

# Thirty Years of Jihad in Perspective, the Observations of Domestic Intelligence

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## ABSTRACT

For a variety of reasons, including its history, sociology, democratic values, and its presence in Africa and the Near and Middle East, France has been chosen as the anchor point and bridgehead for waging holy war in Europe.

*Keywords:* France, Terrorism, Jihad, Islamism

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## RESUMEN

Por una variedad de razones, que incluyen su historia, sociología, valores democráticos y su presencia en África y el Cercano y Medio Oriente, Francia ha sido elegida como punto de anclaje y cabeza de puente para librar la guerra santa en Europa.

*Palabras clave:* Francia, Terrorismo, Yihad, Islamismo

# 正确审视三十年圣战：国内情报观察

## 摘要

鉴于各种原因，包括其历史、社会学、民主价值观及其在非洲、近东和中东的存在，法国被选为在欧洲发动圣战的锚点和桥头堡。

关键词：法国，恐怖主义，圣战，伊斯兰

## Foreword

This selective chronology covers the period from the 1980s to the 2000s, which was marked by the emergence, entrenchment, and deployment of Islamism in France:

### France, Europe's target country – Weaving the Islamist web

For a variety of reasons, including its history, sociology, democratic values, and its presence in Africa and the Near and Middle East, France has been chosen as the anchor point and bridgehead for waging holy war in Europe.

Recognizing and fighting infidel Muslim states, striking at and dividing ungodly Western societies from within, destroying the sin of coexistence of Muslims and non-Muslims; these are the watchwords that permeate the totalitarian discourse of jihad. In Europe, France holds the grim record for the number of terrorist attacks perpetrated on its soil, as well as for the number of nationals who have left to join the Islamic State. In fact, our country is exposed to a double threat: that of the multiplication of individual suicide attacks and that of a more unprecedented scale of attacks prepared and committed by militarized assailants.

Most counterterrorism actors agree that *a new generation of jihadist actors* has emerged, and that *the nature of the terrorist threat has changed*<sup>2</sup> after a period of lull (1996-2012). In fact, the *change in the nature of the threat* is mainly due to the fact that the risks associated with warfare in foreign lands are now exposed in tight flows. Terrorism is a revolutionary and archaic means of warfare that has plunged Africa and the East into bloodshed for decades. Jihadist groups resort to it in these regions of the world and, according to a long-standing strategy, export it through networks that have been established beforehand in the target countries. In a general climate of confrontation rather than coexistence between Islam and other civilizations, the failure of Westernization and the demographic explosion have incubated the eggs of the new holy war. The jihad, in its rage to win, was exported to the West in the wake of events which, from 1979, precipitated its evolution: the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the Iranian revolution, the signing of the Camp David agreements and the taking of the Great Mosque of Mecca hostage by a group of Islamist fundamentalists.

From the groundswell of yesterday's radical Islamism<sup>3</sup> to its impulses that transcend borders today, jihadist aspirations and strategies do in fact show a certain continuity. The thought of *a single generation of the Koran* called to achieve the restoration of a pure and authentic Islamic order still prevails by reference to the doctrine of the ideologue Sayyid Qotb.<sup>4</sup> The strategic choices advocated by *the architect of the global jihad*, Abu Musab al-Suri, have been adapted to modern contexts through a *decentralized global Islamic resistance* fight.<sup>5</sup> The jihadist shock suffered in France is a result of this decentralization implemented in our

country for more than three decades. The recent wave of attacks and the current persistent threat of terrorist acts are thus the culmination of a long gestation of Islamist activism observed on French soil since the 1980s. Before being a land of offensives, France was the privileged target of an infiltration strategy of Islamist movements declined in several tendencies, to the most radical Islamic fundamentalism. To know Islam is to know “*the vast earthly scarf where several hundred million men have found and should deepen their “site of truthfulness.” “That the scarf is ‘mubawwâçid,’*” as it is said in the Koran.<sup>6</sup> That the scarf is therefore long and colorful because if all Muslims aspire to faith, there is far from the *bazari* of Tehran to the pious pilgrim of the *Maghrebian* marabouts or to the Senegalese of great confraternity. The Muslim community of France, the Umma, does not escape this fragmentation of Islam and the power rivalries expressed in its name by the Arab-Muslim states; its very composite character and its numerical representation which positions it as the second religion in our country is enough to make it a stake of conquest.

### **The jihadist continuum: identifying terrorism from outside, a refocusing of domestic intelligence missions**

Jihadist activism on French soil was revealed by a wave of deadly attacks perpetrated between 1982 and 1986.<sup>7</sup> The national security services<sup>8</sup> of the Ministry of the Interior were confronted with a new expression of terrorism. Until then, terrorism on French soil had been the result of political violence driven by mainly “purely French” secular organizations and causes—revolutionary, anarchist and socialist, nationalist and separatist—identified and relatively circumscribed in their nature and scope of expression. The jihadist phenomenon imports into France its fragmentation of nature, this intrinsic complexity where politics and religion, ancestral rivalries and geostrategy intermingle. In addition to the difficulty of identifying the movements of this nebula, there is also the difficulty of identifying the inspirers, Arab-Muslim states, foreign revolutionary organizations, and jihadist groups. These instigators are most often located in foreign countries, and it is therefore necessary to determine the relays, structures, and individuals in a position to perpetrate subversive activities on the national territory.

This new terrorist threat has led to a strengthening of prevention and a refocusing of the missions of the *Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire* (DST) and the *Direction Centrale des Renseignements Généraux* (DCRG). Historically in charge of counter-intelligence, the DST carries out missions related to defense, directed towards research, prevention and the fight against all activities inspired or supported by foreign powers that could threaten the security and safety of the country (and its economic and scientific heritage). By decree of December 22, 1982, a specific section was created for the surveillance of the Muslim world and domestic counterterrorism. For its part, the DCRG was already in charge of the

fight against political violence and the surveillance of foreign colonies on national territory.

Its general mission of information and education is to evaluate, at present and in the future, the nature and importance of subversive risks. In this perspective, it is particularly important to control the legality of representative structures and to identify any signs of radical drift. For this mission, the RG Directorate centralizes, cross-references, and analyses the information it receives from its territorial services. To anticipate risks, its priority objectives were reoriented at the beginning of the 1990s towards the fight against terrorism, the fight against urban violence and the observation of social events that might to encourage them.

These two internal security services are provided with additional anti-terrorist resources. The DST, in addition to a large documentation and archive center, has highly specialized technical resources, in particular a radio communications police force that enable the localization of clandestine transmitters and, since 1986, an IT department. DST investigators have repressive powers, while RG police officers are specialized in the strict search for information and the realization of prospective analyses on risk-carrying organizations, groups and individuals; the information gathered is transmitted to the DST and to the *Unité de coordination de la lutte anti-terroriste*, UCLAT, for possible follow-up action.<sup>9</sup> Although the DST has much more efficient technical resources than the DCRG, the latter has a much wider territorial coverage and comparatively three times the number of staff.<sup>10</sup> This territorial network allows it to provide local intelligence as close as possible to the realities. This is an asset that leads the DCRG to spontaneously claim its competence to deal with the jihadist phenomenon.

Apparently anecdotal but nonetheless serious (and not without consequences for the future), to carry out this mission, it is first necessary to overcome the blockages within the *Direction* itself. Indeed, some of its managers oppose the work of general information, which they believe is inoperative in the fight against terrorism, to that of intelligence to identify individuals who are dangerous to approach with human and technological resources. To this strict distinction between intelligence and general information, they add the argument of a separation between “open environment” and “closed environment,” general information being confined to the exploitation of open sources.

In order to counteract Islamist terrorism, the strategy to be implemented therefore questions two security logics that can nevertheless be considered as complementary: the first one, a logic of short-term action, which is already applied by the DCRG’s “Research” subdirectorate (perpetuated by the future DCRI / DGSI<sup>11</sup>), consists of targeting research on the “*top of the spectrum*,” i.e., the most dangerous individuals to be identified and, if necessary, to be reported for questioning; the second one, inscribed in a logic of long-term consolidation security and advocated by the “General Information” subdirectorate, wants to broaden the investigation.

It intends to identify the very nature of the phenomenon, its origins, its causes, its actors, its manifestations; it is a question of understanding the risks of its evolution and of preventively putting in place the necessary safeguards to counter them. At the end of a difficult internal debate (reopened and discarded during the reorganization of domestic intelligence in 2008), the desire to combine the strengths of these two main sub-directorates finally took hold: in 1986, the DCRG launched its first large-scale survey of departmental services.

### **A first national survey revealing the jihadist strategy: “Nizam la Tanzim,” i.e., a system, not an organization**

Following the series of attacks that shook France in 1985-1986, the DCRG launched a first investigation on the whole national territory. The objective was to carry out a more precise inventory to establish a cartography of the principal radical Islamist hotbeds; it is necessary to detect the faults which allowed their establishment or could support it in the more or less long term, and to determine their means of activity and influence.

In this perspective, an estimate is made by each RG departmental service based on evaluation data, if not exhaustive, at least indicative of the jihadist reality in France. Considering the geographical distribution of the Muslim population,<sup>12</sup> estimated at around 2,500,000 people, and distinguishing the foreign population and its main nationalities<sup>13</sup> from Muslims of French nationality,<sup>14</sup> the investigations mainly target: the representative structures, their leaders, their financing, their means of activity and propagation, the numerical importance of memberships and their audience. The range is wide and includes organizations specific to the cult, which aggregate religious associations, places of worship (established or “wild”) and Islamic centers; structures of associative groups related to culture, sports, leisure, etc.; other structures of activity, such as corporatist associations. For all these structures, the research also focuses on the existence of external influences exerted by Arab Muslim states, foreign revolutionary movements and active Islamist movements—fundamentalists—by noting their possible connections.

The findings of this first national survey, confirmed by other censuses of the same type,<sup>15</sup> this time focused on the main geographical areas where Muslim populations live, reveal first the extreme diversity and vulnerability of the Umma. Its composition does not allow to grasp a homogeneous vision of Islam in France; it is more accurate to see the existence of sub-cultures or sub-communities that share the field of Islamic culture in it.

This very disparate character of the Muslim populations appears to be both weakness and strength, weakness eager for strength one might say. The various currents of Islam manifest themselves in two main forms of expression, modernist, and fundamentalist, with the weight of nationalism remaining as a dominant

factor and fundamentalism on the margins. A heterogeneous coalition where ambitions clash and dogmas compete, the Muslim community in France reproduces on a reduced scale the fevers of the Muslim world. France is thus sucked into this vast movement of fundamentalist uprising where Islam allows to universalize under its banner a same wave of different peoples and to lead them by watchwords.

This expansionist achievement is based on multiple causes; they are certainly of a religious and spiritual order, but they are also, and above all, of an ideological, political, economic, social, and cultural order. In the Arab world, calls for revolt in the name of Islam are based on the resentments of proletarian peoples; in France, jihad led by the various fundamentalist currents bases its discourse on the eradication of the moral heritage bequeathed by the West, which is denounced for its cultural domination and economic exploitation. The absence of a collegial representative structure of the Umma favors the interventionist wills of foreign states wishing to take control of it—mainly Algeria, Saudi Arabia—as well as the fundamentalist thrusts of the Libyan, Iranian, and Turkish branches, determined to make it the springboard of Islamization in Europe.

The *French Council of the Muslim Faith* (CFCM) has not escaped these tensions. Impelled since 1990 by the French public authorities, the CFCM was born in April 2003 after more than a decade of efforts marked by the will to constitute the broadest possible representative base of the tendencies of Islam and to adopt a double political recognition: recognition of the presence of Islam by the Republic and acceptance by the representatives of the cult of the laws of the Republic, in particular of the principle of secularism. A representative body of Islam in France that appears to be a strong symbolic and institutional stake for the various components of the Umma and is therefore immediately confronted with its divisions and rivalries.<sup>16</sup> A windfall for the most radical Islamists who rushed into the cracks of these power struggles.

The interference of state control games allows the breakthrough of fundamentalist factions encompassed in a movement with blurred contours where confessional antagonisms (Sunnism/Shiism) and political divergences (Saudi Arabia/Iran) give way to temporary consensus of opportunity. This phenomenon is illustrated, among other things, by the failed attempts at unity made by the Grand Mosque of Paris, the most important Islamic center in France with about 2,000 faithful and 42 affiliated places of worship in the provinces. Algeria intends to exercise its authority over the Umma and to impose itself as its official representative to the French authorities. It justifies this ambition by the bonds of history and the number of its nationals on our territory.

Its seniority<sup>17</sup> gives it a certain prevalence, but the interference of the Algerian government is denounced by French Muslims (for a long time grouped around the Mosque of Paris) and the Moroccan community. The strongest opposition to Algeria's hegemonic aims is, however, that of Saudi Arabia, which claims to be

the guarantor of *Dar al-Islam* throughout the world, where it seeks to impose the values of Wahhabism. The near non-existence of a Saudi community on French territory does not prevent it from exerting its influence, notably through international Islamist organizations.

The control of the native Muslim populations, but also those who have emigrated, is carried out through NGOs, such as the World Islamic League (WIL) founded in 1962 in Mecca by Prince Faisal of Saudi Arabia, or through collegial structures, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which brings together some forty Muslim states from various political backgrounds, yet under the control of the largest financial contributors: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait.<sup>18</sup>

In France, Saudi Arabia's action is essentially focused on taking over the Great Mosque of Paris (and its satellite places of worship). This plan is marked by the financial aid of the Parisian office of the World Islamic League, which ensures the creation in December 1985 of the principal opposition organization to the Mosque of Paris, the *National Federation of Muslims of France* (FNMF). This organization, open to all components of the Muslim community, displays *its sovereign independence from any foreign influence* and asserts its desire to oppose nationalist influences. Intentions contradicted by the facts; in addition to the financing of its activities by the World Islamic League, its head office is in the premises of the Parisian office of the League.

This Federation, which gathers about a hundred Islamic cultural associations, presents above all a great heterogeneity: it gathers as well French converts gathered within the association *Vivre l'Islam en Occident* (created in December 1984 by Yacoub Jacques Roty, who is also the President of the FNMF), as fundamentalist associations. Among these, the Islamic Group in France (GIF) established in Paris since 1980, emanating from the *Islamic Tendency Movement* (MTI) which corresponds to the Tunisian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, aka the ultra-Islamist opposition to the regime of President Bourguiba. The GIF has a large geographical representation in France, having kept an important hold on the *Association of Islamic Students in France* (AEIF), the organization from which it originated.

The AEIF, created in 1963 in Paris, is representative of the two main trends of the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Europe, the sympathizers of the Syrian Issam El Attar<sup>19</sup> and those of the MTI. Constituted by a network of associations established in the major university cities (Strasbourg, Toulouse, Nice, Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, Bordeaux, and Nancy), the AEIF advocates a pro-Khomeinist and anti-Zionist fundamentalist ideology.

Its orientation is clearly expressed during its national Congress of June 28, 29, and 30, 1987: *it is by an Islamic training of the young students that these prob-*

*lems* (difficulties of insertion of the young people in the socioeconomic life) *will be solved by helping to an awakening which will lead to overthrow the too lax governments to create the Islamic State by regrouping all the Muslim countries.* Its active militancy can incline some of its members to the terrorist drift, as shown by the discovery on December 18, 1986, of a large stock of weapons and explosives at the home of its former secretary general in Aulnay-sous-Bois (93). Slightly on the fringe of the GIF and the AEIF, in the movement of the Muslim Brotherhood but increasingly receptive to Iranian theses, many fundamentalist associations with a religious or cultural vocation are deploying important propaganda in the Paris region and elsewhere in France.

The constitution of a cascade of associations aiming at widening the field of fundamentalist influence to the largest number of Muslim communities. In this perspective, the GIF targets mainly the populations originating from the Maghreb and the Near East. To this end, it advances masked through its links with a whole network of militant organizations or sympathizers of the Muslim Brotherhood, some of which are close to Iranian circles. At the same time, the GIF has created new structures to present a moderate image, but these are contradicted by signs of radicalism. Thus, the Union of Islamic Organizations in France (UOIF), created in 1983, which in 1987 groups together twelve associations, some of which appear as real fundamentalist bastions.

Its façade of honorability allows it to achieve a large audience (1,500 faithful at its annual congress in 1987) and testifies to its desire to impose itself as a reliable interlocutor with the French authorities. Especially since the UOIF intends to participate in the Council of reflection on the Islam of France launched in 1990 by the Minister of the Interior (prelude to the CFCM); initially composed of six members representative of the communities of the Umma, this council has for vocation to collect their proposals on the organization of the Muslim worship.

A double language because if some of its releases condemn the attacks perpetrated in Paris or demand the release of the French hostages in Lebanon, the speeches during its meetings make the apology of the holy war. Served by a solid financial vitality, in which the office of the World Islamic League participates, the UOIF appears, to say the least, to be one of the closed fields where the various nationalist and religious sensibilities, both Maghrebi and Middle Eastern, interpenetrate and are torn apart.

As a composite microcosm, agitated despite the unanimous dream by contradictory theological currents and nationalist interests, the Umma presents a certain porosity; its internal struggles create the fragility of a critical mass that is exploited by a minority but particularly active fundamentalist fraction. The result is a dynamic, shifting process that evolves in time and space through a game of inter-community competition and inclusion. The global observation inscribes the Islamic radical phenomenon in a circular logic; this one puts in place mechanisms



of enclosure and intercultural exclusion based on an apparent will to normalize the relations between the communities but whose underlying discourses continuously feed a strategy of power struggle.

## **The Islamic radical phenomenon: a circular logic**

Alongside the interventionism of Arab-Muslim states and the activism of the Muslim Brotherhood, other lines of force, at once horizontal, vertical, and oblique, favor fundamentalist intersections: the Libyan axis and the Iranian line. Libya, whose interest in Islamic immigration to France is far greater than the size of its community there, intends to bring the *Revolution of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya*. Its influence is mainly exercised through two para-governmental organizations. One, the association *Représentation du Congrès du Peuple Arabe*, created in Paris in 1981,<sup>20</sup> whose head is the ex-director of the Parisian office of the Libyan press agency Jana, ensures the international propaganda to all national communities of the Umma.

This association gathers several extremist political organizations representing various Arab countries: Syrian Nationalist Party, Gathering of Egyptians in France, Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco, Tunisian Popular Unity Movement, Lebanese Communist Party. The other one, the Association for the Call to Islam or *Dawa*, created in Paris in 1983, is the French representation of the association of the same name which is based in Tripoli with *the aim of developing the influence of the Muslim religion in the world*. Its Parisian manager, cultural attaché at the Libyan embassy's popular office, tries to rally various Muslim associations by providing them with financial aid. Among them, the Union of Islamic Associations in France, the UAIF created in 1982 in the movement of the mosque of Mantes La Jolie, whose president is a Moroccan totally infatuated with the Libyan politics. The UAIF gathers about fifteen satellites associations but loses however some of its influence on the profit of the Iranian movement.

Following the example of the evolution of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Libyan branch appears to be more and more under the Iranian yoke, the Khomeinist revolution going beyond theological and national cleavages. The Iranian influence is exerted on the structures of the other Islamic movements essentially through its embassy. The latter coordinates Tehran's propaganda in France and ensures the financing of cultural and religious associations and places of worship. Associations of Iranian students, such as the Islamic Association of Iranian Students in France, or the Association of Islamic Students in Paris, play an important role both in the field of intelligence on Khomeini's opponents who have taken refuge in France, and in that of the takeover of the Umma. Until December 1983, the main part of the subversive activities of the Iranian and Lebanese fundamentalists took place at the Jean Bart Iranian Cultural Center in Paris (6°).

Following its administrative closure and the expulsion of three Iranian diplomats, the meetings were held in private apartments in the Tokyo Tower in Paris (13°) occupied by leaders of Islamist opposition movements to the regime in their countries of origin, Iraq, and Egypt. A period of transition before the constitution of a new associative structure, Ahl El Beit, which will be until its dissolution by administrative decision in June 1987 the nerve center of the pro-Khomeinist fundamentalists. But in anticipation of this new dissolution, the association *Solidarité Internationale des Pays Sous-Développés* was created in April 1987.

Its leaders, in close relationship with the Iranian embassy, ensure the continuity of the Iranian action. Its declared aim, to *express and develop solidarity with the oppressed and forgotten in prisons*, brings together certain clandestine movements such as the *Islamic Tendency Movement* (MTI, the Tunisian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood) or the *Islamic Youth Movement of Morocco* whose leader, sentenced to death in absentia in Morocco, lives in the Paris region. The Iranian strategy combines false diplomacy and secrecy to ensure its propaganda and the recruitment of a militant elite that crosses several nationalities of the Umma.

Alongside the activity of declared associations, Iranian agents scattered throughout Europe ensure the collection of information likely to help in the establishment of the Islamic nation, notably through the surveillance of Iranian opposition circles, the observation of the activity of the different Islamic confessions, and the analysis of the regime and the political life of the host country. In France, alongside members of the Iranian embassy, these Iranian agents are most often scholarship students who actively participate in the recruitment of future Jihad fighters had among the immigrant population. The impact of the Iranian ideology is noticeable among militant Islamist networks, Muslim Brotherhood, Libya, and Turkey.

Turkish Islamists are essentially represented by the *organization Tendance Nationale Union Islamique en France*, created in Paris on February 20, 1987, which gathers about 2000 members distributed within sections constituted in the main geographical zones of implantation of Turkish immigration (Paris region and the East of the country). This association is an expression in France of the *National Salvation Party*, a religious movement in opposition to the government of Ankara which favours the establishment of a regime modelled on the Iranian state. It launches real calls for violence against impious nations.

Its members distribute leaflets in the mosques of the North-East region of France calling for armed combat and multiply the acts of threats and intimidation against the local Muslim population. The Umma undergoes this radicalization expressed daily by a whole panoply of pressures which go from the obligatory wearing of the chador for the women to the prohibition of frequentation of the French businesses. Such processes illustrate the strong will of the fundamentalists to isolate the immigrant Muslim community by exacerbating the thought of a difference and a proper identity.

Beyond the confusion caused by the proliferation of Islamic networks, their nature and origin, we observe a policy of federative action orchestrated around a common objective: the Islamization of French society. In this perspective, the Islamic conquerors of all persuasions agree on a strategy to be deployed in stages. The first phase consists in the setting up of structures of worship and proselytizing deployment aiming at a crystallization of the immigrant identities around Islam and at a weakening of the republican balances. This first operation was based on a network of associations and gathering places that were gradually expanded over time by targeting categories of the population where militants could be recruited and “dormant networks” of future fighters could be formed.

### **A polymorphous explosion of meeting and prayer and of indoctrination or recruitment structures**

The structural fragmentation of Islam in France allows the emergence of *de facto* powers revealed by a real explosion in the number of cultural or religious Islamic associations as of the law of October 9, 1981, which abrogates the restrictive regulations for the constitution of foreign associations subject to prior authorization that can be revised by decree.<sup>21</sup> This new legislation allowed them to benefit from the provisions of the law of 1901 relating to freedom of association; it was mainly under this regime that associations managing places of worship were created, of which 706 were counted in 1986 by the *Direction Centrale des Renseignements Généraux* (Central Directorate of General Information), 530 of which were located in the provinces.<sup>22</sup> The gathering of immigrant communities under the different banners of Islam is done through these associative networks, which set up structures of meeting and exchange by the creation of places of worship, mosques, Koranic schools, but also a multitude of prayer halls often improvised in places of concentration of Muslim population.

The place of worship establishes a community link between the various components of the Umma. Its constitution adopts two main schemes: the first one is based on the regrouping of an ethnic-national community which endows itself with a place of worship often coupled with a Koranic and language school. The means of operation are based primarily on contributions from the faithful, financial contributions from their country of origin<sup>23</sup> and provisions for aid from the State or local authorities. Of moderate obedience, these places of worship are visited by Islamist preachers who distribute their propaganda publications. The second pattern concerns the members of national Islamist associations where members of religious movements of fundamentalist tendency meet. Their financing, which is partly opaque, comes from national organizations and federations of associations, from private, individual, or state donors, generally through international Islamist leagues.

National censuses carried out by the DCRG note a rapid increase in the number of places of worship in France: from 33 in 1971, 83 in 1977, nine years later there were 817, of which 542 were located in the provinces and 275 in Paris and the Paris region; these figures are constantly increasing, 1,035 mosques in October 1989, 1,600 in 2004.<sup>24</sup> These counts remain largely underestimated since they only concern fixed and public places, which are themselves of very unequal importance: mosque-cathedrals or Islamic centers offering various community services, and local mosques or neighborhood prayer halls. To this estimate, one must add the clandestine oratories—improvised rooms in private apartments, building cellars, back stores of grocery stores, butcher shops or Halal tea rooms, without ignoring the importance of oratories in immigrant homes, factories, universities, and in religious action the role of Islamic bookshops.

Thus, these figures do not include places of worship installed in migrant hostels, which mainly welcome immigrants from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa. However, SONACOTRA alone has equipped 80% of its 300 hostels managed throughout France with places of worship and the residents are free to invite outsiders to attend. The same policy of openness is applied by other semi-public associations managing homes (AFRP, AFTAM, ASSOTRAF, SOUNDIATA). The fundamentalists of the *Tabligh* and the Islamists, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Iranians quickly perceived the development of these prayer rooms in the hostels as a relay for their cause; their proselytizing increased with frequent visits by itinerant imams, which are redoubled during the religious holidays.

Another parameter to consider is the installation of prayer rooms (and related time arrangements) in companies. This evolution is marked in the automobile factory in the Paris region with a high concentration of Muslim immigrant workers. In the conflictual social context marked by the strikes at the Renault factories in Billancourt (1981) and Talbot and Citroën (1982), Islam already appeared as a cement of mobilization. Since then, on the lookout for all the circumstances likely to favor their advance, Islamist militants have infiltrated the working-class environment by playing on the declining influence of union representation.

As Islam does not distinguish between the profane and the religious, the Islamist brotherhoods adapt their proselytizing discourse to the concerns and expectations of their targets. From this point of view, any meeting place is of interest; thus, the fundamentalist movements carry out a dynamic action by creating their own cultural centers or places of worship but also by infiltrating any other place of prayer. The methods implemented by each faction are identical to those developed in their associative influence.

Islamist activism relies on networks whose organization differs according to the movement. The Muslim Brotherhood as well as the pro-Khomeinist Turks have established a centralized system composed of pyramidal structures linking associative groups and places of worship to ensure an important influence in the

provinces. The Libyan militants adopted an identical organizational scheme but without managing to extend their network outside the Paris region, their audience being considerably limited to the benefit of the Iranian cause. The Iranian Islamists differ from other fundamentalist currents in the methods they use to control associations and places of worship. They do not create federations or associations but seek to develop, most often through the intermediary of the Iranian embassy, an action of infiltration of any Muslim structure established in France.

Their influence, which is growing within the Muslim Brotherhood, Libyan, and Turkish organizations, is also noticeable in non-grouped associations and autonomous places of worship, whether they are mosques or prayer rooms in universities, factories, or immigrant homes. To overcome the pitfall of nationalism, which remains a priority identity factor, Iranian Islamists are concentrating their policy of entry into religious structures with a fundamentalist vocation. The challenge is more important because fundamentalist Islam is clearly on the rise in the migrant *milieu*, where the association *Foi et Pratique*, created in Paris in 1972 (called *Invitation et Mission pour la Foi et la Pratique* since February 1986) has succeeded in overcoming the divisions between nationalities of origin by asserting its ideological independence.

French branch of a vast and powerful international Islamic movement, the *Jama'at al Tabligh* (People of the Message),<sup>25</sup> the fundamentalists of *Foi et Pratique* refer to the genesis of the Islamic faith, privileging the example of the primitive Muslim community of Medina to advocate a very dogmatic and rigorous Islam. The preachers of this pietistic Pakistani movement travel around France and are often well received by religious leaders, which favors their contact with the local Muslim population.

The first dimension of jihad is therefore to ensure its influence on the greatest number of people, hence the importance of this proselytizing tactic, which has been widely deployed in France since the 1980s and 1990s. To widen their audience, the various Islamist organizations pay particular attention to communication.

## **Covering the “Umma” target: the bludgeoning of a diverse communication**

Less developed than the associative and cult networks, the communication network reflects both the divisions of the Umma and the various ambitions for its control. The visits of the places of reception of Moslem population are the object of actions of propaganda supported on the speeches of the big figures of the militant Islamic call, diffused in the form of books, booklets, leaflets, or phono and video cassettes. The Muslim Brotherhood ensures the diffusion in Arabic, French and English of the moralist and pietistic texts of the founding fathers of the Brother-

hood, interpreted and enlightened by the radical ideas of the Egyptian theologian Sayid Qotb. Another best-seller, the work of the Pakistani theorist Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, the first Islamist of the twentieth century to advocate the return to jihad.

Leaflets of ideologists of the *Islamic Tendency Movement* (ITM) are widely distributed as well as the monthly *Al-Ghuraba* published in London by the *Association of Muslim Students in the United Kingdom and Ireland* in collaboration with the *Union of Islamic Associations in Europe* or *Al Dawa* published by the *Islamic Center of Austria*. This last example shows the extent of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, which however oscillates between different state influences. Thus, the weekly *Al Mouslimoun* published in Saudi Arabia, distributed in France, opens its pages to the ideologues of the Muslim Brotherhood, which also distributes *Al Muslim*, the organ of the Islamic party of Libya, *Al Alam*, and its supplement *Al Islami*, published in London which propagates the ideology of the Iranian revolution.<sup>26</sup>

Iran is not to be outdone, and through its embassies in Paris and Geneva it regularly distributes works from Tehran, Qom, Beirut, and Tripoli.<sup>27</sup> Finally, some pro-Khomeinist associations periodically publish booklets denouncing the Shiite pressure in Iraq. A proliferation of Islamist works further abounded by publications from Libya distributed in France by a company located in Rome.<sup>28</sup> The field of communication marks the leadership of Iranian thought, which again goes beyond the antagonism between Shiites and Sunnis as well as nationality cleavages. This observation is confirmed from time to time during common operations of leafleting; thus, in April 1987, a leaflet entitled "In the name of God" is widely distributed in the mosques and places of prayer of the Lyon conurbation.

Signed by six Islamist associations from different tendencies, Muslim Brotherhood, Iranian, Iraqi Shiite, Lebanese, this leaflet denounces a German documentary dedicated to the 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran broadcast in FRG and captured in Eastern France. The pro-Khomeinists Turkish Islamists relay this distribution in particular in the mosques of Mulhouse. The diffusion of phono and video cassettes is also part of the arsenal available to the Islamist communicators. These recordings come mainly from Iran and include chanted verses from the Koran, preaching by the renowned Egyptian Sheikh Abd al-Hamid Kishk<sup>29</sup> and a famous text from the tenth century by the theologian El Karaouani which gives the instructions for holy war. A bludgeoning of Islamist propaganda that passes through all means of information, including the most modern of the time.

The Muslim Brotherhood set up a Minitel service, the *Journal Télématique d'Information Arabo-musulmane*, which provided practical (economic, social, legal) and religious information<sup>30</sup>; a directory of places of worship and Islamic associations in France was provided, as well as recommendations for religious practice. The field of local radio stations remains under the control of Arab states, mainly Algeria, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. A few stations opposed to the Algerian and Saudi

para-governmental radios have been set up in the “Beur” movement but without any real audience. As for the Islamist organizations, they do not have a very developed radio activity.

The beginning of the 1990s changes the situation with the arrival of the Internet in France. Amplifying megaphone for jihadist propaganda, it is also a new space for the logistical exchanges of various terrorist groups. In the early days of the Internet, it was mainly radical Algerian groups that transposed their war to it. Algerians emigrated or exiled in the United States, Canada, England, or France follow on the network the diffusion of Jihad News and the evolution of the political situation in Algeria, version *Armed Islamist Group* (GIA). The contributions are long, argued and documented. Corruption, the attitude of Western countries towards the Arab world, the policy of the IMF and the World Bank towards Third World countries, and the *unacceptable* refusal of change in the spheres of Algerian power are all scrutinized.

The GIA's communiqués, issued mainly from San Diego in the United States, seek to reach out and bring together the Algerian community beyond their borders. Algeria-net is one of the networks that is distributed through private messaging on the Net, where one only needs to register with an e-mail address. The GIA has spoken with several voices on the Internet before distancing itself from some of its spokespersons who are engaged in a real information war by interposed electronic messages. Islam Report, broadcast from California by the *American Islamic Group*, is one of its Islamist propagandas bulletins that claims to have direct sources of information. But if some of this information is authenticated by the Islamist groups, such as the “letter to Chirac” in sent to the French President at the end of August 1995 and enjoining him to convert to Islam, or the threats made to France of new terrorist attacks, others are contested; for example, on January 29, 1996, the alleged communiqué of operations of the GIA announcing the liberation of several regions of Algeria and the institution of the Islamic law by several governors.

Propaganda, intoxication, manipulation—we are in the middle of disinformation and some observers even suspect servers like Islam Report of being a CIA or Mossad office in charge of sowing confusion in the Islamic community. Realities or deceptions are delivered in bulk to the sole discernment of Internet users and this information, objective or not, often contains more emotion than reason. In this, the Internet is formidable and participates in the manipulation of minds; it helps to constitute in the same cult a vast thinking envelope of a global brain joining the sublimation of the jihadist ideology.

However, if the virtual jihad is a formidable additional weapon for its export to the heart of democratic societies, it cannot replace the necessary meetings of people for its effective realization. The Islamist movements know this and continue to activate the field work. On the occasion of the distribution of various Islamist publications, the preachers of the *Tabligh* or the Iranian recruiters propose train-

ing courses related to religious, mainly in Qom and in Pakistan. In 1986, the case of the recruitment of young immigrants in the district of Montbéliard (25) by the leaders of the SONACOTRA mosque in Bethoncourt is an illustration of this: the leaders of the Islamic Religious Assembly of Montbéliard, identified as Shiite fundamentalists, indoctrinated young Turkish and North African immigrants who were sent on training courses to Pakistan.

In fact, the mere typology of associations reveals the main Islamist levers in the life of the Muslim community in France and shows the difficulties of a rigorous classification of the different components of this nebula; a grouping recognized as moderate can have subversive branches and vice versa, the change from one tendency to another can take place progressively or brutally. Fundamentalists feed “a system, not an organization” where radical minorities navigate in symbiosis with each other, each group feeding off the other and the rejections of the other. The bridges are multiple, the logics at work intertwine to achieve a common goal: the conquest and liberation of lands to impose the law of Islam on the greatest number. In the 1980s and 1990s, France was already a land of action for the jihad, which went far beyond the borders of Africa and the East. In the first place, the radical Islamist strategy aims to cut the Umma in half.

This objective requires the creation of more and more representative structures and gathering places to deploy militant proselytism, logistical exchanges, and where to recruit future soldiers of Islam. Its realization is based on two operations which, like their networks, merge: the first consisted in insidiously weaving a jihadist web throughout the national territory, targeting mainly the cultural and religious domains in order to reach the Umma. Once this first foundation was consolidated, the second operation, which was partially initiated, consisted in the deployment of the web accompanied by the targeting of Muslim youth. The overall and final objective is to set up networks of reserve fighters ready to make the supreme sacrifice at the opportune moment decided by the jihadist leaders. France thus appears as a land of action of the jihad through its battles conducted in the shadow of a war of conquest in which time is the ally.

## **France, land of action—From the deployment of the Islamist web to the terrorist tilt**

The events of 2015 confront our country with terrorism on a massive scale with six simultaneous attacks that bloodied the heart of Paris. Under the shock of the massacre perpetrated at the Bataclan on November 13, 2015, the entire country was suddenly projected in a state of war against a blind terrorism, terribly deadly. The President of the Republic announced a state of emergency throughout the metropolis and the closure of borders. This exceptional regime between the normal situation and the state of siege reinforces the powers of the administrative authority to deal with *imminent danger resulting from serious attacks on public order or from*



events which, by their nature and seriousness, have the character of a public calamity. Imminent danger can also be considered a calamity because if the terrorist act is not a natural disaster, it has the same unpredictable character in its occurrence.

The powerlessness to counter these threats is said by the heads of the security services, who since the attacks on Charlie Hebdo and the Hyper Cacher ten months earlier feared a *complex attack*. In the aftermath of these attacks, the observation is bitter: the attacks planned outside our borders, organized in Belgium, mark the failure of external intelligence as well as that of internal intelligence insofar as they occurred on our soil. From onwards, France continues to be an epicenter of jihadist terrorism. Synchronized assaults, carried out according to a carefully elaborated plan and with sophisticated weapons, claimed by the Islamic State and an al-Qaeda network, have been followed by numerous individual attacks with knives (or with a ram car); their perpetrators, most of them unknown to intelligence services, do not have an identified allegiance to a terrorist group.

Then should we consider that these acts go beyond the jihadist networks by identifying them as lone wolves, psychologically fragile personalities, or disaffected young people who dream to be *negative heroes*?<sup>31</sup> The absence of claims by a jihadist group should not exclude the impact of the Islamist movement on the radicalization of these individuals. Islamists politicize the resentments of populations and address individuals first and foremost through active proselytization designed to sow and root their discourse. Observed in France since the 1980s and 1990s, this strategy appears to be perfectly thought out and orchestrated through fundamental preaching and the specific action of Islamist socio-educational structures established throughout the country.

The intensification of terrorist acts, now part of the jihadist strategy of chaos, has its origins in the roots of these movements, whose different networks are structured and intertwined according to the international situation. The complexity of the threat, reinforced by the link between the inspirers and sponsors abroad and individuals and organizations established on national territory, questions this past and raises questions about the adaptability of the national security system.

## **A double hold on the Muslim youth: fundamentalist preaching and Islamic socio-educational proselytizing**

Following the example of the strategy of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which focuses its militant action on those “left behind,” fundamentalists and Islamists are investing in the difficult neighborhoods of the suburbs with a strong North African presence.

Since the 1980s, the *Tabligh* movement has developed in France by exploiting the disillusionment of the “Marche des Beurs” and political organizations (MIB, SOS Racism). *Tabligh* does not target an educated public but a deprived im-

migrant population and applies the principle of an “Islamization from below.” At first, its association *Foi et Pratique* concentrated its activities in Paris and the Paris region in the neighborhoods where its own mosques and prayer places were located.<sup>32</sup> It managed to create real Islamic enclaves with their own economic, social, and cultural structures. The most significant example of this Islamization (along with that of the rue de Tanger in the 19<sup>th</sup> arrondissement) is that of the Belleville district, notably the perimeter of the Omar Mosque (11°); little by little, French shopkeepers under the pression of Muslim customers are being led to give up their businesses to Islamist buyers who are converting them into bookstores, cafés, grocery stores, halal butchers.

In addition to this desire to create “Islamic villages” in the capital, *Foi et Pratique* also wanted to spread throughout the country, where it quickly established numerous branches. The strong participation of faithful, mainly of Maghrebin origin, in the gatherings organized by *Foi et Pratique* marks the constant importance of its audience: 2,000 people gathered in Creil (60) in 1984, 6,000 in Lille (59) in 1985, 2,000 in the castle of Villemain in Grisy-Suisnes (77) in 1987.

In many ways, *Foi et Pratique* illustrates the intertwining of the various Islamist currents. The independence displayed by its leaders is contradicted by the financial support it receives from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Pakistan. Saudi Arabia contributed to the acquisition of the Villemain castle; converted into a Koranic school, these buildings host Islamic training courses and serve as accommodation centers for foreign preachers and imams, the main source of inspiration for Pakistanis. The doctrine advocated by the *Tabligh*, this time under the influence of Iran and the Muslim Brotherhood, led to the radicalization of several Parisian association leaders and provincial section leaders.<sup>33</sup>

Some are in contact with the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and actively participate in the functioning of this movement from France; under the pretext of religious training courses, young French *Tablighis* undergo military training in Pakistan and Libya before joining the Algerian maquis. In fact, between Islamization and operational support, the line is often very thin. The radical fringe of the *Tabligh* dangerously flirts with the pro-Iranian Muslim Brothers and with the Turkish fundamentalists of the *Tendance Nationale Union Islamique en France* (TNUIF) movement, known as Erbakan.<sup>34</sup> However, the Turkish organization, until now rather withdrawn, is also making a sensitive rapprochement with the pro-FIS organizations.

The fundamentalists of the *Tabligh* and the Muslim Brotherhood are very active in the sensitive social housing districts. Regarding *Tablighis*, one regularly observes incursions of six to ten preachers, some of them from abroad, who come to meet young people, question them about their difficulties before offering them educational support and economic aid, in particular employment in one of the many businesses managed by the faithful. The *Tablighis* also visit young delin-

quents or drug addicts in prisons and hospitals where they teach them a literal and rigorous practice of Islam that can modify their social condition in France. They reinforce the young people in their revolt against a corrupted Western society, without moral values, offering them no possibility of insertion and carrying the hope in another model of existence based on the refusal of “foreign” values for the return to the only truth, the life in Islam.

The discourse is buoyant, as evidenced by the many examples of redemption, such as those of the leaders of the *Minguettes* ZUP in Vénissieux, who were particularly prominent during the slow clashes of 1981 and 1982 between young (often delinquent) immigrants and the police. The Islamists and fundamentalists, under the guise of moral guidance of the youth of difficult neighborhoods, are developing actions to occupy the social and political terrain. This very active proselytizing, especially in “sensitive” neighborhoods, is most often tolerated by the authorities because their actions apparently pacify the cities.

But beyond the rhetoric of integration and prevention, their interventions feed the communal withdrawal of a provocative and even deeply anti-institutional fringe of youth. Exploiting the global context of the rise of urban violence, fundamentalists are seizing on the gaps in social cohesion to Islamize the “Beurs.” The progression of insecurities, the permanent oscillation between collective revolt and common delinquency, between implosion and explosion of the violence of the cities, opens a diversified field to the tactics of conversion to a militant Islam.

Alongside the *Tabligh*, other Islamist organizations, encouraged by the effectiveness of proselytizing by religious associations, began to invest in socio-educational associations at the end of the 1980s. This approach resulted in a steady increase in the number of associations for young Beurs until 1992, when this phenomenon became more popular. The recrudescence observed is explained by the amplification of the activities of radical Islamists on all fronts with a progressive specialization of their structures. In 1995, the DCRG counted more than 210 associations with fundamentalist tendencies or risks established at the local level. Of great structural diversity, autonomous associations or those attached to national organizations, the type of individuals who gravitate around this, present different profiles: fundamentalist religious, notorious delinquents or members of terrorist movements.

Overall, these associations are located at the confluence of all Islamist tendencies but also at the heart of social issues such as the rise of common law delinquency in the suburbs and urban violence. Their societal positioning to encourage a return to Islam is mainly based on three kinds of activities: the most frequent are cultural, sports and leisure activities. As a prelude to Islamization, the teaching of the Arabic language constitutes the main part of the cultural activities; sports activities are mainly oriented towards team sports, such as soccer ball, combat sports and martial arts; leisure activities are divided between the organization of

vacations, of which the Turkish COJEP has made a specialty, and more classic outings. Then come the associations that help the integration of young people and, in priority, the school support that allows to keep the little brothers on the right track and to take over from parents overwhelmed by their cultural difference. Finally, Islamic associations, especially in large urban areas, are dedicated to the fight against delinquency and drugs.

The methods used here again play on several levels. The Muslim Brotherhood, through its associations, seeks to create a Muslim lobby able to put pressure on the public authorities to impose its identity claims. They want to interfere in local politics by presenting a consensual and constructive facade. The approach consists of federating a Muslim electorate. Several organizations, notably the *Fédération Nationale des Musulmans de France* (FNMF), the *Union des Jeunes Musulmans* (UJM) and the association *Les Jeunes Musulmans de France* (JMF), supported by the *Union des Organisations Islamiques de France* (UOIF), are calling on young French Muslims to register on the electoral rolls as of the 1995 municipal elections.

The French nationality progressing with the generations of the Umma with a birth rate much more important than that of the “native” French, the Muslim Brotherhood aims in the long term to deeply influence the French politics. This will of the FNMF and the UOIF is also expressed through their active participation in the entry of Islam to the table of the Republic during the whole process of the establishment of the French Council of the Muslim Cult. Daily, the *Tabligh* as well as the Muslim Brotherhood clearly seek to claim a certain legitimacy both from public authorities and from their co-religionists. In order to do so, they try to create a hierarchy within the suburbs through associative leadership and to impose themselves as privileged interlocutors with the public authorities, notably by playing the role of mediators capable of canalizing the violence—violence that they sometimes trigger themselves.

In highly degraded neighborhoods, where drug addiction and drug trafficking are part of the daily violence, the presence of a militant Islam imposed by a small core of young adults introduced into community life leads to punitive actions against petty criminals, drunken youth, heroin dealers, or their clients. A real parallel police force is set up, often with the approval of Muslim families, scandalized by the rise of all kinds of abuses and dissatisfied with the response of French authorities.

In the early 1990s, there were many examples of violence inspired by an apparent concern for moral order, but which revealed obscure rivalries for control of the market for cannabis and were in fact triggered by leaders with the profile of converted delinquents. The frontier between Islam and delinquency often appears blurred, as the dismantling of support networks for armed groups in Algeria has shown, revealing this growing interpenetration of common law and Islamist activities. The profile of the most virulent proselytizers shows a correlation between the

judicial past of these individuals and their radicalism, since on average one in five is known to the police, often for intentional violence, and half of the common law leaders are also known for their links with the radical Islamist movement.

In 1998, the DCRG reported the presence of this local proselytizing in 216 neighborhoods.<sup>35</sup> There are numerous tangible signs: the actions of social workers<sup>36</sup> are undermined by the most violent young people; the frequentation of prayer halls by young people and the attendance at Islamist congresses or conferences are increasing; with the refusal of secularism, difficulties are growing in the school environment (rejection of female teachers, refusal of co-education, wearing of the veil by young girls, refusal of the teaching of certain subjects, history, natural sciences, sports, etc.); small shopkeepers or industrialists established in sensitive neighborhoods are victims of harassment (expressed in various forms, assaults, pressure, racketeering and reprisals, etc.). In some neighborhoods, the successful establishment of Islamist leadership structures is accompanied by deliberately provocative and violent anti-institutional behavior. Young “Beurs” claim their religious affiliation by means of vengeful graffiti celebrating the “martyr” Khaled Kelkal, the GIA, or the FIS, by burning the tricolor flag or shouting their hatred of the French, or even by physically attacking people; 28 neighborhoods were the scene of this type of action in 1994/1995, and 71 in 1997/1998.<sup>37</sup>

As it stands, militant Islamism, far from integrating young “Beurs” by fighting against delinquency and urban violence, only provides a facade of appeasement masking the takeover of sensitive neighborhoods by a rigorist Islam that is constantly progressing. This progress is based on various strategies of influence patiently applied in time and space.

## **The art of war or the indirect strategy of radical Islamists**

As an example, the examination of the associative nebula of the *Union des Jeunes Musulmans* (UJM) of Lyon illustrates these combinations of strategy; this organization includes practically all types of individuals and associations as well as presenting a panoply of the means of action to which the jihadists have recourse. Its creation brings it from the outset to the confluence of fundamentalist currents. Formed in 1984, declared in the Prefecture of the Rhone in December 1987, the UJM was born from the will of the pro-Khomeynist Shiites to establish in France a movement of gathering of the youth of the Umma. The embassy of Iran, the leader of the Iranian movement of the Rhone, as well as a French intellectual converted to Islam and member of the Center of Study and Islamic Documentation, notorious organ of propaganda of the Khomeynist word, are Presidents of the UJM.

Among the other currents which take part in this creation, one notes various local associations professing a radical Sunni Islam and national organizations of the movement of the Muslim Brothers, such as the Association of the Islamic Students in France (AEIF) or the Union of the Islamic Organizations in France

(UOIF), this last organization being used as link between the followers of *Foi et Pratique*, the Iranian and Turkish fundamentalists. Initially, the UJM, which did not have its own premises for preaching, frequented the Errahma mosque in Villeurbanne; set up in the building of a disused factory, it brought together about 200 adherents, most of whom were of Moroccan and Tunisian origin. Its leaders, in relation with the fundamentalists *Foi et Pratique* of the Omar Ibn Khatab Mosque in Bron, lean towards the Iranian fundamentalist theses. Members of the UJM are also present in different places of worship managed by pro-Khomeynist Turkish extremists gathered in the section of the organization *Tendance Nationale de l'Union Isla mique en France* (TNUIF), located in Villeurbanne.

Like the *Association des Étudiants Islamiques en France* (AEIF), the UJM pursues an elitist policy to create a leadership capable of managing the Muslim community. It explicitly aims to raise the level of education of young "Beurs" with the dual purpose of infiltrating the public administration and investing the local political level. With this objective in mind, the UJM launched the "Committee of One Hundred Thousand" in 1995, which set the objective of registering young Muslims on the electoral lists. Its central structure is limited to around thirty members, each in charge of specific sectors: teaching, administration, organization of seminars, meetings, or religious vigils.

Based in Paris (6°), it has two branches in Vénissieux and controls forty-six associations in Lyon and the Lyon suburbs, some of which even federate other organizations. For example, the "Aube" association in Vénissieux, which brings together 15 or so associations covering all aspects of local Muslim life (cultural, educational, integration assistance, etc.), has established itself as an essential intermediary with the municipality. The UJM has therefore a very wide local representation and ensures daily exchanges with its satellites, especially through its bookshop Tawhid which serves as a permanent office. Present on all fronts, religious, socio-educational, anti-racism, humanitarian, the UJM cultivates a facade of a moderate Islam and violence in the ban leagues. This is the front side.

On the other hand, the UJM is against any compromise with the republican laws, preventing the integration of the "Beurs" whose religious orientations it radicalizes. Its annual congress, where radical groups of various tendencies meet, constitutes one of the most important events of the Islamist world in France; its audience grows rapidly, 300 people in 1992, 2,000 in 1993, 3,000 in 1994. Benefiting from a good logistic organization, each of these congresses tackles the various aspects of the integration of Muslims in France. A thematic presentation a priori moderate but which gives place to often stormy interventions stigmatizing the *cultural rape of the West*. At the time of the congress of 1994, the French authorities are strongly denounced for their refusal of integration and assimilation of the Moslem; the Minister of the Interior, Charles Pasqua, is denounced for *his racist security policy*.

These accusations are regularly repeated, notably through the distribution, from January 1995 onwards, of a liaison and information bulletin entitled “Jeunes Musulmans” (Young Muslims) which accuses the French state of *waging war on the most peaceful of religions*, and of infringing human rights daily by stigmatizing Muslims in France. This radicalism is also expressed during specific demonstrations: in Lyon in 1987, protesting the publication of Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* and in 1988, during a pro-Palestinian rally gathering 400 people chanting anti-Israeli slogans; in Grenoble in 1995, in support of the young high school student Shérazade Ben Larbi who was expelled from her school, where the UJM mobilized 2,000 demonstrators, during the controversy over the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in schools.

The non-exhaustive example of the UJM shows the dynamism of militant Islamist action which uses a consensus of different fundamentalist currents to inscribe the jihad in the very heart of society in the apparent respect of republican rules, a respect which is in fact very relative. Unlike the Muslim Brotherhood or the Iranian Islamists, the *Tablighis*’ project is confined to the religious sphere. Theoretically opposed to violent action, the religious radicalization advocated by these fundamentalists serves, however, sometimes as a passage to terrorism by abounding in the all-out proselytizing strategy of Islamism.

The goal remains to reach the greatest number of Muslims to recuperate from this target the most fragile individuals, often young delinquents in disarray ready to switch from one violence to another. The amateurism of the *modus operandi* of the terrorists illustrates the mode of recruitment which is based on mental manipulation much more than on technical combat training. The weapons of radical Islamism are human bombs, and their strategy is to increase their number tenfold by actions concentrated on a sectarian type of indoctrination.

### **Export of clandestine armed networks—Constitution of dormant networks: the terrorist shift**

Radical Islamization in France is strongly linked to issues of external geopolitics against a background of rivalries between Arab-Muslim states. In the tangle of different terrorist networks, three major families of actors emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. The pan-Arab Marxists, whose attacks on French soil in 1982-1983 caused 13 deaths and 164 injuries, embodied Arab nationalism in the name of the Palestinian cause. The myth of the *elusive* international terrorist *Carlos*, who claimed responsibility (among other things) for these attacks in the name of the Organization of the Arab Armed Struggle, still feeds the fantasy of the magnificent hero among the “Beurs.” Other movements took action in France during the same period: the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (Asala), which claimed responsibility for the attack on Orly airport in July 1983, killing 8 people

and wounding 56 others, and members of the Lebanese armed opposition, including the former leader of the Lebanese Revolutionary Army Faction (FARL), who was responsible for the assassination of two American and Israeli diplomats in Paris in 1982. These actions remain sporadic, which does not prevent them from having an impact on the psychology of young Muslims men.

Islamist terrorism in France from 1980 to 2000 was the result of a background war orchestrated by its two other major families: state terrorism, which plunged into the intricacies of the divisions of the Arab world, where Iran played a central role, and the Algerian terrorism of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). The fundamentalist movement is articulated around these two major poles, characterized by numerous bridges between networks and the adoption of complementary strategies. Thus, this period is marked by the establishment on the national soil of terrorist networks with complex ramifications that interpenetrate, link and, or un-link. The development or infiltration of Muslim structures of reception and influence, religious proselytizing, and the recruitment of future fighters, characterizes almost all of them. The common objective is to turn France into a terrorist breeding ground, a sort of army of kamikaze reservists to be used more particularly in periods of international tension.

Iran, which promotes the export of the Islamic revolution in the countries of the Middle East, while encouraging resistance to *the Western cultural invasion*, makes France above all a rear base of propaganda and recruitment, its privileged terrorist target remaining the godless governments of certain Arab states. However, this policy does not exclude the perpetration of terrorist acts on French soil, either to eliminate opponents of the Khomeini regime who have fled to France, or to put pressure on the French government in its positions in the Middle East. Thus, we find the hand of Tehran in the assassination of Chapour Bakhtiar, a refugee in France in 1979, where he led from Paris the National Resistance Movement of Iran which fights non-violently the Islamic Republic on its territory.<sup>38</sup>

The release and deportation in May 2010 of one of his assassins dispatched by the Mullahs' regime, Ali Vakili Rad, who had been sentenced in 1994 by the Court of Assizes of Paris to life imprisonment, causes great concern in French political circles. Many observatories denounce an inadmissible bargaining between Paris and Tehran, the Minister of Interior sending back to his country the Iranian Ali Vakili Rad, a few hours after the release of the French student Clotilde Reiss who was detained in Iran since 2009. The Iranian will to influence French politics is also particularly sensitive and motivates its activism in the constitution of clandestine networks. In the mid-1980s, DST reports estimated that there were several dozen Iranian terrorists in the Paris region. They are most often from student circles, but there is a tendency to widen their recruitment targets, mainly young French immigrants or those who have been living in France for several years. These young people constitute the dormant networks, and their characteris-



tics and their strength lie in their apparent assimilation into our society. The Saleh Fouad affair is revealing in many ways of these Iranian maneuvers.

Fouad Ali Saleh, known as “Ali the Tunisian,” was the presumed organizer of thirteen attacks that killed 13 people and injured 303 others in Paris between December 1985 and September 1986, known as *Black September*.<sup>39</sup> The dismantling in March 1987 of this Maghreb terrorist network linked to Hezbollah illustrates the long-standing roots of its members, without any particular description: the Saleh couple were both born in Paris, he is Tunisian but his wife has French nationality; his close accomplice, Mohamed Al Mouhajer, is a naturalized French citizen by marriage, and the first five members arrested, all Tunisians, had long been working regularly in our country, as cab drivers, cooks, and merchants.

Iran clearly appears to be the instigator of such a network through the theological and military education given to Saleh Fouad and his friend Al Mouhajer during stays of three years in Qom. Thereafter, Saleh Fouad exercised activities of proselytism in the Iranian Cultural Center Jean Bart in Paris. During his hearings, he told the investigators that he had perpetrated these attacks to force the French government to change its policy towards Tehran, notably denouncing France’s support for Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran. He confirmed this during his trial by declaring: *the fortress of Islam is Iran. Your country, by helping Iraq, is fighting Iran, so it is an enemy. Our main objective is to bring France back to the raison through violent actions.*

The Saleh network, of which 18 members have been identified, is a thread of a vast web woven throughout Europe, the investigation having revealed the existence of links between this group and two other terrorist networks, one established in the Federal Republic of Germany (the Hamadei case), the other in Italy (the Khodr case).<sup>40</sup> Involved in 1985 in the hijacking of a TWA plane from Athens to Beirut, the Hamadei brothers are part of the Lebanese network to which holds Fouad Saleh. The investigation reveals the presence of Abbas Hamadei in Paris in December 1985 during the commission of the explosive attacks on the Printemps and Galeries Lafayette stores. The kidnapping of two German citizens in Lebanon in 1987, the day after the arrest of Mohamed Ali Hamadei, and then of four others in 1989 during the trial, marks once again the desire of the Hezbollah movement to blackmail the political authorities into releasing Mohamed and Abbas Hamadei, who were arrested in Frankfurt in possession of explosives.

During the trial, the Bonn government publicly acknowledged that it had yielded to pressure from the hostage takers. During his hearing, Chancellery Minister Wolfgang Schäuble said that German politicians *decided not to extradite* (the U.S. extradition request is mainly for Mohamed Hamadei, his brother Abbas is a German citizen by marriage) *after weighing all the risks considering the threats to the hostages, which influenced our decision.* Beyond the evidence put forward on the actions of Mohamed Ali Hamadei within the terrorist cells of Hezbollah,

it exposes the key role of this movement in the organization of attacks. Multiple hearings and confrontations show that these attacks are fomented in close collaboration with the Iranian regime, which serves as material, political, and ideological support, and Syria, which appears to be an obligatory passage for terrorists. The trial also proves the existence of the specific Lebanese network of Iranian inspiration, directed by Ali Fouad Saleh to act on the French territory. The fate of the Lebanese brothers ends up in a compromise between the kidnappers, Iran, and Syria on one side, and the FRG on the other.

This case also reveals the interweaving of actors and terrorist movements. Anecdotally, one of Saleh Fouad's lawyers is the wife of the terrorist Carlos, Isabelle Coutant-Peyre. But above all, this network reveals once again the connections between Shiite and Sunni groups, between Iran, Lebanon, and the Muslim Brotherhood: close links between Saleh have been established with Shiite agents of the Lebanese Hezbollah, the person concerned having renamed himself in Lebanon in October 1986, while the other Tunisians arrested belong to the Muslim Brotherhood movement of the MTI. Finally, the violence of Fouad Saleh's declarations during his trial in February 1990 and his Third Worldist remarks revised by the most fanatical Shiism give the full dimension of the jihad: *The West has no right to exist! The crimes you have committed for centuries justify your total annihilation!* At this stage, knowing that the interested party also attended the mosque of the movement *Foi et Pratique* of the street Jean-Pierre Timbaud in Paris (11<sup>o</sup>), one can only fear the fundamentalist contagion of a part of the Umma.

Iran works in this sense by its double action: the setting up of clandestine armed networks and its infiltration of associative structures of various tendencies and intertwined. Another rather eloquent example: the discovery in December 1986 of a large stock of arms and explosives in a box belonging to a pro-Khomeinist Lebanese national installed in France since 1969; general secretary in 1978 of the Association of Islamic Students in France (AEIF, close to the Muslim Brotherhood), then in charge in 1980 of the *Association Culturelle et Culturelle de Toulouse* in connection with the Association of Students of Strasbourg, the Association of Muslims of the Alpes Maritimes, and the GIF, all these associations being grouped together in 1987 within the Union of Islamic Organizations in France (UOIF), which, let us recall, sits on the French Council of the Muslim Cult under the aegis of the Ministry of the Interior.

These various fundamentalist movements in the shadow of the big Iranian brother and under the manna of the Saudi gold represent more than 20 associations with a socio-educational vocation<sup>41</sup> closely or remotely linked to the armed Islamist movements, those belonging to the nebulous Algerian FIS or belonging to the Tunisian movement En Nahda and its radical branch, the Tunisian Islamic Front. These organizations find a favorable echo, especially among young Algerian immigrants, often motivated by resentment of colonial history. Established first in

Ile-de-France and on the Mediterranean coast, these associations are a threat, both in terms of the organization of rear bases for the above-mentioned movements and in terms of recruitment and training activities for fundamentalist fighters. This is illustrated by the example of the attack in Marrakech in August 1994 by seven young French “Beurs” of Algerian and Moroccan origin, all of whom were members of two martial arts associations in Orléans (45) run by Islamists, or the involvement of the *Association Éducative des Musulmans de France* in Orly (94) through its leaders in an arms trafficking network dismantled in November 1994.

The story of Khaled Kelkal, a petty thug who became a member of the GIA after his Islamization in prison<sup>42</sup> and his childhood friends from the Vaulx-en-Velin housing projects, is another example. It all started in the early 1980s, with the first March for Equality, the *Vaulx-en-Velin* riots, the first rodeos. A suburban gang, some of whose members slipped into delinquency before uniting around Islam and forming the Lyon operational commando responsible for the attacks in the summer of 1995, which left 8 dead and 152 injured.<sup>43</sup> A path that foreshadowed those of Mohamed Merah, Amedy Coulibaly and the Kouachi brothers: homemade jihadists, young people with a history of delinquency, almost all of whom had spent time in prison, all of whom had been de-Islamized and had become hardcore Muslims after an initiatory trip to a Middle Eastern country or to regions of war, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Their revolt is activated by international context events that feed a series of representations among young “Beurs.” For another example, some of them will leave to fight in the Balkans where the massacre of Srebrenica symbolizes the persecution of the Muslims, victims of the Serbs.

The observation of this past shows how, under the effect of contextual and structural factors, the jihadist phenomenon has progressively taken root in French society. The intensification of terrorist acts on our soil that we are experiencing today has its roots there, as does the perpetuation of a recurring parameter: jihadist networks, all tendencies combined, tend to structure themselves and to interweave around the most powerful groups. These amalgams are however shifting according to the conjuncture. Thus, the planetary spectacle of the events of September 11, 2001, revived the fighting spirit and favored the globalization of Islamist terrorism, manifested by a crescendo in attacks.

## **The roots of a strategy of chaos**

Several interrelated factors explain the rise of jihadism in Western countries rate. The rise of groups such as al-Qaeda, and more recently, the Islamic State and Boko Haram, has been facilitated by chaotic geopolitical contexts that offer terrorist groups many opportunities for expansion. The multiplication of terrorist attacks, which have also become much more deadly, reflects this evolution. Regarding the last decades, it marks above all the affirmation of an ideology and the outcome of a jihadist strategy patiently applied in the target countries, of which France has

long been a part. The strategy of chaos, theorized by al-Qaeda executive Abu Jihad al-Masri in the text entitled *The Administration of Savagery*, published on the Internet in 2004, echoes the fanaticism of the terrorist Fouad Ali Saleh expressed 15 years earlier by his exalted declarations on the end of the West in the name of a god of vengeance. This text, which expresses a hatred of Jews, Christians, apostates, democracy, and its values, also reminds us of the killings in Toulouse and Montauban perpetrated between March 11 and March 19, 2012, by the French-Algerian Islamist terrorist Mohammed Merah, who caused the death of seven people, including three soldiers and three children from a Jewish school.

The Salafist nebula, strengthened by the success of Al Qaeda on the *American devil*, is progressing all over the world. In France, it is largely taking over from the *Tabligh* in the suburbs by sucking in fundamentalists or by fraternizing with other Islamist movements. Thus, in 2006, Ay man al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden founded a base of operations in Algeria to serve as a springboard for activities through the North African diaspora in France, where fundamentalist relay groups have been established since the 1980s and 1990s. Since that time, France has served mainly as a reservoir of jihadists fed by the various currents of a rigorous traditionalist or more radical Islamization without determining the time for the operational. The future has shown this: in May 2013, the man who stabbed a soldier in the La Défense district of Paris went through the *Tablighis* networks; in October 2014, four young Frenchmen from Lunel in the Hérault region sent to wage jihad in Syria were killed during Syrian army bombings in the city of Deir ez-Zor.

Islamist violence in France signals a new dimension of warfare that is growing, following, again and again, the curve of conflicts between Arab-Muslim states. The strategic opportunities that must be seized are the openings that the various terrorist groups create in response to the various pressures exerted by and between these states, making the battlefield somewhat fluid. France has thus long been one of the meeting places, a fallback zone but also a springboard for jihadist conquest. Terrorist groups are developing modalities of action there: exporting clandestine networks intended to fight in war zones and encouraging the individuals constituting the dormant networks to act alone on French soil, notably through suicide attacks that are intended to be particularly murderous triers.

These are the “lone wolves” in charge of knife attacks or handmade bombers. This phenomenon is not recent—let’s say it has been consolidated with the rise of jihadist forces and formalized with the organization of these forces. For example, a secret al-Qaeda document discovered by German police in 2011 that dictates to its lieutenants in Europe to target and recruit lone men and then encourage them to commit attacks in their countries of residence along the lines of the one perpetrated on July 14, 2016, in Nice.

In fact, never has our country been confronted with such a diffuse and massive jihadist phenomenon, where fanatical individuals blindly strike defenseless

targets. Faced with such an elusive threat and, the director of the CIA declared in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks: *this war will be carried out by intelligence, not by the pure projection of power. The challenge will not be to defeat the enemy militarily.* In France, the entry into force of several key measures of the intelligence law adopted in July 2015 makes up for the lack of legal framework for French intelligence and defines the modalities of action and control—authorization of special investigative techniques for the services, real-time computer surveillance, sounding of private places—and the establishment of an operational headquarters for the prevention of terrorism.

These measures seem insufficient, as the intelligence services remain overwhelmed by the pace of the attacks. The jihadist phenomenon, which is both multifaceted and hidden, is still as difficult to qualify and measure, one of the major challenges being to identify before the event a jihadist reality that thrives in the shelter of an Islamism with many variants. The reinforcement of procedures and the reorganization of intelligence services underpinned by the necessary implementation of a global strategy for the protection of the territory are reshaping the anti-terrorist system but are still struggling to stay one step ahead of the terrorists. One of the reasons for this is the weakening of human intelligence on the ground following the reform of the organization of domestic intelligence in 2008. However, territorial intelligence as practiced in the decades 1980–2000 was an indispensable forecasting tool for the knowledge of the jihadist risk.

### **Gathering scattered information, exposing the system, and transmitting it: the importance of proximity intelligence in the fight against terrorism**

Faced with the emergence of Islamist terrorism, the first objective of domestic intelligence is to understand this new enemy. This approach led to the first national investigation launched by the DCRG in 1986: the territorial network of this service made it possible to explore the jihadist reality locally and, consequently, to establish a national diagnosis of its components, its strengths, its strategies, and factors of evolution.

The feedback from all corners of France of information obtained from the closest actors, witnesses or involved in this phenomenon, reveals the tricks set up by the Islamist militants, the which with the patience of the spider weave their web on the whole national territory. To the web woven by the radical Islamists, the DCRG opposes a counter-web aiming to thwart its deployment. In this perspective, the priorities are to identify the elements at risk, groups or individuals, and to establish a cartography of their meeting places and exchanges proselytes and, or, logistic (finances, weapons, “hideouts”). The main Islamist centers are regularly monitored and a system combining several security logics is put in place. This

system consists of detecting causal chains upstream and blocking connections and physical links between terrorist networks or channels.

A constantly updated compilation, examination and prospective analysis is carried out based on information gathered from the field. This method makes it possible to establish a picture of the terrorist threat, its origin, its actors, and its activities. The surveillance of radiated individuals who are subject to a special file ("fiches S") is of course necessary, but it represents only a tiny response to the jihadist phenomenon, which in France is based on structures grouping together hundreds, even thousands of individuals. Organizational networks that develop one after the other, sometimes overlapping or intersecting, and where moderate groups can have extremist fractions, and vice versa. In the 1990s, the ideological violence that spilled over the Internet did not alter the effectiveness of these measures, which complemented technical intelligence, which found its limits in surveillance and intervention in the field.

In addition to the application of this security approach, which consists of reducing terrorist opportunities by increasing the risks of identification and arrest for their perpetrators, this proximity intelligence is working to support mediation, accountability, rapprochement, and socialization actions carried out by Muslim leaders, local elected officials, and social actors in the micro-territories of the suburbs. Particular attention is paid to identifying the factors that are likely to encourage radicalization among young people. Parameters of evolution common to certain suburbs are listed, serving as *clues ref rents* to the proselytizing development and the installation of the Islamist presence.

These developments go through the following stages: progressive sanctuarization and communicating criminal vessels with connections between drugs and urban violence; installation of the omerta with the development of an underground economy, criminal activities legitimized by their authors, an associative drift due to mafia interests, the failure of political organizations to establish themselves (Movement of Immigration and the Suburbs, MIB, SOS-Racism, etc.); and a communal drift characterized by a break in dialogue and identity. At this last stage, the proselytizing Islamist and a militant activism tinged with delinquency appear in broad daylight.

This knowledge of the jihadist phenomenon is essentially based on the territorial capacity of intelligence, combining local investigation and national processing of information. This capacity was dismantled in 2008 by the reform of the organization of domestic intelligence. The merger of the two previous domestic services (DST and DCRG) into a Central Directorate of Domestic Intelligence (DCRI) broke up the DCRG's network system and thus eliminated the counter-strategy, "network against network," opposed to the jihadists. The reasons for this decision to reform, however, do not stem from the inefficiency of the internal intelligence methods of the time. On the contrary, they were largely due to political

discomfort in the face of the diagnostic of worsening violence and the related phenomenon of Islamization of the suburbs. “Killing the messenger” is the response of successive political leaders to the DCRG, suspected of seeking to destabilize the government(s) through overly alarmist forecasts.

The decline of the RG thus began in the early 2000s with a clear political brake on the pursuit of its investigations, particularly regarding the monitoring of sensitive neighborhoods where Islamism flourishes. This situation was publicly denounced by the head of the DCRG’s Cities and Suburbs section in these terms: *the government broke the tool because it was scary*.<sup>44</sup> In fact, the disgrace of the RG is reflected in their being sidelined before the final blow, which comes against a backdrop of political-police ambitions. The new head of the DGSI, a fervent opposing as early as 1986 at the initiative of the DCRG to take up the Islamist question and a fierce supporter of a research focused mainly on the identification of radical individuals, chose thereafter to leave the tool to the scrapyard. This is how the security counter-web is defeated despite its effectiveness. An efficiency that cannot exclude the necessity of a national protection strategy that must be global with the services qualified today as first rank.<sup>45</sup>

The urgency of the situation is assessed in terms of the recent past and the near future. Given the state of socio-demographic forecasts, we cannot expect a spontaneous reversal of the trend in the years to come. *The Art of War* by the Chinese strategist Sun Tzu, written two millennia ago, is very relevant today. This text bears astonishing similarities with the jihadist methods based on an indirect strategy, full of cunning, knowledge of the adversary, psychological action, of the designed to leave to the shock only the role of the coup de grace struck to a helpless and terrorized enemy. A resonance with *the horror* and  *dread* expressed by the head of state on Friday, November 13, 2015, at the very moment when the terrorist attacks are underway in Paris.

*The Art of War* also states the vital importance of countering the enemy’s strategy: *when one tiger guards the ford, ten thousand deer cannot cross it*. But to keep the ford and to make intelligence an efficient tool of knowledge, we need to put the jihadist phenomenon back in its duration and to grasp the reality of its mutations which is its essence. A reinforcement of human intelligence close to the realities on the ground should be considered to stem the jihadist wave, knowing that the proliferation of Islamist organizations and the tangle of their activities, which are carried out on a continuous basis, require relentless surveillance of proximity.

## Endnotes

- 1 Isabelle Jouandet has spent her entire career in the police force, working for the Central Director of the RG. For 25 years, she conducted investigations and wrote reports on political violence and radical Islamism, as well as on related subjects (sectarian aberrations, urban violence, etc.).
- 2 Government Site - Action against terrorism - Updated November 19, 2020. Terrorism operates on several fronts: across borders and within the country itself. The nature of the terrorist threat has changed significantly, particularly with the continuing evolution of the forms of terrorist acts. Nearly 2,000 people are, in one way or another, involved in violent religious radicalization or in jihadist recruitment networks. To ensure the security of the French people, the government has supplemented the legal arsenal and put in place an unprecedented reinforcement of resources and personnel in the police, justice, army and intelligence services. <https://www.gouvernement.fr/action/l-action-contre-le-terrorisme>
- 3 The Islamic radicalism that emerged in the wake of pan-Islamism was nourished by the failures of modern-progressive Arab nationalism. Popular Islam is the bearer of more radical forms of pan-Islamic activism, which began in Egypt in 1928 with the founding of the Muslim Brotherhood by Hassan Al Banna. Another center of Muslim activism was Iran, where fundamentalist activities began to develop in the 1940s. The consolidation of strong regimes in these countries led to a relative lull. Fundamentalism suddenly reappeared at the end of the 1970s, reinforced by two spectacular successes of Islamist revolutionaries: the overthrow of the Shah of Iran and the assassination of Anwar Sadat in Egypt.
- 4 Sayyid Qotb, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, was executed in 1966 under the Nasserite regime. Considered a martyr of Islam, one of his essays published in 1964, *Signs of the Trail*, remains a founding text of reference for the Jihadists. In a break with the Muslim Brotherhood, radical Qutbist thought differentiates between those who obey the exclusive wisdom of God and those of the jāhiliya—the period of pre-Islamic ignorance—which includes not only pre-Islamic peoples, but also non-Muslims, especially in the West, and Muslim peoples who do not live entirely under the sharia.
- 5 Three generations of jihadism represented by one man. The call for “*global Islamic resistance*” is made by Abu Musab al-Suri, nicknamed “The Syrian,” known as the “architect of the global jihad.” After publishing a first book on the failure of the “Islamic revolutionary” movement in Syria, this jihadist theorist published a booklet in 1991 that foreshadowed the *Call to Global Islamic Resistance, a book that was posted on the internet in 2005*. Musab al-Suri has a slogan: “nizam la tanzim,” which means “a system, not an organization.” His career is revealing of the interpenetration of the movements of the jihadist nebula: affiliated with the Organization of the Fighting Vanguard of the Muslim Brotherhood, military training in Iraq and Syria, participation in the jihad against the Soviets in Afghanistan where he met Osama Bin Laden and became one of the executives of Al Qaeda (an organization from which he later distanced himself),



participation in the drafting of the Al Ansar bulletin of the Algerian Islamists. His lectures, recorded on cassettes, have toured the world, but he does not limit himself to theoretical teachings. He also gives practical courses—from close combat to handling explosives—in training camps in Afghanistan.

6 *L'Islam au défi* by Jacques Berque, Gallimard (1980).

7 Reminder of the main attacks:

- August 9, 1982: six dead and 22 wounded in the shooting of the rue des Rosiers in Paris. On Monday, August 9, 1982, at lunchtime, a shooting by an armed group broke out in Jo Goldenberg's restaurant in the heart of the Marais district. The gunmen threw a grenade into the restaurant and machine-gunned the crowd. An anti-Semitic attack never claimed. On June 17, 2015, the alleged mastermind of the attack was arrested in Jordan.

- July 15, 1983: 8 dead and 56 injured at Orly airport. Claimed by the Armenian Secret Liberation Army (Asala), this suitcase bomb attack was motivated by the non-recognition of the Armenian genocide. The suitcase, deposited by a Syrian-Armenian, exploded on the luggage conveyor belt at Orly airport.

- Between February 1985 and September 1986, thirteen terrorist attacks shook France. This series of events ended with the attack of the street of Rennes in Paris. In total, these repeated terrorist attacks caused 13 deaths and nearly 300 wounded. The wave of attacks is attributed to the Committee of Solidarity with Arab and Near Eastern Political Prisoners (CSPPA), an organization close to Hezbollah.

8 The prevention and repression of terrorism is mainly the business of a few specialized services: the *Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire* (DST), the *Direction Centrale des Renseignements Généraux* (DCRG), the *Renseignements Généraux of the Préfecture de Police*, the *Division Nationale Antiterroriste of the Direction Centrale de la Police Judiciaire* (DNAT), and the *Bureau de Lutte Antiterroriste of the Gendarmerie Nationale* (BLAT). In terms of foreign intelligence, the DGSE is obviously directly involved in the fight against terrorism. At the end of the 1980s, a relative specialization took place. The central directorate of the judicial police, notably the DNAT, and the gendarmerie are more specialized in domestic terrorism. On the other hand, from 1986 onwards, the intelligence services and the DST, from 1982 onwards, focused on the fight against Islamist terrorism. The original mission of the DST, classical counterespionage, explains this inclination. For a long time, Islamist terrorism was mainly an external threat, whether it was the 1985-1986 attacks or later those of 1995-1996. As for general intelligence, the priority objectives have been reoriented towards the fight against terrorism, the fight against urban drift and the general observation of society to better anticipate threats. This refocusing of missions is accompanied by an ambitious reform of working methods in order to make the RG a true domestic intelligence service on a par with the DST. More decentralized than other services, the RG has developed regional centers to fight radical Islam in the 22 regions of metropolitan France. The mission of these centers is to monitor certain prayer halls and other places that are conducive to fundamentalist or fundamentalist proselytizing. Prisons have also been the subject of an

in-depth study by these services.

- 9 Placed under the authority of the Director General of the National Police, the UCLAT, created on October 8, 1984, coordinates, leads and directs the actions of the active directorates and services of the National Police and the Gendarmerie in the fight against terrorism.
- 10 The DST has seven regional directorates, distributed by military region and defense zone throughout the country, in [Lille](#), [Rennes](#), [Bordeaux](#), [Marseille](#), [Metz](#), [Lyon](#), [Tours](#), and four detachments, [Antilles-Guyana](#), [Reunion](#), [Polynesia](#), and [New Caledonia](#). The DCRG has at least one service per department, increased to one service per arrondissement for the largest districts.
- 11 On July 1, 2008, the DST merged with the DCRG to form a new directorate called the *Direction Centrale du Renseignement Intérieur* (DCRI) and then the *Direction Générale de la Sécurité Intérieure* (DGSJ) in 2014.
- 12 Estimating the numbers of the Umma remains difficult, as the 1978 law on information technology and freedom prohibits the mention of religious affiliation on census forms. This limits the evaluation of the number of French citizens of the Muslim faith and that of foreign populations with diverse religious allegiances whose emigration map does not necessarily overlap with that of their country of origin. On the other hand, the estimate is more accurate for foreign populations, almost all of whom profess the Muslim religion of their countries. Most of them practice Malikite Sunni Islam; a strong Algerian minority and a Tunisian core adhere to Kharidjism. Shi'ism, which is not very well represented, is divided mainly between pro and anti-Khomeinists, and includes several communities: Druze, Alawites, Ismailis, Nizarites, Baha'is, Bohoras, Khojas, etc. Some Sufi groups are reported, especially among converts.
- 13 According to the 1982 statistical census and the 1983 forecast of the Ministry of the Interior, the Muslim immigrant population is mainly made up of North Africans: Algerians, Moroccans, Tunisians; Black Africans: Senegalese, Sudanese, Cameroonians; Turks; and to a lesser extent, nationals from the Near and Middle East: Iranians, Lebanese, Syrians; and Southeast Asians: Pakistanis and Comorians.
- 14 Muslims of French nationality are grouped into three main communities: Algerian repatriates or French Muslims; second-generation *beurs* (children of Algerians born in French Algeria before 1962 or on national territory after January 1, 1963); and French converts to Islam.
- 15 In particular, censuses conducted in 1990 on the major cities of France: Paris and its regions, Marseille, Lyon, and Lille.
- 16 The CFCM is an association governed by the law of 1901, placed under the aegis of the Ministry of the Interior, which has the role of representing the Muslims of France before the state authorities and of taking charge of issues related to the organization and management of their religion. the construction of mosques, the training and status of imams (9 out of 10 imams come from abroad), the institution of Muslim squares in

cemeteries, the organization and management of the market for hallal meat, the regulations around the annual sacrifice of the sheep are all questions of management of the cult that can be put to this new body.

- 17 The creation of the Muslim Institute in Paris represents the first official recognition of Islam by the French Republic. The instigator of this decision, Marshal Lyautey, had the law of August 19, 1920, voted allocating a financing credit to the Society of Habous and Holy Places of Islam presided over by the chief of protocol of the Sultan of Morocco and made up of seven active members including two representatives for Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia and one representative for Senegal. At the end of decades of legal battles, the Algerian State, which ensures an important financing of the Institute, becomes the owner of the place of worship and takes the control of the managing company and of the Muslim Institute which is the depository of the religious and administrative power of the Mosque.
- 18 The Islamic World League (IWL) is a Muslim NGO founded in 1962 in Mecca by Prince Faisal of Saudi Arabia in opposition to the Arab League of Nasser. The IWL has an observer status at the UN. It is a member of several world organizations, the most important of which are: the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, the International Islamic Conference, the International Council for Islamic Assistance and Preaching, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. There are other inter-Islamic organizations that intersect and compete around the world. The most important of them are located in Saudi Arabia: The League of the Muslim World in Mecca, the World Organization of Islamic Science in Riyadh, the World Federation of International Arab Islamic Schools in Jeddah. Founder of the main international leagues, Saudi Arabia is in direct competition with other organizations of the same type sponsored by States such as Libya (League of Islamic Call).
- 19 Issam al-Attar, second supreme guide of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, symbol of the resistance to President Hafez al-Assad.
- 20 French branch of the "Congress," founded in Tripoli in December 1977 during the summit of the firmness organized by the Libyan government, which brings together representatives of Libya, Syria, Algeria, Iraq, South Yemen, and the PLO to decide on the constitution of a unified Front, called "Front of the firmness," and the freezing of their relations with Egypt.
- 21 Repeal of the decree-law of April 12, 1939 (or title IV of the 1901 law) including a special regulation for the constitution of foreign associations subject to a prior authorization of the Minister of the Interior, authorization that can be withdrawn at any time by decree.
- 22 This number only concerns cultural and religious associations. Muslim associations with a corporatist character which can also manage places of worship are not considered.
- 23 The main cases of funding from foreign states come either from the countries of origin

of the faithful (Algeria and Morocco for the most part), or from Turkey, Iran, and the Gulf States.

- 24 According to 2015 data from the Ministry of the Interior and Cults, there are **2,450** mosques “mostly located in large population areas and mostly in the Paris region (459 mosques), then in the Lyon region (319) and around Marseille (218).”
- 25 *Tabligh* is a transnational mass preaching movement born in India in 1927. Its founder Muhammad Ilyas advocated a pure individual practice close to the life of the Prophet and a strictly literal interpretation of the Koran around six founding principles: belief in Allah, the only God, prayer duties, profession of faith, knowledge of God, personal devotion to others and preaching. Spreading in India and Pakistan, it became the most widespread of the Islamist movements at the end of the 1960s. It was then exported to the West and set up its base in the United Kingdom, the former colonizer, where today half of the mosques are run by the *Tablighis*.
- 26 These books are on sale at the bookshop of the *Groupement Islamique de France* (GIF) in Paris (11<sup>e</sup>) which also publishes two episodic bulletins, *El Hakika* and *El Rissalat*.
- 27 Among the publications most widely distributed in France through the Iranian embassies in Paris and Geneva: *Le Message de l'islam*, a cultural, political, and general information magazine published by the Islamic Thought Foundation in Tehran, is widely distributed in places of worship. A monthly magazine for young people, presented in the form of comic strips, is distributed mainly in the universities of Bouches-du-Rhône. Also from Iran, the fundamentalist publication *Islam Cagrisi*, produced in Turkish, is sent to Turkish cultural associations. From Qom, the magazine *The Roots of Religion*, and from Beirut the brochure of the Muslim People's Movement of Iraq.
- 28 From Libya, the main publications are the cultural and Islamic magazine *Rissalat Al Jihad* published by the Association of the Islamic Appeal as well as two Arabic-language dailies, *La Marche Verte* and *La République*. A bilingual magazine (Arabic–French), *Al Mottamar*, is distributed by the association of the same name close to the Representation of the Arab People's Congress, which is based in the 13<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris; its director of publication is a journalist correspondent of the Libyan radio station Saout Al Arab.
- 29 Author Gilles Kepel writes of the Sheikh's fame: “In the last years of Anwar Sadat's presidency, it was impossible to walk through the streets of Cairo without hearing Kishk's stentorian voice. If one got into a shared cab, the driver would listen to one of the sermons recorded by Sheikh Kishk. Kishk was heard in Cairo, Casablanca, and the entire North African area of Marseille. A magazine financed by the Saudis had nicknamed him the “star of Islamic preachers ... With his incomparable vocal cords, his panoramic Muslim culture, his phenomenal capacities of improvisation and his acerbic humor dedicated to the criticism of infidel regimes, military dictatorships, the Camp David agreements with Israel or the complicity of al-Azhar...” So great was his fame, that the Ministry of Waqf had to build several annexes to the mosque to accommodate the

crowd on Fridays. In 1981, however, even these shelters proved insufficient to accommodate the approximately 10,000 people who regularly came to hear him.

30 As of 26/02/1987, the Averroes Foundation for Scientific Research (FARS), located in Paris (10°), whose president is the secretary general of the GIF, and the S.A. Vegapress (Paris 1°) manage the operation of this Minitel service.

31 Journal Le Monde of 09/01/2015, Tribune by sociologist Farhad Khosrokhavar: “*Radicalized youth who dream of themselves as negative heroes.*”

32 Established in the mosque of Omar Ibu el Khtah (11°), the association *Foi et Pratique* also manages the mosque of Ali (9°), the mosque of Abou-Bakr (11°), and places of prayer in Seine Saint Denis and in the Yvelines.

33 The founder of *Foi et Pratique*, Imam Mohammed Hammami, was expelled in February 2012, because of his anti-Semitic preaching. In 1986, the association *Foi et Pratique* directly controls 20 places of worship. We observe a pro Khomeinist radicalization of the person in charge of the mosque of Omar (headquarters of the association) and members of the castle of Villemain (77) as well as sections of Colmar, Lyon, Perpignan, and Mulhouse.

34 Imam Erbakan whose political party, the Refah Partisi, advocates a return to Islam according to a doctrine close to that of the Muslim Brotherhood. His electoral successes in Turkey (1994) have an exemplary value within the Turkish youth of COJEP. In France, the TNUIF has a highly structured network of associations, with some twenty associations located mainly in Alsace-Lorraine and federated within COJEP.

35 Report established by the “Urban Violence” section of the DCRG. The neighborhoods most at risk are those already affected by a process of ghettoization (departure of native French citizens, multiplication of associations with ethnic or religious connotations), particularly those located in the Lyon area and in Toulouse, Lille, Orleans, Nantes, Saint-Etienne, La Courneuve, and Nanterre.

36 Many local elected officials, social workers, and association leaders testify to the failure of the aid provided (allocation of credits, rooms, organization of activities, trips, etc.), which are scuttled by young extremists.

37 For this assessment, only actions targeting the symbols of the French Nation (the flag, the military, the war memorials, the Marseillaise, the French people) were considered and not actions targeting the institutions of the State (national education, the police, etc.).

38 On July 18, 1980, Chapour Bakhtiar escaped an assassination attempt at his home in Neuilly-sur-Seine, which cost the lives of a neighbor and a policeman, and seriously injured another. Anis Naccache was sentenced to life imprisonment for this attempt, before being released and deported in July 1990. Eleven years later (August 6, 1991), Bakhtiar and his secretary were stabbed and then had their throats slit with a knife by three assassins dispatched by the mullah’s regime to his home in Suresnes. Nine men

are suspected of being involved in this operation, including the alleged organizer, the advisor to the Iranian Minister of Telecommunications. One of the arrested assassins, Ali Vakili Rad, was sentenced in 1994 by the Paris Court of Assizes to life imprisonment with an incompressible security period of 18 years. During his trial, he admitted to having been sent by the Iranian government to kill Chapour Bakhtiar. Ali Vakili Rad will be released on May 18, 2010, and sent back to Iran, a few hours after the release by Iran of the French student Clotilde Reiss.

39 The attack of the street of Rennes perpetrated on September 17, 1986, in front of the store Tati in the 6<sup>th</sup> district of Paris, makes 7 dead and 55 wounded. It was the last and most deadly of a series of thirteen attacks that began in February 1985 and left thirteen dead and nearly 300 injured: explosion of a bomb at the Marks & Spencer store on Boulevard Haussmann (1 dead and 14 injured, February 23, 1985), two explosions in the basement of the Galeries Lafayette and on the first floor of the Printemps Haussmann (43 injured, December 7, 1985), an explosion on the first floor of the Claridge hotel shopping mall on the Champs-Élysées (1 dead, February 3, 1986), an explosion in the basement of the Gibert-Jeune bookstore, place Saint-Michel (5 injured, February 4, 1986), explosion in the Fnac-Sport store in the Forum des Halles (22 injured, February 5, 1986), an explosion in the Point Show gallery on the Champs-Élysées (2 dead and 29 injured, March 20, 1986), an explosion in the cafeteria of the Casino store in the Les Quatre Temps shopping center in La Défense (54 injured, September 12, 1986) [http://dictionnaire.sensagent.leparisien.fr/Attentat\\_de\\_la\\_rue\\_de\\_Rennes/fr-fr/-cite\\_note-3](http://dictionnaire.sensagent.leparisien.fr/Attentat_de_la_rue_de_Rennes/fr-fr/-cite_note-3) .

40 The brothers Mohamed Ali and Abbas Hamadei were involved in 1985 in the hijacking of a TWA plane to Beirut during which a passenger was coldly shot by the hijackers. The arrest of Mohamed Ali Hamadei, in Frankfurt on January 13, 1987, came the day after the arrest at Milan airport of another Lebanese, Bachir El-Khodr, found in possession of 10 kilograms of plastic. The West German police discovered on January 28, near Beckingen, in Saarland, a cache containing about twenty liters of methyl nitrate, a high-powered liquid explosive. The cache was indicated to investigators by Abbas Hamadei, who was arrested on January 26 at Frankfurt airport.

41 According to the DCRG census in March 1995.

42 A small-time thug from Vaulx-en-Velin, sentenced in 1991 to four years in prison for complicity in ram car robberies, Khaled Kelkal met Islamist clerics during his sentence; he learned Arabic and became radicalized, joining the ranks of the GIA.

43 On July 11, 1995, Khaled Kelkal was involved in the assassination of Imam Sahraoui, one of the founding members of the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) in disagreement with the GIA, and of his assistant, at the Khalid ibn al-Walid Mosque, rue Myrha in Paris (18<sup>e</sup>). On July 15, 1995, Kelkal participated in a shooting against gendarmes in Bron with his friend Karim Koussa. On July 25, 1995, he was involved with Boualem Bensaïd in the group that planted a bomb at the Saint-Michel-Notre-Dame station on line B of the Parisian RER; this attack left eight people dead and 117 injured. On August

17, 1995, he was involved in another attack at Place de l'Etoile in Paris, where a bomb injured 17 people. On August 26, 1995, he was involved in the attempted attack against the Paris-Lyon TGV line. Despite being hunted down, Khaled Kelkal managed to carry out two more attacks: on September 3, 1995, a defective bomb exploded in the Richard Lenoir market in the 11<sup>th</sup> district of Paris, injuring 4 people; on September 7, 1995, a bomb placed in a car parked in front of a Jewish school in Villeurbanne injured 14 people. On September 29, 1995, Khaled Kelkal was shot dead by the police in Vaugneray near Lyon.

44 In *Le Figaro* of February 1, 2002, the former commissioner of the RG, Lucienne Bui Trong, who created the “Ville et Banlieues” section, declared on this subject: *“Everything changed in January 2000. Everything confirmed the overall deterioration in the housing estates (...) this information was not politically correct (...) The forecasting tool that some people are now calling for does exist, but they prefer to put it in the closet (...) those who are now calling for more transparency are the very ones who did everything possible to hide the reality.”*

45 Direction générale de la sécurité extérieure (DGSE), Direction du renseignement militaire (DRM), Direction de la protection et de la sécurité de la défense (DPSD), Direction générale de la sécurité intérieure (DGSI), Direction nationale du renseignement et des enquêtes douanières (DNRED), and cellule de traitement du renseignement et d'action contre les circuits financiers clandestins (TRACFIN). France continues to rely on the Unité de Coordination de la Lutte Antiterroriste (UCLAT) created in 1984 to ensure operational coordination within the national police force, on a National Intelligence Coordinator established in 2008 and placed under the President of the Republic, and on an Operational Staff for the Prevention of Terrorism (EMOPT) created in June 2015 within the Ministry of the Interior. Since January 1, 2020, the UCLAT has been attached to the director general of internal security and the EMOPT has been integrated into the UCLAT since June 2018.