AN ANALYSIS ON THE ISLAMOPHOBIC ACTS IN FRANCE POST-ARAB SPRING

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Abstract

The discourse of Islamophobia in Europe has become increasingly popular after the endless war in the Middle East. The instability that hit the Middle East after Arab Spring and the civil war in Syria has forced some of its population to migrate to European countries, including France. The large number of immigrants who have entered France has also been accompanied by rampant acts of attacks and terrorism, thereby revives the feelings of Islamophobia among the native white French. Meanwhile, Front National as an ultranationalist party known for its racist anti-immigrant policies has gained more influences in France by using Islamophobic narratives. In its political campaign, Front National uses the concepts of Laicite to corner French Muslim in the public sphere. The presence of French Muslim community is considered as a threat toward secular values and Christian civilization. In this study, the author will analyze the increase of Islamophobia which has been triggered by the immigrant crisis and the influence of the right-wing movement. The concept of race by W. Thomas Schmid will serve as a theoretical framework to answer the increasing Islamophobia in France. To conduct the research, the author uses the qualitative method to analyze texts and narratives related to the Islamophobia acts in France. This research concluded with a statement that Islamophobia in France post-Arab Spring generally occurs in three aspect: cognitive, motivational and behavioral aspects. A tendency of certain groups in the French society which looks Islam as a racial problem becomes one of the main roots of the rise of Islamophobia

Intisari

Wacana Islamofobia di Eropa berkembang pesat, didorong oleh intensitas konflik di Timur Tengah yang tidak berkesudahan. Instabilitas yang melanda kawasan Timur Tengah pasca Arab Spring dan perang saudara di Suriah mendorong sebagian besar penduduknya untuk melakukan imigrasi ke berbagai wilayah di Eropa, termasuk Perancis. Hal ini membangkitkan kembali perasaan Islamofobia di beberapa kalangan penduduk Perancis yang berkulit putih. Dalam kondisi ini, Front National sebagai partai ultra-nasionalis menjadikan narasi-narasi Islamofobia untuk merebut pengaruh dalam politik Perancis. Front National juga menggunakan konsep Laicite untuk menyudutkan masyarakat Muslim di ranah publik. Kehadiran kelompok Muslim di tengah-tengah penduduk Perancis dianggap dapat mengancam nilai-nilai sekuler dan peradaban Kristen. Dalam tulisan ini, penulis akan menganalisis mengapa terjadi peningkatan Islamofobia yang dipicu akibat krisis imigran serta pengaruh gerakan sayap kanan. Penelitian ini menggunakan konsep Ras yang dikembangkan oleh W. Thomas Schmid. Dalam melakukan riset, penulis menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk mengkaji teks serta naskah-naskah yang terkait dengan tindakan Islamofobia di Perancis. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa Islamofobia di Perancis setelah Arab Spring terjadi dalam 3 aspek, yakni aspek kognitif, motivasional, dan behavioral. Adanya kecenderungan sebagian masyarakat Perancis memandang Islam sebagai masalah rasial menjadi akar penting yang menyebabkan berkembangnya Islamofobia di Perancis.

Kata kunci: Rasisme, Islamofobia, Sekularisme, Front National

A. Introduction

Negative prejudices have been directed towards Islam and Muslim since long times ago in Europe. Nevertheless, as the hatred, negative prejudices, and discrimination towards Muslims are increasing in Europe, the number of Muslim believers is also increasing as well. In the case of France, currently there are approximately five million French citizens who are adhering to the Islamic faith. This number is currently the largest number of Muslim minority population in the

Western Europe.[1] In 2016, the figure of French Muslim population reaches 5,7 million citizens, or approximately 8,8% from total amount of French population.[2] The particular increase of French Muslim population propels racist movements which have strong tendency of Islamophobia.

Islamophobia could be defined as a form of fear which is based upon negative prejudices about Islam and Muslim which eventually affected toward the anger and hatred toward the Muslim community. The phenomenon of Islamophobia in France has started to rise since the September 11 terrorist attack. Several survey and research conducted, such as one conducted by European Monitoring Research Center in 2002 indicated that September 11 promoted the rise of hatred against Muslim communities in many European countries, especially France[3]. Before the terrorist attack of September 11, the relations between Muslim immigrant and native white French population were nominally in good terms. The change of attitude and behavior of native white French population toward Muslim immigrants were caused by perception of several French which considered Islam and Muslims to be responsible for the terrorist attack.[4]

Particularly after September 11, some of native white French population wanted Muslim immigrants to leave France because of their fear against Islam and things that are related to Islam. According to data surveyed by CCIF, it is reported that between 2003-2004 alone there are 182 Islamophobic acts in France. This Islamophobic acts consisted of individual attacks against individual Muslims, attack against Mosque, destruction of Muslim cemeteries and forced closure of architectural/construction projects related to Islam/Muslim communities [5]. The

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[1] BBC, "*Presiden Prancis Emmanuel Macron: 'Jangan memberi cap buruk kepada Muslim dan pemakai hijab'.*, BBC, accessed October 25, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/dunia-50088950

[2] Hackett, C. "*5 Facts about the Muslim population in Europe*", *Pew Research*, accessed November 25, 2019 https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/29/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe/

[3] Allen, Christopher, Jorgen S. Nielsen. 2002. *Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001.* Vienna: EUMC and Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Department of Theology, The University of Birmingham. https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/199-Synthesis-report_en.pdf

[4] Pabotinggi, Mohtar. Potret politik kaum muslim di Perancis dan Kanada (Makasar: Pemadani, 2008)

[5] Euro-Islam, "*A Collective Tries to Count Islamophobic Acts*", Birmingham University, accessed November 25, 2019, https://more.bham.ac.uk/euro-islam/2004/10/21/a-collective-tries-to-count-islamophobic-acts/

terrorist attack on Charlie Hebdo office which had caused the death of 12 people in 2015 increased negative sentiments toward Muslim in France. After the attack, the mobilization of right-wing political movements against Muslim becoming more stronger than ever[6]. Islamophobic acts were subsequently increasing 110% higher or twice than the figure in 2014.[7] According to *The Collective Against Islamophobia in France* (CCIF/*Collectif Contre L'Islamophobie en France*), Islamophobia in France has been increasing to an alarming rate of 500%, which was recorded in the first trimester of 2015.[8]

The presence of Muslim was eventually considered, especially by right-wing politicians in France, as a phenomenon which eventually triggered serious evaluation toward French political principles of "*Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite*" which is included as part of Republican principles in the French constitution of 1946 and 1958. This principle of "*Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite*" is considered as a "safe refuge" of French citizenship identity. But, what currently happens in France is actually the opposite of these principles, which could be expressed in the terms of "*Inequality, Divisions, and Abuse of Power*".[9] The emergence of Islamophobia acts in France has smudged the equality and brotherhood. It is obvious that the phenomenon of Islamophobia in France has not only been a threat toward Muslim communities in Europe, but also affecting the security and stability in European countries. Muslim communities are the main victim from the emergence of the extremist right-wing groups in Europe. The terror attacks conducted by these extremist right-wing groups has clearly show the anti-Muslim stance of these groups.[10] There have been many researches which tried to discuss the case of Islamophobia in France. Most of these researches,

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[6] CNN, *Setahun Tragedi Charlie Hebdo, Warga Perancis Terpecah*, accessed October 25, 2019, https://www.cnnindonesia.com/internasional/20160106150304-134-102620/setahun-tragedi-charlie-hebdo-warga-perancis-terpecah

[7] CNN, *Sentimen Anti-Islam di Perancis Meningkat 110* Persen, accessed October 25, 2019, https://www.cnnindonesia.com/internasional/20150121141219-134-26240/sentimen-anti-islam-di-perancis-meningkat-110-persen

[8] Shadiq. F, *Tindakan Islamophobia Di Perancis Melonjak Hingga 500%*, accessed October 25, 2019, https://www.kiblat.net/2015/04/17/tindakan-islamophobia-di-perancis-melonjak-hingga-500/

[9] Williamson, Lucy. *What do liberty, equality, fraternity mean to France now?*, BBC, accessed October 25, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36775634

[10] Bayrakli, Enes and Farid Hafez, European Islamophobia Report 2018, SETA, accessed February 10, 2020, https://www.setav.org/en/european-islamophobia-report-2018-eir2018/

such as by Mondon and Winter, has been dedicated to discuss the issue of republican secularism and Islamophobia[11]. Another research, such as by Najib, is trying to discuss the relations between Islamophobia and inequality in Greater Paris[12]. Another mostly cited research conducted by Silverstein also successfully presented the relations between antisemitism and Islamophobia in France[13]. So far, there has been a few researches which entirely focused to discuss the issue of Islamophobia as part of racism itself, such as research by MacMaster[14]. This research would like to position itself as looking the problem of Islamophobia as a part of racism issue in France. The main difference that distinguishes this research from the others would be in the usage of conceptual framework by Schmid.

B. Methodology

Conceptual Frameworks: Schmid's Racial Approaches

The word "race" comes from French word "race" and has its Latin root from the word of "*radix*", meaning "root". Race is a social conception which emerges due to the constructed categorization of people based on their genetic differences. The effect of this categorization is difficult to be identified due to the nature of racial prejudices and actions which could be done consciously or unconsciously. The act of racism is usually done by humiliating the victim based on his/her identity and cultural background. This kind of act would eventually be having a serious consequence of certain nations' or countries' destruction in its political, social, or economic system.[15]

According to W. Thomas Schmid, the definition of racism could be seen in 3 different approaches, which are the behavioral approach, the motivational approach, and the cognitive approach.[16]

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[11]   Mondon, A and Aaron. Winter. "Charlie Hebdo, republican secularism and Islamophobia" In *After Charlie Hebdo: Terror, Racism and Free Speech*, ed. Gavan Titley, et al. (London: Zed Books, 2017)

[12]   Najib, K. "Spaces of Islamophobia and spaces of inequality in Greater Paris". *Journal of Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* (July 2020), 1-20

[13]   Silverstein, Paul. 2008. "The Context of Antisemitism and Islamophobia in France". *Patterns of Prejudice* 42(1): 1-26

[14]   MacMaster, N. 2003. "Islamophobia in France and the Algerian Problem" in *The New Crusades, Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, eds. Emran Qureshi and Michael Sells (New York: Columbia University Press)

[15]   Samovar, Lary. *Komunikasi Lintas Budaya*, (Jakarta: Salemba Humanika, 2013)"

[16]   Schmid, W. Thomas. 1996. "The Definition of Racism," Journal of Applied Philosophy, 13(1): 131-40. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24354200

Table 3.
Three Approach of Racism by W. Thomas Schmid

Approach	Indicator
The behavioral approach	Ethnocentric behavior
The motivational approach	The consideration of racial inequality based on the tendency of wanting to dominate certain "inferior" races
The cognitive approach	The emergence of superiority against another racial identities/communities. The cognitive refers to the act of discrimination being done by the "superior" race against the "inferior" race

According to Schmid, the best definition of racism could be reflected in the motivational approach. Because this particular approach is not only imposing an excessive pride of certain racial identity, but also having a strong desire to annihilate another "inferior" racial identities. This desire is shown through imposition of verbal violence, racial slurs, or the worst of all, genocide. Currently, most of French citizens believed that only native white French or those who are willing to assimilate to French national identity could enjoy the privileges of social and civil rights, including the rights to be free from discriminatory acts conducted by the governments.[17] As most of the French Muslim were coming as immigrant, they encountered many difficulties to obtain equal chance in work and education.

The debates surrounding the issue of immigration could be defined as a context of insecurity that is considered to be threatening the essence of national identity in the era of globalization. This resulted in new exclusivist practices which involved substantial level of racialization. By looking through the indicators, it could be argued that Islamophobia in France has been worsened through racialization in social, cultural, political and even economic aspects. Furthermore, French Muslim immigrants are also considered as a community which ideas and way of life goes against the values of French nation.[18]

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[17]   Doty, Roxanne Lynn. *Anti-Immigrantism in Western Democracies: Statecraft, Desire and the politics of exclusion*, (New York: Routledge), 2003
[18]   Taras, Raymond. 2013. "Islamophobia never stands still: race, religion, and culture", Ethnic and Racial Studies, 36(3): 417-433, https://doi.org/10.1080/0 1419870.2013.734388

C. Result and Discussion

1. Defining Islamophobia

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word Islamophobia was used firstly in Insight journal in year 1991. In another version of the story, the usage of the word Islamophobia could be found in an article entitled *Acces de delire islamophobe* written by Etienne Dinet and Slima Ben Ibrahim in 1925 in French language. There is also a version who said that the word Islamophobia was used initially during the course of Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979.[19] This term evolved to be a concept that was particularly used by political activists to describe the existence of threat and fear toward Muslim and Islam in the liberal democratic countries in the Western Hemisphere.

The term Islamophobia was officially used as a concept in 1997, when Runnymede Trust published a report entitled "Islamophobia a challenge for us all". Based on this report, the definition of Islamophobia could be referred to the existence of three phenomenon, which includes the baseless accusation and enmity against Muslims, the consequence of the enmity which resulted in deliberate discrimination against Muslims (either individually or collectively), and the disenfranchisement of Muslim from the political and social affairs.[20]

Table 1.

Three Indicators of Islamophobia according to the Indicator of Runnymede Trust

No	Indicators	Explanation
1.	Baseless accusation and enmity against Muslims	Islam is accused to be a religion of violence and extremism, a false ideology, and the adherents of this believe are considered to be either alien to the local community or terrorists.
2.	Consequence of the enmity which resulted in deliberate discrimination against Muslim	Muslims are having difficulties in obtaining opportunities for job interviews and furthering their career because of their Muslim names and Muslim origin.

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[19] Aswar, Hasbi. "Mobilisasi Muslim dalam Membendung Aksi dan Narasi Islamofobia di Amerika Serikat," in Isu-Isu Dalam Hubungan Internasional Kontemporer Perspektif Multidisiplin, ed. Hasbi Aswar (Yogyakarta: The Phinisi Press Yogyakarta, 2019), 19.

[20] Runnymede Trust, Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All, 20th-anniversary report, (London: Runnymede,2017), 1-5.

3.	Disenfranchisement of Muslim from the political and social affairs	The implementation of hijab and burqa ban for Muslim women that would eventually resulted in the inability of Muslim women to participate in public education and public life. Muslims who are having beard are also discouraged to participate in the public life as well.

Alongside this definition, the related definition on Islamophobia could also be referred to the first article of the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (ICERD):

Article 1

1. In this Convention, the term "racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

Based on that article, Islamophobia could be elaborated accordingly to this definition:

Longer definition: Islamophobia is any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin (or those Muslims or those perceived to be Muslims) which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

In the context of France, the phobia against Muslim adherents and communities are mainly adopted as a political stance not only by politicians, but also by intellectuals, activists, and mass media from various ideological spectrum. This kind of idea was particularly promoted by Marie Le Pen from the Front National party whose provocative statements toward Muslim has caused huge damage towards French Muslim community.[21] The narratives on Islamophobia became an effective weapon for right-wing parties' political propaganda. Some examples of the narratives including the argument

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[21] Aswar, Hasbi. "Mobilisasi Muslim dalam Membendung Aksi dan Narasi Islamofobia di Amerika Serikat," in Isu-Isu Dalam Hubungan Internasional Kontemporer Perspektif Multidisiplin, ed. Hasbi Aswar (Yogyakarta: The Phinisi Press Yogyakarta, 2019), 22.

who considered that Muslim involvement in the social and political life in Western Hemisphere could threaten the very existence of Western and Judeo-Christian civilization in Europe. A relatively similar argument could also be seen in the view of some people who correlates the arrival of immigrants from Muslim countries could cause the rise of terrorist attacks and another criminal acts in Europe.[22]

The spread of hatred narratives against Muslim communities has also impacted the private lives of Muslim communities. It is important to mention that in the research conducted by Zorlu and Frijters, the rise of hatred which fueled attacks toward Muslim community resulted in the low-level of confidence and well-being in Muslim population in European countries[23]. In another research, the public discourse of Islamophobia and hatred narratives against Muslim also leads to two rising phenomena: (1) rising Islamophobism in a society would want Muslim to give up their heritage and (2) in the case of Muslim suppression, it is not seen in the context of religion but rather in the context of ethnic engagement[24]. In the case of France, some policies have been enacted to restrict the freedom and rights of Muslim communities in public life. These policies include the Anti-Burqa Law (*La Loi Contre La Burqa*) which was proposed by Jean-Francois Cope, the President of *Union pour un Movement Populaire*/UMP, the French right-wing party on April 11, 2011 in the *Assemble Nationale* (French Parliament). It could be said that Islamophobia in France has fulfilled the definition and indicators of the Islamophobia. The increasing rate of Islamophobia in France has been caused not only by the rampant discrimination conducted by right-wing political groups, but also legitimized as part of legal regulations in the country.

2. Understanding *Laicite* as a French-Style Secularism

France is still implementing a legal system which is based on secular system. The separation between the secular/political affairs with religious affairs is generally known with the term *laicite*, in which a country should stand up neutrally against any religious believes.

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[22] Bayrakli, Enes and Farid Hafez, European Islamophobia Report 2018, SETA, September 27, 2019, https://www.setav.org/en/european-islamophobia-report-2018-eir2018/

[23] Zorlu, Aslan and Paul Frijters. 2018. "The happiness of European Muslims post-9/11". *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42 (16): 23-44

[24] Kunst, Jonas R., Talieh Sadeghi, Hajra Tahir, David Sam, Lotte Thomsen. 2015. "The vicious circle of religious prejudice: Islamophobia makes the acculturation attitudes of majority and minority members clash". *European Journal of Social Psychology* 46 (2): 249-259

In other words, there should not be any kind of intervention done by religious clerics upon the matters of state and governance, especially in the process of decision-making. State could not also involve and intervened in any kind of religious affairs[25]. This regulation has been legalized in 1905 French Law on the Separation of the Church and the State. This law stipulated many regulations that would eventually resulted in full separation of the religious and secular/political affairs in France. The early objectives of the implementation of this law is to weaken the influence of Catholic hierarchy in France and to put the position of Catholic hierarchy in France in the same position as any other religion/religious groups in France.

The 1958 French Constitution clearly delineated the application of rigid secularism as mentioned in the first article of the constitution:

"La France est une République indivisible, laïque, démocratique et sociale. Elle assure l'égalité devant la loi de tous les citoyens sans distinction d'origine, de race ou de religion. Elle respecte toutes les croyances"...

In English translation:

"France shall be an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic. It shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race or religion. It shall respect all beliefs" ...

As France develop its political system, the conception of *laicite* or *laicism* could be seen in two kind of interpretations, which are strict and soft interpretations. The group who adopts the strict outlook consisted of people who affiliate themselves to "Republican left" political ideologies, feminists, and teachers' union. This strict group argues that the restriction toward the role of religion should be done in order to ensure freedom and liberty from the oppression of religious hierarchy. The group who adopts the soft outlook mainly consisted of people who affiliate themselves with "left multiculturalism". These people include human rights advocate, the religious leaders from Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities. This group considered the importance of state's respect toward various religious believes and state should provide funding toward to support religious education in the public schools.[26]

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[25]   Celestine Bohlen, "France Takes a Back Seat to Germany in E.U. imigrant Crisis", accessed June 11, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/22/world/europe/france-europe-migrant-crisis-germany.html

[26]   Fetzer, Joel S. and J. Christopher Soper, France: Laïcité and the hijāb in Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 73, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511790973.004

There are several things which differentiate secularism in France from the other version. If laicism a la France is to have some moral prescription, it could be explained in these three points:

1. A clear caution towards the role of clerics in the state affairs,

2. Republic as the sole moral and political authority,

3. The full and clear separation between the state and the church,

In the context of 21st century, it is clear that Islam is replacing the role that was once filled with Roman Catholic hierarchy in the battle between religion and state in secular France. Constitution-wise, the French constitution had clearly stipulated that French secularism would be mostly applied on practical and procedural terms. Ideally, French secularism would be closer to the idea of constitutional political liberalism. Nevertheless, the current political debates in France are mostly founded upon the opposite fundamentals of the liberal understanding of secularism itself, which has been clearly explained in the Constitution.[27]

3. The Rise and The View of Right-Wing Political Movement towards Islam and Laicism

One of the right-wing political groups which has been successfully gained significant traction in France is the *Front Nationale* party. This party is still developing and becoming an umbrella party which represents the interests of racist, nationalist, fascist and xenophobic movements in France. One of the issues that is often raised by the *Front Nationale* is the issue of migration flow from Middle East, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa to France. The issue of migration has become a sensitive and complex issue that often triggers public debates that involves political groups from various ideologies. Although the rate of migration flux is always fluctuating each year, right-wing parties and political groups whose political interests represented mainly by *Front Nationale* always try to securitize the issue of migration by viewing the existence of migrants as a threat to national security and national identity of France.

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[27] Assemblée nationale, *Rapport d'information au nom de la Mission d'information sur la pratique du port du voile intégral sur le territoire national* [Information Report in the Name of the Parliamentary Fact-Finding Mission on the Wearing of Full-Face Veils on National Territory. (Paris: Assemblée Nationale, 2010), 546-559

Grafik 1.

Net Migration in France from 2014 - 2019
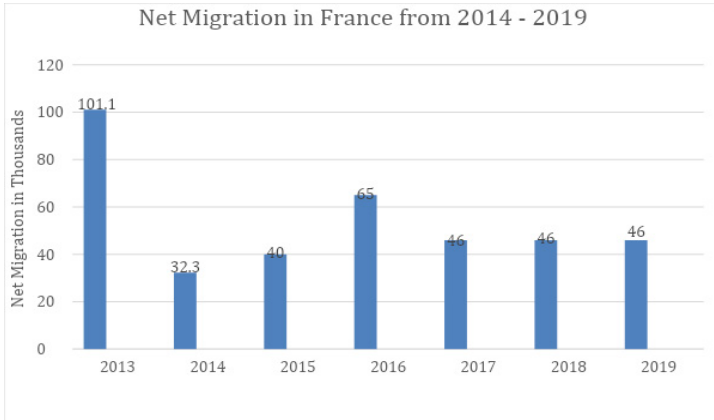
Source: Statista Research Department

It is during 2015-2016 that series of terror attacks and crisis allegedly caused by migrants began to reach its ultimate peak. Taking advantage from this condition, right-wing political party tried to gain confidence from the public by exploiting the migrant and migration policy. In the 2017 Presidential Election, *Front Nationale* is trying to propose their own leader, Marine Le Pen to become party's presidential candidate. While the *Front Nationale* is not totally successful in winning the presidential election, they successfully managed to increase their seats in *Assemble Nationale,* thus bringing their party and right-wing ideology to a more important position in French politics. During the election, Marine Le Pen mostly emphasized her campaign by using populist rhetoric. In the words of Ivaldi, Le Pen is trying to do "de-demonization" to make *Front Nationale* acceptable to their potential constituents in France.[28] *Front Nationale* is also trying to make itself closer to the constituents in the leftist Republican groups which are notable for their strict laicism. Exploiting the conception of *laicite, Front Nationale* is mobilizing people from various ideological spectrum to ignite hatred against Islam and Muslim communities.[29]

Front Nationale also emphasized their political strategy to be more focused on the issue to defend secularism in French public life. The strong emphasis on laicism is intended to build a positive image of Marie Le Pen and *Front Nationale*, so that Le Pen and the party she led will be considered as the last standing protectors of the

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[28]   Ivaldi, Gilles. "A new course for the French radical-right? The Front National and 'de-demonization." (2014): 1-4, https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01059581

[29]   Dimitri, Almeida. Laizität im Konflikt: Religion und Politik in Frankreich. (Wiesbaden: Springer VS), 2017

Republican values. Thus, it will become easier for Le Pen to attract attention from various parts of French society on the sensitive issues by correlating the problems as threat toward the Laicism and Republican principle.[30] Following this logic, it will be easier for Le Pen to find acknowledgements and approval for discriminative actions against the religious minorities (in this case, Muslim community in France) as a form of action to defend the laicism and Republican values in the new era.[31]

Under the leadership of Marine Le Pen, *Front Nationale* has successfully brought the narrative of anti-Islam and anti-Muslim under the grand umbrella of "protecting Republican values and laicism". Several political debates ensued due to the threat that might be caused by the *Front Nationale* anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim acts, especially on the politics of multiculturalism. The *laicite identitiare* is founded upon the exclusivist ideals of republicanism. The meaning of exclusivist Republicanism brought by the *Front Nationale* is related to their strong attachment toward the Judeo-Christian philosophy as the backbone of the French society.[32]

4. The Islamophobia Acts in France after Arab Spring

The issue of Islamophobia is often related by politicians in France to the issue of national identity and racism. The former President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, is one of the examples of the leading politicians in France who often brought up the issue of Islamophobia by relating it with both issues[33]. This tendency also resonates into the daily politics of discrimination towards Muslim communities. Using the Schmid's racial theory, the Islamophobia acts in France which particularly happened after Arab Spring will be explained in three different approaches: the cognitive approach, motivational approaches, and behavioral approaches.

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[30] Dimitri, Almeida. "Exclusionary secularism: The Front National and the reinvention of laïcité." Modern & Contemporary France, (2017): 2-3

[31] Hajjat, Abdellali and Mohammed Marwan, Islamophobie. Comment les élites françaises fabriquent le «problème musulman» [Islamophobia. How French Elites Construct the 'Muslim Problem'], (Paris: La Découverte), 2013

[32] Baubérot, Jean Les sept laïcités françaises: le modèle français de laïcité n'existe pas [The Seven French Laïcités. The French of Model of Laïcité Does not Exist], (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme Les Editions de la MSH), 2015

[33] Times, New York. "Xenophobia: Casting Out the Un-French", New York Times, Aug. 5, 2010, https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/06/opinion/06fri2.html

a. The cognitive approach

The cognitive approach has indicators marked by the emergence of a belief that other races beside than white Europeans are inferior. In the cognitive approach refers to the act of discrimination as a paradigmatic action.[34] In its relation to Islamophobia, it can be seen that Islam is considered a threat due to the increasing number of Muslims in France has brought concern for some of the French population. In this cognitive approach, it could be derived that there is a rising concern on the increase of Muslim population in France. According to right-wing political groups, the increase of Muslim population will affect the secular values that have been adhered to by the native French.

The Islamophobia that surrounds France is also evident in the difficulty of access to worship for French Muslims, as happened in the case of Clichy-la-Garenne. This incident began when native French tried to prevent Muslims from praying on the street. Eventually it caused disputes from both parties. The dispute about the right of access to places of worship reflects a serious problem that happened nationwide. The rally, which involved more than 100 demonstrators, was led directly by Mayor Remi Muzeau, who also pressured the Muslims to prevent them praying in the town square. Worshipers have been praying there every Friday for months. This was done as a form of protest against the government that had closed the "prayer room/ mosques" in the city.

The presence of this action damaged the principle of secularism which has been upheld by France. CNCDH (*Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme*) or a National Advisory Commission on Human Rights in France, has guaranteed respect for religious freedom in social and political life. This principle has also been clearly stated in the 1949 Constitution which was later reaffirmed in Article 1 of the 1958 Constitution.[35] With the freedom guaranteed by the constitution, French Muslims should have been able to practice their religion freely like members of other religions.

b. The motivational approach

Using the motivational approach, Schmid tried to explain that the motivational approach is actually originated from a feeling of inequality

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[34] Schmid, W. Thomas, "The Definition of Racism," Journal of Applied Philosophy, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1996): 31-40. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24354200

[35] Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme [National Consultative Commission on Human Rights], Laïcité, accessed July 18, 2020, https://www.cncdh.fr/fr/dossiers-thematiques/laicite

and a strong determination to humiliate another "inferior race". This can be done through an open action, such as an open action by doing a direct discrimination toward another racial groups and directing racial slurs that is offensive toward another race. This motivational action is actually a continuation of the cognitive approach.

This practice could be seen in a statement expressed by Agnes Cerighelli, local representative of Saint-Germain-en-Laye in West Paris. In his statement, he declared his position against Muslim and North African candidates running for mayor in the upcoming mayoral election in France[36]. This was done in order to limit the opportunities for Muslim obtaining position in public offices. It started when Cerighelli's social media account uploaded photos of Maghribi-origin French politicians who are candidates in the upcoming Paris municipal election Rachida Dati and Mounir Mahjoubi. The tweet said following statements in French:

> *Deux candidats maghrébins pour @Paris?! Sérieusement, en quelques années, la France a bien changé... #Paris #GriveauxGate #electionsMunicipales2020.* [37]
> **"Two Maghrebi candidates for Paris?! Seriously, in a few years, France has changed a lot".**

In his statement, Cerighelli also stated that Paris as the capital of France could not be led and managed by Maghrebi Muslim candidates. In another statement, he also emphasized that France is a Christian and a secular Republic. He told that every Catholic who supports the election of a Muslim is an apostate. Cerighelli also explained that North Africans residing in France will never be 100% French.

The approach that Cerighelli used allegedly aimed to restore secular values. Therefore, it is not surprising that the right-wing movement has regained its place in the hearts of French people. The motivational approach is a explaining how hate speech contributed to the increase of Islamophobia in France. Because in this view, racists are not only people who are prouder of their own race, but have a desire to humiliate other races by showing their racial superiority in various ways, both verbal violence such as by expressing racial slurs.

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[36] Hekking, Morgan. "French Councilor: 'Paris Cannot be Governed by a Maghrebi Candidate'." Morocco World News. Feb 16, 2020, https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2020/02/293813/french-councilor-paris-cannot-be-governed-by-a-maghrebi-candidate

[37] Cerighelli, Agnes (@AgnesCerighelli). 2020. "Deux candidats maghrébins pour @Paris ?! Sérieusement, en quelques années, la France a bien changé … #Paris #GriveauxGate #electionsMunicipales2020." Twitter, February 14, 2020, https://twitter.com/AgnesCerighelli/status/1228464935140810752

c. The behavioral approach

This approach is considered as a combination of various other approaches that emphasize the motivation and the cognitive aspects of racial acts. Based on data reported by CCIF, the phenomenon of Islamophobia that occurred in France places public institutions as the main actors in carrying out Islamophobic acts[38]. As seen in the diagram below:

Grafik 2.

Division of Islamophobic Acts

- ■ Institution
- ■ Moral Person
- ■ Physical Person

8%

37%

55%
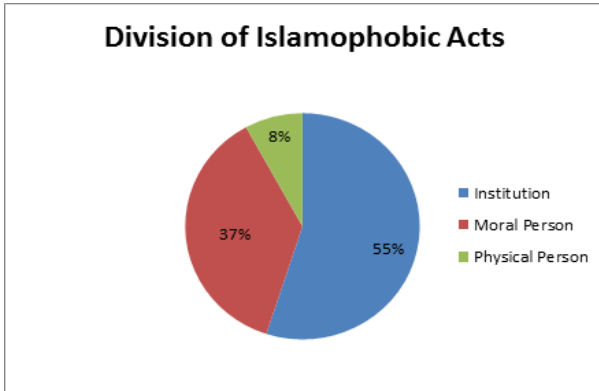
Source: CCIF Annual Report

Islamophobic narratives are the main selling point in political campaigns of many political groups in France. Among the narratives being promoted are related to the "invasion" of Muslim immigrants who will annihilate the existence of the white nation and European Judeo-Christian civilization. In other words, it is assumed by most right-wing politicians that the entry of Muslim immigrants will increase the number of terrorists and other criminal acts in the European region[39]. The position of Muslims and Islamic symbols in France has often sparked debate. Contemporary issues such as the wave of immigration from the Middle East after the Arab Spring to the cases of terror attacks that have not been resolved wisely have made people start to worry about various threats that can threaten national security and political stability in France. Thus, the ever-expanding the influence of the right-wing political groups on the French political scene has influenced the

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[38] CCIF(Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France)[Collective against Islamophobia in France], Report of Islamophobia in 2018, (La Plaine Saint-Denis: France Keyser / M.Y.O. P.), 2019

[39] Aswar, Hasbi. "Mobilisasi Muslim dalam Membendung Aksi dan Narasi Islamofobia di Amerika Serikat," in Isu-Isu Dalam Hubungan Internasional Kontemporer Perspektif Multidisiplin, ed. Hasbi Aswar (Yogyakarta: The Phinisi Press Yogyakarta, 2019), 23.

political orientation of the French society.[40]

Currently, the reality of Islamophobia in France is more worrying than ever. According to the report data provided by CCIF, it could be summarized and concluded that Islamophobia has increased especially in 2015 and has increased again in the last 3 years, particularly 2017, 2018, and 2019. In 2015, the phenomenon of Islamophobia had increased to 905 cases. Then in 2016 it experienced a decrease of -35.9% compared to the previous year. However, from 2017 to 2019 the phenomenon of Islamophobia in France has again increased. In 2018, there were 676 acts of Islamophobia reported. Within a year, there was an increase of 52% since 2017, in which 446 cases were recorded.[41] Then in 2019, there were 789 cases, an increase of 17% compared to the previous year.

In 2015–2019, Islamophobia in France had experienced an increasing trend. Even though in 2016-2017, it had experienced a decline, Islamophobic actions have again increased from 2017, 2018 and 2019.[42] The increase in Islamophobia in the last 3 years cannot be separated from the influence of Front National as the basis for the French right-wing movement that entered the government in the 2017 presidential election. Marine Le Pen as a figure from Front National has an important role in the politicization of Xenophobia and Islamophobia into the public space with anti-Islamic calls because it has disturbed the purity of French values.

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[40] Langenbacher, N and B. Schellenberg, Is Europe On The "Right" Path? Right-wing extremism and right-wing populism in Europe, (Berlin: The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2011), 17-25, https://progressivepost.eu/wp-content/uploads/Is-Europe-on-the-Right-Path.pdf

[41] CCIF(Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France)[Collective against Islamophobia in France], Report of Islamophobia in 2018, (La Plaine Saint-Denis: France Keyser / M.Y.O. P.), 2019

[42] CCIF(Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France)[Collective against Islamophobia in France], Rapport 2020 l'islamophobie en France: *Rapport du Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France sur l'année 2019* [Islamophobia in France 2020 Report: *Report of the Collective against Islamophobia in France for the year 2019*]. Paris: rapport. *Islamophobie*.net, 2020, accessed October 5, 2020. https://issuu.com/ccif/docs/rapport_ccif_2020

Grafik 3

Census of Islamophobic Acts 2015-2019
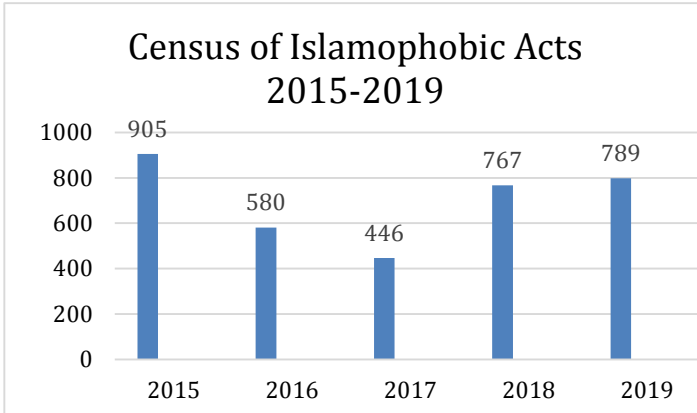
Source: CCIF Annual Reports

Meanwhile, racial identity is closely related to national identity. French identity is reflected in the slogan of *Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite* which prioritized the principles of freedom, equality and togetherness as a country. Thus, society should be more tolerant in dealing with various differences. The understanding of Islamophobia is not an opinion, but an understanding that is rooted in acts of racism and alienation against minority groups through physical, verbal, and symbolic violence.

Thus, it could be concluded that based on a report published by CCIF shows the validity of the application of Laicite in France in running the government. The current centrist government could be considered as failed in providing protection towards the minority Muslim community in France and guaranteeing the implementation of the principles of "*Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite*" is considered a failure of the current centrist government. It is also clear that there are some people who want to confuse the basic principles of *Laicite*, because for them basically anything related to Islam is anti-republican.[43]

D. Concluding Remarks

In this study, the authors tried to analyze the phenomenon of Islamophobia in France by engaging with the concept of race by W. Thomas Schmid through 3 approaches. First, the cognitive approach, which is marked by the emergence of the belief that races other than Europeans are inferior. This cognitive approach refers to stereotypical actions that eventually lead to discrimination, in which Islam is

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[43] Ismoyo, Petsy Jessy. "Islamofobia Di Prancis: Diskriminasi Perempuan Muslim Maghribi." Cakrawala 5, no. 2 (2016): 220.

considered a threat. The increasing number of Muslims in France has brought concern for some of the French population, because it is considered to affect the purity of French values and French nation. Second, the motivational approach arises a desire to dominate based on a particular race. In this approach there is an attempt to humiliate other races so that they can show the superiority of their own race. This can be done through both from various open actions, such as differences in treatment of other races against other races or through acts of verbal violence such as using racist nicknames.

This motivational approach is a continuation of the cognitive approach. This is proven in the example of deliberate rejection toward Maghrebi-origin French people who wanted to involve in the French political life. Third, the behavioral approach is considered a combination of various characteristics that emphasize behavior, motivation and cognitive approach. This approach identifies series of racist attitudes and practices. In its relations to Islamophobia, this approach also functions using a series of ethnocentric or racial bias that could be found among a certain racial group.

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