

ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM AS A THREAT TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF FRANCE

ІСЛАМСЬКИЙ ФУНДАМЕНТАЛІЗМ ЯК ЗАГРОЗА НАЦІОНАЛЬНІЙ БЕЗПЕЦІ ФРАНЦІЇ

Petriaiev O.S.,

*Postgraduate student at the Department of Informational Security
National Institute for Strategic Studies*

The article analyzes the problem of Islamization of France and the social challenges that the country may face in the foreseeable future. It examines the external and internal factors that have influenced the formation of the threat of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism in the country. In modern France, as in other countries of the European Union, there is a significant increase in migrants who profess Islam. The majority of Muslims living in France are from North African countries, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, as well as from Syria. Also, a significant number of people from Turkey and equatorial Africa live in France. This is due to France's colonial past and its significant economic and political interests in the Islamic world. The era of decolonization was very difficult for France. France waged a long war in Algeria from 1954-1962, which ended with the proclamation of Algerian independence. The French armed forces also participated in the Suez Crisis in 1956 on the side of Israel and Great Britain against the Republic of Egypt. After the French troops left Algeria, Algerians who had closely collaborated with the French colonial administration migrated to France out of fear of persecution. Already in the eighties, their children founded several Islamic public organizations to defend their rights. French armed forces also participated in the conflict in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and Iraq. The 2015 migration crisis also had a strong impact on France. The demographic situation in the country has changed significantly in recent years. An increase in the number of people practicing Islam is recorded. Islamic terrorism also poses a high threat to the country's internal stability. French society is hostile to the country's population that professes Islam. This is due to the social values that developed during the French Revolution, namely secularism and freedom of conscience. Islamic ideology is entirely based on religion, which extends to all spheres of human life. These two factors create a conflict in French society between two opposing cultures. The concept of multiculturalism has not been able to completely solve this problem. The French government now and in the future will need to develop a working strategy for the integration of Muslims into French society to prevent various problems that are already arising and may also intensify in the foreseeable future.

Key words: France, Islam, Islamophobia, terrorism, migration.

У статті аналізується проблема ісламізації Франції та соціальні виклики, з якими країна може зіткнутися в найближчому майбутньому. Досліджуються зовнішні та внутрішні чинники, що вплинули на формування загрози ісламського фундаменталізму та тероризму у країні. У сучасній Франції, як і в інших країнах Європейського Союзу, спостерігається значне зростання мігрантів, які сповідують іслам. Основна частина мусульман, які проживають у Франції, – це вихідці з країн Північної Африки, Марокко, Алжиру і Тунісу, а також із Сирії. Так само, у Франції проживає значна кількість вихідців із Туреччини та екваторіальної Африки. Це пов'язано з колоніальним минулим Франції та її значними економічними та політичними інтересами у країнах ісламського світу. Епоха деколонізації проходила дуже складно для Франції. Франція вела довгу війну в Алжирі з 1954-1962, яка закінчилася проголошенням незалежності Алжиру. Так само збройні сили Франції брали участь у Суецькій кризі 1956 року на боці Ізраїлю та Великобританії проти Республіки Єгипет. Після виходу Французьких військ з Алжиру, алжирці, які тісно співпрацювали з французькою колоніальною адміністрацією, через страх переслідування мігрували до Франції. Вже у вісімдесятих роках їхні діти заснували кілька ісламських громадських організацій для захисту своїх прав. Також Французькі збройні сили брали участь у конфліктах в Афганістані, Лівії, Сирії та Іраку. Міграційна криза 2015 року, так само сильно торкнулася Франції. Демографічна ситуація країни останніми роками сильно змінилася. Фіксується збільшення чисельності населення, яке сповідує іслам. Ісламський тероризм також становить високу небезпеку для внутрішньої стабільності країни. Французьке суспільство з ворожістю ставиться до населення країни, що сповідує іслам. Це пов'язано з соціальними цінностями, виробленими за доби Французької Революції, саме секуляризм і свобода совісті. Ісламська ідеологія повністю будується на релігії, яка поширюється у всі сфери життя. Ці два чинники створюють конфлікт у суспільстві Франції між двома протилежними культурами. Концепція мультикультуризму не змогла повністю вирішити цю проблему. Французькому уряду зараз і в майбутньому потрібно буде виробити робочу стратегію з інтеграції мусульман до французького суспільства для запобігання різним проблемам, які вже виникають, а також можуть посилитися в найближчому майбутньому.

Ключові слова: Франція, іслам, ісламофобія, тероризм, міграція.

Introduction. Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism pose a serious threat to modern France. France's colonial past haunts the country to this day. Muslim migration to the country, especially from North and Equatorial Africa, as well as from Syria, may have negative consequences in the foreseeable future. Ter-

rorism has also become a problem for France. All these factors play an important role in creating a threat to the country's national security.

The article's main goal. Research on Islamic fundamentalism in France and how it affects the country's national security.

Recent literature review. The topic of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism in France has been studied by scholars such as Jonathan Laurence, Justin Vaisse, Gilles Kepel, Antoine Jardin, Edwy Plenel, David Fernbach, Jan Eichler, Dafne Accoroni, Paul Silverstein etc.

The main research material. Muslim society has existed in France for many centuries. The first Muslims arrived on the French coast in the 8th century during the Moorish occupation of Spain. Some of them settled on the outskirts of Toulouse and in other places as far as Burgundy. In 732, at the Battle of Poitiers, Charles Martel, the mayor of the Frankish state, defeated the Arab army of Abdur-Rahman ibn Abdallah. The Battle of Poitiers has acquired mythological significance in the ideology of Europe and Christianity as a victory over Muslim invaders and a Muslim threat to Christian European civilization.

Later, some Muslims who fled the Spanish Reconquista and later the Inquisition settled in Languedoc-Roussillon and the Basque Country, as well as around Narbonne and in Béarn. By the 15th century, the expansion of navigation and maritime trade brought the French into contact with Islam in the Ottoman Empire, West Africa and the Indian Ocean. Through imperial expansion, France came to control or colonize territories with a Muslim majority, such as Egypt (1798), Algeria (1830), West Africa (1880), Tunisia (1881), Morocco (1912), Syria and Lebanon (1920) [1, c. 15-16].

With the advent of the 20th century, the migration of Muslims from the colonies to France began to intensify. During World War I, many Muslims from the French colonies fought in the French army in the European theater of military operations. Despite the negative attitude towards them from the native French living in the metropolis, after 1918, many soldiers from the colonies remained in France. During World War I, 280,000 soldiers were mobilized in North Africa, another 200,000 were mobilized from the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

In 1926, workers from Algeria formed the first Muslim community in France. In the same year, 1926, the Paris Mosque and the Franco-Muslim Avicenna Hospital in Bobigny were opened in Paris.

During the Second World War, between 1943 and 1945, France had approximately 200,000 to 250,000 Muslim soldiers mobilized in the French colonies of North Africa. After the end of the Second World War, France lay in ruins and many workers were needed to rebuild the country. Since 1950, France has been actively attracting workers from its Muslim colonies. In particular, the French government signed an agreement with the governments of Morocco and Tunisia to attract cheap labor to work in France. Large French companies hired workers directly in the provinces of Morocco and Tunisia.

The period of mass migration of Muslims to France lasted until 1974. Also, during this period, workers from Muslim countries such as Comoros and Turkey arrived in France in large numbers. Between 1974 and 1982, the phenomenon of Muslim family reunification occurred. The number of Muslims increased sharply due to the newly arrived wives and children of Muslims who had worked in France for many years. Also, the increase in the number of Muslims in France contributed to the creation of Islamic infrastructure, such as the construction of mosques, Islamic schools and Islamic meeting centers.

In the 1980s, the first generation of Muslims, born to parents who came as hired workers, began to appear in France. Children born in Muslim diasporas in the 1980s received French citizenship, a French education, and became politically active. [2, C.12-17].

The problem of Muslim integration into French society has gradually begun to arise. Many French politicians use the concept of migrant integration for their semi-mystical political purposes. This is done in order to calm the French public, to instill in them the calm that the problem will be solved, and to promise migrants that they will be accepted into French society. Firstly, there is no clear understanding in France that there is no clear understanding of the concept of integration. Many experts consider the successful integration of migrants, especially their children, that is, the second generation of migrants born in France as knowledge of the French language and its use at home among the family, education in French schools and universities, have friends among the native inhabitants of France, a sense of belonging to the French nation and a sense of patriotism [1, c. 29-30].

Migrants may also reject the integration policy. There are many reasons why the integration of Muslim migrants into French society is difficult. Islam is a religion that has a very strong political aspect that can be used to form state institutions. This concept is contrary to French statehood, which has a long history of development. It can also be added that in 1905, France had a law "Law on the Separation of Churches and State" that separates the church from the state and according to this law, France is a secular state [3].

France has a long colonial history. Particular attention should be paid to the French colonies in North Africa, where the indigenous population is Arab and Muslim. Algeria and the war for Algerian independence from France played a particularly important role in the history of modern France. After Algeria gained independence, many residents of that country, as well as Morocco, Tunisia and other former French colonies, began to emigrate en masse to France in the hope of a better life. But at the same time, the Muslim population in France retained hatred for their former enslavers, who exploited their people for their own material gain.

The Muslim population in the major cities of France has settled in compactly defined quarters, creating areas exclusively with the Muslim community living there. These Muslim communities or ghettos live in poverty, there is no prospect of social development, which becomes a favorable atmosphere for the development of criminal activity, social unrest and the development of religious extremism.

After the Arab Spring began, France made several strategic mistakes in its foreign policy. France's involvement in the conflicts in Libya and Syria created a feeling among local residents that French imperialism and colonialism was returning. Also, the creation of instability in these two countries led to a flood of Arab refugees, some of whom moved to France.

As we see, in connection with the historical processes of development of France, and its foreign policy towards the Islamic world, two societies have appeared in the country, the indigenous French professing Christianity, Catholicism and Protestantism, and the Islamic society professing Islam, consisting mainly of the Arab ethnic group. Due to the different paths of their development, differences in religion, values, mentality, historical memory, these two social groups inevitably come into conflict with each other. On the one hand, there is an increase in religious extremism among Muslim youth, due to poverty, lack of prospects and inability to integrate. On the other hand, nationalism and right-wing radicalism are developing among the indigenous population, as a response to the weak state policy on the integration of Muslims, which can lead to serious social problems in the foreseeable future.

When talking about French colonies in the Islamic world, it is worth highlighting Algeria separately. Relations between France and Algeria have a long and complicated history. The colonization of Algeria by France began in 1930 and lasted until 1847. The colonization was characterized by cruelty and bloodshed on the part of the French colonists. The new French colonial authorities did not have a system of communication with the local population, which inevitably led to various types of conflicts. Many French settlers began to move to Algeria, they were called colons, who began to demand social privileges for themselves. A little later, Algeria legally became part of France, and the French living in the new colony began to send their delegates to the French parliament as their representatives. French settlers made up about one tenth of the total population of Algeria from the mid-19th century until the country gained independence.

Although the French were able to capture Algeria, their full control over the territory was not secured until the fall of Napoleon III and the rise of the Third Republic. Before that, Algeria was under French military rule. After the fall of Napoleon III and the defeat of France in the Franco-German War, military

administration in Algeria was replaced by a civilian one. Over time, more and more French people began to move to Algeria and appropriate lands that had previously belonged to the tribes. This led to the Algerian tribes, consisting of peasants, finding themselves in a difficult economic and social situation.

Over time, the French settlers established complete control over the political, economic, and social spheres of life. The French owned the new houses, farms, businesses, and workshops. Algerians had access to only basic education and primitive medical care. Prospects for higher education were limited. Since jobs were mostly in the big cities, the Muslim population living outside the cities suffered from chronic unemployment [4].

After World War II, the process of decolonization began. Former dependent territories became independent countries. The process of decolonization was not always peaceful. Former metropolitan countries tried to keep their colonies under their control with the help of their armies. France was no exception. Between 1954 and 1962, Algeria waged a war against France for its independence. In 1954, the National Liberation Front (FLN) began a guerrilla war against France demanding recognition of Algeria as an independent state. The Algerian resistance mainly fought in the provinces, but often the rebels carried out large-scale planned attacks in large cities against the French army and the colonial administration. In 1959, French President Charles de Gaulle declared that the Algerians had the right to independence. For three more years, French Algerians waged a terrorist war against the idea of Algerian independence. On March 18, 1962, France signed the Evian Treaty, which ended the war in Algeria [5, c. 52-61].

According to the French Institute of National Statistics, in 2022 there will be 7 million immigrants in France. This is 10.3% of the total population. The largest number of migrants living in France are from Algeria, they make up 12.5% of all immigrants [6].

Immediately after the end of the war, many Algerians who had collaborated with the French colonial authorities fled to France, as did 90,000 Algerian soldiers who had fought on the French side.

Since the end of the Algerian War of Independence, the flow of migrants from Algeria has not ceased. On the European continent, 90% of all Algerians live in France. Sometimes France serves as a temporary refuge for Algerian migrants who want to move to other European countries, as well as the United States and Canada.

Later, in the sixties, Algerian labor migrants moved to France, as the French economy was still on the rise after World War II. The Algerians successfully adapted to the new life, but in families they maintained conservative religious relationships.

In the seventies, many Algerians who came to France to earn money began to bring their families,

and began to associate their future completely with France. Their children went to French schools, began to forget the Arabic language. Most of this generation adapted to the French way of life, and began to lose their Algerian, Arab and Islamic identity. It was also relatively easy for them to adapt to the new life, since this life was similar to Algeria at the time when it was a colony of France.

In the early nineties, deindustrialization gradually began in France. Many large factories began to close. The demand in the labor market changed. Low-skilled labor was no longer needed. In the new economic reality, employers began to pay more attention to the level of education. The Algerian diaspora found itself in a difficult situation. In the suburbs of large cities in France, where Muslim diasporas mainly lived, including Algerian migrants, social unrest began. The police harshly suppressed the riots, thereby further exacerbating the conflict. The situation worsened with the beginning of the Gulf War. A new generation of Muslim youth in France was already finding it difficult to adapt. The re-Islamization of young Muslims began. Radical Islam also began to penetrate into the circles of young Algerians with Islamism, which subsequently led to terrorism.

With the advent of globalization, the situation worsened in the 2000s. Many of the Algerian youth no longer received a full secondary education. The areas where Algerians and other immigrants from Arab and Muslim countries lived began to turn into ghettos. These areas were located on the outskirts of large cities. They had a low standard of living, unemployment, and crime. The younger generation was unable to integrate into French society, but also began to lose their Algerian roots. This was easily taken advantage of by radical Islamists, who began to spread extremist ideas among the youth who were looking for their identity. Islamic radicals were able to offer them Islam as an alternative to identity, that is, religion as the basis of their identity. Disappointment in social injustice among young Algerians began to transform into hatred of the native inhabitants of France, who were seen as former colonizers and exploiters. Islamic fundamentalists were able to skillfully use this hatred to achieve their political goals and create chaos in France [7, c. 29-48].

France is often subjected to terrorist attacks by Islamic fundamentalists. The first terrorist attacks committed by Islamic terrorists began in the last decade of the 20th century. The Algerian organization Armed Islamic Group was behind these terrorist attacks. The Armed Islamic Group set itself the goal of overthrowing the secular political regime in Algeria and, upon coming to power, building an Islamic state. They carried out terrorist attacks in France with the aim of preventing France from cooperating with the Algerian government [8].

The next stage of the intensification of Islamic terrorism in France began in 2015, when on January 7 in Paris, terrorists shot 12 people from the editorial office of a satirical magazine and wounded another 11 people. In total, 17 people fell victim to terrorists during the terrorist attack in January [9, c. 286-299].

A few months after the terrorist attack on the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, on November 13, 2015, the Islamic State carried out two simultaneous attacks against civilians. The first attack took place at the Stade de France Saint-Denis, where an Islamic extremist blew himself up and shot at several restaurants. The second attack took place at the Bataclan concert hall. The attack killed 131 people and injured 416 [10].

In July 2016, an Islamic State terrorist in a hijacked truck killed 86 people and wounded 434 [11].

The terrorist attacks in France were carefully planned and carried out by a group of people using automatic firearms and explosives; later, lone terrorists began to act, running over people with stolen cars or killing them with bladed weapons.

There are several reasons why France is often attacked by jihadists. France has one of the largest Muslim communities in Europe. Some of them are exposed to Islamic fundamentalist propaganda. The goal of jihadists is to recruit young Muslims who cannot integrate into French society. They are encouraged to carry out terrorist attacks to create chaos, a sense of fear among the native population, and to demonstrate the helplessness of the French authorities.

Another reason is that France has its own strategic interests in the Muslim world. France has supported secular governments in neighboring Arab countries for many decades, which counter the threat of Islamic fundamentalism and maintain relative stability in the region, thereby reducing the danger for France itself. France has also been conducting military counter-terrorism operations in Muslim countries for many years. These actions are considered by Islamic fundamentalists as a war of European Christian civilization against the Islamic world.

Thus, due to the long colonial history of France and their actions in Muslim colonies, the geographical location, the political, social and ethnographic situation within the country, conditions have been created for the development of Islamic extremism that threatens the national security of France [12, c. 51-63].

France has historically had close ties with many Muslim countries. France as a colonial power was interested in overseas territories for access to resources, as well as for the promotion of French culture, language, economic and political interests. When considering the issue of France's relations with Muslim countries, these countries can be divided into regions. The first region is the African continent, especially North Africa, where France has historically

had a strong position due to its geographical proximity. These countries include Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. The majority of Muslims in France came from these three countries. Next come the countries of West and Equatorial Africa, these include: Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Senegal, Guyana, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Cameroon. Also, the Comoros Islands, where the population professes Islam, were part of the French colonial empire [13].

In the Middle East region itself, historically France controlled Syria and Lebanon from 1923 to 1946. The territories of the modern states of Syria and Lebanon were placed under French control as a mandate following the French-British San Remo Conference in 1920. These territories in the Middle East were the result of the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I and its dissolution. French troops left Syria and Lebanon in 1946 during the decolonization of the region. It is important to note that in 2015, at the height of the refugee crisis, large numbers of Syrians fled to the European Union, including France, in search of a better life [14].

Separately, we will highlight the participation of French troops in the conflicts in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and Iraq. France took part in military actions in these countries as a member of military coalitions. In Afghanistan, the French armed forces were from 2001 to 2014 as part of the International Security Assistance Force [15].

Following the outbreak of protests in Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa, a civil war broke out in Libya between the Libyan government and the armed opposition. France has had long-standing interests in Libya, dating back to the mid-20th century, when France tried to take control of the southern Libyan province of Fezzan, where it had military and economic interests. France waited for the moment to take control of Libya throughout the second half of the 20th century. This was difficult to do after 1969, when a military dictator, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, came to power in Libya as a result of a coup d'état [16].

In 2007, Colonel Gaddafi provided 50 million euros to finance the election campaign of future French President Nicolas Sarkozy [17].

After the civil war in Libya began, France was interested in the liquidation of Colonel Gaddafi's regime. In addition to direct assistance to the armed forces of the Libyan opposition, France participated in the bombing of government troops in Libya, as part of an international coalition consisting mainly of NATO member countries [18].

After the end of the first phase of the civil war in Libya, the French government under President Francois Hollande and Emmanuel Macron continued to play an important role in the conflict and political life in Libya. France's main goal in Libya was to stabilize the country, fight against international

Islamic terrorism, counteract illegal migration from the African continent, and economic interests, primarily energy resources [19].

Syrian troops also participated in the civil war in Syria. As has already been written, France controlled Syria in the first half of the 20th century after the collapse of the Omani Empire. France participated in Operation "Shamal" on September 19, 2014, which was part of the international military operation Inherent Resolve. The French Air Force provided military support to the Iraqi Armed Forces in the fight against the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq [20].

On April 14, 2018, French President Emmanuel Macron stated that: *"France's priorities in Syria remain unchanged: ending the fight against the Islamic State, providing humanitarian aid to the civilian population and initiating collective efforts for a peaceful resolution of the conflict so that peace can return to Syria and bring stability to the region"* [21].

Also, French interests to varying degrees extended to the African continent. As already mentioned, France's presence was noted in North Africa in Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. But French interests also extend to other parts of the African continent. The French military presence in Africa has always allowed France to influence politics in the French-speaking countries of the region. After the failure of Operation Barkhane, which lasted from 2014 to 2022, the French armed forces had to leave Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger after a series of military coups. Despite the fact that the French government officially declared the fight against Islamic terrorism in these countries as its main task, Operation Barkhane was viewed by the residents of these African countries as a policy of neocolonialism on the part of France. The French military-industrial complex and military lobby were also interested in armed conflicts in Africa. As of 2024, French troops continue to be stationed in Chad, Djibouti, Gabon, Ivory Coast, and Senegal [22].

Due to the fact that France has the largest Muslim population of any member of the European Union, there is hatred of Muslims in the country, or more simply, Islamophobia. Anti-Muslim hatred in France is not a new phenomenon. Islamophobia has been present in French society since the beginning of their interaction with the Muslim world. The issue of Islamophobia in French society is quite complex and has a long history. There are two worlds in France, the Islamic world, in which religion plays a major role, which influences many aspects of Muslim life, and on the other hand, the secular world of French society, which is distrustful of Muslims. France, during its colonial past, invaded and colonized many Muslim countries, especially Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and later Syria and Lebanon. Already in the XXI century, the French armed forces carried out military operations in Libya, Syria and Iraq, after the Arab Spring in 2011 and the beginning of civil wars in these countries. In

the second decade of the XXI century, France was shaken by a number of bloody terrorist attacks carried out by Islamic terrorists.

In 2023, the percentage of Islamophobia increased to 57%. This year, 828 cases of Islamophobia were recorded. 81.5% of manifestations of Islamophobia were directed against women. Islamophobia is manifested through discrimination, provocation, incitement to hatred, humiliation, insult, moral humiliation, slander, physical attack. In 2023, 81.5% of women and 18.5% of men were subjected to various types of discrimination [23].

Islamophobia is played on by the right-wing political parties of France. They believe that the growing number of the population in France that professes Islam, as well as the spread of Islamic culture, threatens the national security of the country and its cultural values. During the French Revolution, French society declared the beginning of the era of secularization, but already in the 21st century, the country's authorities were unable to develop an ideology to counter the growing influence of religion, especially Islam. The right-wing parties of France, especially Marine Le Pen and her National Rally party, began to advocate for the unification of the nation to counter the Islamic threat [24].

Conclusion. The number of Muslims in France is the largest in the European Union. The high birth rate, as well as the ongoing migration, can lead to irreversible social consequences. The complex history of interaction between France and the Islamic

world contributes to the development of mutual hatred between the native population of France and Muslim migrants. This trend will gradually increase if the situation is not radically corrected. More specifically, it is necessary to note such threat factors as Islamic terrorism and the popularity of far-right French parties that advocate the fight against migration, which, in their opinion, leads to an increase in the Islamic threat in their country. The lack of a clear strategy in the issue of migration policy and the fight against Islamic radicalism on the part of various French governments has led to the emergence of such an important problem today. The participation of the French armed forces in wars in Muslim countries and the further destabilization of the Islamic world, as well as the era of globalization, has led to the emergence of a new generation of Muslim migrants in France in search of a better life. Many of them were unable to integrate due to differences in culture, religion, language, worldview, ideals and values. These people, especially the youth, become targets for Islamic fundamentalists who are looking for young Muslims who are dissatisfied with their lives and French society. The propaganda of Islamic fundamentalism among young Muslims in France contributes to the growth of Islamic terrorism. On the other hand, as has already been said, the lack of a clear strategy to combat this phenomenon on the part of the French government is used by the opposition to gradually obtain a mandate from power.

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