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THE ROLE OF MOROCCAN SALAFIST RADICALISM IN CREATING A THREAT TO SPAIN'S SECURITY

ABSTRACT

The paper is focused on the mechanisms and manifestations of Moroccan jihadism in Spain. It analyses how fighting Salafist radicalism from Mahgreb emerged in Spain and how it created challenges and threats for the security of the country. Europe has become one of the key fields of battle in the global war on jihadist terror. Today, in the age of decentralized terrorism, Al-Qaeda is seen as a symbol of extremism legitimizing the use of violence by religious references. Jihadist ideology inspires the phenomenon of home-grown terrorism in many European countries. The paper shows the background of the activity of some radical groups and movements in Morocco and then explains the ways it came to Spain. Moroccan jihadists played an increasingly important role in the activity of different Salafist cells in Spain. The article analyses the causes of the bomb attack carried out on 11 March 2004 in Madrid, which constituted an expression of open forms of terrorism, and the forms and factors of jihadist radicalism over the following years. It shows the links of the Moroccan Salafist movement with Islamic immigrant communities in Spain.

Keywords: Spain, Morocco, jihadist terrorism, Salafism, cells

Although the genesis of the activity of fighting Salafist radicalism in Spain dates back to the 80s, the development of extremism of this kind manifested itself only in the subsequent decade. Its first permanently functioning structures in this country in the second half of 1990s came from Algeria and Syria, hence one can distinguish two most important rings of Islamistic terrorism there: the Algerian and the Syrian one¹. At the same time it should be emphasized that this distinction is in many ways conventional, the more so because they consisted also of immigrants from other countries of Islam, particularly from Morocco. Frequently, especially over the course of the years, these structures became connected by various links and participatory fluctuation of their members. On the eve of the new millennium Moroccan jihadists played an increasingly important role. Although the activity of these groups had for many years mainly logistical and propaganda character, the bomb attack carried out on 11 March 2004 in Madrid constituted an expression of open forms of terrorism, directed against the authorities and society of Spain and reflected the narration of representatives of the trend of the global jihad. The people involved in carrying out that act of violence were to a large extent Moroccan immigrants; also in the following years among the cells of radicals in Spain Moroccans stood out many times. That is why the forms and directions of activity of these extremists in Spain are worth presenting. It is important from the perspective of diagnosing the threats to the security of this country and the region and remains connected with the issues of mutual relations of the society of a host country with immigrant communities which to a large degree come from this part of Maghreb.

It should be emphasized that Salafism is a significantly varied movement. The term *As-Salaf As-Salih* is of crucial importance as it refers to the Prophet's virtuous companions and their successors – ancestors who were ardent believers serving as role models. The notion of 'Salafism' was developed towards the end of the nineteenth century by Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani who promoted the need for a return to the model of society and its organization from the time of Prophet Mohammed, thus rejecting all foreign influences and accretions as well as indicating the reasons for the crisis of the Muslim world. In our times a very important dimension of this trend has for a long time remained cultural anti-occidentalism, hence Salafism is sometimes called 'neo-fundamentalism'². Its development has been affected for many years, among other things, by the crisis of traditional societies – detachment from communities of mother countries and the creation and deepening of a sense of belonging to an imaginary community. One can also discern here a reflection of the process of transnational identification with an imaginary community, uniting all the faithful in the world and built on a specific understanding of the bond based on religion and its norms.

¹ See S. Kosmyńska, *Święta wojna w Al-Ándalus. Przeobrażenia aktywności dżihadystycznych komórek terrorystycznych w Hiszpanii w latach 1995-2012*, Łódź 2015.

² See O. Roy, *El islam mundializado. Los musulmanes en la era de la globalización*, Barcelona 2003, pp. 138-139 (*Biblioteca del Islam Contemporáneo*, 20).

Being aware of all the different kinds of Salafism in this particular aspect which concerns rejecting everything that is foreign, western and threatens 'true' Islam one can distinguish a number of its repeating indicators such as: decisive action against Sufism, emphasis on absolute monotheism (*tawhid*) and proclamation of the need to return to religious purity – the time of Prophet and orthodox caliphs, which means regarding all the influences and different exegesis as heresy, stigmatizing moral liberalism and ecumenism, thereby leading to an unfriendly attitude towards Christianity and Judaism. The above pillars arise from the assumption that the only appropriate source of knowledge about the norms of conduct for Muslims are the Koran and the Sunna. The Salafis are convinced that a genuine faith in Islam is based both on the internal belief of each Muslim as well as their external activities. One of the signs of the external action realized in practice is a duty to exclude (*takfir*) from the Muslim community those who do not fulfil religious responsibilities³. Calls for a return to 'true Islam' interweave with demands for ridding the Muslim world of the influences of the West. This stand often takes a purely dogmatic form, as e.g. Saudi Wahhabism, sometimes also offensive, armed, as with jihadi variants and movements. Salafi ideas lead to the diversification of attitudes both toward the axionormative order in Muslim countries as well as social and political reality in countries in which adherents of Islam constitute the immigrant communities (e.g. Europe). There are among them representatives of dialogue with societies in host countries, accepting their jurisprudence and customs but also radicals, critically disposed towards the mechanisms of democracy and its institutions, opting for separate social and cultural identity of the followers of Islam.

TRENDS OF RADICAL SALAFISM IN MOROCCO

The terrorist threat in Morocco has never reached such proportions as in neighbouring Algeria, yet underestimating the role of extremists from this country in the structure of the global jihadism movement in Spain and other countries would be a mistake. The Islamist trends which have been active in Morocco for a few decades are characterised by complexity. Particularly in the 1960s and 70s moderate factions, dissociating themselves from using violence, dominated among them, though over the course of time radicals also appeared⁴. Among the Islamist organizations which were created in that period there was, *inter alia*, Al-Shab al-Islamiyya (The Muslim Youth) founded in 1969. The organization, led by Abd al-Karim Muti, was established illegally. However, it was to a certain degree tolerated by the authorities which sought in this type of movements an alternative to Marxist currents. There existed also an armed faction

³ A. Wejksznar, *Ewolucja terroryzmu motywowanego ideologią religijną na przykładzie salafickiego ruchu globalnego dżihadu*, Poznań 2010, pp. 17-18.

⁴ See M. Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb. Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring*, New York 2012, pp. 121-125; M. Zeghal, *Islamism in Morocco. Religion, Authoritarianism and Electoral Politics*, Princeton 2008, pp. 61-64; J. Żebrowski, *Maroko. Współczesność a historia*, Warszawa 2000 (*Świat Orientu*).

within it, Moroccan Mujahideen Movement, whose leader, Abd al-Aziz Nuamani presented more radical views. Members of the group used violence and believed that the ruling elites together with a large section of society departed from the principles of true Islam and thus was mired in neopaganism. King Hassan II, ruling from 1961 to 1999, was well disposed, particularly from the 70s, towards the creation of Koranic schools as well as social and charity organizations established to a large degree thanks to Saudi funds, which was obviously connected with promoting Wahhabi version of Sunnism⁵. During that period many imams, preachers and thinkers of quite radical views received their education, yet their activities had for a long time been tolerated by the authorities, since their sting of criticism had not been clearly directed against the ruling elite. However, over the course of the years, together with more and more open stigmatization of the doings of the reigning family as well as attacks on the people accused of betrayal of Islam, repression from authorities against Islamists conducting a discourse explicitly politicizing religion intensified.

This situation intensified especially during the first war in the Persian Gulf (1990-1991) when some of the spiritual leaders started to criticise loudly the United States and the foreign policy of the royal families of Morocco and Saudi Arabia based on an alliance with the U.S.⁶ It produced a strong reaction on the part of the authorities, which in turn forced imams with radical views to act in a more camouflaged way.

The end of the decade of the 90s was the time favouring the popularity of Islamic groups, which to a considerable extent resulted from growing economic problems and the impoverishment of a large part of society. Jamat al-'adl wa-l-ihsan (Justice and Mercy) became an important Islamic organization. Its leader, Abd as-Salam Yasin, described as one of the main ideologists of the Moroccan Islamism, presented a critical attitude to the monarchy. At that time moderate Islamists became active within Hizb al-Adala wa-l-Tanmiyya party (The Justice and Development Party) while some of the radicals grew increasingly inclined towards jihadism⁷. However, neither the Islamists' political wing nor the extremists' terrorist groups were able to turn out a sufficient force to seize power. As far back as in the 90s some of the representatives of the younger generation went to Afghanistan to become involved in the armed struggle already as mujahideen fighters. That decade was the period of the growing popularity of radical Salafism, in particular among the poorly educated inhabitants of impoverished suburbs of cities such as Casablanca or Fez. Unemployment, social exclusion and lack of prospects and on the other hand the popularity of ideas explaining reality in a dichotomous way contributed on the eve of the new millennium to the creation and activity of criminal

⁵ A. Dialmy, 'L'islamisme marocain: entre révolution et intégration', *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, No. 110 (2000), at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.4000/assr.20198>>.

⁶ Anti-Iraq coalition forces included a 1200-strong contingent of Moroccan soldiers. See J. Farley, 'The Maghreb's Islamic Challenge', *World Today*, Vol. 47, No. 8-9 (1991).

⁷ For more details see M. Zeghal, *Islamism in Morocco...*; M. Daadaoui, *Moroccan Monarchy and the Islamist Challenge. Maintaining Makhzen Power*, New York 2011; O. Ben Elmostafa, *Les mouvements islamiques au Maroc. Leurs modes d'action et d'organisation*, Paris 2009 (*Histoire et Perspectives Méditerranéennes*).

groups whose members committed robberies and murders justifying this type of activity with jihadist slogans.

Many young Moroccans, motivated by economic considerations, emigrated to Europe, to countries such as Spain which, by virtue of its geographical proximity, very often served as both a destination and transit country. Some of them, having experienced social exclusion and discrimination, at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries came across the views of radical 'missionaries of jihad', who travelled quite freely around Europe at that time, or broke the law and ended in prison where they frequently gave in to indoctrination with radical ideas. Organizations of jihadist orientations marked their activity also in Morocco. Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (Groupe Islamique Combattant Marocain – GICM), put on the list of terrorist organizations by the Department of State and the European Union in October 2002, is one of them. Many members of the cell which carried out the attack in Madrid on 11th March 2004 were suspected of links with this group. GICM was founded above all with the aim of expanding the logistic base of Al-Qaeda in North Africa and Europe. It was established around 1998⁸ and to a large extent consisted of Moroccan participants of fights in Afghanistan, whose number fluctuated around 200-300 fighters. Soon members of the organization undertook activity not only in Morocco but also in Spain, Belgium, Italy, Holland and Germany. In organizational sense the GICM represents the mechanisms of fragmentation of jihadism structure; it is reflected by lack of centralized structure and a multitude of autonomous and independent cells active in many countries⁹. Over the years the group was characterized by a multifaceted nature of its activities including logistical and propaganda undertakings, e.g. organizing the routes of transportation for terrorists travelling around Europe and North Africa, forging documents and collecting financial means.

Safety agencies estimated that at the turn of the century, in just under ten years there was a significant increase in the number of members of jihadist cells in Morocco: from around 70 in 1996 to about 3 thousand in 2004¹⁰. The dynamics of the development of these networks shows that the policy of the authorities on counteracting terrorism was

⁸ Alfonso Merlos in turn gives the year 1993 as the date of the creation of the pillars of this organization. It only confirms how many inaccuracies and ambiguities accompany the information on this and many other terrorist organizations. A. Merlos, *Al Qaeda. Raíces y metas del terror global*, Madrid 2006, p. 209 (*Ensayo*).

⁹ Another example of activity of Moroccan terrorist cells is a Dutch group called 'Group from Hofstad' consisting of Moroccan immigrants, including young extremists coming from the immigrant backgrounds but already born in Europe. They operated in several Dutch cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, the Hague) and maintained an extensive network of contacts with cells in other countries, among others, in Morocco and Spain. The terrorists planned attacks on civilian structures (e.g. an airport) and also members of the Dutch government and parliament. Nevertheless, the most spectacular act of terror was the killing of a film director Theo van Gogh carried out on 2nd November 2004 in Amsterdam. The perpetrator of the murder was a Moroccan, Mohammed Bouyeri. More in: *ibid.*, pp. 337-359. Cf. J. Groen, A. Kranenberg, *Women Warriors for Allah. An Islamist Network in the Netherlands*, trans. by R. Naborn, Philadelphia 2010.

¹⁰ M. Willis, *Politics and Power...*, p. 142.

quite ineffective. Only over the course of the years more decisive preventive measures were taken. As a result of anti-terrorist operations, conducted both by the authorities of Morocco¹¹ and European agencies in cooperation with American services, it was possible to break up a number of GICM cells and other groups and put many radicals in prison¹². Particularly after the attacks in Casablanca and Madrid these efforts resulted in weakening the ranks of the organization. Some of its members were absorbed by the Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat – GSPC), which perfectly depicts the mechanisms of functioning of networks of decentralized global terrorism, whose members are linked by changeable *modus operandi* as well as fluid organizational affiliation.

A failed terrorist attempt in May 2002 on NATO warships passing through the Strait of Gibraltar and stationed in the British military base in Rocca was a sign of the internationalization of jihadist terrorism and Morocco strategic location. As a result of the operation 'Gibraltar' it was possible to detain eight Saudis and seven Morocco citizens. It was revealed that they had links with Al-Qaeda and its centres in Africa and Europe; some of them were connected with another Moroccan organization – Ad-Dawat-Tabligh. However, the most serious act of terror were suicide attacks in Casablanca on the night of 15th May 2003¹³. They demonstrated that terrorism in North Africa could no longer be perceived as a phenomenon signifying only internal problems of Algeria. The attack was carried out by fourteen suicide terrorists (twelve of them were killed), linked to GICM and As-Sirat al-Mustakim. The target of the operation, as a result of which 45 people died, was hotel Farah-Maghreb, the restaurant Positano, which belonged to Moroccan Jews, Casa de España and a centre of Israeli Society.

A new anti-terrorist law passed after the May attack equipped the state and its services with additional instruments, indispensable in the fight against extremism. Moroccan authorities issued 44 international arrest warrants for hiding terrorists, among others for Mohammed Gerbuzi, accused of coordinating training camps for Moroccans in Afghanistan in 2001 commissioned by the leader of Al-Qaeda. The government of Morocco conducted a number of operations aimed at breaking up active terrorist cells

¹¹ E.g. numerous detentions of radicals accused by the Moroccan authorities of affiliation with the above mentioned movement, developing in cities such as, among others, Casablanca, Salé and Tanger. In August 2002 the Moroccan police arrested around 30 members of extremist terrorist groups of Salafiyya and Jihadiyya as well as At-Takfir wa-l-hijra. They were charged with the killing of ten people in Casablanca because of their alleged betrayal of Islamic rules. Police actions in Tanger and Fez resulted in further arrests. It is also worth noting that in the wake of anti-terrorist operations in Iraq and Afghanistan a dozen or so Moroccan mujahideen were sent to the camp in Guantanamo (Malika Zeghal gives the number of 17 fighters). M. Zeghal, *Islamism in Morocco...*, pp. 88-89.

¹² In July 2005 in a few Moroccan cities in total 30 extremists were arrested. In March of the following year it was possible to detain in Casablanca eight Moroccans and one Tunisian who were charged with preparing bomb attacks in Italy: the target of the attacks was to be the underground in Milan and one of the churches in Bologna. After: M. Willis, *Politics and Power...*, p. 143.

¹³ See A. Dialmy, 'Le terrorisme islamique au Maroc', Social Compass, Vol. 52, No. 1 (2005), at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0037768605050154>>; A. Chaarani, *La mouvance islamiste au Maroc. Du 11 septembre 2001 aux attentats de Casablanca du 16 mai 2003*, Paris 2004 (Tropiques).

in the country, which took place also as a result of international pressure. Altogether over 2300 people were detained, out of which 1700 were sentenced, including several to death¹⁴. In the following years King Mohammed VI continued the struggle against Salafist extremism although the terrorists did not remain passive, e.g. by taking advantage of the weaknesses of the Moroccan prison system.¹⁵ Morocco became for the West one of the key players in the arena of the fight against terrorism.¹⁶ At the same time let us add that the authorities in Rabat – due to historical and political animosities – did not always offer effective cooperation with the Spanish side as regards access to information and coordination of actions taken by intelligence services.

It should be emphasized that putting extremists in penal institutions did not mean in every case the end of their activity since they took interaction as part of secondary socialization of other inmates. Within the course of the last two decades jihadist socialisation has very often taken place in prisons and usually concerned the poorly educated, people who come into conflict with the law or simply those useful from the point of view of terrorist groups. Moroccan penal institutions were characteristic ‘incubators’ of extremists for a number of years and those were the places where they underwent a process of radicalization and terrorist propaganda¹⁷. For example many preachers who were imprisoned after the 2003 attack continued their proselytic activity in jails, also among those convicted of crimes concerning drug trafficking. The links between terrorism and organized crime (smuggling of drugs, goods, weapons and people) which partly resulted from proselytic activity conducted in penal institutions aroused particular anxiety among Moroccan authorities as well as – for obvious reasons – the Spanish side¹⁸. It is worth paying attention to the process of the interpenetrating of crime and terrorism: ‘It is in prisons where political activists recruit those who are needed for the functioning of their cells – specialists in forging documents, weapon trading, etc. The recruiters use doctrines which legitimize crime and transform it into redemption (...) Today’s prisons produce terrorists of tomorrow.’¹⁹ Religious phraseology justifies violating the law, which allows for further clarification of the pillars of identity. An example of this type of mechanisms are for instance biographies of many jihadists active in Spain.

It is worth mentioning that in an announcement from 13th February 2003 bin Laden pointed at Morocco as one of the important operational areas of Al-Qaeda and

¹⁴ C. Echeverría Jesús, ‘La evolución del islamismo radical en el Magreb y en el Sahel: de los activistas políticos a los terroristas’, *Grupo de Estudios Estratégicos*, 26 March 2012.

¹⁵ In April 2008 nine terrorists, sentenced for their involvement in attacks in Casablanca, escaped from prison in Keintra. More in: idem, ‘El radicalismo islamista en Marruecos, hoy’, *Grupo de Estudios Estratégicos*, 31 March 2010.

¹⁶ D. Alvarado, *La yihad a nuestras puertas. La amenaza de Al Qaeda en el Maghreb Islámico*, Foca, Madrid 2010, p. 99 (*Investigación*).

¹⁷ See A. Boukhars, *Politics in Morocco. Executive Monarchy and Enlightened Authoritarianism*, New York 2011, pp. 142-144 (*Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Politics*, 23).

¹⁸ D. Alvarado, *La yihad a nuestras puertas...*, p. 142.

¹⁹ After: *ibid.* (Transaltion mine).

groups linked to it in view of an alliance of this country with the United States. Co-operation with the US within the anti-terrorist policy after the attack from 11th September 2001 contributed to the fact that many extremist groups which earlier dealt mainly with logistic activity became involved in creating strictly operational undertakings. A good example of this evolution is GICM. In January 2002, for instance, during a meeting of envoys of Al-Qaeda and groups connected with it in Istanbul, in which the representatives of GICM took part as well, the issue of the preparation of the attacks in Casablanca and Madrid was addressed and talks about the cooperation with Algerian GSPC and Egyptian Islamic Jihad were held.

After the events of 11th March 2004 the Spanish authorities intensified their efforts towards cooperation with the Moroccan side in order to neutralise threats from terrorist groups²⁰. Moroccan police detained over seventy people who were charged with being involved in preparations for the attack²¹. However, that did not mean that threats to the internal security of Morocco, Spain and other countries were eliminated. In 2004 a Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón, who had conducted many trials against terrorists, received information about an unknown place of residence of about 400 Moroccan mujahideen who had considerable operational experience gained either in paramilitary camps in Afghanistan or during fights in Bosnia or Chechnya. It was suggested that some of them might be hiding in Spain and other European countries²². According to estimates from the Spanish side in Morocco there were about one hundred active cells or groups linked indirectly or directly to Al-Qaeda network.²³ From a dozen or so to several dozen of Moroccans living in Spain were involved in preparation for the attack in Casablanca.

In general, between 2003 and 2010 in Morocco over 3 thousand people were arrested and it was possible to break up 55 terrorist cells to a larger or lesser extent linked to the structures of Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb region²⁴. They dealt both with organising direct terrorist acts all over the country and recruiting potential candidates for mujahideen ready for armed action in Iraq. An interesting example of an Islamic hit squad active on the African side of the Strait of Gibraltar but *de facto* in Spain was a group broken up in December 2006 as a result of an anti-terrorist operation code-named 'Dune' (*Duna*) organized by the Spanish authorities in the city of Ceuta. As a result a dozen or so people were arrested who had prepared attacks on facilities in the city-exclave belonging to Spain: a shopping centre and a military warehouse²⁵. The main reason for

²⁰ In the context of this cooperation a number of meetings dedicated to the coordination of anti-terrorist strategies were held at government level. (e.g. a meeting of the Interior Ministers of both countries, Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba and Shakib Benmussa in Madrid on 26th January 2009).

²¹ C. Tawil, *Brothers in Arms. The Story of Al-Qa'ida and the Arab Jihadists*, London 2010, p. 49.

²² L. de la Corte Ibáñez, J. Jordán, *La yihad terrorista*, Madrid 2007, p. 185 (*Ciencias Políticas*).

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

²⁵ Cf. J. Jordán, R. Wesley, 'The Threat of Grassroots Jihadi Networks. A Case Study from Ceuta, Spain', *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (2007); J. Jordán, H. Trujillo, 'Entornos favorables al reclutamiento yihadista: El barrio del Príncipe Alfonso (Ceuta)', *Jihad Monitor Occasional Paper*, No. 3 (2006).

the activity of the cell was the idea of 'liberation of the [land] occupied by the infidels' – (i.e. Spain) – parts of Morocco – Ceuta and Melilla. The vast majority of the group members came from Ceuta, from the Príncipe Alfonso district and most of them also had Spanish citizenship. Their actions initially included acts of vandalism, putting on walls and buildings graffiti comprising Salafist and anti-Spanish slogans, etc. However, over the course of time plans for undertakings of a much more serious character were launched. They concerned preparations for terrorist attacks with the use of explosives on civilian buildings (shopping centres, a petrol station, a funfair during a fete)²⁶.

Despite these quite ineffectual, incidental attempts at shifting the hotbeds of terror to the Spanish cities-exclaves in Morocco, we need to bear in mind that the status of these centres is often raised on Internet sites and forums containing radical contents. The liberation of Ceuta and Melilla constitutes at the same time another argument in favour of conducting jihad against Spain. This demand found expression in many declarations of 'holy war' issued by representatives of Maghreb network of Al-Qaeda, among others, in the convictions of the members of the group broken up at the end of August 2008. The network was linked to GSPC and acted in the regions of Tanger, El Aaiún, Tetuan, Larache and Casablanca and carried a highly telling name Fatah Al-Andalus (The Capture of Al-Ándalus). The target of the attacks were to be first of all facilities belonging to Spain, both in Morocco and the Iberian Peninsula²⁷.

ACTIVITY OF MOROCCAN TERRORISTS IN SPAIN IN THE FIRST DECADE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

In 2009 the number of foreigners legally staying in Spain amounted to almost 5 million 600 thousand people (around 12 per cent of the population), which in comparison with the year 2000, when there were just under 900 thousand inhabitants, indicates an increase of about 600 per cent²⁸. Data from 2010 provide already over 5 million 700 immigrants. The impossibility of determining exactly their number results from the difficulty of establishing the number of illegal immigrants and fluctuation of their presence in Spain over the years. Apart from newcomers from Latin America as well as Central Europe, successively larger and larger groups of foreigners were coming also

²⁶ J. Jordán, R. Wesley, 'The Threat of Grassroots Jihadi Networks...'

²⁷ The network was created in the Western Sahara region, in the city of El Aaiún – the area of former Spanish colony from which Spain withdrew its military contingent on 26th February 1976 on the strength of agreements from 14th November 1975. However, the population of Western Sahara was deprived of its right to self-determination. The area was taken by Morocco as a result of the so-called 'Green March' in 1975, which soon led to armed clashes with the pro-independence Polisario Front. Mauritania also got temporarily involved in the conflict. In 1991 a cease-fire agreement was reached between the Polisario Front and the authorities of Morocco who control the western part of disputed territory. See C. Echeverría Jesús, 'Aproximación al terrorismo yihadista salafista en y desde Marruecos', *Grupo de Estudios Estratégicos*, 20 February 2009.

²⁸ After: M.A. Cano Paños, *Generación Yihad. La radicalización de los jóvenes musulmanes en Europa*, Madrid 2010, p. 211 (*Estudios de Criminología y Política Criminal*).

from Muslim countries – the area of Maghreb – as well as from the Middle East. It was estimated that in the year 2000 in Spain there legally lived about 265 thousand people coming from the Muslim countries, a year later there were already around 324 thousand and in 2004 the number almost doubled reaching approx. 600 thousand and in 2010, in turn, just the foreigners of Moroccan origin numbered over 710 thousand²⁹. These values would be certainly higher if numerous foreigners staying in Spain illegally were added³⁰. Social a profile and family relations had considerable significance in this process: among the people coming to the Iberian Peninsula there was a large number of young men who then entered into marriage or, after some time, brought there their spouses or other family members, including also more distant relatives³¹.

A very large proportion of foreigners came from the countries of Maghreb, primarily from Morocco and also from Algeria. Algerian migration in Spain characterizes considerable dispersion as to the choice of the place of settlement. In the region of Murcia, for example, the population of people of Moroccan origin in 2006 reached almost 2 per cent³². Quite a large proportion settled in districts of big cities, for instance, of Madrid and Barcelona. From as early as the 70's of the 20th century one can observe a phenomenon of labour immigration from Morocco to Spain, yet the next two decades brought the intensification of this phenomenon. Emigration constituted for Moroccans and inhabitants of other Maghreb countries a chance for improving their economic status, which actually also influenced the dynamics of transformations of the societies of North Africa, whose character in many cases was so distinctively determined by tribal structure³³. Undoubtedly for some the decision to emigrate was politically motivated. Many Moroccans who were poor and deprived of prospects for the future constituted a social group susceptible to the influence of Salafist ideas, unfavourable also to the ruling elites. Despite the fact that a certain proportion of Moroccans went to Spain in connection with educational programmes, it was first of all labour immigration.

Integration of foreigners from the Maghreb region turned out to be the most difficult and constituted the greatest challenge although obviously the reasons for it should not be sought primarily in their number, but to a larger extent in the social and cultural dimensions touching upon the axionormative context, so different from the culture of the host society. The pillar of identity is Islam, as numerous researches demonstrate³⁴.

²⁹ R. Stryjewski, 'Muzułmanie w Hiszpanii' in A. Parzymies (ed.), *Muzułmanie w Europie*, Warszawa 2005, p. 466; M.A. Cano Paños, *Generación Yihad...*, pp. 213-214.

³⁰ Part of immigrants staying in Spain illegally were expelled from the country – e.g. over 77 thousand in 2002 and over 92 thousand in 2003 (Moroccans made one fourth of it). C. Alcaide, *La inmigración y sus efectos sobre la estadística*, Madrid 2004, p. 162.

³¹ L. Cachón Rodríguez, 'En la "España inmigrante". Entre la fragilidad de los inmigrantes y las políticas de integración', *Papeles del CEIC*, No. 1 (2009).

³² Ibid.

³³ See: A. Dziubiński, 'Migracje w dziejach Maghrebu' in J. E. Zamojski (ed.), *Migracje – historia, kultura*, Warszawa 2002, pp. 103-110 (*Migracje i Społeczeństwo*).

³⁴ On the other hand, one should bear in mind that attachment to religion emphasized in opinion polls does not automatically translate into a thorough knowledge of Islam, which in many cases is seriously

In the attack carried out on 11th March 2004 in Madrid immigrants from Morocco living in Spain played a key role. Their involvement in extremist activity was, among other things, a consequence of the influence of activists from the Abu Dahdah network³⁵, who particularly in the second half of the 90s and at the beginning of the new century developed an extensive network of domestic and international contacts in order to propagate the idea of jihadism and socialise potential candidates for the soldiers of 'holy war'. A lot of Moroccans were involved in the structures of 'Algerian and Syrian network' which were active in Spain at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. After the arrest of Abu Dahdah and other extremists³⁶ further fragmentation of terrorist cells followed. A few structures maintaining extensive links (domestic and foreign) were established: among others 'Villaverde' network as well as 'Lavapiés', 'Virgen del Coro' and 'Jamal Ahmidan' networks.³⁷ The names of the first three groups came from the names of Madrid districts in which extremists' contacts and meetings took place. Among the members of the first network there were among others: Mustafa al-Maymuni, Driss Shebli, Serhane ibn Abdelmajid Fakheth, Sayyid Berrah and Hisham Tensamani Had. The leader of the cell became Fakheth (also known as 'Tunisian'); its members underwent progressive radicalization whose catalyst were interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan and the conviction that the European countries (among others Spain), which remain in political and military alliance with the United States, to a considerable degree contribute to Muslim suffering.

Recruitment and socialization to radicalism had considerable significance in the consolidation of the cells and the process of slow initiation of new followers. One of the 'missionaries' conducting proselytic activity was a Moroccan, Amer Azizi. His links with the groups of Salafist radicalism were very extensive and constituted a perfect example of the mechanisms of functioning and interpenetrating of the structures of global jihad cells in many countries. Those contacts also included, apart from participation in Abu Dahdah network, activity in the Moroccan and Libyan organizations of this type.

limited. The consequence of this ignorance are simplifications in perceiving this religion, which in favourable conditions is often used by Salafist 'missionaries of jihad' who in the process of secondary socialization give an image of Islam in the version of Salafist radicalism. They manipulate it and on this basis try to build the identity of the recruited people. See R. Aparicio et al., *Marroquites en España*, Madrid 2005, pp. 242-244 (*Sociedad, Cultura, Migraciones*, 6).

³⁵ Abu Dahdah (Imad Eddin Barakat Yarkas) was a Syrian immigrant and a bricklayer. Due to the extremist activity in his country he was forced to emigrate. With time he acquired Spanish citizenship and developed to a large extent propaganda activity whose main aim was to spread Salafist doctrines and propagate the idea of a holy war among Muslim communities in Spain, mainly Moroccans. He had links with an armed faction of Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and maintained contacts with a great number of jihadists belonging to Al-Qaeda network in Europe, among others, with Abu Qatada living in London.

³⁶ Eighteen were sentenced for conducting terrorist activity. Between 11th September 2001 and 11th March 2004 around seventy people were arrested on charges of links with jihadist cells and preparation of attacks on structures in Europe.

³⁷ See: J. Jordán, F.M. Mañas, 'La naturaleza combatiente de las organizaciones terroristas. Una aportación desde el análisis de redes sociales', *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, No. 20 (2009).

Investigation showed that in 2003 Azizi was in the Internet correspondence with some members of 11-M cell: Mutamaz Almallah Dabas and Serhane Fakheth – the ‘Tunisian’.

Azizi recruited to this cell, among others, another Moroccan immigrant, Mustafa Al-Maymuni, who played an important role in the coordination of cooperation between many Islamist cells in and also outside Spain. It concerned, among other things, establishing contacts between terrorists in Morocco and recruited immigrants from this country who already lived in the Iberian Peninsula. Soon Al-Maymuni managed to set up at least two cells of jihadists: one in Madrid and the other in his country of origin³⁸.

After arresting Al-Maymuni in the spring of 2003 it was the ‘Tunisian’ who had to take on a very important role in merging individual groups. An Algerian Allekema Lamari belonged to one of them. After serving a sentence of a few years’ imprisonment he again became involved in extremist activity and then was one of the terrorists taking part in the March 11th attack. The terrorist’s cell gathered around 40 activists, mainly from Morocco, of whom about 25 were directly involved in preparations and realization of the attack in Madrid³⁹. Among the members of the group were an Egyptian Rabei Osman al-Sayyid as well as Moroccans: Mohammed Afallah, Driss Shebli (belonging to the structures of GICM functioning in Europe), Sayyid Chedadi, Jamal Zugam and Sayyid Berrah. As it has been mentioned above, in many cases they were people who were earlier active in the Abu Dahdah network⁴⁰. At the end of the summer 2003 the terrorist cell was consolidated and up and running whereas its leadership was on the shoulders of Fakheth, Lamari and Ahmidan.

Their contacts included multi-vector interactions with members of networks existing outside Spain – e.g. with Muslims belonging to the cell of GICM operating in Belgium. Many of its members seemed to lead the ordinary life of immigrants. They worked, avoided conflicts with the people around them, paid the bills, etc. Most of the terrorists taking part in the attack underwent the process of jihadist conversion already in Spain so they underwent the radicalization process in Europe. They did not receive military training or ideological formation, e.g. at one of training camps of structures linked to Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan or Pakistan, as many other extremists travelling around Europe in the 90s and at the beginning of 21st century did. They were activists whose period of involvement in the cause of ‘global jihad’ did not exceed a few years and still – even taking into account the dimension of international links – they were able to prepare the attack and realize it in a way which was to a large extent independent. Obviously, on the other hand one should not forget about the involvement of combatants having very useful experiences with regard to affiliation with jihadist groups such as a former officer of the Egyptian army, Rabei Osman al-Sayyid, who became one of the planners of the attack at Atocha station.

³⁸ Apart from Maymuni, another activist in the group operating in the capital of Spain was ‘Tunisian’ who shortly became his brother-in-law, which is another proof of the importance of family links and friendly relations for the development of structures of this face of radicalism.

³⁹ J.M. Irujo, ‘Cómo surgió la célula local del 11-M’, *El País*, 12 September 2004.

⁴⁰ See L. de la Corte Ibañez, J. Jordán, *La yihad terrorista*, pp. 249-250.

The Internet played an important role in the functioning of the 11-M cell, both during the months preceding the attack and shortly after its execution. Its use shows a considerable significance of virtual space for the existence and development of jihadist terrorism. This process illustrates the character of its evolution within the space of recent years. The representatives of this trend of extremism, aware of the role of media influence and the fact that terrorism is in a sense a media spectacle in which getting the message across to the public and its interpretation have great importance, have been using the Internet for years more and more eagerly as a safe carrier of propaganda content, source of instructional and operational information⁴¹ as well as a way of communication and mechanism of recruitment of potential candidates for the fighters of 'holy war'⁴². On the basis of an analysis of the contents of hard disks of computers belonging to the terrorists it was established that the importance of virtual space for the 11-M cell manifested itself in ideological indoctrination, mutual strengthening of emotional bonds, obtaining operational information, communicating and propaganda influence. The mechanisms of functioning of the cell responsible for March 11th attack constitute one of the examples of decentralization of jihadism networks, active in different regions of the world. In this context the dimension of the autonomy of the cell with regard to financing the attack is noteworthy.

In total 191 died, many sustained wounds and injuries. Soon after the attack the Ministry of Internal Affairs, intelligence service and the police took appropriate measures aimed at establishing the identity of the perpetrators of the tragedy⁴³. A trial of the arrested members of the group started on 15th February 2007 and lasted a few months whereas the judge passed sentence on 31st October. Twenty-nine extremists appeared before the court in Madrid (fifteen Moroccans, nine Spaniards, two Syrians, an Algerian, a Lebanese and an Egyptian). Some of them were charged with affiliation with a terrorist group and causing death of many people. Others were accused of indirect terrorism, i.e. cooperation with extremist organization, trafficking of explosive materials and drugs, illegal possession of firearms and false documents, theft, etc.⁴⁴

⁴¹ E.g. terrorists who carried out the attack in London on 7th July 2005 found instructions concerning the construction of explosives on the Internet.

⁴² More in: S. Kosmyńska, 'Cyberdzihad. Wykorzystanie Internetu przez współczesny terroryzm islamistyczny' in A. Podraza, P. Polakowski, K. Wiak (eds.), *Cyberterroryzm zagrożeniem XXI wieku. Perspektywa politologiczna i prawna*, Warszawa 2013. Cf. G. Weinmann, *Terror on the Internet. The New Arena, the New Challenges*, Washington 2006; P. Seib, D. J. Janbek, *Global Terrorism and New Media. The Post-Al Qaeda Generation*, London 2010 (*Media, War and Security*).

⁴³ Spain had been grappling for years with the problem of Basque separatism personified by ETA organization. Basque terrorism had claimed a lot of victims over the years, hence the first opinions reflecting suspicions that the attack had been carried out by that group seemed to be justified. See J. Cieszko, 'Tragedia w Madrycie, 11 marca' in B. Dobek-Ostrowska, M. Kuś (eds.), *Hiszpania. Media masowe i wybory w obliczu terroryzmu*, Wrocław 2007 (*Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis. Komunikowanie i Media*, 2918).

⁴⁴ Two terrorists who were found guilty of taking part in the attack: Jamal Zugam and Omar al-Ghanut received the severest punishment and were sentenced to almost 43 thousand years' imprisonment. The rest of the accused who were proven guilty of links with a terrorist group and different cases of vio-

According to a number of analyses, that unprecedented act of terror contributed to a higher voter turnout (as much as 76 per cent) which in turn became a factor favourable for the election success of the opposition party— in this sense the attack can be perceived as a catalyst for the victory of socialists⁴⁵. It motivated a large number of undecided voters of whom many voted for socialists. PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español) defeated the PP (Partido Popular) by about 5 per cent gaining over 42,5 per cent of the support (the support for Partido Popular amounted to 37,1 per cent).

Undoubtedly the question of the decision-makers behind the attack remains especially important. There appeared two main hypotheses. One of them pointed at the cell in Madrid, which consisted mainly of Moroccans and whose members were responsible for that act of terror. In other words, it meant the autonomy of the perpetrators of the attack. In this context some analyses point at the significance of the Spanish-Moroccan conflict over a small island Perejil⁴⁶, which was to be an additional reason for the attack, i.e. it aroused in the circles of extremists a desire to punish Spain for its claims, military manoeuvres, etc. The other hypothesis that the authors of the attacks should be sought outside Spanish territory, in the international networks of jihadism and their managerial structures existing in many European and Muslim countries. The argument in support of this thesis was the existence of extremely complex links of a number of radicals with the cells of fighting Islamism in Great Britain, France, Germany, Morocco, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and other countries. In the light of the revealed facts there is no doubt that the Madrid cell did not function in isolation and coordinated its undertakings with foreign structures of the movement of global jihad.

A symbolic impulse to carry out the attack could have been Osama bin Laden's announcement of 18th October in which he warned Spain that its military involvement in Iraq (around 1300 soldiers, advisors and specialists) would trigger retaliatory actions. It is worth pointing out that a considerable part of the 11-M network consisted of Moroccan immigrants. Becoming politically and militarily involved on the side of the United States Prime Minister José María Aznar tried to gain American support in discouraging the Moroccan authorities from claims to the cities-exclaves Ceuta and Melilla belonging to Spain. In the circle of people acquainted with preparations for the attack at Atocha station there were two important members of GICM linked to Al-Qaeda structures: Yussuf Belhaj and Hassan al-Haski⁴⁷. The Dabbas brothers, who did

lating the law were sentenced to less severe punishments. Predictably, foreign and domestic groups of jihadists recognized as martyrs both those who died and those convicted as a result of the trial.

⁴⁵ Miguel Platón, among others, holds such an opinion. See idem, *11-M. Cómo la yihad puso de rodillas a España*, Madrid 2005, pp. 448-449.

⁴⁶ In the summer of 2002 the Moroccan side set up a military camp and then a navy cadets base on the island of Perejil in the Strait of Gibraltar. It met with a strong reaction from Spain which directed there its navy and air force units as well as a special-forces unit. As a result of the operation the Moroccans were removed from the island. The conflict was averted through the mediation of the U.S Secretary of State Collin Powell, but it contributed to increased tension in bilateral relations.

⁴⁷ Belhaj undoubtedly knew the date of the attack earlier. He maintained quite close contacts with Fakhet and he spent some time in the village of Leganés in Spain in February 2004 where shortly after the attack seven terrorists committed suicide. After those events Belhaj moved to Barcelona and then

not take part in the attack, played an important role in ideological formation of the cell members⁴⁸. Both brothers were arrested in 2005. It does not mean, however, that the 11-M cell was directly responsible to the structures of GICM or Al-Qaeda. It just indicates operational contacts, typical of the evolution of structures of jihadist terrorism, maintained as part of decentralized network of links. That is why the 11-M group can only be regarded as a peculiar 'franchise of Al-Qaeda.'

It is worth emphasizing once again the importance of direct interactions conducted by extremists as part of close affective ties, built on the basis of friendship, hatred for enemies and involvement in the common cause. That is why a social profile of the functioning of members of the cell responsible for the Madrid attack to a certain degree bore the hallmarks of a category of 'a bunch of friends' (*pandilla de amigos*) distinguished by Marc Sageman as a specific kind of a terrorist social group⁴⁹. In this model informal ties play a more important role than structural framework of an organization. Nevertheless one should remember that also this aspect of functioning of jihadism in Spain and other European countries has a substantial significance in a sense of a network structure of this extremism, a phenomenon of participatory fluctuation and operational experiences of some members of those groups. For example in case of the 11-M group of 47 exposed members of the cell about 40 per cent were bound by ties of blood and 27,6 per cent were linked by bonds of friendship formed not only before the group was constituted but coming from the period preceding their arrival in Spain (some of the terrorists came from the Moroccan cities of Tetuan and Tanger)⁵⁰. Their earlier familiarity played a significant role in consolidating and strengthening later relations, also taking into account security reasons and mutual socialization with ideas of fighting Salafism. In turn, almost 32 per cent of the cell members were linked by interactions conducted near Madrid mosques⁵¹. Although these institutions were not the centres of propagating the idea of radical Salafism, as was the case at the turn of the 21st century in many other European cities, they played an important role for social interactions

left Spain. However, before long, in February 2005, he was arrested in Belgium. Yet, he managed to regain freedom and went to Syria where in May 2008 he was arrested on a charge of terrorism. Belhaj was turned in to the Moroccan authorities and subjected to interrogations in connection with the Madrid attack. Finally, in February 2008, he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment. Al-Haski, in turn, before going to Spain, spent some time in Afghanistan where he contacted the leaders of Al-Qaeda. An investigation revealed that he also knew the date and details of the attack. A few days prior to it, he left Afghanistan and went to Paris where he claimed before his fellow radicals that he was behind the idea and organization of the attack. Al-Haski was arrested in Lanzarote in the Canary Islands in December 2004. A. Malalana Ureña, 'Los atentados de Madrid del 11 de marzo en la primera historiografía', *Spagna Contemporanea*, Vol. 19, No. 37 (2010).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ M. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, Philadelphia 2004, pp. 152-158.

⁵⁰ J.M. Irujo, 'Cómo surgió la célula local...' These data remain consistent with the results of Sageman's research concerning the analysis of cases of the recruited jihadists: as many as 70 per cent of them were linked by bonds of friendship and 20 per cent by family ties before they got involved in actions inside the terrorist cells. See also: M. Sageman, *Understanding...*, pp. 109-113.

⁵¹ J. M. Irujo, 'Cómo surgió la célula local...'

thus becoming a part of social space used for forging and maintaining bonds. A similar proportion of members of the group from Madrid was distinguished by criminal past and links to criminal structures. Around 34 per cent of radicals had earlier experiences in jihadist structures at home and abroad⁵². It constituted quite a high proportion and affected mobilization potential of the group as well as strengthened the commitment of its members. However, the majority of extremists belonging to the group (over 60 per cent) lacked such experience. Therefore it should be pointed out that apart from informal relations, characteristic of the community of the bunch of guys type, the mechanisms of recruitment and proselytic activity, realized within other, national and foreign structures, had a significant role in the crystallization of the 11-M group.

Arrests of extremists and reorganization of the strategy of the fight against terrorism after the 11th March attacks enfeebled jihadist networks in Spain, yet they were not broken up. The report of the Ministry of Internal Affairs from 2006 revealed alarming information about the expansion of fighting Salafist radicalism cells in Spain⁵³. They consisted to a large extent of Moroccan immigrants but also of Muslims coming from other countries. The mechanisms of their functioning showed to a considerable degree a continuum of the strategy of action consisting in maintaining the network of operational links with structures functioning in other European and non-European countries and organization of logistical undertakings. However, the cells were to a larger degree affected by the conflict in chaos-stricken Iraq, which involved recruiting volunteers willing to play in this theatre of armed action among the communities of followers of Islam living on the Continent so also Spain. In the years 2004-2010 that task determined the core activities of as many as twelve neutralized networks. All in all, during the period 2004 to 2010 twenty-eight police operations were carried out in the wake of which it was possible to break up a number of jihadist cells in Spain⁵⁴. In twenty-two cases they had network links with foreign structures, whereas five of them were groups of the bunch of guys type. What characterized them was auto-affiliation with the network of fighting Salafism symbolized by Al-Qaeda as well as social and organizational similarity to the 11-M cells.

The fact that the communities of Muslim immigrants in Spain were growing in number was undoubtedly favourable for the terrorist structures both in the sense of developing support networks, i.e. characteristic infrastructure of links essential for functioning as part of society of the host country as well as for searching new candidates for mujahideen. Obviously the majority of the newcomers from Morocco and other Muslim countries was far from extremism; the motive for coming to Spain were first of all economic reasons. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that among such a large number of immigrants there were people with a radical attitude or susceptible to

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ F. Reinales, C. García-Calvo, 'Los yihadistas en España: perfil sociodemográfico de condenados por actividades terroristas o muertos en acto de terrorismo suicida entre 1996 y 2012', *Documento de Trabajo*, No. 11 (2013).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

it. After 11th March, despite the authorities' efforts, there was still a danger of spreading radically Salafist proselytism in penal institutions and some centres of Islam culture. For example at the beginning of 2006 the intelligence services indicated that in about 10 per cent of prayer rooms and mosques in Spain radical views were presented. Although it does not automatically indicate the affirmation of terrorist methods and calling for 'holy war', yet their influence may contribute to shaping extreme outlooks.

After 2004 terrorists' activity was still affected by international links of organizational and operational character. Different groups cooperated with each other in preparation for various undertakings mainly in their home countries, which explains why their activists in Europe concentrated on logistical operations. The situation in Maghreb countries, particularly in Algeria still had major significance. The evolution of the structures of jihadism in this country – the transformation of GSPC into AQIM (Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb) in January 2007 – did not fail to influence related cells in the south of Europe.

The direct character of terrorism which afflicted Spain on 11th March 2004 materialized itself more than once in the form of successive attacks on civil facilities. While the majority of terrorist cells with international structural links concentrated on logistical undertakings, the local groups, auto-affiliating with the global jihad movement and linked to it by a symbolic, virtual bond were more focused on carrying out an attack in Spain. Between 2004 and 2006 the Spanish police managed to prevent at least eight terrorist attacks prepared by Salafist extremists. Among their targets were public buildings in Madrid, metro stations, one of the hotels in Barcelona, a ferry running through the Straits of Gibraltar and other targets⁵⁵. In 2004 two Moroccan citizens, who were photographing a nuclear power station, were arrested. In May of the same year, so shortly after the attack at Atocha station, a terrorist network was broken up. It was linked to Ansar al-Islam organization which dealt with recruiting volunteers to take part in fights in Iraq and cooperating with the Algerian cells situated in Germany, Barcelona and the Basque province of Vizcaya. The group which in large part consisted of criminals recruited in prisons and run by an Algerian Mohammed Ashraf tied with the Armed Islamic Group (Groupe Islamique Armé – GIA) and GSPC, was preparing for detonating a lorry with 500 kilograms of explosives in front of the Supreme Court building in Madrid. The list of facilities in the capital which were to become the target of attacks included also Santiago Bernabeu stadium, a high-rise building called Picasso's Tower and train stations⁵⁶. Ashraf's cell was broken up as a result of 'NOVA' operation in October 2004 in Andalusia, Valencia, Madrid and in the Navarra region. Eight extremists were arrested and a number of links with Muslims put in prisons in Asturias, Pontevedra and Salamanca were discovered and neutralized. Eight radicals serving their sentences there were isolated. They were in touch with Islamists not only from other European countries (e. g. France) but also from such remote places like the United States or Australia. The group they created bore the name 'Martyrs of Morocco' and

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ L. de la Corte Ibáñez, J. Jordán, *La yihad terrorista*, pp. 84-85.

cooperated with Algerian GSPC and criminal structures from the Maghreb region. In the ideological dimension it stigmatized Spain for its involvement in the conflict in Iraq, for its participation in the mission in Afghanistan and alleged persecution of Islam followers.

At the close of 2004 the Spanish police managed to arrest also other Muslims on a charge of executing or planning activities directed at the security of the country. On 28th October in Madrid, Galicia, Valencia, Andalusia and the Basque Country altogether thirteen people were detained. They were all linked to the terrorists preparing an attack against the Supreme Court. At the beginning of November other immigrants from Algeria were arrested in Valencia and in the second half of the month imam Samir ibn Abdullah was arrested in Barcelona. He spread jihadist propaganda, encouraged people to carry out suicide attacks and maintained contacts with 'the Martyrs of Morocco'.

Among all the jihadists detained in Spain in the years 2004-2006 about 70 per cent came from Algeria and Morocco⁵⁷. In that period also 23 radicals of Pakistani origin were arrested. The evolution of jihadism in Spain after 2004 shows that the percentage of radicals from Morocco rose significantly whereas the number of Algerians decreased markedly. That regularity can be explained by a considerable growth in the number of immigrants from Morocco – it also affects a potentially higher risk of Spanish borders being penetrated by radically-minded people.

Nationality of jihadists detained and killed in Spain (1995-2012)

Citizenship	1995-2003	2004-2012	In total
Algerian	46,7 per cent	18,5 per cent	28,5 per cent
Moroccan	3,3 per cent	40,7 per cent	27,4 per cent
Spanish	30 per cent	9,3 per cent	16,7 per cent
Pakistani	3,3 per cent	25,9 per cent	17,9 per cent
Syrian	16,7 per cent	-	5,9 per cent
other	-	5,6 per cent	3,6 per cent

Study on the basis of F. Reinares, C. García-Calvo, 'Los yihadistas en España: perfil sociodemográfico de condenados por actividades terroristas o muertos en acto de terrorismo suicida entre 1996 y 2012', *Documento de Trabajo*, No. 11 (2013).

After the Madrid attack the radicals intensified their activity in Catalonia. It is illustrated by a large number of anti-terrorist operations, e.g. 'Tiger' (*Tigris*), 'Jackal' (*Chacal*), 'Chameleon' (*Camaleón*) conducted in this part of Spain – in 2009 there were thirty of them, out of which fourteen in Barcelona and the surrounding region – e.g. in Tarragona. Police actions directed against jihadists were also carried out in Andalusia (ten operations), Valencia (six), Madrid (five) as well as in Ceuta and Melilla, the

⁵⁷ See: F. Reinares, C. García-Calvo, 'Los yihadistas en España...'; M. Sosa Troya, C. Rico Motos, 'Las principales actuaciones contra el yihadismo en España desde el 11-M', *El País*, 23 April 2013.

Basque Country, Murcia and Castile and León⁵⁸. Threats posed by the activity of jihadism in Catalonia were highlighted by, among others, the U.S. intelligence, which found expression in the report directed by the embassy of this country to the authorities in Madrid on 2nd October 2007.

The hotbeds of radicalism were found in Catalonia in some cultural centres, including those which are religious in character. It concerned e.g. the mosque Al-Forkan in the village Villanueva y Geltrú situated near Barcelona. It housed a centre of Islam, which was used, among other things, for propagating ideas of fighting Salafism, calling for armed involvement in the conflict in Iraq, etc. In Ceuta in turn, in the Atawba mosque as many as eleven people were arrested at the end of 2006. The detained were charged with spreading materials calling for violence. However, those were isolated incidents; Spanish mosques usually were not and are not the centres of jihad influence – to a greater extent direct interactions were conducted in Internet cafes, shops with *halal* food, tea-houses, gyms, etc. Increasingly, in recent years spreading propaganda and (auto-)recruitment has been taking place with the use of the Internet.

There still existed a real threat coming from the activity of the radicals serving sentences in penal institutions in Spain. Socialization affirming violence by means of propaganda still generated the risk of recruitment of young Muslims in conflict with the law and trying to re-define their identity. That is why anti-terrorist actions of the police included also prisons, an example of which is the above-mentioned 'NOVA' operation or uncovering the recruitment conducted among prisoners by a Moroccan Reduan ibn Fraim with the aim of preparing an attack on a ferry running on the Ceuta-Algeciras route. It is worth noting that monitoring conversations and materials the prisoners legally receive (books, documents, audiovisual materials) poses a considerable challenge also for a seemingly prosaic reason: a language barrier. Challenges concerning this control are also connected with illegal contacts with the outside world: e.g. in 2007 in Spanish prisons 939 mobile phones and 2032 SIM cards were confiscated. However, according to approximate estimates it constituted just about 20 per cent of the whole. In this context prisons, with regard to effectiveness of the system of supervision and control, fall outside Erving Goffman's definition of total institutions.

Analyses of social profiles of members of networks operating in Spain show that they were mainly young men with immigrant background, acting primarily in the area of the capital district as well as Catalonia and Andalusia. They aged between 25 and 39 and most of them were married and had children. Only 4.8 per cent of the detained were born already in Spain. However, there is a clear tendency for the extremists' age to become lower.⁵⁹ Taking into account the process of crystallization of the second and third generation of immigrants, one can assume that a phenomenon of home-grown terrorism may in the years to come present a greater threat for Spain's security.

⁵⁸ L. de la Corte Ibáñez, J. Jordán, *La yihad terrorista*, p. 89.

⁵⁹ In comparison with the period from 1995 to 2003 the years 2004-2012 showed an increase in the number of 24-29 year old extremists from 30 to 44.4 per cent of all the arrested radicals. See F. Reinales, C. García-Calvo, 'Los yihadistas en España...'

To sum up, Moroccan terrorists, belonging to GICM and other radical groups, over the years managed to anchor a number of 'dormant' cells in many European countries. A large number of immigrants from Morocco living in Spain, France and Holland played an essential role. Another important factor was the fact that the security services of those countries for a long time tried to monitor the structures of Algerian and Egyptian Salafists much more thoroughly and did not adequately appreciate other dimensions of threats.

In the light of the above analysis a special importance of the Madrid attack of 11th March should be emphasized. The cells of fighting Salafism situated in the countries of Western and Southern Europe for years realized multi-vector undertakings placing themselves on backstage of direct terrorist actions. Until 2004 Spain was one of the crucial areas of that activity; the attack at Atocha station meant that the country and its society had also become the target. It was used by jihadist movements in Europe and outside it for propaganda purposes. In less than three years after 11th September it confirmed the operational efficiency of those groups and their ability to carry out an effective attack on the enemy territory of the country taking part in the anti-terrorist campaign alongside the United States, whose image often appeared, also through the prism of retroactive historical references in the narration of fighting movements of Salafism.

In the wake of parliamentary elections socialists took over power whereas a new prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero soon fulfilled his pre-election promise and acted in accordance with social expectations withdrawing Spanish forces from Iraq. The relation between that decision and the context of the attack was treated as a success of jihadist terrorism. The 11th March attack constituted the realization of global strategy of Al-Qaeda consisting in taking armed actions directed at the allies of the United States in different parts of the world although at the same time the Spanish terrorist cell had autonomy with regard to preparation of the plan and carrying out the attack.

After 11th March 2004 the evolution of the network of fighting Salafism in Spain included both indirect forms of terrorism and reflected the strategy of conceptions of realization of direct forms of violence. In comparison with an earlier period, there was an increase in the number of planned terrorist operations with participation of immigrants from Morocco. Their target were to include facilities in Spain whereas their realization would have a media effect. Structures associated with the global network of jihadist groups such as GSPC/AQIM, GICM and others as well as the cells of radicals, experiencing (auto-)recruitment in virtual space and maintaining only declarative affiliation to international structures of Al-Qaeda – all these groups made their presence felt in this country. It is recommended that these organizational forms should be put in categories of their affiliation to the movement of global jihad.

The present character of threats posed by jihadism to Spain and other European countries to a large extent arises from the influence of the so-called Islamic State and the recruitment and propaganda activities of its supporters. The assassination carried out in Paris on 13th November 2015 forcibly revealed the scale of challenges coming from the phenomenon of homegrown terrorism inspired by radical ideology legitimizing violence. The formation of the Islamic State turned out to be an attractive formula

also for some radically-disposed Muslims living in Spain who, in some cases, even have citizenship of this country. At the beginning of the year 2015 their number in the structures of IS in Syria and Iraq was assessed at around 70-80 people⁶⁰. One should at the same time remember that among those who get to Syria from the Maghreb region there is a large number of volunteers militarily and logistically involved in activities within the Islamic State who, after their return to their home countries, often continue their extremist activity which poses a huge challenge to security. It is estimated that as many as 1500 fighters who came from Morocco joined the ranks of jihadist formations of the Islamic State⁶¹. In 2014 alone, Spanish anti-terrorist and police forces conducted twelve operations which led to the detention of 47 people, mainly of Moroccan origin, and from 2012 to January 2015 in total there were over thirty such operations⁶².

After years of mutual animosity and tensions in relations between both countries, serious challenges determined among other things by illegal immigration, transnationalism of organized crime and terrorist threat acted as a catalyst for Spanish-Moroccan cooperation. In August of 2014 the Moroccan police, working together with the Spanish side, broke up terrorist cells in Castillejos near Ceuta and in Fez. Members of those rings dealt with recruiting volunteers to fight in Syria and Iraq in the structures of IS. At the beginning of March of 2014 police chiefs of Spain and Morocco set out guidelines for cooperation in terms of combating terrorism, organized crime and countering radicalism. In Marrakesh police specialists from both countries analysed the level of threats posed by extremism to security in Spain and Morocco. Decisions were also made about appointing joint expert groups responsible for diagnosing individual aspects of threats, covering diverse levels: terrorism and organized crime, radicalization, cybercrime. These bilateral initiatives are of vital importance in fulfilling tasks of preventive character given that also in Morocco, as a result of 'the Arab Spring' there occurred an increase in Islamist sentiment: the winning of the 2011 election by the Justice and Development Party, growing participation of Moroccan volunteers in the ranks of the Islamic State and the presence of Moroccan extremists in terrorist rings in Europe (including the assassination in Paris in 2015).

Spanish authorities are aware that an effective response to the challenge to security resulting from Salafi extremism, apart from international cooperation, is not only anti-terrorism prevention but also the necessity for monitoring groups which are the most susceptible to radicalism and at the same time building intercultural dialogue, development of deradicalization programmes and taking action for socio-economic and cultural integration of Muslim believers.

⁶⁰ J. Duva, '70 españoles combaten en las filas del Estado Islámico en Siria', *El País*, 2 January 2015.

⁶¹ J. Barrett, *Foreign Fighters in Syria*, The Soufan Group, June 2014, at <<http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/TSG-Foreign-Fighters-in-Syria.pdf>>.

⁶² For example in 2013 the Spanish police arrested in Ceuta eight members of the group called 'Warriors from Ceuta' responsible for suicidal deaths and the recruitment to fight in terrorist networks in Syria. Cf. J. M. Irujo, 'Detenido en Bélgica el jefe de la red Ceutí que envía suicidas a Siria', *El País*, 26 September 2013. See 'La detención de yihadistas en España crece un 36% en el último año y medio', *El Mundo*, 2 September 2014.

It should be stressed that Spain is still present in the narration of fighting Salafism and constitutes a potential target of attacks. Moreover, its territory is being used for the realization of undertakings of regional (the European dimension) and global character (the conflict in Iraq, operations in the countries of Maghreb and in the Middle East, also in connection with the destabilization which affected some countries as a result of transformations caused by 'the Arab Spring'). This strategy constitutes an important indicator of the polymorphism of contemporary jihadist terrorism.

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