworks

The traditional literature on crisis management is divided into two theoretical categories: the normal accident theory (NAT) and the high-reliability theory (HRT). On the one hand, NAT argues that crises are unavoidable because of the multiplication of “small events” (Perrow 2001, 33). As organizations become more and more “complex”, accidents become inevitable (Perrow 2001, 34). On the other hand, HRT argues that organizations have become better at improving their reliability of their systems. Preventing crises is therefore made possible on the basis of “trial and error” (La Porte 1996, 61). Nonetheless, it is only feasible if those organizations are provided with “the necessary means and support” (Boin and Fishbacher-Smith 2011, 80).

Therefore, organizations can detect and prevent crises if they are able to detect unexpected warning signals. Academics such as Turner have developed a framework to better understand

why organizations often fail in detecting those signals. The next section will be devoted to the literature on the failures of foresight in organizational crises, as well as to the specific case of intelligence agencies.

4. Intelligence agencies and crisis management

There is an abundant body of knowledge when it comes to intelligence failures and successes. This section provides an overview of the different paradigms that exist on why intelligence agencies fail.

The traditionalists

One of the key elements of the crisis –even more when it relates to terrorism- is the concept of uncertainty: attacks are difficult to predict, and the consequences are also unclear, even when the authorities know that an attack just occurred. While considering such crises, the concept of “warning signals” is also relevant. Warning signals can be defined as “clue”, “sign” or “evidence that tells about a particular danger” (Wohlstetter 1962, 2). Wohlstetter’s aim was to understand how decision-makers acted upon warning signals in the case of the Pearl Harbor crisis (Wohlstetter 1962, 2). In her analysis, she suggests that intelligence services are struggling with what she calls “noise” and “signals” (Wohlstetter 1962, 228). Whereas signals are signs of an eminent threat –therefore, relevant information-, the “noise” can be defined as the overwhelming amount of data and information that a particular organization needs to deal with. Therefore, following Wohlstetter’s argument, the success of the intelligence services in managing a crisis results in their capacity or ability to “separate [...] the signals from the noise” (Wohlstetter 1962, 228). According to Dahl, her framework of signals and noise has been the key characteristic in trying to explain the possible successes and failures of the intelligence services during crises (Dahl 2013, 1). The proponents of the traditional school assume that policymakers are mostly responsible for intelligence failures, in the sense that they “fail to take the advice given by intelligence professionals” (Dahl 2013, 9). Moreover, as argued by Paltrinieri and Khan on organizations working within a “culture of risk assessment” (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 13), traditionalists presuppose that intelligence failures occur because of “mental mindsets and assumptions that are resistant to change” (Dahl 2013, 10), that is to say, their “rigidities in perceptions and beliefs” (Turner 1976, 388).

The reformists

The 9/11 attacks are a turning point in the conceptualization of failure from the intelligence services, leaving room for what academics call the failure “to connect the dots” (Dahl 2013, 1). In other words, this assumes that, prior to a surprise attack, the intelligence services knew about the different warning signals, but those were never connected to one another, in order to create a “coherent narrative that might have convinced the authorities of the need to take effective action” (Dahl 2013, 1). Therefore, whereas traditionalists believe that failure is due to information analysis and the responsiveness of policymakers, reformists assume that the problem lies in the very organizational level. As argued by Wilensky, “intelligence failures are rooted in structural problems” (Wilensky 1967, 42). Therefore, connecting the dots would only be made possible by a better organizational structure of intelligence agencies. As new problems arise, intelligence agencies need to adapt to those challenges. Nonetheless, they are faced with “hierarchies, specialization, and centralization” that result in difficulties of information communication and sharing (Zegart as quoted in Dahl 2013, 12); (Turner 1976, 389).

The contrarians

While the traditionalists attribute intelligence failures to the analysis part of intelligence process, and the reformists to the organizations themselves, the contrarians’ assumption is that the collection of information is what causes failures (Dahl 2013, 13). According to them, the problem lies at the level of the precision of warning signals. Indeed, it is because the warnings are “no[t] credible or conclusive” that intelligence agencies could not act upon them (Levite as quoted in Dahl 2013, 13). Therefore, this school of thought argues that crises, especially terrorist attacks, can be prevented if sufficient information is gathered on the level of “human intelligence” (Dahl 2013, 13). They assume that, if sufficient information is collected, warning signals will therefore be identified by agents of the intelligence services, hence the possible prevention of terrorist attacks, even if those are “surprise attacks” (Dahl 2013, 14).

5. Theory of Preventive Action: Erik Dahl

Interestingly, Erik Dahl developed a framework that encompasses most of the literature on intelligence failures. To determine the characteristics of successful intelligence action, he worked on comparing failures with successes (Dahl 2013, 15). He therefore calls for a broader

understanding of intelligence success, that has to do with both policy makers and agents within the organization (Dahl 2013, 20). What constitutes intelligence failure is not agreed upon in the literature: some consider the element of “surprise” of the attack as a failure in the sense that policymakers or leaders did not see the event coming (Dahl 2013, 6). Others believe that intelligence failure relates to the failure of one of the stages of “intelligence processes”, which therefore results in providing the policymakers with the wrong information (Lowenthal as quoted in Dahl 2013, 6). On a simpler basis, Dahl’s understanding of intelligence failure is the inability to prevent an attack from happening (Dahl 2013, 6).

According to Dahl, before the occurrence of a surprise attack, the relevant information may be present, but it is “general” and “non-specific” (Dahl 2013, 2). In other words, information can be a warning signal that a threat does exist, but the information cannot be as specific as telling the analysts where to look at specifically (Dahl 2013, 2). Therefore, based on that assumption, Dahl designed a theory of “preventive action” (Dahl 2013, 3). Following Turner’s framework, the theory of preventive action’s goal is to create a framework to explain the conditions of successes and failures of the intelligence services in preventing surprise attacks (Dahl 2013, 3).

For Dahl, in order for intelligence to help preventing attacks, (1) it must provide “very precise warning about the threat” and (2) the policymakers must be “receptive to the intelligence” they are given (Dahl 2013, 3).

In order to better understand his two conditions for explaining the failure (or success) of intelligence, Dahl uses the example of 9/11 (Dahl 2013, 128):

(1) “*Precise warning about the threat*”: while many have argued that the intelligence services were overwhelmed by the flow of information and “failed to connect the dots” –all relevant warning signals-, Dahl argues that the very problem was that the warning was not precise enough (Dahl 2013, 129). His argument revolves around the idea that threat assessments on Al-Qaeda (AQ) and Bin Laden were indeed appropriate, and present long before 9/11, but they were not precise enough to enable the intelligence services to “gain tactical-level intelligence” (Dahl 2013, 129). In other words, they knew that AQ was a threat to the country on a “strategic level”, but they did not have the information –or intelligence- about attacks being plotted (Dahl 2013, 129).

(2) “*Receptive policy-makers*”: while it has been argued that the analysts working on the information were not creative or imaginative enough, which resulted in failing to “connect the dots”, Dahl argues that the policy-makers were not receptive enough (Dahl 2013, 129). Here, Dahl suggests that the United-States (US) has a long history of decision-makers being little receptive to intelligence, because they mostly disregard that information (Dahl 2013, 129). In the case of 9/11, top policy-makers were not much concerned about the information they received on AQ or Bin Laden (Dahl 2013, 129). Concluding on 9/11, he claims that, even though the warnings would have been clear on a tactical level, the attacks would not have been prevented because of the lack of receptivity from the US decision-makers (Dahl 2013, 129).

To conclude, the failures of intelligence agencies are more likely than the successful prevention of terrorist attacks for the solely reason that, while a failure can be the result of “a breakdown at either stage of the process, [...] success requires that both steps must be satisfied” (Dahl 2013, 20).

➔ This theoretical section has allowed to better understand the literature surrounding crisis management and the world of intelligence. From the traditional literature on crisis management and the general considerations on the conceptualization of crisis, this section has integrated the specific literature on intelligence crisis and its prevention. It will serve as a basis to develop a conceptual framework to answer the research question of this thesis. The next chapter is meant to further detail the conceptual framework that will be used, but also to explain the research design adopted.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

1. Research design

Assessing the level of awareness

In order to answer the research question, the thesis will look will first assess the level of awareness of the agencies, prior to the attacks. To do so, a table listing the different information available –known as warning signals- will be designed in chronological order. Then, the information collected will be transposed to the model Paltrinieri et al. designed to determine the level of awareness (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 24). The table can be found in the annex of the thesis. This first step allows to identify the *dependent variable* of the research, that is the “unawareness of warning signals”. Two tables –for Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks- can be found in the annex. Moreover, the theoretical framework is designed to identify the *independent variables*, being the different factors that contribute to this unawareness of the warning signals. This will be further explained in the next subsection.

Identifying the factors that contribute to unawareness

The two cases will be investigated combining two theoretical frameworks. The theoretical framework elaborated previously allows to identify the dependent variable being the level of unawareness of the intelligence services, while the nine features that come from Dahl and Turner are the independent variables of this research. This chapter will further explain those concepts.

In terms of independent variables, Erik Dahl's theory of preventive action and Turner's seven common causal features will serve to look into the cases. Indeed, Turner's framework allows for identifying the organizational dysfunctioning features that led to the intelligence sector unawareness of the warning signals. Therefore, the research will use his seven features, that have been re-designed to fit the case of organizations being intelligence agencies: (1) *Rigidity of procedures* –relates to the idea that the intelligence services act within a pre-defined organizational culture; (2) *decoy problem* –relates to the idea that intelligence agents focus on well-structured problems, leaving ill-structured problems aside; (3) *organization exclusivity* – relates to the fact that information from outside sources are not taken seriously; (4) *information difficulties* –it relates to the idea that information and communication are wrongly handled ; (5) *involvement of foreign agencies* –when the actions of foreign agencies have a negative impact on the work of the organization itself; (6) *failure to comply with regulations* –the idea is that failing to comply with regulations can have an impact on the unfolding of a crisis; (7) *minimizing emergent danger* – it relates to the idea that the intelligence services can underestimate the information given to them, and wrongly assess upcoming risks (Turner 1976, 388-392). Nonetheless, Turner's main focus is on the organizational dysfunctions that lead to missing warning signals. Because intelligence agencies' primary goal is to collect and analyze information, Erik Dahl's framework will be used as a preliminary step to investigating organizational dysfunctions. Indeed, he specifically works on the quality of warning signals (Dahl 2013, 3). Therefore, broadening the scope of factors that lead to unawareness of warning signals makes the research more consistent and coherent. Moreover, Erik Dahl's framework is designed to fit the case of the intelligence sector, which adds value to the theoretical framework.

- In concrete terms, the analysis of the cases will be as follows:

(1) Preliminary evaluation of *the precision of the warning signals* (Dahl).

(2) Evaluation of the organizational dysfunctions (Turner) that provides seven factors contributing to intelligence agencies being unaware of early warning signals.

The in-depth analysis of the eight features will allow to identify the factors that lead to the intelligence services being unaware of the warning signals.

After a scan of the literature on failures of foresight and intelligence failures, it is logical to combine both Dahl and Turner. Indeed, while most schools of thoughts have very contrasting views, leaving essential factors apart, both Turner and Dahl have borrowed or integrate different factors as indication of failures to come up with a coherent and complete framework. Therefore,

combining the two theories give this research more strength, and the theoretical framework used is the most complete possible to fit the research question. In order to make the connection between the dependent and the independent variables, the research is based on a multiple-case study design, which is the best fit to answer the research question.

2. Case Study

Multiple case study

In order to answer the central question “What factors contribute to intelligence services being unaware of warning signals?”, the research will use theory-testing. Two theories from the literature review will be used together in order to answer the RQ. Barry Turner’s framework of seven common causal features is the starting point. Nonetheless, to give more strength to the analysis, Erik Dahl’s condition for the success of intelligence will be added to Turner’s model. The theoretical framework is explained in details in the next section. This subsection is aimed at answering the three following questions: why choosing a case study design? Why studying multiple cases? Why Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks in particular?

The research is based on a case-study design. It is the best fit to test the conceptual framework of this study. The choice of a case study design fits the aim of the research, as this method is used to “investigate[...] a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin 1994, 13). Because the aim of the research is to identify the factors that lead to the intelligence services being unaware of warning signals, the choice of a case study design is relevant. Indeed, it will allow the research to identify the factors based on empirical evidence. Moreover, using a qualitative case study design can also be justified in terms of time-related issues. Indeed, as argued by Lijphart, when dealing with restricted time and resources, qualitative methods are seen as “more promising” if the research resorts to in-depth and “intensive comparative analysis of fewer cases” (Lijphart 1971, 685). Using a case study design is also the best fit to answer an explanatory research question.

The choice of multiple cases for the research has been motivated by the idea of generalizing the findings, and therefore, making the research replicable. Indeed, because the design is multiple case study, it allows for “in-depth analysis” of the cases (Seawright & Gerring 2008, 304). This is also for that specific reason that the research will use qualitative analysis. As synthesized by Goodrick, the comparison of multiple cases allows for analyzing

“the similarities, differences and patterns across two or more cases” (Goodrick 2014, 1). Moreover, the choice of having multiple cases to compare has been driven by a will to make the research more “compelling” and “robust”, as well as to be able to “replicate” the findings (Yin 1994, 53). Following Yin’s argument, the replication of this research is possible insofar as the theoretical framework used for the research clearly delimits the conditions under which the intelligence services are unaware of the signals, as well as clear factors for them being unaware (Yin 1994, 54).

Countries all over the world have suffered terrorist attacks in recent years. The year 2015 was the deadliest for the European Union (EU) (Europol 2016, 5). The research will focus on the French case insofar as it has been the country that was most affected by terrorism in terms of the number of jihadi terrorist attacks, and number of deaths (148) and people injured (350+) (Europol 2016, 5). The research will therefore focus on terrorist attacks as crises. They were selected because they fit Turner’s characteristics of crises that fit his theoretical framework. Indeed, Turner defines four key characteristics: (1) “potentially foreseeable”; (2) “potentially avoidable”; (3) “sufficiently unexpected” and finally (4) “sufficiently disruptive to provoke a cultural reassessment” of practices to prevent future crises (Turner 1976, 380). From this perspective, the selection of the 2015 major terrorist attacks fits the definition. Indeed, because of the very presence of warning signals, the two crises were “potentially foreseeable” and looking of them posteriori, “potentially avoidable”. Moreover, the very essence of terrorism is to disrupt societal values, therefore, they did “provoke a cultural reassessment” of the practices of the intelligence sector in France, as stated in the official report on those attacks. Obviously, terrorist attacks are always unexpected, or “sufficiently unexpected”.

Therefore, the cases selected are the two large-scale French terrorist attacks that occurred in 2015: Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks. Using two cases instead of one will give my research more strength and will most likely allow us to draw general conclusions. Because the research’s goal is to understand why the French intelligence sectors failed to act upon warnings, testing two cases will give external validity to the research. Those two specific attacks are selected because they are two large-scale attacks, that happened in France in a limited time period, and because they are treated in the French investigation report jointly. Moreover, at the level of the warning signals, both attacks have similarities in terms of information available, and the characteristics of the terrorists are mostly the same. Other

attacks, such as the Nice attack, have been perpetrated by a single lone-wolf terrorist. The cases have been selected on the basis of the most-similar case-study. Indeed, as argued previously in the methodology, the expectation is that the independent variables will be the same for the two cases. Therefore, it confers the research with more strengths, allowing to generalize the findings of this study. In terms of level of awareness, the analysis will show that in both case, the intelligence services were unaware of the warning signals. Indeed, in both cases, relevant information was not regarded as a signaling an upcoming attack, therefore, the intelligence services did not “capture” the overall situation as one of high risk (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 13). This will be further explained in the analysis section of the thesis. Moreover, these cases have been selected because they have never been researched together, but also because they have not been researched from the perspective of studying the factors of unawareness of warning signals. Therefore, this point confers this research originality, as well as academic relevance. These are the reasons why those cases are relevant to study.

3. Data collection and data analysis.

Origin of data

Consequently, because the research is based on finding the warning signals for both attacks, and identifying the factors that led the French intelligence services to be unaware of those signals, the data must come from original sources, as used by Turner himself in his article. Therefore, for the cases selected, the most relevant document to work on is the French investigation report on the two attacks, produced by a special committee appointed by the French Assemblée Générale. The group worked for several months, conducting interviews with key agents of the crisis, collecting information on the work of the intelligence services before and during the crisis. All the data to conduct this research is gathered from the French report. There are clear and precise statements on the warning signals, but also statements from agents of the intelligence services on their failures. This document (about 500 pages of information), as well as the exact transcripts of the interviews conducted (about 900 pages) are available on the official website of the French Assemblée Générale. Those are selected because they provide primary sources.

Moreover, because it is an investigation report, it is a relevant source in terms of reliability. Indeed, it has been issued by an investigation commission to investigate on the 2015 French terrorist attacks specifically. It is reliable because the commission is composed of many

members from different political parties. Therefore, it can be argued that the report is non-partisan. Moreover, the investigation is based on interviews with individuals that were involved in the attacks that are able to give reliable information, such as the Directors of both the internal and external security agencies and agents of these agencies. This very point also explains why this research has not been done conducting interviews. The commission has had access to key players from the French intelligence services. The interviews the commission conducted are accessible in their full and genuine version on the website of the French Parliament. This thesis being a Master Thesis with time restriction, it is very unlikely that these people would have been available for interviews considering the intelligence services are a secretive sector. Moreover, should the interviews be conducted for this research, the answers would have been exactly the same. Therefore, working on the transcripts available is the most relevant way of collecting the necessary data for this thesis. Moreover, the data found in the report are not analyzed, but they are only collected to re-create the unfolding of the attacks based on interviews with members of the intelligence services, as well as with CT judges and policemen that have been working on the case of the assailants.

Although the data could have been found through media analysis, working on the very reports is more reliable in terms of accuracy of data collection, because media reports such as articles from newspapers, already offer an interpretation of what happened.

Moreover, information on the failures when it comes to cooperation with foreign agencies are collected from the Belgian report on the Brussels attacks, as it dedicated a section to cooperation between France and Belgium. This report has been selected after further online searches of original governmental documents. It is published on the website of the Belgian Chamber.

Data analysis

To analyze the data, the research will use qualitative content analysis, that can be defined as follows: “the interpretation of textual data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes and patterns (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1278). Qualitative content analysis fits my research because it allows to classify data to interpret them. As argued before, the analysis is based on the merge of both Dahl and Turner’s frameworks to explain success and failure in the intelligence sector. The data collected will be coded under numbers (1, 2, 3, 4...) and it will be classified in a table, in relation to the seven features of

Turner and to Erik Dahl. In order for the theoretical framework to be the most reliable possible, the theory of preventive action developed by Dahl will be added to Turner’s causal features. Indeed, because Turner’s framework only operates if warning signals are identified, Dahl’s assertion that only specific and precise warning signals and the leaders’ responsiveness to them can determine the success of the intelligence sector coheres with the goal of the research, and will give more strength to the analysis of data. Therefore, the factors will be identified in the most reliable and complete way possible.

The next section is devoted to the operationalization of the key concepts of the research, as well as the development of indicators to conduct the analysis.

4. Operationalization

This section allows for a better understanding of how the theories will be used. It provides indicators that will serve the analysis of the documents selected. Consequently, the research is based on assessing the factors that contribute to a state of unawareness of warning signals. Therefore, warning signals are defined as both past similar events and hazards that predict the unfolding of an attack being committed.

This section is meant to help the reader to understand how this research has measured the different concepts of the research question.

<u>Concept</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Unawareness of warning signals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lack of surveillance on at-risk individuals ➤ Lack of follow-up procedures on at-risk individuals ➤ Absence of significant resources allocation ➤ Lack of surveillance on at-risk sites ➤ Absence of consideration of / action taken upon the global context 	<p>Warning signals are present when it is certain that some particular type of information was known prior to the event.</p> <p>The warning signals are understood as being the multiplication of similar events in the past, stigmas of social dysfunction (rise of islamophobia, rise of far-right extremism), the multiplication of threats against a country or a group of individuals.</p> <p>From the perspective of the terrorists, warning signals are understood as the process leading to violent radicalization (known as “weak</p>

		signals”), the will to learn war techniques, the explicit will to conduct attacks.
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This section part of the operationalization section helps the reader to understand the ways to measure the independent variables.

Concept	Indicators	Explanation
Precision	1) The information indicates a terrorist threat against a specific location 2) The information indicates a terrorist threat against a specific individual or group of individuals 3) The information indicates that a specific individual is radicalized and (ready to) engage(s) in violence	The warning signal is precise enough to be exploited by the organization when it names a specific location or (a) targeted (group of) individuals. From the perspective of the terrorists, the precision of the warning signals has to do with their level of radicalization. It only takes into account violent radicalization: the individual has traveled to war zones to train, he or she clearly indicates that he or she is ready to conduct attacks.
Rigidity of procedures	1) The organization lacks flexibility and up-dates	The procedures and protocols are outdated and do not correspond to the reality of the organization’s needs.
Decoy problem	1) The organization focuses on other issues	The focus is on well-structured issues such as returning FF or homegrown terrorists
Organization exclusivity	1) The organization underestimates the credibility of outside sources	Information that does not come from the organization itself is disregarded or taken less seriously.
Information difficulties	1) The organization is decentralized which leads to a lack of communication 2) The organization misinterprets information	The organization is divided into multiple units (decentralization) which creates information and communication difficulties. Information is therefore misinterpreted, or a less important information is accessed by the unit in charge.
Involvement of foreign agencies	1) The organization receives irrelevant, incomplete information from foreign agencies 2) Stranger agencies fail to react adequately	This feature applies when international or foreign organizations are involved. They communicate irrelevant or incomplete information. There are differences in organization’s cultures, that may lead to stranger agencies not reacting adequately.
Failure to comply with regulations	1) The organization does not comply with a regulation	When it comes to surveillance, there are clear regulations to follow, this feature applies when the organization disregards those regulations. The organization does not know that a particular regulation applies.

Minimizing emergent danger	1) The organization underestimates the threat of an individual 2) The organization underestimates past events (homegrown terrorism)	(cessation of surveillance, lack of surveillance upon parole,
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5. Reliability and validity

The expectation of this research is that both the dependent and independent variables for both cases will be similar. Moreover, because the data collected is based on primary sources, that are not interpreted, the research can be duplicated and repeated, in the sense that the same results will be found. The research is therefore reliable. In terms of reliability of the data, as argued in the previous section, the data come from an investigation report that gives this research access to primary sources. The commission in charge of this investigation is composed of members from different political parties in France, with different positions within the French political apparatus. Therefore, the information from the report is non-partisan and not an analysis of the reasons that led to the attacks, but the information is meant to give a genuine scheme of what happened and how decisions were made prior to the attacks. Moreover, the way data have been collected is based on how Turner proceeded for his own research, working with investigation reports. Therefore, it can be argued that this research is reliable, as well as the data that it will use to answer the research question. In terms of validity, the findings are based on strict indicators that serve as measurements. They have been retrieved from both Turner and Dahl’s work, and have been adapted to fit the case of the intelligence services. The data used in light of the indicators designed have been analyzed following a strict and systematic reading of the report mentioned earlier. The use of content analysis, that is based on a systematic classification of the content of a document gives this thesis validity. Therefore, the findings of this research are to be replicated, which grants it validity. If the same framework was used with different cases, the results would still apply.

➔ This methodological chapter was meant to further elaborate on the research design that this thesis is based on, and to provide the conceptual framework used to answer the research question. The operationalization part of the section has allowed to design indicators meant to detail how the variables are measured. The next chapter is the analytical chapter. It will be divided into the two cases that have been selected: Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

JANUARY 7, 2015: THE CHARLIE HEBDO ATTACKS

1. Overview

In the morning of January 7, 2015, two armed men entered the headquarters of the satirical journal Charlie Hebdo. After having shot a cleaner at the reception, they went up to the editorial meeting, where they killed ten people (Le Monde 2015). During their escape, they also killed a policeman in duty, which brings the number of victims to 12 (Le Monde 2015). Before running away from the scene, they claimed they acted to avenge the Prophet Muhammad. The two terrorists are rapidly identified as being the Kouachi brothers, known to have pledged allegiance to Al-Qaida, and for their links with a Parisian terrorist cell. This is the starting point of a period of vivid debates in the country, with people not only questioning the role of the intelligence services, but also their legitimacy as they knew the assailants, but were not able to prevent the attack. This chapter will therefore provide an in-depth analysis of the attacks, from the perspective of the French intelligence services. It will allow the research to determine the factors that lead to them being unaware of warning signals, in order to better understand their perceived so-called inaction.

2. Warning signals

As stated in the previous section, there are several warning signals of an upcoming terrorist against Charlie Hebdo. Table 1 gives an overview of the identified warning signals in the case of Charlie Hebdo. It gives both signals from past events, and from the collected information by the intelligence services. As shown in the tables, there are a lot of warning signals from the terrorists: information about their deep and violent radicalization, and about them traveling to combat zones to acquire war skills. Moreover, there are clear warning signals about an imminent risk on the Charlie Hebdo's headquarters, considering past attacks and threats against the Danish journal that first published the Prophet's cartoons and the number of threats against Charlie Hebdo itself. More examples of the warning signals linked with the

Charlie Hebdo attacks are to be found in the table below. Moreover, the specificities of the warning signals in this case are further discussed in the next section. This section is only meant to give an explanation, as well as an overview of the warning signals.

Date	Event	Categorization	Sources
2003	Kouachi brothers visit radical mosques and links with radical individuals	Radicalization process	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
26/01/2005	Cherif is arrested while trying to join Syria	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
2005/2006	Cherif encounters key figures of French jihadism (J. Beghal)	Further radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
30/09/2005	Muhamad cartoons published by the Jyllands-Posten	First provocation felt by the Muslim community	https://www.theguardian.com/media/2006/jan/31/religion.saudi Arabia
20/10/2005	Terrorists threats against the journal and Denmark	Terrorist threats	https://jyllands-posten.dk/international/ECE3931398/The-Cartoon-Crisis-%E2%80%93-how-it-unfolded/?page=1
08/02/2006	Charlie Hebdo publishes the Danish cartoons	Second provocation for the Muslims	Charlie Hebdo. February 8, 2016. "Mahomet débordé par les intégristes", n° 712
11/02/2006	Protests against CH	Anti-CH protests	
2010	Brothers under investigation for plotting the evasion of Belkacem	Evasion of a terrorist	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
2011	Brothers' surveillance starts	Intelligence surveillance	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
Late 2011	Said goes to Yemen to train with AQAP	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
02/11/2011	Said back in France, surveillance continues	Intelligence surveillance	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
02/11/2011	First attack against Charlie Hebdo	Terrorist attack	http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2011/11/02/01016-20111102ARTFIG00304-caricature-de-mahomet-le-siege-de-l-hebdomadaire-satirique-charlie-hebdo-incendie-son-site-pirate.php
2011-2013	Brothers adopt a discrete behaviour	Predictive of readiness to act	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
March 2013	Charb on AQ's hit list	Death threats	Al Qaeda. March 2013. "Yes we can: a bullet a day keeps the infidel away", <i>Inspire</i>
18/11/2013	Attacks against Liberation and BFM	Terrorist attacks	https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/medias/charlie-hebdo-bouleverse-par-l-attaque-contre-liberation_1300696.html
2014	Brothers under surveillance again due to their involvement in a radical Islam + threat they represent	Intelligence surveillance + Threat acknowledgement	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
Aug. 2014	Surveillance dropped because of lack of evidence	Lack of evidence	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
19/11/2014	French IS fighters call for attacks in France	Terrorist threats	https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/21/world/europe/video-shows-french-isis-fighters-calling-for-attacks-in-france.html

(Table 1: List of warning signals for Charlie Hebdo with sources)

3. Level of awareness of the intelligence services

The previous chapter has shown that there were early warning signals to the Charlie Hebdo attacks. The research understands warning signals as being similar past attacks, insofar as they give an indication of the societal dysfunction, but they also are supposed to raise awareness that crises do occur. Specific protests and uprisings also act as warning signals when they are the stigma of societal dysfunction. The analysis will give examples of this statement. Moreover, warning signals are also understood in terms of information related to specific individuals that signal their violent radicalization. This section will be devoted to determining the level of awareness of the intelligence services, based on the information available prior to the attacks. To do so, Paltrinieri and Khan's framework has been used as the basis for the analysis (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14).

Back in 2006, the satirical journal published the Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammed (Charlie Hebdo 2006, N°712). The original Danish publications resulted in uprisings in the Muslim community both in Europe and in the Muslim world, but also in threats of attacks against the Danish journal the Jyllands-Posten and Denmark (L'Obs 2006). In France, this first publication led to a great divide of the public opinion over the representation of religion through satirical cartoons, and to the wrath of the Muslim community that strongly condemned the journal at the time (Coroller 2006). More than 9,000 Muslims protested in France following the publications (Coroller 2006). As stated by Charlie Hebdo's lawyer Mr. Malka, Charlie Hebdo has been threatened since then, on a regular basis (Richard Malka, as quoted in Europe1, 2015). Despite those elements, the headquarters of the journal were not considered as at-risk sites. Therefore, no surveillance or protection was allocated to the journal. Considering the threats against the Danish journal and Denmark, it seems that the intelligence services did not take the global context into account when assessing the risk of an attack against Charlie Hebdo.

In fact, in 2011, Charlie Hebdo suffered a first attack: individuals set fire to the journal's headquarters (Maalouf 2015). In terms of indicator, this fact relates to the absence of action taken upon the global context of similar crises (Danish context), but also to a lack of surveillance and protection upon at-risk sites. It clearly translates an unawareness of the intelligence services that the information collected were in fact warning signals. Following this first attack, the journal's headquarters were under constant and static police surveillance, reinforced in 2013, when one of the cartoonists –Charb- was put on Al Qaeda's (AQ) hit list of people "most wanted for crimes against Islam" (AQ 2013). Moreover, while two media

headquarters –Libération and BFM- had been under attack months later, the intelligence services ignored those events as potential alarms of an upcoming attack against the journal, even reducing police surveillance from a static guard with three men, to a dynamic guard with two men (I. Brinsolaro & M. Wolinski, as quoted in Europe1, 2016). This reduction of resources allocation –both in terms of financial and human resources- is an important lagging factor. Despite the multiplication of warnings such as the attacks of the media companies and the recurring threats against the journal, the lack of follow-up and the reduction of surveillance and protection translate the unawareness of the warning signals of the organization.

When it comes to information collected by the intelligence services on the Kouachi brothers, the investigation report on the 2015 attacks also gives an overview of the signals that have been missed or misinterpreted by the intelligence agencies. Indeed, the Kouachi brothers were known from the French services since 2003, for their links with radical mosques and key figures of French Salafism such as Farid Benyettou (Assemblée Nationale 2016, 145). In 2005, Cherif Kouachi is arrested three days before he was supposed to join Syria, and he is sentenced to prison for his involvement in a Parisian jihadi cell, called “la Filière des Buttes-Chaumont” (Assemblée Nationale 2006, 13). Cherif “radicalized himself in prison between 2005 and 2008” and encountered key figures of armed jihadism there such as “J. Beghal” (Assemblée Nationale 2006, 13,147). In 2011, the DGSI (internal security agency) started its surveillance on the brothers for their links with Salafism, Said Kouachi was under the surveillance of the DRPP (Intelligence service of the Paris police) until he left to train “in Yemen for a few weeks” (Assemblée Nationale 2016, 145). Upon his return in France, his surveillance continued, but it has been rapidly dropped, the telephone interceptions being “inconclusive” (Assemblée Nationale 2016(a), 145). These are other examples of lagging indicators that relate to the unawareness of the intelligence services. Although the brothers were known to have started a deep process of violent radicalization, it can be argued that no diligent surveillance was adopted. It is further illustrated with their surveillance going on and off in 2014. The intelligence services dropped the surveillance on the Kouachi brothers in August 2014 (Assemblée Nationale 2016(b), 752). There is a clear absence of follow-up procedures on at-risk individuals. Indeed, the unawareness of the intelligence services in terms of risk posed by the brothers can be understood in terms of the surveillance going on and off. Should the services have been aware of the warning signals, they would have put the brothers under surveillance continuously.

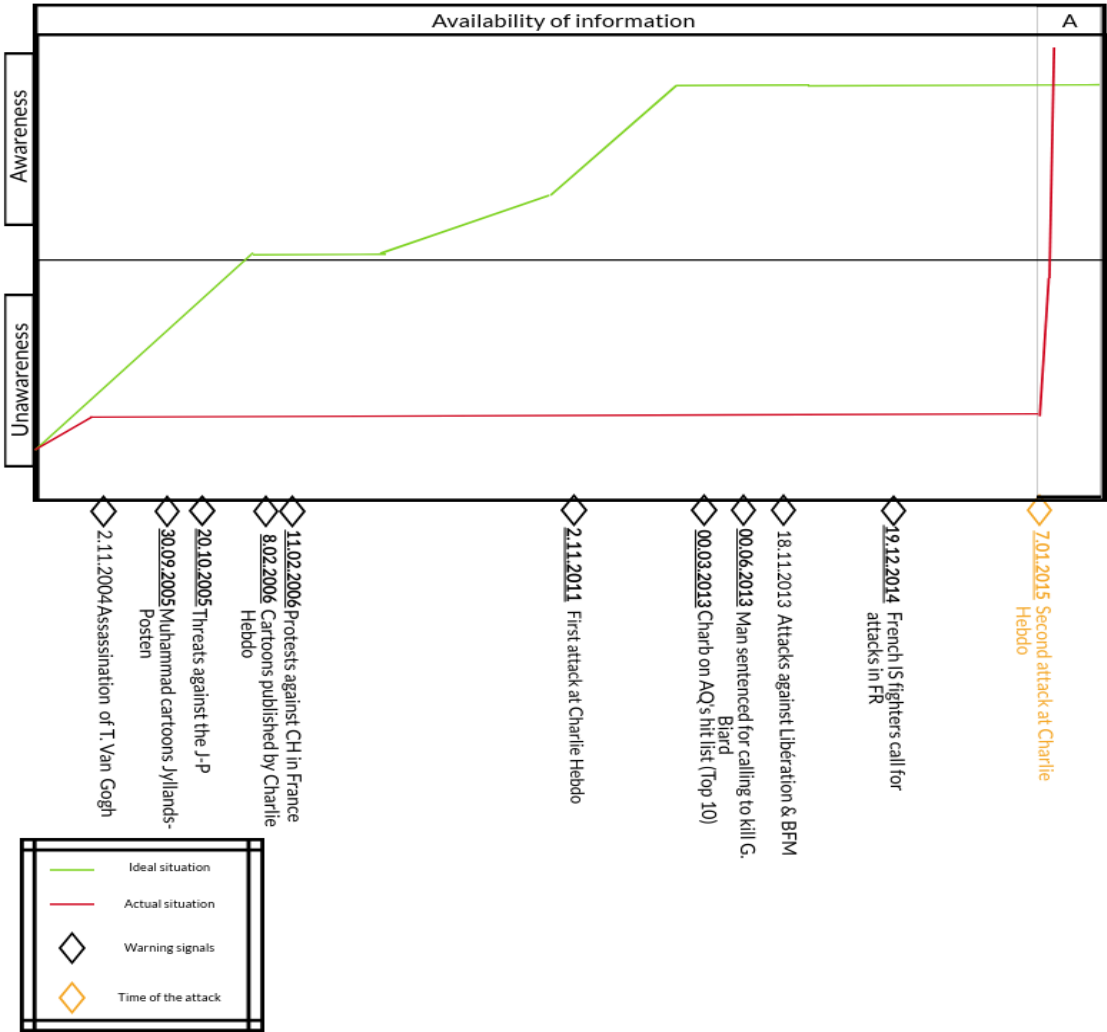
Therefore, based on the number of past events, but also on the information collected by the French intelligence services, it can be argued that, for Charlie Hebdo, the services were not in a state of awareness that the information was actually predictive of a high risk. Relating this statement to Paltrinieri and Khan’s framework, the Charlie Hebdo attacks were an “atypical event”, insofar as the information collected was disregarded, “despite the succession of related early warnings” (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14). A specific figure about the level of awareness with regards to information available for both past events and data collected by the French intelligence agencies can be found in the annex section of the thesis. The statement that the intelligence services were unaware of the warning signals is based on the analysis of the indicators developed in the methodology. Although some improvements were made in terms of legislatures –development of a new CT law (Cazeneuve 2014)- and budget and trainings (DGSE 2010), these are relatively outdated measures that do not take into consideration the imminent threats that the signals reveal. Therefore, the research notes a large number of lagging factors, comparing to the leading factors that are positive and pro-active actions taken upon the right assessment of an imminent risk. The analysis has shown that the five lagging indicators that have been developed in the methodology section apply to the case of Charlie Hebdo. The research therefore argues that the intelligence services were not aware of the warning signals in this particular case.

Overview of the findings

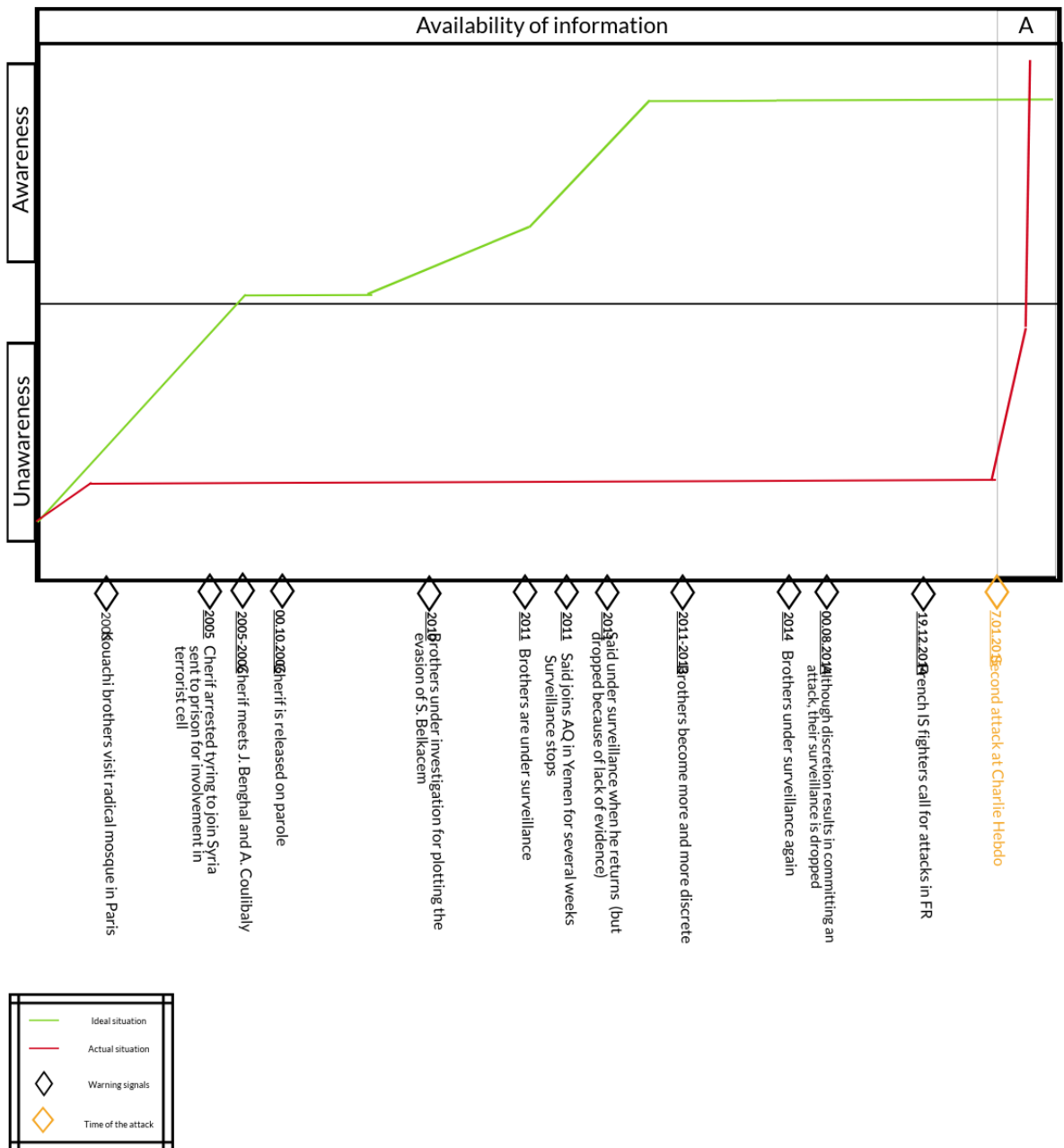
Indicators	Presence
Lack of surveillance on at-risk individuals	✓
Lack of follow-up procedures	✓
Absence of significant resources allocation	✓
Lack of surveillance on at-risk sites	✓
Absence of action taken upon context	✓

Therefore, this research argues that the intelligence services were in a state of unawareness with regards to the warning signals, prior to the Charlie Hebdo attacks. The results are summarized in the next tables –for both prior events and information about the assailants- and they are based on Paltrinieri et al. framework (2012).

Charlie Hebdo: Events



Charlie Hebdo: Assaultants



powered by

Consequently, this section serves as a basis for further analyzing the reasons that led to that state of unawareness. The next section is meant to identify the potential factors that have an impact on the level of awareness.

4. Potential factors that impact the level of awareness of warning signals in the case of Charlie Hebdo

This research is based on the first assumption that intelligence agencies can only be aware of warning signals, and therefore, act upon them, if, and only if, the characteristic developed by Erik Dahl's is encountered (Erik Dahl 2013, 20). Hence, the warning signals in this particular case are to be analyzed on the basis of them being "*precise*" and specific -threat against a particular place, a particular individual, and signs of violent radicalization (Erik Dahl 2013, 20).

a. Precision of the warning signals

As argued earlier, prior to the 2015 attacks against Charlie Hebdo, the satirical journal has been the victim of a first attack. The attack followed their publication of the Danish cartoons representing the Prophet Muhammad, and months of protests and threats against the journal. Considering Dahl's understanding of the precision of warning signals as being the threat against a specific location or place (Dahl 2013, 20), the risk of an attack against the satirical journal prior to 2015 was high from this perspective. In addition, in 2013, the Charlie Hebdo cartoonist, Charb, was the first French figure to be explicitly cited as "wanted for crimes against Islam" by the AQ's magazine *Inspire* (AQ 2013). This resulted in him receiving special protection. It is another determining factor of the precision of the threat against the journal. During the late months of 2013, concerns arose in the media sphere, with the two attacks suffered by media organizations, Libération and BFM (Brafman 2017).

Put all together, those elements allow to argue that in the case of Charlie Hebdo, the precision of the warning signals was high. Indeed, the threat of a terrorist attack was specific insofar as it pointed at a specific location –Charlie Hebdo-, as well as specific individuals.

From the perspective of the assailants, the Kouachi brothers were known by the intelligence services for a long time. Indeed, they have a long history of radicalization, starting from them visiting radical mosques in Paris, and having links with key figures of Salafism, to Cherif Kouachi being in prison and Said training in Yemen with AQAP.

In January 26, 2005, Cherif Kouachi was arrested three days before his departure to Syria to become mujahedin (Assemblée Nationale 2006(a), 13). Sentenced to prison for his involvement in the Filère des Buttes-Chaumont –a French jihadi cell known for recruiting youths for the jihad- he is known to have been further radicalized in prison, where he encountered key figures

of the jihad, such as J. Beghal (Assemblée Nationale 2016(a), 13). Moreover, Said Kouachi is known to have travelled to Yemen in order to learn war techniques with AQAP back in 2011 (Assemblée Nationale 2016(a), 13). Consequently, the two brothers were under surveillance from the intelligence services because they were considered as “particularly interesting” due to their links with “extremist mosques and individuals that posed a threat to the country’s interior security” (Assemblée Nationale 2016(a), 13). Therefore, with regards to Dahl’s terminology, the threat for national security embodied by the Kouachi brothers was specific at the time, if we consider that there are significant and relevant information that attest them being involved in a violent extremist movement of Islam.

b. Rigidity of procedures

This subsection is related to the organization’s lack of flexibility and up-dates. As mentioned by Turner, every organization is based on a particular culture that allows it to remain safe when a ‘known unknown’ appears (Turner 1976, 388). Nonetheless, this state of awareness of potential risk also creates “blind spots” on other “important issues” (Turner 1976, 388). This features applies when the procedures of the organizations lack flexibility: they impose strict conditions to follow and they prevent the organization to act outside pre-defined rules. The rules also do not correspond with the reality of the organization’s needs, which hinders their capacity to work efficiently.

In France, the culture of surveillance is subjected to many regulations. Indeed, the surveillance process requires an authorization from the Prime Minister, directly advised by a special commission on surveillance techniques (Code de la Sécurité Intérieure 2015, art. L821-1). Moreover, as suggested by the investigation report, when it comes to telephone interceptions, the intelligence services have two months to gather data before needing to ask for another authorization (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 733). The rigidity of procedures when it comes to surveillance and telephone interceptions is also found in the fact that the intelligence services are subjected to strict quotas of surveillance (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 734). The quotas are restrictions that oblige the organization to work within a fixed environment. Indeed, they do not correspond to the needs of the organization, and it creates an issue when it comes to detecting signs of violent radicalization. Indeed, because they have to make choices on who to pay attention to, it is very likely that either they will miss important signals concerning a particular individual, or that they will stop their surveillance before being able to collect

significant data on a particular individual. It was exactly the case with the Kouachi brothers. When asked about the cessation of surveillance over the Kouachi brothers, Patrick Calvar, director of the DGSI at the time of the attacks, declares that the intelligence services are subjected to strict “quotas” in terms of surveillance, but that they are also pressured by “lack of resources” (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 819). This lack of flexibility clearly undermines the work of the organization.

Therefore, the cessation of the Kouachi surveillance results from a rigid procedure, which requires that the individuals targeted represent a terrorist threat to the country (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 733). The intelligence services only have two months to collect relevant intelligence that the individuals represent such a threat, while knowing these individuals “operate undercover”, “aware of the intelligence services’ actions” (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 819). While the individuals the organization targets are constantly on the move and innovating, the lack of flexibility of the intelligence services does not fit the reality of their needs.

Another issue that has been identified through the report is the inability of the intelligence services to adapt to the new challenges posed by terrorism. This point relates to the idea that the organization lack procedures that fit the reality of their field. It can be characterized as a *lack of information on new techniques* employed by terrorists. As argued earlier, terrorists are more and more aware of the techniques employed by the intelligence services to track them. Therefore, they innovate to act undercover: this means that they do resort to “encrypted communications” to prepare their attacks (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 753). Nonetheless, when it comes to accessing those encrypted conversations, relevant authorities have not been provided with the means to do so, as argued by the Vice President of the High Court of Paris in charge of CT (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 494). In terms of indicator, this statement relates to the idea that their course of action does not correspond to the reality of the individuals they are dealing with. Indeed, while at-risk individuals are constantly changing their *modus operandi*, the French intelligence services have maintained old-fashioned methods that are too rigid to respond adequately to terrorism threats.

Moreover, this lack of awareness on new techniques can also be observed in terms of *modus operandi*. Indeed, whereas the intelligence services knew about nationals going to train with AQ or ISIS, they were unprepared to terrorists resorting to suicide missions, or war weapons

(Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 753). This point has posed a serious problem in the response phase of the Paris attacks, and is worth noting.

c. Decoy problem

The decoy problem can be understood in terms of paying too much attention to well-defined issues, while ignoring a severe “ill-structured problem” (Turner 1976, 388). In terms of indicators, this feature is present when the organization focuses on known problematics, while ignoring others. The in-depth analysis of the investigation report shows that the intelligence services were not confronted to such a problem. Nonetheless, the report, as well as the analysis of the 2014 foiled attacks on French soil, show that the intelligence services seem to focus mostly on “technical intelligence”, whereas human intelligence is also much needed (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 327). Indeed, a number of attempted terrorist attacks in 2014 were stopped through the use of telephone interceptions, as well as on the basis of terrorists posting on the Internet about their will of attacking the country (L’Express 2015). With regards to the argument stated earlier on terrorists acting undercover and using encrypted communications, it is likely that the intelligence services did pay attention to well-structured issues, such as self-radicalized individuals based on their online activities, rather than deepening their investigations on individuals –such as the Kouachi brothers- acting undercover.

d. Organization exclusivity

This point has to do with the outside sources, that may have relevant information, but that are “disregarded” (Turner 1976, 388). In the case of intelligence agencies, it relates to one agency underestimating the credibility of others. It applies when the information that is delivered by outside sources is disregarded or taken less seriously.

In France, the great decentralization of intelligence agencies leads to rivalry between the agencies (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 14). Indeed, when it comes to the French capital, Paris, the city is provided with its own agency, that has no jurisdiction over the rest of the country. This factor has posed a serious problem with the surveillance of the Kouachi brothers. Indeed, the Paris intelligence agency (DRPP) had the brothers Kouachi under surveillance until late 2014, when Said Kouachi moved to Reims, outside the DRPP’s jurisdiction (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 875). Said Kouachi fell under the DGSI’s jurisdiction, which decided to cease the surveillance because of the lack of evidence that he was going to engage in terrorism

(Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 146). This cessation is surprising insofar as the DGSI committed to continue the surveillance over Said Kouachi, but also because the report stated that the “unfruitful interceptions” were a signal that Said went undercover (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 147). Nonetheless, it can be understood as being caused by a strong rivalry between the two agencies. Therefore, the exclusivity of the Parisian intelligence agency creates a problem of intelligence sharing, but also a rivalry between the different services, as mentioned by Senator Dominati (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 14). In this particular case, it has created difficulties of information sharing, which has severe repercussions when it comes to dealing with terrorist threats. Indeed, because coping with terrorism requires information sharing from different parties, the old rivalry that remains between the Parisian and other agencies in France clearly undermines the work of the intelligence services as a whole.

e. Information difficulties

This issue is understood in terms of difficulty in information sharing, and lack of cooperation between the different intelligence services. This feature applies when the organization is divided into multiple agencies –known as the process of decentralization. It is also characterized by the fact that the organization misinterprets important information. These two indicators can go together, but the misinterpretation of information is also found within an agency itself.

The investigation report states that at the time of Said’s travel to Yemen, the intelligence services were unable to detect which of the brothers went to train with AQ (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 819). As argued by Turner, “wrong information” allows for the unfolding of the crisis because the organization misses the signals (Turner 1976, 389). This difficulty to gather relevant information is explained by both the very techniques the intelligence services used at the time, being “telephone interceptions, physical surveillance and the use of metadata” (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 819). But it also results from the great level of decentralization of the intelligence sector. Because of the high number of agencies in charge of dealing with terrorist threats, the information goes through multiple layers, resulting in the information being miscommunicated or misinterpreted.

In France, there are about nine different intelligence agencies. Each service has its own database and proceeds to its own surveillance operations (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 13). Although there has been an effort made to coordinate the information of all those services, the

coordination is guaranteed by three different “coordinators”: UCLAT attached to the police, the EMOPT is working with the Minister of Interiors, and a last one –Coordinateur National du Renseignement- working with the President of the Republic (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 14). This high decentralization leads to great information difficulties and to a lack of coordination between the different services. Indeed, the investigation report states that it has an impact on international cooperation, insofar as, the auditions of the directors of foreign intelligence agencies have shown that they were unable to identify their French colleagues in charge of CT in the country (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 14). This results in information difficulty in the sense that foreign agencies may have relevant information, but are unable to identify the right counter-part the intelligence should be delivered to.

Related to this issue of lack of communication, the French intelligence sector also lacks expertise when it comes to interpreting signals of radicalization, also called “weak signals” (Assemblée Générale 2016b, 730). The misinterpretation of signals is a blind spot that undermines the detection of threatening individuals potentially carrying out attacks. Indeed, the first obstacle to the lack of expertise in this field is tied with the lack of development of prison intelligence. Academic research (Khrosrokhavar 2013); (Bazex et al. 2017), as well as undertaken policies have shown that youths may be recruited in prison, starting or further developing the process of radicalization inside the jail system. The inefficiency of French prison intelligence is the first obstacle for the internal security agency (DGSI) to detect early signs of radicalization. Considering the case of Charlie Hebdo, Cherif Kouachi was known to have been in prison, where intelligence services acknowledge, *a posteriori*, that he further radicalized himself during his encounter with Salafist recruiters (Assemblée Nationale, 2016a, 13). Prisons have their own intelligence agencies, known as prison intelligence. Nonetheless, the creation of this new agency only added to the high number of agencies in charge of collecting intelligence. Therefore, the great decentralization has led to the information about the brothers in prison to be miscommunicated. It is another indicator that has a great impact on the ability of the intelligence services to detect early warning signals of violent radicalization.

f. Involvement of foreign agencies

Turner calls this feature “involvement of strangers”, referring to “members of the public” that have no links with the organization dealing with the crisis, and that may “activate the hazards” through an “inappropriate behavior” (Turner 1976, 390). To fit the case of

intelligence services, this research is concerned with the role of foreign or international agencies that may behave inappropriately, leading to the unfolding of the crisis. In the case of Charlie Hebdo, this feature does not apply for several reasons.

First, the two assailants were French nationals that have plotted the attacks on French soil. They were not under any international arrest warrant, and were –at some point- under French surveillance.

Moreover, foreign agencies have been involved when Said Kouachi travelled to Yemen, but they have not acted in an inappropriate way. The American CIA informed the French intelligence services that the individual was on their terrorist watch list, and that he was known to have joined Yemen (Burke 2015).

Therefore, the only inappropriate behavior that can be pointed at is the cessation of surveillance over the brothers, when one of them moved to Reims. Nonetheless, it is an issue that does not involve foreign agencies, but French agencies with different jurisdictions. It has more to do with the lack of cooperation between the agencies within the country.

g. Failure to comply with existing regulations

According to Turner, a crisis may unfold because organizations do not take regulations in place seriously. Therefore, this feature applies either when they do not realize that the regulation applies to their case specifically, or when they think a particular regulation is “out-of-date” (Turner 1976, 390).

Prior to the attacks at Charlie Hebdo, the major failure in complying with regulations is the lack of involvement of the prison intelligence (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 16). This agency, focusing on prisoners, was created in 2003, focusing primarily on radicalization since the London and Madrid bombings in 2005 (CF2R 2017, 1). Since 2005, the agency is in charge of “collecting, cross-checking and analyzing intelligence concerning dangerous prisoners, mostly with regards to terrorism” (CF2R 2017, 2). In June 2014, both the Ministry of Interiors and of Justice asked for the reinforcement of the cooperation between prison intelligence and other services (CF2R 2017, 2). Nonetheless, from the investigation report, it appears that no real cooperation existed between the prison agency and other state services (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 16). This statement goes alongside with what has been argued in the previous subchapter. The decentralization of the intelligence services hinders their ability to work efficiently, but the different agencies do not comply with existing procedures. While the DGSI argues that they did not have sufficient information on the brothers to continue to work on them,

it appears that they did not consult the prison agency in charge of the surveillance of prisoners, which was aware of his deep process of radicalization. Therefore, although Cherif Kouachi radicalized in prison, he was not subject to surveillance upon his release. His surveillance, alongside with his brother's, started in 2011 when they were suspected to plot the evasion of Belkacem (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 13). In the French case, it appears that different agencies have relevant information on at-risk individuals, but they do not comply with the procedures that oblige them to cooperate together in order to have the most up-to-date information on these individuals.

h. Minimizing emergent danger

As stated by Turner, this feature has to do with the “failure to see or to appreciate fully the magnitude of some emergent danger” (Turner 1976, 390). From the intelligence sector perspective, this feature applies when the organization underestimates both the risk posed by a particular individual, but also the context of the information collected. It applies when past events are disregarded whereas they are warnings of a social dysfunction but also when although past similar attacks have happened –sometimes in a very short time frame– surveillance upon individuals has been stopped.

With regards to minimizing the threat that an individual poses, the investigation report has auditioned a great number of intelligence actors on the cessation of the surveillance over the Kouachi brothers. Indeed, the commissioners question them several times on this point, implying that they underestimated the risk posed by those individuals. Aware of the new techniques to behave undercover, they know that acting undercover and adopting clandestine attitude is a sign that predicts the individual may conduct an attack (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 727). Moreover, the investigate reports clearly stated that this cessation of surveillance is an intelligence failure (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 13).

The lack of surveillance upon Cherif Kouachi's release is an indicator that the intelligence services have minimized an emergent danger. Having been in contact with jihadi recruiters in prison, and knowing his involvement in the Filière des Buttes-Chaumont, it appears as clear that Cherif was an emergent danger to the country, which would have required surveillance.

With regards to underestimating past events, this research has shown earlier that Charlie Hebdo was clearly a target of AQ. The growing wrath of the jihadi community has been

translated by AQ's magazine *Inspire*, which targeted one of their cartoonists, Charb (AQ 2013). For several years, the satirical journal's headquarters were provided with a "static guard", meaning that they had policemen on the site for their protection (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 143). The idea that the danger to which Charlie Hebdo was exposed had been minimized can be explained by the idea that their protection has been changed, leaving them with a dynamic guard, meaning that policemen were circulating in the neighborhood (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 143). Moreover, in a context of great tensions in France involving the Muslim community, the awareness of the intelligence services should have arisen. The absence of importance given to past events and to the global atmosphere shows that the organization has minimized emergent danger.

Moreover, the report points at a third point, which is the fact that France had not been attacked between 1996 and 2012 (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 733). The report states that "this failure of intelligence does not come as a surprise insofar as our country living in peace, and had suddenly been confronted to war" (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 315). Maybe the absence of terrorist attacks led the intelligence services to underestimate the potential chances of terrorism in the country. This point can also be related to what Paltrinieri and Khan call the "loss of memory" when dealing with risk assessment (Paltrinieri & Khan 2016, 14).

3. Conclusion on Charlie Hebdo

The in-depth analysis of the information available prior to the attacks at Charlie Hebdo has shown that there existed early warning signals leading to the attacks. With regards to the preventive action theory developed by Erik Dahl, those warning signals were precise enough for the intelligence services to act upon them. The information gathered has shown that the threat was aimed at a specific location, as well as at a specific individual, pertaining to the satirical journal's staff. Moreover, the intelligence services also collected evidence that the Kouachi brothers were deeply radicalized, siding with an extremist and violent branch of Islam.

Nonetheless, those features being present, the attacks still happened. For that reason, the research has investigated into organizational issues to identify the factors that contributed to the intelligence services being unaware of the signals, and therefore, that prevented them from acting upon them. Based on Turner's work on organizational disasters, the case-study findings can be summarized as follows:

- **Rigidity in procedures:** highly regulated culture of surveillance (approval process, quotas); reliance on technical intelligence rather than human intelligence; lack of adaptability (little knowledge over new techniques used by terrorists).
- **Information difficulties:** great decentralization leading to a lack of effective communication (confusion); numerous coordination agencies (3 in France); lack on expertise on signals of radicalization (weak signals).
- **Failure to comply with regulations:** failure to involve prison intelligence, whereas at-risk youths mostly radicalize in prisons; lack of coordination between prison intelligence and other intelligence services.
- **Minimizing emergent risk:** failure of threat assessment (failing to interpret individual's behavior as predictive of committing an attack); underestimating past events (past similar attacks); peaceful history bias (thinking the event is not likely because attacks have not occurred in 20 years).

Those four features out of the seven developed by Turner are the most impacting in the case of Charlie Hebdo. The in-depth analysis of the investigation report has provided this research with two more factors that enter into account when considering why the intelligence services were not aware of the signals prior to the attacks.

- **Scarcity of resources:** disproportion between the number of people considered as threats for national security and the intelligence agents capable of operating surveillance; absence of “intrusive means of surveillance” (IT surveillance, wiretapping); lack of human intelligence (undercover agents).
- **Absence of trainings:** lack of expertise on encrypted means of communication, lack of training on signals of radicalization, lack of preparedness to new challenges posed by terrorists.

➔ Having analyzed the first case study of this research, the next section of the analytical chapter is devoted to the analysis of the second case study, being the Paris attacks. It will follow the same outline as for Charlie Hebdo.

1. Overview

On November 13, 2015, a terrorist organization split up in three distinct commandos to perpetrate attacks in the French capital. At 9:20pm, the first team of kamikazes attacked the Stade de France. 4 people were killed –including the three kamikazes, and 49 were injured (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 46). At 9:25pm, the second team of terrorists, known as the “terraces commando” opened the fire at bars and restaurants in the center of Paris. 37 people were killed and 58 were injured (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 50). At 9:40pm, the third commando entered the Bataclan, a Parisian concert venue that was full that night. They fired at the crowd, taken into hostage, until the situation was handled by the elite forces, two and a half hours later, at 12:20am (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 60). 85 people were killed, and 114 were injured (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 61). In total, the Paris attacks resulted in the death of 130 people, 493 people were injured, and 1184 people were traumatized (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 61).

2. Warning signals

As argued in the methodological chapter, there are different types of events or information that act as warning signals. Similar past events are the first type of warning signals. Similar terrorist attacks, and also their iteration is a warning signals of an upcoming risk. Related to this point, the societal context is also considered as a warning signal in this research. Indeed, some events are the stigma of social dysfunctions, such as communities’ protests or the rise of islamophobia and far-right ideology. Examples of warning signals that relates to these arguments are to be found in the table giving an overview of the signals. Moreover, from the perspective of the terrorists, warning signals of an upcoming risk are also present in the case of the Paris attacks. For example, when information collected on an individual show that he entered a process of violent radicalization –links with Salafist mosques and individuals, travels to jihadi combat zones- online terrorist activities. The table below shows more examples of the Paris attacks’ warning signals. As for the case of Charlie Hebdo, the specificities of the warning signals in this case are further discussed in the next section. This section is only meant to give an explanation, as well as an overview of the warning signals.

Overview of the findings concerning the warning signals:

Date	Event	Categorization	Sources
2007/2009	Charity to support Israeli forces organized at Bataclan	Wrath of Muslim world	http://www.lemonde.fr/attaques-a-paris/article/2015/11/15/le-bataclan-un-haut-lieu-de-la-culture-cible-de-longue-date-par-les-islamistes_4810424_4809495.html
2008/2009	Pro-Palestine protests against the Bataclan	Protests	http://www.lemonde.fr/attaques-a-paris/article/2015/11/15/le-bataclan-un-haut-lieu-de-la-culture-cible-de-longue-date-par-les-islamistes_4810424_4809495.html
22/09/2009	Ben Abbes plots attacks against the Bataclan	Terrorist threat	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
2010	I. O. Mostefai identified as radicalized	Radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
00/10/2012	Amimour interrogated for plotting to join Syria	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
23/05/2013	Attack against the military in Paris	Terrorist attack	https://www.francetvinfo.fr/faits-divers/terrorisme/militaire-poignarde-a-la-defense-il-y-avait-une-volonte-de-tuer_332990.html
00/09/2013	Amimour and Mostefai travel to Syria	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
00/09/2013	International arrest warrant against Amimour, nothing for Mostefai	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
2013	Abaaoud joins IS	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
00/12/2013	Mohamed-Aggad goes to Syria with members of the Strasbourg jihadi cell	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
00/02/2014	Abaaoud considered a mujihadeen of IS by Belgium	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
24/05/2014	Attacks against Jewish museum in Brussels	Terrorist attack	http://www.liberation.fr/planete/2014/06/01/attaque-du-musee-juif-de-bruxelles-un-suspect-arrete_1031144
00/07/2014	Abaaoud sentenced to 20 years in Belgium for terrorism (he is not at the trial)	Sentence for terrorism	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
19/11/2014	French IS fighters call for attacks in France	Terrorist threats	https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/21/world/europe/video-shows-french-isis-fighters-calling-for-attacks-in-france.html
00/01/2015	B. Abdeslam known for radicalization, his brother too	Radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
03/02/2015	Attacks against Jewish center in France	Terrorist attacks	https://fr.timesofisrael.com/3-militaires-agresses-dont-2-blesses-devant-un-centre-juif-a-nice/
14/02/2015	Attacks in Copenhagen (coffee shop and synagogue)	Terrorist attacks	https://www.nouvelobs.com/monde/20150215.OBS2554/attentats-de-copenhague-le-deroule-de-la-double-attaque.html
00/02/2015	Hadfi foes to Syria	Violent radicalization	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r3922-t1.pdf
10/04/2015	Attacks at Paris airport	Terrorist attack	http://www.francesoir.fr/societe-faits-divers/aeroport-dorly-agression-au-couteau-dun-militaire-affecte-au-plan-vigipirate
16/06/2015	Attack in the Thalys	Terrorist attack	https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/fusillade-dans-un-thalys-amsterdam-paris_1708657.html

(Table 2: List of the warning signals for the Paris attacks)

3. The level of awareness of the intelligence services

The research has identified a number of warning signals prior to the Paris attacks. This section is also based on Paltrinieri et al. model of awareness. The figures can be found in the annex.

First, the concert hall the Bataclan, known for rock music concerts, had been targeted by terrorists in 2009 (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 141). Indeed, after the Cairo attacks in Egypt, the Egyptian police arrested a first suspect, Ms. Hohxa, who reported to the police that Farouk Ben Abbes was plotting an attack against the Parisian concert venue (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 141). Despite the precision of the threat against the city, and the precision of the concert venue, it appears that no additional security or surveillance measures were taken at the time. The investigation of the signals the years following the Paris attacks reveals that the threat against the Bataclan, and Paris in general, was more and more established. In August 2015, Reda Hame is arrested upon his return from Syria. While in custody, he declared that Abdelhamid Abaaoud urged him to conduct an attack, anywhere in Europe, in a concert venue that features rock music (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 142). *Abdelhamid Abaaoud is now known to be the mastermind of the Paris attacks*. Upon this new information, the French report shows no signs of collaboration with the Belgian intelligence services –that supposedly work on Abaaoud, which is a lagging indicator, relating to the lack of surveillance on at-risk individuals. Adding this to the lack of surveillance on sites, the level of awareness of the intelligence services prior to the Paris attacks appears to lower over time.

Moreover, the multiplication of attacks before the Paris attacks, as explained in the warning signals subchapters should theoretically raise the level of risk awareness of the authorities. In terms of indicators, it is to be considered as the absence of action taken upon the global context of crises both in Europe and in France. The next paragraph goes deeper into the analysis of the absence of actions taken.

Although the legislation on counter-terrorism was up-dated in 2014, as argued earlier, the aftermath of the Charlie Hebdo attacks shows that the French CT legislation has not been updated with regards to the attacks (Direction de l'Information Légale et Administrative (DILA) 2016). This factor is taken into account as being a lagging indicator. Indeed, as listed above, France had been the theatre of multiple attacks from 2013, but most of them occurred in 2015. Nonetheless, the government never updated the legislation (DILA 2016).

In terms of surveillance, it appears from the investigation report that the Bataclan was never under surveillance, may it be specific or not (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 142). This is also a lagging indicators as developed in the methodology. The very fact that no extraordinary measures had been taken at this time shows that the intelligence services were unaware of the

warning signals as being signs of an emerging risk. Although the risk of attacks was high in the country –referring to the threats against Paris, the calls from IS fighters and the threat against the Bataclan, there is a clear absence of significant resources allocation. Indeed, usual sites were under close surveillance such as religious buildings, but the protection and surveillance of mass-gathering events was low, which indicates a clear unawareness of the intelligence services.

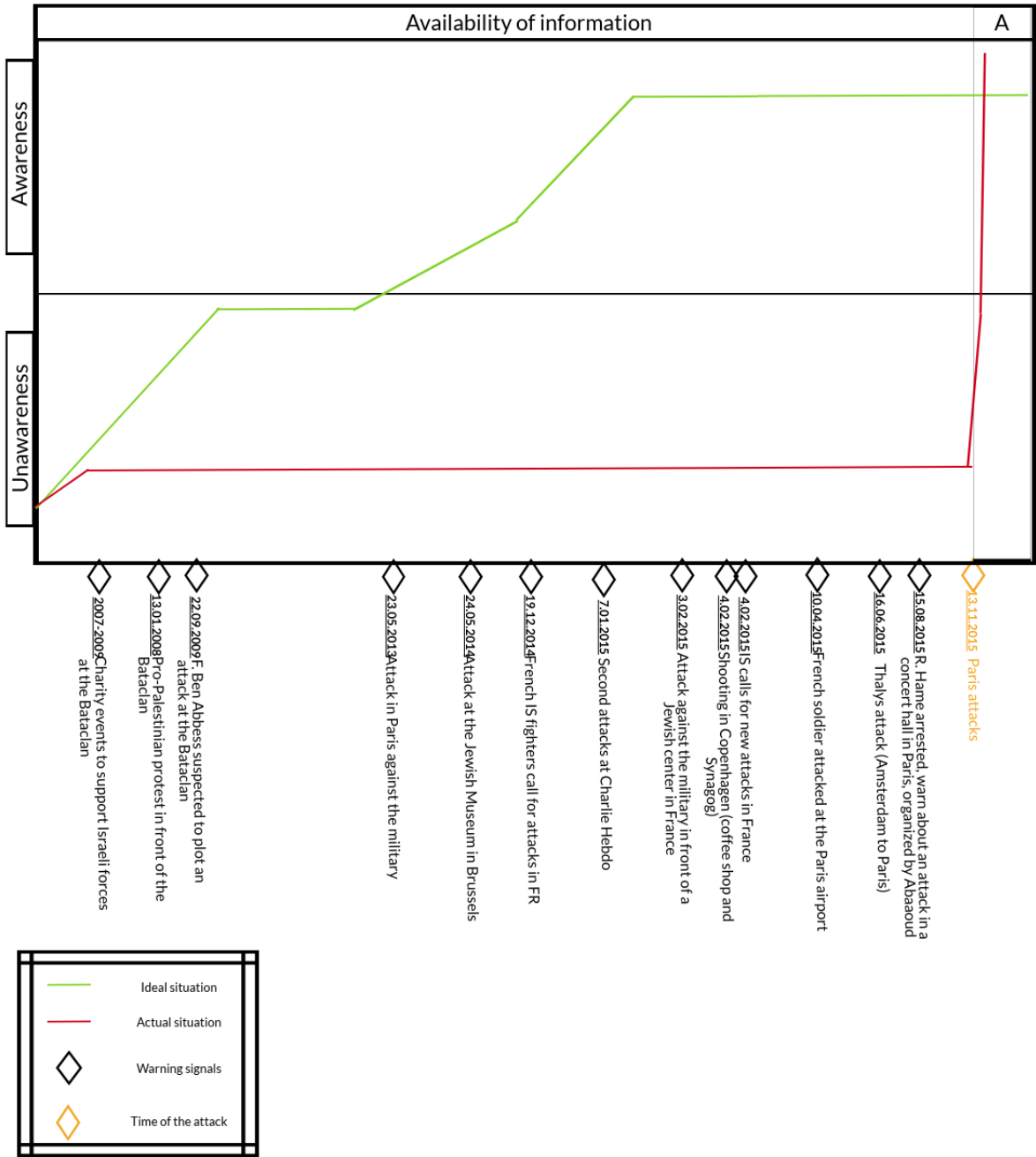
From the perspective of the individuals involved in the attacks, the complexity of this case is that about 11 people actively perpetrated those attacks, divided into three separate commandos. The investigation report has shown that all individuals were known by the intelligence community (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 145). Nonetheless, most of them were only categorized as “*Fiché S*” (a French classification that identifies individuals that pose a threat to national security, but with no legal power). The absence of deep surveillance upon those individuals is a lagging indicator, but it also translates a lack of resources of the intelligence community. Indeed, the lack of resources involved in the surveillance of the individuals that represent a threat to the country is interpreted as a lack of awareness of the intelligence services. Another lagging indicator relates to the lack of follow-up procedures. Among the assailants of the Paris attacks, some were released upon parole, but there was no follow-up and no surveillance upon them, although the intelligence services knew they were radicalized and willing to conduct attacks on French soil.

Overview of the findings

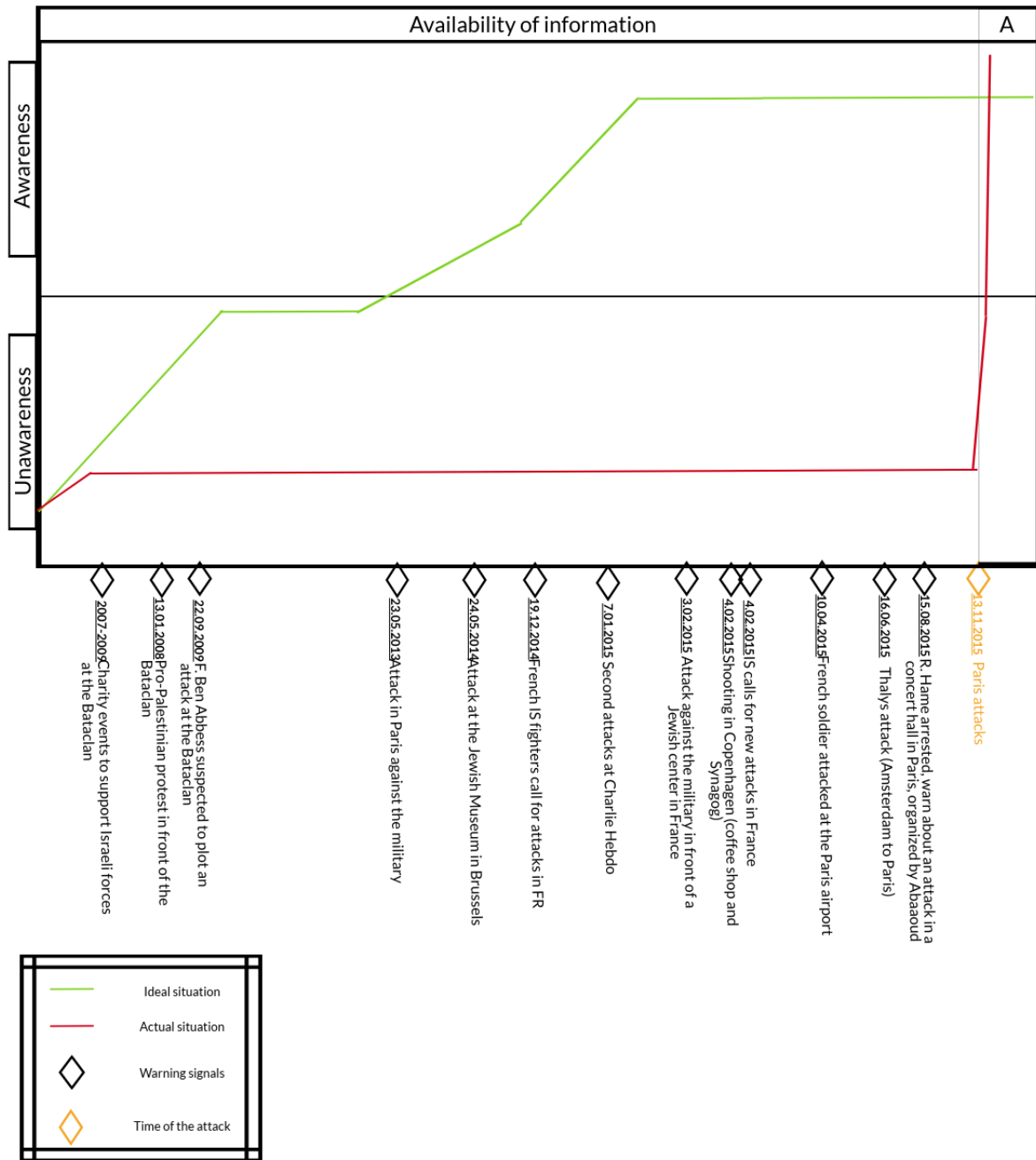
Indicators	Presence
Lack of surveillance on at-risk individuals	✓
Lack of follow-up procedures	✓
Absence of significant resources allocation	✓
Lack of surveillance on at-risk sites	✓
Absence of action taken upon context	✓

This research therefore argues that the intelligence services were in a state of unawareness with regards to the warning signals prior to the Paris attacks. The next tables summarize the results –for both prior events and the information collected on the assailants.

Paris Attacks: Events



Paris Attacks: Events



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Therefore, this section has shown that the lagging indicators are overweighing the leading ones. Indeed, the level of risk awareness of the warning signals was low. It is surprising insofar as the country experienced several terrorist attacks prior to these attacks. Nonetheless,

this case fits the definition of an atypical event, as being “a scenario deviating from normal expectations of unwanted events or worst case reference scenarios” (Paltrinieri et al. 2012, 21).

4. Potential factors of that impact the level of awareness of warning signals in the case of the Paris attacks

a. Precision of the warning signals

As argued earlier, the Paris attacks are complex insofar as they have occurred in different locations, simultaneously.

- 21h19: first explosion at the Stade de France (Gate D)
- 21h22: second explosion at the Stade de France (Gate H)
- 21h24: first shooting at <i>Le Carillon</i> and <i>Le Petit Cambodge</i> terraces, Paris 10 th district
- 21h26: second shooting at <i>Casa Nostra</i> and <i>Café Bonne Bière</i> terraces, Paris 11 th district
- 21h36: third shooting at <i>La Belle Equipe</i> terrace, Paris 11 th District
- 21h40: explosion inside the restaurant <i>Comptoir Voltaire</i> , Paris 11 th district
- 21h40: beginning of the mass shooting at <i>Le Bataclan</i> , Paris 11 th district
- 21h53: third explosion at the Stade de France (Gate B)

Table 3: Chronology of the attacks, translated from French (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 42).

The very unfolding of the attacks makes it unpredictable for the intelligence services to know the exact location of the attacks. Nonetheless, it has been argued earlier that the Bataclan was already mentioned during the interrogation of terrorists. Moreover, the Bataclan is one of Paris biggest concert venues, with a capacity of about 1,500 people (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 19). In August 2015 –three months prior to the attacks- Reda Hame declared that Abaaoud urged him to conduct an attack in a rock concert (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 19). Although the Bataclan was not mentioned specifically, the investigation report argues that more protection should have been allocated to the concert venue (Assemblée Nationale 2016b, 19). This point will be further elaborated in the next subsections.

When it comes to the other locations, the intelligence services did not receive or gather any information that would suggest that an attack would occur at those locations. Indeed, the shootings that occurred at terraces were targeted at six different cafés and restaurants, making it impossible to predict. Moreover, the explosion at the Stade de France were also unpredictable in terms of intelligence available. Nonetheless, as being a mass-gathering event, protection and surveillance could have been increased with regards to the attacks that France suffered in the months following these attacks, but also with regards to the threats against the country.

In terms of the threat targeted specific individuals or groups of individuals, the intelligence services did not have any information that would help to predict such an attack. Indeed, although the French people as a whole was targeted in propaganda videos, the information available was not specific enough.

With regards to the assailants, the intelligence services had relevant information to assess that those individuals were deeply radicalized. Table 4 lists the different individuals involved in the Paris attacks.

Name	Involvement	Nationality
Mohamed Abrini	Logistics	Belgian & Moroccan
Ismael Omar Mostefai	Bataclan	French
Samy Amimour	Bataclan	French
Foued Mohamed-Aggad	Bataclan	French
Salah Abdeslam	Logistics + Stade de France	French & Belgian
Bilal Hadfi	Stade de France	French
Ahmad Al-Mohammad	Stade de France	Syrian passport found
Mohammad Al-Mahmod	Stade de France	Syrian passport found
Abdelhamid Abaaoud	Mastermind + Terraces	Belgian
Brahim Abdeslam	Terraces	French & Belgian
Chakib Akhrouh	Terraces	Belgian & Moroccan

Table 4: Paris attacks commando (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 62-68).

Concerning the French nationals involved in the attacks, the investigation report helps to claim that the intelligence services were concerned about the risk that those individuals posed. Indeed, I. O. Mostefai and S. Amimour travelled to Syria together in September 2013 (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 12). They were “*fichés S*” for violent radicalization (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 13). F. Mohamed-Aggad was also known having travelled to Syria with a group of nine individuals from Strasbourg (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 13). B. Hadfi was subject to an international arrest warrant: he was condemned by the Belgian justice to prison for his involvement in terrorist activities (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 65). The other individuals involved were under Belgian jurisdiction, their case will be examined later in the research. Concerning A. Al-Mohammad and M. Al-Mahmod are known to have crossed the Greek border with fake Syrian passport in October 2015 (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 24). They are, therefore, excluded from this part of the analysis for obvious reasons, mostly because the French intelligence services had no relevant information about them.

Therefore, it appears that the French intelligence services had relevant information that clearly highlighted the fact that the French individuals that perpetrated the Paris attacks were threatening national security because of their involvement in a violent and radical Islam.

→ This section has provided the research with evidence that the French intelligence services did not possess sufficiently precise warning signals of an upcoming threat. Indeed, although the country was at a high terrorist threat level, they had no specific information about a threat on the locations of the attacks –except for the Bataclan-, and no specific information about a targeted group of individuals. Nonetheless, it appears from the investigation reports that they had sufficient and precise intelligence about the French perpetrators of the attacks prior to their occurrence. The section devoted to Turner’s analysis will help to understand the specific factors that led them not to act upon that information.

b. Rigidity of procedures

The investigation report highlights the idea that the very structure of the French intelligence community lacks flexibility, insofar as there is a “rigid division” of the agencies between what they call the “open milieu” and the “closed milieu” (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 158). In France, each service operates within a certain degree of competences: some agencies only work with “closed milieu” information, that is information related to terrorism or economic espionage, while some others work with “open milieu” information, related to social conflicts or urban violence (Fouchet 2012). Because “closed milieu” information are exclusively gathered and analyzed by the DCRI (Central unit of intelligence), it makes it hard, or even impossible for other agencies to work properly when it comes to terrorism issues (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 158). Considering terrorist threats as being a multidimensional issue that requires cooperation, this strict division that is lacking flexibility hinders the work of the intelligence services.

The rigidity of the systems used to report threatening individuals is another example provided by the report. Indeed, as argued earlier, the French intelligence community is divided into multiple agencies. Those agencies all have different ways of reporting individuals, and some information is classified, meaning that it is only accessible by members of the agency that reported them (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 174). In other words, when a service wants to

check if a particular individual is a potential risk, they may not have access to that information. As argued by the director of the military intelligence, Christophe Gomart, there needs to be a fusion of intelligence to be able to detect and prevent attacks (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 174). Once again, the procedures are outdated and the organization does not work in an optimal way.

Moreover, as for the case of Charlie Hebdo, the intelligence services also suffer a lack of preparation when it comes to adapting to terrorists' new techniques. Because of their over-reliance on technical intelligence, rather than human intelligence, it makes it hard for the intelligence community to infiltrate terrorist cells. Because they often operate undercover, using encrypted means of communication, such as Telegram or the Dark Web, the intelligence community needs to adapt to those new techniques (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 151). Therefore, according to the investigate report, infiltrating cells, and adapting to new terrorist techniques is the only way to be able to detect upcoming attacks. This is another example of the outdated procedures the organization suffers.

c. Decoy problem

Turner understands the idea of decoy problem as focusing too much on well-known problems that organizations know they can result in a crisis, while ignoring the risk posed by less known problems. This feature applies when the intelligence services are paying much of their attention to known problems such as returning foreign fighters or homegrown terrorists.

In the case of the Paris attacks, the investigation report claims that the French intelligence services were focusing too much on French foreign fighters, as it is known that they are very likely to conduct attacks on French soil, or that they may enter in contact with friends to conduct attacks (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 152). Nonetheless, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who is the mastermind of the Paris attacks, was known by the French intelligence services. Indeed, as argued earlier, in August 2015 –three months before the attacks- they knew that he was projected an attack at a rock concert (Assemblée Nationale, 2016a, 142). About this particular case, the director of the DGSI argues that Abaaoud was not part of the organization's top priority insofar as they had “enough French nationals from Syria that want to conduct attacks on French soils” (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 152). This clearly indicates that the

organization was focusing on well-structured issues, such as French citizens willing to conduct attacks on French soil rather than thinking terrorism as a transboundary phenomenon.

The argument of the director of the DGSI was deeply questioned, and the director also argued later in the interview that the intelligence community's strategy to focus on French national is a mistake (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 139). Indeed, instead of thinking in terms of French, one should think in terms of francophone, because the country is also confronted to assailants from Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 139). Reflecting on both the Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks, it appears that the intelligence community is trying to understand terrorism as a transboundary crisis, considering that threats on French soil come from a larger panel of individuals.

d. Organization exclusivity

As for the case of Charlie Hebdo, this feature applies when information received from outside sources or organizations is given less credit or/and is disregarded.

This issue of underestimating the sources of other organizations does not apply in the study of this research. Indeed, the success of intelligence, even more when it comes to issues of terrorism, is very linked to cooperation. European countries have understood the vital importance of information sharing to succeed. Moreover, terrorism can be understood as a transboundary crisis. Indeed, transboundary crises can be defined as crises that have no political or geographical boundaries, and that "originate from many sources" (Boin & Rhinard 2008, 1). Therefore, following the argument of Boin and Rhinard, managing terrorism as a transboundary threat means that "individual states" need to merge their "capacities" to cope with those new threats (Boin & Rhinard 2008, 1).

Moreover, the French intelligence services have worked with foreign agencies and did share information with them. For all those reasons, this particular feature does not apply to the case of the Paris attacks.

e. Information difficulties

As for the case of the attacks against Charlie Hebdo, this feature applies when there is a high level of decentralization: the organization is divided into multiple agencies and information is miscommunicated or misinterpreted.

As argued earlier, the French intelligence community is divided in multiple agencies, and are supposed to be coordinated by central agencies. The report highlights the fact that those coordinating agencies are ill-functioning. Indeed, the very fact that there are three different agencies in charge of coordinating information adds up to the existing “complexity”, which undermines the objectives of the intelligence services (Assemblée Nationale 2013a, 13-14). This statement relates to the first indicator, that is that the high level of decentralization creates information difficulties. Having three coordinating agencies does not help in the information sharing and monitoring process, but rather adds layers to the existing complex structure of the organization.

Another factor that leads to information difficulties in this very case is related to the lack of cooperation and coordination between the different actors responsible for combatting terrorism. Indeed, this is embedded by the example of Samy Amimour, one of the terrorists of the Paris attacks. In 2012, he was arrested on the basis that he projected to travel to a jihadi combat zone in Syria (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 65). Although he was not imprisoned, he was subjected to judiciary control, deprived from his identification documents, and was not allowed to leave the country (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 65). The investigation report suggests that he was able to renew his identification documents (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 148). Moreover, during the investigation, they learnt that S. Amimour stopped going to the police office every week, as he was supposed to do following his arrest (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 148). This happened a month prior to the attacks (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 148). This point shows that there is a clear lack of communication and information sharing between the different agencies involved in counter-terrorism. Once again, the multiple layers that compose the French intelligence services clearly hinders their capacity to cooperate with one another adequately.

f. Involvement of foreign agencies

In the realm of intelligence, this feature applies when foreign agencies are involved. Their work may affect the performance of the French intelligence services. It applies when the organization receives irrelevant or incomplete information, but also when foreign agencies fail to (re)-act adequately. It is the case insofar as terrorism is a transboundary threat, meaning that international cooperation is paramount.

Although this feature did not apply to the case of Charlie Hebdo because the protagonists were French nationals, the Paris attacks were perpetrated by French, as well as Belgian nationals. Hence the analysis of the involvement of foreign agencies, that will mostly rely on Belgian intelligence services. In this particular case, the French intelligence services are dependent on the way the Belgians gather and analyze intelligence, but also on how they assess risk and threats.

The first issue highlighted by the French investigation report is related to A. Abaaoud, the Paris attacks mastermind. The French intelligence services knew that he was involved in terrorism since January 2015 (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 152). Indeed, they helped the Belgians to shut down a terrorist cell, known as the Verviers cell (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 152). At the time, A. Abaaoud was known to be in Athens, where the Belgians were working with the Greek intelligence services to arrest him. It appears from the investigation report that the Greeks were misinformed about the Belgian intervention in Verviers. It resulted in them rushing their intervention, which allowed A. Abaaoud to flee (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 152). From there, the French intelligence services were aware that Abaaoud was a threat, but as he fled, both the French and Belgians were not able to locate him. In terms of indicators, this point relates to the Belgian intelligence community failing to act adequately. Indeed, the fact that they were unable to give relevant information and communicate the right information to the Greek agency has profound consequences for the French intelligence because from this point, they were unable to locate Abaaoud –who is the mastermind of the Paris attacks. It also means that information that they will later communicate to the French services is mostly incomplete, resulting from their inability to locate their target.

Another issue that is linked with the Belgians has to do with the brothers Abdeslam. They were known to be radicalized, and therefore, the Belgian authorities decided to investigate their case (La Chambre 2017, 354). With regards to the investigation of terrorism, the DR3 (which is the CT division of the Brussels federal police) classifies the different files under 4 distinct categories, corresponding to a certain level of threat or risk (La Chambre 2017, 344). “Category 1”: the files are considered as top priority because they pose a serious and “immediate threat” to Belgium or any other country, and investigating them should precede any another category (La Chambre 2017, 344). “Category 2”: the files are considered as “urgent”, agents work on them daily because they have to do with auditioned individuals that have been

released (La Chambre 2017, 345). “Category 3”: the files are considered “normal” and it is very likely that those files will be closed (La Chambre 2017, 345). “Category 4”: those are filed that will be closed, and agents do not work on them when the division is “understaffed” (La Chambre 2017, 345). The Belgian investigation report states that although there exist clear criteria for categorizing the different investigations, they are also classified on the basis of the limited capacity (in terms of staff and resources) to work on them (La Chambre 2017, 356). To cope with this issue, the Belgian created what they call the “red files” –*dossiers rouges*–, those are investigated upon if the prosecutor demands it (La Chambre 2017, 348). The case of the Adbeslam brothers was a red file, meaning that it was considered as top priority. Nonetheless, the Belgian investigation report reveals that the investigation was stopped in June 2015 (La Chambre 2017, 355). Although the Belgians did resort to telephone interceptions in this case, the results were “frozen” at the time, meaning that they were not analyzed (La Chambre 2017, 355). After the Paris attacks, it appears that the Belgians had lost track of the interceptions made on the brothers (La Chambre 2017, 356). When these interceptions were finally analyzed, they revealed that the brothers were in contact with Abaooud since July 2014, and that Abaooud had sent “worrying messages” (La Chambre 2017, 356). This point also relates to the Belgian services’ inability to work adequately, and it also has repercussion on the information they later communicated to the French intelligence services. Indeed, they wrongly assessed the threat posed by the brothers mostly because of time and resources scarcity. The posteriori analysis of the brothers’ communication shows that they were at-risk individuals involved in terrorism matter –because of their relationship with Abaaoud.

Moreover, in the case of the Adbeslam brothers, another issue has to do with the Belgian use of the Schengen information system (SIS). Although they were known for their radicalization, the Belgian did not enter any information about Salah’s radicalization in the SIS (La Chambre 2017, 477). It means that whenever European authorities would check his name on the SIS, the only thing that would appear was related to civil law, not to criminal law (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 16). This very point has to do with the post-attacks period, insofar as S. Abdeslam was only checked the day after the attacks. Therefore, a better categorization of the individual would not have prevented the attacks. It is only meant to better illustrate the Belgian dysfunctions revealed by both the French and Belgian investigation reports.

g. Failure to comply with regulations

As for the case of Charlie Hebdo, this feature applies when the organization fails to comply with regulations: it is the case when they stopped surveillance whereas they should not have or that they did not work with particular agencies in charge of the issue.

In France, the fight against terrorism involves several instances that are supposed to work together. Concerning the failure to comply with regulations, the first mistake that the report highlights is related to the case of S. Amimour. As argued earlier, he was deprived from his identification documents and consequently, he was not able to leave the country. In order to renew these documents, agents have to make sure that the person asking for new identification documents does not appear in a particular system –*fichier des personnes recherchées (FPR)*– (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 148). For Amimour, that search was not made by the staff, although it is supposed to be a systematic check (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 148). It allowed Amimour to travel to Syria. Nonetheless, the intelligence services did their part right, insofar as Amimour appeared in the FPR. This point is useful to understand the second argument of this subsection, that involves the intelligence community. Not following the procedure that requires to resort to checks when an individual asks for the renewal of his or her identification documents is considered a failure to comply with regulations. Indeed, checking the reasons that left him without those documents would have prevented Amimour to travel to Syria where he acquired war skills that he would later use during the Paris attacks.

Indeed, when travelling to Syria, Amimour was accompanied by Mostefai. To reach the country, they transited to Turkey –famous point of transit of future jihadis that allow them to cross the border to Syria. As stated in the report, the Turkish intelligence services alerted the French services as soon as the individuals reached Ankara (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 149). French nationals that join jihadi combat zones are to be considered as top priority by the French intelligence services –may it be by the internal or external services (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 149). Nonetheless, the report reveals that Mostefai was never under surveillance at any point in time (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 149). When informed that a French national has traveled to a jihadi war zone, the report states that the intelligence services have to work on that individual. Nonetheless, it is stated that the French failed to comply with that regulation. The intelligence community did not follow the strict regulation when it comes to surveillance in this particular case.

Another issue results from the high decentralization of the intelligence community. As argued earlier, the French intelligence services are divided into numerous agencies, that all possess their own systems when it comes to identifying radicalized and threatening individuals. To cope with this problem, B. Cazeneuve –Ministry of the Interior- created a coordinating agency called the EMOPT, attached to his minister, as well as a new type of system that gather names of all individuals linked to terrorism (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 15). The report reveals that this new system only “adds up to the complexity of the existing regulations in terms of signaling radicalized individuals”, and that it is unclear whether this system is used systematically when reporting people (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 15). This related to Turner’s argument, organization often ignore the fact that a particular regulation applies to their case (Turner 1976, 390). Here, agencies ignore whether they should report an individual in system A or system B. This is another example of the failure to comply with regulations. There are that many systems that are used to report individuals that agencies may not be aware that they also need to report individuals in the global system created by the former Ministry of Interior.

h. Minimizing emergent danger

As for the case of Charlie Hebdo, this feature applies when the organization underestimates the threat posed by an individual, and also the existing context –homegrown terrorism or past attacks. The underestimation of the threat posed by an individual is characterized by the fact that the organization have not started surveillance upon him, or that it dropped its surveillance for example.

The cessation of surveillance upon Amimour is an example of minimizing the threat that he posed. He was first subjected to an administrative surveillance (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 149). This means that he was obliged to stay in the country and had to visit the police station frequently. This administrative surveillance was stopped insofar as he was subjected to an investigation for breaking the terms of his surveillance when he travelled to Syria (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 149). Although the law does not allow for an administrative surveillance on individual under investigation on the basis of a “fair trial, the DGSI –internal security- was allowed to conduct surveillance on him, this was not done (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 149). In terms of indicators, the lack of surveillance upon him is clearly a factor that indicates that the organization underestimates the threat Amimour posed –as he was known and

sentenced for his involvement in terrorist activities. The report clearly states that the inaction of the DGSI translates an “underestimation of Amimour’s danger that he and his plans posed” (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 149).

The other issue that related to minimizing emergent danger has to do with A. Abaaoud. As argued earlier, he was known for his involvement in a Belgian terrorist cell. It was also known that he was recruiting people to conduct terrorist attacks in Europe. He clearly stated that he wanted to attack a rock concert. The director of the DGSI argued that although they knew him, he was not considered a top priority for the French intelligence services (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 152). Because the French intelligence community was focused on French nationals in Syria, they wrongly assessed the threat posed by foreign individuals that manifested their will to conduct terrorist attacks (Assemblée Nationale 2016a, 152). The organization did not think of the issue of terrorism as a global phenomenon, and they clearly underestimated the context. Although they had information about Abaaoud –his involvement in terrorism in Belgian, and also his will to conduct attacks on French soil- they did not resort to any kind of surveillance upon him, nor did they ask for Belgian cooperation at any point prior to the attacks.

When it comes to the French and European context in terms of terrorist attacks, as for the case of Charlie Hebdo, a number of past events act as warning signs that should raise the awareness of the intelligence services on the risk of upcoming attacks. The majority of the attacks conducted on French soil were perpetrated by French nationals. Most of them acted alone. It is very likely that the French intelligence services could not imagine that such an attack would happen. As argued by many authors such as Boin and Lagadec, crises become “more complex [and] blurred” (Lagadec 2005, 1); (Boin & Rhinard 2008, 1). Lagadec argues that there needs to be a shift in the way crises are managed, and that new solutions needs to be addressed to cope with “unthinkable events in inconceivable contexts” (Lagadec 2005, 1). Therefore, although the Paris attacks were beyond conceivable, it reveals that the intelligence services were minimizing the emergent scope and danger posed by terrorism as a transboundary phenomenon. Nonetheless, the scope and frequency of past attacks should have raised concerns among the intelligence community. Mass-gathering events were not subject to any extraordinary surveillance. As argued earlier, the Bataclan was sold out that night –about 1,500 people were inside- and the Stade de France welcomed more than 70,000 people for the football game. Considering the massive number of people at these two events, this research argues that

the lack of surveillance and protection that the two locations suffered clearly translates that the intelligence services minimized the risk of a large scale attack.

3. Conclusion on the Paris Attacks

This analytical section has demonstrated that the French intelligence services were not aware of the warning signals in the case of the Paris attacks. Using Paltrinieri et al.'s framework (2012), the research has argued that the multiplication of lagging indicators –understood as the absence of actions and measures taken upon the signals- resulted in the unawareness of the intelligence services.

Moreover, the complexity of the attacks, both in terms of the number of loci targeted and number of assailants made it difficult for the intelligence community to determine with precision both the very location of the upcoming attack and the amplitude of it. Nonetheless, it has been argued that there were explicit warning concerning the concert venue –the Bataclan-, which was the deadliest attack on November 13, 2015. In terms of leaders' responsiveness, the findings are more ambivalent. Indeed, it appears that leaders were very aware that the country was threatened by terrorism. Nonetheless, when it comes to the intelligence services, the research has demonstrated some of the failures of the surveillance.

In terms of factors that contributed to the intelligence services being unaware of the warning signals, the findings on the Paris attacks can be summarized as follows:

- **Lack of precision:** let alone the Bataclan, France and its lifestyle were threatened as a whole. The intelligence community did not possess sufficient information about a specific location.
- **Rigidity of procedures:** rigid structure of the intelligence agencies and of the systems used, that undermines the work of the community as a whole. Moreover, over-reliance on technical intelligence rather than on human intelligence.
- **Decoy problem:** great attention paid to well-structured problems –French nationals threatening the country-, while ill-structured problems such as foreign terrorists are disregarded.
- **Information difficulties:** high decentralization leads to issues of communication and information sharing. Also the lack of cooperation between the agencies creates information difficulties.

- **Involvement of foreign agencies:** lack of reliance on foreign agencies to cooperate on terrorism issues. Moreover, the absence of surveillance on particular individual from foreign agencies undermined the work of the French intelligence services in this case.
- **Failure to comply with regulations:** absence of surveillance on individuals known as foreign fighters that joined combat zones. Difficulty to report individuals on necessary systems of radicalized individuals.
- **Minimizing emergent danger:** both in terms of lack of surveillance on threatening individuals, and underestimation of past events.

Moreover, as for the case of Charlie Hebdo, the in-depth analysis of the Paris attacks has allowed the research to identify other factors:

- **Scarcity of resources:** absence of surveillance on particular individuals because of the lack of financial and human resources.
- **Absence of trainings:** lack of expertise on new means of communication –such as encrypted communication- and lack of training on both weak signals –radicalization- and new challenges posed by terrorism (“unthinkable events in inconceivable contexts).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

“A real shift has occurred and the new challenges must be addressed, as it is not possible to entertain the option of failure”

(Patrick Lagadec 2005, 1)

1. Answering the research question

Understanding the challenges posed by transboundary crises, this thesis has worked on the issue of terrorism. Both Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks have been investigated in-depth from the perspective of the intelligence services to identify the factors that lead to them being unaware of warning signals. Barry Turner’s framework of organizational crisis served as the basis for the analysis, allowing the research to identify several joint factors in both cases. Based on a framework borrowed from Dahl’s precision of warning signals and Turner’s causal features, the research has argued that the French intelligence sector suffers from organizational failures.

(1) *Rigid procedures* hinder both the intelligence community’s ability to raise their awareness on warning signals, and their capacity to think outside the box. Indeed, the rigid procedures they suffer prevent them from adapting to the new challenges that transboundary crises bring. (2) *Information difficulties* are related to the great decentralization of the sector in France. The research has shown that the community lacks effective communication because of the high number of intelligence agencies, as well as the three coordinating agencies that also create further complexity. This decentralization also creates great confusion. It has been the case with Amimour that was able to renew his identification documents, or with the confusion over the danger posed by some individuals. (3) The *failure to comply with regulations* is related first to the failure to involve prison intelligence. Indeed, the government had called for greater coordination between traditional intelligence agencies and prison intelligence, but the report has shown that this was not the case in practice. Moreover, when it comes to actual surveillance on violent extremists, some regulations are not applied, such as the systematic surveillance on individuals gone to combat in Syria or combat zones. (4) *Minimizing emergent danger* or risk is also a criterion found in both cases studied. Indeed, both cases showed that the intelligence services failed in assessing the risk posed by particular individuals, but they also did not take into account the signals delivered by past terrorist attacks.

Those are the four factors that stem from Turner's seven common causal features. Those factors are found in both cases. Moreover, the research has also identified a fifth factor that applies to cases where foreign terrorists are involved, as well as foreign agencies. (5) *The involvement of foreign agencies* can undermine the work of the intelligence services of a country where the attack may occur. In the case of the Paris attacks, the Belgian intelligence services have wrongly assessed the threat posed by Abaaoud and the Abdeslam brothers.

Moreover, two other features, independent from the conceptual framework used to research the cases, are worth noting.

(1) *The scarcity of resources* can help to explain why the intelligence services are unaware of the warning signals. This feature has been identified by key actors of the intelligence community themselves. It has been retrieved from the interviews they gave to the commission in charge of investigating the 2015 attacks. Indeed, the surveillance and collection of information on individuals is limited by both human and financial resources. Because they have a great number of profiles to check, agents sometimes cease their surveillance before any relevant information is found. They also lack financial resources to engage in expensive surveillance techniques or to work with experts.

(2) *The absence of trainings* is also another issue that the research has identified reading the transcripts of the interviews given by members of the intelligence services. There is a real lack of expertise on new means of communication –encryption- but also on new techniques used by terrorists. Although it does not precisely concern the intelligence community, Lagadec argues that trainings are key to manage the new types of crises that the 21st century has created (Lagadec 2005, 17). It is relevant in this case.

The factors that lead to the intelligence services being unaware of warning signals can be summarized as follows:

- **Rigidity in procedures**
- **Information difficulties**
- **Failure to comply with regulations**
- **Minimizing emergent danger**
- **Scarcity of resources**
- **Absence of trainings**
- *Involvement of foreign agencies* (specific cases)

The findings concerning Erik Dahl's factors are more ambivalent. In the case of the Paris attacks, the indicators for the precision of the warning signals were not present at a significant

level. For against Charlie Hebdo, the location of the attacks, as well of the risk posed by the assailants was highly predictable. Therefore, in those two particular cases, his framework cannot be used to identify the factors that lead to intelligence services being unaware of warning signals. Barry Turner’s framework was highly relevant to identify these factors. As argued earlier, five of the seven features were found in both cases. The feature of the decoy problem was also found in the study of the Paris attacks only. Nonetheless, it remains an interesting feature to take into account when considering the reasons behind intelligence failures. Just like the involvement of foreign agencies, the decoy problem can be taken into account when dealing with foreign terrorists that conduct attacks outside their home country.

Comparing the findings on Charlie Hebdo and the Paris attacks:

Features	Indicators	Charlie Hebdo	Paris
Precision	The information indicates a terrorist threat against a specific location	✓	
	The information indicates a terrorist threat against a specific individual or group of individuals	✓	
	The information indicates that a specific individual is radicalized and (ready to) engage(s) in violence	✓	✓
Rigidity of procedures	The organization lacks flexibility and up-dates	✓	✓
Decoy problem	The organization focuses on other issues		✓
Organization exclusivity	The organization underestimates the credibility of outside sources	✓	
Information difficulties	The organization is decentralized which leads to a lack of communication	✓	✓
	The organization misinterprets information	✓	✓
Involvement of foreign agencies	The organization receives irrelevant, incomplete information from foreign agencies		✓
	Stranger agencies fail to react adequately		✓

Failure to comply with regulations	The organization does not comply with a regulation	✓	✓
Minimizing emergent danger	The organization underestimates the threat of an individual	✓	✓
	The organization underestimates past events	✓	✓

2. Reflection on the findings

2.1 Societal implications

One of the drivers of this research has been the loss of confidence and legitimacy the intelligence services suffered after both attacks. This thesis has allowed to affirm that it is always easier to rewrite a story once we know how it ends.

One of the key findings of this research is that the high decentralization the French intelligence services suffer from has severe repercussions, and sometimes is the root cause of the other factors that lead to them being unaware of warning signals. The intelligence community is not the sole sector that suffers from decentralization. Indeed, debates have come around the decentralization of public finances. The high degree of decentralization when it comes to French territorialities has proven too complex and not coherent. Therefore, this point is relevant insofar as what is argued in this thesis can be found in other French sectors. As for the example of the French territorialities, the decentralization of the intelligence community into multiple agencies gives birth to issues of governance, but also problems of information sharing and communication.

Moreover, whereas the public debate revolved around the incapacity of the intelligence services to act upon signals they collected from at-risk individuals, the research has also demonstrated that their inaction was in part due to the scarcity of resources. The increasing number of at-risk radicalized individuals cannot be rightfully managed taking into account the number of agents available. Nonetheless, this point has been a top priority for the country after the Paris attacks, with the intelligence services recruiting more and more agents from both the military and the police, but also individuals from the civil society to engage in their organization. Consequently, the government has allocated more budget to the organization.

2.2 Academic implications

The findings of this research show that, although B. Turner's framework is not the most recent one, it is a strong base for analyzing organizational dysfunctions in times of crisis. In fact, it is a valid and relevant framework that can be transposed to the realm of intelligence.

Moreover, the findings have been identified using a cross-field framework. Taking from the engineering study of risk prevention to assess the level of awareness of the intelligence services and from the organizational crisis to identify a set of factors that impact the awareness of the agency, this research has proven that the phenomenon of terrorism can be studied from a different angle, leaving apart international relations and the roots of homegrown radicalization.

This thesis has also identified a number of factors that help to understand what impacts the level of awareness of the intelligence services. Because the factors identified are not related to the French intelligence services' specificities, the conceptual framework that has been designed here can be transposed to other cases, and therefore allows for future researches.

3. Limitations

Although the research has answered the research question, there are some limitations worth noting. Indeed, because of time restriction, the research had been limited to the study of two French cases. It may have been easier to generalize the findings with more cases, but this is impossible within such a short time frame.

The choice of working from the perspective of the intelligence services can also be seen as a limitation to the research. Indeed, it is a significantly closed milieu, difficult to access, especially at a master's level. Therefore, while it can be argued that conducting interviews would have given the research more strength, it would have been impossible to reach high-ranked agents and directors of the French intelligence sector. With more time and a better network, future researches on this topic may reach this goal of conducting interviews with relevant individuals.

Following this point, the access to data can also be seen as a limitation. Indeed, I had requested the declassified notes made by the DGSI on the Kouachi brothers. Nonetheless, these documents were never delivered to me, despite several calls and emails asking for them.

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