

THE RADICALIZATION OF MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS FROM THE SECOND AND THIRD GENERATION IN EUROPE: DOES INSPIRE MAGAZINE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

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Introduction

Radical Islam has gained more and more adherents among muslim migrants of the second and third generation. Individuals, who no longer identify with any nation state, are prisoners between two cultures and, while living in western European society, studying in European universities, getting married and having children, they resort to radical action. In the knowledge society, intelligence communities must connect to complex situations, difficult to prevent, citizens of European countries turning into executives of terrorist attacks on European soil.

Moreover, at the European level, after London and Madrid bombings, the radicalization process is viewed as one of the most important national security threat. Bearing this in mind, Europol's 2009 Report on terrorist activity in Europe identify a particular risk to global security: increasing recruitment of terrorist supporters from the EU citizens. Therefore, the document focuses mainly on those from the second generation immigrants, and on the number of those who had attended training camps in Pakistan¹. Coming across with this prediction the 2010 report pinpoints that "Islamist terrorism is often facilitated through transnational contacts between individuals residing in many EU Member States and other parts of the world"². 2011³ brings to the fore deep transformations, the composition of terrorist groups becoming different: multinational command and control no longer depend on assistance from outside of Europe,

¹ TE-SAT 2009, Eu Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, (http://www.europol.europa.eu/publications/EU_Terrorism_Situation_and_Trend_Report_TE-SAT/TE-SAT2009.pdf) p.22.

² TE-SAT Eu Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, 2010, p.18 (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/TE-SAT%202010.pdf>)

³ TE-SAT Eu Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, 2011, p.6, (<http://www.epractice.eu/files/TE-SAT2011.pdf>)

while more and more “lone wolves”, citizens of European countries, are involved in terrorist attacks.

Radicalization of Muslims in Western states, manifested by a series of events like Madrid, London or the killing of the filmmaker Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam, has generated a real interest in security studies. How can be explained this radical change in the behavior of individuals who were born and lived in European countries, well-integrated into society, with a high level of education, being “respectful and well-mannered”⁴?

Beyond the overly simplified theory focusing on the socio-economic dimension, what gives a special feature to this process, is the explanation that radical Muslims expand in order to legitimize their radical beliefs and subsequent acts of violence: the suffering of their “Muslim brothers” in the Islamic space. Thus, radicalisation is acquired at the individual level, and not as a result of an internal discontent perceived as a “punishment act”, but more as a reaction induced by a “radicalizing factor”: images of persecuted Muslims by “Western infidels”⁵. According to the literature in this field these actions are translated through the concept of “humiliation by proxy”⁶.

Let's talk about jihad - Inspire magazine

Inspire magazine, the English version on the online environment, is one of the most important tool that facilitates recruitment and radicalization, posting exhortations to trigger “individual jihad”. The article “What to Expect from Jihad” depicts clear indications for potential mujahedin “*attacking the enemy in his own garden is one of the best ways to help the jihad. (...) The effect is much larger, these types of individual attacks are impossible to deliberate*”⁷. The same magazine discusses the attacks against Americans, and therefore against their supporters, trying to legitimize their action grounded on the opponent dehumanization “*We Muslims have no*

⁴ “respectful and well-mannered” is one of the phrase that a neighbor uses to describe Abdullah Shaheed Jamal, one of those involved in the attack on London in 2005, The Guardian (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/jul/16/july7.uksecurity6>), The Guardian (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/jul/16/july7.uksecurity6>).

⁵ Ali, LAIDI, “*Efectul de boomerang. Cum a determinat globalizarea apariția terorismului*”, Ed.House of Guides,Bucharest,2007, p.21. (The original title: *Retour de flamme. Comment la mondialisation a accouché du terrorisme*, Ed. Calmann-Levy, 2006).

⁶ Farhad, KHOSROKHAVAR,*Suicide Bombers: Allah's new martyrs*, London, Pluto Press, 2005.

⁷ Inspire Magazine, Fall 1431/2010, What to expect in jihad.

*animosity against racial or ethnic group. We are not against Americans simply because they are Americans, we are against evil, and America as a whole has turned into a nation of evil”*⁸

According to a nihilistic ideology, the dividing of the world allows multiplication of motivations, while the opponents actions are qualified as high motivation lines in the process of radicalization. So, referring to Nidal Hassan, it is specified “*he was not recruited by Al Qaeda ideals but was recruited by American crimes and this is what America refuses to admit*”⁹.

Reflecting the global orientation of jihad, the cases presented above as examples increase substantially and tend to converge on the women’s importance into the logic of the terrorist attacks on European soil. In this respect, Roshonara Choudhry, a British student, radicalized through the internet, is a striking case, especially since she appeared in Inspire near the Swedish Muslim Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly with the title “*comrades of loyalty without borders*”¹⁰. This study is used as an example to mobilize the second and third generation Muslims from Europe, whose obligation is to support the religion of Allah through death “*with lone operations however, as long as you keep it to your- self, nobody in the world would know what you're thinking and planning. That's why individuals like Taimour, Roshonara, Nidal and others have been successful, even if they were ultimately arrested*”¹¹.

Being categorized as “*the vanity faire of Al-Qaida*”¹² Inspire magazine managed to transgress the radical leaders’ dialectic giving to the Muslim immigrants in Europe the ability to understand their messages. Apart from this, Al-Qaeda message, most often inaccessible, is transformed into something that can be not only analyzed, but also commented and internalized by someone who is viewing the articles online. “Q&A” type sections of the publication can be an important key for understanding the way in which European Muslims identify themselves with the ideology supported by those articles. For instance, we can attain questions such as “*I live in the West and greatly desire hijrah to the lands of jihad such as Afghanistan or Yemen. I have the money ready and have an idea of where to go. The problem is that I don't have any contact to meet the mujahidin. What do you recommend that I do?*”¹³.

⁸ Inspire Magazine, Fall 1431/2010

⁹ Inspire Magazine 1431/2010, p.57.

¹⁰ Inspire Magazine, 1431/2010.

¹¹ Inspire Magazine, 1431/2011

¹² Bob, DROGIN, *The 'Vanity Fair' of Al Qaeda*, Los Angeles Times, 26 nov 2010, (<http://articles.latimes.com/2010/nov/26/nation/la-na-terror-magazine-20101126>).

¹³ Inspire Magazine, Spring 1431/ 2011, p.11.

How to prepare a bomb in the kitchen of your mother, how to use the AK47 or what to expect in jihad are some of the sections made to draw up attention and support, being more an “ideological recruitment than an operational tool”¹⁴. However, this process is fundamental, given the fact that putting the bases of a “virtual Islamic community”¹⁵ is the first step in identifying and selecting potential candidates.

Instead of conclusions

In the European countries, characterized through a high percentage of Muslim migrants, the issue of religion, radicalization and terrorism becomes more debated inside the public opinion sphere. For example, the Tv show from the French channel *France 3*, “Ce Soir ou jamais”, having as protagonists Abdelwahab Meddeb, writer and producer of a broadcast about Islam, and Tariq Ramadan translated two parallel visions on the western perceptions about Islam. “Religion is more than this calculation between life and death”¹⁶ said Abdelwahab Meddeb, or the perception of Islam thesis is able to corrupt from within. The proposed solution can only be the “despecification” of Islam, a process defined as releasing from the religious dogma. Tariq Ramadan on the other way was supporting a new conceptualization leading to the so called “double criticism”. As an individual, the Muslim immigrant must reflect on the readings of these texts, criticizing them both as Muslim and occidental .

Asked how he sees the integration of immigrants inside the liberal democracies, Fukuyama pointed to the conflicting relationship between host societies and cultural integration of minorities “especially those from Muslim countries”¹⁷. Fukuyama lessens from the religious fault, constructing his argument on a sociological approach. Taking into consideration the model proposed by Tonnies, more precisely the distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, the scholar examines the propensity to violence of Muslim immigrant communities in relation to changes imposed by the transition from a closed society, subject to a rigorous set of structured values, to an consumption society, focused on liberal principles. Identity becomes problematic

¹⁴ Jonathan FIGHEL, *Radical Islamic Internet Propaganda: Concepts, Idioms and Visual Motifs* in Boaz, GANOR et al, *Hypermedia Seduction for terrorist recruiting*, IOS Press, 2007, p.36.

¹⁵ Jonathan FIGHEL, *Radical Islamic Internet Propaganda...*, pp.36-37.

¹⁶ <http://www.mecanopolis.org/?p=350>

¹⁷ Francis, FUKUYAMA, “*Identity, Immigration and Democracy*” in *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.17, Nr.2, aprilie 2006

when Muslims leave their traditional societies emigrating. The situation involves a number of anomalies taking into account that “when the Muslim identity of an individual is not supported anymore by society, there is a strong pressure on him to comply with prevailing cultural norms in Western societies”¹⁸. These deviations can give a coherent explanation of questions that distinguish between what is allowed and what is forbidden (haram). The issues presented above does not occur in the Muslim states. At the intersection of these issues of identity is born, says the historian, radical Islamism and jihadism.

All in all, the question of ideology becomes problematic when even among Islamic moderates, who disapprove Jihad, there is no consensus upon why it should be condemned. As a consequence, in the absence of a coherent vision and of a moderate religious education, in the absence of a high assimilation and integration process, the radicalisation of Muslim immigrants will continue.

Certainly, if we look at what happened in Norway with Anders Behring Breivik, we can find another important dimension relevant for our discussion. This accelerated debate on the muslim immigrants involved in terrorist attacks, mixed with the highly islamophobe ideology (outlining the negative image of Muslims discriminated because of factual contexts, imagined or assigned due to the identification with Islam), can trigger questions not only about the integration and assimilation of muslim immigrant community but also on the “disponibility” of the non-muslim to accept the “different other”.

¹⁸ Francis, FUKUYAMA, “*Identity, Immigration and Democracy*”.