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THE ISLAMIC STATE AS A SOURCE OF TERRORIST THREATS

ABSTRACT: The article presents the Islamic State as a source of terrorist threats. In the eyes of ISIS fighters, the Western world is tantamount to moral corruption, and the lack of any values. By its actions, ISIS aims at pushing the followers of other religions out of the areas defined in the prophecies in the name of cleansing the world from evil. The author analyzes the activity of Islamic extremists in the context of the great wave of migration to Europe from the Middle East region. This phenomenon influenced changes in the international security environment, especially in the European Union countries. The author shows how ISIS, using ideology, pushes Islamic fundamentalists to prepare terrorist attacks. Combating such threats poses major challenges for anti-terrorist services.

KEYWORDS: Islamic State, ISIS, terrorism, terrorist threats.

The analysis of safety hazards, with particular emphasis on their types and directions, should begin by stating that contemporary activities in the security environment involve, to a large extent, non-government players. The real intentions and capabilities of these entities, however, are frequently unknown, which often contributes to a kind of chaos, in turn evoking a feeling of uncertainty in the international community. At the same time, these features can be considered as defining the current security policy. One can hardly disagree with the thesis that the assessment of the impact of security events and activities on one side of the globe may be completely different in another, distant part of the world. That is why threats may be equally

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overestimated or neglected. Moreover, the current security situation forces the global community to counteract the threats by engaging international organisations such as NATO, the UN or the EU in solving crises in the world. Increasingly more countries send their contingents to support international coalitions in crisis response operations. It is, therefore, important to identify the threats that influence the effectiveness of actions taken.

It should be stressed that the subject of threats is topical and discussed in research from various points of view. The term is used in the safety literature to describe a situation in which a state of danger for the surrounding environment appears, which may be expressed as having a direct or indirect destructive impact on the area¹. It also means a possible danger i.e. a prediction that certain phenomena will be unfavourable, the possibility of failure of planned actions or the loss of material or intellectual values, the state of the psyche or awareness influenced by phenomena assessed as unfavourable or dangerous, and factors causing uncertainty and fear².

In order to organise the considerations, typologies of hazards used in security sciences should be invoked. For instance, Roman Kulczycki adopted the time criterion and distinguished between dynamic hazards (D-type) and creeping hazards (C-type)³. He included hazards caused by forces of nature, technical malfunctions, epidemics, terrorism, warfare and public threats into the D-type, whereas the C-type involves political, social, cultural, environmental and information hazards. In this division, it is the time criterion which determines the categorisation. The D-type hazards enforce imminent reaction for the sake of their minimisation and are of short duration and variable nature. Creeping hazards are time-spanned and, thus, reactions to them by definition assume a long duration and staged actions for their neutralisation.

Currently, terrorism is primarily associated with Islamic radicalism, as confirmed by the phenomenon of the so-called Islamic State and the migration crisis, which increased the Muslim population, mainly in the western states of the European Union. Waves of people brought about internal hazards in European countries, which is best proven by the number of terrorist attacks in the past years. These are a result, *inter alia*, of the existence within the Muslim

¹ S. Koziej, *Między piekłem a niebem. Szare bezpieczeństwo na progu XXI wieku*, [in:] *Identyfikacja zagrożeń organizacji zhierarchizowanej*, M. Wrzosek (ed), Warszawa 2010, s. 20.

² *Ibidem*, s. 21.

³ *Ibidem*, s. 25.

population of groups which openly support jihad and are hostile to European law, traditions and customs.

In this context, the Islamisation of Europe is often mentioned. The term can be best explained with Muammar Gadhafi's words: 'We have 50 million Muslims in Europe. There are signs that Allah will grant Islam victory in Europe – without swords, without guns, without conquest –will turn it into a Muslim continent within a few decades'⁴. Currently, the Islamisation of Europe cannot be stopped; it can only be delayed by creating proper conditions for the Islamic population to integrate and adapt to the laws and rules applicable in Europe.

Islamic fundamentalism as a social threat in Europe dates back to the 1980s and 1990s when Yugoslavia broke apart and Islamic militants arrived in Bosnia. The special services of the United States and Germany were involved in that crooked operation hoping to weaken Russian influence in the Balkans. Subsequently, radicalism started to develop organically in European states, mainly in Germany. It is still said to be supported by Arabic states, such as Saudi Arabia or Qatar⁵.

Today, the terrorist threat in Europe is associated mainly with ISIS, hereinafter referred to as the caliphate or Daesh⁶. In this respect, special attention should be drawn to the declaration of sending hundreds of militant assassins together with the waves of refugees. New terrorist groups, however, should be expected to appear, whose objective would be to influence the indigenous European population. This is evidenced by conclusions drawn from investigations conducted in Belgium, France, Germany and the United Kingdom between 2015 and 2017, which showed that the key perpetrators were Muslim nationals of western states – a generation raised in the European spirit. The inquiries also proved that there was no clear

⁴ S. Duke, Islam is taking over Europe – Without Swords, Without guns, Without Conquest, *“Observer”*, 21 January, 2017. Retrieved August 31, 2020, from <https://observer.com/2017/01/muslim-population-europe-religion-growing-worldwide>.

⁵ J. Elsasser, *Wie der Dschihad nach Europa kam: Gotteskrieger und Geheimdienste auf dem Balkan*. Homilius, 2008.

⁶ The so-called Islamic State has many names and acronyms. The best known are: a) the Caliphate, which began to be used in June 2014 and expressed the ambition to rule Muslims around the world; it is the equivalent of an empire; b) ISIS, which is an acronym for Islamic State in Iraq and Syria; c) IS, which is an acronym for Islamic State; d) Daesh, which is Arab for Al-Dawla Al-Islamiya fil 'Iraq wal-Sham (Islamic State of Iraq and Great Syria). The name was used by French President François Hollande after the terrorist attacks in Paris and by President Barack Obama at the G20 summit in Turkey (15–16 November 2015). It was used because, in Arabic, it is similar to words such as: crumple, crush, destroy, smash and scrub and has pejorative connotations. According to the French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, the name "Daesh" does not give terrorists the dignity of a state, which is why it was adopted in the language of French diplomacy.

separation within the Muslim population, which would allow for a clear delineation of the most radical groups. Thus, neither their monitoring nor physical elimination is possible.

The Islamic State is a quasi-state entity created in mid-2014 in the territory of Syria and northern Iraq. It originated as a result of political and cultural disturbances after the 2003 Iraqi war and, in particular, due to the social and economic crisis that emerged after the conflict had ended. Numerous critics of American policy stress that the Iraqi Al-Qaeda was only formed in the chaos following the end of the military operations. Its ranks were filled by Hussain's troops, who were not admitted to the new Iraqi army. After the war, they emigrated to Syria where they joined the civil war and, having captured victory, returned to Iraq under the ISIS banner and swiftly took over ¼ of the country. Another factor was Barack Obama's decision in 2011 to withdraw US troops from Iraq. The so-created social gap became a goal not only for terrorists of various Islamic groups but also for Iran, which wanted to strengthen its influence upon Iraq.

It should be stressed that the califate's strategy remarkably differs from the actions taken by Al-Qaeda. It assumes export of its ideology and activities wherever opportunities allow, using all available resources which can be applied at a given place and time. Contrary to Al-Qaeda, the impressiveness and scale of a single attack are unimportant for ISIS, which cares more for the pace of actions, as shown by the large number and frequency of small attacks, which do not necessarily have to be carried out by assailants related to ISIS. Such operations are supposed to impact western societies and force them to subdue to Islamic radicals' demands.

According to researchers on Islamic extremism, ISIS cells are dispersed throughout most western countries, including the US, Canada and Australia⁷. In Europe, the Balkans are a highly sensitive region. Intelligence by special services has reported the creation of Islamic enclaves in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In its operations, ISIS strives to push out the believers of other religions from the territories prescribed in prophecies in the name of purifying the world from evil. They identify evil with other religions and the ideology of the western lifestyle, which is perceived by Islamic radicalism as the synonym of the worst moral values or lack thereof. Purification can only be achieved by the subordination of the western world, its conversion or its total extermination. That is exemplified by the crimes of Muslim radicals in Iraq and Syria, which fulfil the legal terms for

⁷ T. Otlowski, *Wojna z kalifatem: armia Państwa Islamskiego*, „Portal Geopolityka.online”, 03 December, 2014. Retrieved May 19, 2016 from <http://geopolityka.org/analizy/tomasz-otlowski-wojna-z-kalifatem-armia-panstwa-islamskiego>, s. 86.

genocide. The victims of Islamic persecutions include members of certain ethnic and religious communities – Turkmen, Christians, Yazidis and Kurds.

According to UN data, the califate militants count ca. 23–25 thousand Islamic radicals from over 100 countries, including Tunisia (over 3,000 fighters), Saudi Arabia (ca. 2,300)⁸ (Rahmani and Tanco 2016), Jordan, Morocco, France, the UK⁹, Australia (BBC 2015), Russia (Caucasus – about 1,000), and even Germany¹⁰. Also, jihadists from Finland and the Maldives have been noted. Military specialists believe the number is underestimated and it should be assumed that the actual number of militants totals 50,000, of which about 15–20 thousand have good military training and experience from the battlefield¹¹.

The basic recruitment source of fighters is draft among men aged 15 to 40 residing at the occupied territories. Taking into account the male population size of 4–4.5 million, this allows for the creation of a potential army of 80–140 thousand troops¹².

Recruitment from outside ISIS makes for a separate subject of analysis. Experts claim that within several months of its operations, ISIS recruited more foreign volunteers than all existing jihad structures put together in the previous 20 years. Their main asset is the highly religiously and ideologically motivated volunteers for the holy war, including those from western countries. Volunteers are solicited mainly among young people who are very susceptible to ideological manipulation, who struggle with the economic crisis and who face a future with no prospects. The best opportunities arise in Arab countries, which after the Arab Spring still struggle with strengthening security and ensuring adequate economic development (Libya, Tunisia).

⁸ B. Rahmani, A. Tanco, *ISIS's Growing Caliphate: Profiles of affiliates*. Wilson Center, 19 February, 2016. Retrieved August 31, 2020 from <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/isiss-growing-caliphate-profiles-affiliates>.

⁹ According to British data, since 2012, around 800 British citizens have fought on the ISIS side, of which around 400 are still in Syria and over 600 have been detained before joining Daesh, see: Daily News and Analysis, *600 Britons caught on way to join ISIS since 2012, says UK minister Philip Hammond*, "Daily News and Analysis", 16 January, 2016. Retrieved August 31, 2020, from <https://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-600-britons-caught-on-way-to-join-isis-since-2012-says-uk-minister-philip-hammond-2166533>.

¹⁰ According to the German secret service, about 450 German citizens have left for jihad, but the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung claims that there are 1,800 of them and they have their own detachment in the so-called Islamic State, see: B. Wielński, *Polacy, niesiemy wam szariat*, "Gazeta Wyborcza, Duży Format" (suppl.), 20 November, 2014: 8.

¹¹ T. Otłowski, *Wojna z kalifatem: armia Państwa Islamskiego*, „Portal Geopolityka.online”, 03 December, 2014. Retrieved May 19, 2016 from <http://geopolityka.org/analizy/tomasz-otlowski-wojna-z-kalifatem-armia-panstwa-islamskiego>.

¹² Ibidem.

While recruitment in Arab countries seems not to be surprising, soliciting militants from developed countries is controversial. Numerous experts in the field keep asking how is it possible that, in multicultural and democratic states, volunteers can be recruited for fighting and supporting the so-called Islamic State? A good example is the Salafi movement which enjoys remarkable popularity in Germany, and which is the most radical type of Islam. This expanding fundamentalist group has its main centre in North-Rhine – Westphalia, the region with the highest unemployment rate, which creates opportunities for attracting new believers. It should be pointed out that many Salafi grew up in Catholic families and there are also Polish immigrants amongst them. One of their intentions is to carry the word of God to Poland as well using our religious converts. The situation is similar in other EU states where social media play an important role in recruiting young people, especially when combined with the verbal pluralism inherent in their use¹³.

The problem of increasing radicalisation does not only affect certain states in Western Europe. Today, it impacts the security of all European countries, Poland included. The situation in Germany elicits particular concern, where, according to the data provided by the Federal Migration and Refugees Office in 2012, the number of Muslims reached 4.2 million (5.3% of the total population), of which 1.5 million are Turks (in 2014)¹⁴.

According to research by Jerzy Guź, in 2012, Germany was home to 210–336 thousand Muslim fundamentalists¹⁵. Among them, between 6,300 and 26,680 were members and active supporters of terrorist organisations¹⁶. His conclusions may be supported by other data, which state that annually ca. 4,000 people convert to Islam in Germany, including indigenous Germans, while the majority of second and third generation Muslim immigrants look for their religious roots¹⁷.

Poland is by no means excluded from the list of states within the sphere of interest of Islamic radicalism believers. According to experts, activities in the field began with Saudi King

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ A. Jarecka, 2015. *Rekord obcokrajowców w Niemczech. Najwięcej Turków i Polaków*, DW, 16 March, 2015. Retrieved July 19, 2016, from <http://www.dw.com/pl/rekord-obcokrajowc%C3%B3w-w-niemczech-najwi%C4%99cej-turk%C3%B3w-i-polak%C3%B3w/a-18319042>.

¹⁵ J. Guź, *Muzułmanie w Niemczech – lojalni obywatele państwa, „społeczeństwo równoległe” czy baza dla terroryzmu islamskiego. Wprowadzenie do zagadnienia [in:] Acta Erasiana V. Varia*, M. Sadowski (ed), Wrocław 2013, Retrieved August 31, 2020, from <https://repozytorium.uni.wroc.pl/dlibra/show-content/publication/41047?id=41047>.

¹⁶ Ibidem, s. 204-205.

¹⁷ B. Wieliński, Bartosz, Polacy, niesiemy wam szariat, „*Gazeta Wyborcza, Duży Format*” (suppl.), 20 November, 2014, s. 8.

Abdullah's financing of the surgery of Siamese twins from Janikowo in 2003. This apparently selfless gesture was intended to warm the image of the Saudis and initiate pro-Salafi activities in Poland¹⁸. A tangible effect of these medial activities was the construction of a Dialogue Centre in Janów. The facility does not play an important role in Polish–Islamic relations, but Saudi and Qatari money stream into other Islamic cultural centres in Poland. Statistics show that there are 10–11 thousand Muslims in Poland, of which only 1,100 belong to the Muslim Religious Association. Data collected by the Foreigners' Office show that between 1991 and 2015, over 80,000 Chechens moved through Poland, of which six thousand settled permanently here¹⁹. Currently, it is assumed that the absolute majority of Muslims in Poland do not present any radical tendencies. Numerous accusations of Islamophobia, however, addressed by Muslim centres against individuals who only try to analyse Muslim extremism do cause concern²⁰.

Analysis of the composition of the Muslim population in Poland shows that a threat may come from the Chechens²¹ who are mostly Salafi. This is exemplified by an operation of the Internal Security Agency in 2016, which eliminated a Daesh logistic cell formed by Chechen refugees. Money earned from human trafficking and the smuggling of weapons was allocated to support fundamentalist activities²². In the case of the Chechen group which has no formal minority status, one must remember that they constitute a hermetic environment with high ideological indoctrination. Honour and loyalty are their key values; therefore, so far, no Chechen has become a crown witness in any European state, police or prosecution authority²³. The idea of Russia using the Chechen community for its already verified actions within a hybrid war to disturb the legal and social order in Poland should be viewed separately.

¹⁸ Salafism is a religious trend in Islam.

¹⁹ M. Wojtalik, Ilu muzułmanów mieszka w Polsce? Polacy bardzo się mylą, „*Newsweek Polska*”, December 14, 2016. Retrieved June 18, 2016 from <http://www.newsweek.pl/polska/ilu-muzulmanow-mieszka-w-polsce-dane-i-wyniki-badan,artykuly,402066,1.html>.

²⁰ W. Repetowicz, „Terroryzm i salafizm – wyzwania dla Polski tu i teraz”, „*Defence.24*”, 17 August, 2015. Retrieved August 8, 2016, from <https://www.defence24.pl/terroryzm-i-salafizm-wyzwania-dla-polski-tu-i-teraz>.

²¹ A. Białous, Adam, „Kim są Czeczeni żyjący w naszym kraju”, „*PCh24.pl*”, 30 January, 2017. Retrieved June 20, 2017, from <http://www.pch24.pl/kim-sa-czeczeni-zyjacy-w-naszym-kraju--najliczniejsi-uchodzcy-wzbudzajaj-rozne-opinie-,49119,i.html>.

²² There are also earlier known cases of Polish Chechens supporting the activities of other terrorist groups, including the Emirate of the Caucasus, which was included in the UN list of terrorist organisations in 2011. Chechens take advantage of the fact that, in Poland, they are treated as victims of wars with Russia and, therefore, quickly granted refugee status. See more: L. Szymowski, *Szahidzi z gór Kaukazu*, Angora 2016, no. 32: 33.

²³ Ibidem.

Another risk group is found among Polish converts whose number is estimated at ca. 2,000 individuals²⁴ (The level of their unpredictability and danger is seen in the case of 24-year-old Jakub Jakus, wanted by an international arrest warrant for being a member of a terrorist organisation and creating conditions for recruitment for ISIS²⁵ Other confirmed cases of support and participation on the part of Daesh include the involvement of Karolina R., the wife of a Muslim jihadist, accused of supporting ISIS, and her brother Maksymilian R. who died in January 2015 during the Kurd offensive against Kirkuk in Iraq²⁶. Other deadly examples of religious conversion are those of Jacek S., a suicide terrorist who died in 2015 during an attack on a refinery in Baiji in Iraq²⁷, (and Adam N. aka Abu Bakr al-Sham arrested in October 2015 in Jordan²⁸, interviewed by ABC weekly. Both men were from Polish immigrant families in Germany and converted to Islam there, while their relations with Poland were not really strong. That is why Jacek S. adopted the name al-Almani, not al-Bulandi (Arabic names for Germany and Poland).

A natural consequence of the migration crisis and associated terrorist attacks are changes to the mentality of European societies. People feel fear against believers of Islam, which increases xenophobic attitudes. Feelings of threatened safety result sociologically in the radicalisation of public attitudes. A growing number of Europeans turn to political groups showing right-wing, racist and fascist attitudes. Public discourse among European societies increasingly frequently uses the slogans of war against radical Islam and simultaneously alleges that those in power refrain from clearly naming the enemy for the sake of political correctness.

Currently, it should be understood that terrorism cannot be fully eliminated; it can only be effectively kerbed. The terrorists' advantage today lies mainly in their good knowledge of the behaviour and vulnerabilities of the West. This mainly refers to special services procedures,

²⁴ R. Kulig, *Dlaczego Polacy przechodzą na islam*, „Onet.pl”, 20August, 2012. Retrieved January 9, 2016, from <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/religia/dlaczego-polacy-przechodza-na-islam/5n9dk>.

²⁵ Pk/tr, *Mówił, że jedynie zabił na razie psa. Dżihadysta z Polski*, „Tvn24.pl”, 08 September, 2016. Retrieved September 09, 2016 from <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/jakub-jakus-kim-jest-polak-w-panstwie-islamskim,674712.html>.

²⁶ Angora. 2015. “Zginął Polak islamista.” Angora, 2015, no. 7: 70, <https://www.angora.com.pl/spis.php?y=2015&w=07>.

²⁷ Dziennik.pl, *Urodzony w Polsce Jacek S. terrorystą Państwa Islamskiego. Wysadził się w samobójczym zamachu*, Retrieved August 8, 2016, from <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/swiat/zdjecia/497657,5,jacek-s-z-polski-islamski-terrorysta-panstwa-islamskiego-dzihadysta-wysadzil-sie-samobojczym-zamachu-zdjecia.html>.

²⁸ WPolityce.pl, *Polak walczący po stronie ISIS został zatrzymany w Jordanii. Polskie i niemieckie służby pozwoliły mu uciec*, 14 October, 2015. Retrieved August 19, 2016 from <http://wpolityce.pl/swiat/268404-polak-walczacy-po-stronie-isis-zostal-zatrzymany-w-jordanii-polskie-i-niemieckie-sluzby-pozwolily-mu-uciec>.

which are restricted by numerous legal regulations, as aptly exemplified in the case of Salah Abdelslam, the main suspect of the Paris attack (13 November 2015), who avoided arrest in his own home two days after the assault because Belgian law prohibits the police from running searches at homes after 9 p.m.²⁹

It should be stressed that, so far, Poland has been treated by terrorist groups only as logistical support (see: Fig. 1). Despite the reports on CIA prisons in Poland, we have not become a target on the global jihad map. There is limited threat related to a possibility of penetration of radicalism from the German side through Polish converts living there. It should be remembered though that a separate threat may come from our citizens tempted by the considerable amounts of money offered for smuggling people to Germany, as unintentionally they may help in preparing an attack.



Figure 1. Map of terror attacks in Europe. Poland has a strict no-migrants policy. Retrieved September 20, 2019 from <https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/poland-no-muslims-no-terror-map-100-fake-news/07/06/>.

²⁹ Angora. 2015. "Zginął Polak islamista." Angora, 2015, no. 7: 70, <https://www.angora.com.pl/spis.php?y=2015&w=07>.

As Polish society is ethnically uniform, this impedes the preparation of an attack in our country. A probable target of a terrorist attack could initially be Polish nationals staying abroad, including diplomatic staff and troops in missions and operations abroad, followed by Polish diplomatic posts abroad. In order to make attacks adequately spectacular, terrorists may target their actions to organised groups, e.g. tourists. It should be remembered that the risk may increase with the forecast new migration wave if the conflict in the Middle East escalates.

The financial aspect of ISIS operations also deserves a closer look. In 2015, the so-called Islamic State held 2 bn USD worth of property and assets. The main income sources include private sponsors from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, as well as from western states (about USD 50 M). A remarkable portion of ISIS assets comes from raw materials trade, namely petroleum and natural gas (ca. USD 480 M), and looted items of historic value (20–50% tax has been imposed on antiques sold). Profits gained from ransoms (kidnapping of businessmen, politicians, clergymen), human trafficking and human organs³⁰ (ca. USD 120 M in total) and taxes, including for using roads and the protection of non-Muslims (about USD 360 M), cannot be neglected. Industrial production and the mining industry also generate profits, including the sale of cement and phosphates (ca. USD 290 M), together with collecting goods appropriated during military operations (banks³¹, stores, warehouses, pharmacies), which are later distributed for the needs of the organisation and its people³².

The great efficiency of ISIS operations is possible due to the high morale based on the fighters' absolute faith, determination and motivation. In this field, the political and religious activity of imams in the caliphate and other parts of the world, Western Europe included, is of great assistance. Jihadi John, a 27-year-old British citizen born in Kuwait is the unquestionable

³⁰ According to Reuters, electronic documents obtained by the American special forces during the operation in eastern Syria contained religious recommendations (so-called fatwas) in which Allah allows to take organs from living prisoners, if it helps to save a Muslim. This is also permissible if the removal of an organ will cause the death of the prisoner (see: *Wirtualna Polska*, *Państwo Islamskie pobiera organy od „niewiernych”*, „*Wirtualna Polska*”, 26 December, 2015. Retrieved August 31, 2020 from <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/panstwo-islamskie-pobiera-organy-od-niewiernych-6027696101954177a/panstwo-islamskie-pobiera-organy-od-niewiernych-6027696101954177a>). According to the United Nations, the price of slaves on the markets ranges from 40 to 160 dollars and the price of organs, e.g. kidneys, on the black market ranges from 100 to 200 thousand dollars, see: P. Strawiński, *Państwo Islamskie. Najbogatsza organizacja terrorystyczna świata*, „*Onet*”, 19 November, 2015. Retrieved November 29, 2015, from <http://biznes.onet.pl/wiadomosci/swiat/panstwo-islamskie-najbogatsza-organizacja-terrorystyczna-swiate/b377x1>.

³¹ USD 420 M is estimated to be in the Iraqi bank taken over in Mosul, see: J. Zawadzki, *Nowa strategia terroryzmu międzynarodowego – kazus Państwa Islamskiego*, „*Kwartalnik Bellona*”, 2015, no. 3, p. 52.

³² P. Strawiński, *Państwo Islamskie. Najbogatsza organizacja terrorystyczna świata*, „*Onet*”, 19 November, 2015. Retrieved November 29, 2015, from <http://biznes.onet.pl/wiadomosci/swiat/panstwo-islamskie-najbogatsza-organizacja-terrorystyczna-swiate/b377x1>.

leader in this respect. Also, ideological brainwashing cannot be disregarded, especially when enhanced by psychotropic drugs. Information on the terrorist use of captagon³³, a drug derived from amphetamine, has been confirmed³⁴. It helps to boost the body's stamina and to overcome fear by increasing self-confidence and concentration, which has been observed during intensive attacks of ISIS militants. Its consumption is addictive and the more of it is taken, the more human personality changes. Considering the scale of use of suicide terrorist attacks on enemy lines, various sources suggest that the attackers must be fed with drugs. Another aspect of ideological indoctrination involves the training of children. That is the job of the so-called instructors, who teach the Quran and killing prisoners through a "find and kill" game (looking for a prisoner hidden in the ruins of an ancient castle)³⁵ and by participation in regular executions, like in the case of the killing of an alleged Israeli spy by a 12-year-old boy³⁶.

An important part in ISIS operations is played by skilfully and effectively introduced elements of psychological warfare, including live propaganda, especially in the social media – terrorising viewers with brutal media messages, mainly from mass executions. Such actions, focused on threatening western societies and Christians, are proven by the words of Adnani, spokesman for the Islamic State: 'We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women'³⁷.

Russia's involvement in combating international terrorism should be considered here. Russian military support during the conflict in Syria allowed the Syrian army to take over the initiative and regain many lost towns, as well as to create the proper conditions for the operation of pushing Daesh out of Syria. Simultaneously, Russia is very active on the

³³ Captagon – invented in 1961 in Germany and used as a drug in Europe and the United States to treat ADHD and depression before being used as a stimulant for athletes, students and party-goers. In 1986, it was declared a dangerous drug and banned. It was used in the Middle East, and since 2011 it has been experiencing a kind of renaissance, used by combatants of all denominations. It is mass produced in Syria and distributed in all Gulf countries, see: M. Motyka, J. Marcinkowski, *Nowe metody odurzania się. Część XI. Captagon – narkotyki używane przez terrorystów*, „Problemy Higieny i Epidemiologii”, no. 97(2): 118-124.

³⁵ J. Neurink, B. Dudek, *Dzieci – żołnierze Państwa Islamskiego. „Wiedzą, że przegrywają”*, DW, 18 October, 2016. Retrieved August 31, 2020, from <https://www.dw.com/pl/dzieci-%C5%BCo%C5%82nierze-pa%C5%84stwa-islamskiego-wiedz%C4%85-%C5%BCe-przegrywaj%C4%85/a-36071713>.

³⁶ See video: (Live Leak n.d.).

³⁷ Polska Times, Szokująca instrukcja ISIS. Państwo Islamskie radzi jak sprzedawać, bić i gwałcić niewolnice, „PolskaTimes.pl”, 15 December, 2014; last modified 8 December, 2018. Retrieved December 19, 2018 from <https://polskatimes.pl/szokujaca-instrukcja-isis-panstwo-islamskie-radzi-jak-sprzedawac-bic-i-gwalcic-niewolnice/ar/3684422/2>.

international scene building an image of a party most interested in stabilising the situation in the Middle East, while its official engagement in combating ISIS creates an opportunity to restore Russian influence in that region. Russia finds itself a victim of ISIS attacks following the shooting down of its passenger plane in Sinai on 31 October 2015 (224 people died)³⁸. It should be noted that in the name of the fight against the common enemy – Daesh – Russia is calling for turning a blind eye on its previous activities, e.g. the annexation of the Crimea, supporting Ukrainian separatists, and even ideological differences.

Initially, Russian operations against the Syrian opposition received an unfriendly reaction from the US and other western countries, which at the end of 2015 disregarded the creation of a common front against the caliphate. As early as September 2014, however, President Barack Obama stated that: 'Although we will not accept Russia's actions in Ukraine, our interests in the Middle East region potentially overlap'³⁹. Conversely, US cooperation with Russia provides an opportunity for a quicker solution of the Syrian problem, which is essential to defeat ISIS and stabilise the situation in the region. That view is confirmed by Americans, including officials from the Pentagon and the Department of State, who point out that Russian intervention is beneficial from the Washington point of view, as it relieves the US from the main burden of fighting Daesh⁴⁰.

In the case of Western countries, the migration crisis and the related internal anxieties seem to grasp fully the attention of the public. The United States keeps trying to maintain the coalition of about 70 states combating ISIS, mainly the Arab countries, and motivate them to a more effective fight. Operations against Daesh mainly involve air raids on targets in Syria and Iraq, supported by planes from the UK, France and Canada, as well as from Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Other Western countries, i.e. Germany, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland are involved in materially combating the caliphate, i.e. by sending military equipment. Since mid-2016, Polish troops have run a training mission in Iraq. Terrorist attacks in France on

³⁸ Mk, mm/ tka, gak, *Islamiści twierdzą, że zestrzelili samolot. Rosyjski minister nie potwierdza*, „Tvn24.pl”, 31 October, 2015. Retrieved March 12, 2016 from <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-ze-swiata,2/katastrofa-rosyjskiego-airbusa-na-synaju,590676.html>.

³⁹ P. Milewski, *Święta wojna*, „Newsweek”, no. 3 (January): 60. Last modified April 10, 2019, retrieved May, 2019 from <https://www.newsweek.pl/swiat/spor-miedzy-arabia-saudyjska-a-iranem-czy-grozi-wojna/qrypx5p>, s. 60.

⁴⁰ R. Stefanicki, *Rosja szykuje cios w Syrii*, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 23 September, 2015: 14. Retrieved September 28, 2015, from http://www.archiwum.wyborcza.pl/Archiwum/1,0,8070527,20150923RP-DGW,Rosja_szykuje_cios_w_Syrii,.html.

the editor of *Charlie Hebdo*, a satirical weekly, on 7 January 2015 and a coordinated attack in Paris on six different public utility facilities, including the Bataclan music club (13 November 2015) stimulated the country's activity in the fight against jihad. After the Paris attacks, France resumed air raids and attacked Daesh command centres in its informal capital Raqqa (Syria). The French air force operations were part of the merciless revenge proclaimed by the then French President François Hollande.

In the context of the discussed problem, a thesis by journalist Jakub Kapiszewski should be quoted: 'The Islamic State is strong with the weakness of its enemies'⁴¹. It matches experts' opinions, who point out that the present internal conflict in Syria and Iraq is nothing else than also-called substitute conflict, known from the Cold War period, among the key players in the region, namely Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, with Russia, the US and Israel in the background⁴². Thus, a socially dangerous situation is building up, which confirms previous forecasts by military specialists that destroying ISIS may take up to 30 years⁴³. It is difficult to fight against an enemy who is a religious fanatic with high morale, motivated towards action, often brainwashed, who fights with contempt for death, and who operates among civilians.

An analysis of ISIS components and operations may lead to the conclusion that it is a hybrid, operating under a combination of factors, formally and administratively loosely connected, but strongly bound with religion and ideology. It should be remembered that in the case of increasing losses on the part of ISIS, the risk of terrorist attacks worldwide increases. The Islamic State needs to be perceived as all-successful, so in the case of any defeats it will carry out attacks outside its territory.

The case of the Islamic State clearly shows that multi-annual involvement or remarkable resources in the fight against terrorism has, until now, failed to minimise the threat for a longer period. The weakening of Al-Qaeda was only an apparent success, as new fractions of terrorist organisations are continuously created. The weakening or eliminating of ISIS does not seem to herald the end of the jihad. Today, security specialists indicate key issues which may arise in

⁴¹ J. Kapiszewski, Pokonać Państwo Islamskie nalotami? 5 powodów, dla których to się nie może udać, „Dziennik.pl”, 14 November, 2015. Retrieved November 11, 2016, from <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/swiat/zdjecia/496795,1,wojna-z-panstwem-islamskim-bedzie-dluga-naloty-to-za-malo.html>.

⁴² R. Ciastoń, Zderzenie wewnątrz cywilizacji, „Polska Zbrojna”, August, 2015: 81.

⁴³ P. Henzel, „Na linii frontu”. Nowa strategia walki z ISIS? Gen. Odierno: powinniśmy przedstawić ten plan prezydentowi. „Onet”, 15 August, 2015. Retrieved August 18, 2015, from <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/tylko-w-onecie/na-linii-frontu-nowa-strategia-walki-z-isis-gen-odierno-powinnismy-przedstawic-ten/r9xzds>.

such a situation, i.e. fight for influence in the region between the coalition grouped around Saudi Arabia and Iran, and Shia militant operations, which can pose a real threat to the stability of Iraq. The most important in this respect may be the returning fighters from jihad, including citizens of Western countries, who will strive to continue their activities and rebuild their image. Also, the conflict may move (to Libya for example), while the jihad centre may relocate to Caucasian countries.

In conclusion, it can be stated that, by its actions, ISIS aims at pushing the followers of other religions out of the areas defined in the prophecies in the name of cleansing the world from evil. They identify evil with other religions and with the ideology associated with the Western lifestyle. In the eyes of ISIS fighters, the Western world is tantamount to moral corruption, and the lack of any values. The idea of purification can only be realised by subordinating, converting or destroying the Western world. It should be borne in mind that Poland, as a European country within the sphere of Western culture, as well as an ally of the United States and an active member of NATO, can be identified as one of the political goals of Islamic radicalism.

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