

Islamic Activism and the Counterterror state
The Impact of the Securitised Lens on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark

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Project Abstract

This project aims to answer the following research question: How has the development of a securitised lens impacted on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark? To achieve this, it will explore the construction of a securitised lens, the impact of securitisation processes and the difference between responses within Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) in Britain and Denmark through the following three sub-questions: 1. How do we know securitisation is an issue for Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark? 2. How can we understand securitisation as creating patterns of repression through perception? and 3. What are the long-term effects of this experience of perceived repression in the different contexts? It aims to do this through an approach that brings together the two theoretical discussions of social movement theories and securitisation theories through the nexus of repression. This enables the project to understand patterns of repression and mobilisation response, as well as respond to the limitations of both theoretical facets – social movement theory’s difficulty in understanding subtler, long-term and multi-spatial forms of repressions and securitisation theory’s disposition to assume power only travels downwards, from monolithic repressor to repressed, without an interactive response amongst all actors.

The project took an empirical approach grounded in interaction with members, ex-members and those who operate in and around security – something considered particularly important in the study of an organisation that is semi-clandestine in its operation. This included attendance at demonstrations, public talks, da’wah stalls, Friday prayers and mosques talks, as well as halaqat (private study circles), social events, meetings at coffee shops, family meals, weddings and even participation in football practice, with fieldwork conducted between 2015 and 2018. Conceptually, the thesis is designed to fill gaps in contemporary study of the Islamic Activist organisation Hizb ut-Tahrir, updating the literature on an organisation that study has largely neglected in recent years but has become more relevant with the addition of discourse about ‘extremism’ in European counterterrorism. However, this thesis aims to offer a basic framework not just for understanding Hizb ut-Tahrir or even Islamic Activism, but for any forms of activism that are problematised under the increasing rubric of ‘extremism’, and explore how different groups from diverse movements change tactics in response to the threat or perception of repression by policies, practices or policing under the counterterrorism lens.

It suggests the following findings: 1. Increased securitisation has been instrumental in the decline of HT in Britain and Denmark; 2. However, securitisation has had different effects in the UK than in Denmark, leading to adaption and institutionalisation in the British context and a continuation of contention in the Danish context; and 3. This is because different perceptions of repression have been created by the use of different securitising mechanisms, suggesting that the concept of counterterror securitisation needs to be reconsidered as a more interactive and diversified process, to account for the quanta of securitisation and mobilisation responses produced.

The thesis is structured accordingly: Chapter one briefly outlines the questions to be addressed through the project. Chapter two explores the current literature on the topic and the gaps requiring redress. Chapter three details how the research was carried out and why such methodology was chosen. Chapter four outlines the theoretical tools used to understand what has been taking place. Chapter five details the case study of who is being researched, profiling Hizb ut-Tahrir ready for analysis. Chapter six explores the first sub-question: how do we know securitisation has become an issue for Hizb ut-Tahrir? Chapter seven responds to the second sub-question: how do we understand securitisation as creating patterns of repression for Hizb ut-Tahrir? Chapter eight analyses the final sub-question: what are the long-term effects of this experience of securitisation on Hizb ut-Tahrir and how can we understand this as an interactive process? Finally, chapter nine brings together all findings to determine the impact of the securitising lens on Hizb ut-Tahrir, examining alternative explanations and the limitation of this approach, as well as detailing the study's implications for the field and drawing recommendations for future research.

Table of Contents

Declaration and Statement of Copyright.....	11
Acknowledgements.....	13
List of Images.....	15
List of Figures.....	17
List of Abbreviations.....	19
Arabic Glossary.....	21
1. <u>Introduction</u>	25
1.1 Key Questions, Themes and Discussions.....	25
1.2 Impacts of the Study.....	28
1.2.1 The literature on Hizb ut-Tahrir.....	28
1.2.2 Repression through counter-terrorism.....	29
1.2.3 Theorising dialectical securitisation.....	30
1.3 Case Study Introduction.....	31
1.4 Case Study Rationale.....	33
1.4.1 Shared organisational links.....	33
1.4.2 Similar counterterror context.....	34
1.4.3 State-minority relations.....	34
1.4.4 Differing HT tactics.....	35
1.5 Methodological Overview.....	37
1.6 Theoretical Overview.....	38
1.6.1 Social Movement Theory.....	38
1.6.2 Securitisation.....	39
1.6.3 Theoretical Recommendations.....	40
1.7 Definitions of Key Terms.....	41
1.7.1 Islamic Activism.....	41
1.7.2 Securitising Lens.....	44
1.7.3 Social Movement Organisation.....	45
1.7.4 Repression.....	46
1.7.5 Mechanism.....	47
1.7.5.1 Authority Repression Mechanisms.....	49
1.7.5.2 SMO Response Mechanisms.....	49
1.8 Conclusions.....	50
1.9 Personal Remarks.....	50

2.	<u>Literature Review</u>	53
2.1	Islamic Activism.....	53
2.2	Hizb ut-Tahrir.....	58
2.3	Social Movements.....	67
2.4	Literature Review Findings.....	72
3.	<u>Methodological framework</u>	74
3.1	Access.....	74
3.1.1	Study Sites.....	77
3.2	Research Data.....	83
3.2.1	Interviews.....	83
3.2.2	Ethnographic and Survey Data.....	84
3.2.3	Documents.....	85
3.3	Ethics.....	86
3.4	Legal Barriers.....	91
3.5	Negotiating Barriers of Access.....	92
3.6	Time and Budgetary Constraints.....	94
4.	<u>Theoretical Framework</u>	95
4.1	Securitisation.....	95
4.2	Social Movement Theory.....	98
4.3	Repression.....	105
4.3.1	The Repression-Mobilisation Nexus.....	109
5.	<u>Hizb ut-Tahrir</u>	117
5.1	Historical Development.....	117
5.2	HT Activism in Western Europe.....	119
5.3	Democracy and Engagement.....	121
5.4	Organisational Activism.....	125
5.5	Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain.....	127
5.6	Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia.....	131
5.7	Indigenous Organisational Strength.....	133
5.7.1	The Maajal Crisis.....	134
5.7.2	The Global Redress.....	140
5.8	Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia.....	146
6.	<u>The Securitising Lens</u>	150

6.1 Discursive Evidence of the Securitising Lens.....	150
6.1.1 Events.....	152
6.1.2 Actors.....	156
6.1.3 Political Lean.....	162
6.1.4 Frames.....	168
6.1.5 Media Conclusions as Evidence of the Securitising Lens.....	172
6.2 The Impact of the Securitising Lens on HT.....	174
6.3 Environment Degradation under a securitised lens.....	177
6.3.1 Wali’s Study of HTB Demographics (2011).....	179
6.3.2 Survey of HT Activists.....	182
6.3.2.1 The demographics of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain.....	182
6.3.2.1.1 HTB Event I: Protest I.....	182
6.3.2.1.2 HTB Event II: Protest II.....	184
6.3.2.1.3 HTB Event III: Talk I.....	185
6.3.2.2 The demographics of Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia.....	186
6.3.2.2.1 HTS Event I: Talk I.....	186
6.3.2.2.2 HTS Event II: Talk II.....	187
6.3.2.2.3 HTS Event III: Protest I.....	188
6.3.2.3 Results: Changing Demographics.....	189
6.3.2.4 Means of Engagement.....	193
6.3.2.4.1 Contrasting the Datasets on Engagement.....	195
6.3.2.5 Causes for Demographic Change.....	197
6.3.3 Conclusions on Degrading Environmental Resources.....	203
7. <u>Repression</u>	207
7.1 Introduction.....	207
7.2 Boykoff’s Repression Mechanisms.....	208
7.3 Counter-terrorism.....	209
7.3.1 The Development of Counterterrorism in the UK.....	209
7.3.2 The Development of Counterterrorism in Denmark.....	212
7.4 Action Modes of Repression.....	217
7.4.1 Action Mode 1: Direct violence.....	218
7.4.2 Action Mode 2: Public Prosecutions and Hearings.....	221
7.4.3 Action Mode 3: Employment Deprivation.....	226
7.4.4 Action Mode 4: Surveillance and break-ins.....	229
7.4.5 Action Mode 5: Infiltration, ‘badjacketing’ and the use of agent provocateurs.....	232
7.4.6 Action Mode 6: ‘Black propaganda’.....	234
7.4.7 Action Mode 7: Harassment and harassment arrests.....	234

7.4.8	Action Mode 8: Extraordinary rules and laws.....	237
7.4.9	Action Mode 9: Mass media manipulation.....	241
7.4.10	Action Mode 10: Mass media deprecation.....	243
7.5	Repression and Emulation.....	244
7.5.1	Resource Depletion.....	244
7.5.2	Stigmatisation.....	250
7.5.3	Divisive Disruption.....	251
7.5.4	Intimidation.....	256
7.5.5	Emulation.....	257
7.6	Conclusions.....	262
8.	<u>The Repression-Mobilisation Nexus</u>	265
8.1	Micro: HT's framing response.....	265
8.1.1	New developments in HT frames.....	238
8.1.1.1	Diagnostic Frames.....	266
8.1.1.1.1	Malign Western Influence in the Islamic World.....	266
8.1.1.1.2	Structural inequality of minorities in the West.....	267
8.1.1.1.3	Securitisation of national Muslim communities.....	270
8.1.1.2	Prognostic and Motivational Frames.....	272
8.1.1.3	The Master Frame.....	274
8.1.2	Frame Degradation.....	275
8.1.2.1	The Arab Uprisings.....	276
8.1.2.2	The Khilafah.....	280
8.1.3	Framing Conclusions.....	284
8.2	Meso: The Securitisation and HT's organisation.....	285
8.2.1	Front Groups.....	286
8.2.2	Allies.....	290
8.2.3	Meso-Level Conclusions.....	294
8.3	Macro: Interactive Securitisation Processes.....	295
8.3.1	Tracing Securitised Mechanisms.....	298
8.3.2	Mechanisms and their impacts.....	300
8.3.2.1	First order mechanisms: Initial Mechanisms of Securitisation.....	300
8.3.2.1.1	Threat Identification.....	301
8.3.2.1.2	Political Opportunity Structure (POS).....	304
8.3.2.1.3	Discursive Opportunity Structure (DOS).....	305
8.3.2.2	First order mechanism impacts.....	306
8.3.2.2.1	Greater Costs of Activism.....	306
8.3.2.2.2	Membership Disengagement.....	306

8.3.2.2.3	Frame Displacement.....	309
8.3.2.3	Second Order Mechanism: Response to Mechanisms of Securitisation.....	310
8.3.2.3.1	Alliance Building vs. Front Groups.....	310
8.3.2.3.2	Contentious vs. Institutionalised Activism.....	311
8.3.2.3.3	Radical vs. Moderate Framing.....	312
8.3.2.4	Second order mechanism impacts.....	312
8.3.3	Modelling Interactive Securitisation.....	313
8.3.3.1	Further use of the Interactive Securitisation Model.....	314
8.3.3.1.1	Case 1: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2001-2008).....	315
8.3.3.1.2	Case 2: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2008-2017).....	315
8.3.3.1.3	Case 3: al Muhajiroun (2001-2017).....	316
8.3.3.1.4	Case 4: Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia (2008-2017).....	317
8.4	Repression-Mobilisation Nexus Conclusions.....	318
9.	<u>Conclusions</u>	319
9.1	Project Findings.....	319
9.2	Project Limitations.....	324
9.3	Findings beyond the Research Questions.....	326
9.4	Final Conclusions.....	329
	Bibliography.....	333
	Primary Research Interviews.....	350

Declaration

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List of Images

Image 1: <i>Kaffehuset, Nørrebrogade, 'a favourite of the brothers'</i>	78
Image 2: <i>al Faruq HTS gift shop</i>	79
Image 3: <i>al Faruq HTS gift shop</i>	79
Image 4: <i>al Faruq HTS gift shop</i>	80
Image 5: <i>HTS women activists at a demonstration, Copenhagen</i>	81
Image 6: <i>A young activist amongst an HTB demonstration, London</i>	82
Image 7: <i>An activist holds up the HT flag, with police in the background, London</i>	82
Image 8: <i>Poster for HTS talk on Rohingya Muslims, Copenhagen</i>	187

List of Figures

Fig. 1: Overview of core interview participants.....	84
Fig. 2: Coleman’s model of macro-micro-macro relations.....	112
Fig. 3: Media articles published on HTB (UK).....	153
Fig. 4: Media articles published on HTS (Denmark).....	154
Fig. 5: Total number of articles published on HT per year (UK & Denmark).....	155
Fig. 6: Number of articles quoting directly HT sources per year (UK and Denmark).....	156
Fig. 7: Percentage of articles quoting HT sources per year (UK and Denmark).....	157
Fig. 8: UK articles on HTB against number of press releases by HTB per year.....	158
Fig. 9: Number of press releases by Hizb ut-Tahrir branches (UK and Scandinavia).....	159
Fig. 10: Percentage of UK media articles engaging with members, neutral and hostile ex-members.....	161
Fig. 11: UK national articles on Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (Left vs. Right-leaning).....	163
Fig. 12: Danish national articles on HTS (Left vs. Right).....	164
Fig. 13: Political orientation of UK national articles on HTB as percentage.....	165
Fig. 14: Political orientation of Danish national articles on HTS as percentage.....	166
Fig. 15: The political orientation of national articles as lean from perceived centre (0.00).....	167
Fig. 16: HT framed in the context of extremism and related terms (UK and Denmark).....	169
Fig. 17: HT framed in the context of radicalism and related terms (UK and Denmark).....	170
Fig. 18: HT framed in the context of terrorism and related terms (UK and Denmark).....	171
Fig. 19: Percentage of UK articles referring to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain using securitised terms.....	172
Fig. 20: Percentage of Danish articles referring to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain using securitised terms.....	172
Fig. 21: Age of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain members recorded by Wali (2011).....	180
Fig. 22: Age of activists present at Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain events (London, 2016-17).....	189
Fig. 23: Age of activists present at Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain events (Copenhagen, 2016-17).....	190
Fig. 24: Demographics of those present at HTB and HTS events studied against Wali’s findings (2011).....	191
Fig. 25: Demographics of those present at protests (London & Copenhagen) against Wali’s findings.....	192
Fig. 26: Demographics of those present at talks (London & Copenhagen) against Wali’s findings.....	192
Fig. 27: Means of Engagement with HTB events (London, 2016-17).....	193

Fig. 28: <i>Means of Engagement with HTS events (Copenhagen, 2016-17)</i>	194
Fig. 29: <i>Means of Engagement with HTB and HTS events (London and Copenhagen, 2016-17)</i>	195
Fig. 30: <i>Reported Action Modes of Repression (UK and Denmark)</i>	218
Fig. 31: <i>Action Mode 1 – Direct Violence</i>	218
Fig. 32: <i>Action Mode 2 – Public prosecutions and hearings</i>	221
Fig. 33: <i>Action Mode 3 – Employment Deprivation</i>	227
Fig. 34: <i>Action Mode 4 – Surveillance and break-ins</i>	229
Fig. 35: <i>Action Mode 5 – Infiltration, ‘badjacketing’ and the use of agent provocateurs</i>	232
Fig. 36: <i>Action Mode 6 – ‘Black propaganda’</i>	234
Fig. 37: <i>Action Mode 7 - Harassment and harassment arrests</i>	234
Fig. 38: <i>Action Mode 8 – Extraordinary rules and laws</i>	238
Fig. 39: <i>Action Mode 9 – Mass media manipulation</i>	242
Fig. 40: <i>Action Mode 10 – Mass media deprecation</i>	243
Fig. 41: <i>Coleman’s model of macro-micro-macro relations</i>	298
Fig. 42: <i>Political Opportunity Structure</i>	305
Fig. 43: <i>Discursive Opportunity Structure</i>	306
Fig. 44: <i>First Order Mechanism Impacts</i>	310
Fig. 45: <i>Alliance Building vs. Front Groups</i>	311
Fig. 46: <i>Contentious vs. Institutionalised Activism</i>	312
Fig. 47: <i>Radical vs. Moderate Framing</i>	312
Fig. 48: <i>The Interactive Securitisation Model</i>	313
Fig. 49: <i>Case 1: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2001-2008)</i>	315
Fig. 50: <i>Case 2: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2008-2017)</i>	316
Fig. 51: <i>Case 3: al Muhajiroun (2001-2017)</i>	317
Fig. 52: <i>Case 4: Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia (2008-2017)</i>	317

List of Abbreviations

ALM	Al Muhajiroun
AQ	Al Qaeda
BNP	British National Party
CP	Contentious Politics
CT	Counterterrorism
CVE	Countering Violence Extremism
DOS	Discursive Opportunity Structure
DCLG	Department for Community and Local Government
EDL	English Defence League
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FEI	Further Education Institution
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HO	Home Office
HT	Hizb ut-Tahrir
HT1	Majority Hizb ut-Tahrir branch
HT2	Breakaway faction of Hizb ut-Tahrir
HTB	Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain
HTI	Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia
HTS	Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia
ICSR	International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence
ISD	Institute of Strategic Dialogue
IS/ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
LTF	Loyal to Familia
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MENA	Middle East and North Africa

MP	Member of Parliament
MPACUK	Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSM	New Social Movement
OBM	Omar Bakri Muhammad
POS	Political Opportunity Structure
PPM	Political Process Modelling
QF	Quilliam Foundation (now 'Quilliam')
RMT	Resource Mobilisation Theory
SMT	Social Movement Theories
SMO	Social Movement Organisation
TJ	Tablighi Jamaat
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

Glossary

<i>Allahu Akbar</i>	الله أكبر	God is the greatest (response to takbir)
<i>Ash'ari[sm]</i>	الأشعرية	Sunni doctrine based on clerical authority
<i>'Aqeedah</i>	عقيدة	doctrine
<i>Beyah</i>	بيعة	allegiance
<i>Dawah</i>	دعوة	invitation
<i>Deen</i>	دين	religion
<i>Emir</i>	أمير	leader
<i>Halaqat</i>	حلقة	circle, ring (in this case, 'study circle')
<i>Haram</i>	حرام	forbidden
<i>Hijab</i>	حجاب	religious code of modesty/headscarf
<i>Hizb</i>	حزب	party
<i>Hizb al-Wa'ed</i>	حزب الوعد	the Party of Promise
<i>Hizb ut-Tahrir</i>	حزب التحرير	the Party of Liberation
<i>Ikhwan</i>	الإخوان	the [Muslim] Brotherhood
<i>Imam</i>	إمام	Leader of the mosque
<i>Insha'allah</i>	ان شاء الله	'God Willing'
<i>Jihad</i>	جهاد	struggle
<i>Jilbab</i>	جلباب	robe
<i>Jamaat</i>	جماعة	group
<i>Kafir</i>	كافر	non-Muslim
<i>Kufr</i>	كُفر	denial or rejection of Islam
<i>Khalifa</i>	خليفة	Caliph
<i>Khilafah</i>	خيلافة	Caliphate/Islamic state
<i>Khutbah</i>	خطبة	'Sermon'
<i>Majaal</i>	مجال	field
<i>Masjid</i>	مسجد	mosque
<i>Minbar</i>	منبر	mosque 'pulpit'

<i>Muhajiroun</i>	المهاجرون	the migrants
<i>Mukhabarat</i>	مخابرات	intelligence agency
<i>Mutamid</i>	المعتمد	the approved/the one you rely on
<i>Naaqitun</i>	الناقطون	'those who drop out'
<i>Nafsiyyah</i>	نفسيه	disposition
<i>Niqab</i>	نقاب	a cloth which covers the face except the eyes
<i>Nusrah</i>	نصرة	victory
<i>Qadir</i>	قدير	qualified
<i>Riba</i>	ريا	usury
<i>Salah</i>	صلاة	prayer
<i>Salat al-jumu'ah</i>	صلاة الجمعة	Friday Prayers
<i>Salafism</i>	السلفية	Sunni revivalist movement
<i>Shab/Shabab</i>	شاب/شباب	young man/HT activist
<i>Shalwar Kameez</i>	شلوار قميص	baggy trousers and shirt traditional of Indian subcontinent
<i>Shari'a</i>	شارع	religious law/way
<i>Suria</i>	شورى	consultation
<i>Taariqah</i>	طريقة	the seeking of truth
<i>Takbir</i>	تَكْبِير	an invocation
<i>Ummah</i>	أمة	people
<i>Wilayah</i>	ولاية	state/province
<i>Wasatiyya</i>	الوسطية	centrism/'the middle way'

1. Introduction

1.1 Key Questions, Themes and Discussions

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) in Britain were a vibrant 'Islamist' group, known for provocative political tactics, well-honed doctrinal texts, colourful large-scale conferences and significant presence in higher education institutions. The launch of a Danish branch in 1999 by British members and the huge Birmingham conference of 2003 pointed towards a future of growth and expansion.¹ However, this period turned out to be a high watermark, with Western branches increasingly receding in their membership, influence and scope.² The incomplete collapse of the party in Britain is comparable to the more recent, gradual decline of the Danish branch and the case studies offer an opportunity to understand how such Islamic activist movements have been degraded in a political environment that, whilst in many ways conducive to their party message and activism, has increasingly seen Islamic activism posited through a securitised lens.³ This project offers a means of addressing significant gaps in current literature on Hizb ut-Tahrir and the impact of securitisation processes on problematised (oft-called 'extremist') groups. Methodologically, the project was carried out using 43 in-depth interviews with HT members, ex-members and security services in the UK and Denmark, along with over 200 hours of ethnographic study of activist engagement at events, surveys of 250 members and activists at six official HT events, and discursive analyses of government policy and over 8,000 media articles. The project looks to analyse HT through the harmonisation of tools from two theoretical schools – securitisation and social movement theories – which are bridged by utilising concepts of repression. In a European context increasingly concerned about security – particularly Islamic activism and its cited links to 'extremism' – it is crucial for researchers, governments, citizens and activists (Islamic or otherwise) to understand the wide-ranging impacts of the expanding securitised lens on a variety of elements within Western societies and politics. The case study of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark offers just such an opportunity to do this.

¹ Kathy Evans, "Radical Time-Bomb under British Islam," *The Guardian*, 7th February 1994.

² Ed Kessler, "If I Am Right, Must You Be Wrong?," *Independent*, 2nd September 2018 2018.

³ Jocelyne Cesari, "Securitisation of Islam in Europe," *Die Welt des Islams* 52 (2012).

The marked change and decline in the activism of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark has taken place alongside new international articulations of terrorism and counterterror response. The attacks of 2001 in New York and Washington DC, the Madrid bombings in 2004 and the London bombings of 2005 ushered in the *War on Terror* and the new security paradigm of counterterrorism which is in place today.⁴ Whilst initial responses to the 2001 attacks were largely reactionary, utilising ‘hard’ articulations of power, since 2005 the expansion of counterterrorism structures has shifted focus towards ‘softer’ articulations of power, aimed at pre-crime prevention, to safeguard ‘vulnerable’ individuals from being drawn into ‘extremism’ or ‘radicalisation’.⁵ Critics see this as both legitimising wider securitisation processes in European societies and de-politicising the grievances of more radical political groups – as often espoused by Islamic activist organisations.⁶ This new context has had significant ramifications for Hizb ut-Tahrir, a non-violent but avowedly anti-democratic, anti-integrationist ‘Islamist’ organisation that has often openly courted controversy in the West.⁷ By studying two Western branches of HT – both alike in their organisational structure, ideational framing and political context – this project will draw out how processes of securitisation have impacted differentially on Islamic activist groups in the post-2005 international context. It will explore the adaptations that HT in Britain and Denmark have undergone in response to the securitised lens under which it finds itself, to answer the primary research question:

How has the development of a securitised lens impacted on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark?

Within this core question has been identified three sub-questions, which act to disaggregate explorations of the securitised lens and its impact, as well as the differing responses by Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark. The first sub-question will ask why securitisation and the deployment of a securitised lens is significant for Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark, with the following sub-question:

i. How do we know securitisation is an issue for Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark?

⁴ Richard Jackson, Marie Breen Smyth, and Jeroen Gunning, *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda* (London: Routledge, 2009).

⁵ Jade McCulloch and Sharon Pickering, "Pre-Crime and Counter-Terrorism: Imagining Future Crime in the 'War on Terror'," *The British Journal of Criminology* 49, no. 5 (2009); Commission for Countering Extremism, "Study into Extremism: Terms of Reference," ed. Sara Khan (Commission for Countering Extremism, 2018).

⁶ Scott Poynting and David Whyte, *Counter-Terrorism and State Political Violence* (London: Routledge, 2012).

⁷ Kirstine Sinclair, "Same Old Message, New Wrapping: Hizb Ut-Tahrir's Activities in Denmark," (Syddansk Universitet: Centre for Mellemøststudier, 2011).

Through interviews, surveys and analysis of national-level media, this thesis will map how securitisation has developed and how members and activists in and around Hizb ut-Tahrir perceive the importance of securitisation for their party and their activism. Members, activists and counterterror practitioners, policymakers and police, have all sought to shape the political and discursive opportunity context within which HT operate. This constant battle for control of the arena of Islamic activism has often been played out through authority counterterror (CT) measures and HT activist responses, designating it an important site of contestation for study in understanding party activism.

The second sub-question explores how the application of a securitised lens has created a perception of repression amongst HT members and activists, and how this has been articulated and performed in interactions between authorities and HT, using the following sub-question:

ii. How do we understand securitisation as creating the perception of repression?

This question will detail how specific mechanisms of repression have been constructed and perceived by members as directly or indirectly targeting Hizb ut-Tahrir activism in Britain and Denmark. Through interviews with HT members and with counterterror practitioners, policymakers and police, it will determine how downwards repression mechanisms have been developed, implemented and have sought to influence the party. It will furthermore examine the perception of these mechanisms from the perspective of the activists themselves. This also allows us to engage with securitisation in a way which begins to account for regional differentiation of its application, illuminating counterterror policy and practice variations to better define the lens. From identifying securitisation as a key issue in sub-question one, we now determine that this issue is linked to repression through counterterrorism and start to track how this has been articulated from the perspective of HT members and activists.

Finally, through a multi-level, cross-case comparison of party branches in different national contexts, we can draw out what the long-term effects of this perceived repression have been on HT, using the following question:

iii. What are the long-term effects of perceived counterterrorism repression and securitisation?

This question enables engagement with securitisation in a way which accounts for diverging responses to similar counterterrorism mechanisms by Hizb ut-Tahrir regional branches. It enables us to analyse why Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (HTB) has chosen to adapt to the securitised lens through an institutionalisation of its activism, disengaging from contention, whilst Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia (HTS) has chosen to maintain contention as a useful tactic. Using the findings on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark, we can thus reconstruct how similar securitisation processes have been articulated differently by authorities and responded to differently by HT. This will support findings for future researchers exploring the impact of the securitised lens on other problematised organisations – allowing for a series of recommendations into future research on securitisation mechanisms and ‘extremist’ social movements to be made – as well as determining the limitations of such a mechanistically-inclined approach.

1.2 Impacts of the Study

This project is designed to create three demonstrable long-term impacts for the literature: 1. To update the literature on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Western Europe; 2. To explore how counter-extremism legislation, discourse and practice has been perceived as targeting and impacting upon Islamic activism through repressive means; and 3. To theorise the long-term effects of this securitised interaction between counter-extremism authorities and problematised social movement organisations (SMOs) such as Hizb ut-Tahrir.

1.2.1 The literature on Hizb ut-Tahrir

Firstly, the project aims to inform the literature on the decline of Hizb ut-Tahrir – a party which has received relatively less research time since its radical politics became eclipsed by other ‘Islamist’ groups such as *al Muhajiroun* (ALM), *al Qaeda* and *Islamic State in Iraq and Syria* (ISIS). These more visually obtrusive manifestations of ‘Islamism’ have become the *plat du jour* of recent academic and non-academic research and

funding,⁸ as governments scramble to develop adequate policy which responds to the alarmist media cycle of ‘Islamist terrorism’.⁹ Despite this decline in interest by researchers, Hizb ut-Tahrir has undergone significant and radical changes in their activism and influence in recent years, and it is important to update our understanding of what was once a more significantly observed and studied organisation. This also helps to inform our understanding of wider trends within European ‘Islamism’ in recent years, to consider how such non-violent ‘Islamist’ groups have developed within changing political contexts.

Another important reason for updating the literature is that consistent concerns have been raised from within academia about the quality of the research conducted on and around ‘Islamist’ groups, with a significant number of researchers avoiding direct engagement with members – either due to the perceived risk or difficulty in doing so, or from spurious concerns that such engagement would tarnish the data by amplifying and giving undue credibility to actors with problematic viewpoints.¹⁰ This research project is therefore designed to challenge this (mis)conception by engaging directly and unapologetically with members – both during the conducting of activism and in more ‘everyday’ situations – to understand how they operate within their current organisational, discursive and political context. In doing so, I hope to update the literature on Hizb ut-Tahrir through the words and actions of the party body members themselves, to provide a platform for voices rarely heard in similar research and to create a more accurate and comprehensive present-day assessment.

1.2.2 Repression through counterterrorism

Secondly, as well as updating the literature on Hizb ut-Tahrir’s development, this project explores how counterterror approaches – particularly post-2005 – have been perceived by Hizb ut-Tahrir members, activists and ex-members, to conceptualise how repression can be understood within counterterrorism. The project takes a normatively-open (although not politically neutral) approach to the data by conceptualising Hizb ut-

⁸ As Breen Smyth states, whilst the orthodox ‘terrorism’ research can more readily access professional opportunities, such as jobs and research funding, ‘the critical scholar, in comparison, ploughs a rather more difficult and lonely furrow’. Marie Breen Smyth, “Subjectivities, ‘Suspect Communities’, Governments and the Ethics of Research on ‘Terrorism’,” in *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda*, ed. Marie Breen Smyth & Jeroen Gunning Richard Jackson (London: Routledge, 2009). p.209

⁹ ‘The relentless focus on terrorism and security in public discourse in the United States since [11th September 2001] has greatly exaggerated the threat it really poses – and concomitantly raised the level of fear terrorism can evoke’ Ziad Munson, “Terrorism,” *Contexts: All Politics is Social* 7, no. 4 (2008). p.78

¹⁰ Magnus Ranstorp, “Mapping Terrorism Studies after 9/11: An Academic Field of Old Problems and New Prospects,” in *Critical Terrorism Studies*, ed. Richard Jackson, Marie Breen Smyth, and Jeroen Gunning (London: Routledge, 2009). p.22

Tahrir members and activists as complex, 'reasonable' actors and individuals, neither a product of their structures nor their ideology.¹¹ It places key importance on understanding the party's political context, investigating how this context has been perceived by activists, how they have responded to it, and whether and how securitisation processes have contributed towards HT's change and decline. This offers a means of rationalising some of the reasons for changes within Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark. In a wider sense, it also aids in conceptualising the impact of counterterrorism and counter-extremism legislation on groups that are problematised – though not directly targeted – by such policy, programmes and policing. With the rise of discussions over extremism and counter-extremism – and the legal and definitional fudge that this inevitably entails – it is critical that research engages with the impact that it has on a variety of legally-operating but problematised groups, of which Hizb ut-Tahrir is one example.

1.2.3 Theorising dialectical securitisation

Thirdly and finally, the project aims to create a more sophisticated dialectic between two distinct theoretical toolsets sets to analyse the long-term impact that securitisation has had on social movement organisations such as HT. By drawing together theories of mechanistic social movement theories and securitisation, using concepts of repression as a bridging device between the two fields, we can address problems and limitations in both theoretical toolsets. This enables us to flesh out elements of social movement theory (SMT) that have struggled to adequately conceptualise subtler, long-term forms of repressions that are multi-spatial and more difficult to observe, whilst also creating a more malleable conceptualisation of securitisation as dialectical and interactive, consisting of quanta of processes, rather than one rigid and monolithic process. It will suggest that the implication that securitisation is a single, easily-identifiable process is problematic and that a significant number of 'securitisations' exist and need to be accounted for.

¹¹ Andrew Silke, "The Devil You Know: Continuing Problems with Research on Terrorism," in *Research on Terrorism: Trends, Achievements and Failures*, ed. Andrew Silke (London: Routledge, 2004). p.58; on 'reasonable' actors, see also Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (2003); Robert A. Pape and James K Fieldman, *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

The three impacts allow us to re-interpret recent developments in Western European Islamic activism to account for interactions between state authorities and social movement organisations and suggest recommendations for future analysis of such groups within the contemporary European counterterror state.

1.3 Case Study Introduction

The case study used to understand the impact of the securitised lens on Islamic activist groups is Hizb ut-Tahrir (or HT). Hizb ut-Tahrir, 'the Party of Liberation', was founded in Palestine on 17th November 1952 by Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani, an Islamic scholar and judge in the *shari'a* appeal court in East Jerusalem,¹² with the aim of replacing the 'colonialist regime' in Jordan with a *Khilafah*.¹³ Its ideology was greatly shaped by al-Nabhani's interactions with Western-educated intellectuals 'modern in their thought on political organisation and activity', as well as socialist Ba'athist activists, who convinced him of the need for 'revolutionary change in the Arab world and the unification of all Arab states'.¹⁴ He combined this Ba'athist pan-Arabism with 'political-Islamic' elements which framed an Islamic (rather than Arab) identity as *the* common denominator in the region.¹⁵ Rejecting European and Arab nationalisms as external impositions, he also criticised socialism and capitalism as constituting elements of a continued ideological assault by Western powers aimed at controlling the Middle East through perpetual political insecurity.¹⁶

Initially a member of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Palestine, Al-Nabhani echoed Sayyid Qutb's prognosis of global affairs, asserting that the Islamic world's shortcomings can be remedied through the revival of Islam amongst the *ummah* as a comprehensive guide for daily life.¹⁷ However, he rejected the MB as too moderate and accommodating of Western influences. Largely comprised of the Levantine-Palestinian diaspora, HT initially found support in Islamic-majority countries under al-Nabhani, before he was succeeded as leader after his death

¹² Simon Ross Valentine, "Monitoring Islamic Militancy: Hizb Ut-Tahrir, 'the Party of Liberation'," *Policing* 4, no. 4 (2010). p.412

¹³ al-Khilafah, "The Departure of the Caravan of Hizb Ut Tahrir: 'The Blessed Light That Originated from Masjid Al Aqsa'," Al Khilafah, <http://www.khilafah.com/the-departure-of-the-caravan-of-hizb-ut-tahrir-qthe-blessed-light-that-originated-from-masjid-al-aqsa/>.

¹⁴ Suha Taji-Farouki, "Islamic Discourse and Modern Political Methods: An Analysis of Nabhani's Reading of Canonical Textual Sources of Islam," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 11, no. 3 (1994). p.369

¹⁵ Kirstine Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain" (University of Southern Denmark, 2010). p.23

¹⁶ Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, *Political Thoughts* (London: Al-Khilafah Publications, 1999).

¹⁷ Ihsan Yilmaz, "The Varied Performance of Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Success in Britain and Uzbekistan and Stalemate in Egypt and Turkey," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 30, no. 4 (2010); Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones: Ma'alim Fi'l-Tareeq*, ed. A.B. al-Mehri (Birmingham: Maktabah, 2006); *ibid.*

in 1979 by another Palestinian cleric, Abu Yusuf Abdul Qadim Zalloom. In 2003, the organisation came under the current leadership of a third Palestinian, Ata Ibn Khalil Abu Rashta (alias Abu Yasin).

The party has grown and expanded and is now active throughout many parts of the world, with operative branches in at least 43 countries.¹⁸ In the Middle East, main bases of operations include Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Palestine and many Gulf countries, along with Jordan where the global leadership is based; however, its operational capacity has become increasingly constrained and it is banned from operating in most Muslim-majority countries.¹⁹ HT has also established a significant base in Central Asia, exploiting the ideological and political vacuum following the fall of Soviet communism, along with widespread socioeconomic poverty and disparity.²⁰ The party has furthermore founded bases for operations in Europe, the first European national branch established in West Germany in the 1960s, before the arrival of more significant branches in countries including Britain and Denmark in recent decades.

Despite their recent decline and the concurrent dwindling of research conducted on their activism, Hizb ut-Tahrir offers an interesting and relevant case study. Their recent activism in Western states has increasingly centred around concerns over the impact of counter-terrorism on Muslim and other minority groups in the West, and they have become highly engaged in the critical debate over Western state security.²¹ A semi-clandestine organisation, they are Janus-like in their operations, with both a relatively visible presence in both the UK and Denmark including public events and media presence, coupled with a closed, cell-based membership, requiring many years of commitment and learning to officially join. Whilst being an active 'Islamist' party and taking a hard-line, non-integrationist, anti-democratic stance within Muslim communities, they are avowedly non-violent – a view confirmed by even their most ardent of critics.²² Yet they operate within a space that is becoming increasingly problematised by growing counter-extremist discourse.

¹⁸ Houriya Ahmed and Hannah Stuart, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Ideology and Strategy," (London: The Centre for Social Cohesion, The Henry Jackson Society, 2009).

¹⁹ Emmanuel Karagiannis, "Political Islam and Social Movement Theory: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan," *Religion, State and Society* 33, no. 2 (2005). p.318

²⁰ Yilmaz. p.502

²¹ Peter Osborne, "'Extremist Is the Secular Word for Heretic': The Hizb Ut-Tahrir Leader Who Insists on High Right to Speak," *The Guardian*, 24th July 2015.

²² William Scates Frances, "Why Ban Hizb Ut-Tahrir? They're Not Isis - They're Isis's Whipping Boys," *the Guardian*, 12th February 2015.

Whilst attempts have been made to proscribe the party in recent years in both the UK and Denmark under counterterrorism legislation, and limitations on membership or public activism have been put in place in other European countries, they have not yet faced a legal ban – although debate still occasionally erupts on the matter in both Britain and Denmark.²³ Hizb ut-Tahrir therefore represents an invaluable case study for understanding the impact of the securitised lens on Islamic activism: ‘Islamist’ yet avowedly non-violent; legal yet problematised; public yet semi-clandestine; anti-democratic yet engaging with national politics (and, in some cases, politicians); situated within discussion on highly-relevant public debates, yet in serious long-term decline. There is a need, therefore, to understand and disaggregate these sets of competing states within which the party finds itself.

1.4 Case Study Rationale

The cases of Britain and Denmark have been chosen for a comparative study of Hizb ut-Tahrir within a securitised lens for the following reasons: 1. the shared organisational, ideological and historical links of HT in the countries; 2. the similar patterns of securitisation and counterterrorism articulated by Britain and Denmark; 3. the different relationships evident between the state and minorities in Britain and Denmark; and 4. the differing articulation of activism and protest tactics that have developed by HTB and HTS. The similar ideological, organisational and political opportunity structures that surrounds the two bodies allows the project to delve deeper into how and why the same movement has diverged differently and why the tactics used by the two HT branches have not shifted in parallel with each other. This should be conducive to a more nuanced exploration of securitisation processes and impacts.

1.4.1 Shared organisational links

Their shared ideology and organisational structure, coupled with their regional operational independence, enables us to compare social movement organisations (SMOs) in a way which removes some of the variables of more divergent group analysis. That the organisational bodies share a historical link enables the researcher to

²³ Sinclair, "Same Old Message, New Wrapping: Hizb Ut-Tahrir's Activities in Denmark."

explore external factors with more confidence. A comparative study offers the opportunity to examine divergence between the two groups within a context of a shared origin. Sharing common ancestry, we can suggest that tactical shifts by HT in Britain and Denmark are more likely to be in response to variables that reach beyond simplified interpretations of organisational make-up or ideological tenets. This allows us to challenge essentialist readings of Islamic activism that have bedevilled scholarship by their problematic explanatory approaches to contentious activism as the result of ossified textual interpretation.

1.4.2 Similar counterterrorism context

Secondly, similar patterns of securitisation and counterterrorism from the state in different political contexts allow for greater disaggregation of securitisation processes in national and regional matrixes. Whilst the Danish approach to terrorism has largely been characterised as ‘softer’ in comparison to many Western approaches – particularly following the implementation of what has become known as the ‘Aarhus model’ in response to the foreign fighter phenomenon in Syria and Iraq²⁴ – both Britain and Denmark have adopted a similar civil society-based approach to counter-extremism. Denmark has implemented European frameworks based on the British CONTEST programme which prioritise early ‘pre-crime’ deradicalisation and counter-extremism approaches;²⁵ meanwhile, the ‘joined-up’ approach of the Danish authorities – in which counterterrorism is built outwards from existing public service structures – is increasingly being followed in Britain, most notably seen in the 2015 British Channel Programme and ‘Prevent Duty’ which shifts focus onto the public sector to act as a vanguard against and first form of response to so-called ‘extremist’ behaviour. As such, there has been a strong exchange of ideas and approaches and, despite the obvious differences between the size and structure of the states, a comparative similarity of counterterrorism seems fair considering their CT links.²⁶

1.4.3 State-minority relations

²⁴ Anthony Faiola and Souad Mekhennet, "Denmark Tries a Soft-Handed Approach to Returned Islamist Fighters," *The Washington Post*, 19th October 2014; Manfred Ertel and Ralf Hoppe, "A Danish Answer to Radical Jihad," *der Spiegel*, 23rd February 2015.

²⁵ Municipality of Aarhus, "International Radicalisation Conference" (paper presented at the Building Resilience to Radicalisation and Violence Extremism II, Aarhus, 17th-19th May 2017).

²⁶ See for instance, Strong Cities Network, "Strong Cities Network," <https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/>.

Whilst broadly similar counterterror approaches have been observed, different historical experiences have contributed towards different state approaches to immigration and integration from the British and Danish state. Britain has traditionally sought a ‘multicultural’ approach (at least openly until around 2010), promoting different cultures and communities rather than imposing one ideal-type as a means of building national cohesion. Denmark, meanwhile, has sought to balance the French idea of *laïcité* with the British-form of protection for ethnic groups’ rights: on one hand, there is a pervasive focus on integration within Denmark through a delineation and adaptation of secular-leaning ‘Danish values’; on the other, the Danish church and state religion has become a ubiquitous (though largely invisible) pillar of society.²⁷

Contextually, the Muslim communities of Britain and Denmark have very different compositions in terms of their cultural heritage due to historical migration patterns. In Britain – largely due to colonial expansionism – most British Muslim communities have historical-family ties to the Asian subcontinent: Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka. In Denmark, meanwhile, the country’s different colonial practices – more focussed on facilitating the sugar and slave trade beyond the borders of Denmark – led to much more limited early modern Muslim migration, with significant migration into the country only beginning much later. Denmark’s first immigrants were invited guest workers from Turkey, Morocco, former Yugoslavia and Pakistan, whilst many have since been received as refugees since the 1980s, following conflicts in Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Sudan and Afghanistan.²⁸

1.4.4 Differing HT tactics

Thirdly and finally, despite the similarities of the two branches and of counter-terrorism approaches in general, different articulations of activism and protest tactics have developed in HT since 2001. In terms of ability to conduct activism, both HT party bodies have declined in recent years in terms of membership, activism and influence within a context of growing securitisation. Whilst both declines have seen a visible diminution in their ability to engage in activism and mobilise supporters, there are marked differences in the way in which HT party bodies in Britain and Denmark have responded to the decline. In Britain, a ‘quietening’ or institutionalisation of protest tactics has occurred, the party engaging less in contentious, high-profile activism, eschewing the

²⁷ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.13

²⁸ Ibid. p.13

publicity stunts of the late 1990s.²⁹ They have also increasingly sought to engage in partnerships with other organisations and individuals on single-issue platforms and shifted towards attempting to become a more low-profile, grassroots organisation.

HTB has, in recent years, sought to stay within strict limitations set by the British Government, engaging in a complex dance with the Home Office, politicians and police to ensure that their activism can continue legally, despite a growing political problematisation of all forms of 'Islamism'.³⁰ In contrast, the Danish branch has continued to take part in more high-profile, contentious acts, often deliberately attempting to provoke a public backlash from media and politicians.³¹ Whilst consisting of a small membership in real terms, HTS not been prone to the same competition for influence than in the more crowded UK Islamic activist scene,³² and has cultivated a rejectionist attitude to the media, adopting a generally hostile, tactical disengagement from mainstream press rather than seeking to publicly refute accusations it sees as misrepresentative, in contrast with HTB.

*If there are 300 people in the party in Denmark - as I said, there may be 80 members, and if they all have 5 students, then - it's not difficult to assemble them, to convince them that they have to come to the demonstration or conference. So, in reality, you will have at most 50 - on a good day perhaps 100 new people - who may disagree with them, the message.*³³

As such, the similarities between the Danish and British branches and their contexts, as well as their different patterns of decline, mean that the Islamic activist organisations offer an apt and interesting set of international case studies which can be compared without too many reservations.³⁴ Comparative studies between the branches have been carried out before by Sinclair who finds that 'comparing activities in two neighbouring European branches serves to emphasise... similarities (for instance, ideology and organisational structure) and differences (for instance, language, political focus, members' ethnicity)'.³⁵ Alternative European Hizb ut-Tahrir

²⁹ Saul Dibb, "Tottenham Ayatollah," (London: RDF Television, 1997).

³⁰ Nomaan Hanif, "The Securitisation of Hizb Ut-Tahrir: A Comparative Case Study" (University of London, 2014).

³¹ 'Hizb ut-Tahrir says that Muslims "should not" distance themselves from the violence', as in "Most Muslim Organisations Condemn Weekend Terror Attack," *CPH Post Online*, 16th February 2015.

³² Kirstine Sinclair, "Islam in Britain and Denmark: Deterritorialised Identity and Reterritorialised Agendas," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 28, no. 1 (2008). p.47

³³ XI, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

³⁴ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.12

³⁵ *Ibid.* p.12

regional bodies were ruled impractical due to reasons of access: the case study of Germany was too difficult for data collection due to a government ban on open activism (though not membership) by HT since 2003, whilst examples such as Russia and Ukraine were deemed problematic due to severe and overt state repression and the subsequent risk it would pose to researcher and subjects.

1.5 Methodological Overview

Studies that have engaged with the impact of CT on organisational tactics tend to fall into two camps: either they have taken an *orthodox, security-centric* approach evaluating the *effectiveness* CT; or they have adopted a *civil rights* approach which highlights the *societal impact* of security measures on civil liberties.³⁶ This study will seek an alternative route, charting a course between the two by analysing an ‘Islamist’ SMO problematised by CT legislation but not directly targeted; it will neither seek to problem-solve ‘extreme ideologies’, nor evaluate the ethical implications of CT on human and civil rights; rather, it will explore interactive processes that have taken place between authorities and challenger as a means of understanding organisational change and decline, determining the most relevant arena of research to be the point of contact between HT and authority actors.³⁷ To achieve this, a total of 43 intensive, semi-structured interviews were carried out with both Hizb ut-Tahrir members, ex-members and the security services of, and counterterrorism practitioners in, the UK and Denmark.

Interviewees from Hizb ut-Tahrir branches in the UK and Denmark were at a variety of levels of association and activism, although there was some bias towards mid-level and upper-level activists due to the ‘elite’-level knowledge they hold on the party’s activism and history. Interviews were gathered through snowball sampling methods, with contacts made through early pilot study engagements with activists at public HT events – such as demonstrations, talks, *da’wah* stalls and mosques – which led to 10 ‘gatekeeper’ contacts being made. These gatekeepers were instrumental in the securing of the final 43 interviews, almost all of which took place either in London or Copenhagen. Interview data was accompanied by over 200 hours spent at party events and with party members in a variety of different public and personal settings, building an ethnographic understanding of their

³⁶ Smyth; David Miller and Rizwaan Sabir, "Counter-Terrorism as Counterinsurgency in the UK "War on Terror"," in *Counter-Terrorism and State Political Violence*, ed. Scott Poynting and David Whyte (London and New York: Routledge, 2012).

³⁷ Graham Macklin and Joel Busher, "Understanding 'Reciprocal Radicalisation' as a Component of Wider Conflict Dynamics," (Radicalisation Research, 2018); James M. Jasper and Jan Willem Duyvendak, *Players and Arenas: The Interactive Dynamics of Protest, Protest and Social Movements* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015).

activism and involvement. The notes from ethnographic fieldwork that were deemed relevant have been added to this thesis, to add context to the events and, in some cases, to complexify the subjects. Other information on the party was garnered from short surveys of 250 members and activists conducted at events, and was further supported by online sources, national and local media, government policy and debates, and social media. This has enabled the formation of a holistic snapshot of the party in Britain and Denmark within the current, securitised context.

1.6 Theoretical Overview

Theoretically, this project brings together social movement studies and securitisation theories to address some significant gaps and limitations within contemporary scholarship. This includes limitations on research conducted on articulations of so-called 'softer' forms of political repression (with focus often placed on highly visible, immediate examples of repression) and the impact that long-term securitisation processes – as exemplified in the post-2001 counterterror paradigm – have on organisational mobilisation.³⁸ Current research also fails to account for relevant actors beyond the state-challenger nexus – such as non-state actors or media, and their role in repression.³⁹ Such an approach encourages an interactive, holistic approach towards the decline of Islamic activism within a CT context. To achieve this, this project combines mechanistic elements of social movement studies with theories of securitisation by using repression as a key means of bridging these two different schools of thought.

1.6.1 Social Movement Theory

Social movement theory (SMT) was developed to investigate processes of activist mobilisation within a variety of forms of social protest and represent an important vehicle in exploring activism by Hizb ut-Tahrir. It was

³⁸ Jennifer Earl, "Political Repression: Iron Fists, Velvet Gloves and Diffuse Control," *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011); Myra Marx Ferree, "Soft Repression: Ridicule, Stigma and Silencing in Gender-Based Movements," in *Repression and Mobilisation*, ed. Christian Davenport and Hank Johnston (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

³⁹ Jennifer Earl, "Tanks, Tear Gas and Taxes: Towards a Theory of Movement Repression," *Sociological Theory* 21, no. 1 (2003). '[researchers] tend to look at media coverage as a simplistic information-gathering and distribution process and as a by-product of contention and not the other way around.' Charles Davenport, "Introduction, Repression and Mobilisation: Insights from Political Science and Sociology," in *Repression and Mobilisation*, ed. Christian Davenport, Hank Johnston, and Carol Mueller (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005). p.xi

developed in response to the civil rights movements of the late 1960s, the organised and progressive nature of which challenged the then-paradigmatic study of movements and their manifestations as a subversion of politics – ‘dysfunctional, irrational and inherently undesirable’ and ‘alternatives to, rather than expressions of, politics’.⁴⁰ The subsequent development of social movement theories led to new strands or tools of analysis being created which sought to understand elements of activism, including: how social movement organisations utilise human and material resources (Resource Mobilisation Theory, or RMT); how social movement organisations respond to their political context (Political Opportunity Structures, or POS); how rhetorical ideas are appropriated by social movements (Framing); how and why social movements chose to engage in violence (Contentious Politics, or CP); and how interaction develops between social movements and surrounding structures (mechanisms).⁴¹

With an increasingly wide palette derived from SMT, social movement theories have come to play a significant role in the successful untangling of complex political events, becoming a paradigmatic mainstay for social scientists. Social movement theories have been, for instance, praised for their potential to de-exceptionalise violence by locating it in broader contexts and complex processes.⁴² However, despite some successful application to studies of ‘Islamist’ groups – mostly beyond the borders Western-democratic states – this approach remains somewhat limited; as Olesen states, social movement research has largely ‘focused on red, green and rights activism; or to put it slightly provocatively, research has focussed on the kinds of activism scholars sympathise with’.⁴³

1.6.2 Securitisation Theory

In this study, elements of SMT will be combined with securitisation studies, as developed by the Copenhagen School (a small group of scholars formerly based at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute in Copenhagen, most notably Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan) and furthered by the Welsh School (a group of security studies

⁴⁰ David S. Meyer, “Protest and Political Opportunities,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (2004). pp. 126-7.

⁴¹ See Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction*, second edition ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006); David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

⁴² Donatella della Porta and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, “Patterns of Radicalisation in Political Activism: An Introduction,” *Social Science History* 36, no. 3 (2012). p.313

⁴³ Thomas Olesen, “Social Movement Theory and Radical Islamic Activism,” in *Islamism as Social Movement*, ed. Thomas Olesen and Farhad Khosrokhavar (Aarhus University: Centre for Studies in Islamism and Radicalisation (CIR), 2009). p.7

researchers linked to the University of Aberystwyth).⁴⁴ Concepts of securitisation have been given increasing relevance and importance in recent years with the expansion of wide-ranging counterterror structures and the explosion of counterterrorism and security rhetoric. It has a strongly discursive foundation and gives language a central role in justifying and enabling the emergence of structures of security.

*The main argument of securitisation theory is that security is an (illocutionary) speech act, that alone in uttering "security" something is being done... A securitising actor, by stating that a particular referent object is threatened in its existence, claims a right to extraordinary measures to ensure the referent object's survival. The issue is then moved out of the sphere of normal politics into the realm of emergency politics, where it can be dealt with swiftly and without the normal (democratic) rules and regulations of policymaking... [Thus] Security is understood to be a social and intersubjective construction.*⁴⁵

1.6.3 Theoretical Recommendations

This project will propose the following suggestions for further developing the theoretical facets available for understanding actors such as HT when operating within a CT context:

1. *Theoretical Harmonisation:* The harmonisation of social movement theories with concepts of securitisation is analytically useful in understanding how 'Islamist' and other problematised organisations respond to counterterrorism.
2. *Repression as a Bridge:* Repression offers the means of bringing these theoretical facets together, as both can be used in concert to describe different aspects of the same process: securitisation, to conceptualise the discursive, structural and long-term, covert elements of counterterrorism-based repression; social movement theories to illuminate the security mechanisms used as part of short term, overt forms repression, as well as accounting for SMO response and the challenge of such articulations of power.

⁴⁴ Rita Floyd, "Towards a Consequentialist Evaluation of Security: Bringing Together the Copenhagen and the Welsh Schools of Security Studies," *Review of International Studies* 33, no. 2 (2007). p.329-333

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p.329

3. *Interactive Securitisation*: This reveals that the securitising lens, when understood as a combination of these theoretical facets, is comprised of a far wider range of actions than is currently accounted for, and so a securitisation needs to be diversified, the refracted mechanisms from this lens properly understood not as one monolithic or easily identifiable process, but as a plethora of actions and interaction – conceptualised broadly here as quanta of securitisation.

1.7 Definitions of Key Terms

There are five terms which require clarification prior to analysis within the thesis – terms either present in the primary research question or central to the subsequent research: 1. Islamic activism; 2. The securitising lens; 3. social movement organisations (SMOs); 4. repression; and 5. mechanisms.

1.7.1 Islamic Activism and Islamism

The term ‘Islamic activism’ is used throughout this project, often to represent what is commonly termed ‘Islamism’ – although the terms differ in hue. It’s important, at this stage, to discuss the different implications of these terms and how they will be used throughout the course of this thesis.

With regards to general usage, whilst ‘Islamism’ is used throughout mainstream political discourse, reportage and even large sections academia, it has been critiqued as problematic, carrying Euro-centric and Orientalist implications. The term ‘Islamism’ has a long history, but largely began its modern incantation with the Iranian revolution, before gaining traction amongst mainstream Western discourse following the September 2001 attacks in the US.⁴⁶ It has recently been used as a replacement for ‘political Islam’ and ‘fundamentalist Islam’ by scholars such as Roy and Kepel (despite their other disagreements), and represents only the most recent manifestation of an attempt by commentators and researchers to capture a complex set of phenomena which has been otherwise termed: Islamic fundamentalism; Islamism movements; political Islam; Islamic revivalism or

⁴⁶ ‘It is almost certain that the etiquette of “Islamism” was used for the first time by French writers at the end of the seventeenth century. *Le Petit Robert* gives 1697 as the first reference to the word. The Enlightenment philosopher Voltaire is one of the first writers to use the term: “this religion is called *Islamism*”. In a work from 1838, Tocqueville found the “root of *Islamism* in Judaism”...’ Mehdi Mozaffari, “What Is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8, no. 1 (2007). p.18

resurgence; and new religious politics.⁴⁷ Mozaffari, in interrogating the definitions of several significant late-20th and early-21st Century scholars, posits that 'Islamism' could be seen as 'a religious ideology with a holistic interpretation of Islam whose final aim is the conquest of the world by all means'.⁴⁸ However, determining it a 'holistic', 'religious ideology' assumes that we can successfully and definitively delineate the religious from the secular – a practice which involves uncritically accepting some problematic post-Westphalian European norms⁴⁹ – whilst focussing in on the holism of Islamism obscures the nature of other 'ideologies' which often have similar holistic interpretations (as can be said of conceptualisations of liberalism, capitalism or nationalism, for instance). Furthermore, the idea that Islamism requires a 'conquest of the world by all means' is shown to be fundamentally problematised by studies of Islamist groups that have engaged with democratic structures (such as Ennahda in Tunisia or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt), have localised regional and national focusses (such as The Justice and Development Party in Turkey or Hamas in Palestine), or those who consistently condemn violence or expansionist oppression (such as Hizb ut-Tahrir).

The problems with the term 'Islamism' extend deeply into discussions on political Islam and counterterrorism. It creates a presumed connection between Islam and violence due to its usage in discussions over terrorism and extremism and perpetrates wider Liberal and Neoliberal assumptions that the presence of 'religion' in general, or Islam in particular, makes political groups more violence prone.⁵⁰ This is also echoed in other similar terms prevalent within counterterror discussions, such as 'moderate/radical Muslim', which tend to problematise the legitimacy of open Islamic articulations of identity in the context of political engagement, particularly in the West. This creates a process whereby Muslims are discouraged or barred from accessing mainstream political platforms, with greater scrutiny and more 'redlines' placed on the speech of those that are identifiably Muslim.⁵¹

'Islamic activism' has been used by social movement scholars in place of and as a means of addressing some of the limitations that plague contemporary definitions of 'Islamism'. In doing so, it aims to complexify the subject,

⁴⁷ Olivier Roy, *Jihad and Death: The Global Appeal of Islamic State* (London: C Hurst & Co Publishers Limited, 2017); Gilles Kepel, *Terror in France: The Rise of Jihad in the West*, Princeton Series in Muslim Politics (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2017).

⁴⁸ Mozaffari. p.21

⁴⁹ William T. Cavanaugh, "The Violence of 'Religion': Examining a Prevalent Myth," *Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies* 310 (2004); *The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁵⁰ Jeroen Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2007). pp.4-7

⁵¹ Jonathan Githens-Mazer, "The Rhetoric and Reality: Radicalisation and Political Discourse," *International Political Science Review* 33, no. 5 (2012).

to describe a wide palette of views and behaviours, and to ‘account for the inclusion of various types of activities, political, social and cultural, that emerge under the rubric of Islamic movement’.⁵² Wiktorowicz is one of the key authors in this shift, destabilising the term to refocus the definition onto forms of activism rather than belief, and describing Islamists as those ‘who attempt to re-Islamise society by encouraging individuals to practice Islam in daily life and bridge the gap between religious discourse and practical realities’.⁵³ Bayat extends this definition, offering further clarity on the activism, which he sees as ‘... *extra-ordinary*, extra-usual practices which aim, collectively or individually, institutionally or informally, to cause social change. When those practises cease to become extra-ordinary, when they become usual practices of everyday life, they no longer constitute “activism”’.⁵⁴ Use of the term ‘Islamic activism’ sidesteps some of the more problematic assumptions of ‘Islamism’ by substituting ideological elements of definition for a practical focus on observable political activity – engagement in public events, protests or da’wah, for instance. By placing the identification of ‘Islamism’ within a wider pool of other comparable activism, we to some extent de-essentialise the definition, removing the oft-supposed *sui generis* and irrational nature of ‘Islamism’.⁵⁵

There are limitations with the term ‘Islamic activism’, as it still contains conspicuous vagaries and, whilst it attempts to shift focus onto activism, it risks in turn glossing over its common ideological tenets. ‘Islamic activism’ is, however, preferred by the author of this work, as it has generally nullified some of the more securitised connotations associated with ‘Islamism’ – such as the implicit linking of Islam and violence – and was viewed by the author as more representative of the phenomenon under examination. However, there are points at which ‘Islamism’ has been used, mostly where it was deemed important to reflect the language of interviewees or where ‘Islamism’ offered more clarity in a specific context. In cases where it has been used, the author has placed the term in inverted commas (as in, ‘Islamism’), to represent the reflexivity required in employing such a contested and problematic concept.

With regards to Hizb ut-Tahrir, the party are still often described (largely by detractors) as an ‘Islamist’ organisation. Yet, whilst it is generally used in the pejorative, the term ‘Islamist’ was still sometimes present

⁵² Asef Bayat, “Islamism and Social Movement Theory,” *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 6 (2005). p.893

⁵³ Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004). p.168

⁵⁴ Bayat. pp.893-4

⁵⁵ Wiktorowicz.

during interactions and interviews with members (albeit often in a way that stressed a second-hand usage). Some interviewees, indeed, even self-identified as 'Islamist' during discussions, despite the term being so often negative in its use. This implies that there was some reclamation of the term, albeit on a very minor level. The security connotations of the term, whilst creating valid criticisms within some Muslim commentators, was also shown to be highly relevant when speaking with counterterrorism practitioners and policymakers. Whilst not used extensively amongst HT activists, the term is a significant mainstay of counterterrorism stakeholders, present in contemporary policy, analysis and practice. Considering the use of the term by actors outlined above, the complete negation of 'Islamism' throughout this thesis was deemed to be unrepresentative of some of the discussions and debates that define Hizb ut-Tahrir.

As the author of this work, it was not within my scope to determine whether HT is an 'Islamist' organisation, nor to speak on behalf of the interviewees. I made the decision, therefore, not to exclude the term completely with regards to this thesis on Hizb ut-Tahrir but to emphasise its problematic nature throughout. It is referred to when considered necessary and to allow the interviewees space to identify and define themselves or others as they feel fit. However, just as the term is important to preserve in some senses to reflect the securitised context within which it is used, so must the pejorative connotations that it brings with it be clearly and critically marked. As such, I consider it more accurate to refer to HT as an Islamic activist organisation – partly as a replacement for the term 'Islamist' but partly to show their focus on forms of public and private activism – but to allow space for the term 'Islamist' to be used sparingly when necessary to convey certain securitised connotations.

1.7.2 Securitising Lens

This project aims to explore the impact of counterterrorism on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark through theoretically constructing the 'securitised lens'. The 'securitising lens' is a term with a strongly discursive foundation, which aims to describe the way in which language is used to problematise certain movements, organisations or ideas as within a security paradigm. With the creation of this term, the author aims to bring together descriptive strands of securitisation under one umbrella, to account for the following elements: the actions of authorities; the response by social movement organisations; and the engagement of actors beyond the repression-mobilisation nexus. The 'securitising lens' describes the application of securitising mechanisms

towards certain groups, individuals or forms of activism. However, it modifies slightly some current conceptualisations of securitisation by emphasising the greater scrutiny that securitised groups face from national governments and security agencies, *as well as non-authority actors* such as print and investigative media, researchers and academics, and the ‘wider public’. This slightly differs in the way ‘securitisation’ is applied to Hizb ut-Tahrir by scholars such as Noman Hanif, for instance, as it aims to account for the potential impact of securitisation on both the organisation under study – in this case, Hizb ut-Tahrir – and the perception of their forms of activism (ergo, their activism can be securitised, whilst the organisation itself can be de-securitised).⁵⁶ The securitising lens can, therefore, impact increasingly on an organisation even whilst authority actors de-escalate official rhetoric against a specific organisation. As such, the use of a ‘securitised lens’ was deemed to represent a more appropriate term for this project than ‘securitisation’ in isolation.

1.7.3 Social Movement Organisation

This project will often refer to Hizb ut-Tahrir as a ‘social movement organisation’ (or SMO). Any organisation involved in a social movement dynamic may be regarded as a ‘social movement organisation’ and, in this case, HT represents an SMO operating within the wider social movement of (European) Islamic activism.⁵⁷ What exactly constitutes a SMO has proven to be ambiguous, taken to have different meanings by different authors.⁵⁸ However, McCarthy and Zald offer a useful conceptualisation, as ‘a complex, or formal, organisation which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or countermovement and attempts to implement these goals’.⁵⁹ Snow, Soule and Kriesi build on this further, determining SMOs to be:

... collectivities acting with some degree of organisation and continuity outside of institutional or organisational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority,

⁵⁶ Hanif.

⁵⁷ Porta and Diani. p.26

⁵⁸ John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilisation and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977).

⁵⁹ Mayer N. Zald; John D. McCarthy, *Social Movements in an Organisational Society: Collected Essays* (New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1987). p.140

*whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organisation, society, culture or world order of which they are a part.*⁶⁰

The term ‘social movement organisation’ – as with ‘Islamic activism’ – has been chosen for this project to de-essentialise and de-escalate language on ‘Islamist’ groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir. It also highlights the theoretical foundations upon which this project is built, drawing on social movement theories (SMT) to conceptualise Hizb ut-Tahrir as a ‘change-making’ vehicle which challenges existing power structures within a wider milieu of actors and activists. Whilst it is necessary broad in its scope – sometimes used vaguely or misappropriated by scholars – it is favoured in this study due to its prominent role in social movement studies.

1.7.4 Repression

Repression has a broad swathe of meanings and the approach we adopt has profound implications for the study. Tilly and Tarrow (2015) define it as ‘the attempt by a state or its agents against challengers in order to end their challenge by arresting them, harassing them, or destroying their organisations’.⁶¹ Were the study to accept this conceptualisation, it would be of limited use in this context, as HT has suffered little if no examples of direct arrests or harassment, whilst attempts to proscribe the party in the UK and Denmark have, to date, been stifled or abandoned. Yet, members in both case studies consistently report experiencing state repression through alternative means – surveillance, disruption and the fomenting of wide-scale anti-Muslim sentiment. Despite offering this limited definition, Tilly and Tarrow do recognise that states can engage in non-violent forms of repression,⁶² including ‘legal prosecution, employment discrimination, surveillance, infiltration, and other forms of harassment that avoid physical repression’, and that ‘repression in its extreme form’ has been ‘used to defeat the forces of violent Islamism by the United States and its allies’.⁶³ As such, there seems an initial case for the relevance of the term. Particularly, value has been found in this work for the definition, developed by Goldstein, for repression:

⁶⁰ David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, "Mapping the Terrain," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006). p.11

⁶¹ Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, second ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). p.37

⁶² ‘... lawmakers make laws banning some kinds of assemblies, police arrest unruly demonstrators, judges try people for seditious claims, and officials intervene when their clients of constituents are fighting collectively.’ *ibid.* p.13

⁶³ *Ibid.* pp.37-8

... as a technical and neutral term classifying, and not judging, government action. When this action grossly discriminates against the holders of certain beliefs, it is categorised as political repression, whether it succeeds or fails, is 'justified' or 'unjustified'.⁶⁴

In this understanding, counterterrorism can indeed be strongly implicated as a formation repression. Certainly, UK and EU practices built around the Prevent programme discriminate against the holders of beliefs – be those openly violent, anti-democratic, anti-Westphalian or generally incendiary. It is important to stress that no normative claim is being made in the use of the term in this thesis, and the use of 'repression' – analysing mechanisms used by authority or authority-linked actors – therefore rests on a purely technical basis, describing attempts to limit or degrade the activism of groups designated or implied as being 'extremist' by authority actors, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir in this instance.

1.7.5 Mechanism

Finally, this project will use the term 'mechanism' throughout in the analysis of the actions and events being analysed. Eruditely and adequately defining 'mechanisms' has proven a difficult task – even the founders admit that too many mechanisms lack scrutiny and clarification – but, for the purposes of this project, it will take the founders' definition of mechanism and processes from McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow:

Mechanisms are a delineated class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations. Processes are regular sequences of such mechanisms that produce similar (generally more complex and contingent) transformation of those elements.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Robert J. Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America: From 1870 to 1976* (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978). p.xxx

⁶⁵ Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2001). p.24

The ‘mechanistic’ lens has been developed by Hedström, Kuorikoski and Mahoney, and linked to social movement studies through the work of McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow.⁶⁶ Whilst hardly a recent approach, the use of mechanisms has gained notable traction as a means of understanding large-scale sequential actions:

... to explain an event is to give an account of why it happened. Usually... this takes the form of citing an earlier event as the cause of the event we want to explain... [But] to cite the cause is not enough: the causal mechanism must also be provided, or at least suggested.⁶⁷

Mechanisms offer an innovative means of understanding sets of actions, sidestepping some of the more problematic issues of causality by attempting to also represent the scholar’s interpretation of events – based on the information available to them – rather than a truly definitive determination of causation. Since various factors (overt and obscure, empirical and perceived) contribute towards certain actions being made by social movements and authorities, it is most likely impossible to accurately determine the full causes for events in a social science setting. A mechanistically-informed approach encourages the drawing together of sets of events through the scholar’s research to consider what combinations of actions are most likely to have resulted in subsequent outcomes. This process is, therefore, just as reliant on the data gathered as on the researcher’s own interpretation, and so we create a reflexive process whereby the researcher is openly cast in playing a significant role as the other actors situated within the project. This dispels the need for creating a ‘smoking gun’ of causality, replacing it with the more moderate (but infinitely more achievable goal) of finding reasonable association.

Such a mechanistic approach has been likened to Darwin’s evolutionary theory: the context within which species are operating, the kinds of competition they face from others and the decisions that species make in response, act together in concert to result in the preferencing of certain adaptations over others.⁶⁸ Whilst these can be

⁶⁶ Ibid.; Peter Hedström and Richard Swedberg, "Social Mechanisms," *Acta Sociologica* 39, no. 3 (1996); Jaakko Kuorikoski, "Two Concepts of Mechanism," *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 23 (2009); James Mahoney, "Review Essay: Beyond Correlational Analysis: Recent Innovations in Theory and Method," *Sociological Forum* 16, no. 3 (2001); "Toward a Unified Theory of Causality," *Comparative Political Studies* 41, no. 4-5 (2008).

⁶⁷ Jon Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). pp.3-4

⁶⁸ Peter Hedstrom, "Explaining the Growth Patterns of Social Movements," in *Understanding Choice, Explaining Behaviour: Essays in Honour of Ole Jorgen Skog*, ed. Jon Elster, et al. (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 2006); John Maynard Smith, *Did Darwin Get It Right?* (London: Penguin, 1993).

surmised with some degree of confidence, the precise causes for certain adaptations cannot be truly ascertained. Such an approach broadly describes mechanisms, which have been subdivided into the environmental, relational and the cognitive, and broken down further into, amongst others: brokerage, diffusion, polarisation, repression and radicalisation.⁶⁹ The following mechanisms have been assumed from analysing the data, to be further developed and utilised throughout the subsequent analysis. These are divided into authority action mechanisms and SMO tactical response mechanisms:

1.7.5.1 Authority Repression Mechanisms

- i. *Threat Identification*: The development of hostile frames against specific actors (in this case, understood as the expansion of the 'securitised lens').
- ii. *Resource Depletion*: The inversion of resource mobilisation to erode the capacity of social movements and diminishing their ability to engage in contentious politics.⁷⁰
- iii. *Stigmatisation*: The attachment of discrediting attributes to the character, nature or reputation of an individual or group.⁷¹
- iv. *Divisive disruption*: The forced creation of splits within or amongst social movement organisations to prevent alliance building.⁷²
- v. *Intimidation*: The threat of force against social movement organisations to prevent activist engagement.
- vi. *Emulation*: Actions to alter social relations, within other spaces of dissent, to explain to dissident or potentially-dissident citizens why they should not engage in contentious or problematised politics.⁷³

1.7.5.2 SMO response mechanisms

⁶⁹ McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly. pp.25-26

⁷⁰ Jules Boykoff, "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA," *Social Movement Studies* 6, no. 3 (2007). p.294

⁷¹ Ibid. p.296

⁷² Doug McAdam, "Beyond Structural Analysis: Toward a More Dynamic Understanding of Social Movements," in *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, ed. Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁷³ Boykoff. p.287

- vii. *Alliance Building*: The development of strategic open alliances or closed organisational front groups.
- viii. *Contentious Tactics*: The use of contentious or institutionalised forms of activism and political engagement.
- ix. *Radical Framing*: The use of more 'radical' or more 'moderate' frames in mobilising activists or potential activists.

These mechanisms, built on previous research by scholars such as Boykoff, represent the different constellations of responses used by both authority actors (1.7.5.1) and Hizb ut-Tahrir (1.7.5.2) identified in the project data. They will form the basis for modelling interaction between the actors at a later stage of the project.

1.8 Conclusions

This thesis will seek to develop a response to the question of how the development of a securitised lens has impacted on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark by determining the significance of the role that securitisation has played, analysing how securitisation has been interpreted as repression, before using this information to map how this has impacted the two case studies in Britain and Denmark in different ways. Firstly, the project will find that securitisation is central to the changing patterns of activism and decline of the Hizb ut-Tahrir groups under examination, tracked through media and government analysis and confirmed through interviews with members. Secondly, it will find that Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark have faced a securitisation of their discourse and activism, and this has been perceived and felt as repressive because of the ways in which it has targeted either the group directly or their ability to engage in activism. Thirdly, the different repression mechanisms used by authorities have led to different responses in Britain and Denmark, suggesting that processes of securitisation differ greatly in different contexts through the mechanisms used by authorities and the tactical responses of SMOs responding to the securitised lens.

1.9 Personal Remarks

Finally, I consider it important to offer some personal remarks on my viewpoints and biases, which will no doubt be inherent within this study. I have tried to take a politically-open view of the data and analysis, without indulging too much in my own prejudices nor uncritically amplifying the biases of my interviewees or research subjects. Having spent time with Hizb ut-Tahrir members, I have developed invaluable links in both Britain and Denmark to persons without whose help I could not have completed this project. Whilst I strongly disagree with some of the viewpoints of those I have interviewed, I am grateful to all those who took the time to discuss their work, activism and passions, and I aspire to reflect these complex viewpoints and characters in the work. I am generally critical of the way in which counterterrorism operates, having worked within some counterterror structures and seen some of the impacts that discussions over security have on some of the most vulnerable individuals and communities. As such, I must confess I sympathise with some of HT's grievances, if not their end goal. Whilst this may suggest a lack of objectivity, I take Sara Roy's invaluable advice on academic writing within an unequal political context: that pure objectivity is not only unobtainable but undesirable, and that the harbouring of aspirations of objectivity 'results in ideological warfare and political gamesmanship where the stronger party... predominates'.⁷⁴ Therefore, I hope I have given each actor – from HT member to authority actor – their own unique (albeit anonymised) voice, as is due. This research also takes place within a rising tide of Islamophobia and far-right populism, in which the state is arguably implicit. As one member poignantly said in an interview:

It's constantly the case that politicians... dehumanise Muslims – politicians, the media. When you have interaction, you start to break prejudices down... And when you have interaction, you start to see Muslims, or 'Islamists', as complex human beings. And when you see the complexity of someone, they become human. It's impossible for one human to watch another die and do nothing. But when you can dehumanise them, you can pass any law you want: like how they passed anti-refugee legislation; or stopping boats from rescuing refugees in the Mediterranean...⁷⁵

It is just such complexity of the individual – which I consider key to dissecting the human relations that surround us – that I have aspired towards throughout this thesis, and this quote acted as my guide for much of the research

⁷⁴ Sara Roy, *Failing Peace: Gaza and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict* (London: Pluto Press, 2007). p. xv

⁷⁵ HP, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

process. I proclaim neither objectivity nor political neutrality, but complexity and its conveyance, as my battle standard for this work.

2. Literature Review

This chapter aims to provide a review of the current literature available on Hizb ut-Tahrir, counterterrorism and theoretical approaches towards Islamic activism. It will take three central pillars of the case study – ‘Islamism’ and activism, Hizb ut-Tahrir and social movement studies – to gauge current analysis on Hizb ut-Tahrir and its interaction with the counter-terror state.

2.1 Islamic Activism

This first section explores extant studies on Islamic activist organisations to provide the basis for understanding how to approach research on such actors. Contemporary research on the topic of Islamic activism and security has largely fallen within a broader study of ‘terrorism’ or ‘security studies’ – a field long criticised as theoretically and methodologically inadequate.⁷⁶ The field has been accused of lacking academic rigour and self-reflexivity, demonstrating ‘little self-conscious sophisticated engagement with theoretical developments elsewhere and even less rigorous application of explicitly visible methodologies’.⁷⁷ These limitations come in a number of different guises: a canonical dearth of empirically grounded research; a lack of methodological rigour leading to speculative conclusions; dubious and unethical practices by researchers; and a representative generalisation of the field as comprised of researchers either on short-term projects (and therefore unlikely to stay in the field) or embedded within (and answerable to) government power structures.⁷⁸

Accusations of poor scholarship on research into ideas of extremism and terrorism are not new: in 1997, Reid stated that current practices constituted a ‘feedback loop’, a static environment whereby ‘the same hypotheses, definitions and theories continue to be analysed, assimilated, published, cited and eventually retrieved’.⁷⁹ Crucially, many of these criticisms do not seem to have been fully addressed, the period since seeing the entrenchment of additional problems. Publications on contentious ‘terrorist’ and ‘extremist’ groups have

⁷⁶ Alex P. Schmid and A. Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Concepts, Databases, Theories and Literature* (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company, 1988).

⁷⁷ Ranstorp. p.24

⁷⁸ Frederick Schulze, "Breaking the Cycle: Empirical Research and Postgraduate Studies on Terrorism," in *Research on Terrorism: Trends, Achievements and Failures*, ed. A. Silke (London: Routledge, 2004). pp.161 & 167; Ranstorp. pp.22 & 28-30

⁷⁹ Edna Reid, "Evolution of a Body of Knowledge: An Analysis of Terrorism Research," *Information Processing and Management* 33, no. 1 (1997).

become ‘an almost impenetrable mountain of contributions that could be generously characterised as highly speculative in nature and without a high degree of rigorous scientific standard’.⁸⁰ This poor quality work forms a characterisation of a field not only academically deficient but lacking in reflexivity: as Dolnik stated in 2011, ‘while a new book on terrorism comes out roughly every six hours, only three evaluating the state of the field and its future directions have been published in the last ten years’.⁸¹

A seminal work in the reconceptualisation of Islamist groups as within a broader movement of Islamic activism comes from Wiktorowicz's *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (2004). His work explores a range of Islamic activist organisations through a social movement theory (SMT) lens to ‘augment’ analytical approaches, subdividing research into ‘violence and contention, networks and alliances, and culture and framing’.⁸² The work is designed to distance study of Islamist groups from the misleading and obfuscating generalisation that they are ‘irrational, “crazy” or deviant’, instead demonstrating their engagement in ‘a particular dynamic that mirrors the rational calculus of other non-Islamic social movement actors’.⁸³ It represents an important theoretical starting point for understanding contemporary Islamism, contributing swathes of empirical data and global case studies within a context of ‘shifting opportunity structures, mobilisation contexts, recruitment processes, [and] movement success’.⁸⁴ By drawing organisational comparisons, Wiktorowicz and his fellow authors reveal both their heterogeneity and challenge monolithic perceptions of Islamist groups, revealing them as ‘not wild-eyed fanatics... but rather rational actors who respond to stimuli and create social movements much the same way as others around the world’.⁸⁵

One of the limitations of this work – as argued by Schmidt – is the situating of the research and analysis entirely within a Middle Eastern contextual framework, the limited geographical scope failing to account for any European context, which ‘creates or continues an exoticification of its subject’.⁸⁶ Whilst the use of SMT has made huge advancements in analysis of Islamism in the MENA region, there is still a need to fold SMT back into a

⁸⁰ Ranstorp. p.22

⁸¹ Adam Dolnik, "Conducting Field Research on Terrorism: A Brief Primer," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 5, no. 2 (2011). p.3

⁸² Wiktorowicz. p.19

⁸³ Ibid. p.20

⁸⁴ Case studies examined include Islamist women study circles in Yemen, highly-educated Islamists in Egypt, Palestinian Hamas, the bazaars of Iran and the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria. Ibid. p.286

⁸⁵ Ibid. p.298

⁸⁶ Garbi Schmidt, "Review: Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach by Quintan Wiktorowicz," *Contemporary Sociology* 34, no. 4 (2005). p.402

European context to explore SMOs not traditionally associated with the more ‘Westernised’ movements of socialism, anarchism or fascism. We should also contest Wiktorowicz’s treatment of the Arab World as different to the West on his stated grounds that ‘many regimes in the Middle East rely upon political exclusion and repression to maintain rule’.⁸⁷ This logic results in the methodological pitfall of failing to account for the widespread political exclusion and repression that occurs *within* Western liberal-democratic states, as seen in certain European articulations of counterterrorism (CT).⁸⁸ This is not something unique to Wiktorowicz – decrepit delineations between Western democracies and ‘Eastern’ authoritarian regimes are generally a frustrating stumbling block in social movement analysis.⁸⁹ By uncritically assuming repression within liberal-democratic states is methodologically incomparable to authoritarian repression, we risk reproducing a Eurocentric methodology which drifts dangerously towards forms of orientalism.⁹⁰

Bayat offers further foundational analysis of Islamic activism through social movement approaches in *Islamism and Social Movement Theory*, where he argues for ‘a more fluid and fragmented understanding of social movements’ to understand ‘the differentiated and changing disposition of such movements as Islamism’.⁹¹ He problematises the reified, ‘static vision’ of ‘Islamism’ as composed of ‘highly homogenous and coherent social units which are to be identified by the discourse of their ideologies’, emphasising the need to construct an approach which rigorously utilises SMT.⁹² This offers a riposte to what he characterises as the two interpretations dominating analysis of ‘religious politics’: the modernist approach which frames ‘Islamism’ as antagonistic to Western-style modernisation, ‘anti-democratic and regressive by character’; and the reactionary postmodern approach, which sees ‘Islamism’ as ‘a quest for difference, cultural autonomy, alternative polity and morality vs the universalising secular modernity’.⁹³ He questions the appropriateness of reliance on symbols, language and ideology, which tends to assume ‘a unitary image of social movements as homogeneous and harmonious entities, ones which are identified with and represented primarily by leaders’, creating research

⁸⁷ Wiktorowicz. pp.143-4

⁸⁸ Amnesty International (AI), "The Netherlands: Excessive Immigration Detention, Ethnic Profiling and Counter-Terrorism Measures," in *Amnesty International Submission for the UN Universal Periodic Review - 27th session of the UPR working group May 2017* (Amnesty International, 2016).

⁸⁹ Tilly and Tarrow.

⁹⁰ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003).

⁹¹ Bayat. p.891

⁹² *Ibid.* pp. 905-6

⁹³ *Ibid.* p.894

which ‘studies movements in static form, in a frozen structure and discourse, rather than in practice, in constant shift and motion’.⁹⁴

Bayat suggests that scholars should re-orientate study of Islamist groups and organisations as highly dynamic entities in constant flow and motion; not a ‘thing’ but a process. He also highlights the term ‘Islamism’ as highly context dependent, ‘often taken to describe not the same but many different things in different national settings’.⁹⁵ He offers an important definition of activism, as ‘extraordinary, extra-usual practices which aim, collectively to individually, institutionally or informally, to cause social change’; the point at which activism ends is when these practices ‘cease to become extra-ordinary, when they become usual practices of everyday life, and thus no longer constitute activism’.⁹⁶ Whilst Bayat’s work has some limitations in the structure-agency debate and some potentially questionable delineations between the closed nature of Muslim-majority societies and the ‘highly differentiated and politically open Western societies’, the work poses important ideas for how to offer clarity in understanding the way in which challenges to authority are articulated by ‘the ordinary, the powerless, the poor, minorities, women and other subaltern elements’.⁹⁷

Tilly and Tarrow also offer an exploration of the development of transnational ‘Islamism’ in their 2015 book *Contentious Politics (Second edition)*.⁹⁸ The work offers a dizzying array of theoretical facets for scholars analysing contentious political movements. However, in their exploration of ‘political Islamism’ (the slightly tautological term they adopt for Islamic activism), their lack of specialism in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies is jarring, the authors slipping into sweeping historical narratives or rough assertions that potentially undermine the credibility of their arguments. As well as relying on questionable sources considering their theoretical aims,⁹⁹ Tilly and Tarrow link the development of all ‘political Islamist’ groups back to the Iranian Revolution – a notion challenged by the case study of HT.¹⁰⁰ Once again, a key limitation of the work is the categorisation of democratic and authoritarian regime types by the authors, assuming SMO composition and tactics are entirely dependent

⁹⁴ Ibid. p.896

⁹⁵ Ibid. p.899

⁹⁶ Ibid. pp.893-4

⁹⁷ Ibid. p.892; cf. Colin J. Beck, "The Contribution of Social Movement Theory to Understanding Terrorism," *Sociology Compass* 2, no. 5 (2008). p.1571

⁹⁸ Tilly and Tarrow.

⁹⁹ cf. Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

¹⁰⁰ ‘none of these strands of what became a global [Islamist] movement would have spread very far without the successful example of the Iranian Revolution in 1977-1979’; Khomeini is also questionably credited as the first actor with the ‘stated or implied goal of reinstating the Caliphate’ Tilly and Tarrow. p.205

on the context of (open) democracies or (closed) autocracies, and authority response entirely dependent on regime type, with autocracies utilising a far wider and more overt palette of repression tactics than liberal democracies beholden to democratic procedures. Yet, counterterror practices have arguably challenged this assumption, with state actors engaging in overt, long-term repressive mechanisms against challengers – some of which have drawn on authoritarian regime-style tactics.¹⁰¹

To account for this, contemporary theorists have developed the ‘hybrid regime’ type, which ‘vacillate between more democratic and less democratic regimes or employ constitutional means for the majority alongside the repression of minorities’.¹⁰² The limitations of this approach can be clearly seen in one of Tilly and Tarrow’s ‘hybrid regime’ examples: Northern Ireland. The authors state that, following the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and the end of the Troubles, ‘Britain/Northern Ireland *remained a hybrid system* with composite forms of contention’ [emphasis added].¹⁰³ Such regimes lead to polarisation, whereby there have been ‘electoral incentives for political leaders to seek support from the extremes’.¹⁰⁴ The framing of Northern Ireland in this way causes problems because, as has been pointed out by other scholars, we can discern similar patterns of repression and polarisation in Britain towards Muslim and minority communities.¹⁰⁵

Whilst Britain does not have the same settler-colonial context as Ireland, Muslim communities in the UK have suffered from a similar political and economic system that privileges and represses along racial-community lines and there are clear comparisons between how Muslim communities and Irish Republican communities have been treated by the UK state. Composite forms of contention have also developed within Islamic activism as groups like HT reject the democratic system entirely, recasting activist groups who have little or no access to the mechanisms of authority in a different guise but with ultimately the same outcome. Finally, in both the UK and Danish cases, there has been electoral incentives for politicians to polarise issues such as integration and security, with reference made to Muslim communities.¹⁰⁶ As such, the implementation of counterterror policies and discourses which disproportionately target and problematise Muslim communities in Western Europe

¹⁰¹ Richard Jackson et al., *Terrorism: A Critical Introduction* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011).

¹⁰² Tilly and Tarrow. p.76

¹⁰³ Ibid. p.79

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p.93

¹⁰⁵ Christina Pantazis and Simon A. Pemberton, "From the Old to the New Suspect Community: Examining the Impacts of Recent Uk Counter-Terrorist Legislation," *British Journal of Criminology* 79 (2009).

¹⁰⁶ Arun Kundnani, "Integrationism: The Politics of Anti-Muslim Racism," *Race and Class* 48, no. 4 (2007).

creates the same conditions described in a so-called ‘hybrid democracy’, and this approach ultimately leads to the conclusion that the UK cannot be considered a democratic state under the terms of Tilly and Tarrow.¹⁰⁷ As such, we are shown some limits of existing social movement literature on ‘Islamism’/Islamic activism and how it operates within Western democratic contexts that have developed and used state of emergency-style counterterror policies.¹⁰⁸

Examination of these sources has sought to show current literature on ‘Islamism’ has been greatly advanced by an SMT approach which offers important opportunities for contextualising as a movement constantly in flux, reacting to the political context and with ideologies that are malleable to activist aims. However, it also raises important questions and limitations: notably, that central SMT texts have consistently struggled to understand Islamic activist groups within patterns of repression that have developed in the counterterror paradigm. Research into state interaction with Islamist groups therefore needs to account for the growth of tactics which challenge or subvert traditional Western human rights norms.¹⁰⁹

2.2 Hizb ut-Tahrir

Whilst there has been a decline in contemporary research on Hizb ut-Tahrir, there have been some important recent contributions. Sadek Hamid offers important research on HT’s role in British Islamic activism in his 2007 *Islamic Political Radicalism in Britain: the case of Hizb ut-Tahrir*.¹¹⁰ He explores how HTB interacts with potential members, why certain young people join the organisation (and others do not) and how certain tactics are used to appeal to different sections of Muslim communities, focussing particularly on the development of the organisation since 2002 – a period involving ‘the re-lunching of HT’s image, activities and clandestine recruitment’.¹¹¹ As well as detailing recruitment techniques – one-to-one targeting, public programmes, pamphleting – Hamid tracks organisational mobilisation which capitalises on a sense of injustice, particularly

¹⁰⁷ Fahid Qurashi, "The Prevent Strategy and the Uk ‘War on Terror’: Embedding Infrastructures of Surveillance in Muslim Communities," *Palgrave Communications* 4, no. 1 (2018).

¹⁰⁸ Christian Bjørnskov and Stefan Voigt, "When Does Terror Induce a State of Emergency? And What Are the Effects?," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 20, no. 10 (2019).

¹⁰⁹ Stefano Bonino, "Counter-Terrorism in the United Kingdom: Between Security and Human Rights," (Turin: Torino World Affairs Institute, 2017).

¹¹⁰ Sadek Hamid, "Islamic Political Radicalism in Britain," in *Islamic Political Radicalism: A European Perspective*, ed. T. Abbas (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007). p.148

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

amongst educated youth who are not religiously-literate. He also highlights how certain tactics have both attracted elements of disenfranchised and disenchanting Muslim youth and simultaneously alienated significant sections of Muslim communities, due to instances of their aggressive and reductionist argumentation, divisive denunciation of certain communities or scholars, and deceptively opportunistic and exploitative interactions with other Muslims.¹¹² Externally, such tactics have ‘undermined years of careful bridge-building or interfaith work with non-Muslim groups’, whilst internally the party’s aggressive focus on the Caliphate has led to member dissatisfaction and defection, ‘fundamentally because it has been unable to achieve its all-important objective’.¹¹³

Hamid concludes that the ‘pariah status’ and one-issue mentality of HTB operates as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it limits community engagement due to its perceived arrogance and unwillingness to work with, other Muslim groups, as well as its intellectual naivety on the issue of the Caliphate. On the other hand, it has engendered a degree of success, mobilising young Muslims who feel alienated from society, mainstream politics and the mosque-based practicing of older generations. Ultimately, Hamid finds that HTB has been able to ‘fill a void in the Islamic landscape with a consistent, professionally marketed message’, but that their record ‘demonstrates its inability to gain popular support among the Muslim masses in any way comparable to other similar movements’.¹¹⁴ Whilst the group’s long-term appeal is limited – many young people leaving once they ‘complete their education and settle down into adult life’ – there are hints that the core demographics are shifting and it is worth exploring whether this youth-based characterisation is still appropriate.¹¹⁵

Another important contribution towards the literature on HTB by Hamid is his 2016 *Sufis, Salafis and Islamists: The Contested Ground of British Islamic Activism*.¹¹⁶ He contrasts four British Islamic movements: a reformist Islamist youth movement, Hizb ut-Tahir, Salafism and Sufi-inspired ‘traditional Islam’. Hamid’s SMT-based framework places the groups firmly within their political context, and this ‘re-politicisation’ enables Hamid to avoid becoming stranded amongst self-referential discussions on radicalisation which are oft-prevalent in similar studies. Hamid positions the work as a criticism of the reductionist narrative promulgated from within certain

¹¹² Ibid. pp.152-3

¹¹³ Ibid. p.153

¹¹⁴ Ibid. pp.157-8

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p.158

¹¹⁶ *Sufis, Salafis and Islamists: The Contested Ground of British Islamic Activism* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2016).

sections of both media and academia towards Islamic activism in the UK and attacks the securitisation of Islamic identity markers in contemporary Europe, in which perceived threats from al-Qaeda and Islamic State have disproportionately impacted on discourse and debate surrounding Islamic activism in the West.¹¹⁷ The work, providing intensive and highly rigorous and triangulated sets of data from the groups, marks a departure from other voices often dominating the field – those of self-styled ‘ex-Islamists’ and ‘counter-radicalisers’ who problematise Islamism from a liberal-normative standpoint¹¹⁸ – whilst also avoiding the uncritical amplification of Islamist rhetoric, critically dissecting the groups to produce a broadly balanced account.

Using an approach referential to social movement theories, Hamid explores how different tactics have led to the groups gaining or losing support, exploring instances when they have attempted to provide attractive and successful frames to conceptualise Muslim identity in contemporary Britain. He offers up discussion on the temporality of such movement organisations, identifying 2001 and 2005 as critical dates in shaping Islamic activism, and sees the future development of such movements as equally in a state of flux, particularly following the Arab Uprisings post-2010, with such changes possibly leading to ‘a further emitting of different orientations until they are unrecognisable from their origins’.¹¹⁹ The focus on these years as key moments in shaping and redirecting the course of European ‘Islamism’ certainly tallies with data from members of HTB and HTS, explored in this thesis at a later stage.

There are some limitations with this work. The examination of these four groups is questionable in potentially over-prioritising their rather limited appeal, with Hamid admitting that ‘most British Muslims are not members of these four trends’ but that ‘their understanding and practice of Islam is likely to have been influenced them’.¹²⁰ This is perhaps a slight of hand that risks reinforcing the simplification and essentialisation that he critiques – by side-lining the diversity of Islamic innovation in the UK, the work arguably fails to account for how other Islamic social movement organisations have shaped the tactical and organisational development of the four case studies. The work is also slightly clumsy in dealing with sensitive political and communities issues, with Abedin criticising it as ‘mildly partisan’ against HT, with an analysis which ‘betrays the author’s bias against this

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ed Hussein, *The Islamist: Why I Joined Radical Islam in Britain, What I Saw inside and Why I Left* (London: Penguin Books, 2007); Maajid Nawaz, *Radical: My Journey out of Islamist Extremism* (The Aspen Institute, 2015).

¹¹⁹ Hamid, *Sufis, Salafis and Islamists: The Contested Ground of British Islamic Activism*.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

group',¹²¹ and his perhaps overly critical approach prevents proper reflection on HT's maturation on British soil.¹²² There is also some problem with Hamid's prediction of a 'post-ideological future' which he suggests will lead to a collapse of such groups, as the data fails to account for such conclusions.¹²³

Another important contribution towards HT comes from Farhaan Wali, whose doctoral thesis, *Radicalism Unveiled: A study of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain* – and subsequent book of the same name – seeks to provide an 'insider perspective of HT activism', in contrast to other scholars who, according to Wali, 'cannot penetrate the clandestine veil of the organisation, hindering their ability to formulate meaningful conclusions'.¹²⁴ The work provides key insights: Wali's own personal engagement with the organisation and stint as a member; processes of recruitment; and a rich dissection of the demographics of members and recruits. It represents an attempt to 'place HT activists at the centre of [the] research' and '[construct] knowledge around the life experiences of activists', as well as to 'cut through programmed and robotic rhetoric often spouted to "outsiders"'.¹²⁵ This is a valuable approach in a pool of research with limited direct engagement with HT activists, and is produced through various data gathering methodologies, including ethnographic study, semi-structured in-depth interviews with over thirty HT members, and a survey, to ultimately create a resource-rich study.

There are, however, monumental methodological questions which hang over Wali's work. Most glaringly is his wholesale and uncritical acceptance and use of the term 'radicalisation' in reference to HT activism. Determining HTB to be 'a radical fringe group... inspir[ing] young people in Britain to turn away from the bedrock principles of this country, infusing them with religious fanaticism', he takes an inherently and overtly hostile approach to the group.¹²⁶ This may be what one former member described as 'ex-smoker's syndrome... you're always harshest against it because you used to do it'.¹²⁷ However, this blind-spot of reflexivity colours his analysis, perhaps beyond the limits of scholarly integrity. Wali fails to reflect fully on the problems surrounding his uncritical use of the term 'radicalisation' (despite flagging that 'no clear definition of radicalisation could be

¹²¹ Mahan Abedin, "Review: Sufis, Salafis and Islamists: An Authoritative Survey of Britain's Changing Islamic Landscape," Religioscope, <https://english.religion.info/2016/06/16/sufis-salafis-and-islamists-an-authoritative-survey-of-britains-changing-islamic-landscape/>.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Farhaan Wali, "A Study of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Britain" (Royal Holloway, University of London, 2011). p.42

¹²⁵ Ibid., p.43

¹²⁶ *Radicalism Unveiled* (London: Ashgate Publications, 2013). p.1

¹²⁷ XC, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

found in the literature’) and whilst he states his initial intention to offer up a definition, specific conclusions are indiscernibly vague.¹²⁸

He is keen to stress the privileged nature of his standing: ‘as someone who has experienced HT radicalisation, I am also my own source of knowledge’.¹²⁹ Yet what is produced is an account which, whilst purporting to provide an ‘interior’ perspective, relies primarily on a few limited sources, many of which are badly dated, from the 1990s and early 2000s.¹³⁰ Furthermore, his ‘hypercritical’ appraisal of previous HT studies lurches from one over-generalisation to another, partly in an almost self-congratulatory highlighting of his ‘unique perspective and standpoint’ which is not tempered by the kind of reflexivity required.¹³¹

One of the most comprehensive overviews of the development of HT in Britain, their repertoire of contention and their ideological framing, comes from Suha Taji-Farouki’s 1996 analysis *A Fundamental Quest: Hizb ut-Tahrir and the search for the Islamic Caliphate*.¹³² It offers both a meticulously built chronology and a hugely detailed insight into its organisational structure, ideological framing and contextual developments. It is a particularly crucial text because it counters some of the more state-centric and securitised reports produced on HT. Following a wide-ranging and historically overarching study, she concludes that groups such as HT are not a ‘monolithic whole as much reporting would have us believe’ but are reliant on the specific contexts from which they emerge:

*... they articulate varied responses to disparate conditions, appealing to different social bases. Like other socio-political movements, their success can depend on their ability to adapt their platforms and strategies to changing circumstances.*¹³³

Taji-Farouki’s findings are now somewhat dated and the context in which HT operates has undergone tectonic shifts, but this work does offer highly relevant insights on the party’s history and ideology, and their use in contemporary activism. Crucial insights on the relationship between discourse and action by HT and al-

¹²⁸ Wali, "A Study of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Britain." p.16 & pp.16-26

¹²⁹ Ibid. p.10

¹³⁰ Douglas Weeks and Basia Spalek, "Review: Farhaan Wali, *Radicalism Unveiled*," *Religion, State and Society* 43, no. 2 (2015). p.192

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Suha Taji-Farouki, *A Fundamental Quest: Hizb Ut-Tahrir and the Search for the Islamic Caliphate* (London: Gery Seal, 1996).

¹³³ Ibid. p.191

Muhajiroun (ALM) are also found in her later study, *Islamists and the Threat of Jihad*, which deconstructs assertions made by authorities – and indeed some academics – on the links between such groups and ‘extremism’.¹³⁴ She explores how HT rhetoric often exists in direct opposition to action, enabling a highly elaborate and reactive rhetoric to exist alongside actions which do not jeopardise the continued capability of the group to conduct activism. Particularly, she cites HT’s commitment to promulgating the concept of a defensive jihad as integral to the global role of the organisation in protecting Muslims against oppression, whilst equally being aware that it would be a ‘serious distraction from their main goal for members to engage in jihad against those who have attacked or occupied Muslim lands, in spite of the fact that, theoretically speaking, this remains a personal duty for any who are directly involved’.¹³⁵ As such, she concludes that HT use concepts such as jihad – which are ‘designed to play to a climate where radical solutions win popular support’ – whilst simultaneously framing it as only possible under ‘a hypothetical situation, under the leadership of the elusive caliph’, within the context of an Islamic state that is yet to materialise according to the party’s strict conditions.¹³⁶ Taji-Farouki’s work on the disconnect between rhetoric and activism demonstrates the way in which Islamic social movement organisations such as HT can utilise discourse – even central, founding texts – in highly flexible ways, to constantly recast frames depending on the political context in which they operate.

Reza Pankhurst’s 2016 *Hizb ut-Tahrir: The Untold History of the Liberation Party* offers an important contribution to understanding the development of the ideology of the party, particularly on the re-establishment of the Caliphate.¹³⁷ A former member with continued ties, Pankhurst gives insight into how the party has historically interacted with authorities in the Middle East, as well as the current trends and future trajectories of ‘Islamism’ as a global social movement. His analysis is concise and draws from Western and non-Western sources to provide an importantly diverse counterweight to much contemporary research. This – along with his previous publication *The Inevitable Caliphate? A History of the Struggle for Global Islamic Union, 1924 to the Present* – disentangles complex debates over the role of an Islamic state in HT’s rhetoric.¹³⁸ Particularly, he draws out HT’s

¹³⁴ "Islamists and the Threat of Jihad: Hizb Ut-Tahrir and Al-Muhajiroun on Israel and the Jews," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 4 (2000).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* p.40

¹³⁶ *Ibid.* pp.42 & 44; Other studies into the disconnect between the rhetoric and action of Islamist groups have found similar conclusions, such as Jeroen Gunning’s research into how cooperation by Hamas with Israeli Authorities were framed within the context of its 1988 founding charter which states ‘there is no solution to the Palestinian Problem except by *Jihad*’. Muhammad Maqdsi, "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) of Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 22, no. 4 (1993). p.126; Gunning.

¹³⁷ Reza Pankhurst, *Hizb Ut-Tahrir: The Untold History of the Liberation Party* (London: C Hurst and Co, 2016).

¹³⁸ *The Inevitable Caliphate: A History of the Struggle for Global Islamic Union, 1924 to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

revolutionary ('top to bottom change') methodology of establishing the Caliphate in comparison with the more gradualist ('bottom up') change of al-Ikhwan (MB), the reactionary, armed insurgent approach of al-Qaeda (AQ), and the numerous approaches of smaller movements such as Muratbitun and Tehreek-e-Kalifat.

Offering a critical foundation for understanding longitudinal trends within HT's conceptualisation of the Caliphate, Pankhurst's emphasis on text does tend to treat ideological factors as the main driving force in the development of the organisation. Whilst this approach has merits, it conflicts with more 'entrepreneurial' elements of SMT in which ideational factors are used as a means of achieving change rather than the main motivational driver. But he does provide important insights into party ideology, accessed through deep access and experience, which helps to contextualise the development of certain HT frames.

A significant tranche of analysis on HT come from non-governmental reports. Such research tends to focus on ideology as the significant explanatory factor, discerning tactics largely through examination of public rhetoric – communiqués, media posts, website information, publications from Hizb ut-Tahrir and media interviews with prominent members of the leadership. Writers of reports on Hizb ut-Tahrir within the European context include Houriya Ahmed and Hannah Stuart, who have detailed contemporary trends in HT's organisational and tactical development. Situated within Western-liberal, methodologically-nationalist, non-governmental organisations, these publications tend to take an approach which conflates 'Islamism' and 'Islamist' SMOs with contested concepts of 'extremism' and 'radicalisation' by essentialising interpretations of discourse: for instance, HT is framed as inherently rejecting '[liberal values such as secularism, human rights and pluralism]' in 'a clash between Western and Islamic civilisation'.¹³⁹ Such language risks uncritically and inversely amplifying the ideological standpoint of HT and denies members the freedom to alter, develop or reconceptualise texts of the party; any disconnect between party ideology and tactical innovation is deemed 'euphemistic language to hide its support for jihad, anti-Semitic beliefs and a totalitarian system of governance'.¹⁴⁰ HT therefore becomes static, unable to develop beyond the writings of al-Nabhani in the 1950s. Such assumptions is challenged by recent HT statements, that state that '[t]he tools to implement the strategy may change from place to place,

¹³⁹ Houriya Ahmed and Hannah Stuart, "Profile: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in the UK," in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, ed. H. Fradkin, et al. (Hudson Institute: Centre on Islam, Democracy and the Future of the Muslim World, 2010). pp.144-5

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. p.155

and from time to time', whilst unquestionably casting doubt on the authenticity of party activism (in favour of textual analysis) is problematic and lacks appropriate nuance.¹⁴¹

Examples of this essentialising practice can be seen at various points of Ahmed and Stuart's analysis. For example, HTB is accused of having 'deliberately and opportunistically sought to manipulate the grievances of some British Muslims in a range of recent incidents', listing examples such as the 2005-6 *Jyllands-Posten* Cartoon Controversy, concerns over the potential banning of the hijab and niqab following legal restrictions in other parts of Europe, as well as hostility towards government counter-terrorism/counter-radicalisation measures.¹⁴² Such framing casts Islamic activists in a victim-perpetrator dichotomy: actors are either 'manipulating' grievances or being manipulated by the party, whilst legitimate grievances – and consequent activism to address perceptions of injustice – are deliberately obscured and dismissed. The reports may be strongly informed by the thinktanks from which they were produced – notably, the Centre for Social Cohesion (CSC) and the subsequent Henry Jackson Society – which have been heavily criticised as being favourable towards a wider securitising agenda.¹⁴³ Much of these reports place government strategies, policy recommendations and state responses at the heart of their approach, inculcating the work within neo-liberal Western power projections that perhaps need to be more critically disentangled.¹⁴⁴ By assuming the 'new terrorism' paradigm, such reports buy unquestionably into a securitised discourse, lacking the reflexivity to consider the actions of Islamic activists as anything other than a result of ideological beliefs, and adopting an approach whereby the author becomes what Schmid and Jongman refer to as a 'fireman' – whereby researchers attempt to solve 'Islamism' it as a problem – rather than acting in the more critical role of a 'student of combustion'.¹⁴⁵

Noman Hanif offers a relevant study on the role of securitisation in HT's recent history in his doctoral thesis. He takes several regional HT bodies as case studies, analysing the similarities (ideology and organisational structure) and differences (localised politics, external interests and objectives) in processes of securitisation towards HT in Britain, Uzbekistan, Indonesia and the Middle East.¹⁴⁶ His analysis, through the securitisation model of the

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid. p.151

¹⁴³ Poynting and Whyte.

¹⁴⁴ cf. John Lea and Simon Hallsworth, "Bringing the State Back In: Understanding Neoliberal Security," in *Criminalisation and Advanced Marginality: Critically Exploring the Work of Loïc Wacquant*, ed. Peter Squires and John Lea (Bristol: Polity Press, 2012).

¹⁴⁵ Silke. p.58

¹⁴⁶ Hanif. p.30

Copenhagen School, utilises a spectrum of securitisation to understand the variance in attitudes towards HT which have impacted on the party's behaviour, finding that 'Britain demonstrates a very unique example of securitisation affecting HT'.¹⁴⁷ Hanif finds a tension amongst 'elite' security actors in the UK as to the potential threat HT poses, which has led to the adoption of different approaches toward the party at different authority levels. He argues that the British Home Office has been working in parallel with HTB to 'de-securitise' the movement organisation, attempting to transform it into 'a British specific societal and community police force against violent extremism'.¹⁴⁸ He also finds evidence for interaction between Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain and government security bodies, observing that the actions of HTB's leadership 'reflect a remarkable coherence' with information retrieved from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Home Office (HO).

Whilst there has been some notable research on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain, less has been produced on the Copenhagen-based Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia. This may be due to its smaller membership, more recent establishment, or perhaps differing perceptions of engaging with HT by researchers in Denmark.

*I think there's a lot of people interested in talking us from to Danish population about our dynamics, researchers like yourself, but very few of them dare to do it because if you are seen with a Hizb ut-Tahrir member it can end your career. Not a lot of researchers in Denmark are talking to us.*¹⁴⁹

Sinclair is one of the relatively few Denmark-based researchers to have spent extended periods of time with the Scandinavian membership. Her 2010 PhD dissertation, *The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain*, explores how members negotiate understandings of 'home', 'homeland' and 'belonging' and the relationship between the transnational elements of their ideology and individual members' localised notions of home.¹⁵⁰ The work is rich in detail and based on extended interviews and discussions with members, offering a particularly important contribution on the party's discourse and framing. Sinclair also provides important reference for the project by offering in-depth analysis of the British and Danish party bodies. She states that her work 'cannot claim to be able to characterise Hizb ut-Tahrir on a meso level (organisational level), but rather...

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. p.247

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ HK, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, Copenhagen.

¹⁵⁰ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.5

[offers] a combined analysis of macro and micro level activities’, analysing ideological material and focussing on ideological stances and their interaction in the national and international context.¹⁵¹ Whilst Sinclair’s research offers impressive depth and colour to the group, there is space for expanding research on HT into more meso-centred approaches, an area which this project looks to address.

This section, reviewing extant studies into HT activism, shows that there are plenty of gaps in the literature to be addressed. Several significant studies either take an overtly ideological/public discourse-based approach – to navigate the significant research barriers posed by the clandestine nature of HT – or a more security-centred approach focussing on HT’s relationship to concepts of ‘extremism’ or ‘terrorism’. This study will avoid such approaches by focussing on meso-level organisational changes within the context of state mechanisms of securitisation. It will also explore the recent decline of the party’s fortunes, something that has only received limited attention in existing studies, to advance the literature and bring the study of HT more up to date.

2.3 Social Movements

This final section of the review of contemporary literature will explore how social movement theories and activist-based approaches have been specifically used to study Islamic activism and HT itself. Olesen’s 2009 paper on SMT and ‘Radical Islamic Activism’, from the Aarhus University Centre for Studies in Islamism and Radicalisation (CIR), forms part of the development of a self-titled ‘Denmark School’ which looks to ‘remedy the fragmentation between different fields of research in Islamism’.¹⁵² This school aims to bring research departments, researchers and data together from six different institutions across Europe to explore three elements of European-Islamic activism: ‘Islamist ideology’; ‘Social movement and radicalisation’; and ‘Islamism and international politics’. As well as building an inter-disciplinary approach drawing on scholarship from political science, anthropology, sociology and the humanities to ‘highlight the mechanisms of radical processes among Muslim youth in Europe’, CIR also brings innovation by exploring the linkage between ‘soft security’ and ‘hard security’.¹⁵³ In establishing ‘whether research in social movements may contribute in enlightening the

¹⁵¹ Ibid. p.51

¹⁵² Centre for Studies of Islamism and Radicalisation (CIR), "Islamism and Radicalisation: The Denmark School," http://cir.au.dk/fileadmin/site_files/filer_statskundskab/subsites/cir/pdf-filer/center-for-islamisme.pdf.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

processes of activism, and to which extent there is a need of developing new parameters',¹⁵⁴ Olesen suggests four social movement-inspired approaches to researching radical forms of Islamic activism: 1. an individual socio-psychological approach on ideational transformation at the individual and group levels; 2. a network and organisation explanation, combining personal networks and existing institutions; 3. an environmental, political opportunity approach, considering interaction with authorities and the public debate climate; and 4. a media and communication explanation on the framing of symbols and use of technologies in a global media infrastructure.¹⁵⁵

Whilst pointing out that there has been increasing interest in researching Islamic activism post-2001, Olesen diagnoses the nascent field as limited in the theoretical tools available to conduct 'a debate with much deeper academic and historical roots than 9/11'.¹⁵⁶ He finds critical gaps in the literature, particularly in the need for 'a toolbox for future studies of radical Islamic activism wishing to engage with social movement theory',¹⁵⁷ and finds SMT offers a set of 'fine-grained theoretical apparatus enabling researchers to identify and analyse a variety of factors'.¹⁵⁸ By conceptualising the theories as individual tools, Olesen highlights the wide and sometimes unwieldy array of facets within SMT, recommending that new combinations need to be constructed and adjusted in the current political context: 'The challenge for future students of radical Islamic activism is consequently to combine the explanations in new and fruitful ways'.¹⁵⁹

Olesen attempts to drive this construction by focussing on two variables: 1. access; and 2. the state's capacity and propensity for repression.¹⁶⁰ For access, Olesen finds SMT research suggests a linkage whereby 'countries with a high degree of centralisation and relatively free access points for activists appear to experience more disruptive forms of protest'.¹⁶¹ Meanwhile, SMT research on the state's capacity and propensity for repression has shown that '[m]odern democratic states generally have high acceptance levels for activism', although 'some forms of activism can unleash repressive responses from authorities' in democratic states, which 'typically

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ These roughly correspond to a micro, meso and macro-level approach respectively, with the additional layer of a Discursive Opportunity Structure (DOS) to account for the impact of external media frames within a context of securitisation. Olesen. p.7

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. p.7

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. p.8

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. p.9

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. p.29

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. p.21

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

involve the police and intelligence services'.¹⁶² The mobilisation of the state's surveillance capacities against SMOs such as HT, along with a contraction of channels of access between Islamic activist groups and the political system and a diminution of discursive public space available to HT should, according to this theory, generate forms of activism that are more disruptive.¹⁶³ This, however, is too simplistic when considering the data drawn from Britain and Denmark in this study – in the UK, whilst some of these diminutions and contractions have occurred, others have not, and members in Copenhagen and London have experienced repression by state surveillance bodies differently, resulting in different responses in both case studies that can neither be wholly characterised as disruptive nor institutionalised. As such, the choice of SMT tools used for this analysis needs to be carefully considered and recalibrated for these case studies.

Olsen's work does highlight important additional points for this research project, such as the importance of understanding the sites of interaction between social movements and state actors, determining that 'the important aspect here is the dynamic and sometimes self-perpetuating interaction between authorities and activists'.¹⁶⁴ Secondly, Olesen concludes that, within future studies of Islamic activism, 'it is of particular importance to consider cross-national differences', and that the 'concept of political opportunities, for example, provides a useful theoretical tool to employ comparative analyses'.¹⁶⁵ This thesis has therefore drawn on these suggestions, to focus analysis on interactive points between authorities and challengers, as well as to offer a comparative study of the two national case studies of Britain and Denmark.

Other relevant contributions to social movement and Islamic activism – particularly within a British and Danish context – come from Lindekilde, Mouritsen and Zapata-Barrero's 2009 comparative study of the *Jyllands-Posten* cartoon controversy.¹⁶⁶ Taking a cross-national approach – one 'largely missing in previous treatments of the controversy, as arguably still in many fields of migration studies generally'¹⁶⁷ – they explore formations of Joppke's 'repressive liberalism' in responses by contemporary Western states.¹⁶⁸ This was articulated differently

¹⁶² Ibid. p.22

¹⁶³ Ibid. p.24

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. p.22

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. p.29

¹⁶⁶ Lasse Lindekilde, Per Mouritsen, and Richard Zapata-Barrero, "The Muhammad Cartoons Controversy in Comparative Perspective," *Ethnicities* 9 (2009).

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. p.293

¹⁶⁸ Christian Joppke, "Beyond National Models: Civic Integration Policies for Immigrants in Western Europe," *Western European Politics* 30, no. 1 (2007); "Transformation of Immigrant Integration: Civic Integration and Antidiscrimination in the Netherlands, France and Germany," *World Politics* 59, no. 2 (2007).

during the controversy in Denmark (where the cartoons were published from the logic that Islam should be critiqued, in line with Government's drive for *Kulturkamp*) than in Britain (where newspapers chose not to publish the cartoons, perhaps influenced by a tradition of UK multiculturalism). They conclude that the 'cartoon controversy' shows the need to further theorise the relationship between the national and the global and to offer some further theoretical tightening of how to understand the impact of interplay between authorities and Islamic activists.

Outside of the Western context, Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman's 2018 study of Hizb ut-Tahrir's Indonesian branch (HTI) takes an SMT approach to explore the growth of HTI through the party's use of the democratic civil society space to propound illiberal aims.¹⁶⁹ This study highlights disconnects between the branch's oft-extreme rhetoric and its increasingly mainstream political engagement. Ultimately, Osman suggests that HTI's use of collective Islamic identity is the most crucial factor in the party's growth, used to support resource mobilisation strategies and the dissemination of a powerful anti-systemic ideology, to enable the party to grow more successfully than competitor Islamist organisations. This work represents an important recent contribution to discussion on other HT branches and the role that SMT facets can have in understanding organisational development.

Another SMT study is that of Sutton and Vertigans, which argues that social movement studies and Islamic studies 'have followed parallel trajectories, with few glances across the chasm that has separated them'.¹⁷⁰ An attempt at alignment creates opportunities to challenge social movement researchers who have been 'confused and bewildered by religious crusaders who dedicate their lives to realising God's will on earth'.¹⁷¹ Sutton and Vertigans focus on the opportunities shown by the development of New Social Movement (NSM) Theories. Criticised by an array of scholars because of its largely unjustified delineation of a distinctive 'new' type of post-industrial social movement (which ultimately 'did not seem quite so "new" after all'), the authors contend that NSM theories of identity have, nevertheless, greatly influenced the mainstream SMT canon.¹⁷² Even whilst much

¹⁶⁹ Mohamad Nawab Mohamed Osman, *Hizb Ut-Tahrir Indonesia and Political Islam: Identity, Ideology and Religio-Political Mobilisation* (Oxford: Routledge, 2018).

¹⁷⁰ Philip W. Sutton and Stephen Vertigans, "Islamic 'New Social Movements'? Radical Islam, Al-Qa'ida and Social Movement Theory," *Mobilisation: An international journal* 11, no. 1 (2006). p.101

¹⁷¹ Anthony Oberschall, "Explaining Terrorism: The Contribution of Collective Action Theory," *Sociological Theory* 22, no. 1 (2004). p.34

¹⁷² Sutton and Vertigans. p.103

of the mechanistic and post-industrial elements of NSM have been discarded, the inclusion of concepts of ‘shared identity’ have greatly expanded the theoretical toolset available in understanding how Islamic activism occurs which circumvents some of the sometimes naked structuralism and rationality which bedevils early SMT analysis.¹⁷³ This offers a path upon which to draw Islamic activism further into the field of SMT, encouraging further exploration of the role of norms, values and identity-based behaviour in social movement analysis.

On social movement theories and minority activism in Western Europe, Gale and O’Toole show how black and minority ethnic (BME) groups have utilised ‘alternative’ public spheres (such as local and grassroots community organisations) in claims-making, largely due to minority groups facing significant barriers to accessing ‘mainstream’ public spheres.¹⁷⁴ This has taken place in a political context where a proliferation of public spheres has occurred due to increasing social complexity, as new interests, identities and demands become unable to be addressed within the mainstream public sphere or through the state. Such research demonstrates a recent ‘spatial turn’, in which the projection of identity-based activism into space and time is addressed using social movement-informed approaches.

Finally, Schmidt offers a relevant contribution on formations of Islamic activism in the municipality of Copenhagen, exploring how the area of Nørrebro has been used as a means of projecting Muslim identity through public political performance. As well as detailing the contextual and social history of Nørrebro, he explores how three different Islamic communities have produced public manifestations of political identities along one of the main streets, Nørrebrogade. One case study explores the mobilisation of HTS following the 2005/6 Jyllends Posten Cartoon Controversy, particularly how HTS ‘used Nørrebro to reactualise both a national and translational struggle’.¹⁷⁵ He utilises a ‘grounded politics’ approach, scrutinising the political dimension of a multicultural urban space – a space that is, according to Deutsche, ‘the product of conflict’ – and the ways in which Muslim and migrant communities argue and perform their identities within them.¹⁷⁶ This

¹⁷³ ‘A social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organisations, engaged in political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity’ Mario Diani, “The Concept of Social Movement,” *The Sociological Review* 40, no. 1 (1992). p.13

¹⁷⁴ Richard T. Gale and Therese O’Toole, “Young People and Faith Activism: British Muslim Youth, Glocalisation and the Umma,” in *Faith in the Public Realm: Controversies, Policies and Practices*, ed. Adam Dinham, Robert Furbey, and Vivien Lowndes (Bristol: Policy Press, 2009). pp.145-6

¹⁷⁵ Garbi Schmidt, “‘Grounded’ Politics: Manifesting Muslim Identity as a Political Factor and Localised Identity in Copenhagen,” *Ethnicities* 12, no. 5 (2012). p.618

¹⁷⁶ Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1996). p.278

ethnographically-informed study offers an account of the different formations of Islamic activism encountered: the methods they use on the street; the atmosphere of the protesters; the reception the demonstrators receive; and the ritualistic elements employed in such political performance.

Schmidt notes that, whilst a spatial turn in social movement theories has enabled a more nuanced understanding of Muslim immigrant minorities in Western Europe, 'we still need studies of, and concepts grasping, the ways that Muslims and other migrants use, engage and transform space of particular neighbourhoods', particularly those that offer 'a perspective on political discourses and supra-local (national) institutions'.¹⁷⁷ The study he produces focusses largely on identifying the projections of such but bypasses some of the more reactionary elements of identity construction and activism, particularly the impact that authorities have in its shaping. It does, however, offer an integral contribution to illuminating political activism through the dual lenses of the contestation of physical space alongside national and international social movement activity.

Examination of the literature on the use of social movement approaches in the study of HT identifies the need for further research which identifies, combines and shapes a theoretical toolset for such study. It highlights the opportunities of engaging in forms of data gathering and analysis which include advances in SMT to understand identity, spatial and temporal elements of activism. This project will seek to explore how elements of SMT approaches can be honed for this case study, as well as the wider analytical implications this has for the study of other 'Islamist' and problematised 'extremist' groups in Western Europe.

2.4 Literature Review Findings

Such exploration of the literature on Islamic activism in Europe and Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark helps to establish the limitations of current research, and the areas where further study is implied. It finds that there is a need to undertake further comparative cross-national studies in the wider field of Islamic activism and in the focussed study of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Such an approach firstly ensures that a static reading of ideological text is not taken as the central explanatory motivation for activist articulation, as the same party – with the same

¹⁷⁷ Schmidt, "'Grounded' Politics: Manifesting Muslim Identity as a Political Factor and Localised Identity in Copenhagen." pp.609 & 610

ideological tenets – has been seen to develop differently in the UK and Denmark. This, in turn, helps to expose the impact of different national political contexts in localised patterns of organisational development on social movement organisations and, specifically, decline. There is a need also to explore the specifics of HT's decline in more depth. Whilst the party has traditionally used controversial and highly visible tactics, their decline over the past two decades has seen tactical shifts by the party, a loss of membership and visibility and a waning of interest in their study by researchers. However, their decline points to some potentially crucial and highly relevant areas of research, providing an opportunity to understand how politically 'radical' groups not only shift away from contentious actions but participate in forms of activist disengagement and even institutionalisation.

There is also a need to understand the impact of counterterrorism policies and securitisation process on Islamic activist groups of all types – not just those that engage in violence, as is more commonly carried out. One particularly prescient example of policy that needs more exploration is that of proscription, a governmental tool which seems to have impacted heavily on HT in Britain and Denmark (despite neither being actually proscribed). Whilst proscription is not a new tactic, it has become a central component within the armoury of the counterterror state, and is 'among the most severe measures available to liberal democratic governments'.¹⁷⁸ However, proscription policy is implemented inconsistently across different European contexts, and its consequences poorly understood.¹⁷⁹ The limited studies available suggest proscription may not prevent organisations operating, but may create geographic and functional substitutions whereby 'extremist' groups reappear elsewhere or use different forms of aggression.¹⁸⁰ Case studies suggest that proscription can embolden targeted groups, increase their resolve, and boost their recruitment and international profile.¹⁸¹ As such, a concerted effort is needed to understand the implications that the policy of proscription – or, in this case, the threat thereof – as a form of repression, has on how SMOs operate. Through research into how HT in Britain and Denmark have responded to repression through tactics such as proscription, we can advance wider discussions on the growth and impact of other formations of counterterrorism.

¹⁷⁸ Tim Legrand, "Banishing the Enemies of Mankind: The Effectiveness of Proscribing Terrorist Organisations in Australia, Canada, the UK and the US," in *Critical Perspectives on Counterterrorism*, ed. Lee Jarvis and Tim Legrand (Oxford: Routledge, 2015). p.165

¹⁷⁹ Lee Jarvis and Tim Legrand, *Critical Perspectives on Counterterrorism* (Oxford: Routledge, 2015).

¹⁸⁰ Teun van Dongen, "Break It Down: An Alternative Approach to Measuring Effectiveness in Counterterrorism," *Journal of Applied Security Research* 6, no. 3 (2011).

¹⁸¹ Jessie Blackbourn, "Counterterrorism and Civil Liberties: The United Kingdom Experience, 1968-2008," *JJIS* 8 (2008). p.63

3. Methodological Framework

Having established the core question and the limitations in the contemporary literature, chapter three is designed to discuss why certain methodologies were chosen over others and how the research project was carried out. It finds that, due to initial difficulties in attaining access to Hizb ut-Tahrir members and activists, a variety of approaches had to be taken which utilised many means of contact at once. The result of was several methodologies being employed simultaneously, with data gained from primary interviews triangulated through a combination of other data sources, including ethnographic engagement, surveys, and media and discourse analysis. Such an approach and the choice of case study threw up several ethical issues which also required successful navigation due to the sensitivity of working with a clandestine, ‘problematized’ group that often falls within the scope of counterterrorism measures.

3.1 Access

Methodologically, to counter limitations of similar contemporary studies, direct interaction with Hizb ut-Tahrir activists and members was prioritised. However, because of this, data collection for this project was often difficult and the process sometimes gruelling. The party operates in a semi-clandestine or secretive manner, although the extent of this clandestine nature is difficult to ascertain with precision. Many HT members during interviews would refute the accusation of a clandestine nature as something externally imposed on them, a mischaracterisation falsely applied as part of a wider process of securitisation within current narratives of ‘extremism’. There is, furthermore, a desire by members to engage publicly with contemporary issues – through public demonstrations, talks, mosque events, and some direct interaction with media and even politicians. Furthermore, in discussions with activists, many were keen to stress that all information about Hizb ut-Tahrir was freely available.

... our opinions are public. So, what we say in private when I call someone, discuss with someone, now when I'm sitting talking with you and my phone, if it's tapped and they're listening, I'm not saying anything that I'm not saying in public anyway.¹⁸²

Certainly, the core ideological tenets were not difficult to access, with active websites and social media pages consistently kept up to date, core treatises often readily available to download or to pick up at public events, and leaflets distributed as part of the process of da'wah.

We have public meetings, we can be approached at the mosque, we are always talking with the community, we are a part of the community. It's ridiculous to say we are some hidden, malign body.¹⁸³

However, party bodies do operate in a semi-clandestine manner, HT requiring the attainment of membership to access study circles (*halaqat*), with membership taking, generally, between three and five years to attain.¹⁸⁴ This has been a problem that has faced many researchers looking to collect data on Hizb ut-Tahrir, leading to limitations in their studies.¹⁸⁵ Sinclair describes her experience of trying to access HTB through various means as part of her PhD dissertation:

Hizb ut-Tahrir's British branch has not responded to my continuous stream of emails throughout 2008 and 2009. Nor do the mobile numbers that I had from previous contact seem to be in use any more... I tried gaining access to British members at party events and at other organisations' debate meetings, seminars etc. without any luck. And in the autumn of 2009 I finally gave up.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸² HO, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

¹⁸³ HG, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

¹⁸⁴ XB, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

¹⁸⁵ As Dr. Gavin Bailey stated in discussion on his doctoral research project in the early 2000s: 'I initially looked to conduct a comparative research project between the British National Party and Hizb ut-Tahrir but, in spite of some early discussions, they indicated they weren't interested and would not be cooperating with the research. It became simply too difficult to gain access and the case study was changed from Hizb ut-Tahrir.' See Gavin Bailey, "We Can All Be a Little Radicalised: Recognising This Will Help Tackle Extremism," *The Conversation*, 17th August 2016.

¹⁸⁶ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." pp.58-59

One researcher who has managed to gain access to the party body was Farhaan Wali, a researcher and former activist for Hizb ut-Tahrir, who reiterates the difficulty facing researchers of Hizb ut-Tahrir. He highlights the ‘considerable lack of access to reliable data sources’ that researchers face due to HT’s proclivity to ‘operate in a clandestine manner and use morally unacceptable behaviour to achieve their goals’, which has limited contemporary study.¹⁸⁷ For Wali, such issues were overcome through the specific circumstances available to him, whereby he was able to utilise several years’ experience and strong social ties to members and activists which he had developed long prior to the research.

*After spending several years interacting with members of HT, I was able to interpret their social world... I adopted the “ethnomethodological” approach, because it provided me with an opportunity to study the activities of group members in their natural surroundings.*¹⁸⁸

As a researcher approaching the group from the outside, such deep ‘ethnomethodological’ approaches were not readily available, but this methodology offered some important guidelines for engagement and was encouraging enough to show that significant findings can be gleaned from limited initial access.¹⁸⁹ Certain alternative approaches used to understand clandestine operations were also deemed problematic in this case. The study of internal communiqués, for instance, was difficult because HT’s are largely unpublished and inaccessible to most members; financial approaches which track funding between organisations was also impossible, with HT only taking donations from its own members. As such, a few early pilot attempts at gathering data were tried to attain relevant information, the resulting thesis coloured by this ‘trial by error’ of a broad palette of approaches.

Even data such as the precise number of members in each party branch at any given time is difficult to know with any degree of accuracy, so decline is largely measured through their ability to attract activists to public

¹⁸⁷ Wali, "A Study of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Britain." p.39

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. p.39

¹⁸⁹ 'I have found ways of analysing the lack of access to primary empirical material and thus view the denied access as part of empirical study itself. Inspired by Sophie Gilliat-Ray's informative and humorous article "Closed Worlds. (Not) Accessing Deobandi *dur al-uloom* in Britain", I have come to see the silence from Hizb ut-Tahrir's British branch as part of a bigger picture involving an ever-changing political reality in Britain.' Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.59; Sophie Gilliat-Ray, "Closed Worlds. (Not) Accessing Deobandi Dar Ul-Uloom in Britain," *Fieldwork in Religion* 1, no. 1 (2005).

events, matched against information from interviews. Indeed, membership numbers are only known by a few members, and even then, they may not be accurate.

*I personally don't know how many members there are in the party; even if I did, I probably wouldn't say. But I don't think anyone knows the numbers. Maybe the head of each branch, perhaps a few committee members. But we generally don't keep lists, which makes it impossible for me to say.*¹⁹⁰

3.1.1 Study sites

With it becoming obvious from the early research stages that there would be significant limitations in accessing the group, preliminary engagement involved establishing important meeting sites – both for activism and for social engagement – to increase the opportunities for meeting with members. Throughout the research process, cafés made up an important site of meeting and discussion. In Denmark, the late-night *Kaffehuset*, Nørrebrogade – an informal café, open later than most others, where party members would generally decamp after Friday prayers, and ‘a favourite of the Brothers’¹⁹¹ – and *Kaffedepartementet*, Rentemestervej – a stylish hipster café further north of Nørrebro – both served as important sites for discussion, debate, activist planning – and even recruitment – sessions by HTS. These spaces further informed research and provided an invaluable site for networking with members throughout the project.

*They sat in various cafes surrounding the area and just recruited. It was a very organised thing, even though it seems spontaneous. It seemed like just a chat with people, but it was very organised. They'd done this a thousand times before...*¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ HB, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

¹⁹¹ HK. I was constantly and enthusiastically urged to try the Green Tea Chai and often bought numerous slices of cheesecake by members

¹⁹² XA, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London & Aarhus.



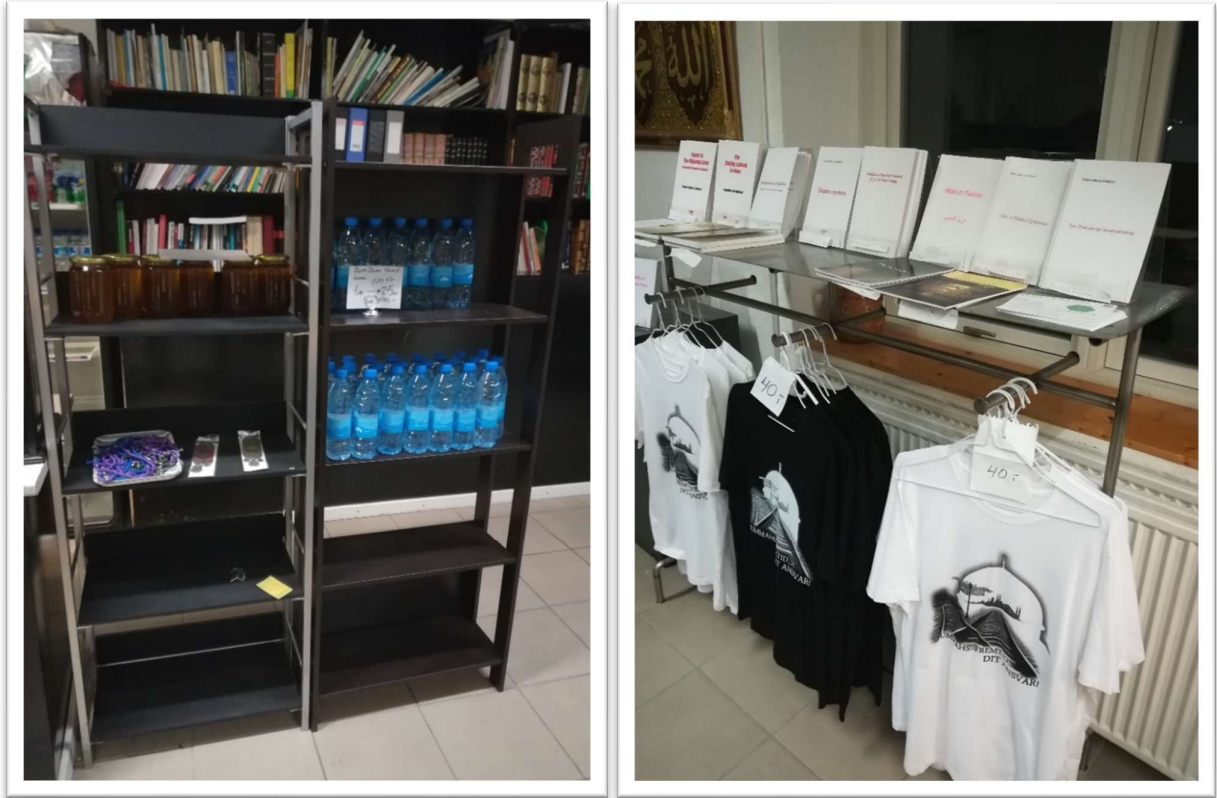
Image 1: *Kaffehuset, Nørrebrogade, 'a favourite of the brothers'*¹⁹³ (McNeil-Willson 2017)

In Denmark, another important site of interaction was that of Masjid al-Faruq, Heimdalsgade 39, 2200, København N. Whilst al Faruq mosque is not legally 'owned' by HTS, they display clear overriding influence and consider the mosque their own, something displayed not only in terms of the talks which buttress Friday prayers, but in highly visual forms. In the main prayer space, for instance, a large black Hizb ut-Tahrir flag hangs, positioned behind the *minbar*, whilst in front a table is flanked by small HT flags in black and white, and HT leaflets are displayed on the table. In the back room, there's a separate space which includes a small library, gift shop and café. There, you can buy core HT texts in Arabic, English or Danish, as well as a variety of other merchandise, including large and small Hizb flags, prayer beads, bookmarks, *zamzam* water and jars of honey.

The cafe sells a variety of readymade foodstuffs - hotdogs and sandwiches, biscuits, chocolate bars, and hot and cold drinks. There's also t-shirts sold, designed by HTS, containing the same design of two rail tracks on the front: one track leading to a utopian Islamic Caliphate, Dubai-esque in its opulence under a signpost that reads, 'radical

¹⁹³ HK.

change'; the other, a broken and menacing track, winds away from the depiction of the Caliphate into darkness, labelled 'gradual change' and 'Camp David accords'. The back reads in Danish the phrase: 'you are responsible for the future of the ummah'.¹⁹⁴



Images 2 & 3: al Faruq HTS gift shop (McNeil-Willson 2017)

The whole room doesn't look too dissimilar from an English heritage gift shop at a local historical attraction. Tables and chairs dot the room, each table labelled with a number and the word 'ummah'. The room is decorated with paintings and murals of key Islamic heritage sights – including the Taj Mahal, Istanbul's Blue Mosque, the mud mosques of Timbuktu, the Kutubiyya Minaret of Marrakesh and, in the centre, the golden dome of al Quds – all positioned around a central, black flag of Hizb ut-Tahrir. These have been artistically painted on, rustic but

¹⁹⁴ A friend later commented that the design of the railway looked similar to the imposing pictures of the tracks that lead to Auschwitz concentration camp and, perhaps, this is a deliberate evocation, recalling the party's criticism of structural inequalities of minorities in Western states.

careful in their execution, although a large low-hanging power cable and socket bathetically obscures the central painting. The party mosque also holds Arabic classes, run and attended by members, which are particularly popular amongst converts/reverts who often join the mosque with limited knowledge of Arabic.



Image 4: al Faruq HTS gift shop (McNeil-Willson 2017)

Another key site of interaction in the Danish case study was at demonstrations, which were held exclusively in Red Square during my time there – the ‘Red Park’ area of Superkilen. Close to the party’s de facto mosque Masjid al-Faruq, it borders Mimersgade, in the centre of the culturally diverse Nørrebro district, northern Copenhagen. It also lies on Nørrebrogade, one of the main roads dissecting Nørrebro and connecting the district to the transport hub at Nørreport. Known for its cultural diversity, the area has recently struggled with a spike in crime – including several fatal shootings taking place in Superkilen – which had claimed several young lives. These were attributed to violence from gangs, particularly the dominant Loyal to Familia (LTF), a gang with a strong base in the area.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Richard Milne, "Danish Killing Spurs Action against Gang Crime," *Financial Times*, 1st November 2017; Stephen Gadd, "Danish Government to Go to Court to Ban Criminal Gang," *Copenhagen Post*, 29th June 2018.



Image 5: HTS women activists at a demonstration, Copenhagen (McNeil-Willson 2017)

In the British case, the party was found to be less centralised, so engagement took place at a more disparate locations where activism was occurring. These included sites of talks – such as the Water Lily Business Centre, Mile End, East London – or protests which largely took place outside of official embassy buildings, such as the (now former) Embassy of the United States, the Embassy of Saudi Arabia, or the (now defunct) embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic, all largely concentrated around the diplomatic hub of Mayfair and Belgravia. Other sites of interaction included various cafés in East London, at which interviews with various members and ex-members were set up, providing a useful place for engaging in semi-structured and informal discussion.



Image 6: A young activist amongst an HTB demonstration, London (McNeil-Willson 2017)



Image 7: An activist holds up the HT flag, with police in the background, London (McNeil-Willson 2017)

3.2 Research Data

Once these research sites were established in the UK and Denmark and early forays into the field conducted, research approaches were able to be set, at least in principle. Successful engagement with relevant actors seemed plausible through the following means: 1. semi-structured interviews with members, ex-members and security services and counterterrorism practitioners; 2. ethnographic and survey data from first-hand analysis of and participation in HT events; 3. analysis of government discussions and policy, media articles, as well as (where possible or relevant) HT websites, social media and official party publications.

3.2.1 Interviews

The methodological process involved snowball sampling in semi-structured interviews with Islamic activists. Firstly, pilot studies were conducted, in which I attended demonstrations and HT events, talking with individuals in attendance, to access those participating in an organising capacity. Names and contact details of individuals met who seemed to fit this profile were recorded by the researcher at these events, a process carried out until I had the contact details of around 10 'gatekeeper' activists.¹⁹⁶ These gatekeepers were then utilised with a request for a meeting as part of the research project under a recorded, semi-structured interview process, where possible. From those initial research interviews that were successful, new relevant contacts were suggested, creating an increasing sample size and enabling engagement with a larger milieu of activists. Gatekeepers were made not only through attending activist events but also through formal approaches to the party through social media or email messages, with meetings with HT members in leadership positions in the UK and Denmark requested where possible. Ex-members and those engaged in relevant counterterrorism work (such as regional or national counterterrorism officials, police practitioners or leaders on the Prevent Delivery Unit, for instance) were contacted either through existing personal contacts from previous relevant professional experience or through contacts made at counterterrorism and counter-extremism conferences in the UK and Denmark.

¹⁹⁶ Gilliat-Ray.

This resulted in the collection of 43 intensive, semi-structured interviews conducted with core Hizb ut-Tahrir members, ex-members and security services and counterterror practitioners in the UK and Denmark. Those with HTB and HTS were from a variety of levels of association and activism, although they were deemed to be important in their knowledge and, as a result, there was some bias towards mid-level and upper-level activists due to the greater levels of information they held on the party's activism and history. Ex-members were also more likely to have been in higher, leadership positions. Counterterror practitioners and politicians that were interviewed included security services, parliamentary party representatives, members of the UK Prevent Delivery Unit and police counterterror leaders. Interviews form the core data of this study and provided the main means by which the research questions were explored and responded to. The majority of interviews were recorded, with the permission of the subject, and all were anonymised, before being transcribed onto NVivo for coding and analysis.

Fig. 1: Overview of core interview participants

Research Type		London		Denmark	
		n	Total	n	Total
Interviews	HT members	9	22/43	10	21/43
	Former members	6		3	
	Authorities	7		8	
Ethnographic	Public talks	3	9/20	6	11/20
	Private talks	1		2	
	Demonstrations	5		3	
TOTAL		31		32	

3.2.2 Ethnographic and Survey Data

To complement interviews, first-hand analysis of events – both those large enough in advertising and attendance to qualify as significant, and more minor meetings and activisms – were analysed in London and Copenhagen. Such events included: demonstrations at embassies and significant protest sites; public, single-issue talks; Friday prayers; private meetings; and several social events – such as coffee meetings, family gatherings, a wedding and football practice with activists and members. Whilst all these engagements contributed towards ethnographic study, the six most significant public events in London and Copenhagen were chosen as the main sites for survey data, based on the size of the events. Surveys of 250 attendees at these six significant events were carried out, to gauge the demographics of, and party engagement with, potential members. Ethnographic data complexified

the research subjects and offered means by which public and private activism were directly experienced and contextualised. This was recorded using a notebook, which was carried throughout field research, and was complimented by photos, videos, drawings and the collection or purchase of physical items, such as leaflets, t-shirts, flags and other items.

When attending demonstrations, ethnographic data was garnered through discussion, notetaking and photography. Following exploratory fieldwork and taking the lead from previous studies, a survey was devised to find out basic information about those attending public activist-style events. Building on (but not replicating) the study of Wali, I decided that the most accessible and important information to gather from such events was about attendees' age and means of engagement with the event.¹⁹⁷ At events, delineating a section of the crowd to ensure a diverse sample of those present, I would approach one-by-one those in the section marked out. At protests, the sample ranged from active and passive members of the crowd, stewards dressed in florescent jackets (marked 'steward') and speakers. Once engaged in conversation with those present, I was quick to identify myself as an academic researcher interested in the protest, before asking them whether they would mind offering some anonymous details for me to better understand the demonstration. In most cases this was offered, on the condition that the information remained anonymous and no other, more personal, details were recorded. Some were initially suspicious of my motives but were reassured when I was able to produce my university and business cards. A minority refused to provide any information, unwilling or unsure as to trust my motives. I carried a digital camera at these events, with which I was recording general shots of the protest. This also led to some suspicion by those approached, some of whom requested that I put the camera away or that they see recent pictures. Others, alternatively, were keen to pose for photos holding banners or flags, and one or two even asked if I could send the photos on to them, providing follow up emails and/or telephone numbers.

3.2.3 Documents

Finally, data was gathered through analysis of government discussions, policy, media articles and Hizb ut-Tahrir website pages, social media posts and official party publications. This enabled additional study of discourse and

¹⁹⁷ Wali, "A Study of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Britain."

policy and the role they have played in activism. Media articles were captured using LexisNexis, data media mined using NCapture, and analysis was conducted using NVivo, with some additional analysis carried out on SPSS and Gephi. Some media or policy documents were obtained through formal requests to national libraries, or official government archives and parliamentary records. In total, 8,789 newspaper articles were studied – the entirety of articles published on HT by registered local and national newspapers in the UK and Denmark between 1989 and 2017. Online and social media was used to build networks, find missing information or triangulate data – although the project followed the lead of Reilly and Trevisan in only using social media quotes from HT’s public figures in instances where they would expect their comments to be publicised.¹⁹⁸

3.3 Ethics

There are several highly important ethical considerations that were considered in this a study, which coalesce around how to approach ethical procedures in a securitised context in which power dynamics between researcher, subject and state are in a state of flux. Within the study of contentious political NSMs and SMOs – particularly groups associated with the post-2001 paradigm of the *War on Terror* – ethics has an increasingly important role in research. This has been particularly relevant as a means of shoring up failing methodological standards, critiques of which have dogged security studies. In a field described as one which ‘attracts phoneyes and amateurs as a candle attracts moths’,¹⁹⁹ adherence to strict academic ethics procedures offers a means of tackling core shortcomings – such as problematic reliance on closed sources by researchers working alongside or within governmental structures.²⁰⁰

Whilst contemporary researchers in and around the field of terrorism and security studies have faced a phalanx of criticism over dubious academic practices, there have been researchers who have started to formulate coordinated responses to enabling primary sources of contentious actors. Adam Dolnik, for instance, uses research approaches from several disciplines in his evaluation of the state of terrorism and security research.

¹⁹⁸ Paul Reilly and Filippo Trevisan, "Researching Protest on Facebook: Developing an Ethical Stance for the Study of Northern Irish Flag Protest Pages," *Information, Communication & Society* 19, no. 3 (2016). pp.431-432

¹⁹⁹ Professor Michael Howard, quoted in Ranstorp. p.26

²⁰⁰Whilst the use of closed source data offers incredible access to information, it is problematic for many reasons: it leaves open the opportunity for sources to be fabricated as they cannot be fully referenced by other researchers; it can be impossible to place the source within time or place; and it is not always possible to ensure that interviews were not obtained under states of duress or immediate repression. Ibid. pp. 28-9

He finds that a reinforcing feedback loop of unreliable, inaccurate and often entirely incorrect data is still prevalent within the field – reaffirming the findings of Crenshaw that the field ‘still lacks the foundation of extensive primary data based on interviews and life histories of individuals engaged [in such action]’²⁰¹ – and outlines means of support for conducting interviews in potential risky situations, working in the context of potentially hostile power structures and negating risk when engaging with illicit non-state actors.²⁰² Additional good ethical practice for this project was drawn from Andrew Silke, who advises on responses to ‘ambient’ and ‘situational’ danger²⁰³ and encourages the development of support networks amongst peers.²⁰⁴

One important point of discussion within fieldwork practices is how current ethics procedures assume an overriding moral duty not to do any harm within the research process – an obligation which is placed all other possible concerns – and which prioritises participants ‘over and above the rights and interests of other individuals including the researcher and society more generally’.²⁰⁵ However, within this study, there were moments where I could have found myself in positions of vulnerability when interviewing members who were ‘relatively powerless by virtue of their social situation, their activities may be covert or illegal, and they may face high risk of repression’.²⁰⁶ As such, the ethical procedures involved gaining full consent and support from the university ethics board in my research processes, as well as understanding the limitations of this support in a legalistic counterterrorism context.²⁰⁷

²⁰¹ Dolnik; Martha Crenshaw, "The Psychology of Terrorism: An Agenda for the 21st Century," *Political Psychology* 21, no. 2 (2000). p.41

²⁰² Yoram Schweitzer, "Conversing with the Adversary: Interviewing Palestinian Suicide Bombers and Tehir Dispatchers in Israeli Prisons," in *Conducting Terrorist Research*, ed. Adam Dolnik (Oxford: Routledge, 2013); Rashmi Singh, "Conducting Terrorism Fieldwork on a Shoestring Budget: Researching Suicide Terrorism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," in *Conducting Terrorist Research*, ed. Adam Dolnik (Oxford: Routledge, 2013); Lindsay Clutterbuck and Richard Warnes, "Interviewing Government and Official Sources: An Introductory Guide," *ibid.*; Michael Kenney, "Learning from the "Dark Side": Identifying, Assessing and Interviewing Illicit Non-State Actors," *ibid.*; Michael Taarnby, "Professionalising High-Risk Research in Academia," *ibid.*

²⁰³ Silke divides danger arising during the research process into two types: the ambient and the situational. ‘Ambient danger arises simply from being in a dangerous setting in order to carry out research... Situational danger arises when the researcher’s presence explicitly provokes hostility and aggression from others in the setting...’ Silke.

²⁰⁴ ‘Postgraduate students are in prime position to break the cycle of dependency on secondary and tertiary accounts which plague terrorism research... In many circumstances, established researchers cannot venture out into the field. If they are working for government agencies or have published accounts on terrorism, access to extremists and terrorists may be severely constrained if not altogether impossible. Postgraduate students however are usually not bound by these constraints’ Frederick Schulze, "Breaking the Cycle: Empirical Research and Postgraduate Studies on Terrorism," *ibid.*, ed. A. Silke. p.182; ‘Currently no formal organisation or association of high-risk fieldworkers exists... Newcomers to the field, while few and far between, are often left to their own devices, and this obviously increases the risks unnecessarily’ Taarnby. p.218

²⁰⁵ These assumptions, built on the Participant Protection Model (PPM), reflect the roots of contemporary academic ethics in biomedical research. See Matt Sleat, "Generic Ethics Principles in Social Science Research," *Professional Briefings*, no. 3 (2013). p.15

²⁰⁶ Kevin Gillan and Jenny Pickerill, "The Difficult and Hopeful Ethics of Research on, and with, Social Movements," *Social Movement Studies* 11, no. 2 (2012). p.133

²⁰⁷ One example whereby a researcher has fallen foul of legal challenges is that of Bradley Garnett, who, during a doctoral research project, conducted deep participation techniques in the researching of urban explorers. Spending prolonged periods of time during the subject group’s night-time excursions, Garnett also acted as the designated ‘scribe for the tribe’, detailing explorations and findings for various academic and popular outputs. In spite of having his research approved by supervisors, an academic ethics committee and successfully signing off his PhD examination, the British Transport Police took legal action against Garnett and a group of research participants. This charge led to the British Transport Police seizing research findings, including gaining access to ‘personal text messages, quotes from my

One issue highly relevant to the study was that of consent. Anonymity was offered to all interviewees and survey participants. This was done for several reasons: party members wished to avoid their comments being taken out of context or were worried about their name being associated with HT publicly in an environment relatively hostile to 'Islamism';²⁰⁸ ex-members were often engaged in counter-extremist activities that could have been compromised by publicly expressing opinions, or had been 'burnt' by researchers and journalists in the past who had revealed their identity against their wishes; and CT officials and practitioners were unable to go on record at the risk of being interpreted as speaking in an official governmental capacity. Due these implications, almost all individuals interviewed chose to take up the offer of anonymity within the research project. Whilst this inevitably meant that certain meso-level relationships and structures could not be analysed as part of the project, it engendered greater freedom for interviewees to discuss their lived experiences without concern over certain possible implications.

Written consent was generally not asked for, only oral consent, which was recorded as part of the interview, to ensure anonymity was kept at all stages. All participants entered into the project freely and willingly, and with knowledge and understanding of what they were agreeing to, as well as being aware of the right to withdraw at any time throughout the doctoral process. Some subjects have seen the complete doctoral thesis prior to its submission, to assess whether they are comfortable with the way in which their words have been presented and were asked at this point whether they wished to withdraw consent for their involvement or alter the wording used. All participants were asked if an audio recording could be made and, of the 43 interviewees that took part, 32 approved the use of recording equipment, most on the condition that the interview was written up and the recording was deleted immediately afterwards. All other interviews were recorded through notetaking alone, some during the discussion and others after the close of the interview, to maintain the flow of the discussion. All data collected was anonymised from the notetaking stage, stored securely, and only used with the explicit consent of the participant. All audio recordings and written notes were encrypted or stored on the university U:drive in a place that was easily accessible to the researcher and backed-up regularly. At the end of the field

thesis, fragments of fieldnotes, photographs, video footage and even chat logs from social media, all collected from me in August 2012 off my person and from my house, which they raided while I was in custody after taking my door down with a battering ram'.

²⁰⁸ 'it seems from experience that it is easiest for the words of Muslims to be taken out of context than any other group of people, and the ramifications greater...'

research process, all data was placed on an external storage device should the transcripts be required by a participant, before all raw data was destroyed.

One of the most important elements of the projects was ensuring that societal and personal prejudices or assumptions towards members were filtered out of the research process. In attempting this, this thesis followed in the position of Toros, when she stated:

I need to empathise with co-participants, try as much as possible to put myself in their place, and be open to renegotiating my truths and understandings in order to create shared new meanings with them. I need to be congruent with my co-participants. I must be truthful – offering a negotiated truth that is both true and comprehensible to my audience – and fully present in the moment. I need to have unconditional positive regard for my co-participants, by which I mean accepting them as complex, entire human beings with positive and negative feelings, capable of hurting and healing. I need to care for my co-participants to ensure that my intrusion into their lives causes as little harm as possible.²⁰⁹

To achieve this, stretches of time were designated to living in East London and Walthamstow in the UK, and Nørrebro in Denmark – all areas where traditionally high levels of party activism have taken place – along with a dedication to consistently turning up to meetings, demonstrations and Friday prayers to get my face and name known to activists. Days were spent attending activism events, meals, drinks, sporting events and even a wedding party and, in Denmark particularly, relationships with members formed (for the most part) the only social life I had during the field research stages.²¹⁰ This enabled access to ethnographic data which greatly informed the study through ‘deep hanging out’ which, whilst not matching the level of access afforded members or even ex-members, did ensure that I was able to observe party activism in a variety of formal and informal settings and build a general sense of the life of those invested in the party body.²¹¹ This also allowed time to be spent in more informal discussion on HT, the views of the members and on my research. Almost inevitably, this

²⁰⁹ Harmonie Toros, "Terrorists as Co-Participants: Outline of a Research Model," in *Critical Methods in Terrorism Studies*, ed. Priya Dixit and Jacob L. Stump (Oxford: Routledge, 2016). p.56

²¹⁰ "... speaking with rather than for another person requires... emotional and cognitive commitment from the researcher" *ibid.* p.51

²¹¹ Clifford Geertz, "Deep Hanging Out," *The New York Review of Books* 45, no. 16 (1998).

involved the occasional uncomfortable situation in which members would express views which substantially conflicted with my own, but I generally dealt with this in a way which didn't directly challenge members' views but either acknowledged my different background or moved the conversation in a different direction. As a researcher, I did not consider my role as extending to challenging the views of party members but as one of articulating their different lived experiences.

The experiences of HT members and activists were deliberately combined with interviews of counterterrorism officials and practitioners. As Dixit and Stump state:

*there remains potential for further research not just on 'talking to terrorists' but also 'talking to (counter-)terrorists'. Government officials, policy-makers and especially security personnel who actually conduct operations in the name of 'terrorism' can be sources for how and why they act in the way(s) they do.*²¹²

This study aims therefore to position itself between the structures of authority and a social movement organisation. Della Porta sums up the rationale behind using a broad range of sources from both government and social movement sources, and the importance of using ethnographic sources through immersive approaches:

*In order to build a more balanced account of events and circumstances, official sources will have to be combined with other sources, in particular with material from inside the radical organisations. This is not easy. Because of their lack of material and their loose structure, very few organisations keep archives. This is all the more true for radical organisations that are "secretive", if not clandestine. The few official documents or publications available tell us something about the groups' ideologies, but nothing about their internal life and the militants' perception of the external world. For these purposes, biographical materials provide instead a rich source.*²¹³

²¹² Priya Dixit and Jacob L. Stump, "Beyond Terrorism?," in *Critical Methods in Terrorism Studies*, ed. Priya Dixit and Jacob L. Stump (Oxford: Routledge, 2016). p.193

²¹³ Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). p.19

Such approaches helped in navigating the ethical implications of researching a semi-clandestine organisation in a securitised context, by drawing upon current discussions and previous studies to provide a set of guidelines for the conducting of safe interviews and analysis.

3.4 Legal Barriers

There are some barriers and limitations that I faced during the study, partly due to the secretive nature of the case study and party because of concerns from counterterrorism legislation. One concern came from government counterterrorism measures, which are increasing the number of barriers the researcher faces when engaging with contentious actors. Potentially problematic elements of British legislation come from sections 57, 58 and 58(A) of the Terrorism Act 2000, articles which relate specifically to the possession, collection and publication or eliciting of material likely to be useful to the conducting of terrorist acts.²¹⁴ Literature of Hizb ut-Tahrir has been confiscated at, for instance, the house of Omar Khan Sharif, one of the 2003 Tel Aviv bombers, and follow up convictions for incitement of a terrorist attack were sought against Parveen and Zahid Sharif – his sister and brother – partly on the evidence of such literature (although both were eventually cleared).²¹⁵ Claims that ‘the 9/11 hijackers were lectured to by the Hizb ut-Tahrir chief in Germany and were regular readers of Hizb ut-Tahrir literature’ have put a further question mark over the status of such literature within the law and the practice of counter-extremism.²¹⁶ As such, a certain sensitivity in handling the many ‘Islamist’ books and leaflets I accumulated from the party throughout my research was followed, and the university was made aware that I was in the possession of such material. Safeguards were also put in place, in the hypothetical instance of

²¹⁴ Section 57 of the Terrorism Act 2000 make it an offence to ‘possess an article in circumstances which give rise to a reasonable suspicion that its possession is for a purpose connected with the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism’. This includes a potentially infinite number of relatively abstract objects, as is demonstrated in the case of *Zafar* (2008), in which five individuals were charged for possession of documents, computer disks and drives containing material described as ‘radical’, ‘religious or philosophical’, and ‘ideological propaganda’ on the basis that they were ‘indirectly’ connected to an act of terrorism. Virgo makes the point that this is particularly problematic because the degree of ‘remoteness’ the item has to a potential act of terrorism is poorly defined: ‘a purpose connected with’ an act of terrorism could include a plan ticket to Pakistan, a credit card which was used to book the flight, or even the defendant’s passport. This is potentially problematic for the researcher, as it leaves them vulnerable to being criminalised for possession of written and electronic material that could be deemed useful to ‘terrorism’. Sections 58 and 58A of the Terrorism Act 2000 are perhaps even more problematic, as they confer less importance to the intentionality of collecting information. In section 58, an offence is committed if the defendant ‘collects or makes a record of information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism’, or if they ‘possess... a document or record containing information of that kind’, a ruling which specifically includes photographic or electronic journals. UK Government, “Terrorism Act 2000,” 1 (legislation.gov.uk, 2000). pp.26-27; EWCA Crim 184 (2008) 2 W.L.R. 1013; Graham Virgo, “Possession of Articles,” *The Cambridge Law Journal* 67, no. 2 (2008). pp.237-238

²¹⁵ John Steele, “Cleared: The Bomber’s Sister ‘Who Praised Bin Laden’,” *The Daily Telegraph*, 29th November 2005.

²¹⁶ Dean Godson, “The Feeble Helping the Unspeakable,” *The Times*, 5th April 2006.

interviewees breaking any counterterror laws.²¹⁷ Whilst these proved to be unnecessary, the fact that the interviewees were made aware of these legal safeguards made the subsequent interview easier to navigate. Whilst some matters discussed in interviews veered onto potentially sensitive topics surrounding issues of security and government, all activities were kept strictly within the bounds of legal research and abided by university ethical guidelines and the implementation of the UK CONTEST programme, as well as broader counter-terror legislation in the UK and Denmark.

3.5 Negotiating Barriers of Access

Problems of access befell this project at various stages, causing more than one crisis of confidence. A steady stream of emails to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain went unanswered and social media approaches sometimes felt fruitless.²¹⁸ The first significant breakthrough came at the attendance of demonstrations in the UK and Denmark in 2016, which led to initial interviews being arranged with activists and media personnel close to the party, who in turn put me in contact with some leading members. In mid-2017, the appointment of new personnel to key positions in Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain and my links with some gatekeeper activists finally enabled significant access. However, some information and quotes from party members had to be found through open source searches on the internet, from places such as chat rooms, blogs and articles, in instance when the information I held was determined to be incomplete. In Denmark, access proved far easier, with many mid- to high-level members happy to talk, as well as welcome me to Copenhagen through various invitations to cafés, homes and social events. One member insisted on a culinary tour of Middle Eastern restaurants across various meetings and, another preferred bars, stating:

*Why don't we have a non-alcoholic beer to drink. Then you can write in your thesis that you had a beer with Hizb ut-Tahrir!*²¹⁹

²¹⁷ Should any instances of counterterror laws be deemed to have been broken, I planned the following steps: 1. any interview will be immediately terminated; 2. the researcher will remove themselves from the situation they are in; 3. the researcher will contact the nearest police or local law enforcement authority; 4. all information relating to that interview will be handed over to the nearest police or local law enforcement authority; and 5. the researcher will contact the university to make them aware of the situation, detailing the previous steps as carried out.

²¹⁸ This was except for the frustratingly occasional 'tweet' to my Twitter account from the official Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain account requesting me to send them reading suggestions of recent material on Islamic activism.

²¹⁹ HR, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen. The interviewee followed up with a story regarding his joy at getting baristas to write down 'Allahu Akbar' as their name on coffee cups, resulting in various instances of this being called out in cafés throughout Copenhagen and Aarhus, 'purely as a means of encouraging greater awareness of the peaceful nature of the phrase, you understand!?'.

There exists, therefore, some disparity between case study interviews, and the study of the two branches of HTB and HTS does not consist of an exact 1:1 comparison.²²⁰ Even more difficult proved to be the accessing of high-profile former members, such as Ed Husain, Maajid Nawaz or Shiraz Maher: limited contact with Ed Husain suggested that he was either disinclined or too busy to speak on this matter; emails to Maajid Nawaz went unanswered; and a positive response from a representative of Shiraz Maher gradually waned over the short course of email exchanges to an inability to meet at any point in the future due to time constraints. However, plenty of online media, newspaper publications and books from prominent former members provided adequate opportunities to understand their disengagement from, and current attitudes towards, HT activism. Other ex-members – with formerly prominent roles in Hizb ut-Tahrir but with far less of public personae – proved more than happy to meet and be interviewed about their experiences.

My status as outsider came to be, to my surprise, a blessing as well as a curse. The inability to fully access rhizomatic networks of a largely clandestine membership was, of course, an obvious limitation of attempting the study, resulting in several months stuck at a standstill and a need for creativity in building access and conducting interviews. However, my clear outsider status – in terms of dress and appearance, lack of significant knowledge of Islamic practices, and few to no community contacts – made it easier to be accepted at some events, and my decision to be honest about my status as a researcher and open about the details of the research project meant that most activists I spoke to (though certainly not all) lost any suspicions during our conversations. In fact, genuine interest and an enthusiasm to learn in an unfamiliar environment became some of my most valuable research tools.

The language barrier caused some minor disruption and difficulty when working with the Danish branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Whilst almost all members spoke English with great competency – as is the case generally across Denmark, of course – talks, seminars and meetings were often in Danish, a language I only have limited experience in working with. However, after establishing my presence at the mosque over several weeks, I found members would often support data collection for me by acting as impromptu translators, guiding me through

²²⁰ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.59

discussions and meetings, or else offering to provide an overview immediately after the event. In terms of document analysis, I relied on Danish HT members and friends to support the translation of key statements or articles, to give as accurate a translation as possible.

3.6 Time and Budgetary Constraints

Aside from access, which sometimes obscured the workings of the party and limited the scope of the research, other cases studies could have been explored, should I have had greater access to time and resources. One relevant comparative case study would be the Australian branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir, which was established later than the British and the Danish bodies. Whilst facing similar counterterror measures and discussions over their banning, the Australian party branch has increasingly courted controversy with far more belligerence than either the British or Danish groups and has sought to position itself as the *bête noire* of its national politics and press.²²¹ However, whilst this was an opportunity I was unable to take, it seems that there is some important contemporary research being carried which includes study of the Australian branch, evident in the 2019 publication by Elisa Orofino, conducted within roughly the same time period as this project.²²²

Further study could also look to analyse HT in comparison to non-Islamic activist groups that are problematised as 'extremist' – such as far-right parties – to explore the impact that threats of counterterror proscription have on such groups. Only limited research to date has been conducted on the impact of proscription on SMOs, with Hizb ut-Tahrir providing an importance case study.²²³ However, this project has nevertheless delivered some important findings, undertaken in challenging research conditions, using a variety of research methods. It will form, I am sure, the foundation of some future research in and around issues such as the impact of securitisation and counterterrorism on activist groups in liberal-democratic states.

²²¹ Elisa Orofino, "Intellectual Radicals Challenging the State: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in the West," *Contemporary Social Science* 10, no. 4 (2015).

²²² *Hizb Ut-Tahrir and the Caliphate: Why the Groups Is Still Appealing to Muslims in the West*, Routledge Studies in Political Islam (London: Routledge, 2019).

²²³ Legrand.

4 Theoretical Framework

The core theoretical motivation to this project is the hypothesis that two theories – securitisation and social movement theories – provide complimentary approaches that, when used together, help to assuage some significant limitations of the other: securitisation theories enable SMT to deal with long-term, ambient or ‘softer’ forms of repression that take place beyond specific spatial or temporal sites; SMT helps to adjust the power direction of securitisation repressions, avoiding limiting the conceptualisation of repression as purely a ‘one-way’, downwards-facing power relationship and giving SMOs the agency to challenge, change or even co-opt securitisation processes. In the context of HTB and HTS, the combining of SMT with securitisation processes offer a means of understanding the pressures that have impacted on these parties due to an increasingly securitised environment, whilst also accounting for differing organisational responses and articulations of decline. The following section will explore, in greater depths, these theoretical tools and why I have chosen to place them at the centre of the project.

4.1 Securitisation

Theories of securitisation aim to explore how state security and power expands outwards from traditional sites of militarism into other, largely civil, spheres through discursive articulations. The rise of the post-2001 *War on Terror* paradigm has securitised civil society by opening up space for military and security discourses to combine with and reinforce concern about fragmented wage labour, immigration, education and a number of other civil sites, creating an environment conducive to the ‘securitisation of the life-world’.²²⁴ Wide areas of social life and civil liberties are traded for security, with citizens increasingly coming to accept the closing down and reconceptualisation of civil liberties, such as pre-emptive arrests or constraints of individuals suspected of having a ‘connection’ with terrorism (particularly as affluent and majority communities are those least likely to be impacted). Inversely, the closing of civil liberties in such a way impacts most severely on minority groups (particularly Muslim communities, who already face severe restrictions on their ability to access education, employment, and to engage with the public arena and shape mainstream political discourse).²²⁵

²²⁴ Lea and Hallsworth.

²²⁵ Amnesty International (AI), "Choice and Prejudice: Discrimination against Muslims in Europe," (London: Amnesty International, 2012).

Whilst minority groups disproportionately face forms of political repression through CT legislation, the beneficiaries of this ‘securitisation of the life world’ can be broadly understood as the Neoliberal and capitalist state, with business and capital increasingly becoming important and visible victims of ‘terrorism’, contrasting the stripping away of civil rights through the appropriation of public space which are increasingly framed as ‘disturbances’ and potential security threats.²²⁶ The focus on tackling an irrational extremist ideology, as well as delegitimising political grievances that those engaging in terrorism may have, furthermore forms part of a wider neoliberal narrative which ‘enjoins people to take responsibility for their own lives under conditions of the destruction of communities, trust and mutual support systems’.²²⁷

Application of securitisation theories show us that counterterror structures have developed around the central assumption that Western states are facing a different kind of violent terrorist threat, framed as unique, unpredictable, irrational and existential – a ‘new’ terrorism, ‘particularly savage and relentless’ in its aims.²²⁸ Such Manichaeian underpinnings create the conditions for another key feature:²²⁹ that of ‘terrorism’ as constituting existential harm to ‘every free society’.²³⁰ The state itself – and not just the individual – becomes a potential victim of those poised to destroy what are framed as ‘our’ freedoms, democracy and value for life.²³¹ From this discursive justification, massive centralisation of powers have coalesced,²³² resulting in the implementation of sweeping counterterror legislation throughout Western states that ensure ‘the norms of prosecution and punishment no longer apply’.²³³ Securitisation theories are therefore inherently bound up with determining the downwards direction of power by dissecting not only the ‘who, what, where and why’ of

²²⁶ Lea and Hallsworth.

²²⁷ Ibid. p.34

²²⁸ Gaetano Joe Ilardi, "Redefining the Issues: The Future of Terrorism Research and the Search for Empathy," in *Research on Terrorism: Trends, Achievements and Failures*, ed. Andrew Silke (London: Routledge, 2004). p.223; Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, "After 9/11: Is It All Different Now?," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 2 (2005).; Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (London: Indigo, 1999).; Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

²²⁹ 'Reality, for ideological adherents... becomes nothing more than a reductionist Manichaeian dualism, a struggle between good and evil, between the light and the darkness... such diametric opposites will remain in constant conflict until one triumphs over the other', Jarret M. Brachman, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2009). p.11

²³⁰ Darrell M. Trent, "The New Religion: Terrorism," *Human Rights* 8, no. 4 (1980). p.12

²³¹ 'Whatever the terrorists are, we are the opposite: the terrorists hate freedom, we love freedom; they are anti-democratic; we are pro-democratic; they destroy life; we value life. Labelling something as "terrorism", in other words, not only condemns the actions of the "other", it also importantly, helps to construct the identity of the "self".' Jackson et al. p.68

²³² See Barry Buzan, "Will the "Global War on Terror" Be the New Cold War?," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 82, no. 6 (2006).

²³³ The words of David Blunkett, former UK Home Secretary, following the 2004 Madrid bombings, as in Patrick Wintour, "Blunkett Warns of Growing Danger," *The Guardian*, 13th March 2004.

security, but also the meanings implied with the use of the term itself.²³⁴ In doing so, it supports the tracing of power through a Coxian analysis of how and why certain articulations of security have been chosen over others – and who benefits from such conceptualisations.²³⁵ Counterterrorism has ‘a clear *political* purpose: it works for someone and for something; it is an exercise of power’.²³⁶ Such securitisation has seeped into and is reproduced by many actors and fields – including the media, governments, financial bodies and academia.²³⁷

Whilst securitisation approaches have enabled researchers to dissect the powerful interests behind counterterror language and legislation, it has significant critiques and limitations: amongst others, it risks removing agency from those very organisations and individuals that it tries to illuminate the repression of. Much securitisation research suggests an implicit assumption that power travels almost – if not completely – in one direction: from authority structure to social movement challenger. The state body, in centralising and militarising new sites of power, is exponentially expanding into traditionally civil spheres, problematising and repressing forms of political opposition with greater expediency. Those groups that face repression – typically Muslim and minority communities, but also political and activist organisations which publicly deviate from the status quo – are the ‘receivers’ the power, victims of the structural imbalance. Whilst it is important to note the huge scope of power the state is co-opting and centralising under the auspices of counterterrorism, there will always exist limitations in the amount of power that can be accrued, hegemony never fully realised, and numerous actors will attempt to use these limitations to challenge authorities and paradigms. Without accounting for activist response and authority limitations within securitisation theories, we risk creating a self-fulfilling process, similar to Jalal al-‘Azm’s critique of Said’s *Orientalism*:²³⁸ if the imbalance of power is reliant solely on power and language from the hegemonic actor, the only means of breaking the processes of repression comes *from the hegemon itself*, and agency for change from the subaltern is denied.²³⁹

²³⁴ Felix Ciută, "Security and the Problem of Context: A Hermeneutical Critique of Secutisation Theory," *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009). p.301

²³⁵ See Robert W. Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 10, no. 2 (1981).

²³⁶ The term ‘War on Terrorism’ is, according to Jackson, ‘a deliberately and meticulously composed set of words, assumptions, metaphors, grammatical forms, myths and forms of knowledge – it is a carefully constructed *discourse* – this that is designed to achieve a number of key political goals: to normalise and legitimise the current counter-terrorist approach; the empower authorities and shield them from criticism; to discipline domestic society by marginalising dissent or protest; and to enforce national unity by reifying a narrow conception of national identity’ Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terror: Language, Politics and Counter-Terrorism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005). p.9

²³⁷ Jackson et al. pp.55, 142, 68-69 & 176 respectively

²³⁸ Said.

²³⁹ Sadik Jalal al-‘Azm, "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse," *libcom.org* (1980). ‘If reciprocity between subject and object is impossible then, by the same token, the object cannot challenge the subject by developing alternative models...’ Michael Richardson, "Enough Said," in *Orientalism: A Reader*, ed. Alexander Lyon Macfie (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000). p.213

Theories of securitisation help to unravel power relations behind articulations of terrorism to reveal how Islamic activist groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir have been inculcated into the counterterrorism paradigm. However, the structuralist and rigid limitations of securitisation theories need addressing to avoid simplifying authorities as operating in a monolithic manner or depriving activists of the means of changing or re-appropriating certain security practices. To achieve this, this project builds in more interactive elements, evident in SMT, to unravel the dialectic processes taking place between authorities and challengers and develop the ‘securitised lens’ of analysis.

4.2 Social Movement Theory

In concert with securitisation, this project uses facets of social movement theories to further develop the concept of the ‘securitised lens’. To fully understand social movement approaches, it is worth briefly exploring its chronological development. Contemporary social movement studies were preceded in the first half of the 20th Century by collective behaviour studies, which drew on the work of early theorists such as Le Bon, and conceptualised acts of violence by crowds, mobs and militias as the largely uncontrollable outcome of shared grievances, coupled with an irrational, momentary, collective mentality.²⁴⁰ Social movements were conceptualised through psychological explanations and observed through the prism of mid-20th Century politics. Theory focussed on periods of high social stress – borne out of social factors such as modernisation, globalisation or industrialisation – which led to societal alienation, isolation and ‘status anxiety’. Eruptions of protest therefore acted as pressure valves, ‘escapist coping mechanisms through which individuals regain a sense of belonging and empowerment’.²⁴¹

The challenge to this conceptualisation was presented during the outbreaks of civil unrest in Europe and America during the latter half of the 1960s, in which often highly organised and widespread social movements coalesced to confront aspects of state power and decision-making.²⁴² As a result, scholarship was forced to fundamentally

²⁴⁰ Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (London: Macmillan, 1897).

²⁴¹ Quintan Wiktorowicz, “Introduction: Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory,” in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, ed. Quintan Wiktorowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004). p. 6.

²⁴² These can be seen in such contemporary events as: the Long Hot Summer of the 1967 race riots in the US; the ‘May 68’ series of massive strikes and demonstrations in France; the Prague Spring of Czechoslovakia in 1968; the *autunno caldo* (Hot Autumn) strikes in Italy between

question prior assumptions, as studies suggested that activists were neither dysfunctional nor irrational but, inversely, psychologically better adjusted and more likely to be acting and interacting within a matrix of wider social and political groups.²⁴³ In response, theory began to conceptualise social movements not as subject to dubious notions of ‘mob mentality’, but as rational and logical actors, borne from narrow self-interest.²⁴⁴ Founded generally upon large-scale dissatisfaction, disenfranchisement and the growth of agitation, social movements are ‘change-oriented’, seeking to mobilise and offer sustained challenges to authority.²⁴⁵ Relying on radiciform cultural, organisational and personal networks – what can be broadly described as ‘alternative’ political forms and structures – and subject to temporal growth and decline, social movements are particularly identity conscious, often adept at creating and perpetuating a sense of belonging and identity.²⁴⁶

With the rise of organised social movements, study shifted onto the social movement organisation (SMO) as the basic unit of analysis. SMOs – activist groups, labour unions, grassroots networks or any change-making organisation that incorporates elements of irregular political engagement – are understood as utilising limited sets of political resources available to them to achieve a set number of objectives. Therefore, the crucial independent variable in understanding moments of high protest was not the *lack* of resources, but the prevalence of certain *kinds* of resources, used effectively to achieve and sustain collective action. SMOs act as centralised hubs, operating in ways not dissimilar from organisations embedded within the political structure (political parties, interest groups), or from businesses and enterprises: they develop efficient networks of communication; formalise the division of labour; offer incentives for new recruits; and, ultimately, attempt to maximise the acquisition of economic and political resources to achieve the long-term resistance required for their specified goals. Within this study, both HTB and HTS are understood as examples of SMOs, operating within the broader social movement of (European) ‘Islamism’.

1969 and 1970; as well as wide scale unrest in Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Poland, China, West Berlin, Rome, London and Argentina. Porta and Diani.

²⁴³ Kenneth Keniston, *Young Radicals* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1968).; Frank Parkin, *Middle-Class Radicalism: The Social Basis of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968).

²⁴⁴ Martin Olsen, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1965).

²⁴⁵ Snow, Soule, and Kriesi, "Mapping the Terrain." p. 6.

²⁴⁶ Porta and Diani. p. 26.

This classification of SMOs was gradually canonised into an emergent ‘resource mobilisation theory’ (RMT) alongside a shift in focus from *why* social movements emerge to *how* they emerge.²⁴⁷ Theories of resource mobilisation focussed on the type and nature of the resources available to explain the tactical choices made by SMOs and the impact that collective action had on the social and political system.²⁴⁸ The limited resources held by an organisation – of economic, structural, social or cultural capital – are utilised through resource maximisation, with the implication that actors are able to discern (with at least some degree of accuracy) the political relief of their environment, and to act upon it accordingly in their favour.²⁴⁹ Whilst RMT helped to conceptualise the way in which SMOs utilise available resources, scholarship had failed to provide an understanding of how these resources had come into play. As such, a theoretical need developed to account for the way in which actors were able to conduct RMT through engaging with their environment. The development of ‘political process modelling’ (PPM) responded this deficiency in explaining how social movement organisations made sense of and interacted with the political context within which they operated, accounting for the impact of local and national conditions on how activists within social movements chose to operate.²⁵⁰

The way in which the environment came to be understood within SMT was as part of a set of ‘political opportunity structures’ (POS) – shifting patterns of closing and opening opportunities which change the set of conditions within which actors operate, to enable or disable certain patterns of protest behaviour. The political opportunity perspective focuses on the activists’ ability to conduct contentious politics, advance certain claims, mobilise potential supporters and create wider influence as being highly dependent on the political context.²⁵¹ Analysis shifted away from an absolute focus on the social movement and relevant SMOs, and onto interaction with the structural power context. Whilst built on structural foundations, it looks to correct the determinism of structuralism by analysing the variance of ‘waves of contention’ across time and within different institutional contexts, emphasising this interaction and the impact this has on tactics and events within a cycle of contention by activist groups. Such an approach explicitly states that the political context sets the framework of how SMOs choose to operate and define claims they seek to make. Once the political context has enabled a playing field of

²⁴⁷ Meyer. p.127

²⁴⁸ Porta and Diani. p.15

²⁴⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research on the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1986).

²⁵⁰ Porta and Diani. p.122

²⁵¹ Meyer.

early actions and grievances, along with setting the rules of the game through what is deemed to be political legitimate forms of opposition, it is up to the agency of individuals within the social movements to decide on, develop and adapt tactical approaches as a response.

Meyer defines political opportunity research as being conducted on how exogenous factors impact on the ability for social movements to mobilise, advance certain claims over others, build alliances, utilise certain strategies and tactics, and exert direct influence over mainstream institutional politics and policy.²⁵² Kriesi offers a slightly more streamlined approach by dividing political process modelling into roughly three sets of variables which shape actors: structures; configurations of power; and interaction contexts.²⁵³ Tarrow conceptualises mobilisation within the varying political context as a response to the way in which ‘opportunities for collective action open and close, allies appear and disappear, political alignments shift and elites divide and cohere’.²⁵⁴ Some of the most foundational ideas on political opportunity interaction come from Eisinger, McAdam and Tarrow, who put forward theoretical assumptions and models which continue to be adhered to in current studies.²⁵⁵

There is a question as to the extent activists are aware or cognisant of changes in the POS, which in turn problematises assumptions about their organisational response. This challenge of conceptualisation sits uncomfortably at the heart of SMT, as debate rages over whether social movement actors should be viewed as rational actors, utilising resources strategically to achieve set aims, or as idealistic actors, unduly optimistic in their intentions and prospects for success. It is perhaps more likely that social movement actors are not always able to fully comprehend the wider political scene and the potential impact of their actions – ‘they do not necessarily calculate with any rigour the prospects for successfully mobilising or generating policy reform; they just keep trying’.²⁵⁶ As such, SMT has to account for actors from both social movements and the power structures engaging in actions based on a partial or skewed perception of the evolving political context.

²⁵² Ibid. p.126

²⁵³ Hanspeter Kriesi, "Political Context and Opportunity," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006). p. 68; Donatella della Porta, "Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing of Protest," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilising Structures and Cultural Framings*, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

²⁵⁴ Sidney Tarrow, "States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements," *ibid.* p.54

²⁵⁵ Peter K. Eisinger, "The Conditions of Protest Behaviour in American Cities," *American Political Science Review* 67, no. 1 (1973).; Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1982).; Sidney Tarrow, *Comparative Perspective on Social Movements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

²⁵⁶ Meyer. p.139

In response to these limitations, social movement researchers initiated a 'cultural turn', accounting for the role of ideological and ideational factors. With identity central to the way in which social movements construct their political opposition, and with the complexity of individual agency playing a central role in political and motivational calculations, social movement theories added the concept of 'framing' as a means of understanding the way by which group-identity is constructed.²⁵⁷ Frames are developed by social movement actors by appropriating and exploiting symbols prevalent within certain cultural milieus, to create meaningful linguistic, cultural and cognitive totemic frames. Together these create 'master frames', the development of an explanatory *Weltanschauung* which requires and encourages activist mobilisation to remedy these problems.²⁵⁸

Framing illuminates the role of discourse in movements and offers a foundation for excavating ideational elements of movements, the rhetoric and symbolism upon which movements are developed and incited to action. Frames take the role of identifying a social or political problem, those responsible for the problem and the actions that should be taken to remedy it.²⁵⁹ Snow and Bedford call this a 'collective action frame' – a frame which encourages individuals to participate in the movement – and they delineate three devices of the collective action frame: the diagnostic, the prognostic and the motivational frames.²⁶⁰ *Diagnostic framing*, as with a medical diagnosis, presents an interpretation of what is wrong and what has caused the problem; *prognostic framing* suggests a solution to the problem identified by the diagnosis, a means of response; and *motivational framing* aims to encourage individuals to take part in the collective action suggested in the prognosis, convincing

²⁵⁷ David A. Snow and Scott C. Byrd, "Ideology, Framing Processes and Islamic Terrorist Movements," *Mobilisation Quarterly Review* 12, no. 1 (2007).

²⁵⁸ Wiktorowicz, "Introduction: Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory." pp.15-18

²⁵⁹ Hank Johnston and John A. Noakes, "Frames of Protest: A Road Map to a Perspective," in *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective*, ed. Hank Johnston and John A. Noakes (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield 2005).

²⁶⁰ David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilisation," *International Social Movement Research* 1 (1988).

others that action is both possible and necessary.²⁶¹ Ensconcing this process is the construction of a *master frame*, a broader narrative that is threaded throughout.²⁶²

Whilst orthodox research on 'Islamism' explores how groups frame activism in opposition to 'Western' norms, critical scholars use Foucauldian approaches to illuminate how Islamophobic discourse enables counterterrorism.²⁶³ This thesis aims to navigate somewhere between the two, understanding how Islamist and authority discourses interact. Through interviews of HT members and a quantitative examination of media coverage towards the party in both regions, this thesis shows how discourses and framing used by state or state-supported actors are used to entrench counter-terrorism policies and how HT has fought against, and appropriated and reused these to challenge authorities. To do this, it engages with the analysis of discourse, including – where appropriate – the study of 'manifestos, records of debates at meetings, actions of political demonstrators, newspaper articles, slogans, speeches, posters, satirical prints, statutes of associations, pamphlets, and so on', collected throughout the research process.²⁶⁴ Hizb ut-Tahrir's central published texts are referred to throughout – published by *al-Khilafah publications* and often sold at Hizb ut-Tahrir protests, meetings and (in the Danish case) their central mosque.²⁶⁵ This study highlights the malleability of party ideology – how and why it has developed within a process of Islamic activism – and treats Hizb ut-Tahrir's discourse as tools constantly being employed, critiqued and adapted by the party in an innovative process of activism creation. Islamist discourse becomes a highly flexible device, 'context-specific, multifaceted, ever evolving, dialectical and

²⁶¹ Charlotte Ryan develops a four-step process of identifying frames through the study of media rhetoric and grassroots organising in qualitative research, enabling the researcher to thematically dissect discourse: What is the key issue in the frame? What is the responsibility/solution proposed in the frame, or its diagnosis and prognosis? What are the symbols used, especially visual images, metaphors, historical examples, stereotypes, and catch phrases? And what are the supporting arguments, especially in terms of historical roots of the grievance, consequences of the frame's success, and appeals and links to broader cultural values? Gamson, meanwhile, delineates three frame components of which should be examined: the identity component (which creates the 'us' and 'them'), the agency component (what 'we' can do to create change the present condition and encourage members to take control of their own destiny) and the injustice component (which places the blame for the current situation on a specified outgroup). Additional focus is paid to, what he terms as, the essential element of 'hot cognition', the injustice component that requires action – although Benford and Snow have suggested that this component is not necessarily required nor evident in the discourse of all social movements. See Johnston and Noakes; Charlotte Ryan, *Prime Time Activism* (Boston: South End Press, 1991); William A. Gamson, "Political Discourse and Collective Action," *International Journal of Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 1 (1988); "The Social Psychology of Collective Action," in *Frontiers of Social Movement Theory*, ed. Aldon Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); *Talking Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

²⁶² David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, ed. C.M. Mueller A.D. Morris (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); Patrick H. Mooney and Scott A. Hunt, "A Repertoire of Interpretations: Master Frames and Ideological Continuity in U.S. Agrarian Mobilisation," *The Sociological Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (1996); William J. Swart, "The League of Nations and the Irish Question: Master Frames, Cycles of Protest and 'Master Frame Alignment'," *ibid.* 36, no. 3 (2016).

²⁶³ Jeroen Gunning, "A Case for Critical Terrorism Studies?," *Government and Opposition* 42, no. 3 (2007); Richard Jackson, "The Study of Terrorism after 11 September 2001: Problems, Challenges and Future Developments," *Political Studies Review* 7, no. 2 (2009); Jackson, Smyth, and Gunning.

²⁶⁴ William Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). pp.8-9

²⁶⁵ al-Khilafah, "The Khilafah," Al Khilafah Publications, <http://www.khilafah.com/>.

conflict-riven', bound within the temporal and spatial changes of Western societies, post-2001.²⁶⁶ This process forms a central component of developing both the 'securitising lens' and of integrating concepts of framing.

More recent developments from social movement scholars have come in response to lingering methodological issues over its use, including: an over reliance on smaller and isolated moments of protest rather than wider scale revolutions or large-n case studies; bias towards Western, overtly democratic-orientated movements; and over reliance on the explanatory power of structures rather than interactive processes. From this was formed the 'contentious politics' (CP) or 'new social movement' (NSM) canon of research, largely brought into semblance by Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow and Doug McAdam.²⁶⁷ These have attempted to alleviate the criticism of PPM as too static, narrow and rationalistic through the development of a more dynamic approach, which can be applied across a wider variety of political and indeed historical contexts, seeking to focus attention on interactions as sets of 'mechanisms'. The emphasis of CP is shifted onto the relational dimension of contention, in a counter to the structuralism and rationalism of PPM.²⁶⁸

This contentious politics approach, whilst no doubt impacting greatly on the literature and development of social movement theories, has met with a phalanx of criticism. Most notably, it has been unable to dispel the lingering repudiation that, in attempting to augment both the historical and political case studies it can handle and the various sites of interaction, it has consigned itself to irrelevance through its overbearing unwieldiness, a criticism accepted even by its own makers.²⁶⁹ There are also doubts raised over definitions and delineations of mechanisms, which are often vague or repetitive in their scope – again, a critique acceded to by its founders, who concede that too many of the declared mechanisms did not undergo enough scrutiny.²⁷⁰ However, despite their limitations, they have introduced a series of new approaches which have informed future studies, most notably a mechanistically-informed approach which illuminates how authority and social movement actors interact, providing an increasingly popular means of dissecting large-scale political movements.²⁷¹

²⁶⁶ Hank Johnston, "Verification and Proof in Frame and Discourse Analysis," in *Methods of Social Movement Research*, ed. Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). p.67

²⁶⁷ McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly.

²⁶⁸ Jerome Drevon, "Theorising Militant Groups' Meso-Level Evolution: A Comparative Study of the Egyptian Islamic and Jihad Groups" (University of Durham, 2015).

²⁶⁹ Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow, "Introduction: Dynamics of Contention," *Mobilisation: An international journal* 16, no. 1 (2011).

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Cyril Hedoin, "Modelling Social Mechanisms: Mechanism-Based Explanations and Agent-Based Modelling in the Social Sciences," (University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne, 2013).

The most recent studies have built on some foundations laid down in contentious politics literature but have attempted to create a more flexible approach to understanding the relational and contextualised interactions between social movement actors, expanding on Bourdieusian concepts of the ‘field’ to analyse relations between the players in a social movement arena – including the organisations, opponents, allies and state.²⁷² This development posits that there is a number of differing ‘strategic action fields’ within society, each containing their own competing systems of social order, with internal and external actors competing to gain control in exchange for certain forms of capital. Such an approach is indicative of another step taken in the structure-agency debate which dogs SMT.²⁷³

Contemporary social movement theorists make use of this chronology of development, with its range of social movement facets or tools able to be utilised depending on the case study. Whilst this has been critiqued as one of its biggest limitations – attempting to explain too much and, in doing so, making itself unstable and top-heavy – this also represents one of its most valuable assets. SMT approaches are malleable enough to be expanded to a range of different groups and contexts, to potentially explore many different phenomena and offering scholars an opportunity for reconceptualising a range of movements in new and illuminatory ways.

4.3 Repression

Finally, this section of the theoretical chapter will explore the bridge that will be used between social movement and securitisation theories – repression. Through interviews with members and activists of Hizb ut-Tahrir in the UK and Denmark, a consistent, driving theme emerged of a sense of repression. This grievance – whether real, manufactured or perceived – continues to play an integral role in the development of protest activity by the party. As such, it offers a central hook around which we can understand interaction between CT authorities and Hizb ut-Tahrir. However, how we define repression plays a key role in how we understand its manifestations, particularly in a context in which perceived repression is non-violent. This section will therefore examine current approaches to repression, to determine how best to utilise the concept.

²⁷² Jasper and Duyvendak.

²⁷³ Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, *A Theory of Fields* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

From social movement theorists, Tilly offers an initial, albeit generalised, definition of repression within the social movement paradigm, determining it to be any action that directly increases the cost of protest.²⁷⁴ Stockdill echoes this activist-based definition, although adds to the definition the specific requirement that these mechanisms are ‘taken by [government] authorities to impede mobilisation, harass and intimidate activists, divide organisations and physically assault, arrest, imprison and/or kill movement participants’.²⁷⁵ Whilst such definitions offer a useful starting point, they have been critiqued by Earl as too limited in their scope, obscuring the more covert actions taken by authority actors to repress social movement activism and impede political mobilisation.²⁷⁶ In response, Earl created a sub-categorical bifurcation of ‘coercion’ and ‘channelling’, with the latter representing ‘more indirect repression, which is meant to affect the forms of protest available, the timing of protests, and/or flows of resources to movements’.²⁷⁷ She elaborates on different structures of authorities, categorising them into three actor-groups: 1. state agents with tight ties to national elites; 2. state agents with loose ties to national elites; and 3. non-state, or private agents. In doing so, she recognises that current critical security studies risk failing to identify the many overlapping structures and actors which construct and emulate forms of repression.²⁷⁸ Within this study, we can observe a constellation of semi- or non-governmental organisations that have sprung up since 2001 to address governmental concerns over terrorism. These act to develop government policy, shape national discourse and run various counterterrorism and counter-extremism programmes – with many having former links to Hizb ut-Tahrir through ex-membership or prior Islamic activist experience. Any study of authority interaction with Hizb ut-Tahrir, therefore, must in some ways account for this structure of actors, voices and organisations that are formulating, creating and replicating patterns of governmentally initiated repression.

In his study of patterns of repression in America across the 19th and 20th Centuries, Goldstein defines repression as ‘government action which grossly discriminates against persons or organisations viewed as presenting a fundamental challenge to existing power relationships or key governmental policies, because of their perceived

²⁷⁴ Charles Tilly, *From Mobilisation to Revolution* (Reading, MA: Addison, 1978).

²⁷⁵ B.C. Stockdill, "Multiple Oppressions and Their Influence on Collective Action: The Case of the Aids Movement" (Northwestern University, 1996). p.146

²⁷⁶ Earl, "Tanks, Tear Gas and Taxes: Towards a Theory of Movement Repression." p.46

²⁷⁷ Ibid. pp.48-9

²⁷⁸ David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe, "Repression and the Decline of Social Movements: The Case of New Religions," in *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies*, ed. Jo Freeman (New York: Long, 1983).

political beliefs'.²⁷⁹ He associates significant increases in the proportion of social activities defined as violations of basic political laws with a shift towards totalitarianism: 'Even drunkenness or abstract painting [or, in the United States, the waving of red flags or the burning of red, white and blue flags] can be considered anti-regime activity'.²⁸⁰ Whilst this suggests that democratic states engage in repression, such a definition requires the complete dissolution of theoretical boundaries between repression from democratic and authoritarian states. Goldstein adds an ideational element to the definition, determining that '[a]ny action by political authorities which interferes with or grossly discriminates against individuals or groups merely for the perceived holding or expression of political *beliefs* constitutes political repression'.²⁸¹ In shifting focus towards tackling extremist and radical beliefs and by framing ideational beliefs as one of the primary motivators for the adoption of terrorist-style tactics, we can observe evidence of Goldstein's description of repression towards Islamic activism as part of European counterterrorism.²⁸²

Due to action modes of repression within liberal-democratic regimes being 'more difficult to observe, and therefore data more difficult to access, many social movement researchers have sidestepped the issue' of engaging with such repression.²⁸³ There is, according to Earl, '[s]till far too little research on covert forms of repression and channelling... far less research on the meso- and micro- level repercussions of repression than on the macro impacts'.²⁸⁴ Ferree also calls for more research on what she terms 'soft repression' – 'whereas hard repression involves the mobilisation of force to control or crush oppositional action through the use or threat of violence, soft repression involves the mobilisation of nonviolent means to silence or eradicate oppositional ideas'.²⁸⁵ What distinguishes soft repression from other formations is that it generally involves the collective mobilisation of power – often in less violent forms or in highly informal ways – to limit and exclude ideas and identities from the public forum.²⁸⁶ Furthermore, within the bloated terrorism industry, '[t]o date, researchers have paid far more attention to the evils done against governments (and citizens) by dissidents, rebels and terrorists than to the evils done by presidents, the police, secret service, national guard and death

²⁷⁹ Goldstein. p.xxviii

²⁸⁰ Ibid.p xxix

²⁸¹ Ibid.p. xxix

²⁸² As Maajid Nawaz states, 'al Qaeda didn't inspire extremism; extremism inspired al Qaeda' Nawaz.

²⁸³ Boykoff. pp.303-304

²⁸⁴ Earl, "Political Repression: Iron Fists, Velvet Gloves and Diffuse Control." p.278

²⁸⁵ Ferree. p.141

²⁸⁶ Ibid.p.141

squads against those within their territorial jurisdiction'.²⁸⁷ This chapter, therefore, looks to address this point by understanding the impact of counterterrorism policy and practice on Hizb ut-Tahrir – a legal but problematised organisation which, whilst not specifically targeted by counterterrorism programmes and laws, does fall under an increasingly widening counterterror scope which seeks to address 'extremism' and the causes thereof.

This also points towards a requirement for a certain de-spatialisation of repression to occur in the context of studying counterterrorism and counter-extremism, with Davenport stating: 'We are very much fixated on certain behaviours that take place in certain locales, ignoring the possibility that repressive behaviour may ignite still other forms of mobilisation that fall underneath our "radar screen"'.²⁸⁸ The diffusion of securitisation into numerous sites of civil society through a plethora of channels requires scholars to take a more dynamic approach in understanding repression that looks beyond the highlighting of specific spatial sites of interaction, as is the case in many canonised social movement studies.²⁸⁹ This is tied to the use of 'channelling' and quieter forms of repression, in which authority actors are encouraged to operate in a way which subverts certain civil rights norms only to the extent to which they will be acceptable to the democratic majority.

*In a democratic society, where open coercion cannot be used too often without losing legitimacy, the state must come up with subtler ways to maintain social control. Therefore, liberal-democratic regimes... tend to rely more on the quieter forms of repression than on overt, direct violence to maintain social control.*²⁹⁰

In both the UK and Denmark, liberal-democratic states were perceived and framed by HT members as equally as aggressive in their acts as authoritarian regimes – contrasting traditional SMT delineations between oppression by democratic and authoritarian state structures.

²⁸⁷ Charles Davenport, "State Repression and Political Order," *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (2007). p.1

²⁸⁸ "Introduction, Repression and Mobilisation: Insights from Political Science and Sociology." p.10

²⁸⁹ Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*.

²⁹⁰ Boykoff. p.303

... they're quite happy to bring in their terrorism laws in order to persecute people and create laws overseas to prevent the rise of Islamic awareness... In reality, it is natural for a capitalist country like this to want to defend themselves in this way...²⁹¹

Whilst this may be part of a well-trodden organisational tactic of utilising grievance narratives against the state by HT, the ubiquitous occurrence of ideas of repression across interviews, the continued resonance of this frame amongst activists, and the reported impact of certain governmental or municipal measures on the party suggests it certainly shouldn't be disregarded as a factor in their changing patterns of Islamic activism. During all interviews conducted, members and former members spoke of the negative impact that perceived repression by state authorities had on the group's ability to conduct effective activism. Whilst repression is conducted in more covert ways than that practiced by authoritarian regimes, the language used by interviewees to describe it was similar, with Western states portrayed as oppressive regimes.

If Western countries enforce a ban with putting people in prison, all that's ever going to do is promote us. And everybody will say that's a political prisoner. And political prisoners are never good, for any regime. For a regime that's more oppressive, it just makes people ask more questions. You look at the way Islam has been slandered in the media since 2001. In every country in the West, you see an increase in people look at Islam and converting to Islam...²⁹²

These definitions of repression suggest that it has significant relevance to this study, as elements from these definitions are visible within current counterterrorism articulations and have been perceived and experienced by Hizb ut-Tahrir activists. Furthermore, discussions with interviewees suggested that perceptions of repression had strongly influenced what kind of organisational activism was put forth at certain times. Therefore, repression should be understood and conceptualised as an interactive process, one that can and is often responded to; not simply the downwards articulation of power but a key element in the process of activism. For instance, as Bosi states, it was the *perception* of repression by British troops that drove the successful recruitment policy of the Irish Republican Army in the late 1960s and early 1970s – it is just such an interaction of tactics that we will look

²⁹¹ HH, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

²⁹² Ibid.

to examine here, by extending our conceptualisation of repression to account for the mobilising response – or, the ‘repression mobilisation nexus’.²⁹³

*In issues which I would say, issues of severe repression, we will make protests... When you write an article, you do a conference, it's usually more complex issues that need analysing, clarification, but an issue - it's just so obvious how oppressive these are, then a protest is more suitable in raising awareness about the injustice which has happened.*²⁹⁴

4.3.1 The Repression-Mobilisation Nexus

Charles Tilly is responsible for the creation of the term ‘repression-mobilisation nexus’, during a discussion in which he examines four different hypothetical responses to repression: 1. repression decreases mobilisation; 2. repression increases mobilisation; 3. mobilisation decreases repression; and 4. mobilisation increases repression.²⁹⁵ What is consistently found by researchers is that, whilst response to authority repression by social movement challengers is often varied and unpredictable, all repression is geared towards ensuring the creation of conditions for SMO demobilisation, which often consist of certain combinations of escalation, institutionalisation, defection, disillusion and repression.²⁹⁶ Mobilisation within a repressive context can lead to counter-mobilisation against the social movement and, in some cases, ‘counter-mobilisation escalates and radicalises the conflicts between opposing actors and organisations’.²⁹⁷ One instance where we can see this in the case study is with the demobilisation and institutionalisation of Hizb ut-Tahrir members into ‘deradicalisation’ and ‘counter-extremism’ bodies, with many such organisations claiming legitimacy because of the involvement of high-profile former members of HT.

²⁹³ Lorenzo Bosi, "Explaining Pathways to Armed Activism in the Provisional IRA, 1969-1972," *Social Science History* 36, no. 3 (2012).

²⁹⁴ HC, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

²⁹⁵ Charles Tilly, "Repression, Mobilisation and Explanation," in *Repression and Mobilisation*, ed. Christian Davenport, Hank Johnston, and Carol Mueller, Social Movements, Protest and Contention (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minneapolis, 2005). pp.224-225; Della Porta further advances this discussion by typologising repression-response as contingent on five dimensions of repression: 1. ‘repressive’ versus ‘tolerant’; 2. ‘selective’ versus ‘diffuse’; 3. ‘preventive’ versus ‘reactive’; 4. ‘hard’ versus ‘soft’; 5. ‘dirty’ versus ‘lawful’. Porta, "Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing of Protest." p.66

²⁹⁶ Tilly and Tarrow. p.140

²⁹⁷ Ibid. p.38

Those who take part in contentious action and extraordinary forms of activism are eventually discouraged by repression, as well as boredom or a desire or need to return to more routine forms of life, and this must be accounted for when researching the decline of activism by HT. As Tilly and Tarrow point out, this leads SMOs to respond to decline in one of two opposing ways:

1. *Institutionalisation*, in which actors move activism into more widely accepted channels through creating more formal structures and/or entering authority power structures;
2. *Escalation or Radicalisation*, in which activism becomes more extreme in its goals and more robust tactics to keep the interest of current members and attract new supporters.²⁹⁸ Such escalation is likely met with repression, to make participation in more extreme tactics less desirable, and together this forms a process of polarisation, in which ideological divisions become greater.

Repression is an important factor in this institutionalisation-escalation split, with authorities often matching extreme repression with escalation whilst moderating behaviour towards actors that choose more moderate tactics. In this case, we can observe HTB undergoing a stronger trend of institutionalisation in contrast to HTS, elements of which have preferred escalation and radicalisation.

This repression-mobilisation concept has its roots in the political opportunity structure developed by Eisinger and extended by Kriesi, Kitschelt and Tarrow, which is combined with discursive opportunity structures (DOS) conveying the *symbolic* opportunities and constraints for movements.²⁹⁹ From this, the researcher can theorise where and how the subject was successful (or unsuccessful) in accessing the polity and finding support for their ideas.³⁰⁰ Both the political opportunity structures and cultural modelling sit within 'the country-specific political

²⁹⁸ Ibid. p.130

²⁹⁹ Eisinger's 1973 research on US protest events found that their likelihood and severity were dependent on the receptivity of political structures to external change, the extent to which such structures were 'open' or 'closed' and how easy it was for change agents to access and influence political decision-making. Governmental power structures were discerned by degree, exploring the level of state centralisation and the dispersal of power between various facets of the state – a more centralised system limits the number of access points available to actors, whilst a decentralised state offers a wider array of state and state-legitimised actors to influence access points on the national, regional or local level. Decentralisation, furthermore, generally places several limitations on the capacity and speed of the state system to act in response to social movements, whilst a centralised state is more likely to quickly and decisively respond to perceived security threats. Such processes can be extended to include the level of separation of powers between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary – and *within* each of these arenas – with greater separation generally constituting more points of access within the state body whilst simultaneously degrading the state's capacity for a quick and decisive response. Other factors within the political opportunity structure include the proportionality of the electoral system, providing greater or lesser amounts of access for social movement actors. Through the lens of the political opportunity structure, the parliamentary system of Denmark potentially provides a significantly higher level of proportionality within, and access to, the political system in comparison to the United Kingdom – reflected generally in the prevalence of coalition versus single party governments. Britain represents a paradigmatic example of a 'strong', majoritarian state, whilst smaller European states such as Denmark provide a typical example of a 'weaker', less centralised, consensus democracy. Eisinger; Kriesi. pp.69-73; Herbert P. Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (1986); Tarrow, *Comparative Perspective on Social Movements*.

³⁰⁰ Kriesi. p.72

cleavage structures', with social cleavage and change determining the potential for mobilisation.³⁰¹ The focus of DOS is therefore placed on the national level of analysis, still the most significant unit for measuring social movements.³⁰² Whilst there has been some attempt to transcend this, with Imig and Tarrow suggesting that the growth of supranational bodies such as the European Union encourage social movements actors to turn their claims 'beyond their borders and towards this new level of governance',³⁰³ for the time being, theories of political opportunity remain firmly rooted within a paradigm of state-based analysis. As such, the national units of the UK and Denmark will form the basis of this project's case studies.

The repression-mobilisation nexus exists within a temporality of change – termed a protest 'cycle' or 'wave'. Eisinger adopted a 'structural-cognitive model' which, firstly, tracks the changes within the macro political structure, then seeks to explore the impact this has on micro conceptualisations, before putting in a number of 'bridge assumptions' that connect both levels.³⁰⁴ This explains how macro opportunity structures affect the likelihood of individual engagement, through the assumption that the rise or diminution of certain incentives to political action in turn impact on collective forms of protest behaviour.³⁰⁵ Such an approach is echoed in Coleman's model of macro-micro-macro relations, highlighting perceived actions and interactions between authorities and challengers, and has since formed the crib-sheet for subsequent mechanistic developments.³⁰⁶

Fig. 2: Coleman's model of macro-micro-macro relations

³⁰¹ Ibid. p.72

³⁰² Ibid. p.72

³⁰³ Doug Imig and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Europeans: Protest and Politics in an Integrating Europe* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001). pp.7-8

³⁰⁴ Eisinger.

³⁰⁵ Karl-Deiter Opp, *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique and Synthesis* (London & New York: Routledge, 2009). p.xv

³⁰⁶ Hedström and Swedberg; James Coleman, "Social Theory, Social Research and a Theory of Action," *American Journal of Sociology* 91 (1986); *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

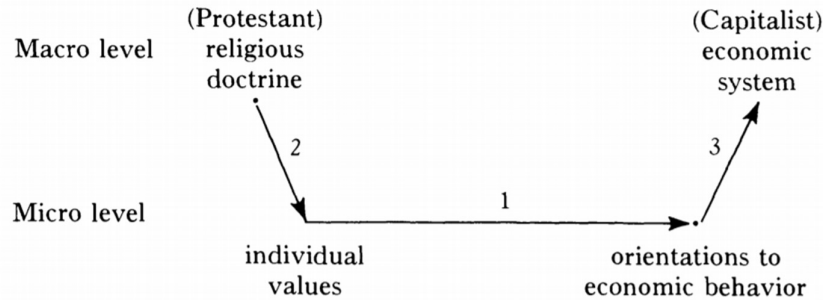


FIG. 2.—Macro-micro-macro relations: methodological individualism

Whether repression encourages or diminishes mobilisation is a subject of a continued (perhaps unsolvable) debate. Scholars such as Eisinger, Johnston, Neidhardt and Francisco have explicitly linked political opportunities with repression through repression-mobilisation modelling. They have produced a variety of different approaches, including: the linear and curvilinear models; the rational choice and frustration-aggression models; the 'line of proportionality' and 'line of deterrence' models; and the 'lying S-curve' models.³⁰⁷ These have been complimented by McAdam's political process model, which finds that broader socio-economic processes interact with expanding political opportunities on the macro level, alongside what he describes as 'indigenous organisational strength' on the meso level, to create a point of 'cognitive liberation' that leads to social movement behaviours such as protest.³⁰⁸ Still widely used, its definitions of socioeconomic processes are

³⁰⁷ The linear model takes a declining linear relationship between political opportunity structures as the independent variable and protest as the dependent variable, resembling a 'frustration-aggression' mechanism. Decreasing political opportunities increases the chance of protest behaviour, as groups engage in protest where they are 'unable to gain access to decision-making councils by conventional means'; conversely, increasing political opportunities and structural access decreases the chances of protest as frustrations can be mediated through state decision-making structures. The curvilinear model – an inverted u-curve – shows that, at the start of the curve, opportunities are low, and protest is absent. Increasing political opportunities enable a cognitive opening for grievances to be actioned upon, enabling protest. However, when political opportunities exceed a tipping point, protest declines as political opportunities increase. Eisinger takes the assumption that rising wide-spread levels or legitimacy of protest will result, in a relatively open system, in political authorities responding in some way to demands, thus alleviating protest and reducing its attraction as a means of political action. The rational-choice model exhibits a linear decline in protest in response to repression, whereby increasing repression depresses protest by creating a set of conditions where the cost to benefit ratio becomes too high. Alternatively, the frustration-aggression model impacts conversely, with repression resulting in higher levels of protest because perceived intransigence or violence by authorities in response to grievances are not addressed. The 'line of proportionality' model shows repression leading to a decrease in activism, until it reaches a 'line of proportionality', whereby repression is seen as becoming illegitimate in its force, and a sense of 'moral outrage' leads to an up-turn. A 'line of deterrence' model sees protest increasing in response to repression, until it then reverts to the rational-choice mode, whereby the cost-benefit balance is shifted in against the social movement, as mobilisation becomes too costly once beyond the 'line of deterrence'. Neidhardt suggests a 'lying S-curve' which proposes an initial slump in protest in response to repression, before a line of proportionality leads to mobilisation opposition gathers greater support following the use of what is seen as an illegitimate level of force against protest. After this increase, and with repression still increasing, costs become too high and the protest wave fades. Francisco, alternatively, in research on protest and repression in East Germany, Czechoslovakia and the first Palestinian Intifada, finds the opposite trend: a line of deterrence initially slows down protest, before the legitimacy of repression becomes questioned, resulting in an upswing of protest. Opp. pp.163-164; Eisinger; Hank Johnston, *States and Social Movements* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011). p.109; Friedhelm Neidhardt, "Gewalt Und Gegengewalt. Steigt Die Bereitschaft Zu Gewaltaktionen Mit Zunehmender Staatlicher Kontrolle Und Repression," in *Jugend-Staat-Gewalt. Politische Sozialisation Von Jugendlichen, Jugendpolitik Und Politische Bildung*, ed. Wilhelm Heitmeyer, Kurt Möller, and Heinz Sünker (Weinheim: Juventa, 1989); Ronaldo A. Francisco, "The Relationship between Coercion and Protest: An Empirical Evaluation in Three Coercive States," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39 (1995).

³⁰⁸ McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970*.

conceptually vague, whilst the level at which these different processes operate are open to change and confusion.³⁰⁹ However, the model offers nuance through the inclusion of indigenous organisational strength as an important factor in repression-mobilisation.

Tilly built on the framework provided by Eisinger, developing a set of theories exploring national comparisons, temporality of protest, and the links between political opportunities and the choosing of tactics from a set of different options – a ‘repertoire of contention’³¹⁰. Like Eisinger, Tilly saw the frequency of protest as existing within a curvilinear relationship with political openness, with protest most likely to occur within a space of toleration, a ‘goldilocks’ zone – the point at which actors are neither sufficiently advantaged and empowered within the system to action their claims, nor completely repressed as to be unable to envisage the possibility of achieving them through non-mainstream means. Such models offer opportunities for cross-national and longitudinal studies, exploring the frequency of a certain kind of behaviour and the changing use of tactics.³¹¹ Models by Tarrow, meanwhile, suggests contention increases in response to repression (‘threats’) as part of a set of other factors, including access to external resources and political opportunities. These change the actions of the activist on the micro level when social movement actors become threatened with overbearing costs or outrage.³¹² He posits that an opening of institutional access comes about as the result of rifts in elites, leading to the possibility for allies and – most crucially in this context – a decline in the state capacity for repression. Such factors ‘combined with high levels of perceived costs for inaction opportunities, produce episodes of contentious politics.’³¹³

In theorising interactive securitisation mechanisms between authority and SMO, we can draw from previous interactive studies, many of which have been built out of political opportunity structures.³¹⁴ Earl, for instance,

³⁰⁹ For instance, on cognitive liberation, McAdam mentions that the costs authorities incur in repressing insurgent groups act as a determinant of repression, but this also implies that the costs incurred by social movement actors are determined by a cost-benefit calculation in the face of repression, in which case cognitive liberation must be first filtered through a conceptualisation of the perception of repression, which is unaccounted for.

³¹⁰ Meyer. p.126

³¹¹ Ibid. p.129

³¹² Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movement and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).p.71

³¹³ Ibid. p.71

³¹⁴ Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*. J. Craig Jenkins, "Social Movements, Political Representation and the State: An Agenda and Comparative Framework," in *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspective on States and Social Movements*, ed. J. Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Hanspeter Kriesi, "The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements: Its Impact on Their Mobilisation," in *The Politics of Social Protest*, ed. J. Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

identifies three models of repression that have been used in previous social movement research. Firstly, a 'threat' model of repression, whereby there is a linear correlation in which a greater threat to political elites corresponds to a greater amount of repression. Secondly, a 'weakness' model, in which SMO decline leads to greater repression, as elites risk the degradation of their authority should they fail in their repressive attempts. This is particularly the case, for instance, with regards to protests by minority groups – such as racial and ethnic, or religious minorities – as they may be viewed as less able to retaliate against harsher responses by authorities. Thirdly, a combined approach, in which protest groups that are both weak and threatening are the most likely to face repression.

This certainly has relevance within the context of analysis of activism by Hizb ut-Tahrir. Various authority actors have sought to repress Islamic activist mobilisation due to the high-level security threat seen as emanating from so-called 'Islamist terrorism'.³¹⁵ The party has therefore been problematised, often dealt with or discussed as a step on the pathway towards 'radicalisation' – particularly in their open rejection of Western democratic norms – and seen as representing part of a significantly wider threat. However, Hizb ut-Tahrir also consist entirely of a minority community within an already existing religious minority, largely comprised of ethnic and racial minority individuals. As such, HT comfortably fulfils the requirements for the above model: the party is associated with a threat that has been constructed as major – even existential – in Western Europe, whilst belonging to a minority ethnic and religious group which is able to be repressed without widespread consequence or protest.

This has not resulted in the same response by HT in Britain and Denmark, however, as securitisation processes have created differing outcomes in respect to the decline of Hizb ut-Tahrir in both case studies. Olivier Fillieule suggests that many of the mechanisms that account for recruitment also apply to withdrawal from collective action, which may offer some explanation of different tactics in response to decline between HTB and HTS.³¹⁶ However, it is also important to account for the properties of a given social or political system and how this may account for patterns of disengagement – in this case, different processes of securitisation.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Andrew Parker, "Mi5 Video Transcripts: Who We Are - Speech, Central London," ed. Secret Services (gov.uk: Government of the United Kingdom, 2017).

³¹⁶ Olivier Fillieule, "Demobilisation and Disengagement in a Life Course Perspective," in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements*, ed. Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

³¹⁷ Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani, "Introduction," *ibid.* p.12

The configuration of authority actors is also important in delineating the constellations of protagonists, antagonists and bystanders – or allies, adversaries and the audience – which interact with the social movement organisation.³¹⁸ The mapping of these actors offers a matrix through which we can see the compatibility or incompatibility of interests.³¹⁹ Social movements are often concerned with influencing policy, challenging what is termed by Baumgartner and Jones as the ‘policy monopoly’,³²⁰ particularly through the inducement of paradigm destabilisation, with sudden shifts offering a ‘window of opportunity’ for social movement actors.³²¹ However, different social movements, with differing motivations, have different levels of focus on the political process and engagement and movements that have a more ‘counter-cultural’ orientation may be more inclined to focussing their efforts not on changing policy but on implementing wider social and cultural changes.³²² Kriesi et al. offer a more culturally nuanced approach, looking at opportunity structures through the nature of political cleavages, institutional structures, the structure and balance of alliances, and the frequency and legitimacy of strategies utilised by social movements.³²³

These models present some interesting findings in conceptualising the repression-mobilisation nexus and exploring interaction between authority actors and social movement actors. They hint at important elements that need to be included in research models: threats, opportunities and resources offered by the state; indigenous organisational strength; as well as external arenas, such as audience actors, allies and enemies. These will be analysed within a context of social movement mechanisms to understand how HT has tactically changed and declined in Britain and Denmark in the context of post-2001 securitisation processes.

³¹⁸ Kriesi, "Political Context and Opportunity." p.74

³¹⁹ One such major example of this comes in the form of party politics: national political parties consistently attempt to realign themselves with both their core support base and the wider electorate in order to be assured of support and advance both their career and ideational motivations. The longer that parties take to realign themselves with those they seek support from, the increasing gap there is between the functioning of the political system and the aspirations of those they seek support from, and the greater potential there is for instability, as a wider range of actors gain access in attempting to influence the polity.

³²⁰ Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, "Two Faces of Power," *American Political Science Review* 56, no. 4 (1993).

³²¹ John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1984). pp.173-204

³²² Kriesi, "Political Context and Opportunity." p.77

³²³ Meyer. p.131

5 Hizb ut-Tahrir

Having outlined the methodological practice, the theoretical approaches and the gaps in contemporary literature relevant to this project, this chapter further will explore the case study of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark, outlining its organisational history in the Middle East and Western Europe, as well as drawing on information obtained from interviews to bring the contextual understanding of the party up to date.

5.1 Historical Development

In understanding HT, it is important to understand the wider context of the 'Islamist' movement within which it operates. European 'Islamism' has gone through a series of developments from the mid-20th Century. In its early stages, 'Islamist' organisations operated in Western Europe as a means of advancing extant activity in other regions of the world, building multinational Muslim opposition against repressive regimes in the Middle East and North Africa.

*... we didn't want to live in Europe indefinitely. We were exiled. Europe was a place from which we could express ourselves and criticise our countries until such time as we could return to our regions.*³²⁴

As such, early groups operated – at least initially – in a relationship with the West that was largely instrumental.³²⁵ The relative political freedom and increasing proliferation of international communication within Europe offered such organisations an opportunity to develop a counterweight to repression in 'home' countries by building transnational models of opposition amplifying opposition to Arab and Turkish dictatorships without enduring high levels of harassment.³²⁶ Members of Hizb ut-Tahrir have described European branches

³²⁴ Samir Amghar, "Europe Puts Islamists to the Test: The Muslim Brotherhood (France, Belgium and Switzerland)," *Mediterranean Politics* 13, no. 1 (2008). p.72

³²⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 64-65

³²⁶ Examples include: Sayyid Ramadan's decision to base militant aspects of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in Geneva, with the creation of the Geneva Islamic Centre from 1961; the development of l'Association des étudiants islamiques de France (AEIF) and le Groupement Islamique de France (GIF) by Tunisians escaping repression under President Habib Bourguiba; and the dispersal of members of the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) throughout Western Europe, the establishment of the Fraternité Algérienne de France (FAF) and Rabah Kebir's time spent working as spokesman for the organisation in Germany during the 1990s. *Ibid.*; Gilles Kepel, *A L'ouest D'allah* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1994).

during this period as a ‘half-way house’, in which focus was placed on Arab individuals studying in the UK in a short-term capacity.

... from the 1960s, individuals went and studied overseas and came back; they just used to take their individual work with them, always focused on: so, if you’re Jordanian, you just talk to Jordanian people, and thinking of ways you can spread that work back home.³²⁷

As ‘Islamist’ organisations developed opposition to regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, a process of delocalisation, deterritorialisation and decentralisation occurred, with groups increasingly contesting cultural, social, ethical and political-economic forms of Western imperialism. With Western Neoliberal and colonial practices key to the longevity of many secular Arab regimes, ‘Islamist’ groups sought to also counter Western dominance in the global arena.³²⁸ Increasingly reliant on support from Muslim communities in the West, the orientation of political activism began to shift, activists substituting messages of nationalist rhetoric with a more universal offering which resonated more efficiently with Muslims in Europe and the West. The culture of exile within ‘Islamist’ groups in Western Europe began to dissipate, replaced by greater focus on the cultivation of re-Islamisation amongst Muslims minorities,³²⁹ as movements previously implicated in a national logic in their country of origin became increasingly trans-nationalised in the Western context.³³⁰

This was even more the case by the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the possibility and probability of building a coherent and plausible Islamic state waned and a triumphant return to the home country became increasingly implausible. A concurrent sense of the embedding within Western Europe occurred with the growth of Muslim ‘second and third generation migrants’ communities – born and educated in European countries and with little or no experience of the countries of their parents’ birth whilst looking to Islam as integral part of their identity formation. With the development of black civil rights movements, a need was recognised for issues of identity and national Western politics to be understood from other minority ethnic perspectives.

³²⁷ HA, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

³²⁸ Amghar. p.71

³²⁹ Ibid. p.67

³³⁰ Ibid. p.65

By the 1990s, the question of identity for second generation ethnic minority individuals was either being part of 'you're British' or 'you're Black British'. There was no other subcultural narrative there. And the concept of 'Blackness' was effectively ethnic minority. But it didn't quite work, or that narrative started to evolve away from anything that was relevant to the subcultural experience. Black Lives Matter - which is an expression, let's say a weak echo of, the Black Panther Movement, the struggles in the US, Malcolm X or Martin Luther King - these would just not be relevant to Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani Muslims. And also, the fact that they were Muslim, the fact that they would fast every year, go to the mosque every Friday and issues around prayer were also bubbling up, in that, one method for people who were racist, instead of being overtly racist, they would actually discriminate on a religious basis, which was legal at the time. So, they would say: 'well, you can't pray at work'. So that would keep all the Asians out really. This bifurcation in terms of within the context of what is Blackness started to leave a vacuum and in stepped Hizb ut-Tahrir...³³¹

'Islamist' organisations such as HT shifted to account for new Francophone and Anglophone spaces in Western Europe and associations previously concerned with national liberation in the Middle East and North Africa came to 'consider themselves to be in charge of the defence of the interests of Muslims in Europe'.³³² They developed a discursive matrix to account for the multifaceted identity whereby activists simultaneously identified as Muslim and politically-engaged Western citizens. Such framing continues to resonate with current generations, offering a mode of integration which accesses sites of transnational, national and localised identity signifiers, problematises social grievances and enables space for dynamic forms of Muslim identity.³³³

5.2 HT Activism in Western Europe

³³¹ XE, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

³³² Amghar. p.72

³³³ Farhaan Wali, "Islamist Indoctrination: Exploring the Techniques Used by Hizb Ut-Tahrir to Radicalise Young British Muslims," *Journal for Deradicalisation* 11 (2017); Hamid, *Sufis, Salafis and Islamists: The Contested Ground of British Islamic Activism*; Roy.

This process of activist re-territorialisation by Hizb ut-Tahrir in Europe has led to a tactical bifurcation developing between the Middle Eastern party bodies and Western (largely European) branches of Hizb ut-Tahrir, creating two distinctly separate modes of operation.

The real work of the party is in the Middle East, in the lands where we expect the Khilafah to come. This is where we expect the real work to come from. We're not working outside of those lands in any true sense of the party's work.³³⁴

In Middle Eastern states, Hizb ut-Tahrir has maintained a largely party-political approach – in keeping with its official ‘party’ label – and, whilst formally rejecting democratic processes and lobbying, has built strategic alliances with leading members of governments or militaries. In Europe, alternatively, party members and activists have diverged from the MENA party model, working instead to provide support to the party work of Hizb ut-Tahrir in the Middle East as well as to develop a groundswell of public support for the central tenets of Hizb ut-Tahrir ideology. As such, Hizb ut-Tahrir’s work in Europe more broadly fits the ‘social movement organisation’ model, rather than the more traditional ‘party’ structure at play in their work in the Middle East. In attempting to bring about widespread cognitive shifts in support of HT’s ideological tenets, European party bodies have come to focus on cultivating grassroots strategies of engagement and activism on more localised, community levels.

The work here follows a slightly different model [to that in the Middle East], as it's not after the same goal - it's not after a model, it's after an awareness of what the British foreign policy is, for example, or it's an awareness of what Islam actually says about a particular topic, which is beneficial to the da'wah, to the call itself.³³⁵

HT seeks to achieve support for its ideology by positioning itself as a vehicle advocating for those feeling a sense of marginalisation within European minority Muslim and ethnic communities. This is particularly relevant in a

³³⁴ HA.

³³⁵ HE, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

Europe where reported instances of racial and religious discrimination and deprivation have risen.³³⁶ It has gained relevance with the rise of both far-right populism – which has targeted Muslim communities – as well as institutionalised, structural examples of Islamophobia following 2001.³³⁷ This has led to Islam becoming ‘a template for the culturally confused, a language of protest for the politically frustrated’, and fits with Roy’s ‘Islamisation of radicalism’ – of Islam becoming a vessel for articulating dissatisfaction and disillusionment with Western political practice.³³⁸ These conditions have enabled the proliferation of ‘Islamist’ organisations in Europe which seek redress for those aggrieved by Western European governments and socio-economic structures, with one of the most active being Hizb ut-Tahrir.

5.3 Democracy and Engagement

HT’s relationship with democracy is complicated – uncompromising in its ideological rejection but under constant contestation in practice. Official party ideology holds a rigid view of democratic practice and engagement, with official texts declaring democracy ‘a system of *Kufr*’, which:

*... completely contradicts the rules of Islam whether in the comprehensive or partial issues, in the source from which it came, in the ‘Aqeedah from which it emanated, in the basis on which it is established, and in the thoughts and systems it has brought.’*³³⁹

Democracy is, as such, ‘definitely forbidden for the Muslims to adopt, implement or call for’,³⁴⁰ with theological justification drawn from a ‘classical Islamist’ line of reasoning which problematises democracy as a process in which ‘people are the source of authority’ with the elected ruler ‘ruling of the people, for the people, by the legislation of the people’.³⁴¹ In a democratic structure, society becomes ‘not answerable to any authority other than their own’, whereby ‘each and every individual has the same right as everyone else in terms of establishing

³³⁶ (AI), "Choice and Prejudice: Discrimination against Muslims in Europe."

³³⁷ Arun Kundnani, "Blind Spot? Security Narratives and Far-Right Violence in Europe," (The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2012).

³³⁸ Caryle Murphy, *Passion for Islam* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002). p.276; Roy.

³³⁹ Abdul Qadeem Zalloom, *Democracy Is a System of the Kufr: It Is Forbidden to Adopt, Implement or Call for It* (London: Al-Khilafah Publications, 1995). p.5

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p.5

³⁴¹ *Ibid.* p.6

the state, appointing the rulers and enacting the systems and laws'.³⁴² These two central tenets of democracy – that sovereignty is for the people, and that the people are the ultimate source of authority – conflicts with a holistic interpretation of Islam, whereby sovereignty is for God and God represents the only source of authority.³⁴³ Democracy is therefore, on this reasoning, predicated upon secularism and it is secular democracies – by placing authority solely into the hands of men – that have, according to al-Nabhani's texts, led to the degradation of society.³⁴⁴

Whilst one official party critique of democracy comes a problematisation of its inherent secularism, another takes a different line of attack: that democracy, as described by Western states, is not actually practiced authentically and, 'in its true meaning, is an imaginary and inapplicable idea'.³⁴⁵ The rhetoric used by Western politicians who propound democracy is seen as empty and hypocritical, current governmental structures too intertwined with capitalism and the interests of the elite, and ultimately constituting plutocratic – rather than genuine democratic – rule. As such, democracy 'never existed and it will never exist' but its invocation by politicians is simply a sign of the redundancy of 'Western' systems and norms.³⁴⁶

Based on these critiques of democracy, HT takes a strong ideological stance against cooperation with and participation in Western liberal-democratic structures. Whilst still officially referring to itself as a party, its lack of official engagement in Europe confines HT to non-parliamentary activism, as it considers participation in a non-Islamic system 'a trap that will only strengthen the status quo'.³⁴⁷ HT reject gradualism and any approach which conceptualises a centrism or middle ground – *al wasatiyya* – and they characterise such positions as alien to Islam, used by Western nations (and 'Eastern lackeys') as a means of ensuring the continuation of colonial inequalities, deviating sincere Muslims from clearly defined Islamic rules.³⁴⁸

³⁴² Ibid. p.6

³⁴³ Ibid. p.8

³⁴⁴ '... abnormal and strange sexual practices have come to fill these low democratic countries. So homosexuality has increased between men and lesbianism has increased between women, as well as sex with all animals. Also on the increase is the practice of group sex between males and females who all have sex together at the same time, the likes of which is not to be found even in the domain of beasts and animals' ibid. p.16

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ 'It is now clear for all to see, especially the Muslims who work to restore the rule of Islam and bring life to their ideology, that Western 'Civilisation' is dead. Dead and buried. The West has failed to convince the Muslims of their ideology, Capitalism. They have failed to convince us of Secularism. The hypocrisy of democracy has become transparent. The charade of international law and the UN has been exposed. The entire Muslim World today calls for a change, and this change is no longer inspired by the western people or the western ideology, but in spite of it.' Jalaluddin Patel, "The Khilafah Has Been Established (It Now Needs to Be Announced)," Khilafah Magazine, April 2003., p.4

³⁴⁷ Hanif. p.78

³⁴⁸ Hizb ut-Tahrir, *Dangerous Concepts to Attack Islam and Consolidate the Western Culture* (London: Al-Khilafah Publications, 1997). p.32

*Thus, whoever does not rule whatever Allah has revealed, denying Allah's right to legislate, as is the case with those who believe in democracy, is a Kaafir according to the explicit words of the Qur'an...*³⁴⁹

Whilst official HT texts take an uncompromising line on democratic engagement, interviews with members and activists yield a far more pragmatic and negotiated approach, and the policy of complete disengagement is constantly under review. There are, for instance, some recorded examples of the party participating in democratic exercises during early stages of development, such as the case of Dawood Hamdan, the party's first Vice-President and Secretary.³⁵⁰ In fact, the current rejection of non-parliamentary activism is not, according to interviewees, due to a blanket ideological rejection of democratic engagement, as would be suggested in the texts. Democratic participation is not contradictory to the party's aims, 'because the goal [of potential democratic participation] is not to legislate, the goal is to use it as a platform to spread the party's message'.³⁵¹ As such, the co-optation of democratic structures is not antithetical for the party. Rather, direct democratic participation is understood as unworkable at the current stage of the party's development, risking the alienation of members and potential members as 'it creates a bit of confusion in their minds',³⁵² and has been officially rejected as a tactic following a decree by former emir Abu Yusuf Abdul Qadim Zalloom. Furthermore, the policy of discouraging HT members from engaging in parliamentary democratic structures was a two-way process, with Dawood Hamdan's participation in the Jordanian parliament 'causing the Jordanian regime a big headache' and leading to targeted repression of the organisation to prevent future HT candidates from standing in future elections.³⁵³

More recently, there have been examples of direct democratic engagement: for instance, following the Arab Spring, the Tunisian branch petitioned the emir for a change in decree to be able to submit parliamentary candidates.

³⁴⁹ *The American Campaign to Suppress Islam* (London: Al-Khilafah Publications, 1996). p.16

³⁵⁰ al-Khilafah, "The Departure of the Caravan of Hizb Ut Tahrir: "The Blessed Light That Originated from Masjid Al Aqsa".

³⁵¹ HH.

³⁵² HC.

³⁵³ HH.

... Hizb ut-Tahrir were very, very popular in Tunisia, and they really could have won some serious seats in the parliament, and they would have used that as a basis to account the rulers, to say: 'that policy you're about to implement is just bringing French influence in, why are you doing that?'. That's the role that we would envisage for a member of the party in the parliament.³⁵⁴

Another discussion within the party on their interaction with democracy is the role of lobbying. As with democracy, the official ideological line on lobbying is rigid, stating that 'lobbying in a non-Muslim country is fundamentally forbidden', due to both legislative and shari'a approaches.³⁵⁵ However, this hasn't prevented the development of unofficial, de facto styles of lobbying, with HT members approaching politicians to try to shape political stances. As such, the party's position on lobbying is one (unofficially, at least) open to constant reassessment and development.

Sometimes I'll meet with politicians, with MPs, to discuss their positions. I'm not necessarily lobbying as such – to say I'm trying to dictate to him and I'm legislating. He can do what he wants to do. I'm simply appealing to his conscience as a human being: 'This is what Allah says; You can address Allah just as well as me; This the right thing to do'... We don't currently see our role to lobby. That doesn't mean that we don't see any role for lobbying. And that doesn't mean that we've always or will always say that. Just, at this moment, we're saying this isn't a policy of ours.³⁵⁶

A complete ideological rejection of democracy has also been challenged from within the party leadership, including by Abdul Wahid, current leader of HTB, who has contended that the conceptualisation of democracy by HT is simply different to that which is practiced in the West and that the party is open to democracy when practiced in an Islamically-supportive way.

³⁵⁴ HC.

³⁵⁵ Zaloom.

³⁵⁶ HH.

... we have a view on democracy. I believe in voting; I believe in elections. The caliphate we want to see is one where a ruler would be elected, accountable, not above the law; accountable to people, to political groups, to elected assembly, to independent media.³⁵⁷

This highlights an important point of nuance within party lines that is highly relevant to conceptualising HT as a social movement organisation, similar to other ‘democratic’ groups. Whilst explicit participation in Western, democratic structures is proscribed by both text and edict, working to hold governments to account for their policies and actions is strongly encouraged, an approach which inevitably involves sincere engagement with democratic agents and structures.

... there’s some grey areas there, there’s some thin lines. In the Muslim countries, it’s clearer but still there’s thin lines. We don’t endorse the government, but it doesn’t mean we don’t account the government and say, ‘your policy is wrong, we don’t account the policy’, but we don’t say ‘and make sure you vote this way’. That’s the step too far.³⁵⁸

The limitations on political engagement in democratic countries often translates into the performance of certain forms of public activism – demonstrations, protests, public talks or leafleting – which respond directly to national political events and attempt to shape, on some level, governmental policy whilst avoiding the legitimising of mainstream structures. Although such HT groups reject Western state democratic processes, they are actively seeking to implicate themselves within national political discussion. Thus, we can conclude there is a level of pragmatic engagement – and therefore interactive response – involved in their relationship with democracy and the state.

5.4 Organisational Activism

Within HT, mainstream forms of political engagement are strongly discouraged, with communiqués stating that ‘the party in the West must not take part in anything related to governance in those countries, i.e. they should

³⁵⁷ Osborne.

³⁵⁸ HC.

not take part in elections or participate in civil disobedience, etc.'.³⁵⁹ However, this does not prevent HT branches organising public protests in response to issues that it perceives as negatively impacting on the Islamic world, Muslim communities or their ability to conduct affairs. There has been a strong tendency towards what look like grassroots forms of action in achieving their wider strategy of seeking to 'reveal the perceived inadequacy of democracy as a system of governance; to oppose integration; and to foster support for HT ideology'.³⁶⁰

One key style of political engagement which has been utilised greatly by HT is that of the public protest or demonstration. Reports and studies have referenced the party's use of visual, choreographed demonstrations along high streets and outside of national embassies.³⁶¹ According to representatives of the party, demonstrations are used on very specific issues, with party texts stating numerous benefits from their usage in the correct context.³⁶² They are used as a form of activism in instances where no change is deemed possible through other means – a response which broadly tallies with social movement suggestions that protest increases in line with the closing of certain political opportunities.

*The problem with the line of thought that finds protests pointless because they don't directly result in some material change is that it is measuring an action by the wrong criteria. If material change were possible, there would be no need for a protest. Indeed, he who can achieve direct change but merely protests reneges on his duty. The role of protest arises precisely where direct material change is not possible.*³⁶³

However, where this perhaps differs from traditional social movement expectations is that activism takes on certain religious connotations due to the holistic nature of the party and their interpretation of Islam. As well as representing a form of political engagement, activism is framed by some members as a means to itself, a form

³⁵⁹ Ahmed and Stuart, "Profile: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in the UK." p.82

³⁶⁰ Ibid. p.82

³⁶¹ Schmidt, "'Grounded' Politics: Manifesting Muslim Identity as a Political Factor and Localised Identity in Copenhagen."

³⁶² These are as follows: 1. Helping to raise awareness about an issue in a collective and public manner; 2. Breaking the fear or inability to act that silences communities; 3. Giving a voice and expression to the truth, which if kept hidden gives way to falsehoods over time; 4. The enjoining of good and forbidding of evil; 5. Publicly calling others to the truth; 6. Accounting tyranny, oppression and their perpetrators; 7. Paving the way for future material change through the influence of public opinion; 8. Offering the oppressed moral support by showing them they are not alone; 9. Being the voice of the oppressed when they have been made voiceless. Uthman Badar, "Protests and Rallies - What Is the Point?," Hizb ut-Tahrir Australia, <http://www.hizb-australia.org/2016/12/protests-what-is-their-point-and-what-do-they-achieve/>.

³⁶³ Ibid.

of worship which operates beyond the more 'rational choice' or 'reasonable'-centred model expected within Western forms of public activism.

*demonstrating, talks, leafletting – this is prayer; they are one and the same. Both are working towards an Islamic personality and society. Both honour God.*³⁶⁴

Some members will argue that the purpose of public activism goes beyond the immediate political context, with the gains being felt in the spiritual – if not in the political – realm.³⁶⁵ This gives us early findings to consider. Firstly, we should, as researchers, be careful in ascribing assumptions regarding the motivations behind certain formations of activism, avoiding interpretations which account only for the political gains without considering the ideological motivations behind the action; we should steer clear of a totally 'rational' approach to understanding certain examples of Islamic activism.³⁶⁶

*a Hizb ut-Tahrir member will consider the value of attending a party event or a demonstration in terms of God's recognition and appreciation of this participation rather than the overall success of a given event or demonstration*³⁶⁷

However, it also suggests we should be cautious in too essentialist a reasoning, one that takes 'religious' or divine arguments as the only or prime motivator, without considering that activism operates within a relevant political context. Thus, we need to take a critical approach, in which we reflexively assess and reconsider the ideational complexity of the Western Islamic activist by bringing together their words, their deeds and – most importantly – the context in which these occur.

5.5 Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain

³⁶⁴ HI, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

³⁶⁵ 'At the individual level, the primary objective is not the establishment of an Islamic state or the success of a demonstration. These are only ways of fulfilling obligations to God, which, in turn, is the only way to achieve salvation. In terms of personal calculations, the very act of participation in itself produces the payoff in the hereafter.' Quintan Wiktorowicz and Karl Kaltenthaler, "The Rationality of Radical Islam," *The Journal of Public and International Studies* 121, no. 2 (2006). p.316

³⁶⁶ See Pape's focus on 'reasonable' rather than 'rational' action: Pape; Pape and Fieldman.

³⁶⁷ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.148

This case studies for this project are the two regional branches in the UK and Denmark: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain and Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia, as they are both currently known. These regional party bodies are designated *wilayat* – although this terminology is used sparingly amongst party bodies beyond official, international correspondence.³⁶⁸ Despite taking a rejectionist approach to democratic engagement, Hizb ut-Tahrir is referred to as a ‘party’ throughout this work, representing its direct Arabic translation and the term often used by members and ex-members.

I just refer to it as ‘the party’ because for a long period of time, that was the only party I really thought about...³⁶⁹

The British branch of HT was established in 1983 by Palestinian Fouad Hussein, although there were highly localised spots of previous activity in the UK, with initial work coming from parts of South Wales. The party expanded and formalised when Omar Bakri Muhammad (OBM) became head of the British branch in 1986, growing from a few active UK members to many thousands of activists in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Omar Bakri combined highly visible forms of political activism and community engagement with theological and jurisprudential discussion on Islamic issues to attract young adult recruits, particularly those embarking on early political activism or on initial study and practice of Islam.

The development of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s was due to various factors. The use of shock media tactics and provocative forms of activism enabled Omar Bakri Muhammad to build a high media profile for the party. The party also lacked serious competition and was one of the first Islamic political organisations which developed an explicit focus on engaging with national and international – rather than diasporic – issues. The party had, and still has, one of the most highly articulated and complex visions of ‘Islamism’ and OBM saw the value of translating al-Nabhani’s texts – as well as Qur’anic texts and Hadith – and condensing them down into easily understandable, ‘bite-size’ phrases, ideal for street-based activism. HT could

³⁶⁸ *Wilayah* (ولاية) translates from Arabic as ‘state’ or ‘province’ and has some history within the Ottoman Caliphate following the restructuring of *eyâlets* into smaller *vilâyets* (Turkish) from 1864 until the disestablishment of the empire in 1924. This terminology shows HT’s rejection of the post-Westphalian international state structure.

³⁶⁹ XI.

draw heavily on their own source books and commentaries, using their political interpretation of Islamic texts and their long-term international vision in localised engagement.

Back then there were no books. To find a book on Islam in the early 1990s was very rare. I had to go to Pakistan to buy one or two. It was very hard to find translated books. Even the books of the hadith, most of them hadn't been translated by that time.³⁷⁰

Due to their work translating and disseminating Hizb ut-Tahrir texts, the British branch has been cited as the 'engine room' of the international organisation, operating from the strategically important international base of London and focussing on the international distribution of English language publications.³⁷¹ As such, HTB currently represents the largest HT body of influence in the Western world.³⁷² As Michael Whine stated in 2006:

... the increasingly central role of its UK leadership – whose members largely belong to the professional classes and are mostly of South Asian origin – is providing HT with the more diplomatic and polished veneer that it previously lacked. The transfer of many administrative and publishing functions to the London leadership has given HT a renewed lease of life as it seeks to fend off the challenge of other groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood.³⁷³

The importance of HTB's role has been challenged by statements from British members themselves, who have downplayed their own importance. Yet, they have been instrumental in the continued international development of the party: their cultivation of international party cells, networks and youth-based activism have directly resulted in the establishment of *wilayat* in Denmark (1994), Pakistan (1999), Bangladesh (2000), Indonesia (2000) and Australia (2004).

OBM departed the party in 1996, spending the years immediately afterwards growing al Muhajiroun (or ALM) in the UK – a group with strong ideological, organisational and historical links to Hizb ut-Tahrir. Hizb ut-Tahrir

³⁷⁰ XF, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

³⁷¹ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.12

³⁷² Hanif. p.249

³⁷³ Michael Whine, "Is Hizb Ut-Tahrir Changing Strategy or Tactics?," in *Centre for Eurasian Policy Occasional Research Paper* (Washington D.C.: Hudson Institute, 2006). p.3

Britain has since endured serious schisms, faced new barriers to activism and undergone significant activist decline. As well as haemorrhaging key members and leaders,³⁷⁴ the core activist body and the wider Islamist milieu in the UK has undergone radical change. In recent years, the party has focussed more attention on developing ‘grassroots activism and engagement with popular culture’, combined with the development of activist front groups and single-issue campaigns often built around the language of human rights.³⁷⁵

Tactically, we can divide HTB’s approach into four stages: a foundational stage, from 1986 to 1996; a retreat, from 1996 to 2001; a post-9/11 stage, between 2001 and 2005; and a post-7/7 stage, which runs from 2005 until the present day – with tactics of activism and their framing shifting throughout each of these phases. During the foundational stage, activism focussed on building support amongst individuals such as international students or businesspeople from countries where HT activism is prohibited, to encourage organisational support upon return to their home countries. This shifted in focus onto the recruitment of second-generation Muslims in the UK – particularly after the signing of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation Accord in September 1993 – and tactics of leafleting and university campus and mosque meetings reflected this. A rise in organisational capacity resulted in increased public visibility, leading to early governmental attempts to ban the party.

The party transitioned into a ‘retreat’ phase of activism from 2001, in which – under increasing levels of scrutiny – the global leadership encouraged HTB to end controversial public rallies and campus meetings. The lowering of the profile led to a discursive alignment, whereby Islamic activism came to focus on contemporary international events – the Middle East Peace process and the Oslo Accords, the involvement of NATO in the Balkans, and US involvement in the Gulf – within a frame of the Western ‘War on Islam’.³⁷⁶ Post-2005, the party continued this retreat, although the political context has now changed – in many ways becoming more conducive to their approach, as Muslims face direct and everyday instances of securitisation and hostility.³⁷⁷ This environment has seen increased concern over Western involvement in the Middle East following the Iraq

³⁷⁴ Amjad Khan, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir's Few Remaining Friends," Harry's Place, <http://hurryupharry.org/2010/06/30/hizb-ut-tahrirs-few-remaining-friends/>.

³⁷⁵ Ahmed and Stuart, "Profile: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in the Uk." p.144

³⁷⁶ "Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Ideology and Strategy."; "Profile: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in the Uk."

³⁷⁷ (AI), "Choice and Prejudice: Discrimination against Muslims in Europe."; Enes Bayrakli and Farid Hafez, "European Islamophobia Report," (Istanbul, Washington D.C. & Cairo: Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA), 2015); "European Islamophobia Report," (Istanbul, Washington D.C. & Cairo: Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA), 2016); "European Islamophobia Report," (Istanbul, Washington D.C. & Cairo: The Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA), 2017).

invasion, pushback over the role of military in civil security, declining competition from similar Islamic activist groups and growing Muslim political engagement.

Current key members include Dr Abdul Wahid, the head of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, Yahya Nisbet, the media representative of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (replacing Taji Mustafa in 2017), and economist Jamal Harwood. Whilst the party body in Britain reportedly boasted an active membership of around 8,500 at the turn of the century,³⁷⁸ this has drastically declined to between 400 and 800, according to interviewees. Today, we can observe a party in decline but still operating in urban areas of relatively high levels of Muslim clustering. The British party generally avoids the more contentious activism which characterised Omar Bakri Muhammad's leadership, concentrating on public lectures or protests outside foreign embassies. The branch has also looked to adapt to the development of the online sphere, with an updated website (hizb.org.uk), as well as being the first regional group to cultivate an active Facebook page (with over 24,000 followers) and official twitter account @hizbuttahrir (with over 14,000 followers), as of the start of 2018.

5.6 Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia

The Danish branch developed later than the British one, registered in Copenhagen in 1994 under the name of *Khilafah*, with an active website from 1999.³⁷⁹ The party branch has historical ties to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, established by, amongst others, Maajid Nawaz through direct activism concentrated on Copenhagen's colleges and mosques.³⁸⁰

I was Maajid Nawaz's supervisor at Hizb ut-Tahrir, so I was responsible as a supervisor and all sorts of stuff. He was also the guy who set up the activities of Denmark. We [Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain] did a lot of the stuff in Denmark, a lot of the stuff there focussing on the university campuses...³⁸¹

³⁷⁸ This may include both members and non-member activists (*shabaab*)

³⁷⁹ Brian Arly Jacobsen, "Denmark," in *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, ed. Oliver Scharbrodt, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2016). p.199

³⁸⁰ Nawaz.

³⁸¹ XD, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia, as well as being established a decade later, 'is still ten years behind in terms of organisation and outreach' in comparison to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain and has been characterised as 'like Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain at the start of the century'.³⁸² It now has a relatively high-profile in Denmark, although its activism is almost entirely concentrated in Copenhagen, particularly Nørrebro, an area with a comparatively high number of Muslim and migrant communities.³⁸³

*In practice, it was just Copenhagen, but it seemed just cool to say Scandinavia. We have only a few members in Norway and Sweden, a few in Aarhus and in the north of Sjælland.*³⁸⁴

The names Hizb ut-Tahrir Denmark and Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia are both used when referring to the Danish branch, often interchangeably by members, activists and authorities. However, the official organisational name, according to party officials, is Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia, having been changed from Hizb ut-Tahrir Denmark in 2008. Because of this, the name Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia has been favoured in this project.

*...calling it HT Scandinavia was my idea, to be honest. I shouldn't criticise it. It just sounded -- Back then I thought there had to be serious development with the new leadership. We had to become more offensive to show that there was something unique about us. It was basically a marketing ploy. I think it worked!*³⁸⁵

Prior to 2001, the party was relatively unknown but events of 2001 and increased concern over Islamic political groups led to a sudden marked increase in its profile. Despite not going through similar schisms as the British branch, the party body in Denmark has also seen a decline in its membership and activism, with estimates setting the current party membership in Denmark at under 150; as Sinclair states, recent research shows that they have been unable to attract more than 500-1,000 people to any conference or protest at any given time.³⁸⁶ Time

³⁸² Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.12; XD.

³⁸³ In 2011, 28 percent of the Nørrebro District were recorded as immigrants or descendants of immigrants, including three areas which were referred to by the Danish Government definition of 'ghettos'. These include Mjølnerparken – an area where 92 percent are first- or second-generation immigrants and 60 percent of the area are of Lebanese, Iraqi or Sudanese origin. Nazia Hussain et al., "Muslims in Copenhagen," in *At Home In Europe* (London: Open Society Foundations, 2011). p.144;

³⁸⁴ '[The leadership in Scandinavia is] five people, including the main leader. But it is basically just an advisory board. Only true influence comes from the leader called al Muatemet - in Arabic that means the one that you rely on [from اعتمد]. As a term that just means a regional leader - so it was regional leader of Scandinavia.' XI.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Sinclair, "Islam in Britain and Denmark: Deterritorialised Identity and Reterritorialised Agendas." p.47

spent by the researcher with the party membership at larger meetings and events suggested that numbers have not recovered, and may well be slightly smaller.³⁸⁷

*At the peak at least, [Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia] could actually assemble 2-3,000 people at demonstrations or rallies - I doubt they can do that now. Last time I checked it was just 300 at most, so that's just members and students, basically.*³⁸⁸

Current high-profile members at the time of research included the deputy leader Elias Lamrabet, media representative Taimullah Abu-Laban, and committee member and mosque organiser Naji Dyndgaard. Despite the many informal links between the party bodies and their shared historical development, the official organisational contact between HTB and HTS is minimal, limited to informal connections or occasional formal visits and collaborative campaigns.³⁸⁹

5.7 Indigenous Organisational Strength

This section will assess the indigenous organisational strength of the party, dissecting the schisms and splits that rocked Hizb ut-Tahrir in the late 1990s and analysing the way this has impacted on the organisation of the British and Danish branches respectively. The Majaal Crisis of 1996 and the Global Redress of 1997 were a series of disputes that hit Hizb ut-Tahrir globally, causing lasting damage to the main body of the organisation, as well as impacting particularly on Western branches – most notably in Britain. Whilst there has been some limited long-term recovery from these events in the years since, they contributed towards the organisational conditions and tactical focus of the party which lead to the eventual decline of the British and Danish branches. The crisis hints at a continued debate that grew alongside the expansion of Western membership that neither the British nor the Danish branches have been able to adequately solve completely: what purpose and approach to activism Hizb ut-Tahrir bodies should take outside of the Islamic *majaal* (area or region).³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Velfægning (SFI), "Antidemokratiske Og Ekstremistiske Miljøer I Danmark: En Kortlægning," (Copenhagen: SFI - Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Velfærd, Afdelingen for beskæftigelse og integration, 2014).

³⁸⁸ XG, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

³⁸⁹ Sinclair, "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." p.14; HK.

³⁹⁰ المجال – field, area; in this case, a reference to the Islamic world, or مجال الإسلامية

... at first the party was very inward looking, it was very - they described it as pseudo-academic, it was people sitting talking about analysis and ideas and whatever, without actually doing anything. So, the focus suddenly became activity. But the party then grew massively. So, it went from being sort of 50, 60 members, a couple of hundred people to like two hundred members, 3,000 people were activists who actually studied in circles, involved in activism and were part of the shabaab, the qadir of the party. And then we kind of peaked at our height, when we ended up having conferences where we had 10-11,000 people...³⁹¹

The following sections will explore the Majaal Crisis and the Global Redress of the late-1990s, events which are integral in understanding why later decline post-2001 has been so terminal.

5.7.1 The Majaal Crisis

The first modern schism of HT in the West came about in the Majaal Crisis of 1996. In the late 1990s, a shift towards public activism by the British branch of HT had instigated a process of discussion amongst the global leadership over the aims and objectives of party bodies operating beyond the Islamic *majaal*. Hizb ut-Tahrir sources stress that it works to establish the *Khilafah* only in Muslim-majority countries or areas with strong Islamic heritage,³⁹² traditionally looking to restrict member activities outside of the *majaal*.³⁹³ It is, at its heart, an Arabist organisation with an Arab international leadership, and this focus on the Arab world has led to diverging tactics between the *majaal* and elsewhere. Within Muslim-majority areas, HT operates more as a traditional political party, aiming to access levers of power and directly influence governments at the state level, whilst party bodies outside the Middle East have sought to reposition themselves as grassroots social movement organisations. This bifurcation led to a breakdown in the organisation in the late 1990s, culminating in the 1996 Majaal Crisis and the 1997 Global Redress.

³⁹¹ XA.

³⁹² for instance, the historical region of *al Andalus* in modern Spain

³⁹³ Mahan Abedin, "Al-Muhajiroun in the UK: An Interview with Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed," in *Spotlight on Terror*, ed. Mahan Abedin (The Jamestown Foundation, 2005).

The Majaal Crisis of 1996 revolves around the figure of Omar Bakri Muhammad. A long-time member of Hizb ut-Tahrir, he had a sometimes-volatile relationship with official party bodies. His first significant confrontation with Hizb ut-Tahrir occurred whilst he was a member in Saudi Arabia. In an attempt to initiate large-scale party activism in the Saudi peninsula, Omar Bakri Muhammad established a front group under the name of *al Muhajiroun* on 3rd March 1983, of 38 activists.³⁹⁴ This led to a rebuke from party officials in Kuwait seeking to avoid confrontation with the Saudi monarchy – and his party membership was suspended.³⁹⁵ In response, on 14th January 1986, Omar Bakri Muhammad left for Britain and connected with the handful of Hizb ut-Tahrir members active in the UK.³⁹⁶

... In terms of the early years, and the early 1990s, it was pretty much a group of three or four people led by Omar Bakri Muhammad...³⁹⁷

Seeing an opportunity, OBM took charge of the nascent group, vastly increasing its membership and activism. Whilst growing party activities in Britain, he also began developing new interpretations of al-Nabhani's texts: particularly, he reframed the *Khilafah* as a project that could be established anywhere in the world where activists were present, not just within the Islamic *majaal*. This resulted in the releasing of increasingly provocative statements by HTB inciting action against Western states and the British government.³⁹⁸

The real dispute [with Hizb ut-Tahrir] was over the methodology to establish the Khilafah, they did not like me attacking man-made laws here in the UK, and they did not like the fact that I was condemning the policy of John Major and the British government.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁴ The date chosen was deliberate, marking the 59th anniversary of the destruction of the Ottoman Caliphate. Although Al Muhajiroun was established in the city of Mecca, it was officially launched in Jeddah.

³⁹⁵ Abedin, "Al-Muhajiroun in the UK: An Interview with Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed."

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ XF.

³⁹⁸ Such an interpretation was largely confirmed as legitimate by members and ex-members who were interviewed. Whilst party tradition states that focus should be placed on the *majaal* and Western groups will often publicly state that they are not seeking to establish the *Khilafah* outside of the *majaal*, the ultimate aim of the *Khilafah* (once established) is to encourage other individuals throughout the world to convert to Islam. This ultimately implies a long-term goal of an expansionist Islamic state. As such, Omar Bakri Muhammad's interpretation of Hizb ut-Tahrir's ideological tenets is acceptable, by their own terms.

³⁹⁹ Abedin, "Al-Muhajiroun in the UK: An Interview with Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed." Omar Bakri Muhammad also made news when he released a statement in 1995 urging 'Queen Elizabeth to convert to Islam and threatening that Muslims would not rest until 'the black flag of Islam flies over Downing Street''. Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005). p.9; Brian R. Farmer, *Radical Islam in the West* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2010).

Increasingly, OBM reaped great success from this use of provocative language and public activism. However, it caused unease with the international party leadership – who had come to cultivate a more measured approach in the Middle East and North Africa following decades of repression – and delegates from HT’s global leadership were sent to discuss the matter with him in person. A series of delegates arrived and, in meetings with OBM, acknowledged that whilst such a doctrinal approach to the texts ‘may well be true, you’re more likely to establish [the *Khilafah*] in a country which has a historical understanding of it and predilection towards it’. As such, the global leadership argued, financial and human resources were better spent focussing on MENA countries, and Omar Bakri Muhammad’s bombastic language actions against the British and Western governments were to be curtailed.

The increasingly fractured relationship between the global leadership and OBM was not simply a difference of doctrinal interpretation but an issue of finances and legitimacy, with Muhammad keen to develop greater independence for the party and his leadership.

*the majaal crisis internally within Hizb ut-Tahrir... was really an issue of money and funding, where Hizb ut-Tahrir had always gained its legitimacy up until that point by being an offshoot of Hizb ut-Tahrir international.*⁴⁰⁰

By the mid-1990s, the global leadership, sensing that OBM was still not adhering to HT doctrine, increased pressure on him, requesting that he discontinue his activism through a series of communiqués and citing specific concern over his support for Bosnian mujahideen,⁴⁰¹ as well as asking him to cancel the increasingly controversial 1994 Khilafah Conference in Wembley.⁴⁰² In an attempt to develop greater control over British-based activism, OBM established a British branch of al Muhajiroun, which operated from within Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain.

*it was really Henry VIII’s problem, which was: ‘I don’t want to pay Rome my tithe, I want to be my own man’.*⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ XD.

⁴⁰¹ Dibb.

⁴⁰² Douglas Weeks, "Radicals and Reactionaries: The Polarisation of Community and Government in the Name of Public Safety and Security" (University of St. Andrews, 2013). p.255; James Cusick, "Organisers Defend Muslim Conference," *The Independent*, 4th August 1994.

⁴⁰³ XC.

Unable to pull Omar Bakri Muhammad into line and with differences between the parties becoming fractious, OBM tendered his resignation as *mutamid* (head) of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain on 16th January 1995.⁴⁰⁴ Ultimately, the global leadership grew so concerned at Muhammad's level of media exposure and controversial actions that they ordered his expulsion from the party in February 1996 and al Muhajiroun diverged formally from HT, taking members from all levels of the British party branch.⁴⁰⁵ ALM continued the contentious approach to British activism that had raised the profile of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain so quickly, whilst HTB launched public attacks and condemnation against the new group, requesting that members avoid all interaction and framing OBM's leadership as 'a brief period of aberrant leadership'.⁴⁰⁶

the [re]establishment of al-Muhajiroun sent shockwaves through the global HT movement. Almost immediately, Omar [Bakri] started receiving phone calls from members throughout the world, and the new al Muhajiroun movement quickly attracted disaffected HT followers and Omar's former students⁴⁰⁷

Ideologically, this split – described by Karagiannis as one that 'resembles the confrontation between the Stalinist and Trotskyist factions of the Bolshevik Party in the 1920s'⁴⁰⁸ – created three lasting divergences between the groups.⁴⁰⁹ Firstly, in terms of the *majaal*, HT continued to prioritise its work on the Islamic world, releasing statements rejecting any suggestion it was looking to establish the Khilafah in the West, in contrast to ALM which urged for a Khilafah to be established wherever there were members. Secondly, the *aqeedah* diverged, ALM following that of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* and the path of *al-Salaf al-Saalih*, rejected by HT.

Hizb ut-Tahrir's official position is that they have no, what is known as Tariqaat positions, which means that whatever flavour Muslim - Shia or Sunni - because of the issue of Khalifah, it's the obligation of everyone to work together for that purpose.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁴ Hamid, "Islamic Political Radicalism in Britain: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir." p.148

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.; Taji Mustafa, "The 'Islamist' Bogeyman," (The Guardian, 2007).

⁴⁰⁶ Karagiannis. p.50; Mustafa.

⁴⁰⁷ Zayno Baran, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Islam's Political Insurgency," (Washington D.C.: The Nixon Centre, 2004).

⁴⁰⁸ Emmanuel Karagiannis, *Political Islam in Central Asia: The Challenge of Hizb Ut-Tahrir* (Oxford: Routledge, 2011).

⁴⁰⁹ Abedin, "Al-Muhajiroun in the UK: An Interview with Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed."

⁴¹⁰ XB.

The implication was that, whilst HT operated as a ‘broad church’ – open to Muslims irrespective of their school of thought and avoiding differentiation between different Islamic traditions to focus on the unification of the global ummah – ALM saw the concept of the Khilafah as directly reliant upon the ecclesiastical position of its members. As one Hizb ut-Tahrir member stated:

*We are open to all Muslims. That is our goal, to unite the ummah, the way it should be. These divisions are later inventions, they are not important and will not matter once the Hizb and ummah converge in one.*⁴¹¹

In contrast, Omar Bakri Muhammad altered the position of al Muhajiroun to ensure stricter religious conditions for membership and the establishment of an Islamic state.

*He claimed that, despite having been brought up in Syria – where you can’t throw a slipper without hitting a Shia’ somewhere – that he’s now discovered that actually this is a questionable attitude, and then basically put an edict out which effectively said that every member of his new group, which was then named al Muhajiroun, had to be a Salafi, basically, and not an ash’ari, which is what Hizb ut-Tahrir’s general position sort of is.*⁴¹²

The third and final divergence was on the implementation of offensive jihad and its role in *da’wah*. Hizb ut-Tahrir have deliberately set very strict conditions for the use of violent forms of ‘offensive jihad’ (as used in ‘terrorist’ attacks by al Qaeda or Islamic State, for instance), stating that it can only be conducted under the guidance of a correctly ordained, extant Islamic state by agents affiliated to the Khilafah. This enables the party to avoid rejecting the tactical and ideological use of violent articulations of ‘jihad’, whilst also preventing its misuse and enabling the party to ideologically distance itself from jihadi ‘Islamist’ organisations. ALM, alternatively, explicitly

⁴¹¹ HB.; ‘Despite being a Sunni organisation, Hizb ut-Tahrir has been keen to present itself as non-sectarian. This stance is consistent with its goal of re-establishing the kind of unified Caliphate that existed prior to the division before Sunni and Shia in 661AD and consistent also with its goal of offering a pan-Islamic political party’ Karagiannis, *Political Islam in Central Asia: The Challenge of Hizb Ut-Tahrir*.

⁴¹² XC.

twinned *da'wah* with both offensive and defensive forms of jihad, declaring it a legitimate means of building support for the later implementation of a future Khilafah.⁴¹³

Hizb ut-Tahrir stays away from these issues about al Qaeda inspired terrorism acts, whereas

*Bakri sees those and then lorded them as great examples of oppressed punch-back.*⁴¹⁴

The expulsion of Omar Bakri Muhammad from HT and the re-establishment of ALM in Britain not only led to a fracture within the membership of the British party – as local activists defected to the new group – but also caused international rifts. Foreign networks of cells with close ties to the British branch and to OBM, such as the Pakistani body, initially vacillated, uncertain of how to respond: they were keen to support the former HTB leader who had supported Pakistani and international party growth, with many cells highly reliant on British guidance. However, the adoption of new ideologies by ALM – openly breaking with core tenets of HT orthodoxy – angered members in Pakistan.⁴¹⁵ The inability of members and cells to ask questions and have them answered quickly, upon which the nascent group in Pakistan still relied, aided the development of a network of HT scholars in Pakistan, ultimately leading to the development of an independent party body in Pakistan (formalised in 1999). Because of this, the Pakistani and other international membership bodies soon recanted their initial support of ALM, returning to the international HT fold.

In the UK, OBM's departure from HT in 1996 was keenly felt, as previously loyal members overnight became aligned to a belligerent – and sometimes outright hostile – opposition party. On many occasions, ALM deliberately disrupted HT events whilst HT members were forbidden from having contact with the new party.

when that was all happening, we were given orders and we listened to orders, 'don't engage, don't talk to anyone, don't make a scene - ignore [al Muhajiroun members] and don't listen to them'.

*We just used to do that.*⁴¹⁶

⁴¹³ Abedin, "Al-Muhajiroun in the UK: An Interview with Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed."

⁴¹⁴ XC.

⁴¹⁵ XB.

⁴¹⁶ XA.

In the national media, the close historical links between HT and ALM led to reports which often conflated or confused the two parties, with contentious events often wrongly attributed to HT.⁴¹⁷ This sparked a damaging battle over the party's name and reputation, as HT attempted to distance themselves from the cycle of controversy caused by ALM tactics which placed it in the media shade of its more bombastic younger brother. Whilst the defection of OBM and the formation of ALM caused some difficulty for HT in Britain, the subsequent Majaal Crisis was indicative of some wider issues the party faced, setting the stage for a larger, international schism to occur in Hizb ut-Tahrir.

... after my departure from HT in 1996, the old internal disputes arose again, and this time around caused an official split in the party.⁴¹⁸

5.7.2 The Global Redress

Whilst Omar Bakri Muhammad's total break with HT was largely due to localised factors, it was however indicative of wider, international problems faced by the party, ultimately leading to the 1997 Global Redress. In the Middle East, the death of al-Nabhani and increasing state repression against HT members had led to a decision by the global leadership to retreat from public life to ensure the continuation of the life of the party body in the majaal. However, this came with an inevitable cost to activism, which become increasingly limited, and the decline in public activism and increase in aversion to risk and provocation by the leadership sat at odds with the official language and aims of HT in the 1990s. A desire for alternative and proactive approaches to confronting global threats, as articulated by OBM, had developed amongst many party members – not only by those who defected to ALM but by a significantly vocal number of HT members in many international branches.

⁴¹⁷ 'For the outsider it is almost impossible to spot the differences between al-Muhajiroun and Ahl-Ul Sunnah Wal Jamaa'h, or what drove their followers to part from Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT). But to the adherents the differences are vital. HuT said that it was taking legal action yesterday after one newspaper wrongly claimed that its members were behind the attack on George Galloway' Sean O'Neill, "Infighting Is Rife as the Islamic Groups Splinter," *The Sunday Times*, 21st April 2005.

⁴¹⁸ Abedin, "Al-Muhajiroun in the UK: An Interview with Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed."

*The third and fourth generation of its Palestinian central leadership, which still remains largely underground, has suffered a loss of focus; this may explain why some announcements made by spokesmen outside the Arab world contradict traditional HT policy.*⁴¹⁹

This sense of frustration by ordinary members towards the global leadership was heightened by the ‘doubling down’ of the leadership in response to the 1996 Majaal Crisis. Following OBM’s expulsion, the global leadership continued its tactical retreat with even greater vigour, recanting OBM’s books – which had been disseminated globally by the British branch – and removing much of the more inciteful and incendiary literature from its websites. The accountability structure changed to ensure greater organisational oversight, new editions of party books appeared and explicit references to jihad were removed from all texts. In an attempt to shore up its international credibility, the leadership began to claim it was finally in a state of readiness to take power (*nusrah*) in the Middle East. As part of this redress, focus was placed on the re-examination of the role of Western branches.

when they removed Omar Bakri from Britain, Hizb ut-Tahrir went through a reassessment... to reflect on ‘what are we doing in the UK? What are we doing in Europe? What is our position here?’⁴²⁰

However, in the process of reviewing and moderating party literature and activism, elements of the membership became disconnected from the leadership. Disaffected members complained that party activists (*as-shabaab*) were being ignored and that party literature was being too heavily moderated, deviating from HT’s central ideologies. Conspiracies began to spread amongst members – some of whom had already publicly accused OBM of being co-opted by the British secret services and joining MI5 – and paranoid suggestions were made that the global leadership had been infiltrated by Mossad, with Zionists leading the party to destruction from within. As such, a vocal segment of the party called for the immediate removal of the leadership to save the party from its supposed impending annihilation.

⁴¹⁹ Whine. p.3

⁴²⁰ XB.

Within this tinderbox of intrigue, a spark from the leadership in Jordan led to the eruption of a global schism: the then-head of the HT complaints department, Abu Raami, critical of the retreat of the leadership, attempted to dismiss the then-party leader, Abdul Qadeem Zalloom – who was in hiding and whose location was unknown by most members. This attempted *coup d'état* ignited hostility between advocates of more offensive and defensive tactical approaches, leading to Abu Raami resigning his position and forming a new party under the same name (often referred to as Hizb ut-Tahrir 2, or HT2). The ideological causes of the split echoed elements of OBM expulsion, the splinter group believing that the main body had gone against the texts of al-Nabhani, party thought and method.

[The split] was based on two things really: one was the [members'] lack of trust in the leadership and the second was the view that HT as a whole had deviated from its methodological principles⁴²¹

The blame for this deviation was HT's desire to remain within the confines of the law, the party too often seeking political recognition through legal systems of *kufr* state bodies. The inclusive aqeedah of HT also came under scrutiny, with HT2 rejecting as deviation the implication that Muslims can follow the *sharia* of previous prophets. Whilst this separate party body had its largest impact in Jordan – where Abu Raami had a high level of influence – it also led to splits convulsing many national bodies. The most prominent member to split from the British party and join HT2 was Farid Kassim, a founding member of the British branch and the then British party's national spokesman, with ultimately around one-third of the British branch joining the new splinter group.⁴²²

This HT2 group is often referred to as *al naaqitun* ('those who drop out') by current and former HTB members, whilst those supportive of HT2 refer to HTB and the remaining global branches as 'Zalloomis', 'Rishtis' or the 'Zalloom Faction'. The main faction of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT1 or HTB as it is now known) forms the main party in Britain, and gives loyalty to the successor of Abdul Qadeem Zalloom, Ata Abu Rishta. Whilst Abu Raami died shortly after the split, the splinter group of HT2 continues to operate to this day, although it is far more secretive

⁴²¹ XD.

⁴²² XC.

than HTB and does not publicly disclose any information about its current activities, membership or leadership.⁴²³

As divisions between the two camps grew, splits multiplied. The main 'Zalloomi' camp in the Middle East fractured again, a new schism called 'Hizb Wa'ed' appearing in Palestine under the leadership of Muhammad Showeiki. Meanwhile, another faction emerged – mostly made up of members in Germany and America – referred to as 'the Reformers of Hizb ut-Tahrir', who aspired to reunify the party under one catholic body.⁴²⁴

*there was a lot of reactions when people left, a lot of confusion. Some people left when Omar Bakri left, some people joined Muhajiroun, some people left when the whole split happened with Abu Raami in Jordan, and some people re-joined again and were confused about nothing happening.*⁴²⁵

The disruption from the splits was further compounded by the global leadership's slow response to this sequence of events and its subsequent entrenchment of tactical moderation. Following the two schisms, an official delegation – led by Sheikh Abu Selim as-Sakhri – was sent to Britain from the central party to assess the state of the party. Touring the country, interviewing members and activists from different cells and cities, Abu Selim ultimately reported back to the global party body that the main cause of the splits was simply a lack of religiosity.

*I remember meeting [Abu Selim] and having conversations about what's happening with the party in Britain and they came to the conclusion that the party body in the UK is just not pious...*⁴²⁶

Whilst this was 'not necessarily untrue',⁴²⁷ it did little to reunify the party in Britain or respond to the unease of the members who had stayed. In impotent response, the HT global party body commissioned a set of new texts to foster piety amongst members – rather than tackling concerns over ideological tensions or organisational

⁴²³ Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT2), "Hizb Ut-Tahrir: About Us," Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT2), <http://english.hizbuttahrir.org/about/about-us>.

⁴²⁴ Abedin, "Al-Muhajiroun in the UK: An Interview with Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed."

⁴²⁵ XD.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

retreat – with one of the most notable being *the Essentials of the Islamic Disposition (Nafsiyyah)* in the early 2000s.⁴²⁸

*that split had ramifications [in the UK], because the way it was analysed was that that split took place not because of any genuine, sincere analysis of the party, but because those people were just bad people. And the reason they were bad people was because they had bad dispositions, and they had bad dispositions because they weren't really religious enough.*⁴²⁹

The disruption of the Majaal Crisis and the Global Redress led to many leaving the party in Britain, having lost faith in either the ideology or the ability of Hizb ut-Tahrir to successfully enact it.

*... people were leaving because of those reasons: it wasn't really ideologically sound, it wasn't really religiously pure. But they still bought into the overriding aim, the broad aim of: we need an Islamic State, we need a Caliphate but maybe this group isn't ideal to bring it about. And so, you had quite a lot of individuals leave then, and some of them actually continued their journey into kind of question and analyse the ideology.*⁴³⁰

The disruption and the haemorrhaging of member through splits and disillusionment in the late 1990s led to an organisational knock-on effect in which many younger and more inexperienced members and activists in Britain were fast-tracked to replace those lost. Whereas generally it still takes four to five years for activists and student to 'impose' themselves on the party as a member, these crises led to HT quickly taking on new members, whilst young members were speedily fast-tracked into roles of regional and national power.

... a lot of senior members kind of like withdrew. And we had new generations who weren't really of the calibre of the previous generations. And we had a lot of problems because of that. Taking

⁴²⁸ Hizb ut-Tahrir, *The Essential Elements of the Islamic Disposition* (Beirut: Dar al-Ummah Publishing House, 2004).

⁴²⁹ XC.

⁴³⁰ XF.

very young people from gangs, and stuff like that... We always used to select a very high calibre sort of people. And that wasn't what we did.⁴³¹

This allowed the branch in Britain to maintain its position and grow its membership, ensuring immediate recovery in terms of size and activism. However, it also destabilised the party in Britain, as new members and local leaders lacked the experience and maturity of former members.

... if you've got, like, 18, 19, 20, 21-year olds like we had in the late 1990s, which is when the Hizb grew exponentially in Britain, you're going to get naivety, you're going to get people throwing things out without really understanding what they're doing.⁴³²

To heal the division of the late 1990s, to consolidate the power of the now-younger party members in Britain catapulted into power and to demonstrate that the British branch had not lost its operational capacity, the party sought to bring together branches in activism which culminated in the massive Birmingham Conference on 24th August 2003.⁴³³ As well as addressing the previous divisions within the Western party bodies, this event looked forward in defining the work of the future work of party branches outside the majaal.

Around 2003 with the new leadership... we organised a conference with all of the different leaders of the party in different parts of the non-Muslim world – America, European countries, Britain – and really said, 'look, let's hear all of your opinions on what you think the work should be'. And from that we took all these opinions from a big consultation and came up with a strategy and policy.⁴³⁴

This concentrated activism in Britain, focussing the work of the British party branch across the country in a coordinated event, with members and activists from across the country and internationally attending, speaking and manning stalls on their work.

⁴³¹ XB.

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ BBC, "Thousands Attend Muslim Conference," BBC, 24th August 2003.

⁴³⁴ XA.

People would come from all over Europe to the stalls - it would be quite impressive turn out as well, so it made our organisation seem very big, something to be taken seriously⁴³⁵

Yet, this event would mark the high watermark of the party in Britain, which would never fully recover from the convulsions of the late 1990s.

We had this large conference... and that was the focus of our activity across the country; that conference was the centrepiece around all we were doing for six months. I think that was the peak of when we were – it was based in Birmingham – and we had about 10,000 people turn up. And that's probably when we were at our height...⁴³⁶

The split of Omar Bakri Muhammad and the establishment of al Muhajiroun caused chaos with the British party as high-profile members and activists defected. This new and often hostile organisation constantly clashed with HT over the coming decade, competing for members and resources, causing disruption at events and confusion in national reportage. In the sudden heat of the post-2001 counterterrorism climate, the provocative activism of Omar Bakri Muhammad and ALM caused further problems for HT, as they were forced onto the defensive to protect their brand. The promotion of youth in response to the splits of the Majaal Crisis and the Global Redress led to greater turbulence and the defection of trenches of members, confusion amongst activists and an inability for the party to initiate effective forms of recruitment. The continuation of tactical retreat by HT internationally following the splits led to a continued period of confusion as to the aims and objectives of the party.⁴³⁷ Strategically, the British party has responded with continued withdrawal since these events, with the leadership looking to re-brand, shunning the controversy and media spotlight which characterised Omar Bakri's style of leadership.

⁴³⁵ XE.

⁴³⁶ XA.

⁴³⁷ 'We were asking: What kind of vision do we have for Muslims in Britain, as a model, as a Muslim community; How do we operate in wider society; What type of message do we have politically, what type of messages do we have intellectually, in kind of academic, political, intellectual circles? This then re-shifted everything and this was very difficult for the party body here, because they'd just been trained into not thinking about this, they'd be trained into thinking about it in a very limited way - that we don't do political activity because we're outside the Muslim lands. And then suddenly realising that with the geopolitical activity, we don't follow our politicised methodology, we don't do political activism in Britain, we're not trying to bring down the government, but our activism is shaped around our political goal in the Middle East'. XC.

5.8 Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia

In assessing the organisational strength in the early 21st Century, we don't see the same level of divisive turbulence in the Danish party. Officially coming into being in 1999, Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia were still in their nascent stages of operations during the British and global schisms of the late 1990s. As such, the party body has not picked up some of the 'retreat' tactics that have been utilised in Britain following OBM's departure.

We [in Denmark] haven't had the same splits that the [British branch] has. We had no Omar Bakri Muhammad style event; nothing here has affected us the same way.⁴³⁸

However, HTS has still faced their own problems in ensuring continued unity amongst the membership. One issue has been the rise of internal factionalism, with alliances and clashes occurring within the current membership.

... there has been huge infighting between the members. There were a lot of factions, and there are a lot of factions now. They just basically take turns at suppressing the others, depending on who is in power.⁴³⁹

There have also been several smaller splits from the party – though it is important to stress that these have been limited in their impact. One such schism occurred with the establishment of *Kaldet til Islam* ('The Call to Islam'), an 'Islamist' organisation established in Copenhagen in December 2010 by Muslim students with some links to HTS. On a far more smaller scale than the split of ALM a generation earlier, they seek to challenge Hizb ut-Tahrir's legitimacy and influence in the Danish Islamic milieu by utilising more provocative public activism – including tacit support for acts of violence and the making of threats against national political leaders.⁴⁴⁰ They have

⁴³⁸ HS, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

⁴³⁹ XI.

⁴⁴⁰ 'Vi har en klar holdning til krigen i Syrien, og det er, at det er obligatorisk for enhver muslim at støtte sin brødre og søstre, når de er i nød. Man kan støtte på tre måder: økonomisk, ved at bevidstgøre om situationen i Syrien (både over for muslimer og ikke-muslimer) og endelig kan man støtte fysisk. Det vil sige, at man tager et våben i sine hænder og drager af sted for at beskytte sine muslimske brødre og søstre, eller ved at tage del i nødhjælpsarbejdet' (*We have a clear attitude to the war in Syria, and it is obligatory for any Muslim to support their brothers and sisters when they are in need. You can support in three ways: economically, by raising awareness of the situation in Syria (both*

attracted young followers more 'extreme' in their views than HTS, and its members have become embroiled in a series of recent arrests and convictions in Danish courts.⁴⁴¹ However, whilst a tactical and discursive similarity can be broadly drawn between Kaldet til Islam and ALM, a true comparison would be misleading, with Kaldet til Islam far smaller, operating on the very fringes of the Islamic communities of Copenhagen, and with a limited, largely negligible, impact on the activism of HTS.

*[With Call to Islam] there were no senior members involved – just students. Perhaps one or two members split. It can't be compared to what happened with al Muhajiroun because that was the ex-leader leaving the party. Nothing of that sort has happened here.*⁴⁴²

Whilst there has been sometimes vicious politicking between internal factions and groups inside HTS, it has not led to widescale organisational fragmentation and, as such, the Danish party body, throughout the period of post-2001 securitisation, has had far more party unity than was the case with HTB for much of this period.

*I think the party [in Denmark] has been here for long enough that it's just natural for them to have these fights. They're quite ugly right now, from what I hear. But [there's been] no official split.*⁴⁴³

Study of the Indigenous Organisational Strength aims to explore the structural potential of SMOs to mobilise and take advantage of political opportunities or respond to threats of repression.⁴⁴⁴ To a certain extent we can discern this strength, the research showing that, whilst membership of the British branch at the start of the study period was much higher and activism much larger, HTB had been under severe strain following a series of splits, with fragmentation impacting on the British and leadership party bodies. In comparison, HTS has not had the same instances of historical instability. This has influenced strategic responses: in Britain, the adoption of tactical retreat and consolidation has prevented future large-scale schisms or defections like that of Omar Bakri Muhammad and ALM. These events have shaped the British branch's strength and their decision to continue

Muslims and non-Muslims) and finally, you can support it physically. That is, taking a weapon in his hands and going to protect his Muslim brothers and sisters, or by taking part in relief work). Lars Jellestad, "Vi Snakkede Med Formanden for Kaldet Til Islam Om Hans Forhold Til Demokrati Og Martyrer," *Vice*, 30th March 2015.

⁴⁴¹ Morten Heuser, "Law Student Questioned on Submachine Gun Possession " *University Post, University of Copenhagen*, 29th January 2016.

⁴⁴² XI.

⁴⁴³ XH, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.3

⁴⁴⁴ McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970*.

using mechanisms of strategic retreat and consolidation from the public sphere. In contrast, HTS have neither had to confront the internal instability nor public rebukes from the international leaderships and have chosen to continue pursuing a higher profile through a wider array of public and sometimes contentious activism. This gives us some indication into the organisational strength of the party bodies at early securitisation stages.

[HTB's] role in British Muslim communities is confused. Very confused.... First of all, you've got this reassessment. So, you have the senior guys trying to keep things together and as you know they had a split as well in the movement. And they're trying to keep things together. Those guys over time are becoming less and less vocal - Jamal Harwood and these guys - and less and less visible over time. But they're in the background. And I think the generation after that has lost a lot of direction, focus, they're not sure what HT are meant to be doing anymore. Even within their membership there's a lot of confusion as to what they're supposed to be doing.⁴⁴⁵

Internal instability in the British branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir was, in part, due to sudden changes in party membership, and followed an influx of young, inexperienced activists and members. HTB has never fully recovered from the splits of the late 1990s, despite some immediate growth in the aftermath, and the defection of Omar Bakri Muhammad and the international schisms caused by the global redress still haunt the party in Britain. The Western branches have not been able to fully address questions over the role of the party outside of the Islamic *majaal*, whilst the subsequent limitations placed on Western branches since 1996 and the withdrawal of the party in the Middle East have continued to cultivate a sense of disconnect between the global leadership and Western branches. The inability of the global leadership to adequately deal with this question – and their clumsy attempts when they have attempted to provide an answer – have certainly not assuaged concern from Western bodies that the global leadership is proving ineffective, with their keenness to ensure the avoidance of controversy leading to an awkward balancing act being carried out by regional parties. This exploration has helped to enlighten some of the changes that have taken place in the two HT case studies and suggests that securitisation is linked to tactical changes and decline. The following chapters will seek to explore this further, firstly by examining the claim that securitisation is a central issue for Hizb ut-Tahrir.

⁴⁴⁵ XC.

6 The Securitising Lens

This chapter will discuss the following sub-question: *can we suggest that securitisation has become a significant issue for Hizb ut-Tahrir?* This can be carried out in a two-step process. Firstly, this chapter will examine what evidence there is of a securitisation of discourse taking place around Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark, to show that the securitising lens is an important, determinable factor to be considered. Secondly, this chapter will explore what evidence there is that Hizb ut-Tahrir are under external pressures caused by their political context. This will further support the thesis in determining the following: 1. That there is proof of an increasing securitising lens; and 2. That there is proof of HT decline within this interactive political context. This will form the foundation for establishing a determinable process occurring that links both.

6.1 Discursive evidence of the Securitising Lens

This section will establish that a securitisation of language has occurred with regards to Hizb ut-Tahrir. To do this, it will analyse language around the party in Britain and Denmark through a large-*n* analysis of 8,789 media articles to illuminate what events are driving discussion, who is leading discussion, the political orientation of reportage and what frames are used to describe HT. This analysis resulted in the following findings: 1. Hizb ut-Tahrir is facing securitisation in both Britain and Denmark; 2. However, these are being manifested in unequally distributed processes of securitisation across the case studies; and 3. This suggests that there are different *types* of securitisation at play, and that the process requires further disaggregating. It will firstly use media reportage on HT as a gauge for understanding public discussion:

*public opinion [on HT] is directed by the media, and the media has a sort of consensus – almost consensus – when it comes to these issues...*⁴⁴⁶

Studies of how the British press cover Islamic activism and, in some cases, Hizb ut-Tahrir, have already been carried out by (amongst others) Poole, Richardson, Volf and Moore, Mason and Lewis and this section will build

⁴⁴⁶ HK.

upon their work, exploring how Hizb ut-Tahrir has been framed in Britain and Denmark throughout their organisational lifetime and particularly since 2001.⁴⁴⁷

Firstly, to understand whether a securitisation of the language in public discourse surrounding the UK case study has occurred, all media articles written on HTB were accessed and coded to determine the following points: 1. which newspapers were publishing articles about HTB; 2. which actors were leading discussion about HTB; and 3. what frames were being used to describe HTB. The UK dataset was gathered by the software Lexis Nexis Academic – an electronic database containing articles from over 2,000 newspapers from 1980 onwards.⁴⁴⁸ Following a request, all articles published in print and online by all UK publications on Hizb ut-Tahrir were downloaded, the resultant articles ranging in date from their first mention on 2nd August 1989 to 31st December 2017. The dataset was then cleaned of duplicate articles and those deemed irrelevant to the analysis – such as articles which make only passing reference to the party. The remaining dataset produced from all UK press consisted of 2,213 articles from 78 national and local newspapers, magazines and advertisers.

For the Danish case study, to build a similar dataset for comparative study, a different approach was required, with Lexis Nexis Academic unable to access media articles published in Denmark. Data was therefore accessed through a formal enquiry at *Det Kongelige Bibliotek* (The Royal Library), the national library of Denmark and university library of the University of Copenhagen.⁴⁴⁹ This returned a dataset which, once cleaned in the same fashion, totalled 6,585 articles across a smaller timeframe of 1999 to 2017. Both datasets were then triangulated to confirm the accuracy of the searches using sampling techniques to compare the datasets to information that could be found on individual media website searches.

⁴⁴⁷ Elizabeth Poole, "Framing Islam: An Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of Islam in the British Press," in *Islam and the West in the Mass Media: Fragmented Images in a Globalising World*, ed. Kai Hafez (Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, 2000); *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2002); "The Effects of September 11 and the War in Iraq on British Newspaper Coverage," in *Muslims and the News Media*, ed. Elizabeth Poole and John E. Richardson (London: I.B. Taurus, 2006); John E. Richardson, "British Muslims in the Broadsheet Press: A Challenge to Cultural Hegemony," *Journalism Studies* 2, no. 2 (2001); *(Mis)Representing Islam: The Racism and Rhetoric of British Broadsheet Newspapers* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004); "Who Gets to Speak? A Study of Sources in the Broadsheet Press," in *Muslims and the News Media*, ed. Elizabeth Poole and John E. Richardson (London: I.B. Taurus, 2006); Irina Volf, "Comparative Quantitative and Qualitative Content Analyses of Coverage of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in German, British and Kyrgyz Quality Newspapers in 2002-2007" (Universität Konstanz, 2011). Kerry Moore, Paul Mason, and Justin Lewis, "The Representation of British Muslims in the National Print News Media 2000-2008," (Cardiff: Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, 2008).

⁴⁴⁸ Michael Kenney et al., "Organisational Adaptation in an Activist Network: Social Networks, Leadership and Change in Al-Muhajiroun," *Applied Ergonomics* 44 (2013). p.741

⁴⁴⁹ Det Kongelige Bibliotek, "Newspapers," <http://www.kb.dk/en/kub/materialer/aviser/index.html>.

For both datasets, the following research questions were considered:

- *Events*: What events have been driving the discussion about Hizb ut-Tahrir within national and local newspapers?
- *Actors*: Who is leading the discussion on Hizb ut-Tahrir and to what extent is the party successfully influencing the narrative?
- *Frames*: What are the political frames used by the media towards the party?

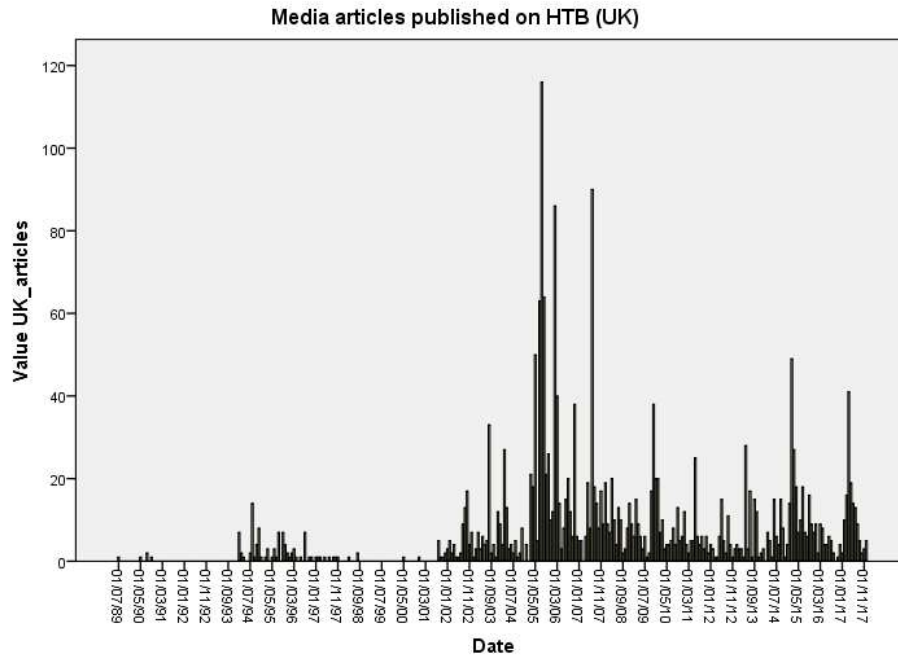
6.1.1 Events

Firstly, the question 'What events are driving discussion on Hizb ut-Tahrir?' was considered, using the datasets to track the number and distribution of articles in the UK and Denmark. In the UK case, the data showed relatively little interest in the party prior to 2001, with 113 relevant articles published in the 12 years between 1989 and 2001. Most of these tended to concern either international events – such as repression in Uzbekistan – interest pieces on localised events, meetings or demonstrations, or the contentious activism of Omar Bakri and al Muhajiroun.⁴⁵⁰ In the years between 2001 and 2005, media interest increases gradually – largely focused around the arrest of three British party members in Egypt⁴⁵¹ – before a sudden and significant set of peaks occur between 2005 and 2007. 2005 had the highest number of articles published on Hizb ut-Tahrir in the dataset (398), with August 2005 being the most prolific month. A first set of three peaks in UK media activity (comprised of by far the most articles per month) occurs in the months of August 2005 (116 articles), July 2007 (90 articles) and February 2006 (86 articles). From 2007 onwards, media interest in the party wanes, until a second set of three peaks – this time much smaller – appears, representing some limited interest in the party and their activities. These later peaks in publication occur in February 2015 (49 articles), April 2017 (41 articles) and November 2009 (28 articles).

⁴⁵⁰ Volf.

⁴⁵¹ Owen Bowcott, "'People Were Begging for Mercy'," *The Guardian*, 11th April 2006.

Fig. 3: Media articles published on HTB (UK)



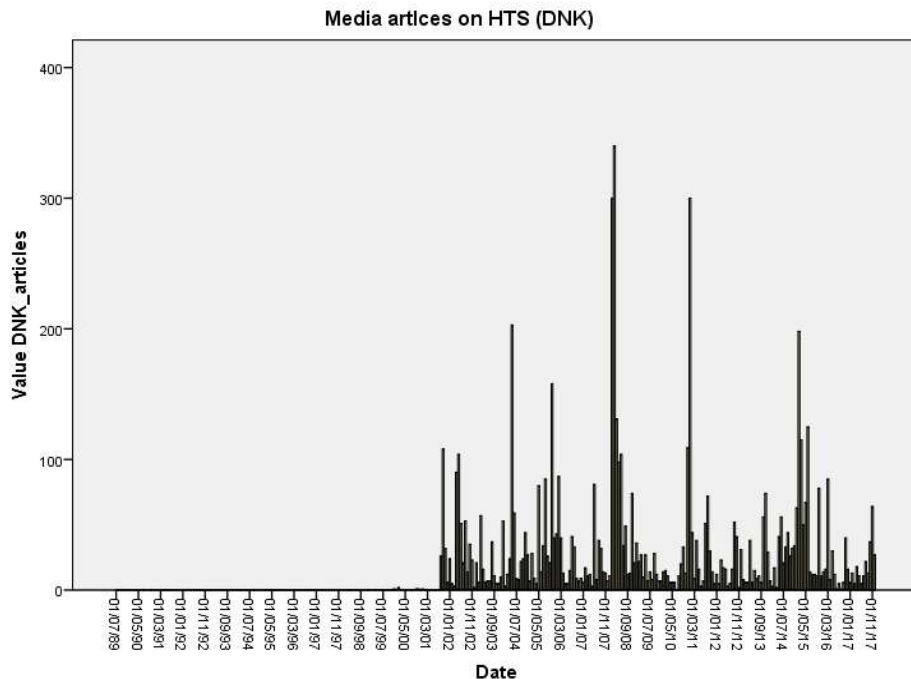
Through a cursory examination of the articles written during months, Hizb ut-Tahrir garnered the most attention in Britain during instances of ‘Islamist’ violence or ‘terrorism’. This trend seems to begin with the bombing of the Tel Aviv bar *Mike’s Place* by British attackers in 2003 (in which activists from the British branch of the party were linked) and has developed alongside the party’s increasing media profile in the UK.⁴⁵² Four of the five highest spikes correspond with the following incidences: the London 7/7 bombing; the Glasgow Airport bombing; the murder of Lee Rigby; and, most recently, the Manchester and Westminster attacks of 2017. Most articles written on the party during these peaks explicit discuss Hizb ut-Tahrir in connection to these ‘terrorist’ events. Volf finds similar conclusions when examining UK articles written on HT in July and August 2005, stating that “[a]lthough the articles differed thematically to a great extent, references to HT were almost always made in connection with an acute question in British society at that time: “why did four British-born Muslims commit terrorist attacks on July 7 on the transportation system in London?””.⁴⁵³ This is an early indication that Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain is being discussed within media through frames which emphasise perceived links to terrorism and extremism.

⁴⁵² Angel Rabasa and Cheryl Benard, *Eurojihad: Patterns of Islamist Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). p.53

⁴⁵³ Volf. p.139

When the UK dataset is compared with the Danish case study, the most obvious difference is in size. Despite Denmark containing a far smaller media sector and HTS being a younger, less media-savvy organisation, more limited in their scope and contacts, it has been consistently given a more substantial public focus in national and local media (6,585 articles published in Denmark between 1999 and 2017 versus 2,213 in the UK between 1989 and 2017). Whilst very few articles were published on the party in Denmark prior to September 2001 (6) – with HTS only registering officially in Denmark in 1999 – the New York attacks and sudden in focus on terrorism in Denmark coincided with a sharp increase in the number of articles on HTS.⁴⁵⁴ After this sudden rise, there is relative consistency throughout the dataset, with most years seeing between 200 and 300 articles from 2002 to 2017. The year 2008 contained the most published articles on the party in Denmark (1,187), and the most active months were March 2008 (340) and February 2008 (300), January 2011 (300), May 2004 (203) and February 2015 (198). Whilst the most recent years of 2016 and 2017 produced only 234 and 232 articles respectively, the Danish media dataset does not exhibit the same decline in numbers of articles evident in the UK data.

Fig. 4: Media articles published on HTS (Denmark)

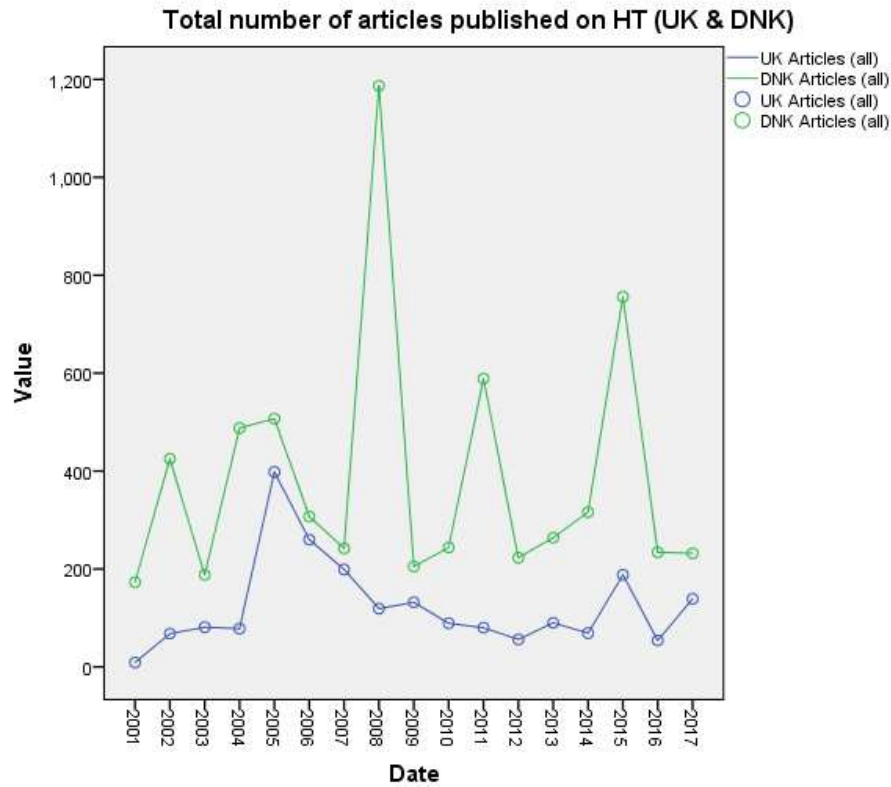


⁴⁵⁴ In October 2001, for instance, 108 articles are published on the party, in comparison to the six (6) prior.

Unlike the UK dataset, peaks in the Danish dataset do not correspond with national or international ‘terrorist’ events. Rather, the three main peaks in Danish articles align with the four investigations and attempts by *Folketinget* to proscribe the organisation: in 2004-5, 2008, 2011 and 2015.

This is more clearly seen when the datasets are placed alongside each other (Fig. 5). When compared, we see these spikes in the Danish dataset in 2008, 2011 and 2015 and the decline in British articles since a spike in 2005. Initial findings therefore suggest that debate over HT’s proscription seems to have taken a more prominent role in Danish media than in the UK. It also suggests that, when compared, media discourses between the British and the Danish branches are angled slightly differently: in the UK, discussion of HT is concerned with their role in ‘terrorist’ events; in Denmark, emphasis is placed on the party’s legitimacy and role in society. These early differences in discourse towards the case studies will be examined further in the coming tests.

Fig. 5: Total number of articles published on HT per year (UK & Denmark)

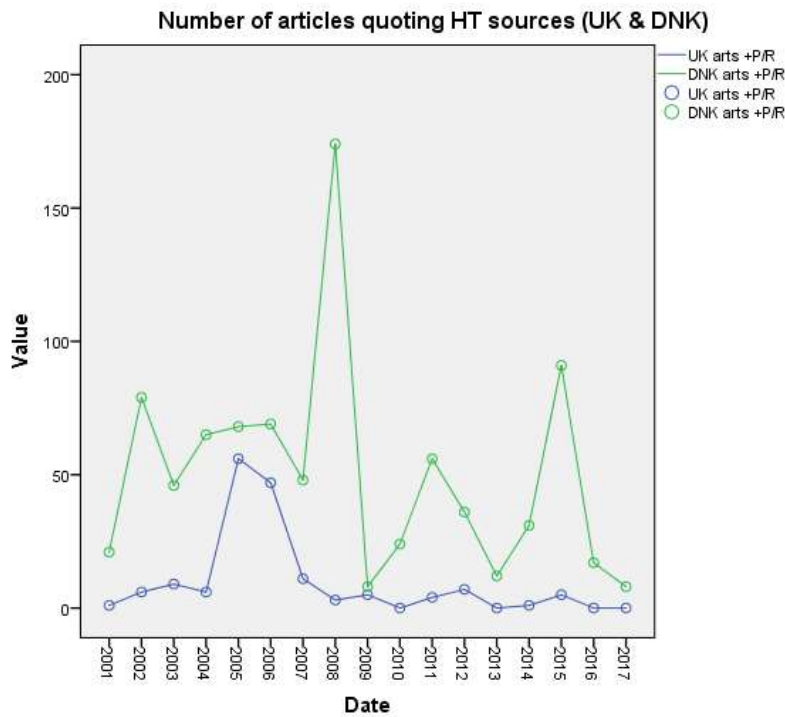


6.1.2 Actors

Having roughly determined what events seem to be driving the most media interest in the party bodies, the next task is to establish who is leading the discussion on HT. This will be achieved by firstly exploring the extent to which media and HT are successfully engaging with each other, before then exploring why fluctuations in engagement may have occurred and, finally, which specific actors are leading discussion on the party.

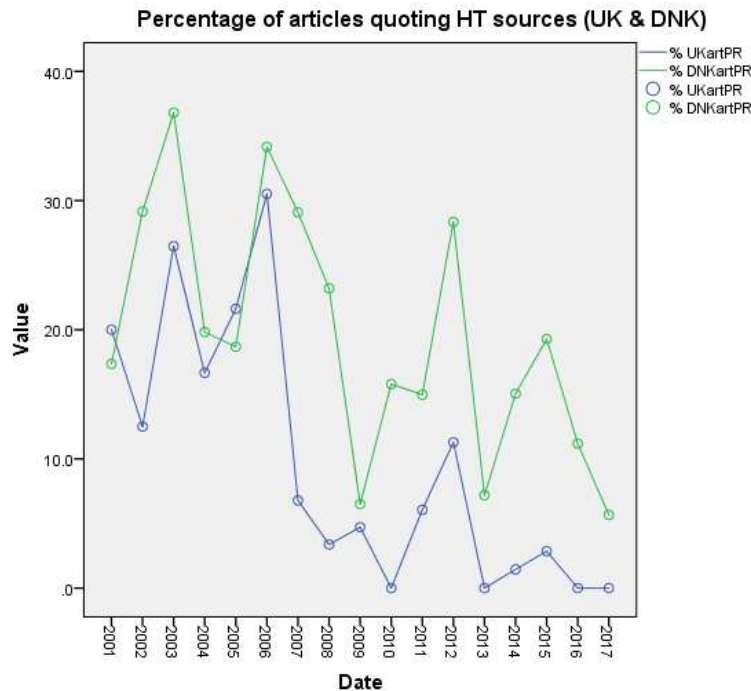
The extent to which national media and HT branches are engaging with each other will give us some indication of the ability of HT to influence media discussion for their aims. To determine this engagement, the number of incidences whereby spokespeople, current Hizb ut-Tahrir members and press releases have been directly quoted within media articles were recorded. This should show the extent to which HT is able or attempting to use press releases effectively and whether there is engagement and receptivity between media and the party.

Fig. 6: Number of articles quoting directly HT sources per year (UK and Denmark)



The percentage of articles in which HT were able to successfully engage were recorded and plotted. In the UK, there was engagement in 20% of articles in 2001, to just over 30% of articles in 2006. However, in the years immediately these peaks, we see an abrupt decline in HTB spokespeople, members and press releases being quoted in the UK media from 2007 to 2009, leading to increasingly isolated incidences of successful engagement with the media. From 2013 onwards, there are only isolated incidences of HTB being quoted or sought for comment within published media articles, despite somewhat renewed interest in the party. This suggests that, at an early stage, both media and party were engaging with each other, but that this situation has reversed, and engagement has declined and stalled.

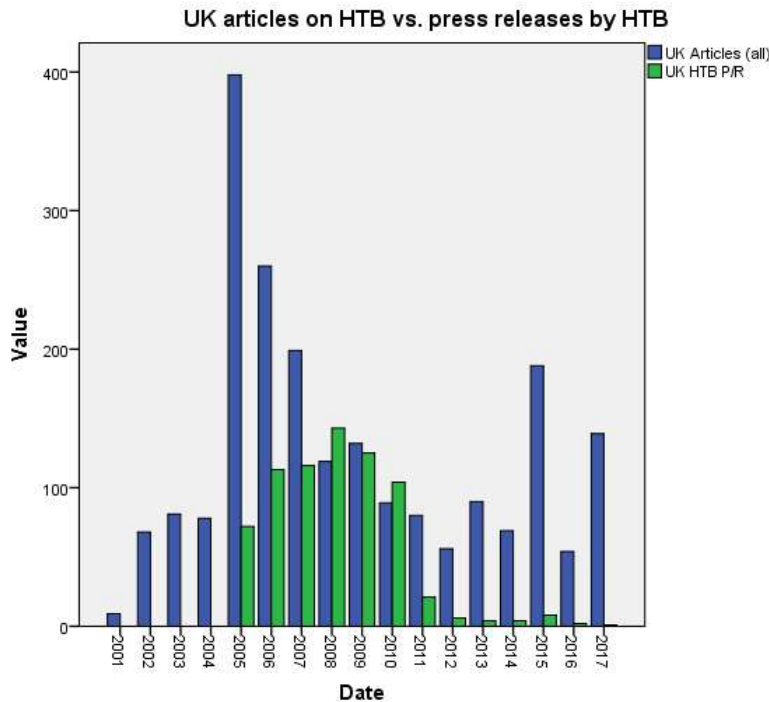
Fig. 7: Percentage of articles quoting HT sources per year (UK and Denmark)



There are two hypotheses we can draw out from this: either HTB shifted away from engagement, determining engagement to be counter-productive, or media publications shifted away from engagement with HTB, due to the increased toxicity of the HTB brand and/or the arrival of new actors which were preferable for media to engage with outside of HTB. Whether it was the party or media in the UK who shifted away from direct engagement is estimable by examining HTB’s press releases – a continued use of press releases by HTB during a

decline in engagement suggests a failure by HTB to maintain successful media engagement. 719 press releases were released by Hizb ut-Tahrir between 2005 and 2017.⁴⁵⁵ The first official press release published by HTB is, notably, released on 7th July 2005, the date of the 2005 London bombings, entitled ‘Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain Issues Message to Muslim Community in Aftermath of London Attacks’.⁴⁵⁶ The sudden introduction and growth of press releases by Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain in 2005 (averaging 12 per month between July and December 2005) suggests a perceived need by the party to respond directly to issues raised by the London bombing and adds weight to the suggestion that terrorist events are driving discourse around the party. This pattern also suggests HTB recognise the attack – and the governmental response that will inevitably stem from it – as a threat to their activism. The introduction of official press releases by the party in Britain – and the increasing space they are given within mainstream media articles – suggests that, as of 2005, both party and media see benefit from engagement at this stage, and that this strategy of media engagement by HTB is reaping some perceived success.

Fig. 8: UK articles on Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain against number of press releases by Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain per year

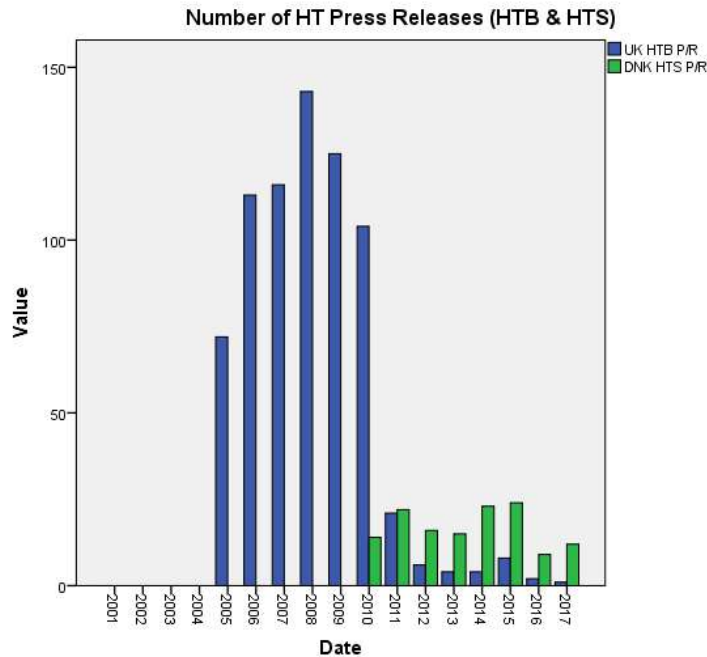


⁴⁵⁵ Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, "Press Releases," Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/media/press-releases/>.

⁴⁵⁶ Imran Waheed, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir Britain Issues Message to Muslim Community in Aftermath of London Attacks," news release, 7th July, 2005, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/media/press-releases/hizb-ut-tahrir-britain-issues-message-to-muslim-community-in-aftermath-of-london-attacks/>.

Mapping press releases by HTB, we see a relatively consistent level of statements being issued up until July 2010 (across six-month subsets from January 2006 to July 2010, the average number released per month stays between 7.67 and 11.67). However, after July 2010, this drops significantly to an average of 2.67 per month and it stays below this figure until the end of 2017, with only two press releases published in 2016 and one in 2017.⁴⁵⁷ Sustained levels of press release activity by HTB during a period of decline in the quoting of spokespeople by UK media, before a later collapse in press releases activity, suggests therefore that the direction of disengagement came *from* newspapers and journalists *towards* HTB. It implies that the media strategy followed by Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain up until 2017 has, at least in the past decade, been increasingly unsuccessful, with HTB increasingly unable to engage with mainstream media publications, despite an implied desire to do so. This furthermore suggests that the image of the party has become increasingly unpalatable for direct engagement and dissemination by the media and/or publications have come to rely on engagement with other actors than HTB members or official party press releases.

Fig. 9: Number of press releases by Hizb ut-Tahrir branches (UK and Scandinavia)



⁴⁵⁷ Since the start of 2018 – beyond the study date – there has been renewed activity in press releases increased, largely due to the commencement of the new Media Secretary Yahya Nibet, who has stressed a renewed emphasis on media outreach by the party in Britain. Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, "Introducing Yahya Nisbet - Media Representative of Hizb Ut-Tahrir Britain," news release, 15th October, 2017, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/media/press-releases/introducing-yahya-nisbet-media-representative-hizb-ut-tahrir-britain/>.

The Danish dataset was also examined to determine to what extent newspapers and HTS have been successfully engaging with each other. In the dataset for Denmark, a similar pattern emerges as in the UK. Initially there is a relatively high set of engagement, with Danish media quoting press releases, members or spokespersons (*talsmand*) from HTS, with similar levels of engagement as in the UK case. However, over the course of the period from 2006 to 2017, there has also been a decline in this practice – although it has been a less significant drop than in the UK case (Fig. 7). Across the study period of 2001-2017 in Denmark, engagement drops from a higher amount of 34% to just under 6% in 2017. However – as can be seen from comparing the number of press releases between each party branch – HTS has released significantly fewer press releases than HTB (Fig. 9).

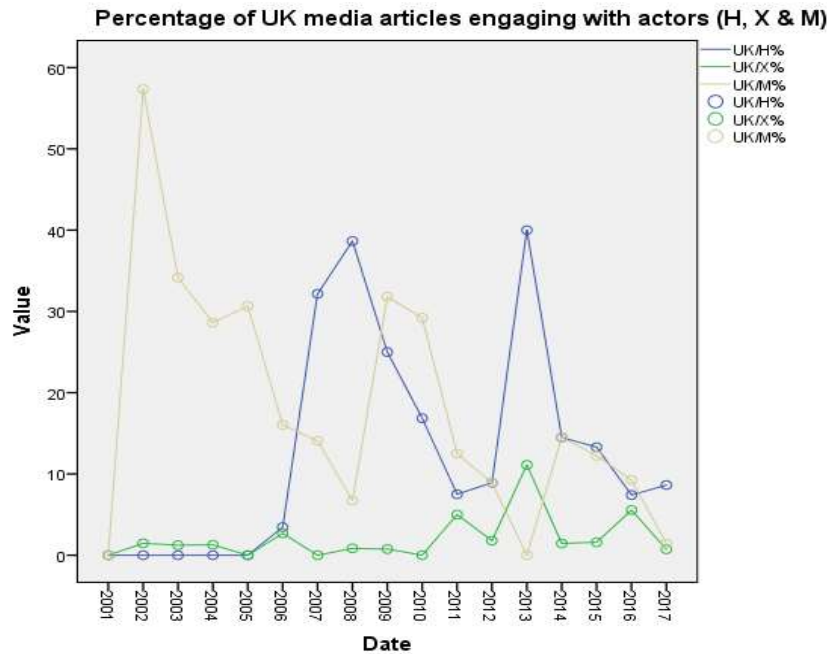
This inability for the party to engage with mainstream media in Britain and, to a lesser extent, in Denmark, can also be determined by examining who is leading media discussion. Current members, media representatives and press releases by Hizb ut-Tahrir have been increasingly excluded from the public debate. In their place has stepped a plethora of other voices – most notably ex-members of the party, who engage with the media as experts on ‘radicalisation’ or ‘extremism’ because of their status as former members. These include the triumvirate of Maajid Nawaz, Ed Husian and Shiraz Maher, who have come to dominate sections of debate on issues of ‘extremism’ in Britain. It is worth, therefore, exploring the impact that such individuals have had on the ability for HTB to engage with mainstream media.

To see this change in actors from the UK dataset, all names of individuals associated with HT in the articles were extracted (164 in total). This data was cleaned to leave only those who could be verifiably confirmed as members, significant activists or former members of HTB to create a dataset of 70 individuals.⁴⁵⁸ These were then divided into three groups and labelled accordingly: those who are members (or *M*); those who are ex-members but neutral towards HT (or *X*); and those who are ex-members but hostile to HTB (or *H*). These names were then recorded by the total amount of direct engagements (direct quotations and statements), giving the

⁴⁵⁸ Kysar Shahnawaz; Bilal Mohammed; Asif Khan; Shezad Manzoor; Farid Kassim; Jackie Abouargub; Rashad Zaman Ali; Omar Bakri Muhammad; Muhammad al Masari; Burhan Hanif; Faisal Muhammad; Firdus Miah; ‘Zulfiqar’; Jamal Harwood; Hamila Marchant; Yahya (Ian) Nisbet; Irfan Waheed; Mohammed Omar; Imran Waheed; Reza Pankhurst; Maajid Nawaz; Jalaluddin Patel; Asaf Razaq; Abdullah Robin; Mahmood Khan; Mohammed Zahid; Aaqib Razzaque; Ibrahim Karir; Syeed Janjua; Fotik Ghafor; Rizvan Bhati; Imran Ali; Basharat Ahmed; Sajjad Khan; Ibrar Hussain; Omar Khudabakhsh; Nazreen Nawaz; Forid Miah; Dilpazier Aslam; Qasim Khawja; Abdul Wahid; Mazhar Khan; Zubair Hussaini; Taji Mustapha; Ruksana Rahman; Shehzad Bashir; Julani Gulam; Thaqib Razaq; Fatima Khan; Sultana Parvin; Hassan Butt; Muhammad Babar; Kasim Shafiq; Abid Javaid; Yusra Hamilton; Farah Ahmed; Themina Ahmed; Salim Frederick; Saleem Atchia; Shazia Rashid; Yusuf Patel; Ibtihal Bsis; Ishtihaq Husain; Hadiya Masieh; Ashraf Miah; Tariq Jahan; Hamza Tzortzis; Shohana Khan; Rabia Nawaz; Adnan Khan; Nasim Ghani

following amounts: M = 673; X = 35; H = 265. By tracking these mentions over time since 2001, we can see how engagement has changed between different sub-groups. Initially, we find a significant level of engagement between media publications and members (M), which remains relatively consistent until 2007, when engagement drops significantly (Yellow, Figure 10). At the same point, in 2007, there is a concurrent growth in the number of media engagements with ‘hostile’ (H) ex-members – those defected from the party and with an open anti-HTB standpoint (Blue, Figure 10). Between 2007 and 2017, there is a general trend of greater engagement with actors who are hostile to HTB than with those who are members of HTB.

Fig. 10: Percentage of UK media articles engaging with members (M), neutral ex-members (X) and hostile ex-members (H)



Significantly, engagement with Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain members drops at the same time as there is an increase in engagement with disaffected ex-members, as media seem to shift in their use of sources. It seems therefore that positive engagement with HTB in the UK media has been negatively impacted and co-opted by former members who are hostile to the party.

In this instance, it is not possible to directly compare the Danish dataset. Within Denmark, there has not been the same disengagement of members and recasting of themselves as public ‘ex-Islamists’, as has been the case in the UK. As such, we can conclude without further analysis that the reportage has not been co-opted in Denmark by former members and experts in ‘Islamism’ who have left the party. This initial finding also suggests that coverage is more likely to be hostile to HT in Britain than in Denmark, as lower levels of engagement between party and media is coupled with the co-optation of discussion by overtly hostile ex-members.

6.1.3 Political Lean

Whilst the discourse around Hizb ut-Tahrir has been increasingly driven by actors outside – rather than from within – the party, the political orientation of newspapers reporting on HTB and HTS has also undergone changes between 2001 and 2017, and this should impact on the framing of the party. This section will take the following hypothesis, in line with Poole’s (2006) research: the more right-leaning the newspaper, the more likely it is to contain securitised frames.⁴⁵⁹ With greater disengagement between media and HTB than is the case in Denmark, and with the arrival of hostile ex-members co-opting media engagement, it is therefore more likely that national UK newspapers have shifted right-wards in their publications and that the frames in Britain will be more hostile to the party than is the case in Denmark.

Articles from the UK dataset on HTB of the eight largest-selling national newspapers across this period were isolated: *The Guardian and Observer* (432); *The Times* (378); *The Daily Mail* (327); *The Daily Telegraph* (249); *The Independent and i* (170); *The Express* (55); *The Mirror* (40); and *The Sun* (37). The number of articles from these major national newspapers were then tracked from 2001 to 2017. Each newspaper was then given a designation as to whether they were ‘more left-leaning’ or ‘more right-leaning’ in their perceived political orientation based on previous published academic surveys conducted across the period to determine the perception of political lean, yielding the following results:⁴⁶⁰

- Generally perceived to be more left-leaning: *the Guardian and Observer; the Mirror; the Independent and i*;

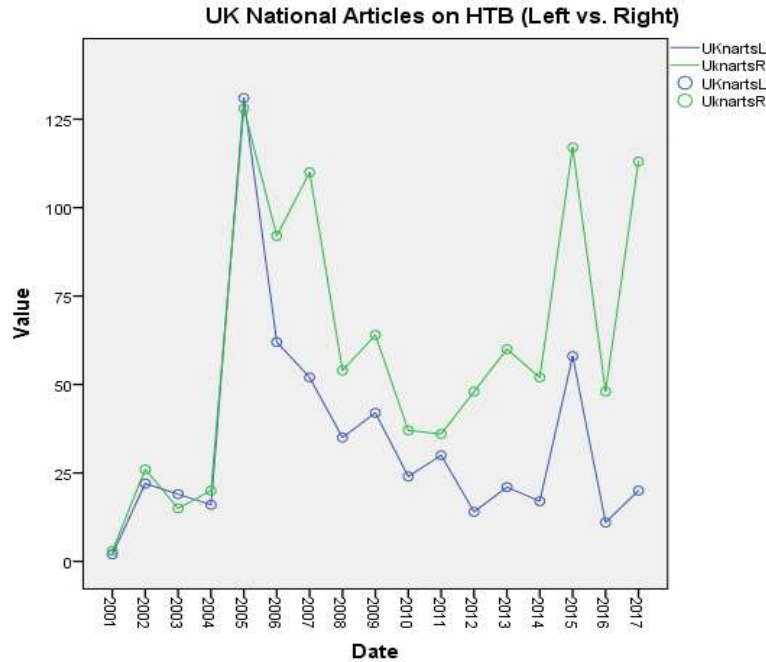
⁴⁵⁹ Poole, "The Effects of September 11 and the War in Iraq on British Newspaper Coverage." (2006)

⁴⁶⁰ Matthew Smith, "How Left or Right-Wing Are the UK's Newspapers," (yougov.co.uk: YouGov UK, 2017).

- Generally perceived to be more right-leaning: *the Mail; the Express; the Sun; the Daily Telegraph; the Times*.

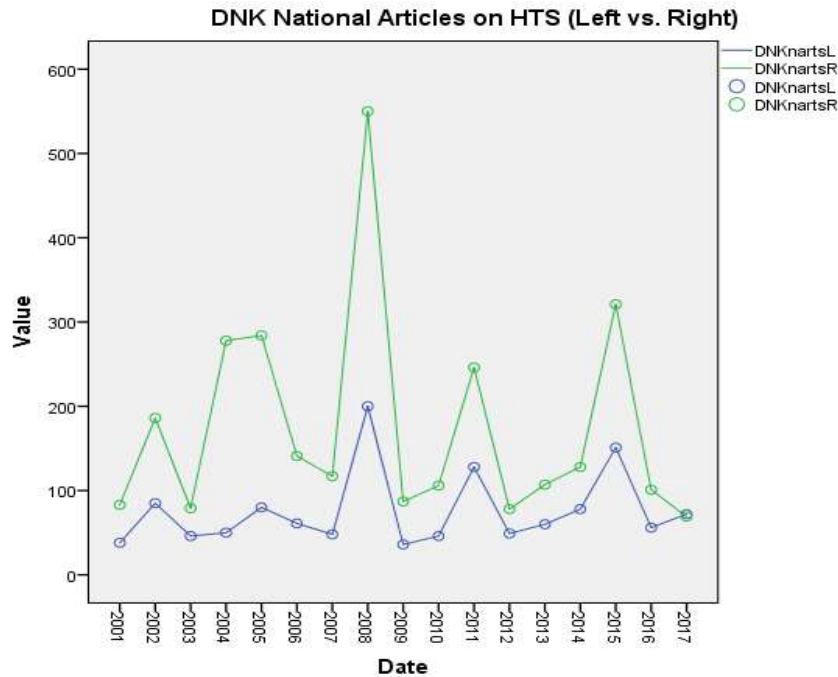
Articles were divided into the two groups of those perceived to be left-leaning and those perceived to be right-leaning, and then tracked onto a chart to show how the number of articles has changed across the two groups.

Fig. 11: UK national articles on Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (Left vs. Right-leaning)



When plotted, it is possible to observe three distinct periods (Fig. 11). In the first period of 2001-2005, there is close parity between the number of articles produced by left-leaning and right-leaning media, with both groups producing almost the same number of articles per year. After 2005, the two groups diverge as, between 2006 and 2011, there are generally more articles by right-leaning publications written on HTB. Finally, from 2012 to 2017, this divergence becomes greater and more consistent, with right-leaning publications significantly more likely to publish articles on HT than left-leaning publications. This process is clearer when the two groupings are plotted as part of a total percentage. We can observe an increasing growth of articles published by right-leaning publications, alongside a concurrent diminution of those by left-leaning publications. This suggests a capturing of the discourse surrounding HTB by right-leaning media and discourse in the UK.

Fig. 12: Danish national articles on HTS (Left vs. Right)



For comparison, the data from the largest national newspapers in Denmark reporting on HTS isolated. These consisted of six national publications from across the political spectrum: *Jyllands-Posten* (1,532); *Berlingske* (962); *Dagenbladet Information* (791); *BT* (467); *Ekstra Bladet* (391); and *Politiken* (102). The number of articles from these major national newspapers were then tracked from 2001 to 2017. Existing studies from the period were consulted to determine whether these publications were perceived to be ‘more left-leaning’ or ‘more right-leaning’ within the Danish population, yielding the following results:⁴⁶¹

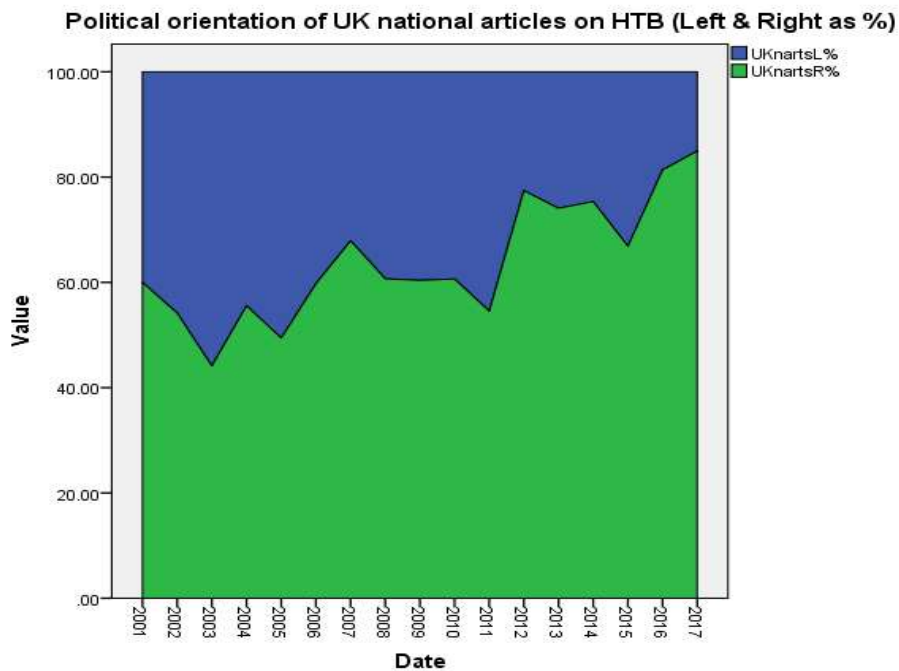
- Generally perceived to be more left-leaning: *Politiken*; *Dagenbladet Information*; *Ekstra Bladet*
- Generally perceived to be more right-leaning: *Berlingske*; *BT*; *Jyllands-Posten*

Articles were divided into the two groups and then tracked to show how the number of articles has changed. In the Danish dataset, there is a more consistent pattern of right-leaning newspapers reporting on the party. However, there are some long-term changes that we can observe in the dataset.

⁴⁶¹ Af Stig Hjarvard, "Den Politiske Presse: En Analyse Af Danske Avisers Politiske Orientering," *Journalistica* 5 (2007). p.42

Again, we can divide the findings into three periods. Between 2001 and 2008, we can see generally observe that right-leaning publications were considerably more likely to publish articles on HTS. Between 2009 and 2015, there has been a lessening of this trend, with a slight increase in the number of articles published by left-leaning publications in comparison to right-leaning publications. Finally, from 2016 to 2017, there has been an increase in the number of left-leaning publications reporting on HTS. This can be seen more clearly when examined as a percentage the number of national left- and right-leaning publications.

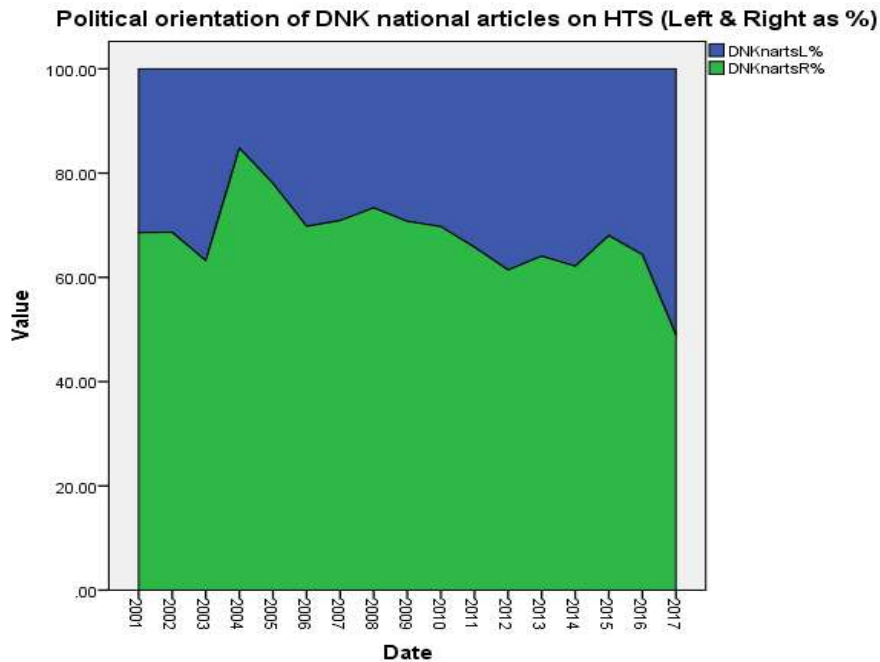
Fig. 13: Political orientation of UK national articles on HTB as percentage



This study suggests that the way in which HT is being reported in the UK and Denmark is subject to different contextual conditions. From the Danish dataset, we can suggest that the national-level reportage of HTS is generally moving leftwards, whilst it is shifting in the opposite direction in the UK with regards to HTB, where reportage is becoming dominated by right-leaning publications. The next stage, a more indicative means of approaching the data was applied, in which a proportional political lean for each of the individual main national newspapers reporting on HT was added, to greater determine the orientation of media discourse on the party.

Data from a 2017 *Yougov* survey of 2,040 UK citizens was used to ascertain the perceived political stance of UK national newspapers. In the study, each participant was required to give a scoring of the eight newspapers titles from completely left-wing (which would elicit the score of -100) to completely right-wing (which would elicit the score of +100).⁴⁶² Data from the *Yougov* survey gives the following scoring averages across a weighted sample: The Daily Mail (61); The Daily Express (53); The Telegraph (50); The Times (42); The Sun (38); The Independent (-16); The Mirror (-27); The Guardian (-35). A similar dataset of 1,000 Danish citizens was found, in which the scoring of a newspaper as completely left-wing by all individuals sampled would give the value of -100 and the scoring of a newspaper as completely right-wing by all those sampled would give the value of 100, as with the UK survey.⁴⁶³ The Danish study gave the following scoring averages across a weighted sample, from left to right: Dagenbladet Information (-64), Politiken (-41), Ekstra Bladet (-9), BT (21), Jyllands-Posten (39), and Berlingske (44). Whilst the two datasets are subject to different conditions – more notably, the potentially differing perceptions of what constitutes ‘left-’ and ‘right’-leaning in the UK and Denmark – they do offer enough consistency in their methodology to provide a generalised comparison for shifts in HT media reporting.

Fig. 14 Political orientation of Danish national articles on HTS as percentage

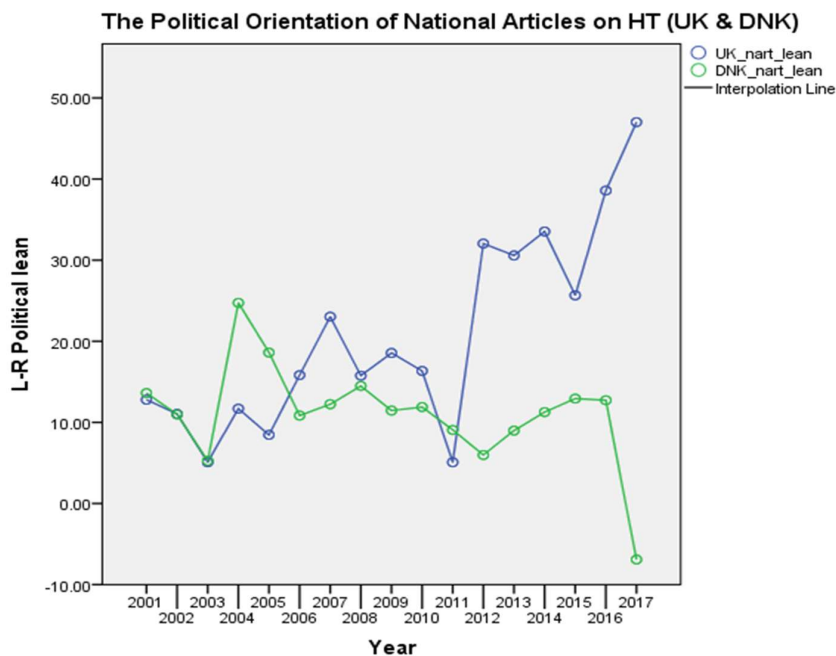


⁴⁶² Smith.

⁴⁶³ Hjarvard. p.42

Applying a score to each article and creating a yearly score based on the overall political lean of all newspaper articles, it is possible to observe with more accuracy how the discussion over Hizb ut-Tahrir has changed in political orientation in the two case study countries between 2001 and 2017. In doing so, we see confirmation that national-level discourse on HT is being increasingly dominated by right-leaning media actors in the UK, alongside an increase in left-leaning media actors in Denmark. With 0.00 representing parity between left-leaning and right-leaning articles (the perceived national political centre), the political orientation of national articles on HTB and HTS were tracked, giving the following results:

Fig. 15: The political orientation of national articles as lean from perceived centre (0.00)



In comparing the two, we can see that between 2001 and 2005, Danish articles were comparatively more likely to be written by publications perceived to be right-leaning, whilst British publications were still right-leaning but slightly closer to the national political centre (0.00). From 2005 to 2011 this trend reversed, British articles generally shifting rightwards and Danish articles generally leftwards. Finally, between 2011 and 2017, the Danish dataset has stayed closer to political balance – with a significant leftward swing in 2017 – finishing on a score of -6.91. By comparison, in the HTB has come to be captured by UK newspapers with a significantly rightward lean, closing on the average 2017 score of 47.02.

As such, the first part of the initial hypothesis still stands: the national media discourse on HTB has shifted significantly rightwards. In contrast, national media discourse on HTS has shifted generally leftwards.

6.1.4 Frames

The final process for this dataset is to understand how the framing of HT has developed in British and Danish national newspapers, particularly whether the frames have become more hostile between 2001 and 2017. A general assumption to be tested is that right-leaning newspapers tend to be more critical of Islamic activism (and therefore HT) than more left-leaning media.⁴⁶⁴ We should, therefore, see an increase in the use of key terms of securitisation in articles from Britain and a decline of their usage in Denmark. Poole has established that ‘the events of September 11 and the war in Iraq have given Islam that kudos to the conservative press... these events have allowed for the construction of Muslims within a more limited and negative framework which is more likely to be reinforced in the conservative press’.⁴⁶⁵ As well as a framing which generally suggested that ‘Muslims are not seen as an integral part of British society’, she also found that, when discussing Muslim activism, the ‘most significant finding is not only the appearance of the category “terrorism” but the amount of space given to it’, particularly after the events of 2001.⁴⁶⁶ Moore, Mason and Lewis analysed 974 articles about British Muslims between 2000 and 2008, finding that around two-thirds of the dataset focussed on:

... Muslims as a threat (in relation to terrorism [36%]), a problem (in terms of differences in values [22%]) or both (Muslim extremism in general [22%])... The most common nouns used in relation to British Muslims were terrorist, extremist, Islamist, suicide bomber and militant, with very few positive nouns (such as “scholar”)... The most common adjectives used were radical, fanatical, fundamentalist, extremist and militant.⁴⁶⁷

Applying these findings to the study, three central terms associated with the securitisation paradigm were chosen and tracked across the period of the datasets. Terminology related to ‘extremism’ (extreme, extremist),

⁴⁶⁴ Anthony Browne, "Fundamentally, We're Useful Idiots," *The Times* 1st August 2005.

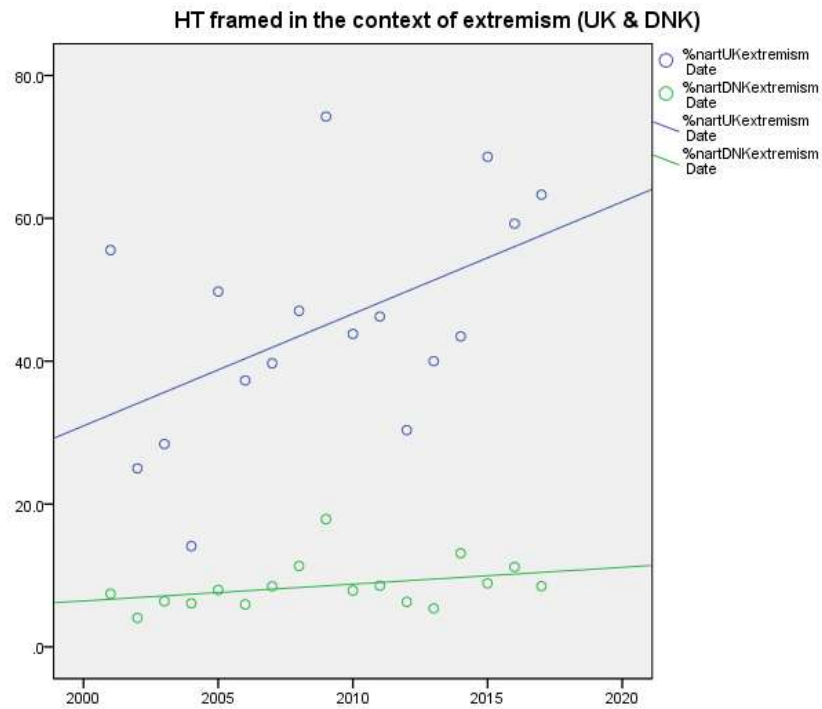
⁴⁶⁵ Poole, "The Effects of September 11 and the War in Iraq on British Newspaper Coverage."

⁴⁶⁶ *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*; "The Effects of September 11 and the War in Iraq on British Newspaper Coverage." p.95

⁴⁶⁷ Moore, Mason, and Lewis. p.3

‘radical’ (radicalism, radicalisation) and ‘terrorism’ (terrorist, terror attacks) were searched in the two datasets and then coded to ensure only relevant entries were recorded – those in which HT were deemed to be directly or indirectly associated with these terms. Each article that used one of the terms (irrespective of the *amount of times* Hizb ut-Tahrir were referred to in this manner per article) was marked as a single positive and the number of articles were tallied and analysed. In the Danish dataset, this was repeated using the respective Danish terms (‘ekstremisme’, ‘radikal’ and ‘terrorisme’ and their variants), each article was examined to record only those in which HT was directly or indirectly referred to with these terms.

Fig. 16: HT framed in the context of extremism and related terms (UK and Denmark)



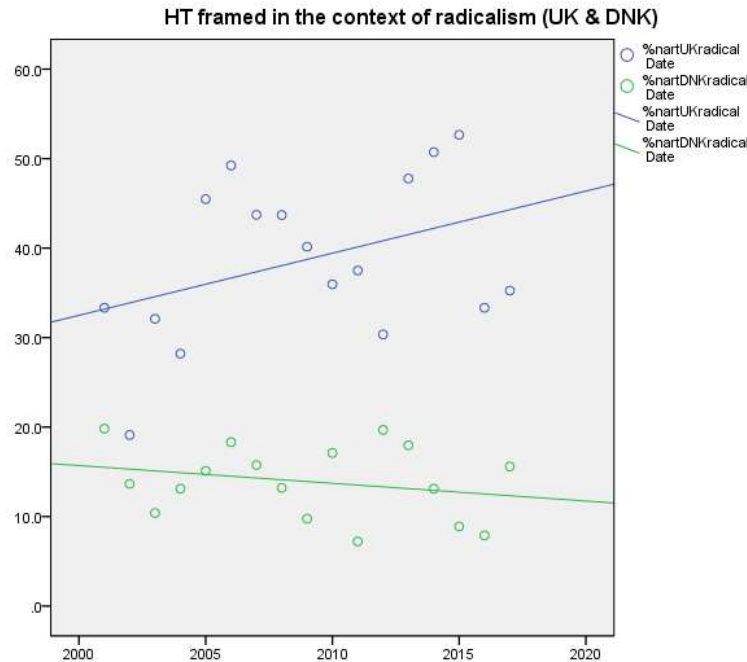
In August 2005, the peak of discussion over Hizb ut-Tahrir within the British press, Volf reports that ‘HT was more often called “a Muslim political party” rather than “a radical Islamist organisation” in these articles.’⁴⁶⁸ Volf also saw an increase in the frequency of negative referent terms for Hizb ut-Tahrir in British newspapers during the period 2001 to 2008.⁴⁶⁹ ‘Not-informative’ articles started referring to HTB more often in negative terms

⁴⁶⁸ Volf. p.140

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid. p.201

rather than in equally negative and neutral terms, while mainly neutral coverage dropped significantly from 34% in 2004 to 4% in 2007.⁴⁷⁰ Volf's findings are not only confirmed here, but we find that securitised terminology has grown in its use in national UK media in recent years. In the UK dataset, we can see most notably a growth in the use of terms associated with 'extremism' when discussing HTB. Smaller increases have been seen in the UK dataset in the use of terminology associated with 'radicalism' and 'terrorism' (fig. 19).

Fig. 17: HT framed in the context of radicalism and related terms (UK and Denmark)

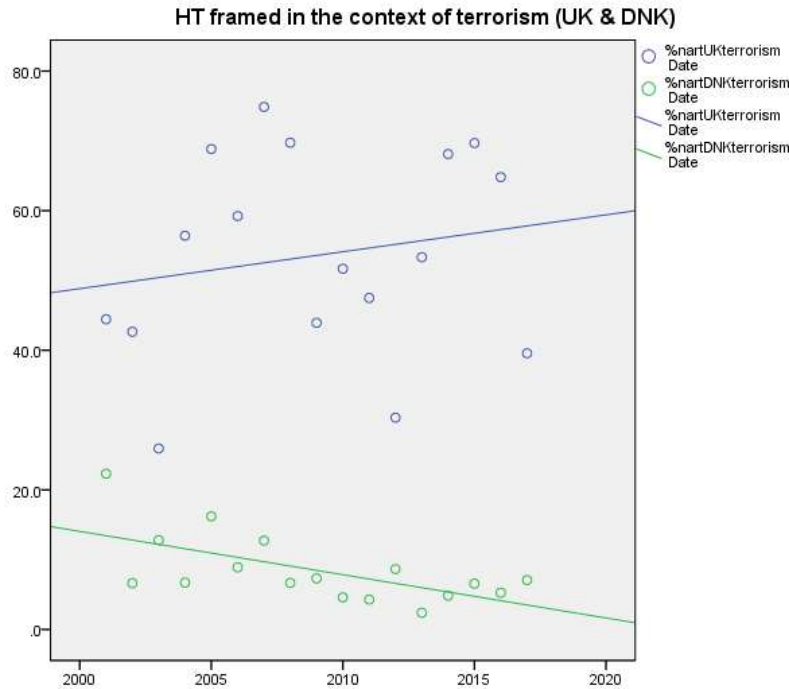


As might have been expected from a dataset that shows a shift by reportage towards the political centre ground, the Danish dataset displays a more mixed set of findings. The percentage of articles which use this set of securitised terminology is much lower than in the UK dataset. There has been a general growth in the percentage of articles which refer to Hizb ut-Tahrir in the context of extremism and a general decline in the percentage of articles referring to Hizb ut-Tahrir in the context of terrorism, along with a slight decline of articles framing HT in the context of 'radicalisation' (fig. 20).

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

If we examine these three terminological sets, we can draw some broad comparative conclusions. In the UK, there has been a slight increase in the comparative number of articles published on HT about terrorism and radicalism, with a significant increase in the number of articles referring to the party in the context of extremism.

Fig. 18: HT framed in the context of terrorism and related terms (UK and Denmark)



The capture of reporting by right-leaning media has taken place alongside a growth of the use of securitised terms – as we generally would expect from a capturing of the discussion by right-leaning publications – and we can, with some confidence, conclude that HTB faces greater processes of securitisation in media discourse.

The Danish dataset, in comparison, similarly shows an increase in the use of the terms of extremism. However, in contrast to UK media, Danish media have seen a very slight decline in framing of the party around issues of ‘extremism’ and a substantial decline with the framing of ‘terrorism’. Whilst we would expect to see less framing of HTS using securitised language, this isn’t entirely the case, due to the growth of framing within the context of ‘extremism’. As such, findings suggest that the left-leaning publications have not necessitated a desecuritisation of the language but have instead appropriated similar levels of securitised language as used by the right.

Fig. 19: Percentage of UK articles referring to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain using securitised terms

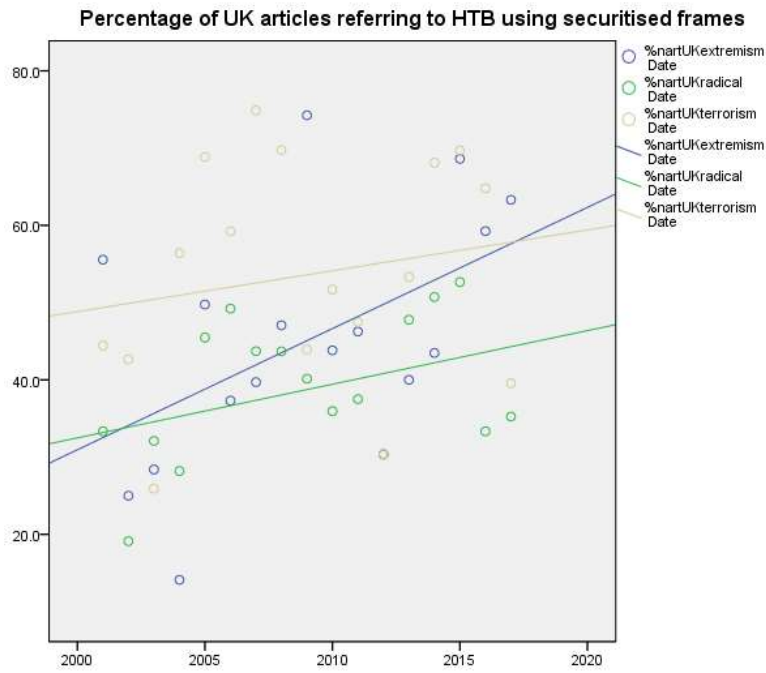
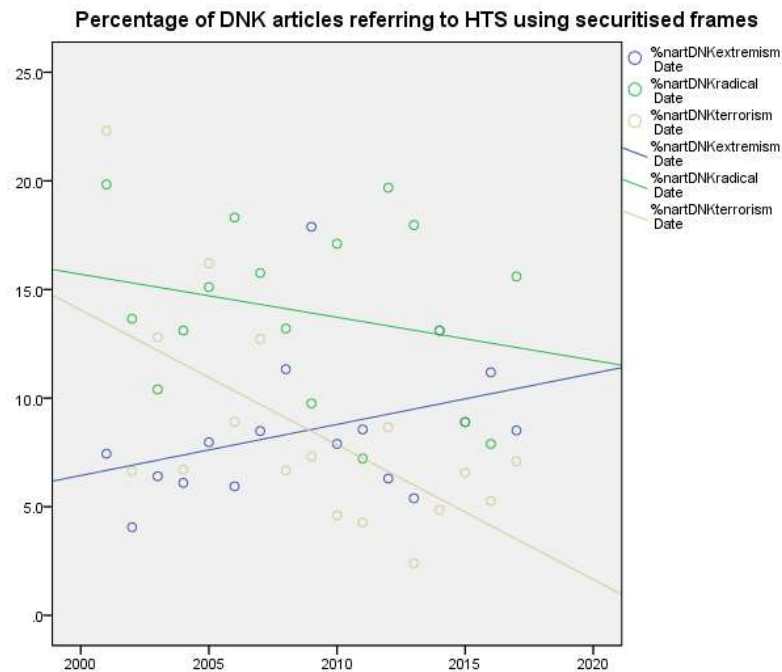


Fig. 20: Percentage of Danish articles referring to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain using securitised terms



6.1.5 Media Conclusions as Evidence of the Securitising Lens

This comparative study of media engagement and framing of HTB and HTS from the datasets suggests several findings. Firstly, external events – rather than the parties’ activism – seem to be driving discussion of the party: in the UK, this has largely been driven by acts of ‘terrorism’; in Denmark, moments of governmental investigation into the party and its potential proscription.

Secondly, in Denmark and the UK, both parties are increasingly unable to engage with national media platforms, as evidenced in the decline of quoting official statements or media representatives in published articles. This is seen in both country datasets, although the Danish branch seems to still have some relatively successful comparative engagement (around 10% of articles), certainly when contrasted to the British branch (around 1% of articles). This is leading to an inability by HTB particularly to shape the discourse around the party and its activism. This is even more stark considering the much smaller size and the limited number of press releases released by HTS in contrast to the more organised and supposedly more media-savvy HTB. This is further evidenced in the decline of media interest in HTB, in comparison to a relatively steady stream of output from Denmark, suggesting that HTS is seen as more relevant to contemporary events and discussions taking place in Danish society and has an elevated platform, in comparison to a weaker and less visible British branch.

Thirdly, the debate in the UK has become increasingly reliant on ex-members who are hostile to the party – such as Maajid Nawaz, Ed Husain and Shiraz Maher – rather than direct interaction with HTB members, who have been muscled-out of the media space over time. Whilst these two factors may be coincidental, clearly there has been an increase in the involvement of ‘hostile’ actors in discussion on HTB and a decline in the involvement of HTB members, suggesting links. This is not the case in Denmark, where there has not been the development of the same clique of ‘counter-extremist’ ex-members who are hostile to the group and have a high media profile.

Fourthly, publications on HT by the media in the UK have become more dominated by right-leaning media. Having initially largely been covered by more left-leaning publications, the media discourse has been broadly captured by the right. There is also a significant increase in the language of ‘extremism’ in British reportage, with HTB becoming implicated as the ‘mood music’ of jihadi terrorism. In Denmark, the media discussion on HTS has

generally shifted leftwards until there is roughly an equal spread of articles with a right and a left-leaning political orientation, hinting at discourse from the national political left expanding into more security-focused debates. There has also been an increase in the terminology of extremism being associated with HT, but this is to a lesser extent in Denmark than in the UK.

It is possible to suggest from these datasets that some form of securitised lens has developed in both cases, although the securitisation of discourse is more obvious in the British dataset than in the Danish dataset. In the UK, the conflation of violence with HTB, their association with extremism – particularly from ex-members – and a right-wards shift in reporting has taken place *despite* attempts by the party to highlight its non-violent nature, stymied by their increasing exclusion from UK media platforms. In Denmark, whilst there has also been a decline in the means of HTS accessing media, the language used about the party has stayed relatively consistent and some of the more obvious markers suggesting securitisation mechanisms are not visible. That the party is more relevant in the Danish media which, alongside a general tactic of media disinterest by HTS suggests that, in Denmark, the discursive opportunity structure (DOS) has not closed as it has in the UK. That discussion on the Danish party branch seems to be coming equally from the political left and right also suggests that the main left-leaning political groups in Denmark have become more engaged in, and vocal about, issues connected with HTS's Islamic activism – such as security, integration and immigration. In comparison, it may also suggest that British left-leaning politics has become less concerned or less vocal about these issues with regards to HT than is the case in Denmark.

6.2 The Impact of the Securitising Lens on HT

These findings are largely representative of wider patterns of securitisation which are taking place in Britain and Denmark. Firstly, there has been a growth of a language of securitisation used in Britain, demonstrated through the proliferation of terminology around 'extremism'. This is representative of the shift broader that has occurred in British counter-terrorism strategies from immediate, 'hard' responses to terrorism to 'softer', more long-term approaches which aim to focus on prevention, particularly through tackling 'extremist' ideologies.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁷¹ HM Government, "Counter-Extremism Strategy," ed. Home Office (UK: HM Government, 2015).

In Britain, the political response to the terror attacks on 11th September 2001 did not involve a discussion of banning Hizb ut-Tahrir. This discussion was not initiated until 2005, where, after the terror bombs in London on 7th July, the protection of religious minorities has given way to stricter anti-terror legislation and public safety priorities.⁴⁷²

In Denmark, meanwhile – which has seen much fewer and smaller ‘terrorist-style’ incidents of violence – there has been a more consistent focus on a joined-up approach since the introduction of terrorist legislation in 2001. This could help to explain why the same general uptick in the use of certain securitised frames hasn’t occurred and why these have stayed consistently limited across the designated period of study. The findings that more ‘socially liberal’ or ‘left-leaning’ publications are engaging in discussion on the issues of security, integration and immigration in Denmark tallies with findings with interviews taken from HTS members. Activists reported a sense of frustration at how left-leaning political parties in Denmark – particularly the main left-leaning party, the Social Democrats – have become more hostile towards the party, their work and the Muslim communities in Denmark as a whole.⁴⁷³

[The political situation in Denmark] has just got much worse. You know, like the left-wing parties. We have two big parties in Denmark: there’s the liberal party Venstre, and the Social Democrats, which is like the [UK] Labour Party. And the Labour Party was like a left-wing party before, and now they’re competing with the right-wing in [terms of] laws. Like, they actually made a suggestion, the Labour Party, the big left-wing party: ‘we should ban all Muslim private schools by making a law which hinders public support for all schools in which more than 50% of the pupils do not have an ethnic Danish background’...⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷² ‘Following the German ban in January 2003, the Danish Public Prosecutor carried out the first of two investigations of the possibility of a ban according to Danish legislation. The Danish constitution states: “Organisations that seek to obtain their goals through violent means, instigate violence or similar punishable impact on individuals of other convictions, can be dissolved by law (§78,2, my own translation), and thus far the conclusion has been (the results of the second investigation were released in the Summer of 2008) that there could be found no constitutional justification for a ban’. Sinclair, “The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain.” pp.66 and 179

⁴⁷³ ‘... It is not only the Right that are Islamophobic. Even more, it is the Left; the Social Democrats’ HQ, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

⁴⁷⁴ HK.

The continued debate over the banning of HTS by the Danish Government is a case in point. The first and second attempts at banning Hizb ut-Tahrir in Denmark – in 2004 and 2008 respectively – were spearheaded by the right-wing, Venstre-led government under Anders Fogh Rasmussen.⁴⁷⁵ The third attempt in 2011 came under the subsequent Venstre Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen. However, the fourth and most recent attempt to ban the party was championed by the Social Democrats, particularly the then Minister of Justice Mette Frederiksen, in the government of Helle Thorning-Schmidt. Mette Frederiksen has spoken since of her desire to see the group banned, becoming the head of the Social Democratic Party in 2015 and Prime Minister in 2019.⁴⁷⁶

The banning of Hizb ut-Tahrir has increasingly come to be framed by left-leaning parties as a progressive cause in Denmark and has been championed by leading figures of left-leaning parties. The encroaching of left and centre-left parties into debates surrounding Hizb ut-Tahrir was framed by members as indicative of dissatisfaction that the Social Democrats had abandoned traditional left-wing principles to counter the growth of the *Dansk Folkeparti*, by courting an increasingly racialised and securitised set of discourses.

All mainstream parties, pretty much, have undergone quite a sharp rightward shift on immigration. Almost the entire Left and Centre-Left has taken over the anti-Islam debate and started to lead debate on it. It's worth noting that, whilst it was initially Venstre that was pushing for a ban HT, more recent have really been by the Social Democrats. This has led to a bit of a toxic mix of nationalism, protectionism and anti-immigration which has come to dominate national politics. The debate on immigration and security has distorted even more the Right-Left discourse in Denmark – which really isn't linear like in some other countries.⁴⁷⁷

As such, there was a sense by HTS members that mainstream politics throughout Denmark, and the politicians that participated in it, were displaying increasingly hostile discourse towards Hizb ut-Tahrir specifically and Muslim more broadly. As one member stated:

⁴⁷⁵ Sinclair, "Same Old Message, New Wrapping: Hizb Ut-Tahrir's Activities in Denmark." p.3

⁴⁷⁶ "Since 2003, the discussion of the possibility of a ban has recurred annually, and the public Prosecutor has investigated the matter... with the result that Hizb ut-Tahrir cannot be banned according to the Danish constitution." "The Caliphate as Homeland: Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Denmark and Britain." pp.65-66

⁴⁷⁷ AL, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

All [political parties] here are openly hostile to us. Perhaps only the Communists haven't been – they're okay... But politicians of every other party treat us as if we're the enemy⁴⁷⁸

A recurrent theme in interviews was frustration at the way in which politicians and media framed Hizb ut-Tahrir (and many Muslims) as problematic, stoking Islamophobia in the country. This is confirmed by other research studies, such as that by Karagiannis, who states: 'the Danish politicians bear a huge share of responsibility for the rise in Islamophobia and hateful rhetoric that has become quite common in Denmark', leading to an increase in attacks 'not only on social media but also at congested places and in broad daylight, verbal and physical assault'.⁴⁷⁹ This growth in Islamophobic discourse has led to HTS members changing the way they perceive and interact with Danish society, with many expressing strong feelings of alienation and disenfranchisement:

I'm tired of the hostility in the press [in Denmark]. It's cost me, my wife and many brothers here their jobs and livelihoods. I hope to move away – insha'allah – to a Muslim country, where we aren't constantly attacked the way we are here.⁴⁸⁰

This sense of disillusionment with mainstream Danish society was framed, therefore, not as a result of an antagonistic 'Islamist' or anti-democratic ideology but as the direct result of the growth in the hostile framing of Islam and HTS from mainstream media and national politicians in Denmark:

How are we supposed to feel a part of the Danish state when all the politicians hate us? What options do we have?⁴⁸¹

6.3 Environmental Degradation under a Securitised Lens

This section will explore what changes have taken place within Hizb ut-Tahrir to suggest the party is under external pressures within a securitised lens. It will assess the current organisational strength of Hizb ut-Tahrir in

⁴⁷⁸ HQ.

⁴⁷⁹ Emmanuel Karagiannis, *The New Political Islam: Human Rights, Democracy and Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018). p.68

⁴⁸⁰ HM, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

⁴⁸¹ HJ, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, Copenhagen.

Britain and Scandinavia by analysing its changing ability to HT to utilise external resources, specifically: to what extent can we see a decline in the favourability of immediate environment factors towards HT in concurrence with the securitisation of the party? It will do this through a study of how well the party has been able to engage with potential members and activists.

Demographics have played an important role in both the activism and the study of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Numerous research projects have focussed on Hizb ut-Tahrir's ability to connect with, access and recruit youth – particularly students and young professionals – through targeted activism. The traditionally high volume of young people engaged in activism with the group has meant that it has been characterised at various points in its existence as a youth-based and youth-focussed organisation.⁴⁸² As such, a change in the party's ability to access its core demographic and a reflection of this at recruitment and activist events would suggest a degradation of its ability to utilise dwindling environmental resources.

Since the influx of youth in the late 1990s and early 2000s following the Majaal Crisis and the Global Redress, the party has had to contend with the closing down of many of its traditional sites of interaction with young people, including: The National Union of Students 'No Platform' policy in the UK; the party's increasing expulsion from mosques and community centres; the rise of the Prevent Duty in educational institutions; and the 'Public Information Law' in Copenhagen which prohibits 'non-democratic' parties such as HT hiring civic spaces for public events.⁴⁸³ Based on this closing down of opportunities for youth recruitment and activism, it is therefore important to establish its ability to engage with its core demographic and whether there has been a shift in the number of young people interacting with and joining the party. Demographic shifts in the party were discussed in interviews and recorded through surveys conducted at events throughout the research process, in both the UK and Denmark:

Hizb started [in Denmark] in the 1990s and of course you grow, the body grows, our surface and contact with the community grows, so I would say that we've grown. We've become more

⁴⁸² Wali, "Islamist Indoctrination: Exploring the Techniques Used by Hizb Ut-Tahrir to Radicalise Young British Muslims."; Hamid, "Islamic Political Radicalism in Britain: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir." pp.149-151

⁴⁸³ *Lov om ændring af folkeoplysningsloven og ligningsloven* (Act amending the Public Education Act and the Tax Act, Public Information Law, 2016)

*experienced, we know the society better, the structure better, we know the media better. We have a more diverse group of members in the sense that before it was mostly youth. Now it's all kind of ages. Few at that time had children, now maybe most members have children and families. So, we're more diverse, and of course that comes naturally with the years, when you're a new group.*⁴⁸⁴

To determine whether the demographics of HT has changed, short informal surveys were conducted at three activist events in London and three activist events in Scandinavia in 2016 and 2017, providing a cross-national comparison. During attendance at activism events, the researcher engaged with attendees, recording their age, whether they had any relationship to Hizb ut-Tahrir (as a member or activist) and how they found out about the activist event, as well as confirming through oral consent the use of this anonymised information in the project. Findings from this help us to understand whether resource degradation has occurred under a securitised lens.

6.3.1 Wali's Study of HTB Demographics (2011)

This section of the research study draws on Wali's previous findings, to offer up a means of comparing demographics changes in HT membership across the time frame. It is important to note that there are some differences in sampling to Farhaan Wali's 2011 study: Wali was in the position to run a focus group with 186 HTB members (95 male, 91 female) to determine key demographic information.⁴⁸⁵ Due to approaching the research field with an outsider status – neither a former member nor with any community or social ties – I was not in the position to replicate study. This thesis, however, responds to this issue of access by replicating parts of the study but lowering the bar of entry for participation, recording instead key demographic information about *activists* and *potential members* present at events, rather than solely HT members. Some of those at the activist events were inevitably members and known or suspected members were prioritised for informal discussions, where possible. However, some of those who offered demographic information will not be members nor even supporters of the party. It must be underscored that what such an approach does not show – *nor attempt to show* – is the average age of membership in HT groups in London and Copenhagen. However, the study can broadly highlight the following: 1. the age-range of HT members and supporters engaging in activist events in

⁴⁸⁴ HE.

⁴⁸⁵ Wali, "A Study of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Britain."

London and Copenhagen; 2. the age of non-members and non-activists attending such public HT events; and 3. how both activists and non-activists engaged with these events. From this, we are better able to determine which demographic strata HTB and HTS can appeal to through public forms of activism.

In Wali's 2011 study of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain members, he records the following demographic results of those participating in the study:

Fig. 21: Age of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain members recorded by Wali (2011)

Age of HT members (published 2011)				
Age (current)	Male Members	Female Members	Members	Total Percentage
Under 20	9	6	15	8
20-25	35	37	72	39
25-30	32	39	71	38
30-35	14	8	22	11.8
35-40	5	1	6	3.2
Over 40	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	95	91	186	100

There are some notable points of interest from Wali's study. Firstly, as Wali states in 2013, '[t]he demographic composition of UK membership is disproportionately skewed towards youth', finding that '85 percent of members are below the age of 30 and 96.3 percent were recruited before the age of 25'.⁴⁸⁶ This finding forms the basis of several research articles and reports. He notes that '[o]ne very noticeable theme that emerged from my survey was the disproportionate number of young people involved within the group' and that age should be considered a powerful factor in the identity of HT members 'because it has a powerful effect on the way members see themselves and others'.⁴⁸⁷ The average age of HT members in his sample was 25 years and 3 months, with 77% of members between the ages of 20 and 29. He also details the age of recruitment within this

⁴⁸⁶ "Islamist Indoctrination: Exploring the Techniques Used by Hizb Ut-Tahrir to Radicalise Young British Muslims." p.30; *Radicalism Unveiled*. p.116

⁴⁸⁷ "A Study of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Britain."

sample, finding that 56% were recruited to Hizb ut-Tahrir when under 20, and 40.3% recruited between the ages of 20 and 25.⁴⁸⁸ Members would largely be young, Muslim, with a relatively limited understanding of Islam prior to joining and more likely to be engaged in study or work within areas such as engineering, computer programming or the medical professions – areas of work which paid well and conferred high social status.

One funny anecdote was, a guy who's not particularly – not the sharpest knife in the kitchen – once asked in one of the meetings, 'do I have to own and wear a suit to join this organisation?'. But that was actually quite telling in that, 'no you didn't' but also sort of, 'yes you did'. They were interested in doctors, accountants, professionals and bringing that sort of skill set in, as well as the sort of financing that comes with that...⁴⁸⁹

Along with a significant skew towards youth and 'high status' professions, Wali's research finds a total absence of HT members over 40. This suggests, firstly, that there is a consistent focus on young people by HT and, secondly, that the party has a relatively high turnover rate of members, who are likely to leave the party once they were settled into careers or marriages. In Wali's study, only around 15% of members continued to play an active role in Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain beyond the age of 30. This roughly matched with what ex-members conveyed during interviews, with many of them leaving the party in their late 20s or early 30s.

However, contemporary attendance by the researcher at HT events, talks, rallies and protests, and other forms of public and private activism suggested that this characterisation of the party is, perhaps, becoming outdated – and this has significant implications for the ability of the party to continue with their traditional styles of activism. Generally, preliminary and exploratory research suggested that the demographics of both Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Scandinavia seemed to be shifting, with interviewees reporting a wider age range and an older average than is found by Wali. Were we to replicate Wali's study as closely as possible by surveying activists present at Hizb ut-Tahrir events, we would expect to see a significant overrepresentation of young people between the ages of 18-25. This should especially be the case due to the specific nature of the events – such events represent activist 'outreach', and should therefore appeal to a mix of members, supporters and *potential*

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ XC.

members and supporters – which should be skewed towards youth, if it is acting as a potential site of recruitment. Such outreach events should provide a barometer for gauging engagement with party activism and the extent to which HT are connecting with their traditional demographic.

6.3.2 Survey of HT Activists

The study of HTB members and potential members consisted of attendance at two large protests (Wednesday 14th December 2016 and Saturday 29th July 2017) and one talk (Saturday 5th November 2016) in London; whilst the study of HTS involved attendance at one large protest (Friday 28th July 2017) and two public talks (Friday 8th September 2017 and Friday 6th October 2017) in Copenhagen. Information given was recorded anonymously and only men were approached, due to the greater likelihood of positive interaction. The same talk-to-protest ratio could not be compared in the UK and Denmark due to time constraints and a reliance on the kinds of activism that took place during the field research stage. Events of greater significance were targeted to ensure the greatest interaction with members and activists and research was supported by attendance at smaller, localised events, to inform data collection and analysis. All of those who engaged with the survey were aware of the intended use of the information provided and gave this information of their own free volition.

Should we find that HT has undergone significant changes in demographic engagement, it should suggest that HT is under environmental pressure in struggling attracting its core demographic – young people – to events. A change in core demographic would suggest that research that analyses HT through a youth lens – as in Wali’s study – need to be re-assessed and re-interpreted if there is evidence that this ‘youth skew’ is no longer present.

6.3.2.1 The demographics of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain

6.3.2.1.1 HTB Event I: Protest I

The first Hizb ut-Tahrir protest studied took place on Wednesday 14th December 2016 outside the Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic, 8 Belgravia Square, London.⁴⁹⁰ This was the second protest to take place within the space of three days outside the embassy – the previous occurring on the evening of Monday 12th December, two days before. Both events were well attended, each numbering between 400 and 600. As with most HT events, the sexes were largely self-segregated, men standing at the front of the crowd and women overwhelmingly at the back, lining the railings with banners. Women wore a mixture of ‘conservative’ dress styles, hijabis, and a few in full niqab. Younger children remained at the back, older children stood at the front holding banners or weaved amongst the crowd, some hoisted onto parents’ shoulders for a better view. Whilst a general majority seemed supportive of the ideological messages being conveyed, not all present were following HT’s line, and some Muslim and non-Muslim student activists were scattered amongst the throng, supporting friends or taking an opportunity to protest recent actions of the Syrian Government, irrespective of the organisers. A variety of Metropolitan Police and community liaison officers encircled the front of the event in single file, stationed in relaxed fashion on the other side of the road, with a collection of stationary police vans arranged at the flanks, preventing traffic flows.

I had attended the emergency protest held on Monday 12th December as exploratory fieldwork, to gauge how to best approach research of the crowd, and to test receptivity of engagement. Most were keen to talk about their activism and why they wanted to be outside a (largely abandoned) embassy building on a bitter December evening. In contrast to Monday night’s protest – at which the Syrian Arab Republic opposition flag was waved enthusiastically by many present – these were largely invisible at the Wednesday demonstration, whilst the black and white flags of Hizb ut-Tahrir were ubiquitous, with Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain playing a greater role in organisation and execution of the latter demonstration.⁴⁹¹

Answers to the following enquiries were sought by those who agreed to share information with me as a researcher: 1. their age; 2. whether they were members of, or associated to, Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain; and 3. how

⁴⁹⁰ Vickiie Oliphant, "'USA You'll Pay!' Uk Muslims Chant Allahu Akbar in 2nd March in 3 Days to Demand Caliphate," *Express*, 19th December 2016.

⁴⁹¹ One of the first things I noticed on Wednesday was that the protest boards had been used again, repurposed for the new event, some with slightly different slogans – the previous messages still partly visible underneath their new covering. All protest boards, as before, used the same font and style – bold black capitals printed on four, white A4 sheets – then stuck over the same boards. Large and small flags dotted the crowd.

they had found out about the event. Additional discussion was followed up as to why they decided to come to the protest that day, with responses focussing on the crimes of the Syrian state, orientated to immediate international events rather than any specific support of HT's long-term or local ideological aims. Almost all of those asked about their relationship to HT distanced themselves from the party, stating that they neither were members nor knew much about the organisation. Following speeches from three speakers, the protest wound down promptly. Participants stopped to briefly talk with other community members, a few interviews were conducted for smaller independent media organisations and prayers were held by groups of men on the corner of Belgravia Square, prayer mats painting the pavement in a riot of colour. Then, quickly, family members found each other, and participants filtered away towards local tube stations, the crowd dispersing quietly and contentedly.

6.3.2.1.2 HTB Event II: Protest II

The second protest attended was held outside the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, Charles Street, Mayfair, London, on 29th July 2017. A changeable British summer day did little to stifle turnout, and umbrellas dotted the crowd perched on the pavement opposite the embassy four or five deep, hemmed in by orange-clad stewards. As before, standing was informally segregated, men gathered round the stage and tailing off stage-left, whilst women and most of the children stood stage-right. Hackney Carriages and Mayfair sports cars roared past, and onlookers clustered on the opposite pavement, dotted between media personnel. As with the previous protest in December 2016, monologues were presented by a handful of speakers: some were party members; some were high-profile individuals sympathetic towards the party's line of argument. Speakers would sometimes break into Qur'anic verses or Hadith, and a few in the crowd would lead cries of '*takbir*' ('*allahu akbar, allahu akbar...*') – sometimes with an over-enthusiasm which disrupted or drowned out the speakers. All speakers were eloquent, weaving together issues of global Muslim oppression from Israel and the occupation of Palestine and al-Aqsa, to the deference shown by rulers of Muslim countries to Western countries, to the continued Islamophobia and anti-minority policies of Britain and Europe.

Both protests came across as well structured and organised, at least in comparison to the other more diffuse pro-Palestinian protests that were taking place in London at the time.⁴⁹² Whilst the speeches were passionate, the crowd present was subdued and generally attentive, though some stood thumbing smartphones or attending to children. This was far removed from the fiery zealotry often associated with the party and, in many ways, was more reminiscent of a late-afternoon village fête which had lapsed into one too many speeches. Again, the crowd dispersed quickly once the monologues had ended, and within 20 minutes the street was empty.

6.3.2.1.3 HTB Event III: Talk I

The third HTB event attended here was a talk held on 5th November 2016, with roughly 300 men and around 120 women in attendance at the Water Lily Business Centre, Mile End. The subject of the talk was the contestation of Kashmir between India and Pakistan, consisting of two presentations and a follow-up question and answer session. Whilst there were many young men present, a significant proportion of those present were older: young families carried children; fathers juggled juice boxes; and older community members looked on serenely. The range of individuals attending was matched by a variety of dress – from more traditional South Asian clothing and the *shalwar kameez*, to jeans, hoodies, trendy puffer jackets and white trainers; suits were few in number. Some looked like the students or young professionals which has characterised HT, but they seemed roughly matched in number by older individuals.⁴⁹³

Once the talk started, a traditional HT approach was adopted to the discourse: firstly, a single-issue focus on an international dispute was established; this is widened to include the diagnostic frames and linked to patterns of oppression against the ummah; the prognosis of the global Khilafah was presented as the inevitable response; and individuals are encouraged to support the cause by engaging with HT's ideas or participating in community activism. However, in contrast to the positive reception received by speakers at demonstrations, the tone of the Question and Answer section after the presentation was mixed. Some expressed support, but others robustly challenged the ideas put forward – particularly the repeated claim that, should Pakistani Muslims bring about

⁴⁹² This is compared to, for instance, demonstrations following the UK's vote on Brexit, the election of Donald Trump in the US, or the UK Government's scrapping of the Dubs Amendment.

⁴⁹³ Julia Ebner from Quilliam offers a brief but sensationalist overview of the meeting in a section of her book, entitled 'Infiltrating Hizb ut-Tahrir'. Julia Ebner, *The Rage: The Vicious Circle of Islamist and Far-Right Extremism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017).

the Khilafah in their lands, then ‘the Indian army would be crushed in five days’.⁴⁹⁴ One young man expressed great frustration with the inability for the panel to describe the precise means by which the Califate would come about, exclaiming with exasperation: ‘but how can this Khilafah just *appear*?! You don’t explain how this will happen, you just say: “talk [about it] and it’ll happen”!’.⁴⁹⁵

When the talk had ended, I questioned as many present as I could catch with the survey, before going to a stall that had been set up by the door as the crowd hollowed out. Buying as many HT books as the money I had with me would allow, I also conducted small discussions with members manning the sales, discussing my research. Stall sellers confirmed that the party’s activism is changing.

*We’ve definitely been going through a quiet stage – in terms of our events. We haven’t done much [activism] recently, at least not around here. But we’re looking to change this, to do more things in and around Tower Hamlets, like in the past. But more grassroots – community talks, social things...*⁴⁹⁶

6.3.2.2 The demographics of Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia

6.3.2.2.1 HTS Event I: Talk I

The first Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia talk attended by the researcher took place on 8th September 2017 at the Masjid al-Faruq, Heimdalsgade 39, 2200, København N at 19.00. Focussed on the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, it presented two speakers on the topic, chaired by the deputy head of the Danish branch Elias Lamrabet, entitled ‘Rohingya – det mest forfulgte folk i verden’ (*Rohingya – the most persecuted people in the world*).

⁴⁹⁴ ‘The establishment of the Khilafah – which is a promise – the establishment of the Khilafah is the death knell of the Zionist state. The Egyptian army and air force alone is larger than the Israeli air force and army. The Pakistani army and air force alone is larger than the Israeli air force and army. The Turkish army and air force alone is larger than the Israeli army and air force. Just one army can liberate Palestine. One or two or three joined together under the righteous Khilafah [and] this [Zionist] state cannot exist, will not exist.’ Gmedia, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir Britain Protest at Saudi Arabia Embassy in London Hd," (youtube.com, 2017).

⁴⁹⁵ ‘It has now transpired that they are all talk and no action, for example when I first joined I heard talk of Pakistan being penetrated through the military and it would be overtaken very soon, this was about 10 years ago now. The message becomes boring and tiresome, there appears to be no action although people are led to believe that things are moving forward but they never do.’ Hamid, "Islamic Political Radicalism in Britain: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir." p.153

⁴⁹⁶ Short Discussion with HTB member, Richard McNeil-Willson (5th November 2016): London



Image 8: Poster for HTS talk on Rohingya Muslims, Copenhagen (2017)

Almost every Friday evening from 19.00, seminars are held around Friday prayers at al Faruq Mosque by a Brother from the party. Most of the time, it is Danish members who will speak, although that this isn't always the case and external speakers sometimes hold talks, either from outside the party or visiting from other international party branches. Speakers are asked to sign up on a roster to talk and present for 30 to 45 minutes on a variety of issues: from talks on international relations to discussions of local events; from critical debates in elements of Western society to an exploration of a certain facet of Islamic interpretation. This event was well attended, with roughly 100 members and activists at the talk.

6.3.2.2 HTS Event II: Talk II

The second Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia talk took place at the same venue as the first, though was less well-attended and seemed to contain a higher relative number of Hizb ut-Tahrir members, with mainly core members in attendance. The talk, delivered with less polish and accompanied by slides, explored ways of living in line with

Islamic thought and practice, particularly in the context of modern life. Members were scattered around the mosque, often scrolling through their phone, sometimes eating or reading, but mostly listening quietly. Certain ages would often crowd together, and groups would sit in the same places each week: a large group in their late teens were always found sitting together by the wall furthest away from the door; whilst a few important and well-liked members would always place a few chairs in the middle of the room, observe proceedings as if from on thrones, before other members would flock to them during the break from prayers, to greet them or ask them specific questions. In contrast to the HTB events, these events felt more communal, the talk acting as a space for interaction and discussion.

A series of other talks were attended, including events in Copenhagen and Aarhus where Hizb ut-Tahrir speakers discussed the party and their understanding of Islam to both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences. This also gave me an opportunity to talk to members of the party based beyond Copenhagen and interview those who had attended the talks. With the Danish branch basing their work and activism almost entirely in Copenhagen, I was surprised to find some limited but significant activity in Aarhus, with some members based in Aarhus who had been with HTS since its seminal stages in the late 1990s.

6.3.2.2.3 HTS Event III: Protest I

The largest Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia protest attended by the researcher – and only one deemed significant for the survey within the fieldwork period – was held on Friday 28th July 2017, in protest at the announced plan for the US to move their embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. Occurring the day before the protest organised by HTB outside the Saudi embassy, the two events offered an opportunity to observe similar protests as part of the same international campaign in a different country.

The protest was slightly smaller than the British equivalent at the Saudi Embassy, although there were between 300 and 400 people present, filling up Red Square in front of Nørrebrohallen, an imposing community sports complex. Two large HT flags of the party flew over the speakers – one white, one black – echoing the arrangement of the HTS mosque – whilst smaller flags and stock wooden placards were held aloft by protesters, many arranged along the front of the gathering. The first talk was by Munzir Abdallah, held entirely in Arabic,

something I had not seen at the British protests that were conducted only in English. The next speaker was Elias Lambraet, a rising star in the Danish branch, the current deputy leader whose professional dress and amiable manner mark him out as an ‘ideal type’ for the party. As with the British demonstrations, the flags, banners and placards were uniform – made centrally by the party and handed out to those present – and the crowd listened attentively, with men at the front and women behind. Those present largely comprised of members, activists or their families.

6.3.2.3 Results: Changing Demographics

The results of the surveys from the six events – three protests and three talks across London and Copenhagen – were collected and compared. Such surveying help to understand the demographics of *potential membership* of HT (members and those attracted to party activism and events). The results from these surveys are listed below.

Fig. 22: Age of activists present at Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain events (London, 2016-17)

Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain Activism, London (collected 2016-17)					
Age	Protest I	Protest II	Talk I	Interactions	Total Percentage
Under 20	6	4	4	14	11
20-25	10	13	7	30	23.6
25-30	10	20	6	36	28.4
30-35	7	2	11	20	15.8
35-40	2	3	8	13	10.2
Over 40	3	4	7	14	11
TOTAL	38	46	43	127	100

If we analyse the demographic information taken from HTB, we detect an implied ageing of the average potential membership. Across the three events, the majority are younger people, with 63% of those who gave information on average under the age of 30. However, this is significantly less than the 85% of those under the age of 30

seen in Wali's similarly-sized sample of HT members.⁴⁹⁷ What Wali suggests during his research gathering in the late 2000s is not simply that the organisation has mostly young members, but that HTB is largely focussed on engaging young people outside of the party. These findings, however, conflict with Wali's assessment, suggesting that HTB's status as orientated towards and participated exclusively by young activists has changed. Concurrently with the decline in youth engagement, the findings show a proportional increase in engagement from older potential members.

In examining the Danish data collected from the surveys on the age of those present at HTS events, we find that there has also been a similar 'ageing' process occurring amongst potential members, although this is to a far lesser extent than in the case of the British party body.

Fig. 23: Age of activists present at Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain events (Copenhagen, 2016-17)

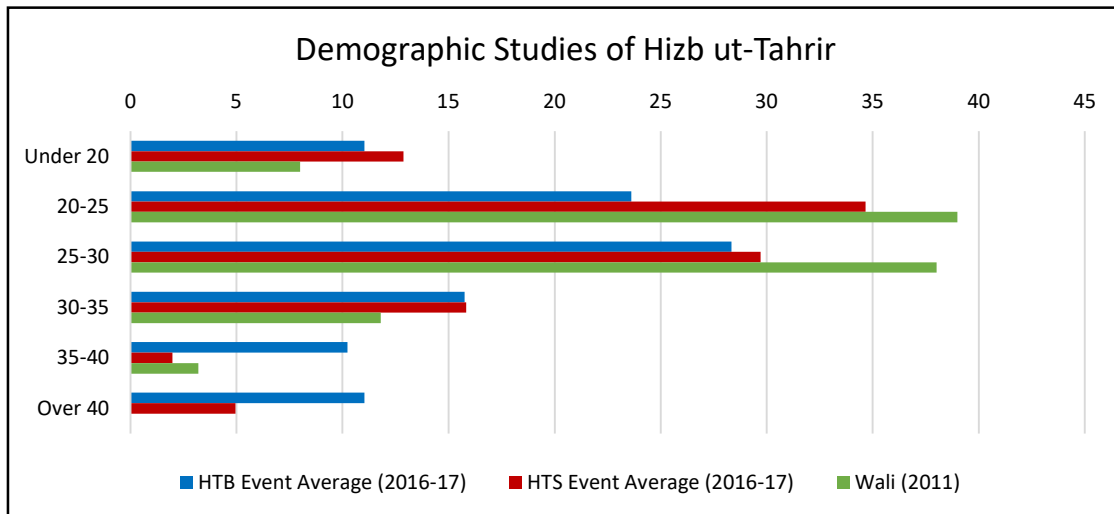
Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia Activism, Denmark (collected 2016-17)					
Age	Protest I	Talk I	Talk II	Total Interactions	Total percentage
Under 20	7	3	3	13	12.9
20-25	15	8	12	35	34.7
25-30	9	11	10	30	29.7
30-35	5	2	9	16	15.8
35-40	0	1	1	2	2
Over 40	2	2	1	5	5
TOTAL	38	29	34	101	100

In comparing the two datasets collected, we find that the average age of potential activists and members in both HTB and HTS is older than in the 2011 study of HTB members by Wali. The 2016-17 data suggests that the average age of those present at British events was roughly 27 years and 7 months of age, whilst in Denmark the average age was 25 years and 5 months – both higher than the 25 years and 3 months average age recorded by Wali in 2011, although with a far more significant shift in the UK case study.

⁴⁹⁷ Wali, *Radicalism Unveiled*. p.116

This suggests that HTB are currently engaging most extensively with Muslims between the ages of 25 and 30, the largest number of respondents coming from this age bracket (28.3% versus Wali’s 38% for the same range). However, whilst this was the most represented demographic, 37% of those surveyed were above the demographic range of 25-30 (in contrast to 15% in Wali’s study). In contrast, the highest number of respondents at HTS events fell within the 20-25 age bracket (34.7% versus Wali’s 39% for the same range), suggesting that HTS is broadly able to appeal to a slightly younger demographic in comparison the UK, and has not experienced the same demographic shift as HTB.

Fig. 24: Demographics of those present at HTB and HTS events studied (2016-17) against Wali’s findings (2011)



When we compare the ages of individuals between talks and protests, the data suggests that talks are more likely to attract a broader range of ages than protests, with families and older members of the community more widely represented. Protests, on the other hand, seem to engage a younger crowd than talks, with numbers of those present under the age of 25 matching or outstripping the results Wali’s study. This suggests that such forms of activism conducted by Hizb ut-Tahrir are still appealing to young people and that the party has been able to successfully engage with youth through these means. Talks, in both national case studies, show a skew towards an older age range, particularly in the case of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain. Whilst it is problematic to over-generalise from the limited number of events attended and the relatively small number of attendees engaged

with (228 on this question, comprising 127 in London and 101 in Copenhagen), it does suggest that different events and tactics yield different results in terms of demographic attendance.

Fig. 25: Demographics of those present at protests (London & Copenhagen) against Wali’s findings

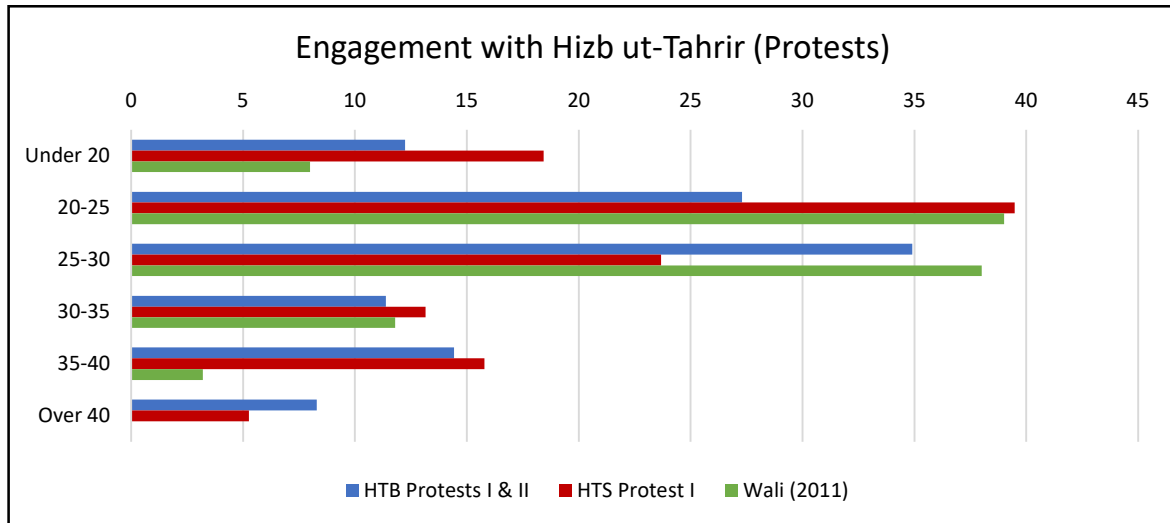
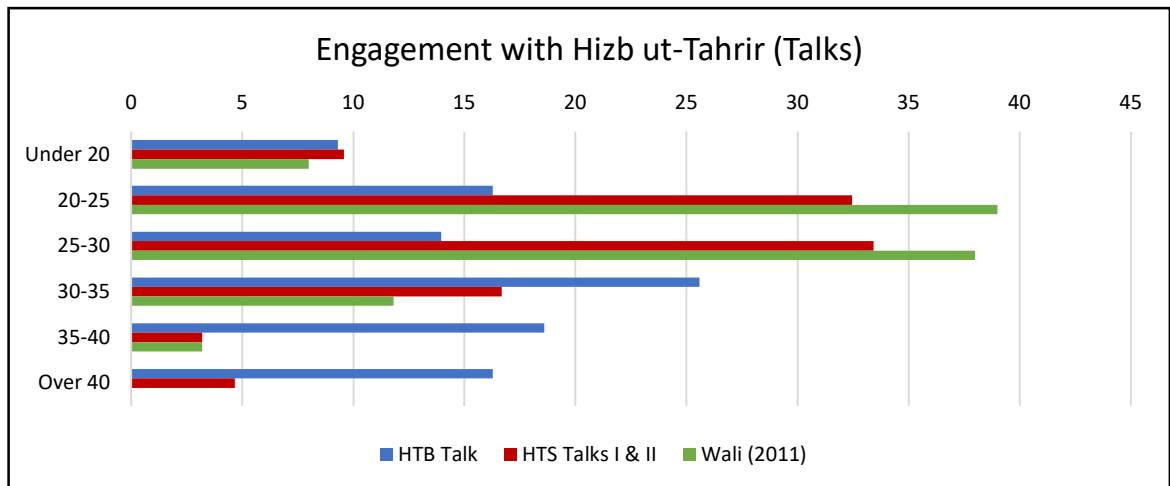


Fig. 26: Demographics of those present at talks (London & Copenhagen) against Wali’s findings



We can also observe a general trend by both party branches towards favouring public talks over demonstrations, with protests utilised only when the party wishes to respond quickly to a specific, high-profile issue, with protests generally diminishing in number and talks increasing.

6.3.2.4 Means of Engagement

The second question that was surveyed at these events was how attendees had heard about this specific activist event. Individuals were slightly more likely to answer this question than that on age-range, with 250 giving a response, in comparison to 228. When asked how they engaged with the event, the following set of responses were given from British attendees.

Fig. 27: Means of Engagement with HTB events (London, 2016-17)

Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain Activism, London (collected 2016-17)					
Medium	Protest I	Protest II	Talk I	Interactions	Total percentage
Family or friends	19	24	11	54	39.1
Social media	16	14	13	43	31.2
Leaflet or flyer	3	2	3	8	5.8
HT website/newsletter	1	6	8	15	10.9
Another HT event	0	0	1	1	0.7
Another non-HT event	0	4	3	7	5.1
Other	5	1	4	10	7.2
TOTAL	44	51	43	138	100

Findings show that the most successful medium of communication between HTB and potential members is through family and friends (39.1%). This suggests a broadly rhizomatic approach to engagement, with some reliance still on familial and community links to sustain activism in London-based Muslim communities. However, there is also a high relative engagement with online platforms, with 31.2% attending the event in response to a social media post and 10.9% in response to the HTB website or through online newsletters (42.1% in total through online platforms).⁴⁹⁸ Very few individuals of those surveyed attended the event in response to finding out about it at another event by Hizb ut-Tahrir (0.7%) or another non-Hizb ut-Tahrir event (5.1%). One notable

⁴⁹⁸ Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir Britain," Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, www.hizb.org.uk.

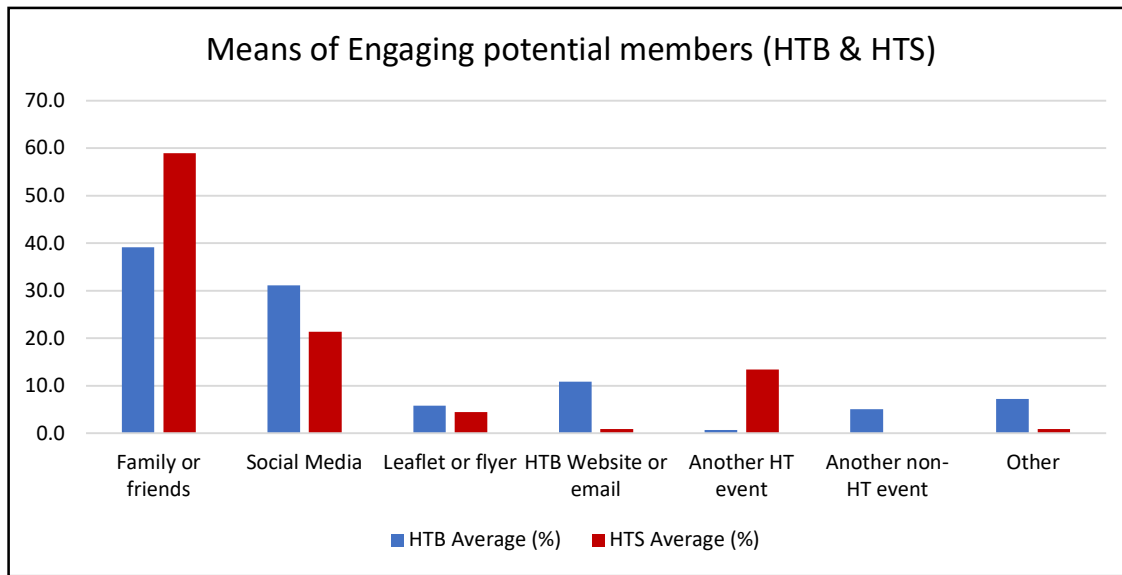
response was the low levels of engagement through leaflets or flyers – a medium which the party is well-known for – which represented only 5.8% of those surveyed.

Fig. 28: Means of Engagement with HTS events (Copenhagen, 2016-17)

Hizb ut-Tahrir Activism, Copenhagen (collected 2016-2017)					
Medium	Protest I	Talk I	Talk II	Interactions	Total percentage
Family or Friends	26	16	21	63	56.3
Social Media	9	7	11	27	24.1
Leaflet or flyer	5	0	0	5	4.5
HT website/newsletter	0	0	1	1	0.9
Another HT event	1	8	6	15	13.4
Another non-HT event	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	1	0.9
TOTAL	41	32	39	112	100

The Danish dataset on engagement shows that there is an even greater reliance on family and friends as means of engaging with activists and potential members by HTS. Over half of those who gave information engaged with the event primarily due to family and friends (56.3%). Again, social media was the second most useful tool in engaging with potential activists (24.1%) but this was lower in comparison to the British branch. Other HT events were, on the other hand, more likely to encourage engagement (13.4%) in comparison to the British branch. Other online forms of engagement – such as the HTS website or email newsletter – were less popular in comparison to those engaging with HTB events.

Fig. 29: Means of Engagement with HTB and HTS events (London and Copenhagen, 2016-17)



6.3.2.4.1 Contrasting the Datasets on Engagement

If we contrast these two sets of data on engagement, it shows some relatively significant findings. Firstly, HTB is shown as more able to engage with members online and has a more practiced and polished online presence. Another finding is that, whilst HT are reliant on family and community networks to organise and execute events in both the UK and Danish case studies, the Danish branch seems to have greater reliance to family and friendship networks, suggesting perhaps that they are more integrated within local community networks.

One factor to consider is the smaller size of Muslim communities living in Copenhagen in comparison to London. The smaller number of communities and their concentration in and around Nørrebro means they have a more interlinked nature, representing a dense 'root' structure within the community. As such, friends and family are, in this context, more effective at conveying information, resulting in greater community embeddedness.

You could, quite easily, have within the same family one brother who is a member of Hizb ut-Tahrir, another brother who is a member of a gang, and another brother who is a member of the PET...⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁹ AO, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

This is reflective of how HTS operate in a dense milieu, within a higher concentration of familial links and rhizomes; that HTS has been more successful at building a 'grassroots' network-approach to campaigning. In contrast, the data from HTB suggests they are operating with a shallower set of roots in the wider Muslim communities of London, more reliant on online engagement, despite members and representatives focussing on localised forms of social movement-oriented support, a finding backed up by interviews.

The problem is that, in Britain, they live in a parallel kind of dimension. They are really not ingrained within the community at all. They're not grassroots in that sense. Even though they try and portray themselves as part of the community, and rest of it, they're not grassroots at all. And that's what's really causing them problems...⁵⁰⁰

This suggests that support for the party is more diffuse in Britain and branches less successful in building localised hubs of community activism; in comparison, the dense community structures in Copenhagen and the centralisation of their work in Nørrebro offers an important network for the Danish branch. However, whilst this offers some advantages to localised activity, the party has been unable to build outwards from core support, beyond Copenhagen. As such, tight community networks have perhaps stunted long-term growth whilst also offering a means of sustaining activism during other declining environmental conditions. This may go some way to explaining why Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia has remained a Copenhagen phenomenon, and why their decline has been less striking.

Only a few short and impersonal questions could be asked at these events and, as such, a more in-depth analysis could not be carried out, though these findings match information that was offered in interviews with members and former members. Follow up research could be done on members' and potential members' ethnic or national family background, employment, and the number of events they have attended, although this would require a longer and more intensive study that was not suited to the short amount of time the researcher had to speak with individuals at public activist events.

⁵⁰⁰ AG, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

6.3.2.5 Causes for Demographic Change

In 2005, Zayno Baran, staunch critic of Hizb ut-Tahrir, argued that HT has been ‘...particularly successful at recruiting frustrated youth who have lost faith in the systems of the countries to which they or their parents came. As a senior European diplomat has put it, after joining HT, “they turn from being rebels without a cause to rebels with a cause”.’⁵⁰¹ However, findings from this study has suggested that, whilst this may have been the case with the previous generation of frustrated Muslims youth, current HT branches are losing their ability to engage with their core demographic.

There are many possible reasons as to why these demographic and engagement patterns differ from Wali’s 2011 study. Firstly, this could be seen through the general demographic changes that have taken place in British and Danish Muslim communities. In 2016, the average age of Muslims throughout Europe was 30.4 years, 13 years younger than the median for other Europeans but older than in recent years, and still above the average age of those polled in the study.⁵⁰² In the UK, there has been a general increase in the average age of British Muslims owing to a decline in birth rates as second and third generation migrant communities become more socially and economically established in Britain. Between 2001 and 2011 – the latest two censuses for this study – there was a growth in the average age of British Muslims from 24 to 25 years of age.⁵⁰³

In Denmark – where significant Muslim immigration has occurred later and has been more influenced by more recent events and conflict in the Middle East – Muslim communities are less well established and more likely to be comprised of first or second-generation migrants. The average age of Danish Muslims is therefore younger than in Britain (although demographics based on religious community are not recorded by the Danish state census), perhaps representing a possible explanation for the different ages that were polled.⁵⁰⁴ However, the demographic shifts demonstrated in the HTB survey data are greater than national demographic changes and

⁵⁰¹ Zayno Baran, "Fighting the War of Ideas," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 6 (2005). p.74; see also "Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Islam's Political Insurgency."

⁵⁰² Conrad Hackett, "5 Facts About the Muslim Population in Europe," (The Pew Research Centre, 2017).

⁵⁰³ The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), "British Muslims in Numbers: A Demographic, Socio-Economic and Health Profile of Muslims in Britain Drawing on the 2011 Census," (The Muslim Council of Britain, 2015).

⁵⁰⁴ the area of Mjølnerparken, for instance, less than 700 metres away from Hizb ut-Tahrir’s al Faruq mosque, was recorded has having more than half of the inhabitants aged under 18 as of 2011, and only 4 percent aged 65 years or above. Hussain et al.

this approach does not offer adequate explanation in this case, nor does it account for the role of new patterns of activism on demographic change.⁵⁰⁵

Another explanation could be the closing of opportunity structures for HT to engage with young people, particularly following ‘no platforming’ bans and increased focus by national anti-extremism policy on educational institutions, such as schools, universities and youth centres. The NUS university ‘no platforming’ of HT and organisations suspected of being front groups, following concerns over anti-Semitic statements by the party, has prevented HTB from accessing traditional sites of youth engagement and recruitment, and members have acknowledged the negative impact that this has had on activism.⁵⁰⁶

*It was all bogus, it was all completely trumped up. But from then on, they've [the NUS] stuck stubbornly with it. From that moment it was very difficult for the Hizb anywhere.*⁵⁰⁷

Other British educational institutions have also faced increased scrutiny about their links to ‘Islamist’ organisations. One high-profile example is that of so-called ‘Trojan Horse plot’, in which ‘Islamists’ were accused of targeting five schools in Muslim majority areas of Birmingham and ‘imposing hard-line religious teachings and fomenting extremism’.⁵⁰⁸ Whilst the accusations were debunked, the fallout led to a flurry of concern over the threat ‘Islamism’ posed to school-aged children from government and national media.⁵⁰⁹ Similar controversy has surrounded concern about HT infiltration of schools: in 2009, the Shakhsiyah Foundation – running a nursery and primary schools in Tottenham and a primary school in Slough – were investigated following revelations about their links to Hizb ut-Tahrir and government education funding was suspended. The foundation’s lead trustee, Yusra Hamilton, was a leading party member and wife of then media spokesman Taji Mustafa, and former teachers referred to the schools as being set up as ‘a great way of creating Hizb ut-Tahrir propaganda’ and a means ‘to lure [pupils] in through that doorway’.⁵¹⁰ The use of educational establishments has been a

⁵⁰⁵ (MCB). p.28; Wali, "A Study of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Britain."

⁵⁰⁶ Along with HTB, the following organisations are also banned from access university-supported platforms: al-Muhajiroun, the British National Party, the English Defence League, the Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK and National Action Rowena Mason, "Student Leaders Criticise Jo Johnson after Threat over No-Platforming Policies," *The Guardian*, 26th December 2017.

⁵⁰⁷ HF, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, London.

⁵⁰⁸ Samira Shackle, "Trojan Horse: The Real Story Behind the Fake 'Islamic Plot' to Take over Schools," *The Guardian*, 1st September 2017.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁵¹⁰ Andrew Gilligan, "Council Suspends Funding to Schools Linked to Hizb Ut-Tahrir," *The Telegraph*, 31st October 2009.

traditional means of engaging with young people, with former members highlighting incidents where they were used for propounding party ideology to school children:

They had their own home-schooling thing; so she asked me to be a teacher. So, I was a teacher at that Islamist school in the house, and it's all, like, indoctrinating their children. I mean, we'd do ABC and 123 and how Khilafah was the answer but in baby form. Building and brainwashing their kids.⁵¹¹

Concern over this has contributed towards a pivoting of British counterterrorism and counter-extremism projects towards Further and Higher Education Institutions (FEIs and HEIs).

We're increasingly reliant on the education sector referring things into us if they've got concerns about groups. Just maintaining the intelligence picture, and constantly updating the threat that such groups pose. I mean HT's an interesting one; as much as ALM groups who continue to change their names to evade that proscribed organisation list... it is a big discussion point at Home Office level as to how we deal with how they operate in schools and universities.⁵¹²

There have also been similar concerns raised over incidents in Denmark by authorities that have accused the party of seeking to establish an organised presence in universities, schools and youth organisations to access young activists. As with in Britain, this has led to a response by authorities to prevent the party and other 'Islamist' groups from accessing educational sites through the introduction of new laws or greater accountability of schools in promoting 'Danish values'.

There's an attack on Muslim private schools, on Muslim kindergartens. There's a certain tradition in Denmark called 'free schools', which has been a tradition for 150 years. So, it's a long tradition. And they just made a new law in restricting access to free schools, because of fear over Muslim private schools... and the Labour Party, the big left-wing party, they made a suggestion that said:

⁵¹¹ XA.

⁵¹² AA, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

'we should ban all Muslim private schools by making a law which hinders public support for all schools in which more than 50% of the pupils do not have an ethnic Danish background'. And the liberal party, the governing party, which actually has been at the forefront in restricting Muslims and fighting against the Muslim identity, even they said: 'well, we're going to have a problem there with the constitution, we can do some other things, we can make a new law where if someone wants to open a Muslim private school, then they have to be examined for their democratic attitudes, opinions, and if we have any suspicion that these people do not believe in democracy, then they cannot open the Muslim private schools'.⁵¹³

Whilst HTB has seen a closing of access to educational institutions encouraged by authorities, this challenge has been less coordinated in Denmark, HTS having more freedom to engage with young people in educational settings such as HEIs. During field research, I attended HTS meetings in Copenhagen and Aarhus at several educational institutions in which HTS were specifically invited to talk about their work, their interpretation of Islam and on issues facing minorities in Denmark. One of the most notable was an invitation for HTS to present to the Aarhus *Venstre Youth*. Hosted by the youth wing of the main governing party in Denmark at their regional headquarters (although not publicised beyond the local youth wing membership), it demonstrated open engagement between political actors and youth groups in Denmark very different to the no-platforming and stricter counter-extremism legislation in the UK.

They're not challenged in Denmark in the same way as they are in England. I just basically believe in the need for alternative voices and in having the ability to have the debate with the members of the party on a public level and also on an individual level, which we're still not skilled at – as a Muslim community or as a civil society. We're still very confused as to what in the world they're talking about, even... We should ignore them as far as we can, but whenever they are able to access debate, we should be equipped to deal with them, effectively. And it shouldn't be that difficult, but Danish society is not doing a good job at publicly challenging HT with other voices.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹³ HK.

⁵¹⁴ XI.

Ex-members in both the UK and in Denmark expressed concern over the freedom Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia have in educational settings to engage with young people, as well as the limited way in which their views are challenged on public platforms.

When you have seminars in Denmark, the leading academics will sit and do joint lectures with Hizb ut-Tahrir in universities in Copenhagen. That type of normalisation shouldn't happen. Engaging with them, to debate with them, on both intellectual levels – to show they're [ideologically] bereft – but also intra-Muslim debates and discourse are important. Having those kind of discussions – which will be much more friendlier because we're trying to engage with them – you have to have very, very clear ideological lines, why you reject certain ideas and the dangers, which can be explained. Those things are really significant and therefore giving confidence to Muslim communities is important.⁵¹⁵

In the UK, specific attempts have been made not only to limit the possibilities of youth engagement by groups such as HT but also to ensure that problematic speakers given platforms are forced to present in a setting where counter-voices are present on an equal footing. One of the problematic findings from, for instance, the Aarhus talk to *Venstre Youth Party* was how well-versed HTS representatives were able to present the party ideology as the only credible version of Islam to persons who had little prior religious knowledge or interaction. Degradation of specific sites of youth engagement in the UK has greatly impacted on the ability for HTB to engage with and recruit young members. As such, the closing down opportunities for accessing young activists may have contributed significantly towards such a shift in demographic patterns of engagement.

Another reason for the demographic shift could come from the development of greater competition for resources from newly formed groups which have used 'radical' activism more effectively. The rise of competing organisations may have led to human and other resources being diverted away from HT. In Denmark, for instance, when HTS was established, the only other 'Islamist' organisations were the Turkish-oriented *Millî*

⁵¹⁵ AM, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

Görüş, and the Pakistani *Minhaj ul-Quran*.⁵¹⁶ In recent years, there has been a proliferation of small Islamic activist organisations, such as *Dawah-bærere* (Dawah Carriers), *Kaldet til Islam* (the Call to Islam), *Dawah-centret* (the Dawah Centre) and *MUC, Muslimske Ungdomcenter* (the Muslim Youth Centre).⁵¹⁷ These groups, many of which have purposely advanced a more radical agenda, have been able to attract some youth looking to engage in contentious activism.⁵¹⁸

*Young people who complete their education and settle down into adult life, and those who can think for themselves, usually leave. HT's long-term appeal will most likely be determined not by the radicalism of its ideas but by the absence of alternatives.*⁵¹⁹

In the UK, the continued (albeit beleaguered) activism of ALM front groups, as well as continued activism by a variety of Salafist and Muslim Brotherhood-related groups may have limited HT's growth,⁵²⁰ whilst smaller, organic groups have sporadically developed in a few urban areas by zealous youth, potentially diverting recruits.⁵²¹ In both Britain and Denmark, tactics initially only utilised by HT – such as dawah-based street activism, youth engagement and focus on second- and third-generational issues – have been successfully co-opted by other groups, in recognition of the success of such tactics. Newer groups have been able to use greater tactical dynamism, avoiding the more constrictive and well-developed hierarchical structures of HT. As such, the party has perhaps become less attractive for young activists as dynamic competing platforms have become available to young people looking to participate in contentious or protest politics.

Whilst the decline of youth may be seen in the context of a wider decline of the party in Britain and to a lesser extent in Denmark, it may also hint at some positives for the party. One problem that has been faced by HT in the West for many years is the inability to keep most members and activists beyond their youth.

⁵¹⁶ Garbi Schmidt, "Muslim i Danmark - Muslim i Verden: En Analyse Af Muslimske Ungdomsforeninger Og Muslimske Identitet i Årene Op Til Muhammad-Krisen " (Uppsala: Universitetsstryckeriet, 2007).

⁵¹⁷ Jacobsen. p.188

⁵¹⁸ Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen, "Anti-Democratic and Violence Promoting Environments in Denmark That Subscribe to Islamist Ideologies: What Do We Know?," (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), 2012). p.31

⁵¹⁹ Hamid, "Islamic Political Radicalism in Britain: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir."

⁵²⁰ *Sufis, Salafis and Islamists: The Contested Ground of British Islamic Activism.*

⁵²¹ It's worth clearly stating that the number and reach of so-called 'Sharia patrols' is almost certainly overstated by national media.

It's basically working on the ground at recruiting fairly young people who will, ten years after, leave the party and become bitter anti-HT people, like me. It's an uphill struggle really, it doesn't look very good for them, it's just getting very tiring.⁵²²

An increase in the age demographic of members in Britain could suggest that the party has developed an ability to appeal to wider subsections of Muslim communities beyond its typical support base. The ageing of the core HT demographic, coupled with membership and activism decline, suggests that the party is being squeezed amongst youth, leading to a requirement to develop approaches more likely to appeal to a wider variety of community demographics.

6.3.3 Conclusions on Degrading Environmental Resources

There are important findings we can take away from the exploration and analysis of demographic trends. Firstly, the extent to which we can define HT exclusively as a youth-based activist organisation has to be questioned in the current context. The findings strongly suggest that there is an ageing of the kind of demographic the party successfully engages with – to some extent in Denmark, and to a much greater extent in the UK. As such, future analysis should be cautious about characterising the party as entirely youth-centric in its activism, as has been the case in prior studies.

Significantly, this demographic analysis is important in understanding environmental degradation as well as HT's response. HT has used youth activism to great effect in the past – particularly following the repletion of membership in the years after the Maajal Crisis and the Global Redress – using the skills and commitment of Muslim youth to encourage grassroots activism. Ageing membership may have contributed, at least in part, to a tactical shift within HT towards disengagement from contentious politics, with previous studies suggesting links between radical activism and youth engagement as older members eschew the confrontational activism of younger generations.⁵²³ This can create a self-sustaining cycle in which, the older the average membership or potential membership, the more likely conservative articulations of activism are used, in turn inclining younger

⁵²² XI.

⁵²³ Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence*. Roy.

activists to eschew the ‘old guard’ of HT in favour of alternative, more ‘action-orientated’ organisations. These factors simultaneously discourage both further youth participation and forms of contentious action.

Tactically, the party in Britain and (to a lesser extent) in Denmark are struggling to engage with its traditional youth demographic, partly due to environmental degradation and the decline in the favourability of immediate regional factors. An increased scrutiny around their role in educational institutions, particularly in the UK, has led to a limiting of spaces within which they can engage. The British branch has come, therefore, to rely more on other means of engagement – such as social media and online platforms – and has increasingly come to tailor its appeal to an older demographic that is out of kilter with its youth-focussed characterisation. This means a reconsideration of areas of the literature that treat the party as solely a youth-based phenomenon.

Abdul Wahid the current leader and some of the other senior ones are the last kind of bastion left of any kind of old guard, if you want to put it, just keeping things afloat. Underneath it there doesn't seem to be any kind of real structure or personalities or even any kind of numbers⁵²⁴

6.4 Chapter Conclusions on the Securitised Lens

Analysis of the discursive media framing surrounding Hizb ut-Tahrir and their demographic changes suggest there has been the development of a securitised lens and that it has impacted on the party's demographic engagement. There has been a securitisation of language surrounding HT in Britain and Denmark, as well as a degradation in the ability of HT to engage with its core demographic, with links suggested between the two processes in the data.

There is a securitisation of language going on around Hizb ut-Tahrir within media and – as can be reasonably be surmised – mainstream political discourse. Significant markers of the securitisation of language around Hizb ut-Tahrir have been observed in British media publications, with an observable increase in the use of terms surrounding ‘extremism’ and lesser increases in the use of terms such as ‘terrorism’ and ‘radicalisation’.

⁵²⁴ XB.

Concurrently, there has also been a sharp rightward shift in the media publications reporting in Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, along with a decline in successful media stratagems and an out-muscling of Hizb ut-Tahrir in their ability to successfully engage with media, instead being replaced with actors overtly hostile to HT. In Denmark however, it is less clear as to whether Hizb ut-Tahrir has come under national processes of securitisation. Discursive markers that would indicate securitisation seem to have remained relatively static since 2001, suggesting that the language hasn't intensified and whilst there has been some drop in direct engagement between HTS and media publications, this is more modest than in the UK case and is less significant if we consider HTS has much less media experience, a smaller amount of resources to engage with media and a largely rejectionist strategy towards national media bodies.

These findings also indicate that Hizb ut-Tahrir branches are under pressure in their ability to attract activists from their core demographic to party events and activism. The securitisation of HTB in the media seems to have occurred alongside an upswing in the average age of the party body membership. Hizb ut-Tahrir have, in the past, ensured their ability to operate by bringing in young members who were able to dedicate significant time and resources to the building of the party. The loss of a proportion of these members, through an ageing of the activist body in Britain, may represent an attempt to broaden the appeal of the party but has arguably contributed to a loss of party dynamism and is reflective of a broader closing of opportunities for HTB to operate openly amongst youth due to an increasingly securitised environment. Certainly, greater focus on concern over the presence of Hizb ut-Tahrir and similar 'Islamist' actors in educational institutions has constrained their ability to bring young people into the party structure. In contrast, the Danish branch – which face fewer examples of securitised language from media publications and has more opportunities to influence media discussion – is not seeing the same ageing of members. Whilst concern in Denmark has also been raised regarding the freedom of HTS to operate in Denmark, this has been framed within the context of debates over secular 'Danish values' and the same limitations have not been placed on HT to operate with further and higher educational institutions.

It is possible to start to draw links between the securitisation of language and the constriction of opportunities for groups such as HT to operate. However, further links need to be established between securitisation processes and social movement response and – in keeping with the project's theoretical approach – repression will form the hinge by which this is achieved. This chapter has sought to determine why securitisation is so relevant to a

study of HT and has demonstrated that there are examples of securitised language developing in at least one of the case studies as well as a concurrent degradation in environmental resources and the party's ability to access them. The next section will seek to determine to what extent this securitising language has led to acts of perceived repression being committed against Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark.

7 Repression

7.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the following question: How do we understand the expansion of the securitising lens as creating repression for HT members and activists? Having established that there are some links between the securitisation of language, and the decline and changing demographic of HT in Britain and – to a lesser extent – in Denmark, the next step is to explore whether this securitisation and decline in activism and resources is linked to articulations of (and perceptions of) repression? It is divided into three smaller questions: 1. What specific examples can we see of interaction between authority actors and Hizb ut-Tahrir that constitute repression? 2. How do these form part of broader, long-term patterns of repression? 3. To what extent is this consistent with and further the findings detailed in chapter six regarding the securitisation of discourse and decline around the party?

This chapter will problematise Karagiannis' assertion that, whilst 'branches in most Muslim countries have typically faced severe repression that restricts their activities', Hizb ut-Tahrir 'can freely convey its messages and engage in polemic debates in Western countries'.⁵²⁵ Whilst repression of the party in much of the Islamic world has been significant, members in Britain and Denmark strongly contest the conceptualisation of the West as providing freedom to convey messages and conduct Islamic activism. Whether such charges by the party are 'objectively true' or overstated is, to some extent, irrespective: the resonance of such critical discourse on counter-terrorism by the party, its continued usefulness and its professed shaping of activism by the members suggests that there is a significant perception of threat from counter-terrorism and that its impact on Islamic activism by Hizb ut-Tahrir needs to be better understood.

Firstly, this chapter will use critical terrorism studies and analysis of securitisation processes to understand how authority mechanisms and their perception amongst Hizb members have negatively impacted on the activism of the party. Whilst these differ in form compared to the overt and more violent repression used against the

⁵²⁵ Karagiannis, *The New Political Islam: Human Rights, Democracy and Justice*. p.66

party in the Middle East, they have still contributed towards changing and declining patterns of Islamic activism. Secondly, in contrast to a purely securitisation-based analysis, this chapter will then seek to explore how the party has both contested and co-opted elements of the securitisation processes imposed upon them, using a mechanistic approach to understand tactical change. As well as offering an approach that is neither essentialist nor entirely critical in its analysis, it should help us to understand how the decline of Islamic activism by Hizb ut-Tahrir has occurred within a context of concurrently diminishing political opportunity structures and the rise of softer, 'ambient' forms of repression through interactive, dialectic and mutually responsive processes.

7.2 Boykoff's Repression Mechanisms

This chapter will disaggregate how differences in systemic authority structures and HT tactics have influenced the tool sets used in repressing the party. It will seek to explore perceived instances repression by breaking down authority interactions by using Boykoff's 'middle-level, context-dependent theoretical approach'.⁵²⁶ Boykoff splits repression into the following dynamic mechanisms: 1. Resource Depletion; 2. Stigmatisation; 3. Divisive Disruption; and 4. Intimidation. These reverberate and interact, reinforcing each other in creating the conditions for the demobilisation of contentious actors. When activated, they are diffused to wider communities of activists through a fifth mechanism: Emulation. These are bound together in a constant two-step movement, with the first four mechanisms forming a constellation termed Isolating Mechanisms, which isolate both social movement organisations and individual activists, and the final mechanism of Emulation amplifying the impact.⁵²⁷

Within these mechanisms, Boykoff develops a typology of ten actions – or 'Action Modes' – that authorities engage in to suppress dissent as part of these mechanisms. These consist of the following: 1. Direct violence; 2. Public prosecutions and hearings; 3. Employment deprivation; 4. Surveillance and break-ins; 5. Infiltration, 'badjacketing' and the use of agent provocateurs; 6. 'Black propaganda'; 7. Harassment and harassment arrests; 8. Extraordinary rules and laws; 9. Mass media manipulation; 10. Mass media deprecation.⁵²⁸ To understand repressive interactions between state and HT, this chapter will therefore examine each of these ten Action

⁵²⁶ Boykoff. p.283

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

⁵²⁸ Ibid. p.288

Modes through interviews with HT members, ex-members and CT authorities to assess their relevance to the decline of HT in Britain and Denmark.

7.3 Counterterrorism

In exploring whether action modes of repression are being actualised towards Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark by authorities, firstly this chapter will offer an overview of the development of counter-terrorism to determine how the counterterror strategy has differed between the UK and Danish governments and assess what implications this has for the case studies.

7.3.1 The Development of Counterterrorism in the UK

The UK counterterror strategy has gone through several processes in the context of the *War on Terror* and its subsequent manifestations, many of which have impacted in some way on HTB. Prior to 2000, the main threat determined by UK police in terms of antiterrorism was focused on concern from violence connected with Irish loyalist groups. The Terrorism Act 2000 – a key strategic foundation for current strategy – indicated a shift in determining a broader contemporary working-definition of terrorism that encompassed more diverse perceived threats, enabling subsequent establishment of a wide-range of new police and investigatory powers into civil spheres.⁵²⁹ It also laid the foundations for the British Government's official counterterror strategy (CONTEST), consisting of four central pillars or 'workstreams': Pursue ('to stop terrorist attacks'); Prevent ('to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism'); Protect ('to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack'); and Prepare ('to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack').⁵³⁰ CONTEST was made publicly available in 2006, and

⁵²⁹ Section 1. (1) In this Act "terrorism" means the use or threat of action where: (a) the action falls within subsection (2); (b) the use or threat is designed to influence the government [or an international governmental organisation]^[2] or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, and; (c) the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious[, racial] or ideological cause. (2) Action falls within this subsection if it: (a) involves serious violence against a person; (b) involves serious damage to property; (c) endangers a person's life, other than that of the person committing the action; (d) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public, or; (e) is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system.(3) The use or threat of action falling within subsection (2) which involves the use of firearms or explosives is terrorism whether or not subsection (1)(b) is satisfied.

⁵³⁰ UK Government, "2010 to 2015 Government Policy: Counter-Terrorism," ed. Foreign & Commonwealth Office Cabinet Office, Home Office and Ministry of Justice (gov.uk: UK Government, 2015).

has since undergone revisions in 2009, 2011, 2015 and 2019 gradually shifting towards a preventative approach towards counterterrorism.⁵³¹

Alongside these developments have been changes on the police level: in 2006, the Metropolitan Police Special Branch and the anti-terror branch merged to form a new counterterrorism command unit, SO15. As well as amalgamating units, it shifted policing towards a more intelligence-focussed approach, with British police looking to move away from traditional ‘arrest and prosecute’ styles to incorporate more preventative approaches to ‘terrorist’ attacks. This was deemed particularly prescient following the 2005 London bombings, the 2006 Transatlantic Aeroplane plot, the Tiger Tiger plot, and the Glasgow city airport bombing of 2007, creating the framework for close police and intelligence collaboration and coordination.

*It would be fair to say we are the envy of most of the world in terms of how closely our police units work with our intelligence community... it's allowed police to maintain the link between neighbourhood policing right up to national counterterrorism and intelligence, which is fundamentally important to us and has become even more so in the last four or five years.*⁵³²

Whilst general concern has been raised by Islamic activists about numerous elements of CONTEST, the main concerns comes from the increasing focus on Prevent. Created and added to CONTEST in 2003 and was, for the first few years, underdeveloped in relation to the three other workstreams.

*It's fair to say that first of the ten years ago, the principle areas of the contest strategy were on Pursue and Protect. Prevent, which is now such a key part of our work was very much seen as the misunderstood and the little brother in the relation between the four 'P's'*⁵³³

⁵³¹ Elements of counter-terror and PREVENT powers will be further broadened under the Counter-Terror and Border Security Act (2017-2019), which had its second reading in the House of Lords in October 2018. "Impact Assessment: Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Bill," ed. Home Office (2018).

⁵³² AB, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

⁵³³ AA.

However, with the London bombings and the resultant public launch of CONTEST in 2006, Prevent came to be seen within policy circles as increasingly central, especially with increased focus on counter-extremism programmes alongside the increasing control, by the Home Office, of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.⁵³⁴

Until 2011, Prevent was within the responsibility of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), which funded numerous community projects aimed at countering extremism through the development of greater ‘interculturalism’. However, following a review by the Conservative-led coalition government, the conflation of the promotion of integration with the needs of counterterrorism was criticised as counter-productive and new measures were put in place to refocus counter-extremism on working with public sector institutions where there were perceived risks of radicalisation.⁵³⁵ This culminated in the October 2015 Counter-Extremism Strategy, which brought in the Channel Programme and so-called ‘Prevent Duty’, making it a legal requirement for public bodies to put in place measures for reporting suspected radicalisation.⁵³⁶

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act [2015], I've talked about a number of times when I've been talking at these extremism conferences that are on nearly every week. I think it's been a brilliant piece of legislation for us, just in terms of getting education sector, health sector, probation, to sit round a table together, overcome the difficulties that have existed in the past in information sharing and data protection, and ensuring then that we have proper channels of referral, so that we can be sure that that little grain of information that is sitting with that health professional finds its way to the people that need to assess it properly and deal with it. And, that piece of legislation last year has fundamentally changed the willingness of people to overcome data protection fears. I think that's been a huge difference and change.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁴ Sam Jones, "Home Office Seizes Overseas Counterterror Role," *The Financial Times*, 29th March 2016.; 'I think what we'll start to see is the Foreign Office starting to engage in more upstream programming in terms of looking at capacity building in the country around Prevent legislation, deradicalisation programmes/the CHANNEL programme, I think we'll start to see that emphasis. Certainly, I think the Americans are engaged in delivering deradicalisation programmes upstream. There's no doubt that under Home Office guidance, the FCO will increasingly become involved in that too.'

⁵³⁵ HM Government, "Prevent Strategy," ed. Home Office (UK: UK Government, 2011).

⁵³⁶ "Counter-Extremism Strategy." 'Channel is a multi-agency safeguarding programme which operates throughout England and Wales. In Scotland, the equivalent programme is known as Prevent Professional Concerns. It provides tailored support to people who have been identified as at risk of being drawn into terrorism' Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism (CRRT), "Understanding Contest: The Foundation and the Future," (The Henry Jackson Society 2017).

⁵³⁷ AD, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

Since 2005/6, the UK has increasingly shifted towards a focus on prevention and ‘pre-crime’.⁵³⁸ Whilst the language of the ‘conveyor belt to radicalisation’ have largely been dropped by counterterror officials in recent years, such predictive approaches of a ‘linear progression of an “at-risk” subjectivity to violence’ represent ‘the foundation of Prevent’ and are still heavily inculcated in its language and approach.⁵³⁹ Whilst groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir have not been proscribed, the rhetoric and activism used by the party has fallen well within the scope of wider counter-radicalisation and counter-extremism efforts. Particularly since the passing of the 2015 ‘Prevent Duty’, such preventative approaches have been firmly planted within public institutions, with schools, universities, hospitals and prisons – amongst others – increasingly responsible for preventing ‘vulnerable’ individuals becoming engaged in ‘radicalisation’. This approach has been further embedded with the 2019 Counterterrorism and Boarder Security Bill.

7.3.2 The Development of Counterterrorism in Denmark

Danish CT legislation developed later than that in the UK as, prior to 2001, there was no specific counterterror provision in Denmark, with previous governments either adjusting existing provisions in the Penal Code or adding new provisions – although Denmark had ratified and implemented all but one of the UN conventions on terrorism.⁵⁴⁰ The first stage of counter-terrorism represents the reconceptualisation of terrorism within the West with the start of the 2001 paradigm, with two packages of counter-terror legislation implemented in 2002 and 2006 following the attacks in New York, and London and Madrid, respectively. These set out frameworks for qualifying what was to be recognised as terrorism within Danish law, as well as implanting within the penal code various set responses. The second chronological stage represents how ‘processes of radicalisation’ were conceptualised, with government and community responses formulated. This was seen with the introduction of

⁵³⁸ ‘The counter-terrorism framework incorporates and combines elements of criminal justice and national security, giving rise to a number of tensions. One key tension is between the ideal of impartial criminal justice and the politically charged concept of national security. Pre-crime counter-terrorism measures can be traced through a number of interlinking historical trajectories including the wars on crime and drugs, criminalisation and, more fundamentally, in colonial strategies of domination, control and repression’. McCulloch and Pickering.

⁵³⁹ Lauren Powell, “Counter-Productive Counter-Terrorism: How Is the Dysfunctional Discourse of Prevent Failing to Restrain Radicalisation?,” *Journal for Deradicalisation* 8 (2016). p.51; cf. Arun Kundnani, “Radicalisation: The Journey of a Concept,” *Race and Class* 54, no. 2 (2012); *A Decade Lost: Rethinking Radicalisation and Extremism* (London: Claystone, 2015); Jonathan Githens-Mazer and Robert Lambert, “Quilliam on Prevent: The Wrong Diagnosis,” *The Guardian*, 19th October 2009 2009.

⁵⁴⁰ Erling Johannes Husabø and Bruce Ingvild, *Fighting Terrorism through Multilevel Criminal Legislation: Security Council Resolution 1373, the Eu Framework Decision on Combatting Terrorism and Their Implementation in Nordic, Dutch and German Criminal Law* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2009). p.76

the 2009 Action Plan, which focused on a cognitive and behavioural approach to understanding radicalisation.⁵⁴¹

The third stage represents a detachment of ideas of radicalisation from concepts of active citizenship and integration, in favour of preventing the consequences of radicalisation through a three-pronged strategy of mentoring, counselling and education, and exiting from violent extremism.⁵⁴² This has been coupled with the third counter-terror package of 2015, which set out increased means of monitoring and sharing information on perceived threats, as well as strengthening initiatives within correctional institutions, at home and abroad.⁵⁴³

The first tranche of contemporary counter-terror legislation was implemented in Denmark in 2002. It was conceived in the aftermath of the 2001 attacks in New York and the subsequent repositioning of Western foreign policy towards the *War on Terror* and shaped by the November 2001 general election. This election cycle is distinct in that it marked a departure from traditional Danish politics, witnessing a shift in mainstream discourse away from traditional sites of contestation concerning distribution - taxation, welfare and economy – and towards what was termed a ‘new politics’ concerned with identity and values - immigration, integration and security.⁵⁴⁴ It also marked a shift in the conceptualisation of how Danish identity was discussed at a national-political level, with discourse on immigration growing in prevalence shifting from concepts of assimilation towards those of integration.⁵⁴⁵ It was within this context that the 2001 election saw Denmark’s main party become the right-wing *Venstre* for the first time since 1924, and created the first outright majority for right-leaning parties since 1901. This prevalence of centre-right party politics within Folketinget between 2001 and 2015 has greatly shaped patterns of discourse and legislation regarding counter-terror law in Denmark.

When the 2002 counter-terror legislation entered law as a legislative package, it established for the first time a set of offences and penalties related solely and entirely to terrorist activity. This came with the insertion of

⁵⁴¹ This was greatly revised in 2011-2012 following the election of a new government and, by 2014, much of the initial plan had been formally dropped, although core measures still yet remain in place (Lindekilde & Sedgwick 2012: 31)

⁵⁴² Margit Helle Thomsen, "Afradikalisering – Måltrettet Intervention. Rapport over Danske Piloterfaringer Med Afrikalisering Og Forebyggelse Af Ekstremisme [Deradicalisation: Targeted Intervention. Report on Danish Pilot-Experiences with Deradicalisation and Prevention of Extremism]," (Copenhagen: MHT Consul for the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, 2012). p.5

⁵⁴³ Richard McNeil-Willson, "Between Trust and Oppression: Contemporary Counter-Terror Politics in Denmark," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Counterterrorism Policy*, ed. Scott N. Romaniuk, et al. (London: Palgrave MacMillan UK, 2017).

⁵⁴⁴ Lise Togeby, "Man Har Et Standpunkt...Om Stabilitet of Forandring I Befolkningens Holdninger [You Have a Standpoint...on the Stability and Change in the Attitudes of Danes].," (Folketinget, Magtudredningen Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2004). pp.37-44

⁵⁴⁵ Lasse Lindekilde and Mark Sedgwick, "Impact of Counter-Terrorism on Communities: Denmark Background Report," (Open Society Foundations & Institute of Strategic Dialogue, 2012). p.55

Section 114 into Chapter 13 of the Penal Code which brought together a statutory definition of ‘terrorism’.⁵⁴⁶ As well as defining terrorism, Section 114 set out the offence and punishment for terrorist acts (114), terrorism-like offences (114a), financing and support of terrorism (114b), recruitment (114c), training (114d) and facilitation (114e), as well a separate clause on incitement to commit terrorist acts (Section 136).⁵⁴⁷ This legislation was adopted almost verbatim from the EU Common Position 931 (2001) and Framework Decision 475 (2002), in spite of the opt-out Denmark continues to maintain with regards to EU rulings on issues of ‘freedom, security and justice’.⁵⁴⁸ The second package of legislation in 2006 was shaped by the Madrid (2004) and London (2005) bombings, as well as the impact of the Jyllands-Posten ‘Cartoon Controversy’, and acted to widen the scope of counterterror law in response to an increased perception of the threat from ‘home-grown’ violent extremism.⁵⁴⁹ This expanded criminal law with regards to intent, further enabling the prosecution of individuals participating in actions that may be used in or in support of the act of terrorism, as well as facilitating greater powers of intelligence sharing between the PET and the FE.⁵⁵⁰

Since 2001, Denmark – as with Britain – has moved increasingly towards the direction of early intervention.⁵⁵¹ Whilst the two packages of counterterror legislation shaped the legal framework for responding to terrorist acts, the January 2009 *A Common and Safe Future Action Plan* marked the first time that a significant attempt was made to conceptualise a stronger set of measures to prevent individuals becoming socially and ideologically drawn into terrorism. Largely grounded within the disputed ‘conveyor belt theory’ – which sees radicalisation as part of a gradual process of accepting the ideas and methods of extremism – it put focus on the role which ideology plays for the individual actor.⁵⁵² As such, extremism became explicitly linked with supporting anti-democratic ideologies, intolerant views and hostile imagery, whilst the concept of Danish identity becomes linked with a certain set of ‘liberal’ beliefs. The focus of such prevention strategies therefore focused on means

⁵⁴⁶ This enumerated a number of different offences - including homicide, grave assault, and deprivation of liberty - when committed to intimidate a population, government or international organization, or else destabilize or destroy the social order. Jørn Vestergaard, "The Legal Framework Applicable to Combatting Terrorism – National Report: Denmark: Evaluation Study of the Legal Framework Applicable to Combatting Terrorism," (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2013). p.4.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid. p.8

⁵⁴⁸ Lindekilde and Sedgwick. p.19

⁵⁴⁹ Mark Sedgwick, "The Concept of Radicalisation as a Source of Confusion," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 22, no. 4 (2010); Bigo Didier and Anastassia Tsoukala, *Terror, Insecurity and Liberty: Illiberal Practices of Liberal Regimes after 9/11* (London: Routledge, 2008).

⁵⁵⁰ Vestergaard. p.3

⁵⁵¹ Lindekilde and Sedgwick. p.25

⁵⁵² Ann-Sophie Hemmingsen and Stéphanie Jeanneret Andreassen, "Radicalisation in Europe: A Post 9/11 Perspective" (DIIS, Copenhagen, 2007).

of strengthening resilience to extremism through upholding and developing Denmark as a democratic and equal society.

The September 2014 Action Plan revised much of its 2009 predecessor, abandoning many key elements and redefining the national approach towards radicalisation to account for changes in the landscape of perceived security threats. Whilst it still puts focus on the ideological components of extremism – such as the rejection of ‘fundamental democratic values and norms, or non-acceptance of democratic decision-making processes’ – it does offer a more cautious construction of radicalisation as ‘not a clearly defined concept’ in which ‘there are no simple causal relationships’.⁵⁵³ The revised action plan sets out several preventative approaches towards violent extremism, particularly an inter-agency collaborative approach, as well as setting out the four key priorities for challenging extremism: greater involvement by local authorities; new tools for prevention and exit work; enhanced international partnerships; and mobilising civil society.⁵⁵⁴ The plan also provides scope for increasingly securitised measures, including the confiscation of passports (introduced into Danish law on 1st June 2015), travel bans, the loss of residence permits, and prison terms and possible deportation.

The third and most recent package of counter-terrorism, entitled ‘A strong defence against terror’ (*Et stærkt værn mod terror*), was presented by the Danish Government on 19th February 2015, coming in the aftermath of the attacks in Paris on 7th January 2015 and the shooting in Copenhagen on 14th February 2015.⁵⁵⁵ This package shifted the focus of CT legislation towards expanding surveillance measures through new powers for intelligence services, with six of the twelve measures detailed related specifically to surveillance, particularly on the monitoring of Danish nationals abroad, focusing measures on those who travel to Syria to fight for prohibited organisations.⁵⁵⁶ As well as marking a significant increase in the power of surveillance activity, the bill also lowered the standards required for monitoring.⁵⁵⁷ Such discourse again focused on the existential threat that

⁵⁵³ Government of Denmark, "Prevention of Radicalisation and Extremism: Action Plan," ed. The Ministry of Justice (2014). p.5

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.* pp.6-7

⁵⁵⁵ "Et Stærkt Værn Mod Terror: 12 Nye Tiltag Mod Terror [a Strong Defence against Terror]," ed. Ministry of Justice (2015).

⁵⁵⁶ As part of the measures, law L 200 for the amendment of Act No. 602 (2013) was proposed in the Parliament, which gave the FE increased powers to engage in electronic monitoring of Danish communications on its own initiative.

⁵⁵⁷ This was altered from that of a ‘presumed suspect’ (Administration of Justice Act 2013) to that of having ‘specific reasons to believe’ that an individual ‘may be engaging in activities that may involve or increase a terrorist threat against Denmark and Danish interests’.

terrorism is presumed to have on Danish society, looking to counter the 'violent forces [who] want to attack our democracy and our freedom'.⁵⁵⁸

In policing terms, the main actor interacting with HTS on a localised level is the *Politiets Efterretningstjeneste* (PET), the intelligence service of the police, described by one interviewee as:

*...legally a part of the police, but they don't really see themselves as part of the police. The police department really don't like the PET, mainly because when the government gives funds to the police, they have to divide it, so they don't get all of the funding. And the more they talk about terrorism and these things, and Islam and extremism, the PET will get more.*⁵⁵⁹

British and Danish counterterrorism are therefore similar in many respects, aligning through a broadly preventative approach to terrorism by looking to prevent early signs of 'radicalisation' and provide support for those displaying signs of 'vulnerability'. However, the Danish approach – typified in the 'Aarhus model' – demonstrates a far more 'joined-up' approach within counterterrorism that aims to utilise existing support structures – alongside the greater safety net of the Danish state – to support individuals identified as 'at risk' through access to counselling, training and rehabilitation. In Britain, much of this has been displaced to non-governmental support or counter-extremism organisations. Crucially, Britain also operates a more sophisticated set of counterterror authorities, heavily reliant on intelligence and built on greater structural development of intelligence gathering.

I think when you talk about Denmark, I think it's worth appreciating that Britain has a much more sophisticated intelligence service. And its modus operandi and experience with Islamist movements is very different. They're very new to this game. Whereas Britain, it's history in the Muslim world, 100s of years of involvement. And with the IRA as well. It's got a different level of sophistication

⁵⁵⁸ Denmark, "Et Stærkt Værn Mod Terror: 12 Nye Tiltag Mod Terror [a Strong Defence against Terror]."

⁵⁵⁹ AJ, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

*and also political sophistication on how to manoeuvre and deal with these movements. The Danish Government, on the other hand, doesn't have that ...*⁵⁶⁰

Meanwhile, in terms of discussion over counterterrorism and counter-extremism implementation, Denmark has been more reliant on issues of Danish identity for identifying extremism, whilst in Britain language has been more focussed on cultural interaction. Both have increasingly moved towards the language of 'safeguarding' and 'vulnerability' with regards to extremism. These differences should be accounted when contrasting counterterror mechanisms and the creation of the perception of repression in Britain and Denmark.

7.4 Action Modes of Repression

Having offered an overview of some of the differing process involved in the development and establishment of structures of counterterrorism in Britain and Denmark, the next task is to explore the perception of their articulation by Hizb ut-Tahrir members. By examining interviews with members and combining them with discussions with security officials and public records, we can detail the extent to which there is evidence that repression mechanisms – or mechanisms which have resulted in the perception of repression by HT members and activists – have been enacted. These are incidents whereby Hizb ut-Tahrir members have expressed specific concerns about certain actions that have been taken by officials against the party and there is some evidence that these concerns are based on significant authority tactics.

The extent to which this research shows evidence of the ten actions of repression, as outlined by Boykoff, can be examined individually to determine to what extent can we see perceived instances of these ten action modes of repression from interviews with Hizb ut-Tahrir members in Britain and Denmark. From this, we can disaggregate tactical shifts or organisational changes in response to these interactions. Each perceived repression mechanism will be examined using interviews with Hizb ut-Tahrir members, before being compared against statements from intelligence services, police and politicians. This will give us some idea of which action modes are impacting on the members of the party and how.

⁵⁶⁰ AK, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

The following findings were developed through interviews with members on their experience of authority counterterror measures when compared with Boykoff's Action Modes of repression. What research suggests is that, in Britain, action modes have been highly targeted against individuals deemed problematic and not against the HTS, whilst in Denmark action modes have been used to target the group specifically, as detailed in the following exploration of the individual action modes.

Fig. 30: Reported Action Modes of Repression (UK and Denmark)

Action Mode of Repression	UK (Perceived)	DNK (Perceived)
1. <i>Direct violence</i>	No	No
2. <i>Public prosecutions and hearings</i>	Yes	Yes
3. <i>Employment deprivation</i>	No	Yes
4. <i>Surveillance and break-ins</i>	No	Yes
5. <i>Infiltration, blackjacketing & agent provocateurs</i>	Yes	No
6. <i>Black propaganda</i>	No	No
7. <i>Harassment and harassment arrests</i>	Yes	Yes
8. <i>Extraordinary rules and laws</i>	No	Yes
9. <i>Mass media manipulation</i>	Yes	Yes
10. <i>Mass media deprecation</i>	Yes	Yes

7.4.1 Action Mode 1: Direct violence

Fig. 31: Action Mode 1 – Direct Violence

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
1. <i>Direct violence</i>	No	No

In study of repression, direct violence has often been framed as its central, sometimes only, articulation, leading to greater focus on the more visible, spatial forms of repression in regimes where it is more overt. From the

Battle of Orgreave in 1984 against British miners, to the violence at the World Trade Organisation talks in Seattle, to the more recent ‘kettling’ tactics in the UK which led to the death of Ian Tomlinson at the 2009 G-20 London protests, direct violence is a tactic which has been utilised by authorities towards social movement challengers in the West. However, the use of violence as a tactic by European police forces – largely from British approaches – has declined in recent years, in favour of new, targeted approaches which seek to prevent trouble from occurring prior to any large-scale activist events.⁵⁶¹ Individuals deemed to be more likely to incite violence are directly disrupted before any protest has occurred, whilst freedoms have been provided for activists to air grievances through managed protest, limiting the use of large-scale, public police violence. With reference to Islamic activism, this is certainly an approach confirmed in interviews with British police forces, who stressed the interactive element of working with, rather than against, organisations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir who wish to hold public forms of activism, particularly in facilitating party protests and demonstrations within the confines of the law.⁵⁶²

Whereas we used to try to prevent big events or rallies by Hizb ut-Tahrir or other such groups, we’ve changed our policing approach to allow these groups to air their grievances but try and prevent troublemakers from attending by picking them up beforehand or putting restraints on their involvement. This has been pretty successful. Now, we wouldn’t be looking to stop events happening but to instead manage their potential for causing problems.⁵⁶³

There are no examples of direct violence taken against Hizb ut-Tahrir by authorities, either in Britain or in Denmark. In fact, regarding police action, HT members and activists generally held a positive image of the police forces in both Britain and Denmark. In Denmark, where trust in police is considered one of the highest in Europe, HTS media spokespeople saw the police as happy to grant them opportunities to protest and even went so far

⁵⁶¹ Porta, "Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing of Protest."

⁵⁶² ‘... we have a community engagement team that used to be called the Muslim Contact Unit, although thankfully that’s changed as the threat’s changed to recognise that it’s not as specifically Islamist threat. So, they will deal with right wing groups, left wing groups, and Islamist groups. Their role is to maintain engagement with group leaders - so at the moment, when I’m talking about this, I’m talking about organisations that aren’t proscribed organisations - so, they maintain contact with them, predominantly around facilitating the right to protest, making sure that if they are protesting, they’re doing it within the bounds of the law, that the threat is properly assessed, we get an idea of how many people are turning up, a lot of information can be passed through the public order branch. So, it’s as much about protecting they’re right to demonstrate, making sure that there are police around to protect them from extreme right-wing elements, as it is about making sure that they are not breaking the law. So that’s one aspect that is important, about engagement. We do community tensions.’ AB.

⁵⁶³ AA.

as to suggest that the Danish police forces were pleased to have HT conducting anti-gang measures in Copenhagen.⁵⁶⁴

*The police department itself, we've never had any problem with. When we make a protest, we have to get approval from the police first. The police will give this to us instantly. And they have praised us a lot of times. Our protests are always peaceful, very organised, there are all sorts of police official which have said that Hizb ut-Tahrir has helped a lot in some gang issues, recently.*⁵⁶⁵

This was predicated on recent spikes in gang crime and violence – including several fatal shootings taking place in Superkilen, close to al Faruq Mosque – and growing concern in Copenhagen at problems caused by the Loyal to Familia (LTF), a gang with a strong base in the area. Representatives of Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia were keen to stress that the work of party in local communities had helped to bring individuals out of gangs, thereby reducing crime in the city.⁵⁶⁶

In Britain, where there is less trust reported in police forces in comparison to Denmark, a broadly positive view was also taken by spokespeople and members by HTB. Much of the interactions between party and police were seen to take place positively at demonstrations and public activist events.

They send two policemen to actually police an entire demonstration, they don't really send a big force. When you see a socialist party demonstration, there's tonnes of them. Police everywhere. Any they're doing that 'kettling' thing. And they're literally trying to incite violence. You can see them actually hitting – I've been there, at the back, it's a frightening place to be, I wanted to run away. The way the police are engaging with protestors, they're not trying to keep it peaceful, they're trying to incite it so it gets discredited as a violent demonstration. They never do that to us, because it just doesn't work. And usually we have a nice chat with the policemen and they come,

⁵⁶⁴ Lindekilde and Sedgwick. pp.39-41

⁵⁶⁵ HN, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

⁵⁶⁶ 'People of an ethnic background. And the police have said that if it wasn't for Hizb ut-Tahrir, we would have a lot more Muslims being in these gangs, because they give them an Islamic identity which helps them go in a different direction than being criminals. So, I know for sure that the police department itself doesn't have a problem with Hizb ut-Tahrir, we haven't experienced any problems with them.'

you know, and they're very civil. I think that's the biggest thing – they have nothing to fear from us in terms of actual direct fear.⁵⁶⁷

As such, we can quickly rule out violence completely from any repressive processes used or seen to be used to contain Islamic activism by problematised groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark. However, the lack of instances of violence does not mean that repression has not been used, particularly within a counterterror context, where it is increasingly understood as being articulated in numerous covert ways beyond direct violence. What this suggests is that social movement organisations can build broadly positive relations with police forces and authority actors and still face repression – an interesting caveat in reconceptualising 'softer' formations of repression.

7.4.2 Action Mode 2: Public Prosecutions and Hearings

Fig. 32: Action Mode 2 – Public prosecutions and hearings

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
2. <i>Public prosecutions and hearings</i>	Yes	Yes

The second of Boykoff's action modes is public prosecutions and hearings used against activists to suppress dissent, which he sees as having two aims: firstly, it persuades activists to drop or put on hold their activism; and secondly, it discourages supporters or bystanders from align their views or activism with the dissidents.⁵⁶⁸ This leads to a degradation of the reputation of the accused group or individual, toxifying and isolating their activism. There are some examples of public prosecutions and hearings against Islamic activists which have taken place in relation to Hizb ut-Tahrir. The arrests and trial of Parveen and Zahid Sharif, whose brother Omar Sharif was one of two suicide bombers of the 'Mike's Place' Tel Aviv bombing in 2003, were partly predicated upon close ties to the party, with reports from their trial stating:

⁵⁶⁷ HE.

⁵⁶⁸ Boykoff. p.289

The Crown had suggested that when assessing how much the sister and brother knew [of the bomb plot], members of the jury should consider that in both of their homes police found material from the extremist Muslim intellectual group, Hizb ut-Tahrir.⁵⁶⁹

However, in both Britain and Denmark, the public hearing that has perhaps had one of the biggest impacts on HT tactics and decline has been the discussion over HT's proscription. In the UK, a governmental ban on the party has been raised at various points throughout the past few decades due to fears that it was providing a gateway to extremism and terrorist-style violence.⁵⁷⁰ Concerns about HT have come from British and Danish CT officials, the party seen by some as implicitly linked to terrorism through their ideological stances.

The goal of Hizb ut-Tahrir is they want the Caliphate. And the goal of some of the other more extremist groups is that they also want the Caliphate. So maybe Hizb ut-Tahrir is saying, 'we're here, we have this democracy and maybe we use these steps to get to that goal'. And the other groups they want these steps, but in the end, you want the same thing. So, in the end, if you're already buying in to this common interest, maybe you start of in one place, but you swap because you want the same thing. It could be a steppingstone, and the other factors that I said. To some, HT would lead people to changing tack for the same goal.⁵⁷¹

Particular concern was raised over HT's potential role as a gateway towards violence, with activists from the party viewed as more likely to go on to be involved in terrorist-style plots or attacks in the future.

Groups like HT and al-Muhajiroun radicalise the so-called "seekers" through a process by which individuals adopt radicalism as an alternative to previously held beliefs. A good way to understand how people become radicalised is to think of the process as a stepladder, where each step up the

⁵⁶⁹ Steele.

⁵⁷⁰ 'I don't think it's controversial to say that someone who is seduced by extremist thinking is more likely to join friends who share that thinking, who can then become more and more living in a bubble and radicalised over time and can become so radicalised that they think that taking up violence is a legitimate form of protest.' AG.

⁵⁷¹ AN, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

*ladder brings individuals to further radicalisation. The process is methodical, and individuals make a conscious choice at each step. They are free to step up or down at any point.*⁵⁷²

However, there are a variety of voices and opinions amongst different authority actors as to whether HT plays a role in the 'radicalising' Islamist activists or, rather, discourages individuals from engagement in 'terrorist-style' activity.

*If you speak to some of my colleagues, many of them would certainly say that Hizb ut-Tahrir help in radicalising some, but I would disagree. In fact, in some senses, it is the opposite – if you end up in Hizb ut-Tahrir, you are probably not going to do much beyond talking. If you're someone looking for extremism and you become involved with Hizb ut-Tahrir, you'll most likely leave pretty quickly and go somewhere else instead.*⁵⁷³

With the Haggard and Rose report at the Kingston hearing in 2007 – in which both Hizb ut-Tahrir and al Muhajiroun were assessed in terms of the threat posed to British society and whether they should consequently face proscription – the party were ultimately found to pose negligible threat in the UK.

*The conclusions of the report were that both of these organisations were fifth columnist organisations, Hizb ut-Tahrir were more interested in political discourse, al Muhajiroun were basically just doing anything for publicity - bang on the money really for both of them.*⁵⁷⁴

This was backed up by the findings of Bruce Holder, then Chairman of the Bar Council's public affairs committee, in response to the anti-terror plans in 2005 under the government of Tony Blair.⁵⁷⁵ Subsequent Whitehall reports in 2010 further confirmed that the party was 'not a gateway to terrorism', with research from civil servants

⁵⁷² Baran, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Islam's Political Insurgency."

⁵⁷³ AL.

⁵⁷⁴ XC.

⁵⁷⁵ 'The Bar Council has yet to come out with its definitive response but Bruce Houlder was able to produce an initial reply... The proscribing of more radical organisations – such as Hizb ut-Tahrir (already banned in Germany) and al Muhajiroun (accused of fomenting hatred against non-Muslims) is something of a grey[] area, though not really a bone of legal contention. Houlder says: 'That is a judgement call.' But ultimately it's unlikely to achieve its purpose. The groups will go underground and continue to meet. In principle, there can be nothing wrong with banning groups that can be shown to be proselytizing in that way. We have had some experience of that here but it didn't stop the Real IRA or the IRA'. LNB News, "Terror Plans Spark Human Rights Fears," news release, 15th August, 2005.

finding that the party could operate as a ‘safety valve’ for those looking to get involved in so-called ‘terrorist’ activity.⁵⁷⁶ Any attempt to ban the organisation in the UK, it was concluded, also risked making a tactical error which would ultimately boost the organisation’s credibility and risk glorifying the party beyond its current capacity.⁵⁷⁷

I think this organisation has been losing ground over the years. It's lost a lot of credibility and now by this announcement it might make their popularity rise more. It is a failing organisation which really shouldn't have been on our Government's radar screen.⁵⁷⁸

Whilst a proposed ban in Britain and Denmark has been ruled to be both legally and tactically problematic, the discussions over the ban have impacted on the way in which Hizb ut-Tahrir has conducted activism, particularly in Britain:

The threat to ban the organisation was by far the biggest problem, the biggest event to hit HTB. And they still haven't recovered from this.⁵⁷⁹

Concern over the loss of the UK branch’s freedom to operate – particularly considering their wide networks, ability to raise funding and its significant media capability, which has seen it act as a central cog in the English-language translation, publication and dissemination of Hizb ut-Tahrir literature – has encouraged the party to seek to stay within the confines of legality.

I recall attending a member's meeting after the 9/11 terror attacks, in which UK leadership instructed the fraternity to ‘manufacture positive and negative stereotypes’ in order to dilute the

⁵⁷⁶ Andrew Gilligan, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir Is Not a Gateway to Terrorism, Claims Whitehall Report," *The Daily Telegraph*, 25th July 2010.

⁵⁷⁷ 'As the new Terrorism Act officially comes into force, MPs, lawyers and a host of Muslim groups voiced their continued opposition to provisions in the Act that outlaw the ‘glorification’ of terrorism. The Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn said: “The legislation is misguided and the whole concept of glorification is frankly absurd, and will end up entrapping the innocent and preventing legitimate debate.” The Muslim Safety Forum (MSF) an umbrella group of over 30 Muslim organisations released a statement saying, “The Clause on Glorification of Terrorism threatens to criminalise non-violent organisations, groups, Imams and individuals for supporting legitimate causes around the world and expressing political opinion.” Azad Ali, chair of the MSF said, “We have submitted over half a dozen examples where we feel innocent acts carried out by Muslims will fall foul of the law, this includes for example praying for those that are standing up against oppression and illegal occupation”.’ Ruth Winstone and Ben Smith, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir and Proscribed Organisations," ed. International Affairs and Defence Section (London: Houses of Commons, 2007).

⁵⁷⁸ Telegraph, "Reaction to Anti-Terror Plans," *The Telegraph*, 5th August 2005.

⁵⁷⁹ XD.

*threat HT pose. Ultimately, the aim of such actions was to avoid any form of legal sanction against HT in the UK.*⁵⁸⁰

HTB has maintained a strong reliance on its branding in literature and at public activist events, the loss of which would be hugely problematic for the party to replicate or respond to. The proscription of ALM, furthermore, has sent a clear warning to HTB that their freedom to conduct activism has significant limitations; in Denmark, meanwhile, only one association has been banned in the last 70 years – the gang *Loyal to Familia*, in a decision taken in 2018 that is constantly under review.⁵⁸¹

HT Scandinavia Committee Member: *There's always threats about banning us [in Denmark], as there are in the UK. And it's affected the British branch a lot; it's made them withdraw and be very careful about what they say. It hasn't happened here though.*

Researcher: *Why do you think that is?*

HTS Committee Member: *Because the [Danish] Brothers don't care [about being banned]. We just don't care...*⁵⁸²

The de-escalation of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain from contentious forms of activism has resulted in a long-term détente developing between HTB and counterterror officials in the Home Office and police, enabling the party to continue its operations but in a manner in which it has become, in effect, self-policing.

If you look at the record, the [UK] Government has got enough from multiple HT declarations in the UK to at least have gone after them and maybe to proscribe them. There's enough evidence; the literature is full of evidence as to why they could be banned. But the British Government has deliberately accepted that there's a separate British arm [of Hizb ut-Tahrir], a British arm that hasn't been closed by counter-terror legislation, even whilst they're still uploading all of these

⁵⁸⁰ Wali, *Radicalism Unveiled*. p.43

⁵⁸¹ Stephen Gadd, "Ltf Gang Ban: Five Already Charged with Contravening It," *Copenhagen Post*, 6th September 2018.

⁵⁸² HL, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, Copenhagen.

articles online from their central leadership which are anti-Jewish, anti-Israel. They don't hide anything, it's still there - all the anti-Semitic stuff - it's still there for people to see.⁵⁸³

Interviews with members also hinted at a form of reciprocity operating between Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain and British authorities, keeping the party in step with counterterrorism legislation.

I think they think they can use us. And in a way they may be, we have – it's difficult for us, it's not an easy game to play, when you're trying not to be used by the media, who are making you the bogey-man everyone else hates. You have to be cautious. How much do I play into their agenda? At the moment they find us more useful than actually harmful, to their agenda, so we are not being threatened openly with being banned... This is politics, we have to stay abreast of it, but you can't control every eventuality, we just have to do our best.⁵⁸⁴

HTB can therefore be understood as responding to public prosecutions and hearings around threats to ban the party by de-escalating activism and, to a certain extent, privately institutionalising the party. To avoid facing the threat of proscription, HTB has placed limitations on its activities to ensure its continued legal operation. This has led to a trade-off in building and maintaining its profile in the UK as a vibrant activist group, impacting on recruitment and support. However, it has also been successful in preventing the rise of discussion over proscription since 2010 in the UK. In contrast, the Danish branch, with a far more limited international reach, a smaller party body and membership, and a less crucial role in the creation and dissemination of media, has not withdrawn from contentious forms activism to the same extent, even welcoming the threat of the ban.

The natural state of Hizb ut-Tahrir is to be banned. In Muslim countries, where al Hizb was established, we are banned there. So, it's our natural state to be banned. If we were banned, it wouldn't be any shock to us. If they did something, I would say it would only make us more strong because it would confirm our believes even more that they are hypocrites, that freedom of speech is just a term that is used when you want to use it as a tool and that democracy is just a word that

⁵⁸³ XB.

⁵⁸⁴ HE.

is used to conceal the real issues from the people... So, going to try and ban us legally only confirms our beliefs, even more than before, and will only make us more strong.⁵⁸⁵

As such, we can see that there has been the perception of public prosecutions and hearings in Britain and Denmark, particularly from the threat of governmental proscription of the party. However, the threat of banning has led to the British branch retreating from public activism, whilst the Danish branch has continued to prioritise public and sometimes contentious activism.

7.4.3 Action Mode 3: Employment Deprivation

Fig. 33: Action Mode 3 – Employment Deprivation

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
3. <i>Employment deprivation</i>	No	Yes

The third repression action mode outlined by Boykoff is employment deprivation, which involves the ‘deliberate threat of being deprived of one’s job and/or the actual loss of employment because of one’s political beliefs’.⁵⁸⁶ Whilst the political views or organisational affiliations are often the central cause of the loss of employment, this motive can remain concealed by other reasons which avoid making explicit political references. It is possible to discern, however, individual and uncoordinated examples of employment deprivation against HT members, particularly in Denmark, where members reported being far more likely to suffer from employment deprivation as a direct reaction to public knowledge of party membership, whilst examples in the UK were limited to very specific contexts whereby a conflict of interest arose.

One example of Danish employment deprivation is Naji Dyndgaard – who played a key role in the establishment of the al Faruq mosque as head of the umbrella organisation *Foreningen for Islamisk Kultur og Viden* – fired from his job as a teacher (‘mainly woodwork and geography’) at al Quds Islamic friskole [free school] following revelations about his involvement in Hizb ut-Tahrir and the sharing of a controversial Facebook post. An initial

⁵⁸⁵ HK.

⁵⁸⁶ Boykoff. p.289

social media post – in which members of the Israeli Defence Force were referred to as ‘Jews... acting like animals’ – led to an investigation being published by the newspaper BT entitled ‘Lærer på dansk friskole: Jøder opfører sig som dyr’ [*Teacher in Danish School: Jews behave like animals*].⁵⁸⁷ Dyndgaard took the newspaper to an independent complaints commission claiming his views had been misrepresented, winning the case. As a result, the newspaper issued a public retraction, but Dyndgaard reported receiving anonymous death threats and a disinterested Danish police response.⁵⁸⁸ A second article from BT followed entitled ‘Dansk lærer bag had-moské’ [*Danish Teacher behind the Hate Mosque*]⁵⁸⁹ and, after a meeting with the headteacher of the school his employment was terminated.

Such employment discrimination had also affected his wife. A nurse, she had been suspended – according to Dyndgaard – for five weeks following the media revelations about her husband, coupled with the refusal to remove traditional ‘Islamic’ dress whilst on duty. The event had, according to Dyndgaard, ‘led to a newspaper report and national discussion on the standardising of nurse’s clothing’ and, as a result, Dyndgaard’s wife was given increasingly sparse shifts. This was not just an instance of discrimination against practicing Danish Muslims but, according to Dyndgaard, took place in a context of greater scrutiny of her husband’s role in al Faruq mosque and the couple’s public participation in Hizb ut-Tahrir activism. It had led to a deterioration in the couple’s finances and to Dyndgaard increasingly seeking to leave Denmark as ‘it’s impossible to live here and act in accordance with my beliefs’.⁵⁹⁰

*Many brothers have lost their jobs for being members. One brother was working with Syrian refugees, on a support programme, and as soon as his employers found out, he lost his job, instantly.*⁵⁹¹

Other instances of individuals losing their jobs following employers finding out their status as members include: another Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia member who lost his position working with a refugee charity in Copenhagen; one who lost his restaurant because the landlord refused to mend broken pipes ‘after he found out he was a

⁵⁸⁷ Jacob Friberg and Andreas Karker, "Lærer På Dansk Friskole: Jøder Opfører Sig Som Dyr," *BT*, 8th August 2017.

⁵⁸⁸ : ‘What have you lost? Money? If it’s not money, then we can’t help you’. Interview with Naji Dyndgaard, Copenhagen (2017)

⁵⁸⁹ Uffe Jørgensen Odde and Jesper Vestergaard Larsen, "Dansk Lærer Bag Had-Moské," *BT*, 24th February 2017.

⁵⁹⁰ Interview with Naji Dyndgaard, Copenhagen (2017)

⁵⁹¹ Interview with Naji Dyndgaard, Copenhagen (2017)

member of the Hizb'; and another whose pay was suspended as a caretaker in a school, before being replaced, after being 'outed' as an HTS member to the school board.

Such accounts clearly represent the aggrieved party's account of events but there are public attempts to block or prevent members from accessing professional roles in Denmark because of their involvement with the HTS. In 2016, the Danish newspaper *Ekstra Bladet* published an article arguing that the then HTS spokesperson Junes Kock and fellow member Govahram Kadkhodaie should be removed from a role as IT engineer for the National Health Platform, owing to it containing 'sensitive' healthcare data on Danes.⁵⁹² Frank Jensen, former Operating Director of PET, confirmed this was 'dangerous' due to HT ideology in favour of a different system of governance, claiming that serious questions should be raised over whether information accessed during their employment is now in the hands of those that wish to see harm to the Danish state.⁵⁹³

In the UK, examples given by members were more limited and were largely found to have occurred in response to a direct conflict of interest arising once they were found to be members of the party. In one instance, the termination of Dilpazier Aslam's traineeship with The Guardian newspaper took place following the publication of an incendiary article by Aslam in the immediate aftermath of the London bombings. Another example was concern raised over Hizb ut-Tahrir member Abid Javaid's position as senior executive officer at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in the Home Office, where sensitive asylum claims are processed.⁵⁹⁴

Such accounts can clearly be overexaggerated or misrepresented by members to suggest a causal link between party membership and termination of employment that may not be there. However, that public statements in the Danish press confirm the problematisation of HTS members in public roles suggests that we should take this concern by members seriously.

7.4.4 Action Mode 4: Surveillance and break-ins

⁵⁹² Thomas Gösta Svensson and Kristian Kornø, "Region Hovedstaden Hyrer Hizb Ut-Tahrir Topfolk," *Ekstrabladet*, 18th December 2016.

⁵⁹³ Simone Agger, "Tidligere Pet-Chef Om Ansættelse Af Hizb-Ut-Tahrir-Topfolk: Noget Er Gået Helt Galt," *TV2*, 18th December 2016.

⁵⁹⁴ BBC, "Reid to Examine Extremist Claims," *BBC*, 15th November 2006.

Fig. 34: Action Mode 4 – Surveillance and break-ins

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
4. Surveillance and break-ins	No	Yes

Surveillance is one of the most common action modes of repression by the state because of its ability to generate wide impacts at relatively small cost and range from electronic surveillance through to overt public monitoring. There are some reported examples of surveillance against HT and no recorded examples of break-ins. However, as with several reports on such action modes by members, perception of surveillance far outpaces available evidence. In Denmark, a high level of concern was expressed about active surveillance practices against the party, whilst in Britain this was more limited. Danish members cited public statements from politicians to demonstrate the grounds for their concern.

... a politician - I don't remember which minister it was - told the newspaper that the PET has Hizb under surveillance. And they confirmed it the year after. And they didn't give a reason for it – because it's a legal organisation, why are they putting us under surveillance?⁵⁹⁵

Numerous members expressed frustration that they perceived they were undergoing surveillance by Danish authorities despite no successful challenge to the party's legality in Denmark by authorities.⁵⁹⁶ There also seemed to be a generalised feeling that Danish security services were engaged in watching and reporting on members beyond the mosque, as well as an oft-repeated assumption that members' phones and homes had been bugged.

... our opinions are public. So, what we say in private when I call someone, discuss with someone, now when I'm sitting talking with you and my phone, if it's tapped and they're listening, I'm not saying anything that I'm not saying in public anyway... But of course, it's a bit uncomfortable that what you talk about with your wife or family, that you know that someone is listening.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹⁵ HL.

⁵⁹⁶ 'We know that we're under surveillance. But there's not, as I see it, a legal reason for putting us there. Because there's no suspicion of us doing illegal activities.'

⁵⁹⁷ HK.

A common line of humour would also revolve around surveillance.⁵⁹⁸ However, most concerns by members interviewed were raised about security at Hizb ut-Tahrir's mosque in Nørrebro.

*Of course, the [al Faruq] mosque is under surveillance. We see new people turning up here all the time, not wanting to talk, watching what's going on. We can't stop them – it's a public place of worship. But we know they're recording what's going on.*⁵⁹⁹

In discussion with the PET, there seemed to be least some credibility to these statements – not that the party is necessarily under surveillance but that the perception that they were under surveillance was recognised as a useful action mode by authority actors.

*... part of my job is – not to make people think that there isn't surveillance being used – but to inform them that the intelligence service also does this preventative resource orientated work not expecting to get anything in return... If everyone were to be surveyed, it would take a huge amount of resources. 10,000 people to process to the data alone, and we don't have that kind of numbers. So, sometimes the idea of it is more powerful than its actual implementation.*⁶⁰⁰

In Britain, meanwhile, despite concerns being raised about acts of surveillance in the past, current members reported less concern, considering it less of a possibility in the current climate.

*I don't think so. I don't think they can be bothered with us. I think they've actually got way more important things to waste their time on... and quite honestly, what threat do we actually pose? It's quite evident from the policing of our demonstrations.*⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁸ When, during one car ride with a member, my audio recorder started to playback previously recorded interviews, the interviewee remarked, 'Ah, it must be the PET again; I knew they were watching me!'

⁵⁹⁹ HN.

⁶⁰⁰ AN.

⁶⁰¹ HE.

This is contrasted to numerous public statements by UK politicians and authorities stating the intention of the UK Government to engage in surveillance of ALM, even before it was proscribed.

British newspapers reported on October 8, the day al-Muhajiroun announced its dissolution, that the British Home Secretary David Blunkett had ordered the authorities to “closely monitor every word and statement” made by Bakri and al-Muhajiroun members.⁶⁰²

Whilst, therefore, there was a recognition that there had been some monitoring of the British branch in the past, this was wrapped up in wider concerns about group infiltration during and immediately after the defection of Omar Bakri Muhammed. As such, concerns about surveillance were limited amongst the British branch, in comparison to very visible concern expressed by current members in Denmark.

7.4.5 Action Mode 5: Infiltration, ‘badjacketing’ and the use of agent provocateurs

Fig. 35: Action Mode 5 – Infiltration, ‘badjacketing’ and the use of agent provocateurs

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
5. <i>Infiltration, ‘badjacketing’ & agent provocateurs</i>	Yes	No

The fifth action mode of repression is described by Boykoff as ‘the infiltration of informants who engage in intelligence gathering, create internal dissension, and/or incite illegal activities.’ There are examples of this being used by British police forces in the past, such with the case of Bob Lambert in the Animal Liberation Front.⁶⁰³ Following the Kingston Crown Court hearing in 2007, in which significant details of Hizb ut-Tahrir and their membership were divulged through intelligence services, there was significant concern expressed about infiltration of HTB expressed amongst members.

... they produced a very detailed, long report, including a lot of references to covert intelligence that was gathered, with some reference to the actual methods of that gathering exercise. It

⁶⁰² XC.

⁶⁰³ Caroline Lucas, "Parliamentary Business," ed. Westminster Hall Commons Debates (Daily Hansard2012).

became very clear that every activity that they had, they either had an agent in there or, you know, reporting on it directly, or they had undercover police officers going around and looking at cars, and number plates, and figuring out who was at these meetings⁶⁰⁴

However, this was perhaps built on existing fears amongst the membership over infiltration and it is difficult to ascertain whether external factors or internal paranoia have driven concern over infiltration of the party.

... I think because of the individuals that had been arrested and charged in that case, that went around both organisations quite quickly, that the level of detail confirmed of intelligence gathering. And this really fed their own paranoia.⁶⁰⁵

Strategic infiltration was also seen as occurring under Omar Bakri Muhammad's leadership, after which he was accused by detractors of joining or supporting British secret services. Questions over Bakri Muhammad's affiliation to the secret services persist to this day.

They want a piece; they want to influence us in Britain. They've tried to infiltrate us; they've tried to approach us. I think generally they're not going to get very far. But they have gotten to individuals – like Maajid, like Omar Bakri – individuals they can pick off. But they haven't really derailed the whole party.⁶⁰⁶

There does seem to be some evidence that the British security services have in some ways shaped the tactics of HTB. Particularly, questions were raised by interviewees as to whether HTB was being protected or 'kept alive' by British security services because of the strategic political and familial ties members have to international bodies. Whilst this naturally remains only speculation, the strong alignment of HTB tactics with authority requirements certainly suggests some form of institutionalisation that may involve mutually beneficial engagement.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁴ XC.

⁶⁰⁵ XB.

⁶⁰⁶ HC.

⁶⁰⁷ 'There's a secret service use of HT, so there's a protective concept in there, and one could argue that keeping them alive would mean that the ability of UK security services to monitor them in Pakistan, in Bangladesh, because they all work from here. They set up all of these

Concern over infiltration was not a point echoed amongst members of HTS, something that would fit with the more limited capacity and reach of Danish security services. As such, there were no recorded examples of the perception of infiltration, badjacketing or the use of agent provocateurs within HTS and no current *significant* examples of badjacketing or agent provocateurs in HTB, despite concerns being raised over infiltration – particularly through the co-optation of previous high-profile individuals.

7.4.6 Action Mode 6: ‘Black propaganda’

Fig. 36: Action Mode 6 – ‘Black propaganda’

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
6. Black Propaganda	No	No

Black propaganda is the use of fabricated documents designed to prevent solidarity between social movement organisations. There are no reported examples of ‘black propaganda’ in the UK or Denmark. However, there has been a very limited perception of this from within the British branch, most notably in the instance of Omar Bakri Muhammed’s writings, and examples of members who have similarly been named as trying to subvert or internally degrade Hizb ut-Tahrir, with OBM’s writings framed as ‘deviant’. Other than this, this action mode was not recorded and the perception that OBM’s party literature is black propaganda is limited to very few members.

7.4.7 Action Mode 7: Harassment and harassment arrests

Fig. 37: Action Mode 7 - Harassment and harassment arrests

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
7. Harassment and harassment arrests	Yes	Yes

cells – including Indonesia – from here and there’s those political and familial ties that the security services have been looking to utilise at various points... because Britain doesn’t have that relationship with certain regimes, it takes ages to try and get through to find out information. But here you’ve got people going back and forth into the Arab world, you’re able to better monitor that situation and possibly even recruit intelligence personnel within HT.’ XB.

Under this Action Mode, ‘dissidents are selectively arrested for minor crimes that, when committed by the general population, go unpunished’, whilst dissidents often face inflated gaol sentences, greater bail conditions or are prevented from engaging in other, unrelated, activities as a result.⁶⁰⁸ This is what Balbus calls ‘legal repression’, in which the ‘formal rationality’ or legal apparatus ‘tends to depoliticise the consciousness of the participants, delegitimize their claims and grievances, and militate against alliances between participants and other nonelites or elite moderates’.⁶⁰⁹ Such harassment arrests may not necessarily result in conviction, or even arrest, as an increased fear of arrest is sometimes enough to lead to activist disengagement and the amount of resources often diverted to deal with this threat can increase the cost of activism. In this case study, the use of laws unconnected to terrorism or extremism offences have been reported as being used to curtail the freedom of those deemed extremist to engage in public forms of activism. There have, therefore, been instances of harassment and harassment arrests, particularly within the framework of counterterrorism legislation.

One tactic found in both case studies is the use of ‘al Capone’ style arrests, in which activism was disrupted by security or policing services using minor charges and legal means unrelated to counterterrorism law to increase the costs of activist engagement. One authority interviewee worked as a member of so-called ‘Disruption Units’, which was established to implement such methods against individuals considered to be extremist.

I worked on a ‘Disruption Unit’, so that was non-TACT [Terrorism Act 2000] offences, committed by people who we would consider extremist... So, if people who were affiliated [to an ‘Islamist’ group] were demonstrating, we would – a bit like the old ‘Al Capone’ model - proactively go after them for things like car insurance, or whatever, to disrupt their activity. And if someone was convicted for a minor fraud, we could implement bail conditions, or curtail their right to conduct street activism or attend demonstrations...⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁸ Boykoff. p.291

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁶¹⁰ AB.

This was corroborated through interviews with members and legal practitioners who reported a wide range of laws being used to target Islamic activists promoting extremism or who were otherwise connected to such individuals.

I mean fraud, benefit fraud, insurance issues - those were the favourites... Generally, it's targeting Hizb ut-Tahrir people who may have family members who are al Muhajiroun, or they've been flirting with one side or another.⁶¹¹

This has led to increased costs for engaging in activism for HTB members, with proscriptions being attached to bail conditions to severely limit the freedom for members and activists to legally engage in any form of controversial activities.⁶¹²

We produce evidence, for instance, for the court that shows that classically around dawah, when they're conducting dawah in the street they are aggressive in how they do it, they're using inflammatory language which causes distress and harm, distress and alarm to members of the public. So, when the court accepts that, we put proscriptions in the ASBO or whatever which say you're not allowed to do dawah in groups of more than one or two people... you can only do it only in groups of two, you can't use a loud hailer, you can't have a banner bigger than an A4 sheet of paper, this sort of stuff, so it was quite interesting. So, there's that disruptive part...⁶¹³

Harassment arrests of certain activist individuals have also been used by security services as a means of gaining intelligence on existing networks of Islamic activists. Strategic focus on networks has typified British approaches, with HTB members being affected by these techniques due to the security service's focus on ALM members and their family and friendship links.

⁶¹¹ XC.

⁶¹² One public example of a successful harassment arrest was cited by an interviewee as Jordan Horner, whose provocative activism was halted using various bail conditions which prevented engaging in public activism. Tristan Kirk, "Anjem Choudary Associates: Extremists Linked with Infamous Hate Preacher," *Evening Standard*, 16th August 2016.

⁶¹³ AA.

If they arrest and charge someone with terror offences, then from their phones they'll find their connections and who they are regularly in contact with, and those people may well have not committed any offences, but then they'll be passed on to Prevent and Prevent will try and find a way in, to examine these people. Prevent or MI5, basically, depending on whether MI5 is interested in a particular group or not.⁶¹⁴

In Denmark, there has also been instances of harassment and harassment arrests through similar 'Al Capone', with activists citing specific public statements by politicians which encouraged and outlined the strategy of disruption through greater implementation of non-terrorism related offences.

Last year, the Danish Justice Minister, he said 'we have to use Al Capone methods' - that's the words he used - 'against Islamists'. You know, tax issues and these things. You just had to look at everything, to survey them in detail, and find any breach of the law.⁶¹⁵

The extent to which these statements represent a concerted strategy is difficult to ascertain. Whilst, particularly in the British case, interviewees with counterterrorism officials who had worked on what they termed 'Disruption Units' outlined such a tactic, the role of such 'Al Capone' tactics have been challenged in discussions with the UK Metropolitan Police who stated officially that 'investigations teams may well take evidence of lesser offending (i.e. that which carries a lighter sentence or penalty) which they can prove to the CPS, so they can successfully arrest, charge and convict an offender' in the hope that the offender is 'prevented, temporarily, from carrying out the larger-scale offending they are suspected of'.⁶¹⁶ However, this will only be used 'at the discretion of the SIO and will likely only be taken if there is reasonable belief that someone is about to carry out a criminal act but which cannot be proven by the investigations team. Police investigations teams spend considerable time and resources investigating organisations such as criminal gangs, and would not choose to sacrifice a successful conviction of a more serious crime for one that carries a lesser sentence unless they

⁶¹⁴ XC.

⁶¹⁵ HJ.

⁶¹⁶ Private Correspondence (2017)

absolutely had to.’⁶¹⁷ As such, the extent to which harassment and harassment arrests were seen to be used or detected varied, depending on the authority actor interviewed.

7.4.8 Action Mode 8: Extraordinary rules and laws

Fig. 38: Action Mode 8 – Extraordinary rules and laws

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
8. <i>Extraordinary rules and laws</i>	No	Yes

Boykoff’s eighth action mode of repression is the use of extraordinary rules and affairs in which, during moments when the state is seriously challenged by dissident groups or individuals, it may respond by promulgating and exercising extraordinary laws and rules that are then used to suppress the challenge and to stifle dissent.⁶¹⁸ This has been reflected in the exchange between violent Islamic activism and state counterterrorism legislation. Whilst most of this legislation has not targeted HT – owing to its continued legal status in both countries – there are significant examples where extraordinary rules and laws have been cited as targeting the party, either directly naming the party as problematic or seeking to depreciate certain formations of activism by the party. One of the most problematic forms of legislation for HTS, for instance, has been the 2016 ‘Public Information Law’, which aimed to prevent ‘non-democratic’ organisations from accessing government funding or from using civil spaces.⁶¹⁹

...the Information Law prevents an organisation which is against democracy or is undemocratic from renting public halls. So that’s of course a challenge, it makes it more difficult for us to rent public halls and make conferences⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁷ Private Correspondence (2017)

⁶¹⁸ Boykoff. p.292

⁶¹⁹ Christian W, "Government Tighens up Public Information Law," *Copenhagen Post*, 11th May 2016. - LOV OM ÆNDRING AF FOLKEOPLYSNINGSLØVEN OG LIGNINGSLØVEN (ACT AMENDING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION ACT AND THE TAX ACT, PUBLIC INFORMATION LAW)

⁶²⁰ HR.

This has been seen by HTS as specifically targeting and limiting the party's activism and was cited by many Danish activists and members as a particular grievance against the state.

The Information Law – we were told – was explicitly against us. We were mentioned directly. Because every time we rented public halls, the municipalities were being targeted by the politicians to ban us. And municipalities would say ‘well, we can’t ban them, there’s no law which prevent us from allowing a legal organisation [to rent public spaces]’. So, the politicians said, then we have to change the law. And it was said it was to target Hizb ut-Tahrir.⁶²¹

In discussion with the PET, this interpretation by HTS members was given credibility, with members of the security services implying that the party was certainly the most publicly visible anti-democratic organisation currently operating in Denmark.

I'm not sure, other than Hizb ut-Tahrir, what groups declare themselves to have an anti-democratic goal. I'm sure we have others, I just cannot think of any... Maybe far left-wing autonomous groups. We also have them as part of a portfolio in trying to reach those groups. But realistically, the political focus is elsewhere [on Islamist groups].⁶²²

Mainstream national media outlets have also framed the Public Information Act 2016 as explicitly targeting HTS activism in Copenhagen:

The law change – which gained the support of Venstre, Socialdemokraterne, Dansk Folkeparti, Liberal Alliance, Socialistisk Folkeparti and Konservative – means that organisations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir won't be able to receive public support or rent/loan state-owned premises in the future.⁶²³

⁶²¹ HK.

⁶²² AN.

⁶²³ Christian W, "Copenhagen Evicts Notorious Islamic Organisation," *Copenhagen Post*, 12 May 2016.

Discussion around this law and approach was cited as the most influential event in creating the conditions for the establishment of the al Faruq mosque, a unique instance of a Western branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir running and owning a permanent space of activism and worship. The previous space favoured by the party for events in Nørrebro became unavailable, following what some members called a ‘sustained attack by the media’, leading to the landlord withdrawing their permission for its use by Hizb ut-Tahrir.

The al-Faruq mosque is a very late development, that’s actually occurred after my departure, and it’s very weird thing, because normally they don’t establish mosques.⁶²⁴

The incoming Information Law in 2016 led to the party leadership decision to invest in owning a permanent home that would not be affected by governmental bans, establishing the ‘Foreningen for Islamisk Kultur og Viden’ [Association for Islamic Culture and Knowledge] which officially leases the space for the HT-owned al Faruq mosque at Heimdalsgade 39, Nørrebro. This encouraged the further centralisation of HTS activism within and around the area of Nørrebro, as they have become increasingly reliant on the al Faruq mosque space for public activist events, diminishing the means for the party to engage outside of this limited geographic and community area.

... we had to establish al Faruq mosque, because we were increasingly being prevented from using public buildings in Denmark. It was established as a permanent base in direct response...⁶²⁵

Another law which has greatly impacted on the ability of Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia to conduct activism is the ‘Radical Preacher Law’ (or ‘Imam Law’), which aims to limit the activities of ‘radical/hate preachers’.⁶²⁶

They called it the Imam Law. Of course, according to the Danish Constitution, you have a problem if you call it the Imam Law, because it’s discrimination against a certain religious segment, so they just called it something else - the Preacher Law. But everyone in the media, the politicians, they

⁶²⁴ XI.

⁶²⁵ HS.

⁶²⁶ LOV 50: LOV OM ÆNDRING AF UDLÆNDINGELOVEN (AMENDMENT TO THE ALIEN’S ACT, RADICAL PREACHER LAW)

called it the Imam Law. So, they're only saying it not to get in conflict with the Danish constitution.

So, the Preacher Law, it has a general name, but it's targeting Muslims...⁶²⁷

Meanwhile, follow-up legislation put forward by the *Dansk Folkeparti* looks to charge imams preaching a view 'contrary to Danish morals' that 'don't respect the basic norms of our society' by stripping them of Danish citizenship or preventing them from conducting key religious rites, such as marriage ceremonies.⁶²⁸ Both the Radical Preacher and the Public Information laws have been singled out by HTS as direct attacking their ability to conduct activism, leading to the closing down of traditional sites of public activism and increased scrutiny over their engagement.

In the UK, legislation such as the 2015 'Prevent Duty' has challenged the right for HTB to conduct public activism or recruitment. With increasing focus on prevention, governments and local authorities have aimed to ensure that public institutions – education, healthcare, prisons – are taking adequate steps to ensure that radicalism and 'extremism' is not given unchallenged platforms, degrading education sites for recruitment. Another set of legal developments that have impacted on HTB was the expansion of CT legislation to include the problematisation of texts that could be viewed as supporting terrorism or extremism. self-censorship.

... when books started being brought in as a subject matter for arresting and charging and convicting people, that really had a massive impact on, not so much on al Muhajiroun, because they're not particularly literate, but certainly Hizb ut-Tahrir who were very much about an academic examination of things. And so, at some point – I don't know who did it – there was a Shura sent out within Hizb ut-Tahrir – I think it was 2006, it was certainly after 7/7 – where an internal order went out: 'burn your books', basically. Now, I mean, that is going have an impact on any organisation when its theological underpinnings are turned to smoke...⁶²⁹

⁶²⁷ HR.

⁶²⁸ Keyleigh Lewis, "Danish Government Plans to Strip Radical Imams of Citizenship," *The Independent*, 24th March 2016. Vince Chadwick, "Denmark Pushes Ahead with Hate Preacher Blacklist," *Politico*, 5th October 2016. AFP, "Denmark Preps Action Plan for 'Hate Preachers'," *AFP/The Local*, 30th March 2016.

⁶²⁹ XE.

In the UK case, however, concerns over proscription have had far greater impact than specific extraordinary laws have in Denmark, which have explicitly targeted and successfully curtailed the freedom for HTS to operate in Denmark.

7.4.9 Action Mode 9: Mass media manipulation

Fig. 39: Action Mode 9 – Mass media manipulation

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
9. <i>Mass media manipulation</i>	Yes	Yes

The final two action modes deal with mass media, which have largely been explored in the previous chapter on the securitisation of media language towards HT within the development of the securitised lens. Boykoff determines there to be two major types of media manipulation: story implantation and journalist strongarming.

Accusations were consistently raised by members about the impact of securitisation – and concurrent anti-Islamic and anti-migrant sentiment – of the national media, on the party. Critical Terrorism Scholars have long cited the use of alarmist elements of the media and the exploitation of fear by politicians as being used as a means of ‘ensuring re-election, silencing their critics, controlling dissent, creating a more docile public, distracting the public from more entrenched and difficult social problems’, as well as ensuring the creation of a number of other projects not necessarily related to terrorism, such as ‘the introduction of identity cards, restriction on immigration, increasing financial regulation and limiting civil liberties’.⁶³⁰ These mechanisms of securitisation not only contribute to a sense of anxiety about the threat from terrorism, it also leads to potentially problematic binary in favour of the current power structures – something O’Reilly conceptualises as a form of ‘hyper-patriotism’, under which ‘political dissent is seen by society as unpatriotic and/or treasonous’, accordingly silenced within mainstream outlets.⁶³¹

⁶³⁰ Jackson et al. p.141

⁶³¹ Fred Vultee, "Securitisation as a Media Frame: What Happens When the Media "Speak Security", " in *Securitisation: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve*, ed. Thierry Balzacq (Oxford Routledge, 2011). p.81

All the media discussion, constantly, it's just there to make people always wary and say 'you can't trust the Muslims, look, they've got these ideas, and they're all a bit radical to the core, and we can't really trust that. They all stand against us.' So it means that if they create that atmosphere as they pretty much have done and they're still promoting it, then it means that when they want to say 'let's go and invade Iraq again' nobody says no, no one says 'why would you invade Iraq', they don't have to say weapons of mass destruction, they say 'well, they're Muslims, they hold on to Islam, look, they're going to get an Islamic state, we've got to do something about that'. No problem.⁶³²

In this case, mass media manipulation was marked as occurring due to the increase in securitising language towards Muslims generally in the UK and Denmark, although – as seen in previous media analysis – focus on HT has been more consistent in Denmark, whilst more securitised language has been used in the UK. Examples of media manipulation against Islamic forms of activism have been strong enough to impact on Hizb ut-Tahrir, even whilst HT may not have been directly targeted by media manipulation.

7.4.10 Action Mode 10: Mass media deprecation

Fig. 40: Action Mode 10 – Mass media deprecation

Action Mode	UK (perceived)	DNK (perceived)
10. <i>Mass media deprecation</i>	Yes	Yes

Finally, mass media deprecation involves the large-scale disapproval of the party and its activism by mass media to sway public opinion away from sympathising with the social movement organisation. As Boykoff stresses, this is 'not so much a conspiracy born in a cigar-smoke-filled, secret room, as it is a collection of every-unfolding tactical responses of journalists to the real world, as guided by professional norms, rules and values'.⁶³³ This process is furthered so that 'when the state is coordinating its message with "friendly" media so as to write

⁶³² HE.

⁶³³ Jules Boykoff, "Framing Dissent: Mass-Media Coverage of the Global Justice Movement," *New Political Science* 28, no. 2 (2006). p.205

stories that intentionally portray dissidents in a negative light, appropriation is virtually impossible'.⁶³⁴ As can be seen in the Chapter 6 analysis of the changing frames by national media towards the party, HT has suffered from a consistent degradation and deprecation from media, and an increasing lack of access which has ensured the party has been increasingly unable to influence wider rhetoric. This has been particularly so in Britain, aligning with Tarrow's statement that 'the capacity of movement organisations to appropriate the media for their own purposes is limited' and the ability for Hizb ut-Tahrir to challenge official policy through mainstream media has declined.

7.5 Repression and Emulation

These ten action modes of repression can be shaped into an interactive set of processes by applying Boykoff's five mechanisms of repression – resource depletion, stigmatisation, divisive disruption, and intimidation – amplified through a process of emulation. This will help to unravel how interplay between authorities and social movement actors have occurred within the case studies. In examining instances of repression through Boykoff's five action modes, therefore, we can excavate precise interactive processes behind post-2001 developments in Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and in Denmark in the context of counter-terrorism and the securitised lens.

7.5.1 Resource Depletion

The first of the five mechanisms of repression and emulation come in the form of resource depletion. Resource depletion is a process designed to invert resource mobilisation processes by social movement organisations, eroding the capacity of social movements and diminishing their ability to engage in contentious politics.⁶³⁵ The decline of resources within mobilising structures – the 'collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilise and engage in collective action'⁶³⁶ – forces social movements to re-orientate their use of increasingly limited resources in a way designed to demobilise them. Boykoff describes an 'internal-external' dimension of resource depletion: internally, social movements use up resources in challenging and adjusting to

⁶³⁴ *The Suppression of Dissent: How the State and Mass Media Squelch Usamerican Social Movements* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006). p.200

⁶³⁵ "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA." p.294

⁶³⁶ Doug McAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. Zald, "Opportunities, Mobilising Structures and Framing Processes - Towards a Synthetic, Comparative Perspective on Social Movements," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilising Structures and Cultural Framings*, ed. J. McCarthy and M. Zald D. McAdam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

the depletion, which cuts recruitment efforts and lowers group morale; externally, support dries up as fewer supporters from outside the movement offer support of a failing movement organisation.⁶³⁷

We can certainly observe such mechanisms and impacts of resource depletion within HTB and HTS. Examples of resources that have been seen to be targeted through CT legislation and policing include, amongst others: sites of activism; means of legal assembly; recruitment and potential membership base; and leadership legitimacy. The action modes most relevant to this focus around the implementation are 4. surveillance and break-ins and 8. extraordinary rules and laws. Recent years have been seen attempts to degrade resources by authorities which Hizb ut-Tahrir had previously used to conduct activism and develop support. Particularly, these are attacks on spatial sites of activism, including declining access to mosques, public halls and other spaces, and the limiting of da'wah stalls, demonstrations and public formations of activism. Whilst most have been carried out by authority actions, some have been actioned through alternative structures, such as counter-extremist organisations or public activism.⁶³⁸ The limiting of public and private sites for engaging in Islamic activism has taken place in both the UK and Denmark and has constricted the repertoire of activism available to the party.

In Britain, we can see a long-term closing down of civic sites to the party, such as public places of worship, community halls and other public buildings. This has meant that space utilised by the party during their peak in the late 1990s and early 2000s has since become inaccessible for HTB to hold official events. A particularly effective tactic has been the 'blacklisting' of individuals known to be associated with the party or who has been involved in booking prior party events.⁶³⁹ Specific examples of significant institutions which have become closed-off to Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain include the Friends' Quaker House, Euston, as well as most major Islamic centres in London, including the East London, Regent's Park and Finsbury Park mosques. Such resource depletion has, prior to the introduction of the 2015 Prevent Duty, relied on combining of actions of resource depletion with actions of intimidation, to discourage individuals from allowing HT to access community resources.

⁶³⁷ Boykoff, "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA." p.295

⁶³⁸ "... their UK summer annual conference will be held at Friends House in Euston. This venue has a capacity for 1,000 people which again reflects the declining nature of HTs support and membership. Gone are the good old days when they could attract 5,000 plus guests and bombard them with fiery speeches from the 'legendary' Farid Kassim... I encourage all right-minded people, Muslim and non-Muslim, to contact Friends House and express their disgust at them for hosting Hizb ut Tahrir..." Khan. See also Peter Tatchell, "Protest against Hizb Ut-Tahrir Conference in East London," Peter Tatchell Foundation, <http://www.petertatchellfoundation.org/protest-against-hizb-ut-tahrir-conference-in-east-london/>.

⁶³⁹ 'It's very explicit, you know, it's very specific: "Hizb ut-Tahrir can't come". And sometimes individuals. So, individuals who book a hall in their name, they get put on a blacklist so the organisation itself - who runs the hall - they would say "that person, he's associated with you guys; he's blacklisted, we can't.'" HE.

... they'd go around [SO15], in East London particularly because East London is huge in terms of the Muslim population in London and our party work here has always been very successful, so this is one of the main areas they targeted one by one, I can't name you a single venue in East London that hasn't been approached by these people and what they do is they approach the manager... they'd just come in with a scare tactic, to just frighten the guy into submission basically. An ordinary person running a business, if someone comes along and threatens his family, threatens his livelihood, threatens to deport him, it doesn't matter if it has any chance of success, he's afraid of them.⁶⁴⁰

The importance of mosques in Islamic activism has been highlighted in previous research into other cases studies.⁶⁴¹ The closing down of such activist sites has led to a decline in the ability of HTB to conduct activism in some of their more traditional regional bases, particularly urban areas with a higher concentration of Muslim communities such as East London.⁶⁴² The 2011 refocussing of UK counterterrorism on the public sectors and the 2015 'Prevent Duty' has also led to further problems for HTB, as public spaces now have a legal duty to prevent 'extremist' speakers from holding or participating in events.

They've got now legislation that can take away properties of people who host 'extremist' events. They didn't used to have that legislation, so they'd just come in with a scare tactic, to just frighten the guy into submission basically. An ordinary person with a business, if someone comes along and threatens his family, threatens his livelihood, threatens to deport him, it doesn't matter if it has any chance of success, he's afraid of them. So, it was on this basis that we found out that platforms were being denied one by one.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴⁰ HF.

⁶⁴¹ 'mosques served many functions in the transformation of young alienated Muslims into global *salafi mujaheddin*. A mosque was an ideal place to meet familiar people, namely fellow Muslims—an important desire in upwardly and geographically mobile young men who missed the community of their friends and family. Friendship groups formed around the mosques, as we saw in the millennium plot and Hamburg cell accounts.' Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004). pp.114–15; Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence*.

⁶⁴² 'We've really had a problem in Tower Hamlets. We traditionally have a good support base here, but that really took a hit when we started getting shut out of public spaces. We've had to reconsider how to do activism.'

⁶⁴³ HE.

Increased securitisation in Britain post-2005 has led to HTB regularly changing event venues two or three times in the run up to an event or cancelling altogether, following police contacting venue owners or controllers to state that HTB is an organisation of interest to police counterterrorism investigations. Members report numerous instances of last minute cancellations of HTB events or being forced to hold meetings at a friend's house or other alternative settings to ensure it goes ahead – 'Some youth societies are quite resilient against those sorts of approaches, but it's impacted the Hizb a lot in being able to participate in activism'.⁶⁴⁴ As counterterror approaches have expanded into public sites, focus has shifted onto long-term prevention and a civic duty to prevent radicalisation. Concurrently, other sites of activism beyond mosques have also become closed to HTB.

*We found that it's difficult to go to mosques, but there's still loads of venues in East London - wedding venues, different places like this, community centres, and we had no problem booking them. But then, one by one, they started going too. We were being rejected from every venue we approached.*⁶⁴⁵

According to Hizb ut-Tahrir representatives, this is due to increased interaction between mosques and the police, who would 'suddenly became quite fearful of consequences of letting the Hizb into their mosque'.⁶⁴⁶ Generally this was reported as against the sentiment of the mosque committees, who would be fine with HTB running events were it not for concerns that 'this police officer is calling me and he's asking me for a report on who came and spoke at the mosque this week'.⁶⁴⁷ Another cause for the decline of mosques in London as spatial resources for activism, suggested by HTB representatives, was the introduction of financial support for mosques as part of the Preventing Violent Extremism approach of the DCLG and Home Office.

⁶⁴⁴ 'police will contact the venues where they have meetings and things, and they will tell the owners or the controllers that this is an organisation of interest to the police counter-terrorism unit, and they will suggest that they shouldn't, for security reasons, allow them to have a meeting or a gathering there, so you will see from the history of where you had previously Hizb ut-Tahrir at events and ISOCs, Islamic societies at universities, these things will often cancel last minute and in the end some of them will end up having meetings at a friend's house' XC.

⁶⁴⁵ HC.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ HE.

Years ago, every mosque was open, there was no problem. You could just walk into any mosque and say, 'we're just going to have a talk here'. And they didn't have a problem, they'd be happy, and say why are all these young people coming to the mosque and talking about Islam, that's a really nice thing, that's great... We never found there was a problem with being invited into mosques, and effectively we invited ourselves. Then, Britain really decided 'we're going to take security seriously, we're really going to clamp down on Islamic dawah'. So, after September 11th this is when it all changed, then you started to see serious activities, and imams and mosque committees... we started to notice that they're not so happy. And they were happy to invite us, they'd never say 'we think you're wrong'; they'd say, 'look, I agree with what you're saying but we're going to lose such and such funding', particularly when PVE – Preventing Violent Extremism – came out and they were actually giving money to the mosques and they were benefiting from that money, that renovation they just got. Barking Mosque is a very good example, or East London Mosque. They'd say, 'if we allowed you in, we get in trouble, so we can't do that'.⁶⁴⁸

The extent to which mosques took funding in the long-term from government sources and the impact this had on mosque committee attitudes towards HTB is uncertain – the receipt of financial incentives from government bodies to support counterextremism integration projects was stopped by larger mosques and Islamic bodies as Prevent saw a toxification of its brand. However, there has been a recognition by CT observers outside of HT that there was pressure on the police to provide names of individuals and community organisations deemed to be requiring a CVE response, and that finance was partly involved in this processes.⁶⁴⁹

Certainly, the degradation that has occurred in, particularly, East London of spatial resources by authorities has led to an alteration in tactics of activism by Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain. The party has become less reliant on public buildings, where barriers to access have been increasingly erected and civic sites have become legally obligated to prevent forms of 'extremism' being given platforms. It has also led to a declining presence in mosques and

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁹ 'The police officers in local communities had to frankly provide names at a very early stage, thought it was meant to be capacity building - in the guise of capacity building for community-based organisations it was to build them so that they would provide names, basically. So, that became fairly quickly known within two years, in the community of these Muslim organisations, so there was an instant sort of rejection of Prevent as a brand by those established organisations because they were set up and it wasn't their purpose to provide names... in terms of it being prevalent, not really, it did not really penetrate deeply. There was the East London Mosque, for example, who took money, and after two years or so, they decided not to take it anymore because of this, so the well-established organisations didn't.'

cultural centres – traditional sites of recruitment and interaction with activists – with mosque committees now increasingly aware of the potential security implications they face from police, security services or the media in response to hosting ‘radical’ speakers of events in light of the 2015 ‘Prevent Duty’. There has also been increased concern about other traditional forms of activism conducted by Hizb ut-Tahrir, with mosques and civic spaces looking to prevent ‘extremist’ material being promoted in or around their buildings.⁶⁵⁰ In response, HTB has shifted large sections of public activist events on-line, with events increasingly publicised as online discussions and consisting of a live-streamed talk without mention of the place from which it is being filmed. Those that are open to the public are arranged with relative short notice and with limited advertising, attempting to avoid the risk of disruption.

In Denmark, similar processes have also occurred in the closing down of public space, especially with the introduction of the Public Information Law, and HTS ‘have to find private halls now which is difficult because they can get a lot of pressure from the media’.⁶⁵¹ HTS have also come to rely increasingly on the live-streaming of talks and events, a move which simultaneously enables engagement with a wider audience whilst also negotiating the increasingly limited number of sites available to the party.

I think if you’re a political organisation and your main work is intellectual and discussing with people, you have to be creative and think about how your voice can reach as many people as possible... Of course, it’s always important for us to be creative and follow with the times and where the youth are – you know, YouTube and Facebook, and online things. So, the shifting of work to an online platform means that we can achieve a lot more, and it means a lot less risk of disruption.⁶⁵²

However, with discussions taking place at the UK governmental-level about whether the party should be blocked from online platforms, and social media organisations facing international criticism about their role in enabling the spread of violent and discriminatory political ideas, this may be the next spatial site to become closed off to the party, certainly in the UK. Examples, for instance, include recent pilot projects (with involvement from

⁶⁵⁰ Priya Joshi, "East London Mosque in Hate Crime Probe over Booklets Urging Worshippers to 'Assassinate Apostates'," *IB Times*, 7th October 2016.

⁶⁵¹ HR.

⁶⁵² HK.

former Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain members) at the Institute of Strategic Dialogue and Facebook to limit the freedom that 'extremist' groups (often citing HT as an example of such) have in online spheres.⁶⁵³

Resource depletion operates differently in the case study of the UK than in Denmark. In Denmark, civic sites have been specifically blocked from hosting Hizb ut-Tahrir and other 'non-democratic' organisations. This direct approach has pushed the party into utilising spaces differently, particularly through the centralisation of activism in certain acceptable sites (such as al Faruq mosque). In the UK, meanwhile, the change has been less direct, focussing instead on creating a general atmosphere which discourages – but not necessarily legally blocks – sites managers from enabling HT activism.⁶⁵⁴ This has led to a slower, less overt degradation of sites of activism through a process which encourages stigmatisation rather than specific targeting. Both processes have led to a long-term closing down of spaces which the party bodies can utilise.

7.5.2 Stigmatisation

The second mechanism, stigmatisation, goes beyond the depletion of material resources to examine the discursive basis of power differences and the language behind repression – integral when using hermeneutically-centred concepts of securitisation.⁶⁵⁵ It is described as 'a relational mechanism whereby discrediting attributes are attached to the character, nature or reputation of an individual or group',⁶⁵⁶ designed to lead to what Ferree describes as 'an impaired collective identity, where connection with the group is a source of discredit and

⁶⁵³ 'Microsoft wants to do its part to help address the use of technology to promote terrorism. That's why we're pleased to announce that we're partnering with the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) on a pilot project to better enable nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) to surface and serve impactful counter-narrative content...' Microsoft, "Microsoft Partners with Institute for Strategic Dialogue and Ngos to Discourage Online Radicalization to Violence," news release, 18th April, 2017, <https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2017/04/18/microsoft-partners-institute-strategic-dialogue-ngos-discourage-online-radicalization-violence/>.

⁶⁵⁴ 'Prevent has never shut down a talk at a university. Universities themselves have made decisions for whatever reason and then just said, 'oh, we did it because of Prevent Duty'. It's the institution that makes the decision to determine whether an event goes ahead or not. We don't knock on the door of a university and say, 'this event cannot go ahead', it's never happened, it just doesn't happen. What we can do and what we have done in the past is, we had a guy that tried to hold a neo-Nazi rally recently, I won't say exactly where, but I was involved in it. It was in the East Midlands. And there was a lot of pressure for us to say you've got to shut it down, you can't have these neo-Nazis in this pub causing problems, and we said we don't and we can't and we won't shut it down - we don't own the venue, we don't own the pub, the brewery owns the pub and the landlord rents the pub, so it's up to him who he has, however, we do know that this speaker will tend to attract an awful lot of fairly unsavoury characters, usually quite violent characters to these talks. So what we did say is go to this pub and say 'look, are you aware that this event is happening tonight', he said 'yeah, yeah, it's such and such an event' and we said 'no it isn't, it's a neo-Nazi rally and this speaker'. When he knew that we said to him 'we can't stop this event going ahead, it's not our job to stop this event from going ahead, but you as the landlord hold the risk of hosting this event, and any repercussions that that comes from it. It's entirely up to you whether you want to host it or not. All we can do is present you with the facts of who's coming and risks that you hold by allowing this event to go ahead, and he chose off his own bat to say 'I don't want this event going ahead, in fact, I'm so worried I'm going to ring other landlords and say to them that if they're going to book with you, don't let them in'. That was entirely his doing.' AB.

⁶⁵⁵ Boykoff, "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA." pp.295-296

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid. p.296

devaluation because that is how the group as a whole is viewed'.⁶⁵⁷ The meso-level mechanism of stigmatisation impacts the capacity of social movements to promote social change, through the mass-media-related action modes of 9. Mass media manipulation and 10. Mass media deprecation.⁶⁵⁸ There can be demonstrated in high levels of stigmatisation against HT but is articulated differently in Britain and Denmark. On a macro-level, this can be seen in the reported rise of Islamophobia within European societies which has led to the problematisation of Hizb ut-Tahrir and Islamic activism within governmental and media discourse.⁶⁵⁹

Whilst there is a growing context of Islamophobia and a securitisation of Islam, members have also faced difficulties due to the stigma of being publicly associated with Hizb ut-Tahrir. In Denmark, several members have reported lost jobs and professional opportunities, as well as greater difficulty accessing public resources – such as police support, state benefits or healthcare – following public reports of their membership.⁶⁶⁰ The al Faruq mosque has faced several calls for its closure from Danish public officials and has been recently described by national newspapers as a 'hate mosque' (*had-moské*), home to 'hate preachers'.⁶⁶¹ In Britain, meanwhile, public places have blacklisted individuals associated with the organisation due to the systematic stigmatisation of the party. The rise of recurrent frames around violence, ignorance and grievances form part of the wider securitisation framing taking place against the party in Britain and Denmark.⁶⁶² As such, we can observe stigmatisation processes occurring in both the UK and Danish examples, although in Britain this has taken more of a 'securitised' focus (as in the previous chapter), whilst in Denmark, stigmatisation has more societal overtones as to the party's anti-democratic nature.

7.5.3 Divisive Disruption

The third repression mechanism outlined by Boykoff, experienced by Hizb ut-Tahrir in both countries, is that of divisive disruption. This mechanism interacts with both previous mechanisms, aiming to create splits within or

⁶⁵⁷ Ferree, p.144

⁶⁵⁸ Boykoff, "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA." p.296

⁶⁵⁹ 'Things which are done today, they would never dream about. Just, not only ten years ago, just three or four years ago, they wouldn't even dream about saying - politicians, in public.' HK.

⁶⁶⁰ 'It's constantly the case that politicians in Denmark dehumanise Muslims – politicians, the media. When you have interaction, you start to break prejudices down. That's why I was so keen to show you the Venstre youth talk, because that was very privileged kids with little or no interaction with Muslims.' HJ.

⁶⁶¹ Bo Norström Weile, "Politikere Raser over Nye Had-Udtalelser: 'Luk Nu Den Moské'," *BT*, 13th May 2017.

⁶⁶² Boykoff, "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA." p.296

amongst social movement organisations by using action modes such as 4. surveillance, 6. 'black propaganda', and 5. infiltration, 'badjacketing' and the use of agent provocateurs. This changes the nature of interaction between other SMOs and the state, and represents the opposite of 'frame bridging', thereby aiming to instigate a process which 'burns frame bridges'.⁶⁶³

The concept of disruption as a tactic by authorities reoccurred throughout interviews in both the UK and Denmark, from members of HT and authorities and counterterrorism providers. Interviewees AA and AB have been involved in counter-terrorism policing and delivery at both a national and regional capacity, as well as currently leading Prevent delivery within the Mayor of London's office and the London Metropolitan police, and the Prevent Delivery Unit, respectively. Describing the development of counterterrorism processes in the UK in recent years, they discussed the shift in counterterrorism from the 'hard', militarised, responsive counterterrorism which characterised the 2001 to 2005 period, towards the 'soft', preventative approaches which have come to dominate since, characterised in the development of counter-extremism and counter-radicalisation programmes which enabled a far wider scope for divisive disruption of Islamism to be implemented.⁶⁶⁴

*Contest went through a review... [in which] we saw a real significant change and emphasis towards Prevent. And in terms of how central government wanted Prevent to be delivered, moving away from the language of just engagement but starting to talk about disruption. And as that's changed we've stated to move into looking to disrupting the radical speaker threat.*⁶⁶⁵

Whilst the introduction of disruption has developed initially as a means of authority response to radical hate preachers, it was given new impetus following the Woolwich murder of Lee Rigby.⁶⁶⁶ This has also been enacted through the recently established Prime Minister's 'Taskforce on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism', which found that 'greater disruption of extremists was needed, and that extremism had to be effectively challenged in

⁶⁶³ McAdam, "Beyond Structural Analysis: Toward a More Dynamic Understanding of Social Movements."

⁶⁶⁴ Tulip Siddiq, "To Speak or Not to Speak: Would You Share a Panel with a Hate Preacher?," *The Huffington Post*, 9th December 2012.

⁶⁶⁵ '... That sort of conversation has started over the last five years, but we can go back as far as Abu Hamza and Finsbury Park Mosque, which were one of the first times the radical speaker really came to the fore. People like Anjem Choudary, al Muhajiroun, were something that were much more in the media, and begun to be recognised as much more of a threat.' AA.

⁶⁶⁶ 'If we take Woolwich, and the murder of Lee Rigby, again as another sea-change in moment in terms of the conversation being broadened to the impact of the radical speaker phenomenon was having, and conversations about how we should deal with that best.' *ibid*.

civic and public spaces'.⁶⁶⁷ As such, individuals seen as publicly engaging in producing or disseminating radical rhetoric have increasingly become targets for Prevent.

... we've started to move into looking to disruption; that sort of conversation has started over the last five years. But we can go back as far as Abu Hamza and Finsbury Park Mosque which has been one of the first times where the radical speaker phenomenon really came to the fore – people like Andem Chourdy, al-Mihajouroun – as being something that was much more in the media. And we began to recognise them as more of a threat.⁶⁶⁸

Disruption aims to create schisms in Islamic activist organisations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir through the targeting of individuals that are believed to be promoting problematic values or engaging in hate speech. HT has not been directly targeted with disruption in the UK, despite government banning orders against organisations such as al Muhajiroun and their subsequent incantations.

In terms of policy, Hizb ut-Tahrir are not on the page in terms of Prevent. The criteria for Prevent seems to be not even al Muhajiroun. It's not classed as that. It's classed as any connection to Anjem Choudary, Abu Baraa [Mizanur Rahman], Omar Bakri Muhammad or key individuals who have been seen in the press... If you've any connection with any of them, then that's where Prevent will come in and start disrupting you – stopping you at dawah stalls, for example...⁶⁶⁹

In Britain, disruption of the party has come about through individuals who have been reported as engaging in extremist speech, although the slightly interpretive nature of the speech being reported – such as the expansion in what can be classified as anti-Semitism and extremism in the UK – has led to a high level of internal policing of language by the party to avoid risking disruption.⁶⁷⁰

⁶⁶⁷ (CRRT).

⁶⁶⁸ AB.

⁶⁶⁹ XC.

⁶⁷⁰ Ben White, "By Limiting Criticism of Israel, Theresa May's New Definition of Anti-Semitism Will Do More Harm Than Good," *The Independent*, 12th December 2016.

The boundaries for these discussions [over counterterrorism] are constantly shifting, and I guess the law has been worked around this, in some way, by targeting individuals rather than groups and associations, particularly by focussing on instances of hate speech. And this is where HT have got themselves in a lot of trouble with authorities, where individuals have been charged with acts of anti-Semitism or hate speech.⁶⁷¹

When targeted with disruption, HT members have been impacted by tactics that include family visitations by police as individuals deemed at risk from extremism.

As a policy, it's clearly one of disruption. It doesn't matter whether these people are involved in anything or not, they get put through a meat grinder of these sort of scenarios, and what we've seen is that this is highly counterproductive in that the family members of these individuals will then suddenly start looking into al Muhajiroun and these sort of people, saying, 'well, the Government's against you'. They know their families not involved in anything, and then that then gives them blood, that concept is given life, because they're experiencing it - children being taken away for a couple of weeks, temporary foster care, that's massively disrupting.⁶⁷²

This can result in parents being investigated for posing a radicalisation risk to children – an approach that has ‘become increasingly used in by Prevent Officers in the last few years’ as extremism has become reframed within UK Contest as a ‘safeguarding’ issue.⁶⁷³ The fear of children being removed by Islamic activists identified as extreme or at risk of extremism has also been identified by organisations highly critical of counter-terror procedures, such as CAGE, who cited instances of families and children being subjected to child protection plans by local authorities and Prevent officers, leading to court appearances and restrictions placed on families.⁶⁷⁴ Concern that this tactic would be used was raised by several HT members, some citing specific instances of this occurring against persons in their personal networks. The use of such approaches and the disruption of individuals deemed to be extremist has increased the cost of conducting activism with the party. Crucially, it has

⁶⁷¹ AB.

⁶⁷² XC.

⁶⁷³ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁴ CAGE, "Separating Families - How Prevent Seeks the Removal of Children Report," (CAGE, 2017); "I Refused to Work with Prevent and Now I'm Afraid of Losing My Children," <https://www.cage.ngo/i-refused-to-work-with-prevent-and-now-im-afraid-of-losing-my-children>.

caused disruption of community and activist networks through which Hizb ut-Tahrir and similar groups operate, with the arrest of one individual resulting in a series of investigations being launched into their immediate close contacts.

In Denmark, another part of disruption has been the organisational and financial support of new civil society actors to compete with Hizb ut-Tahrir within Muslim communities by municipalities and the security services.

We use intelligence-based outreach as a form of disruption. This is not new. It's been done for ten years or so. But it's still relatively new compared to the other intel disciplines... We use strong civil society actors to compete with the not positive ones. We consider that disruption. If you take someone's base of recruitment because someone else is recruiting, it's disrupting. This guy doesn't have any fans because the other guy has taken his fans – then you've disrupted the guy.⁶⁷⁵

This involves the channelling of support, networking opportunities and – in many cases – government funding is channelled through PET operatives to targeted organisational 'partners', which work with state services to enhance narratives which promote community cohesion and integration. This aims to disrupt Hizb ut-Tahrir's strong networks within and around parts of Copenhagen where they are strongest – such as Nørrebro – by removing elements of their network or support base and encouraging them into alternative programmes; sometimes visibly, sometimes more covertly.⁶⁷⁶

... it's somewhere between targeted and the resource-based approach, speaking about building up the good alternatives within this targeted area, be it geographically or based on a network... You can say targeted civil society engagement. Disrupting, in the long-term.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁵ AN.

⁶⁷⁶ 'It takes a lot of cake and conversations and proving that we can be trusted. If we promised to show up to an event or make somebody else do it because you don't want us to show up with our name, because some people don't which is really understandable, part of this is building and branding and showing that it's not just about surveillance and having people n large registers and building in secret microphones to the computers.' *ibid.*

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

As such, we can see instances of disruption being used and impacting on Hizb ut-Tahrir members in Britain and Denmark differently across the case studies. Similarly, in the UK, this seems to focus more on disrupting more ‘radical’ elements linked to HTB, individuals who have drifted beyond the confines of the party and are deemed more likely to be engaging with al Muhajiroun and its subsequent front groups. In Denmark, however, there is more focussed disruption on HTS itself as being problematic, because of its anti-democratic message and activism, and therefore an attempt to actively dissuade members or potential members from engaging with the body of HTS itself.

7.5.4 Intimidation

The extent to which we can say there has been strategic intimidation, the fourth of Boykoff’s repression mechanism, is not easy to ascertain. As with divisive disruption, some party members have been quick to offer instances of intimidation. There has been a certain desire by authorities to, on a low level, instigate reflexivity within early recruits to dissuade them from attending meetings and move them away from consistent engagement in Hizb ut-Tahrir or other formations of Islamic activism. This has, to some extent, been done through some forms of intentional or unintentional intimidation. However, the extent to which such intimidation is representative of wider interactions between party and state, or whether it consists of limited or isolated incidences and is, therefore, unrepresentative of the general policy and implementation, is difficult to adequately dissect.

Intimidation has been reported by members of both HTB and HTS. In Britain, intimidation has largely been seen towards owners and or committees of mosques or civic sites, or towards individuals seen as verging into the realm of extremist activities.

We found that one by one you just go to a hall, you’ve had ten events in a row, and suddenly they’ll say ‘I’ve been approached, this policeman came and he started threatening my family, he said that

we're going to - your uncle such and such we realised his immigration status is unclear, we're going to investigate him'. So, it is using that fear against individuals.⁶⁷⁸

In Denmark, reports of intimidation have centred around PET interaction with individuals, discouraging current or potential activists from engaging with the party.

But the PET, I'm sure they don't like us, I'm very sure. Because that's, you know, if you surveil us you have to monitor us, you have to be motivated by something, and I think they pick their people, they pick certain people and there's been many times when, if a young person has started to go to Hizb ut-Tahrir meetings, then the PET will pay his family a visit... you have been to the Middle East, you know the background that many of us have – when the mukhabarat, when they pay you a visit, it's not just to drink coffee. So, when the Danish intelligence come to family, the family thinks 'woah, what's going on? This is dangerous!'. And they're trying to pressure the youth from not going with Hizb ut-Tahrir because they must be dangerous these people, since we got paid a visit.⁶⁷⁹

The use of intimidation, or the use of the perception of intimidation, has been interwoven with the other repression mechanisms to support the creation of a context that is generally perceived as hostile to Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark. These form a section of the political opportunity structures and are combined with the final mechanism of emulation.

7.5.5 Emulation

The final repression mechanism is that of emulation. This mechanism interacts with the other four mechanisms, diffusing and proliferating their effects. This mechanism is labelled as 'decisional' – in contrast to the 'isolating' other four repression mechanisms – and acts to alter social relations in other spaces of dissent to explain to dissident or potentially dissident citizens why they should not engage in contentious or problematised forms of

⁶⁷⁸ HE.

⁶⁷⁹ HL.

politics.⁶⁸⁰ This section will suggest that, in this context, the key means by which emulation has been established within a counterterror context has been the establishment of counter-extremist organisations. The impact of these have been to ensure that messages of counter-extremism specifically hostile to HT activism have become canonised within contemporary politics.

The proliferation of counter-extremism NGOs has ensured that, in the UK context, repression of HT (direct or indirect) has been emulated far more effectively than is the case in Denmark. The lack of such effective structural emulation mechanisms in Denmark has meant that HTS has not been impacted in the same way as HTB by the development of counterextremism voices – despite greater focus by Danish authorities such as the PET on HT. However, the trend of the internationalisation of counter-extremist organisations and increasing conceptualisation of strategies of CT and CVE as international assets to be traded and exported may change this situation in Denmark in the longer term.

The establishment of non-authority organisations, think-tanks and research centres, act as key emulating actors due to their reciprocal relationship with authorities. Towards the UK Government, such organisations have acted as legitimisers and amplifiers for policy, ensuring that approaches have the legitimacy of an academic veneer. CT/CVE NGOs in the UK include Quilliam, the Centre on Religion and Geopolitics (of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation), the Henry Jackson Society, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD), the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) and Faith Matters.⁶⁸¹ Such organisations – whilst representing various political hues and often openly competing with each other – tend to operate, according to Miller and Sabir, as ‘front groups’ for governments, part of the strategic communication component of counter-terror policies.⁶⁸² By developing recommendations and reports deliberately positioned in line with government policy – as well as producing, in some instances, problematic statements, such as support for spying on Muslims not suspected of committing crimes⁶⁸³ – some of these organisations have been accused of aiding the de-

⁶⁸⁰ Boykoff, "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA." p.287

⁶⁸¹ Quilliam (formerly, the Quilliam Foundation, or QF) was launched in April 2008 with political and financial backing from the HO and FCO to the tune of £1m. The QF listed many high-profile political backers including former leader of the Liberal Democrats Paddy Ashdown and Conservative MP Michael Gove who as chairman of the centre right think tank Policy Exchange was heavily involved in the debate over extremism in the UK' Hanif. p.280

⁶⁸² Miller and Sabir.

⁶⁸³ Vikram Dodd, "Spying Morally Right, Says Thinktank," *The Guardian*, 16th October 2009; "List Sent to Terror Chief Aligns Peaceful Muslim Groups with Terrorist Ideology," *The Guardian*, 4th August 2010.

politicisation of counter-terrorism.⁶⁸⁴ By constructing hegemonic discourse about terrorism in a way which removes not only any counter-narratives to an ideological approach to terrorism but overtly supports ‘necessary’ coercive counterterror tactics, such organisations have been accused of acting to curtail dissent, reproducing structures of repression.⁶⁸⁵ They therefore have been critiqued as enabling a system which attempts to intimidate sections of the population under the guise of a necessary response to terrorism, ‘essential to the efficacy of coercion and the generation of fear’.⁶⁸⁶

*Often, it's quite common for organisations or charities, which are private sector based, to be utilised by CT police. So, Quilliam, the ISD, - you see a big move towards other private sector groups, which again I think is helpful. It moves away from being heavily police-delivered, because we accept that we are not necessarily the right people to be at the forefront of this work.*⁶⁸⁷

CT/CVE NGOs are the creators of a significant proportion of public research outputs – reports, events and public media appearances – and are either led, or have significant high-level input, from former Hizb ut-Tahrir members. These ex-members derive significant credibility or prestige from being self-confessed ‘former radicals’.⁶⁸⁸ For instance, The Quilliam website refers to Maajid Nawaz, listed as the ‘Founder’ of the organisation, as ‘informed by years spent in his youth as a leadership member of a global Islamist group, and his gradual transformation towards liberal democratic values’⁶⁸⁹; Adam Deen ‘dedicates his work to countering extremism and the Islamist ideology he once subscribed to’ as member of ALM, and his ‘past experiences add tremendous value to [Quilliam’s] outreach work’⁶⁹⁰; whilst Ed Husain (the Centre on Religion and Geopolitics) and Shiraz Maher (ICSR) have mounted strong criticisms of Hizb ut-Tahrir’s political ideology and its role in the ‘radicalisation process’.⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁴ Miller and Sabir.

⁶⁸⁵ Richard McNeil-Willson, "A Primer on the Impact of Islamic State on Counterterrorism Legislation," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Counterterrorism Policy*, ed. Scott Nicholas Romaniuk, et al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

⁶⁸⁶ Miller and Sabir. pp.27-8

⁶⁸⁷ AB.

⁶⁸⁸ ‘Majid if the full package. I mean, he was in the right place at the right time and the British Government was looking for ways of addressing the problem - they didn’t know how to deal with it - they suddenly found that Nawaz had come up and they pumped a million pounds into Quilliam – the British Government, I mean. I don’t know if you know Quilliam at all, but Noman Benotman ... he has packaged himself as well; he’s been very good at packaging himself. He realised that there was a market here there.’

⁶⁸⁹ Quilliam, "Staff: Maajid Nawaz," Quilliam, <https://www.quilliaminternational.com/about/staff/maajid-nawaz/>.

⁶⁹⁰ "Staff: Adam Deen," Quilliam International, <https://www.quilliaminternational.com/about/staff/adam-deen/>.

⁶⁹¹ Yahya Birt to yahyabirt1, 1st April, 2007, <https://yahyabirt1.wordpress.com/2007/10/23/dirty-tricks-hizb-ut-tahrir-and-its-critics/>.

As well as amplifying and emulating government counter-terrorism mechanisms of repression through legitimising certain approaches – often in ways beneficial to their profile⁶⁹² – ex-HT members with a high level of media engagement, along with their respective CT/CVE NGOs, influence governmental policy in turn. One central element to this reciprocal government policy-think tank relationship is how such actors have strongly pushed the ideological narrative of extremism. Interviewees suggested that the growth and centralisation of an ideological narrative central to governmental approaches of counterterrorism developed due to the influence of former HT members which helped to drive research on terrorism during this period – actors such as Nawaz, Husain, Maher, etc.

The centrality of the ‘ideological Islamist narrative’ is reflected, as in a mirror, in the drive for ideological purity within HT texts and party meetings, study circles (*halaqat*) and internal organisational matters. The UK government responses to terrorism and extremism – driven at a critical juncture in its development in the years immediately post-2005 – have been built on similar resonant frame which supposes a ‘global war’ between ‘Islamism’ and Western-liberal values.⁶⁹³ This focus on ideological purity/impurity in CT/CVE approaches – an inverted image of HT doctrine – has been shored up by prominent CT actors, who find that the ‘true problem’ of terrorism is ‘the rise of this theocratic, fascist ideology’ of ‘Islamism’, which must be ‘challenge[d], head on’ to ‘reassert, classical small-‘L’ liberal values in the face of this rising theocratic fascism’.⁶⁹⁴ As such, ‘the problem was not in necessarily the associations we made with people who were naturally inclined to violence, but the problem was in the very ideas themselves’.⁶⁹⁵ Hizb ut-Tahrir is described by Nawaz as an extremist but not terrorist group; it is, however, problematised because of its ideological hook of the Khilafah as ‘the group that seeded, from its offshoots, all of the jihadist groups – they have, invariably, a link back to the group’.⁶⁹⁶

Core counter-extremist NGOs have been critiqued as problematic because of their focus on ideology.⁶⁹⁷

However, whilst doubts have been raised by commentators over the role counter-extremism NGOs have

⁶⁹² ‘I have personal experience of events in Ed Hussein’s book, and I know for a fact that Ed Hussein was not there, basically. So, his book is more a work of fiction as well as, maybe, second-hand experiences, cobbled together with a particular narrative in mind. He’s done very well, personally, by working together with Majid Nawaz.’

⁶⁹³ Nawaz.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁵ Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, *The Roots of Violence Islamist Extremism and Efforts to Counter It*, Second, 10th July 2008.

⁶⁹⁶ *Radical: My Journey out of Islamist Extremism*.

⁶⁹⁷ ‘I don’t think that the current situation and the current CT threat that the UK is in has been adequately managed, none of the CT organisations have offered anything substantial to deal with it either. And the time we spent from 2005-2014, up to ISIS, you can almost

achieved in challenging terrorism-style actions in Europe – with the terror threat in the UK parked at high levels⁶⁹⁸ – and potential negative impacts that such organisations have had on enabling Islamophobia and racism have been consistently highlighted,⁶⁹⁹ by framing CT and counter-extremism programmes in terms as an antithetical response to HT activism and ideology, they have created a CT environment that is particularly hostile towards HTB approaches, even whilst not overtly targeting the party.

The focus on the problematisation of ideology – and specifically ‘Islamism’/‘political Islam’ – as well as the development of the ‘conveyor belt to radicalisation’ and its continued usage in form (if not in name) as a foundation stone for CT/CVE creates significant problems for HT because it has roots in a reaction against the party by former members. This has led to the setting in play of actions of emulation against HT, leading to organisational collapse as solidarity nosedives, recruitment slumps and alliance building wane; for Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain – where counter-extremism organisations are prevalent – the mechanism of emulation has been stronger, leading to social movement disintegration and the decline of dissent.⁷⁰⁰

In terms of Quilliam and these guys, there was a disingenuousness there, and I think their literature on ideology was ideologically driven rather than academically rigorous in any way. And they had a personal axe to grind with HT which came through I think in their writings and positions, which inevitably filtered through to policy.⁷⁰¹

In Denmark, there has not been the same development of CT NGOs, partly due to the large reach of state structures which have left limited space for such non-governmental work, as well as a limited pool of ‘ex-radicals’ to drive response. However, the internationalising of CT NGOs and the increased marketisation of counterterrorism programmes has led to such organisations beginning to carve some – still limited – space in Denmark.⁷⁰² There has also been some proliferation of organisations or higher-profile individuals willing to

divide CT into pre and post ISIS, I don’t think all that time has contributed to anything - we haven’t learnt anything from that era. We’ve almost gone to ground zero, everyone’s arguing about the same thing since 2005, nothing’s moved on.’

⁶⁹⁸ MI5, "Threat Levels," MI5 Security Service, <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>.

⁶⁹⁹ Githens-Mazer; Miller and Sabir; Jackson et al.

⁷⁰⁰ Boykoff, "Limiting Dissent: The Mechanisms of State Repression in the USA." p.303

⁷⁰¹ XC.

⁷⁰² Aarhus.

challenge Hizb ut-Tahrir from within Danish Muslim communities, although on a much smaller scale than in the UK, its organisation in nascent stages of development.

We need to catch up [with the UK]. [In Denmark] We don't have many critical voices and intellectuals who are not afraid of criticising Islamists.⁷⁰³

Initiatives have been created to counter 'Islamist' engagement, including the association 'People Against Fundamentalism', designed specifically in part to steer young people away from engaging in activism with Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia.⁷⁰⁴ Ex-members of HTS also highlighted the need for a growth in more advanced critical voices in Denmark, with focus gradually developing on creating a robust discursive counterpoint to the polished language of HTS.

I think one thing that's happened since I left, coincidentally, is the fact that a lot of young Muslims have started taking part in debate. There are more Muslim debaters and they're not 'retarded' anymore – you can quote me on that. So, for the longest time, there was no real competition. At least HT members, they sound crazy, but they didn't sound retarded – if that makes sense. They're quite eloquent. So, I think now we have a number of debaters who are secular and democratic and freedom-orientated, and they're sort of able to steal the limelight from the party.⁷⁰⁵

However, this emulation is not as overtly hostile to HT recruitment and activism processes as is the case in the UK, where former HT members will draw on an inverse HT methodology, as well as target cells and networks developed from their former party activism with anti-extremism 'disengagement' programmes.

7.6 Conclusions

⁷⁰³ XI.

⁷⁰⁴ Birger Langkjer, "Sektor I Danmark: Hizb Ut-Tahrir, Faderhuset, Scientologi Injiva-Behandling," (langkjer.dk2006). Mateen Siddiqui, "The Doctrine of Hizb Ut-Tahrir," in *The Challenge of Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Deciphering and Combatting Radical Islamist Ideology*, ed. Zeyno Baran (Washington D.C.: The Nixon Centre, 2004).

⁷⁰⁵ XI.

From an examination of mechanisms of repression from both UK and Danish CT structures – and their perceived interaction with HT members and activists – we can observe there are several differences in the way that repression and interaction between authorities and HT party bodies have been articulated in the case studies. In the UK, there has been a shift away from the specific securitisation of HTB by the British Government, with proscription becoming seen an increasingly less attractive approach to an organisation that has largely conceived as a ‘talking shop’ that represents a negligible threat to British society and national security. The forms of repression faced by HTB in the UK are also far more ‘ambient’, focussed on a generalised problematisation of forms of Islamic activism that are deemed extremist as part of a ‘pre-crime’ approach towards terrorist-style violence. This has been emulated by a constellation of counter-extremism organisations that have been borne from and led by ex-members hostile to HTB, who have greatly shaped CT and counter-extremism discourse through the (inverted) lens of HT methodology. Counterterrorism has been sculpted towards the development of an ideological purity and an essentialist antagonism between ‘Islamism’ and Western-liberal values. Such processes have helped to both create and emulate a hostile discursive environment towards HTB which has enhanced the conditions for organisational decline.

In Denmark, a different set of repressive processes have occurred under the securitised lens. Repression mechanisms have focussed far more overtly on HTS rather than ‘Islamism’ in general – perhaps representing the dominant position of the party amongst the Islamic activist milieu in Copenhagen and its limited organisational competition – and authority actions have therefore targeted HTS and party membership more pointedly. However, the long-term impact of this on activism has been blunted by limited means of emulation and amplification, which still ensure that the party has some fertile ground remaining for activism. This, however, may change in the future, with the British style of counterterrorism and emulation growing in international stature and use.

This chapter gives us three findings. Firstly, there is evidence that repression mechanisms are being used against and experienced by Hizb ut-Tahrir activists in both Britain and Denmark. Interviews have thrown light on numerous examples of resource depletion, stigmatisation, divisive disruption and intimidation through the implementation of various action modes.

Secondly, the focus of repression is slightly different when comparing the case studies. As with earlier analysis, we see a preference within the Danish context of targeting HTS more directly through the passing of laws aimed at stymieing their activism, direct interventions against specific members and degradation limited to the party. In contrast, in Britain, whilst the party has experienced various instances of disruption, this seems to have been a result of concern over more 'extreme' actors associated with Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain rather than the party itself, with British authority interactions with the party focussed on security concerns from these individuals, often more linked to ALM than HTB. As such, we can conclude that there has been a more significant closing of the political opportunity structures (POS) in Denmark than has been the case in Britain.

Thirdly and finally, emulation of repression mechanisms can be observed through the lens of counter-extremism organisations which have acted to amplify counter-terror practices and weaponise areas of civil society against Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain. In contrast, this has not occurred in Denmark, and it can be reasonably suggested that the missing element of hostile counter-extremism organisations largely led by ex-members is key to this lack of emulation in the Danish case study. This helps to explain why the British branch has undergone a more noticeable decline despite not being as targeted by counter-terrorism policy and practice as Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia.

8. The Repression-Mobilisation Nexus

The previous two data-orientated chapters have examined three things: 1. *Securitised lens*: The first part of chapter six has established the securitisation lens through examination of discourse on the party in Britain and Denmark. 2. *Organisational decline*: The second part of chapter six demonstrated environmental degradation and the decline of organisational capacity. 3. *Counter-terror repression*: Chapter seven bridged these using the explanatory concept of repression through counter-terror legislation. From this, we can further observe not only that there is a link between a securitisation of language and the securitisation of an SMO, but that different styles of securitisation are occurring in different national contexts. Furthermore, the links are not clear cut: more hostile framing in Britain towards HT has not resulted in government targeting of the group; whilst a less hostile framing in Denmark has seen a concurrent rise in authority targeting of HTS.

The final step is to put these tools – the securitised lens, organisational decline and counter-terror repression – together into a model to explore in more detail what the impact of the securitising lens has been on HT in Britain and Denmark and, importantly, how HT has responded to these different forms of repression. This chapter will do this in the following way: firstly, it will examine how the securitising lens has changed HT's tactics on the micro-level, in terms of the framing devices used; secondly, it will explore how HT has sought to respond to securitising repression at the meso, organisational level of party; and finally, it will determine how HT has shifted tactics in its macro environment, to develop an interactive modelling that accounts for macro-micro interactions between HT and authorities.

8.1 Micro: HT's framing response

This section will look at how existing frames have degraded and redeveloped under the lens of securitisation and the extent to which Hizb ut-Tahrir has been able to respond to this effectively. It will firstly outline the core diagnostic, prognostic, motivation and master frames of the contemporary party, before examining how these have faced degradation due to securitisation.

8.1.1 New developments in HT frames

Following the New York attacks of 2001 and the subsequent securitisation of HT and Islamic activism in Western countries, we can observe some significant frame development and adjustment taking place.⁷⁰⁶ Three diagnostic frames have come into focus: the malign influence of Western powers in the Muslim *majaal*; the structural repression of Muslim communities and other minorities, particularly in the West; and the securitisation of Muslim identity markers and Islamic activism, particularly under national counterterrorism legislation. These are highly interlinked and have been created chronologically alongside the development of Islamic activism, playing out respectively in the three arenas of the global, the Western, and the national, as HT has become increasingly inculcated in Western national matrixes and responsive to counterterrorism processes. These have been recently filtered through a ‘hot cognition’ of widespread Muslim inequality, in a master frame of human rights.⁷⁰⁷

*... their books on politics, economics. They have some very interesting concepts. Some of their ideas are amazing if you go into the root of their ideology and political theory, they're very profound ideas. And if you've worked in IR theory, you recognise that they do challenge and contest some important things. They do come up with original premises...*⁷⁰⁸

Firstly, this section will detail how frames have developed alongside counterterrorism legislation and the application of the securitised lens, with HT in Britain and Denmark increasingly twinning human rights issues with frames that problematise the repressive measures of CT measures to grow support for the re-establishment of the *Khilafah*.

8.1.1.1 Diagnostic Frames

8.1.1.1.1 Malign Western Influence in the Islamic World

⁷⁰⁶ Karagiannis, *The New Political Islam: Human Rights, Democracy and Justice*. p.72

⁷⁰⁷ This has happened on an intergroup and international scale – independent branches have adopted and adjusted this master frame of rights and inequality to suit their own regional context and national matrix. *Ibid.* p.72

⁷⁰⁸ XB.

On a global level, the earliest frame – utilised from the genesis of HT and the writings of al-Nibhani in the 1950s – has been the international oppression of Muslims in the Islamic *majaal* by the machinations of Western powers through direct-military and indirect-diplomatic involvement. This frame stresses the capriciousness and hypocrisy of Western military involvement in Muslim-majority countries and aims to show that the stability of the West has often been predicated upon continued instability beyond its borders. A child of the post-colonial struggles in Palestine and the Arab world, party rhetoric draws an explicit link between colonial repression of the Middle East and the enforced decline, dismemberment and disestablishment of the Ottoman Caliphate, through to contemporary military engagements by the US, Russia and European states.⁷⁰⁹ As well as highlighting the continued military engagement of the West in the Middle East, Hizb ut-Tahrir also campaign against leaders of Muslim-majority countries, viewing them as proxies for Western actors.⁷¹⁰ Vitriol is focussed towards Muslim leaders overtly friendly or allied to the West – such as the Saudi monarchy – or those that have displayed a high level of open hostility towards the work of Hizb ut-Tahrir.⁷¹¹ This frame is built out of elements of postcolonial thought and practice, but diverges from postcolonialism by framing it as an essentially Islamic problem – colonialism was justified through generations of repressing and reconstituting Islam into supposedly supporting an imperialist agenda and, as such, any adequate response requires a pan-Ummah Islamic revolution.

[Take] Indian colonialism, i.e., from the British Raj time, they set up the al-Aghar University and so on, they set up specifically to bring out this very wishy-washy, soft, don't oppose the British colonialism, Islam is only okay within the rule of the law of the land...⁷¹²

8.1.1.1.2 Structural Inequality of minorities in the West

⁷⁰⁹ Hizb ut-Tahrir, *Political Concepts of Hizb Ut-Tahrir* (London: Al-Khilafah Publications, 2005). Recent examples of issues around which Hizb ut-Tahrir have centred responsive campaigns include the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the 2011 military engagement in Libya, as well as the lack of response by Western to the horrifying scale of destruction in Syria. Okay Pala, "Iraq, 15 Years Later..." news release, 24th March, 2018, <http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.info/en/index.php/2017-01-28-14-59-33/news-comment/15024.html>; Hizb ut-Tahrir Libya, "The Malignant French Role in Libya (Translated)," news release, 23rd July, 2016, <http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.info/en/index.php/leaflet/libya/11045.html>; Hizb ut-Tahrir Syria, "The Eastern and Western Ghouta Chemical Massacre Is a Horrific Massacre, the Insolvent International Community Must Be Held Accountable," news release, 22nd August, 2013, <http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org/index.php/EN/wshow/1906/>.

⁷¹⁰ Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, "Event Review: Pakistan's Rulers Remain Subservient to Trump," news release, 2nd March, 2018, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/dawah/local-dawah/pakistans-rulers-remain-subservient-trump/>.

⁷¹¹ Okay Pala, "Saudi Arabia Was Never Islamic So How Can It Return to Even a "Moderate Islam!"," news release, 30th October, 2017, <http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.info/en/index.php/2017-01-28-14-59-33/news-comment/14141.html>; Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, "Britain Rolls Red Carpet for Butcher of Yemen," news release, 7th March, 2018, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/viewpoint/britain-rolls-red-carpet-for-butcher-of-yemen/>.

⁷¹² HE.

Beyond the Islamic world, campaigns by HT highlight the political repression of Muslims and other minorities at the hands of majority states – from the Bosnian genocide and Srebrenica massacre of 1992 to the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims in 2017 in Myanmar.⁷¹³ This second frame was developed alongside the growing activism of HT beyond the majaal in the late 1980s and 1990s, with the key international event in its proliferation being the Bosnian War of 1992-1995, which engaged young activists with extreme images of violence against Muslims in Europe.⁷¹⁴ This helped to crystallise a Muslim identity existing in opposition to and antagonistically with a Western/European identity, as well as demonstrating not just the inequality that existed between Muslims in Europe and more mainstream communities but also the potentially violent foundations upon which such inequality was based.

It's the Srebrenica anniversary at the moment. That was a big thing in 1995, it was probably the single most defining thing for Muslims in Europe, especially in the UK, it was a big deal, that you could be white, blond, blue-eyed and still be massacred if you're Muslim. So, there was kind of a sense of a lack of belonging. And there were big debates around Asian identity because the identity thing became a big deal then. So, HT pushed this conception of your identity as not British, not Asian – it's Muslim.⁷¹⁵

Whilst the threat of such massive eruptions of violence in Europe has receded, this frame still focusses on highlighting the structural inequality faced by second and third generation migrants to Europe, who still struggle with higher barriers of access to jobs, welfare and economic and social stability.⁷¹⁶ This has also been given renewed relevance with the (so-called) 'Syrian refugee crisis', which has seen concern about the treatment of refugees by Western States and the EU.

⁷¹³ Hussein; Hizb ut-Tahrir Bangladesh, "Protests by Hizb Ut-Tahrir Condemning the Brutal Genocide of the Rohingya Muslims," news release, 10th September, 2017, <http://www.khilafah.com/protests-by-hizb-ut-tahrir-condemning-the-brutal-genocide-of-the-rohingya-muslims/>.

⁷¹⁴ 'In the dark lecture theatre there were sobs at what people were seeking; gasps of shock at what was going in two hours away from Heathrow airport: the serving of Muslim men's testicles on trays, Serbs slaughtering pregnant Muslim women, reports of gang rape within the borders of Europe' Hussein.

⁷¹⁵ XD.

⁷¹⁶ Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, "Muslims Easy Prey in Sarkozy's Bid to Get Re-Elected," news release, 18th September, 2011, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/islamic-culture/muslims-easy-prey-in-sarkozys-bid-to-get-re-elected/>.

What do you expect from [Denmark,] a country that helped the Nazis and won't admit it? They call us anti-Semitic! But there's this myth that they helped the Jews escape on boats to Sweden but, you know, they made them give them all of their money to leave, to pay for the escape. They stole everything from Jews running away from the Nazis, all their belongings – but they've never acknowledged it. And now they're doing it again with the Syrians...⁷¹⁷

However, as HT has shifted onto utilising a master frame of human rights, the structural inequality frame has expanded outwards, now not confining itself only to the *ummah* but to include other minorities and structurally disadvantaged groups: alternative religious or ethnic minorities facing racism; the economically impoverished with reduced access to society; and women encountering daily sexism and misogyny. These are linked together in demonstration of the fundamental inequalities of Western systems of governance.

Women are required to look in a certain way, have a certain body, being career-orientated and being mums at the same time - there's a big pressure on women in Western societies and they're not as free as people think they are. They're not enslaved, they're not in gaol, but you can oppress someone intellectually and mentally, and that actually is the most effective kind of controlling people - it's the mind control.⁷¹⁸

This embedded inequality of minorities represents a structural critique against the post-Westphalian national state.⁷¹⁹ Whilst the first frame problematises the *acts* of governments and leaders of states, the second frame has a more overtly *structural* basis, problematising the Western articulation of the nation state as the cause of physical and discursive violence. Built upon elements of anti-capitalist and post-Marxist political theories, it aims to contextualise the inequality of the current economic systems and limitations and contradictions of democratic political structures in the West.⁷²⁰ As such, it is often cut with elements of critical class analysis (particularly in

⁷¹⁷ Referring to Folketinget plans to seize assets of refugees worth more than 10,000 Kroner. David Crouch and Patrick Kingsley, "Danish Parliament Approves Plan to Seize Assets from Refugees," *The Guardian*, 26th January 2016 2016.

⁷¹⁸ HA.

⁷¹⁹ Abdul Wahid, "Why Do Western States Seem to Treat Minorities So Badly?," news release, 16th February, 2015, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/viewpoint/why-do-western-states-seem-to-treat-minorities-so-badly-part-three/>.

⁷²⁰ '... their books on politics, economics. There's a very interesting concept. Some of their ideas are amazing if you go into the root of their ideology and political theory, they're very profound ideas. And if you've worked in IR theory, you recognise that they do challenge and contest some important things. They do come up with original premises'

Britain where systems of class are more pervasive) and – similarly to many critiques from the left – frames issues such as crime, addiction, women’s inequality and poverty as an inevitable by-products of Western constructions of the state, nationalism, democracy and free-market capitalism.⁷²¹ In opposition to leftist critiques, however, this structural and class-based analysis is used to support an essentialist oppositional dichotomy between the perceived traditions of the ‘Western-Hellenic’ and the ‘Eastern-Islamic’ as fundamentally incompatible.⁷²² Accordingly, oppression and Islamophobia are used to demonstrate that, structurally-speaking, Western states will never create the equality its rhetoric aspires towards and Muslims will never be able to become an integral (and safe) element of society unless they ‘abandon part of their identity’ and ‘[accept] Western values as superior’.⁷²³ Therefore, establishment of a separate Islamic identity and Islamic state is the only way to challenge this inherent structural and cultural inequality.

8.1.1.1.3 Securitisation of national Muslim communities

Finally, the third and most localised diagnostic frame has been developed specifically in response to the securitising lens within the national matrix of Western states: the securitisation of Muslims under counterterrorism legislation.⁷²⁴

There’s a mosque in Aarhus called the Grimhøjmoskéen Mosque. The Danish Integration Minister, she said ‘if it was up to me, I would demolish it with a bulldozer’. You know, this rhetoric is normal now, but ten years ago nobody would have used this language, like, demolish a mosque. Imagine, a synagogue, if someone said, ‘I wish I could demolish this synagogue or church’. People would think, like, ‘are you crazy’? This wasn’t even controversial. Everyone is experiencing the pressure...⁷²⁵

⁷²¹ Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, "Capitalism: Of the Rich, by the Rich and Only for the Rich," news release, 28th January, 2014, <http://www.hizb.org.uk/viewpoint/capitalism-of-the-rich-by-the-rich-and-only-for-the-rich/>.

⁷²² ‘France banned students from wearing the hijab, Germany recently banned the niqab in schools, in the Netherlands Geert Wilders wants to ban the Qur’an (his party ironically calls itself The Freedom Party), in Australia the One Nation Party called for a ban on Muslim migration, and, of course, let’s not forget about the circus we see in the US right now...’ Ebner.

⁷²³ Jalaluddin Patel, interview by Jessica Aldred, 30th November, 2004.

⁷²⁴ Karagiannis, *The New Political Islam: Human Rights, Democracy and Justice*. p.67

⁷²⁵ HR.

The rise of the *War on Terror* and expansion of counterterrorism and counter-extremism programmes has been framed – with justification – as disproportionately targeting Muslim communities and problematising certain articulations of Islamic identity under the banner of security.⁷²⁶

*... the War on Terror has worsened the situation for Muslims living in the West. Muslims have become the 'dangerous other', fostering new attitudes such as Islamophobia, which is an anxiety and fear in society towards Muslims, who can be regarded as potential terrorists.*⁷²⁷

Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark aim to challenge this disproportionate focus on Muslims, along with the controversial terminology surrounding notions of terrorism and the increased interference of security sectors into the civil space, providing a rallying point for a Muslim-wide response.⁷²⁸ This final frame is intertwined with the others but is differentiated in that, rather than focussing on international political actors or structural inequality, it looks towards the national security arena to show the intractable barriers Muslims face to equal recognition of human rights at an individual state level.

*Muslims are literally bullied in the West, all under the guise of freedom. Western politicians have let this happen. What happened 70 years ago is happening again today. Muslims are today's Jews.*⁷²⁹

This frame forms the basis of much of the party's reorientation – particularly in Britain – towards the relatively substantial chorus of voices problematising governmental counterterrorism. This has given the party an easy and identifiable target, with counterterrorism often clumsy in its implementation, poorly articulated in its discourse and reliant upon often problematic approaches.⁷³⁰ Together, these three frames form a discursive

⁷²⁶ Yasmin Hussain and Paul Bagguley, "Securitized Citizens: Islamophobia, Racism and the 7/7 London Bombings," *The Sociological Review* 60, no. 4 (2012); Arshad Isakjee, "The Securitized Identities of Young Muslim Men in Birmingham" (University of Birmingham, 2012); Pantazis and Pemberton; MEND, "Jchr Report on Counter Extremism Strategy, Extremism Bill and Prevent," <https://mend.org.uk/news/jchr-report-on-counter-extremism-strategy-extremism-bill-and-prevent/>; Isobel Ingham-Barrow, "More Than Words: Approaching a Definition of Islamophobia," (Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND), 2018); Charlotte Heath-Kelly and Erzsebet Strausz, "Counter-Terrorism in the Nhs: Evaluating Prevent Duty Safeguarding in the Nhs," (University of Warwick, 2017).

⁷²⁷ Orofino, "Intellectual Radicals Challenging the State: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in the West." p.407

⁷²⁸ Hanif.

⁷²⁹ Ebner.

⁷³⁰ 'the conveyor belt theory isn't just saying Hizb ut-Tahrir is going to lead you to terrorism, it's saying the more Islamic you are, the more you're going to go down that road'

representation of the development of party activism, built upon each other to access localised political resources in Western Europe.

Whilst the first two of these diagnostic frames were instigated prior to the securitising lens post-2001, they have all been further developed and enhanced, increasingly placed solely through the optic of critically disputing counterterrorism and Western formations of security that stigmatise Muslims and minorities. These frames show that Hizb ut-Tahrir have responded to the threat of securitisation by attempting to build a coordinated challenge to counterterrorism legislation. However, whilst the diagnostic frames have changed in response to securitisation in both Britain and Denmark, the prognostic frame of the *Khilafah* and the motivational frame of *da'wah* have largely stayed the same in response to perceived counterterror repression.

8.1.1.2 Prognostic and Motivational Frames

The prognosis by Hizb ut-Tahrir for these three sub-problems – malign Western intrusion in the Islamic majaan; the structural inequalities of minority Muslim communities; and the targeting of Muslim communities by Islamophobic counterterrorism policies – is the reestablishment of the *Khilafah*, or Islamic state.⁷³¹ The revival of an Islamic state is framed as a potential political counterweight, large enough to resist the machinations of Western politicking whilst simultaneously offering an alternative to the structural inequality of the post-Westphalian capitalist state as an Islamically-supportive set of governing structures which would give the Muslim ummah the stability and safety of a homeland.⁷³²

*Day by day, the realisation is coming: there is one solution, one Khilafah, one ummah, one Qur'an, one solution!*⁷³³

Whilst diagnostic frames changed and developed in response to securitisation processes, it is important to note that the party has not sought to change its prognostic frame – the concept of the *Khilafah* – with the

⁷³¹ Hizb ut-Tahrir, *Hizb Ut-Tahrir* (London: Al-Khilafah Publications, 2000).

⁷³² 'What Muslims need is their own state to protect themselves... to protect Muslims, we need to resurrect that Khalifate.' Nawaz, *Radical: My Journey out of Islamist Extremism*.

⁷³³ Gmedia.

establishment of counterterror legislation. However, whilst HT have been one of the main (and most consistent) Islamist organisations advocating the reestablishment of the Khilafah, the party in Britain and Denmark has shown a desire to be viewed as more diverse and complex in their objectives, keen to link the prognostic Khilafah with the motivational frame of *da'wah*. Members and spokespeople have often stressed wider societal and religious aims within their activism and motivations than simply the establishment of the Khilafah which is, in and of itself, not enough to provide motivation – the *means* of its establishment is just as important as its actuality, if not more so.

*... we have to be clear that our role in Britain is not to be a one trick pony. We're not just about the Khilafah. The Khilafah is an important part of our work, but we've always said this isn't the goal, it's a method reach the goal, which is to carry Allah's will.*⁷³⁴

In the case of Hizb ut-Tahrir, the motivational frame that guides such activism is that of religious *da'wah*: the responsibility of each individual member to take the message of Hizb ut-Tahrir's ideology into wider Muslim and non-Muslim communities.⁷³⁵ Such motivational framing encourages the active dissemination of narrative frames through a variety of talks, protests, leafleting and other forms of public activism in overtly religious and non-religious spaces.

*An individual basically starts to read some of our leaflets, looks at our website, starts to attend a few events, realise that they agree with it. And then he or she starts to say 'I want to carry these same ideas'. All of our dawah is about saying that everybody should be carrying these ideas. So, it's not about, the primary message isn't to say, 'come and join us', the primary message is 'here's an idea, go and tell somebody else about that same idea'.*⁷³⁶

⁷³⁴ HE.

⁷³⁵ '...to implement Islam you need [the Khilafah], but that doesn't mean that everything is suspended until that state comes, we've never said that. A bigger part of the work for an organisation like Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain is actually just genuine dawah: accounting, speaking to people about, exposing the plans against the people, these colonial plans. We need to recognise that ourselves as well as the community we speak to needs to recognise Hizb ut-Tahrir isn't just Khilafah, even though it's going to appear in all of our talks anyway, as it's a big part of the solution. But it isn't the only thing we're talking about. And from the earliest days, it wasn't the only thing we've talked about.' *ibid.*

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*

Activism is framed by Hizb ut-Tahrir – in methods not dissimilar from other Islamic activist organisations – as service to God, rather than service to the party and the organisation seeks to destabilise the liberal-Westphalian norm of a supposed religious-secular divide.⁷³⁷ It is this element that is designed to enable a largely clandestine group with high barriers of entry, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, to build widespread support whilst circumventing the ‘free-rider’ problem.⁷³⁸

*At the end of the day, the spiritual side is not just the prayer, it's also the political side, because if you don't care about the affairs of the ummah, then it's like you're ignoring a big part of your faith. So, you need to look into what's happening around the world, to your brothers and sisters, because if you neglect that, you're neglecting your duty as a Muslim and you'll be questioned about your actions and how you looked after them.*⁷³⁹

8.1.1.3 The Master Frame

Whilst the prognostic and motivational frames have remained the same in response to securitisation, Hizb ut-Tahrir has developed a new master frame. Since the start of the 21st Century, their rhetoric has become increasingly bound together within the master frame of the language of international human rights, which creates both the moral obligation to support fellow Muslims throughout the world as part of a defence of the Ummah and enables the party to position itself as the sole legitimate defender of those rights; to launch initiatives for the support of those Muslim communities deemed to be under threat.⁷⁴⁰ Being active in many countries means that the group must adopt a cognitive schema that can transmit a global message to local audiences, resonating with different cultures and political environments. For this purpose, the group has utilised the master frame of human rights as the most suitable vehicle of communication in bridging Hizb ut-Tahrir's globalist ideology with local concerns about discrimination, abuses and counterterrorism.⁷⁴¹ This discursive turn has resulted in new specific kinds of activism, as, for instance, in 2006 when HTB registered to attend the Human

⁷³⁷ cf. Cavanaugh, "The Violence of 'Religion': Examining a Prevalent Myth."; *The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict*.

⁷³⁸ Will H. Moore, "Rational Rebels: Overcoming the Free-Rider Problem," *Political Research Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (1995).

⁷³⁹ HH.

⁷⁴⁰ Karagiannis, *The New Political Islam: Human Rights, Democracy and Justice*. p.71

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.* p.66

Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, organised by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.⁷⁴²

*This is the first time that we've seen the language of the liberal state, equality and civil rights used for explicitly illiberal goals in Denmark. It is incredibly effective and Danish society doesn't know how to respond...*⁷⁴³

This approach has enabled HT to compete against other Islamist groups at the local level and simultaneously forge alliances with social movement organisations and political parties beyond the world of political Islam within a context of counterterror repression. By using of the human rights master frame, the party has attempted to remake elements of public image, moving away from the more divisive motifs utilised by HTB in the 1990s and ensuring a greater chance the party will avoid proscription under CT legislation.⁷⁴⁴ Whilst this has proven largely successful in avoiding banning, both party branches have faced frame degradation due to other national and international events that link to terrorism and security.

8.1.2 Frame Degradation

We can observe patterns of frame degradation occurring in both HTB and HTS which can be directly linked to securitisation – although this seems to have hit the British branch with greater force. International events have impacted on the ability for HT to engage in resonant framing, as its frames face degradation and decline. From 2001, the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, engagement in Libya, the West's general appeasement of Bashar al-Assad in the face of Islamic State, along with continued occupation in Palestine – all such events have been successfully packaged by HT as evidence of the West's capriciousness in support of their activism. Most recently, however, two events – and the West's security-focussed response to them – have impaired the ability of Hizb ut-Tahrir branches in the West to form and disseminate frames: the Arab Uprisings; and the establishment of

⁷⁴² Edwin Bakker, "Exclusion: Who Decides - and on What Grounds? Hizb Ut-Tahrir and the Hdim," *Helsinki Monitor* 18, no. 4 (2007).

⁷⁴³ Al, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2017, Copenhagen.

⁷⁴⁴ Karagiannis, *The New Political Islam: Human Rights, Democracy and Justice*. p.70

Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. It is these events and their impacts which must now be examined as part of understanding the recent degradation of HT's frames.

8.1.2.1 The Arab Uprisings

Whilst the diagnostic and master frames have changed in response to securitisation, other elements of framing have been degraded in response to other, international factors, largely unconnected to Western counterterrorism. The first international event that has impacted on HT is the Arab Uprisings (or 'Arab Spring'). The events of the Arab Uprisings from December 2010 onwards, which saw the toppling of the Tunisian, Libyan, Egyptian and Yemini governments, as well as a protracted and continuing civil war in Syria, have had a great impact on the operations of Western Hizb ut-Tahrir members. Particularly, there has been a sense of dismay at how the sudden political upheaval in the region has not been translated into any growth in power or influence of the group.

The Arab Spring came, and we all were like, 'well, where are we?' All the members have been told we're working in the Middle East and the Khilafah is near and suddenly this happens and we're nowhere to be seen⁷⁴⁵

Within HT literature, a lot of focus has implicitly been placed on the Levantine triangle – modern-day Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon (and, to a lesser extent, Egypt and Turkey) – as the site central for reestablishment of the new Caliphate.⁷⁴⁶ With the arrival of the 'Arab Spring' uprisings in 2010-2011, a significant number of these areas have slid into conflict and turmoil or collapsed completely: Syria has been engaged in crippling civil war; swathes of Iraq have been ravaged by Islamic State; Egypt has experienced protests, terrorist violence and high levels of state repression.

⁷⁴⁵ XF.

⁷⁴⁶ Pankhurst, *Hizb Ut-Tahrir: The Untold History of the Liberation Party; The Inevitable Caliphate: A History of the Struggle for Global Islamic Union, 1924 to the Present*.

The argument has always been, ‘well, because of authoritarianism, because we’re banned in the Arab world, we can never tell you what the influence is. We’re really big! But you just have to accept that because, you know, because our members are in prison... We are really, really influential...’⁷⁴⁷

Members, however, have observed an enfeebled HT unable to respond adequately to the events taking place in key areas. Furthermore, the uprisings generally saw a (albeit largely unsuccessful) championing of democratic models in places such as Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. This ran counter to central HT philosophy that expected democracy to be removed, through popular revolution, as a Western-imposed tool of colonialism and oppression.

Suddenly, the Arab Spring is happening, and - alright, where are you? Nothing! So, it was that kind of effect. It had a big impact on the members here. And another reflection, that ISIS has come along, the Arab Spring has come along - we’re not really there. So, there’s been that kind of reassessment of the situation.⁷⁴⁸

This has proven to be particularly problematic for the UK party – more so than the Danish branch – as the party in the UK is built upon a predominantly South Asian membership base yet has a strong Arab leadership, discourse and political centre. As such, the disconnect between a politically impotent Arab leadership in the MENA and a South Asian Muslim activist base in HTB has led to disenchantment and disengagement.

In the Islamic world, they still are, on paper, the strongest group. On paper. But the Muslim Brotherhood remains more accessible. The jihadis have also outmanoeuvred them, I think, in terms of the frustrations of the Islamic world. And Hamas, again, Palestine - there’s a question as to why, as Hizb ut-Tahrir started in Palestine, so why have Hamas become so popular? It’s things like this. They’ve got a problem; they’ve got lots of problems to sort out.⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁷ XB.

⁷⁴⁸ XF.

⁷⁴⁹ AC, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

There have been three responses by HT to frame degradation as the result of the Arab Uprisings: 1. to overstate the role that HT played in the Arab Uprisings within Western branches; 2. to frame the Arab Uprisings as the result of Western machinations to retain control in the region;⁷⁵⁰ and 3. as just one step within a longer trend of cognitive shift amongst Muslims towards an Islamic state. Firstly, information released by the party shows a response which focusses on instances where HT members were visible or where HT activity was commented upon by MENA authorities. Yet this has only papered over the cracks, and there has been an essential inability to camouflage this failure.

... the Arab Spring, it was a mass exposure that Hizb ut-Tahrir actually had no influence. And they're trying to know cobble something up, to say, you know, there's a black flag there or there - in their videos or whatever it is or on their website... they were, you know, trying to - if you look at their little articles - hurrying up to show, like, the little two people holding up a flag in Tahrir Square or in Egypt...⁷⁵¹

The attempt to overstate or play up the role of Hizb ut-Tahrir in the Arab Uprising is also seen in specific rhetoric from the HTB leadership.

Alhamdulillah, our voice was heard within Syria from the start and the regime even 'blamed' us at the outset for the calls against them.⁷⁵²

Secondly, the limited power of the party to respond to the Arab Uprisings has been reframed to suggest that the Arab Uprisings have fallen under the auspices of malign Western powers, attempting to reinforce its global framing.

⁷⁵⁰ Karagiannis, *The New Political Islam: Human Rights, Democracy and Justice*. p.63

⁷⁵¹ XB.

⁷⁵² Dilly Hussain, "Interview: Dr Abdul Wahid of Hizb Ut-Tahrir on the Arab Spring," 5 Pillars, <https://5pillarsuk.com/2013/04/29/interview-dr-abdul-wahid-of-hizb-ut-tahrir-on-the-arab-spring/>.

... the West, on seeing the implications of the Arab Spring, have been rolling back their support of dictator rulers in return for a more open system – but one that still maintains their interests.⁷⁵³

Thirdly and finally, the party has tried to place the setbacks in the Middle East and North Africa within a wider contextual frame in which the Arab Uprisings are only a small section of a longer process, which will ultimately result in the establishment of the Khilafah.

There are three stages here [in the Middle East]. At the moment, it is still in a time of confusion: this is the first stage. There has been a realisation that things were wrong, that there was oppression. So, the people started protesting and everything that happened in Syria, Yemen, Tunisia. The second stage is the reawakening of an Islamic consciousness. The people are realising that democracy is not the way forward; it's part of the same problem. And after this the third stage the political change needed [will be brought about]: the properly decreed Khilafah...⁷⁵⁴

A part of this framing is the suggestion that Western-oriented commentators have misinterpreted the democratic elements of the protests; that, whilst viewing them through liberal-democratic lenses, European observers have failed to understand that ‘the slogans of freedom and democracy amongst the Arab populace do not necessarily equate to the West’s understanding of freedom and democracy, but rather a call for a different, more Islamically aware, style of governance’.⁷⁵⁵

This third reframing has allowed HT to attempt to focus on events beyond the Arab Uprisings and excuse the limitations of HT in the immediate present. One such example of this is HTB publication by Adnan Khan entitled, *Dilemmas of the Arab Spring*,⁷⁵⁶ which sees the Arab Uprisings as ‘put[ting] to rest the idea that the Muslim Ummah is resigned to the political status quo’ and that it represents the stage when ‘the Ummah has arisen from its slumber to seize the moment and usher in a new dawn’.⁷⁵⁷ Official HT statements have also suggested

⁷⁵³ Adnan Khan, *Dilemmas of the Arab Spring* (al Khilafah Publications, 2011). p.66; ‘Tyrants have fallen, but in Egypt and Tunisia the military – with its strong links to colonial powers like the US, UK and France – are still very much in charge. Whatever change has happened has been change they have “allowed” to prevent things fully falling out of their control.’ Hussain.

⁷⁵⁴ HR.

⁷⁵⁵ Khan. p.65

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid. p.65

that the Arab Uprisings were driven not by a desire for greater democratic freedoms but for greater Islamic governance, although participants may not be directly aware of this.

*Islam was the motivation behind these revolutions. Therefore, martyrdom for the sake of revival was the theme of the struggle that was carried out by the Arab Muslims. Unless Islam comes to power, these people will not calm down and settle.*⁷⁵⁸

The Arab Uprisings from 2010 onwards have caused a shift in the framing of the international framing of malign Western influence in the Islamic World. HT have attempted to present the instability and violence in the region, and the willingness or unwillingness of the Western powers to intervene, as causal, highlighting the deep continued involvement of the West in the Middle East alongside Western politicians' often hypocritical rhetoric. However, limited successes in this regard have been met with overwhelming failures in the ability of HT to play any meaningful international role in the uprisings and revolutions. The democratic overtones of the protests have reinforced the irrelevance and impotence of the party in the region, risking a knock-on effect in the West as other Islamic activist organisations – such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or Al Qaeda in Syria and Iraq – have been shown to exercise far greater influence.

8.1.2.2 The Khilafah

The degradation of the frame of the Khilafah, however, has had far more of an impact on the organisation's activism and recruitment, and is much more firmly rooted in the development of the securitised lens. The increasing inability of HT to utilise the concept of the Khilafah in response to the rise of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has proven a significant problem for the party. Whilst the prognostic frame itself has not been changed by HT, its resonance has degraded because of its securitised implications. Hizb ut-Tahrir were one of the first Islamist organisations to propound the need for the re-establishment of an Islamic State:

⁷⁵⁸ Bilal Muhajir, "Lessons from the Arab Spring," al-Khilafah, <http://www.khilafah.com/lessons-from-the-arab-spring/>.

... they had ownership over the concept of Khilafah. They were the hip Khilafah group. Al Muhajiroun as well. But HT, that was their thing.⁷⁵⁹

However, the sudden establishment and growth of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and the proclamation of a new ruling Khalifah has put HT, the organisation that historically claims ownership of the modern incarnation of the Khilafah, on the back foot. Since the new Islamic State was proclaimed in 2014, ISIS have garnered global attention due to its uncompromising attacks in the West and its ability to disseminate slick forms of striking (and in many cases bloody) online propaganda. This has created a new set of difficulties for HT in their ability to use their central prognostic frame, the reestablishment of the Khilafah.

... it just caused this confusion after ISIS came and they are Islamic State. They had the better branding! It's just added this extra, 'yeah, Khilafah, but not that one!'. The messaging is going to be confusing and I think they are feeling that.⁷⁶⁰

This has caused confusion on several counts. Firstly, members report problems engaging in recruitment process, with their ability to engage with new recruits and take part in outreach tarnished by the associations of the concept of Khilafah with bloody acts of violence.

I give community youth talks on the Khilafah. Before Da'esh, it was easy to explain about Khilafah; no-one had heard of it, I could start from scratch. Now, if I have an hour, I have to spend 50 minutes of that hour disassociating the Khilafah from Islamic State. I have to explain that this understanding is wrong, that the majority of people killed by Da'esh are Muslims. Most of the young people have heard about Khilafah only through Islamic State and the beheading of journalists...⁷⁶¹

The alarmist discourse amongst Western media and government over ISIS and their ideological links with the concept of Khilafah has meant that their core prognostic frame has become much less resonant and has fallen

⁷⁵⁹ XA.

⁷⁶⁰ XD.

⁷⁶¹ HK.

under the examination of CT legislation and discussion. Furthermore, the arrival of ISIS also caused confusion amongst existing members, whose own texts have been used by some to suggest that party should show support to the 2014 declaration by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and pledge allegiance (*beyah*) to the new Khalifah.

*... even according to their own methodology and concepts, if you can give beyah to Khalifah, you must go there. So, even by their own terms, they should have gone to give beyah, even though they didn't like it.*⁷⁶²

This has seriously degraded the resonance of unifying frames within the party, leading to members and activists problematising their allegiance to HT.

*I remember praying for Khilafah every day. Really, like, when is it going to come? It's the mother of all obligations – we want an Islamic state – and now they've been given one, but, not that one. Then your idea is absolutely flawed because you're just basically saying you want a Khilafah on your terms and he wants a Khilafah on his terms, and he wants a Khilafah on his terms. So, where's the obligation, where does it lay?*⁷⁶³

The appearance of an Islamic state has therefore flagged up contradictions within their ideological standing. A proportion of the membership has struggled to reconcile the drive to support the concept of Khilafah with Hizb ut-Tahrir's official stance against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and made members re-assess the viability of central HT methodology.⁷⁶⁴

Similarly to the establishment of ALM and the split caused by the Majaal Crisis, HT have been quick to recognise the danger that Islamic State pose to their ability to conduct activism and released a steady stream of

⁷⁶² XD.

⁷⁶³ XA.

⁷⁶⁴ '... I suddenly had this idea that, if there were two different states next to each other and everyone was happy and there was peace, would you interrupt that peace to establish the Khilafah? And the fact was that they would. So that didn't sit with me, I saw this other angle. I don't really agree with that because it goes against reality, common sense. And then it was also reading again a Hizb book which I saw in writing that anyone who goes against the Islamic state or does a rebellion against the state, they will be dealt with even if they number many, meaning they'd be killed if you did any rebellion against the state, the state has the legitimacy to kill people. And I was like, well, I really did know that, but I didn't really focus on it. And then when I did, I was like, 'what makes you different if you can kill people and you're moaning about these other people being killed under various regimes and you just go and do exactly the same thing?' So, the hypocrisy and the doubts became more and more evident.' (Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain ex-member)

condemnation, rejecting the declaration of the Khilafah as ‘empty speech without substance’ by a group that has ‘no authority’ to issue such a decree;⁷⁶⁵ former HTB Media Representative Taji Mustafa stated that ‘Hizb ut-Tahrir was one of the first organisations to reject the declaration of a so called caliphate by Isis’ and that ‘Hizb ut-Tahrir has opposed and criticised Isis ever since’.⁷⁶⁶

*We’re not talking about any old Khilafah, the Ottoman Khilafah. We don’t want an Abbasid Khalifate. We don’t want the Fatimid... They were awful. We want the Prophet’s Khilafah, we want the one that he intended to live by. So, you have to make that clear, because now they’ve tried to muddy the name of the Khilafah itself.*⁷⁶⁷

Hizb ut-Tahrir has sought to engage with members on this topic, to dispel the ideological confusion. In a long official repudiation by HT Global Emir Ata bin Khalil Abu al-Rashtah, addressed to ‘all the brothers and sisters who sent inquiries about the declaration of the [ISIS’s] establishment of the Khilafah State’ (the names of those who had contacted the leadership apparently ‘too long to list’), seven confutations were laid out against Islamic State’s methodology, authority, significance, and ability to establish a true Khilafah.⁷⁶⁸ It also contains warnings about the negative impact such a proclamation may have, declaring that ISIS risks leading the notion of Khilafah to ‘shatter[] from its mighty position’ and ‘plunge from that to a feeble idea’, to ‘lose the importance and greatness’, ‘becom[ing] no more than a beautiful word, uttered but devoid of any substance’.⁷⁶⁹

*Islamic State has damaged their call for the Caliphate for at least a generation, so they’ve acknowledged that they have been hurt by it, quite considerably - both outside in the Muslim world and more specifically in the Middle East.*⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁵ al Jazeera, "Islamic State's 'Caliph' Lauds Iraq Rebellion," *al Jazeera*, 6th June 2014.

⁷⁶⁶ Taji Mustafa, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir Is Totally Opposed to Isis," *The Guardian*, 7th October 2015.

⁷⁶⁷ HL.

⁷⁶⁸ Ata bin Khalil Abu al-Rashtah, "Regarding the Declaration of Khilafah by Isis," Hizb ut-Tahrir Australia, <http://www.hizb-australia.org/2014/07/regarding-what-has-been-declared-by-isis-about-the-establishment-of-the-khilafah/>.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁰ XB.

This attack on the legitimacy of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has been echoed by members throughout interviews with both the Danish and British branches. Some challenged its divine legitimacy, stating that it was not Islamically acceptable:

Yes, we want a Khilafah, but a true Khilafah, as outlined by Allah. The current [Islamic State] is not this – it is haram, an imposter; it is not what has been proclaimed. There is no divine justice there.⁷⁷¹

Others have challenged ISIS's political legitimacy, viewing it as part of a wider conspiracy by the West to cause disruption in the region:

[The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] is just another puppet of the West, like any of the other states [in the Middle East]. It has no legitimacy and no support amongst Muslims.⁷⁷²

Whilst HT has been quick to condemn and disassociate itself with ISIS's brutal methodology, its use of the language of a Khilafah has implicated HT in counter-extremism measures, with HT regularly described by authorities as creating the 'mood music' for Islamic State and foreign fighters.

8.1.3 Framing Conclusions

From this analysis we can see that HT in both Britain and Denmark have, to some extent, been able to respond to securitisation by appropriating grievances against counterterrorism to support engagement, recruitment and activism, through the creation of new frames which utilise the structural Islamophobia of elements of CT to build support with Islamic and non-Islamic groups. However, such securitisation has also meant greater exposure to increased concern over Islamic State and the role of Khilafah in 'extremism'. Other international events outside the scope of securitisation processes – particularly the fallout from the Arab Uprisings – have also severely degraded the ability for HT to use frames effectively. As such, central framing devices have been degraded and impaired HT's means for conducting activism. Thus, we can see elements of the securitised lens having degraded

⁷⁷¹ HD, interview by Richard McNeil-Willson, 2016, London.

⁷⁷² HF.

HT framing, forcing a response. But other issues external to the securitised lens – such as the Arab Uprising – have exposed the limitations of the organisation in other ways. As such, we can see some negative impacts from the development of the securitised lens and counterterror repression – but this only tells part of the story. Having explored the impact of the securitised lens on HT's frames, the next step is to explore its impact on the organisational tactics employed by Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark.

8.2 Meso: Securitisation and HT's organisation

This section will explore the potential impact that the securitised lens has had on the meso-level organisational structure and tactics of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark. It will look at the different use of alliances and front groups by HTB and HTS and trace the influence of securitisation on the decision to adopt these tactics. It finds that HTB has become much more pragmatic in its use of alliances, and that a simultaneous process has taken place in which there has been a de-securitisation of the party itself (leading to an opening of the political opportunity structure, or POS) alongside a securitisation of their activist discourse and frames (resulting in the closing of the discursive opportunity structure, or DOS). In comparison, the Danish branch, more targeted by pointed counterterror measures and operating in a less competitive environment of activism, has faced a closing the POS and a relative opening of the DOS – the opposite of the British branch. From this we see significant differences in styles of securitisation and explore their potential impacts on SMOs.

Because of the different action modes of repression involved in actualising the securitised lens in the UK, the British branch has been able to make better use of alliances, having been given the political space to institutionalise the party branch. This has led HTB to be better able to build coalitions around issues prevalent to the Muslim communities without the use of front groups, a tactic which had been relied on in the past. In contrast, Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia has been unwilling and unable to form lasting alliances with other groups – even on important single-issue campaigns – because of constrained political space. Furthermore, there are suggestions that HTS has been increasingly engaging in covert activism in response to the closing of the POS, starting to use demonstrations which hide their links to HT and attempting to develop front groups or similar organisations. This echoes the tactics utilised by HTB in the past, during times when they were facing a higher level of political targeting and a more prevalent threat of proscription.

The shift by HTB towards open alliances and institutionalisation and away from closed front groups and contention was summed up by one former member, thus:

... what we were trying to do was normalise Islamism as an alternative to capitalism, just like socialism was. That was the strategic goal. This had shifted away from things like two, three years before, a year before that, where our campaign during the Iraq War was 'don't stop the war, except for [through] Islamic politics', which was ideologically rigid and pure. It was completely stupid; to the extent where members of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Palestine wrote to the leadership saying, 'There's this really high-profile campaign happening in the UK where everyone thinks we're American agents trying to support the war. Can you tell those idiots not to do anything?'. And, I joined the leadership committee just after that, and I asked whose idea that was, and it was Jalaldin Patel's obviously, who was significant in destroying the party in Britain because he was retarded... there was this shift, towards talking with and engaging with political groups, rather than just rejecting them outright... We were moving towards pragmatism and towards actual positive engagement...⁷⁷³

8.2.1 Front groups

In response to the closing down of political opportunities and debates over proscription of the British party in the early 2000s, several front groups were cited in universities and other educational or public-sector based institutions; in fact, HTB has developed a reputation for using shifting, localised front groups.⁷⁷⁴ Whilst it is not always possible to confirm such tactics and their extent, that such a long list of bodies has become associated with the party strongly suggests their usage. Throughout the UK, these have included, amongst others: *Dialogue with Islam; the 1924 Committee; One Nation Society; the Islamic Society; the Muslim Women's Cultural Forum; the Debating Society; the Millennium Society; the International Affairs Society; the 1924 Society; the Muslim Media Forum; SREIslamic; the Shakhsiyah Foundation; the Global Ideas Society; and the Islamic Education and*

⁷⁷³ XD.

⁷⁷⁴ Ahmed and Stuart, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir: Ideology and Strategy."

Research Academy.⁷⁷⁵ In addition to activist-based front groups, there have also been a number of media bodies which disseminate articles closely along Hizb ut-Tahrir lines of ideology and share close links, including: *al Khilafah Press*; *Siyasah Press*; *Salaam*; *the Gold Report*; *New Civilisation magazine*; and *5Pillars*.

*... people don't realise that 5Pillars is a popular front for Hizb ut-Tahrir in which they've now managed to reinvent themselves, so they now have a massive following which wouldn't happen if people thought this was Hizb ut-Tahrir. There are many people that wouldn't be following Hizb ut-Tahrir, but they follow 5Pillars. They would not say that they are aligned to Hizb ut-Tahrir, because they don't want to have that association...*⁷⁷⁶

The use of front groups has enabled HTB to prevent the complete strangulation of the party in places of limited or no platforms, enabling party members to engage with youth. They have also been strategically important in that their direct links to the party cannot always be established, and when a group is 'outed' as a front group, the party have consistently been quick to disassociate themselves from the accusation. However, there seems several reasons to question the association HTB has with front groups in the current climate.

Firstly, it seems HTB are not being completely dishonest in distancing themselves from front groups; rather, this represents an outcome of the structural workings of the party in Britain. Representatives have been clear to state that HTB has a loose, decentralised structure, with the HTB leadership taking a hands-off approach to the activities of regional and local activities.

*[My work of the governing body of HTB is] all administration. Whenever you get any kind of party structure, you have to have some kind of administration. That really is what the party does. But having said that, each individual member is responsible for his own dawah and decides what he wants to do.*⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁵ Sara Khan, *The Battle for British Islam: Reclaiming Muslim Identity from Extremism* (London: Saqi Books, 2016). Chapter 2; Hamid, "Islamic Political Radicalism in Britain: The Case of Hizb Ut-Tahrir." p.149; Tom Wilson, "Mend: "Islamists Masquerading as Civil Libertarians"," (Centre for the Reponse to Radicalisation and Terrorism, the Henry Jackson Society, 2017). p.11

⁷⁷⁶ XB.

⁷⁷⁷ HE.

The party in Britain has a largely localised approach to activism, in which party cells are almost solely responsible for the activism – and the articulation of this activism – in their locale. Most of the activist-orientated front groups listed (although not the media groups) are site-specific, encompassing just one university or geographical area. As such, it is probable that the central party body in London has only a cursory knowledge of how activism is being run – including whether and how front groups are being used – in certain other areas.⁷⁷⁸ Such a decentralised approach was summed up a HT representative in the following manner:

*If you're in a cell in Whitechapel, then what you're seeking to achieve is going to be localised, your objectives are very much kind of like slogan: think global, act local!*⁷⁷⁹

However, there is also significant evidence that HTB party bodies are starting to abandon the front group as a tactic. Fewer organisations have been recorded as front groups for HTB in recent years, and events by the party have been increasingly public about their links to HTB – using branding on advertisements and at the event themselves – in what seems an attempt to openly soften their image, rather than rely on a degree of covert separation between the brand and their party activism. They also have increasingly sought to engage directly with politicians and political parties, and recent interviewees candidly described front groups as indicative ‘of the old Hizb, the one that picked fights with the Muslim communities rather than trying to build an alliances within them’.⁷⁸⁰

In contrast, Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia seem to be heading in the other direction, with recent accounts suggesting that the party body has started to use covert activism or front groups as a means of deflecting scrutiny from their activism. One instance of this was a protest I attended on Sunday 15th October 2017, organised by the women’s branch of HTS. Held again in Red Square, it was organised in response to discussions in *Folketinget* on the banning of the facial-covering burka and niqab headwear.⁷⁸¹ Unlike previous HTS demonstrations I had

⁷⁷⁸ ‘...it’s preferable to have people planning based on their own local reality. And we found the best benefits there. Because Bradford is Bradford, London is London, there are differences in the communities and the things that Bradford people feel are different from the things that London people feel... there’s just a different need and a different atmosphere, so it would make sense that in Bradford or London, for instance, they were talking to their community, rather than someone elsewhere in the country deciding that we’re all going to talk about one thing.’ *ibid.*

⁷⁷⁹ HD.

⁷⁸⁰ HE.

⁷⁸¹ Christian W, "Denmark Closing in on a Burka Ban," *Copenhagen Post*, 16th August 2017.

witnessed, this one did not use the open branding and monologues of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Rather, flyers distributed by veiled women throughout the day along Mimersgade made no mention of the party's role in its planning and during the speeches: the party was not named; HT flags were not waved. Placards were held almost exclusively by women, of several different cultural and religious backgrounds – women in burqas, mischievous children, relatives, sympathisers, as well as some young members from the Danish 'Alternative' party sporting the green 'Å' symbol pinned to their jackets. Women of minority and majority ethnic backgrounds were present, a significant number outwardly Muslim but many not. I recognised many Brothers who hung around at the edge of the crowd, chatting and observing proceedings.

I came here to support my sister. She is a convert, wears a headscarf, and can't make it because of work. So, I'm here to represent her.⁷⁸²

HTS organisers showed significant nous in their successful execution of such a 'covertly-organised' demonstration. Even journalists covering event were unaware that the demonstration was organised by HTS, and national radio reports that evening failed to note any organisers at all. The following day (Monday 16th October 2017), public station Danish Radio (DR) P1 broadcast an in-depth report from the demonstration as part of the 'Orienting' programme on current affairs. Whilst the programme spoke with several demonstrators – a few eloquent voices amplified through interviews – there was no mention of who organised the demonstration made in the programme nor on other news reports, and the event passed off as a grassroots response by Muslim community members.

... I mean this is basic journalism! And that's what bothers me as someone in the industry – there was no discussion, no questions asked on who was in charge or behind it by those reporting it...⁷⁸³

However, conversations with contacts in HTS in the days prior informed me that they were trying to bring together several different Islamic groups to issue a joint statement and demonstration. When the joint

⁷⁸² Short discussion with demonstrator, Copenhagen (2017)

⁷⁸³ Al.

statement failed to materialise – most Islamic groups in Denmark unwilling to work openly with HTS – the party was successful in making the protest look spontaneous, as well as attracting attendees from a variety of cultural and political backgrounds. From this perspective, the strategy of keeping the response confined to the women’s branch and obscuring their organising hand worked with great effect. Whilst it took almost the same slick format as any other HTS demonstration, discussion on the protest in the media was limited to debating women’s rights and integration, controversy was circumvented by HTS framing the argument exclusively through a liberal, human-rights based lens and public involvement by HTS was kept at arms-length.

Since this demonstration, other reports have suggested covert links between Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia and several recently established organisations campaigning against the banning of the burqa in Denmark. One organisation that has come under the spotlight is that of *Kvinder i Dialog* [‘Women in Dialogue’], which seems to have several overlapping members with HTS women’s branch, as well as typically opaque details of organisational structure. The body has been successful in building significant demonstrations and media publicity around challenging *Folketinget* banning of publicly wearing the burqa. In response to a 2018 article in *Weekendavisen* exploring these links, HTS released a terse rebuttal to the two writers, stating ‘Vi har ikke været arrangør af nogen af de nævnte demonstrationer’ [‘we were not the organisers of any of the aforementioned demonstrations’] and that *Kvinder i Dialog* were unconnected to their work.⁷⁸⁴ However, accusations of front groups are beginning to appear from various Danish sources, along with early instances of covert activism, and – when combined with knowledge of HTB’s previous modus operandi – it suggests that HTS is certainly beginning to use elements of such deliberately opaque strategies which characterised earlier HTB tactics.

8.2.2 Allies

As well as changing attitudes towards front groups, we can also observe different patterns of alliance building between the two cases in Britain and Denmark in response to securitisation. HTB has developed a greater inclination to establish alliances outside of the party membership, linking together organisations that are sympathetic to aspects of their activism or framing. This can perhaps be understood as offsetting limitations

⁷⁸⁴ Leny Malacinski and Jeppe Matzen, "Kvinder I Forklædning [‘Women in Disguise’]," *Weekendavisen*, 17th August 2018.

being placed on the party due to declining resources and a problematisation of Islamic activism by authorities. In comparison, the Danish branch has been both less inclined to build wider alliance structures, and its limited attempts have been less successful.

Ideologically, the party has provisions for working with Islamic groups that are not within the membership base of the party. Party spokespeople and leadership stressed the receptivity of Hizb ut-Tahrir towards working with and alongside other groups, matching Hizb ut-Tahrir's ideological stance of the one-ness of the ummah in building the Khilafah.⁷⁸⁵ In contrast, more 'lower-level' members were more likely to stress the view that Hizb ut-Tahrir generally avoids the building of alliances, even when they make strategic sense, as they compromise the integrity of the party.⁷⁸⁶ What can be observed is that there has been a shift in the making of alliances amongst Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain, with ex-members suggesting increasing inclination towards strategic alliances with other Islamic activist organisations.

They're now much more likely to work with groups than before. They used to be quite exclusionary but that has definitely changed...⁷⁸⁷

Among these alliances developed by Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain include relationships with several Islamic media or political advocacy groups, centred around specific frames – with the most successful being with other Muslim groups challenging the growth of government counterterrorism legislation in the UK. This has seen links develop with groups, including organisations such as CAGE, in an umbrella of critical voices and attempting to influence activism against counterterrorism.⁷⁸⁸ That Hizb ut-Tahrir have had success in aligning themselves with critical counterterror organisations and the wider anti-securitisation movement does not mean that they have been able to co-opt the movement, their influence on the debate on a national level seems negligible. However, this approach seems successful in spreading the increasing costs of activism.

⁷⁸⁵ 'We've always maintained good relationships with Islamic movements and groups as much as we can, with individuals as well. That's not something that's new.'

⁷⁸⁶ 'Other groups we didn't agree with at all, we would never collaborate with them in any way. We were special, we wouldn't mix concepts with Ikhwān or any of the other groups and I didn't really used to hang around with anyone from those groups either.'

⁷⁸⁷ XA.

⁷⁸⁸ ... the Islamic Society of Britain, even the progressive, fairly strong political anti-establishment scene still has that, elements of the anti-Prevent agenda naively [attack counterterrorism] whilst supporting Hizb ut-Tahrir'; 'Moazzam Begg, he supports a lot of the ideas of HT - you can see that from some of his speeches and political positions as well. He doesn't support them in terms of joining a movement, or something like that. But they see that some of that support.'

Being on the side of Islam means being against Prevent, being against the anti-extremism agenda, and therefore supporting and defending groups like MEND, CAGE and Hizb ut-Tahrir, implicitly, because attacking them is Islamophobic, is attacking Islam.⁷⁸⁹

This has been a successful strategy, in that it deflects public attacks by the UK Government and prominent politicians towards a constellation of Islamic pressure groups and anti-Prevent activists, diffusing elements of the securitised lens and allowing for a broader pushback by many groups at once.⁷⁹⁰ The increase in activist cost and the willingness to moderate it through new alliance structures towards several groups seems directly linked to processes of securitisation.

The time of the burning of the books... Hizb ut-Tahrir made links with the Young Muslim Organisation, or the old Jamaat Islamiyya branches and effectively aligned themselves with Jamaat Islamiyya or the Young Muslim Organisations and they've always been rivals, or certainly used to cross swords quite a lot, and I think the general advice was just "put your head down and survive this", and I don't think really they've come out of that sort of shell.⁷⁹¹

This period has seen a greater willingness of alliance building to develop across many Islamic activist groups in the UK, vastly changing the Islamist milieu.⁷⁹² Changes within HTB have also led to sets of looser alliances developing with some left-wing organisations, again on overlapping concerns about governmental abuse of state power and the anti-Islamic underlay of some counterterrorism programmes. These includes socialist parties, protest groups and even Members of Parliament.⁷⁹³

⁷⁸⁹ AB.

⁷⁹⁰ See for instance: Fiona Hamilton, "Tony Blair Calls for Battle of Ideas against Islamists," *The Times*, 13th September 2018 2018; Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND), "Mend Statement: The Master of Spin Accuses Others of a "Propaganda Barrage"... Oh, the Irony," news release, 13th September 2018, 2018, <https://mend.org.uk/news/mend-statement-master-spin-accuses-others-propaganda-barrage-oh-irony/>.

⁷⁹¹ XC.

⁷⁹² 'HT, JIMAS and others jostled for the best talent to win over. But, after 9/11, the dynamic between Islamists and Salafists changed dramatically. Competition between two ideological strands began to give way to cooperation in the first years of the new millennium. At the London Central Mosque, Regent's Park, Salafists and Islamists started to meet every month under the auspices of something called the "London Forum".' Khan.

⁷⁹³ Matthew Tempest, "Short Urged to Cancel Radical Muslim Forum," *The Guardian*, 1st March 2006.

I have attended meetings with various socialist groups, just really to see what was being said, to have an input, to – it's not a case that the enemy of enemy is my friend, it's a case of 'why not actually have a real engagement, let's not have a characterised image in our mind of what the other saying, let's actually listen and build lasting allies'.⁷⁹⁴

Such broad use of alliances has been successful for Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain in spreading the cost of activism and organisationally responding to problems caused by securitisation of Islamic activism, which has in turn impacted on the ability of authorities implement counterterror legislation.⁷⁹⁵

In contrast, Danish processes of securitisation have not led to greater cooperation between Islamic activist organisations and the building of broader alliances.⁷⁹⁶ One potential reason for this is the very limited civil society space that exists for Islamic activist organisations to develop, meaning that there are very few potential allies available. Whilst there is a strong tradition of associations in Denmark, these have largely been depoliticised and, as such, there are very few mobilising actors dealing with Islamic issues. This, combined with a large state structure in Denmark, leaves a very small civil society space, very different to the plethora of Islamic activist organisations, charities and associations that have sprung up in the UK. Limited financial ability also impacts the growth of activism as few Danish charities have an overtly religious focus, and it is difficult to get financial support as a religious or religiously-focused organisation, other than through application to the Church Council of Denmark (which HT has not done, for obvious ideological reasons).

'There's really very few mobilising actors within Danish society that deal specifically with Islamic issues, and this is why organisations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir have been successful - because there's pretty much no-one else who is able to deal with community issues in an Islamic way. Certainly not any other groups that do it in an openly political. I mean, you have groups connected with, for instance, the Grand Mosque, or the Shia' mosque near Nørrebro station. But not groups that are geared towards political mobilisation like HT.'⁷⁹⁷

⁷⁹⁴ HE.

⁷⁹⁵ 'they're having through their strategic approach blended with their Islamic activist approach.... Because there's significant impact, what that means consequentially for anti-extremist agenda, even for prevention agenda, it has consequences.'

⁷⁹⁶ There is no Danish equivalent, for example, of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB)

⁷⁹⁷ AO.

Crucially however, the groups that are available – many connected with mosques – have shown total unwillingness to work with HTS, either through ideological disagreement or through concern over engagement with such a problematised group. As such, attempts at single-issue alliances – which have proven so successful in the UK – have not been formed in Denmark, as is demonstrated with the rejection of a cross-organisational statement in the lead up to the Nørrebrogade protest on 15th October 2017.

8.2.3 Meso-level Conclusions

By exploring the way in which Hizb ut-Tahrir has been impacted by securitisation, we see different results in the case studies. In Britain, a decline is observed through internal splits and party responses, a decreased ability to engage directly with its core youth demographic and new uses of front groups and allies as a means of spreading the growing cost of activism. However, an opening in the political opportunity structures in the UK has occurred as concern over the group's existence wanes. Coupled with a closing in the discursive opportunity structures as framing becomes more hostile, an attempt to soften the image of the party has developed, as the British party seeks to build broader alliances and eschew the use of front groups. Looser organisational and activist structures in Britain, declining environmental factors, a hangover from the factionalism of the late 1990s and increasing securitisation have also contributed to the adoption of these activist networks to spread the cost of activism through engagement in the critical counterterrorism movement. This has allowed HTB to avoid too much heat from the securitised lens and even turn elements of the securitised lens back against authorities by participating in coordinated resistance against counterterrorism.

In contrast, HT in Denmark has seen a closing of the political opportunity structures with continued discussion over their proscription – now from all sides of the political spectrum – coupled with a continually open discursive opportunity structures due to less hostile framing and more media engagement. These mechanistic changes have combined with their reliance on dense community structures in a centralised area of activism such as Nørrebro, and a limited civil society space that does not see the same competition from other Islamic activist groups, to prevent the development of open alliances, encourage the tentative use of closed front groups and continue more contentious politics.

If you ask an HT [Scandinavia] member, 'what is your purpose?', he will just give you half an hour of explanation. And longer if you want that. Try to do that with any other group in Denmark and you'll just be sorely disappointed. They actually have to think about, 'actually, what is our purpose?'. It's a very weak scene, the competitors are very weak...⁷⁹⁸

The development of more covert forms of activism and potential HTS front groups suggest that HTS have responded to targeted securitisation very differently from HTB in recent years, but more in line with HTB's initial responses to greater scrutiny in the years immediately following 2001. From this, we can link targeted counter-terror repression/proscription, the closing of political opportunity structures and the level of usage of front groups, which will form part of an interactive model of interaction with repressive securitisation processes.

8.3 Macro: Interactive Securitisation Processes

This final section will draw together the data and analysis to construct a set of mechanisms to unravel the processes of interaction between macro authority actors and HT as part understanding the impacts of securitisation on the decline of the party. It will focus particularly on the repression-mobilisation nexus; in this context, it will be used to unravel a general process of demobilisation and, in some cases, institutionalisation. In looking to understand macro-micro relations and impacts, this project offers a competing perspective to significant tranches of contemporary research focussing on the explanatory factors of interaction between Islamism and the far-right; or, what has been termed, reciprocal radicalisation.⁷⁹⁹

There's concern in the PET because usually there's a mechanism that the different sides spark each other. If the far-right is mobilising, you will also see the far-left mobilising and Islamist groups exploiting this. And what can make the far-right mobilise will sometimes be issues about immigration, refugees, etc. The refugee is rising because of the phenomenon, and then the far

⁷⁹⁸ XI.

⁷⁹⁹ Ebner; Kim Knott, Ben Lee, and Simon Copeland, "Reciprocal Radicalisation," (Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST), 2018).

right, and then the far left and Islamists. So, it's all reaction against reaction. We've seen it with the Hizb ut-Tahrir [Scandinavia] event at the Black Diamond, which set off a wave of counter-demos.⁸⁰⁰ There are people who have their ideas and you can't change those. It's a question of limiting those reactions into as small a group as possible.⁸⁰¹

Such research often problematically centres attention on the interaction that takes place between contentious or dissonant political groups. With significant HT discourse on Islamophobia and Muslim inequality, there was an initial expectation with the research that concern with the far-right would be raised in interviews with party members and ex-members, providing evidence that it was sustaining Islamic activism and promoting recruitment to HT.⁸⁰² However, there was a significant dearth of evidence of this in interviews, even when the area of discussion was pressed:

During my time, I didn't witness any hostility from right-wing or anti-Islam groups. Maybe in some other areas it might have been more tension, depending on where you lived, but in the various areas I worked, the marches were seen as – people would be staring, and you could see that they were curious or scared or thinking, 'what is this?', they confused as to who this lot were. But there wasn't much hostility at all. I think it was more like, 'who are these people? What's going on?', more of a curiosity.⁸⁰³

Considering this, I deemed an approach that tried to account for interactions between HT and far-right, anti-Islamic groups – in response to the data collected – as placing too much emphasis on an issue peripheral to most party activists. Contemporary members didn't frame threats as prevalent from far-right groups and SMOs; the main threat and motivational force seemed to come from interactions with and grievances from state structures that discriminated against Muslims and HT members.⁸⁰⁴ Focussing on interaction between far-right groups and

⁸⁰⁰ Sinclair, "Same Old Message, New Wrapping: Hizb Ut-Tahrir's Activities in Denmark."

⁸⁰¹ AN.

⁸⁰² Nawaz, *Radical: My Journey out of Islamist Extremism*; Ebner.

⁸⁰³ XA.

⁸⁰⁴ "On Islamophobia, we've got our own take on that, is that it's like arachnophobia is an irrational fear of spiders. So those kinds of fears, that's like a psychological thing. It's a bad word, I think, to describe. I think it is an ideological attack and challenge against Islam. It's an intellectual struggle more than anything else. And it doesn't always stay intellectual, because you can see they're quite happy to bring in their terrorism laws in order to persecute people and create laws overseas to prevent the rise of Islamic awareness.' HE.

HT, in this case, risks missing the far more overt interaction between Western ‘Islamism’ and the counterterror state. This interaction represents what seems to be the critical nexus – that of the relationship between challenger and the challenged – and it is this dialectic that is seen as integral to the development of certain tactical formations or organisational developments by social movement organisations within this context.

This final section will draw inspiration from a ‘process tracing’ approach – the inference, identification and examination of what steps may have occurred to hypothesise how a certain generated outcome came into being. By analysing ‘evidence on processes, sequences and conjunctures of events within a case’ we are able to create means of ‘either developing or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might causally explain the case’.⁸⁰⁵ This offers a useful in cases where there is are high barriers to accessing data – as is the case in this study – as it removes the necessity for direct variables, and focusses instead on processes of inference. Authority mechanisms – developed from the previous data – will be determined, divided roughly into the environmental, cognitive and relational, before postulations are made as to the process in which these mechanisms have shaped interactions between HT and authorities.

What is environmental, cognitive and relational are defined, thus:

- *Environmental mechanisms*: externally generated influences on conditions affecting social life
- *Cognitive mechanisms*: alterations of individual and collective perception
- *Relational mechanisms*: alterations of connections among people, groups and interpersonal networks.⁸⁰⁶

This approach will be used to respond to the following questions raised by the data in this project:

1. *Where can we trace securitisation mechanisms used and their impacts on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark?*
2. *How have HT responses to securitisation mechanisms shaped authority actors and securitisation mechanisms, in turn?*

⁸⁰⁵ Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Process Tracing: From Philosophical Roots to Best Practices," in *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*, ed. Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). p.6

⁸⁰⁶ McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly. pp.25-26

3. *What do these findings suggest for future study of repression of such problematised (but not overtly targeted) social movement organisations and what the problems and limitations of this approach?*

8.3.1 Tracing securitised mechanisms

This section will draw together the data into a mechanistic explanation to show how securitisation has taken effect differently on the social movement organisations, as well as highlighting what this process reveals about how repression within counterterrorism impacts on problematised – but not directly targeted – social movement organisations (typically described as ‘extremist’ groups). Particularly important theoretical approaches have been taken from Coleman’s model of macro-micro relations, which aim to highlight the interactive processes taking place.⁸⁰⁷

Fig. 41: Coleman’s model of macro-micro-macro relations

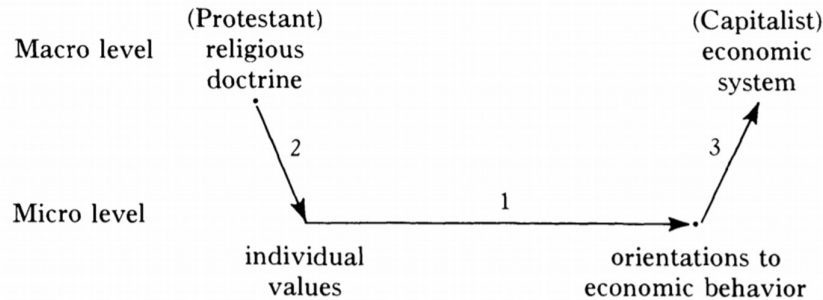


FIG. 2.—Macro-micro-macro relations: methodological individualism

In Coleman’s model, value is found in exploring how events move from the macro-social level down to the level of individual actions, and back to the macro-level.⁸⁰⁸ This approach offers a basic means of balancing explorations of both macro-level structures and individual agency, as well as ensuring that interactions are prioritised at the centre of analysis. By framing these four points as first order (macro-micro) and second order (micro-macro) action and response mechanisms, we can account for interaction amongst and between SMOs

⁸⁰⁷ Hedström and Swedberg; Coleman, "Social Theory, Social Research and a Theory of Action."; *Foundations of Social Theory*.

⁸⁰⁸ "Social Theory, Social Research and a Theory of Action." p.1322

and authority actors. In this case, it should allow reasoning for variations between Hizb ut-Tahrir's tactics in Britain and Denmark and why different formations of activism have appeared in response to the application of a similar lens of securitisation.

By disaggregating the mechanisms developed in the previous chapter and mapping these onto a more complexified version of the Coleman model, we can discern the following first and second order mechanisms:

- *First Order Mechanism*: Threat identification occurs towards Islamic activism organisations, with national and international terrorist-style events creating an urgent need for authority responses – as articulated in this context in the application of the securitised lens. The expansion of threat identification to increasingly encompass elements of HT (such as 'Islamism') leads to a problematisation of the party. In response, mechanisms are utilised by authority actors which attempt to shut down the political opportunity structures (POS), the discursive opportunity structures (DOS), or both.
- *First Order Impact*: This leads to the first order impact, whereby SMOs are affected by the initial securitisation mechanisms. This changes the barriers that SMOs face to conducting activism, creates frame degradation and, if successful, starts a process of organisational decline. The initial impacts on activism from the first order mechanism seem to be largely similar in both the British and the Danish case studies, irrespective of the style of the first order mechanism (POS, DOS, or both). This represents the close of the first order of macro-micro relations.
- *Second Order Mechanisms*: Faced with negative impacts from a repressive first-order mechanism, the SMO reacts to shield group activism from further repression and attempt the mounting a response. The different responses by SMOs to authority repression are measured in this case on a spectrum of politically 'radical' behaviour:

Fig. 41 Radicalising and Deradicalising Second Order Mechanisms

Mechanism Type	Radicalised	Deradicalised
<i>Environmental</i>	Contentious Activism	Institutionalised Activism
<i>Relational</i>	Open Alliances	Closed Front Groups
<i>Cognitive</i>	Radical Framing	Moderate Framing

- Second Order Impact:* The way responses by SMOs such as HT are articulated then impacts on how authority actors continue to conceptualise and engage with the SMO and other ‘problematished’ organisations. By challenging authority actors, they change the nature of the securitisation mechanisms, attempting to shape the nature of future repression as more covert or overt, ‘soft’ or ‘hard’, focussed or diffused.

8.3.2 Mechanisms and their impacts

This section will explore the two case studies between 2005-2017: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain; and Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia to build a mechanistic model from the analysis.

8.3.2.1 First order mechanisms: Initial Mechanisms of Securitisation

Threat identification takes place towards Hizb ut-Tahrir, both in the UK and Denmark, largely occurring between 2001 and 2005/6, as seen in earlier analysis. This represents the spark in which Hizb ut-Tahrir has become implicated within the securitising lens. As a result of this threat identification, responses by UK and Danish governmental authorities, non-governmental bodies and media actors can broadly be divided into two fields where repression mechanisms are concentrated:

- i. the political opportunity structure (POS);
- ii. the discursive opportunity structure (DOS).

8.3.2.1.1 Threat Identification

Threat identification has been actualised differently in the case studies. In Britain, Hizb ut-Tahrir have not been designated as an overt threat despite a broadening of counterterror legislation – they were, according to interviewees, ‘thoroughly looked at in a political angle and security angle, at police level, and they came out with a clean bill of health’.⁸⁰⁹ As such, the political opportunity structure (POS) has generally opened for the party in Britain, as an initial peak of concern around the party in the early years of the 21st Century receded following the growth of more visible security threats, such as al Qaeda and Islamic State.

Hizb ut-Tahrir has sort of fallen off the radar of the government, really. That might be due to just resources - it's easier to look at the person who is shouting the loudest, rather than a group that is sort of effectively not really engaging that much or pushing their literature⁸¹⁰

Concurrently however, certain formations of activism and their central ideological tenets have become more problematised in recent years. ‘Islamism’ has increasingly become conceptualised as ‘the greatest threat’ facing Western European states,⁸¹¹ a ‘generational problem’, with Europe ‘facing 20 to 30 years of terrorist threat’.⁸¹² Ideological elements of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain have become framed as enabling processes for terrorism within the post-2005 shift towards focus on radicalisation and prevention. As such, the ideology and activism of the group has become increasingly problematised, even if its continued ability to operate has not become illegal.

... the continuous and echoing claims of Maajid Nawaz and Ed Husain who say that they are a terrorist organisation, despite the body of evidence against it, has meant that the group has continued to be discussed in relation to radicalisation⁸¹³.

The framing of the party as radical has, to some extent, been predicated on the links Hizb ut-Tahrir have to al Muhajiroun and, subsequently, international jihadi groups and actors. The proscription of ALM has

⁸⁰⁹ XC.

⁸¹⁰ AB.

⁸¹¹ BBC, "Merkel: Islamist Terror Is 'Greatest Threat' to Germany," *BBC*, 31st December 2016; Evgeny Lebedev, "Our Governments Must Confront the Greatest Danger Facing the World - Islamist Terrorism," *Independent*, 18th July 2016; Maajid Nawaz, "We Need to Pull up Islamism by Its Roots," *The Times*, 24th March 2016.

⁸¹² BBC, "Uk Could Face Islamist Threat for Decades, Former Mi5 Chief Warns," *BBC*, 11th August 2017.

⁸¹³ XC.

demonstrated to HTB and ALM activists that there are limits of contention within the contemporary British state, the ban representing:

... a cold shower: that actually freedom of expression has its limits, those limits are suddenly very much constricted, and even ancient laws will be used to constrict us.⁸¹⁴

The recent growth of focus on ‘extremism’ as the gate-way drug to terrorism and increasing concern over reciprocal radicalisation has also seen renewed concern over the ideology and core message of Hizb ut-Tahrir – if not the organisational capacity or party activism in general – as can be seen in recent statements from, for instance, the Commission for Countering Extremism or Tony Blair:

There’s a big challenge within our own societies to confront these ideas and defeat them. That’s what Prevent and Sara Khan are trying to do but the reason they’re being attacked is precisely because those people who want to propagate those ideas are trying to stigmatise anyone who challenges them as being anti-Muslim, when in fact you’re simply trying to combat extremism... You’ve got very obvious ones like Cage and Mend and Hizb ut-Tahir [a fundamentalist international group]. I think what’s important is to combat their ideas vigorously. (Tony Blair)⁸¹⁵

The tactics of groups widely regarded as extremist such as Hizb ut-Tahrir and Britain First, or proscribed organisations that promote extremist world views like National Action and Al-Muhajiroun, evolve over time and so it is important to understand their core objectives to effectively counter their actions. (Sara Khan)⁸¹⁶

As such, HTB have had to deal with declining freedom of media engagement and the closing of platforms for disseminating discourse, as well as and the problematisation of their ideologies and rhetorical framing: the closing of the discursive opportunity structure (DOS).

⁸¹⁴ HI.

⁸¹⁵ Hamilton.

⁸¹⁶ Extremism. p.10

In Denmark, the party has also faced threat identification, yet this has taken a different form. There has been a different bifurcation in the Danish state's approach, where HTS has been problematised less through a security lens and more through a societal lens, as a challenge to integration or Danish values of liberal democracy, whilst also targeted more directly by specific counterterror legislation. This reflects the focus of counterterrorism in Denmark as sitting more overtly within structures of immigration control and integration than in Britain. HTS have also confronted more consistent threats of proscription in Denmark than in the UK, despite strong laws of assembly.

Denmark is well known for allowing for instance neo-Nazis to organise and work in the country; a tolerance that has also generally been extended to Islamic organisations.⁸¹⁷

There has also not been the same development of counter-extremist and counter-radicalisation organisations – driving targeted programmes against Islamist methodologies and emulating repression (such as Quilliam) – in Denmark. There has also been a lower level of framing the party within the confines of extremism, radicalisation or terrorism than there has in the UK and securitisation processes have been largely confined to the problematisation of the party's positive or negative role in society. Threat identification has therefore not been complete in both instances: Britain desecuritising the party and its activism officially (opening POS) and yet securitising the rhetorical landscape within which the party sits (closing DOS);⁸¹⁸ Denmark has seen the securitising of the party and its activism (closing POS) whilst acting to de-securitise the wider discursive context (opening DOS).

8.3.2.1.2 Political Opportunity Structure (POS)

Whilst the structures surrounding the discursive opportunities have changed for Hizb ut-Tahrir in both cases, there has also been a shifting in the political opportunity structures (POS) within which HTB and HTS operate. In

⁸¹⁷ Lene Kühle and Lasse Lindekilde, "Radicalisation among Young Muslims in Aarhus," (Aarhus: Centre for Studies in Islamism and Radicalisation (CIR), Department of Political Science, Aarhus University, 2010).

⁸¹⁸ Hanif.

Britain, there has been a certain opening of the political opportunity structures, evident in a tactical shift by the party towards developing open alliances and engaging with the mainstream political movements. In Denmark, there is evidence to the contrary, that the political opportunity structure has closed to the party, and engagement with other political organisations and actors has reduced or become opaque.

In the UK, the desire and ability of the party to engage in alliance and coalition-making and broader engagement with national political discussions suggests there has been a perceived increase in political opportunities by HTB – the ‘desecuritisation’ that was identified by Hanif.⁸¹⁹ This has enabled the party to develop some allegiances amongst Islamic and left-leaning activists and politicians, as well as engage in forms of lobbying or limited parliamentary-political engagement. In contrast, the Danish case study suggests that there has been a general closing of the political opportunity structure. The political problematisation of HTS has become more mainstreamed, with the party’s legitimacy increasingly challenged by both the main right and left-leaning parties, as well as the growing right-populists of the Dansk Folkeparti. This has led to far less incentive by HTS to engage directly with national politics through the seeking of legitimacy, as well as less to be gained from withdrawal of more contentious statements or formations of public activism. Thus, we see continued use of provocative rhetoric and a lack of interest in interacting with national media platforms, as well as limited alliances and increasing speculation over front groups. From these findings on the POS in Britain and Denmark, we can build the following visualisation:

Fig. 42: Political Opportunity Structure

Case Study	Mechanism	Articulation I
UK	<i>Threat Identification</i>	Opening of Political Opportunity Structure
Denmark		Closing of Political Opportunity Structure

8.3.2.1.3 Discursive Opportunity Structure (DOS)

⁸¹⁹ Ibid.

Discursive opportunity structures (DOS) represent attempts by actors to change the discursive context of the SMOs and so the cognitive actions of the party and majority attitudes towards them. With regards to the DOS in Britain and Denmark, the data suggests the opposite is occurring, in comparison to the POS: the British party faces a closing of the discursive opportunity structures; whilst the Danish branch has seen an opening of the discursive opportunity structures. In the UK, significant media resources have been lost or degraded and the freedom to project activist frames into the media and wider spaces has been constrained or lost. This is, in part, due to an increasingly hostile framing of HTB and its activism in national media, with the party being explicitly connected to discussions on extremism, terrorism and radicalisation. Whilst both HTB and HTS have seen a decline in direct engagement with media, the collapse in the UK has been far more drastic and has taken place despite repeated attempts by the party to engage through press releases and interviews. The British branch has therefore been forced to depart from its former strategy of engagement with national media, having seen platforms increasingly becoming denied to them by the national press.

In comparison, the national press in Denmark has maintained continued high levels of interest in HTS and, whilst the Danish branch has consistently rejected tactics of engagement towards national media, it has been able to command a significant rhetorical presence on a much smaller budget and limited media experience. There is far more national interest in the party in Denmark – something which has held steady throughout from 2001 to 2017 – even if some of this interest inevitably involves attacks on the party and its members. The media environment in Denmark therefore seems similar to the interactions taking place between HTB and the British national media in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with incentives provided by the press for engaging in visible and sometimes overtly controversial forms of activism. In Denmark, therefore, we see the continued opening of a discursive opportunity structure, in contrast to the closing of the DOS in Britain.

Fig. 43: Discursive Opportunity Structure

Case Study	Mechanism	Articulation II
UK	<i>Threat Identification</i>	Closing of Discursive Opportunity Structure
Denmark		Opening of Discursive Opportunity Structure

8.3.2.2 First order mechanism impacts

In both cases, despite different articulations of repression mechanisms taking place between the DOS and POS in Britain and Denmark, the immediate impacts of the first order mechanisms on Hizb ut-Tahrir branches are similar in this case. Both HTB and HTS have seen increased costs of activism, membership disengagement and frame displacement, despite differing formations of repression mechanisms being used in the different national contexts.

8.3.2.2.1 Greater Costs of Activism

The first order mechanisms detailed here have led to greater costs in the performance of public activism and large-scale engagement in both the UK and Danish case. In both instances, members risk the loss of their jobs, opportunities and livelihoods, a public implication they are hostile fifth-column actors, and the increased attention of counterterror police and security operatives. Members have complained of unnecessary engagement from authorities, including the closing down of sites of activism, threats towards their family and the removal of their children due to concerns over safeguarding.⁸²⁰ Stigmatisation of the party specifically – and Islamic activism more generally – has increased the cost of public engagement, even if many of the concerns by members and activists may be beyond the actual remit of authority actors.

8.3.2.2.2 Membership Disengagement

For a party largely defined by youth activism, the ageing of its average membership and the inability to attract younger recruits to activism should have contributed, at least in part, to their continued contraction in the last decade. An already fractured organisation, led by individuals from the old guard who are conscious of – and were in some cases, party to – the schisms which pummelled the former generation of Hizb ut-Tahrir activists in Britain, faced an increase repression, competition and resource decline.

⁸²⁰ XC.

The British party leadership have faced a difficult choice for conducting activism: either to continue public and contentious activism and risk governmental proscription of the party, losing the ability to openly run operations, or else shift focus away from the public, contentious arena, towards grassroots, avoiding the fracturing that Omar Bakri Muhammad's leadership created on the international/global leadership level, the intra-party level and with UK counterterrorism authorities. In choosing a downwards shift of disengagement, the party have relied on a grassroots community network but after years of attempting to off-set repression through local building, rhizomatic community support doesn't exist in the UK, and their shallow roots in the Muslim communities of Britain and London have become exposed. In disengaging, they have continued to conform to an increasingly constricted line of what British authorities demand from legally operating Islamic activist organisations to the detriment of tactics which would maintain their long-term activism. Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain have, to a significant extent, sacrificed growth and development at the altar of continued legal existence.

Across the period studied, and particularly following 2006/2007, increasing numbers of activists and members disengaged from Hizb ut-Tahrir. During interviews, several different tracks of disengagement were reported, including: moral shocks, induced reward, life events, ideological disenchantment and solidarity.

- *Moral shocks*: Former members highlighted several 'moral shocks' which facilitated individual disengagement. This largely converged around terrorist-style violence, which seems to have had a dramatic impact on membership. Whilst such events have been shown to briefly provide platforms for HT to increase their national media profile, in the long-term it creates a problematisation of such groups, both externally and internally. Many former members reported feeling their first desire to distance themselves from the party following incidences of terrorist-style violence, such as the New York attacks in 2001, the London bombings of 2005 or the Copenhagen shootings of 2015. These events led to significant disengagement by members from the party, as well as creating the groundwork for

the contemporary counter-extremism industry in Britain.⁸²¹ Many of these moments of ‘moral shocks’ took place in combination with several other factors.⁸²²

- *Induced reward*: Another track of disengagement came from the perceived opportunity for reward from external, hostile actors within counter-terrorism – particularly governmental-related inducements. The development and growth of an industry based around counter-extremism in the wake of the 2005 London bombings in Britain led to increased rewards for defecting, as opportunities and the new recognition of status as ‘former extremist’ supported the development of a new phalanx of self-professed experts.⁸²³
- *Life events*: Another disengagement factor was life events, key moments of change that induced reflection and disengagement from the party. Reported examples included births, marriages, deaths, the loss of employment or income.⁸²⁴
- *Ideological disenchantment*: Disengagement was also shown to come about because of ideological disenchantment, in which frames would cease having the same resonance amongst members as before.⁸²⁵

⁸²¹ ‘I was in the hospital and the 7/7 bombings happened. It was just really shocking for me. I had a really different reaction to when we had the 9/11 stuff going on. It just felt like, that doesn’t seem right. It made me feel uneasy. It made me see things differently, like, ‘Oh my God, it’s going to be really difficult for my sons and their reputation’, and I just didn’t like it. And then when I was actually in the hospital having my baby delivered, on the hospital bed the other bombs went off on the 22nd July, and that’s when my son was born, and it just made it worse. I had a very spiritual moment thinking really, asking God to help me, really fervent prayers and really, it was very spiritual and very sincere and emotional; I was probably on drugs as well, which didn’t help’ XA.

⁸²² ‘The doubt just snowballed I guess, as in most relationships - because it’s kind of a relationship, you are kind of married to the party. It’s just everywhere, you think about it morning, and throughout the day. You have so many activities, it’s basically your whole life. With every relationship you wait for that breaking point, some huge event that will almost allow you to go through with the divorce.’ XD.

⁸²³ ‘Maajid Nawaz is somebody with capacity, actual ability, and so he had deep and mid-ranking exposure to the inside of Hizb ut-Tahrir at a point where they had an existential crisis as well. After he was in Egypt for some years, Hizb ut-Tahrir went through an existential crisis. He then returned, and it looks like he had his own existential crisis, but I think he came back with an idea that he would be given a leading role. That’s something that Maajid, that he needs, as personality, basically, to be a leader of something, and he was crowded out of that; he wasn’t afforded the sort of respect he believed he deserved because of the experiences he went through and I think he just flipped a switch and turned pariah really, basically, and found a method of capitalising on the experiences he had, the history he had, building an organisation and frankly being an echo chamber for the government – that’s my view of the think tanks. It’s very difficult to be sure that the advice you’re getting from some body is good advice when payment is a fundamental part of that.’ XB.

⁸²⁴ XE.

⁸²⁵ ‘I was just starting to not be as convinced as I used to be. The more I read, the less I was convinced, basically. But I don’t think people would be able to tell, because you had that training. It’s like when you see a politician say things that they clearly don’t mean - I guess every politician - I mean, it’s at that level, it’s that convincing.’ XI.

- *Solidarity*: Finally, another key factor in disengagement was solidarity, whereby the doubt or defection of one individual led subsequently to others departing the party body. This was typified during a sustained haemorrhage of members and activists between 2006 and 2007.⁸²⁶

In all interviews with former members, such disengagements were linked to varying extents with the growth of the securitised lens, as concern over the rising costs of activism combined with personal reflection and issues to create a context unsustainable for continued engagement with the party.

8.3.2.2.3 Frame Displacement

On a local level, the British party has been hit from many sides: its implication in radicalisation and the rising costs of activism have led to some departures; its characterisation as zealous ‘Hizbots’ has caused difficulty in gaining a foothold in many communities;⁸²⁷ whilst its focus on ‘culturing’ and cultivating ideological purity, and its strategy of staying strictly on the right side of legality has disinterested those with more radical inclinations towards activism. The well-developed articulations of party ideology, seen in their numerous and wide-ranging official publications, whilst acting as an advantage during times of organisational growth, have acted as hinderance in times of decline, as frames – similarly to structure – have been too rigid to be melded for changing situations. As such, the party has lost ground in Britain particularly to social movement organisations better able to convey HT’s key frames – Western involvement in the Middle East, Muslim and minority inequality and securitisation and the revival of the Khilafah.

Frames have not been adjusted to account for the changing environment within which the party operates and, as such, have been displaced, becoming increasingly less resonant with target communities. On an international level, discussion over re-establishment of the Khilafah has been hijacked by the rise of Islamic State, becoming synonymous with the eye-catching palette of deliberate brutality enacted by Da’esh. Whilst members claim that

⁸²⁶ ‘at the time I had, someone I looked up to, I really respected and their Islamic opinions, because in my eyes, they were the only that knew Arabic and they were the only ones that knew anything scholarly, and there aren’t many scholarly people in the Hizb. He was also reassessing his position in the Hizb and gave me the Islamic legitimacy to leave. That you shouldn’t feel guilt, you shouldn’t feel like a traitor, you shouldn’t feel bad about these ideas because there are alternative ideas and it’s not necessary that it’s an obligation and if you don’t fulfil that obligation you’re not fulfilling your duty as a Muslim, that is debateable, that doesn’t exist.’ XF.

⁸²⁷ XA.

the normalisation of the idea of the Khilafah and its adoption by other groups ultimately supports the essential ideology of the party, it has meant it has become handicapped in its ability to use this frame effectively, and many have pointed out the damage that such events have caused the party.

Fig. 44: First Order Mechanism Impacts

Case Study	Mechanism	Articulation I	Articulation II	Impacts
UK	<i>Threat Identification</i>	+ POS	- DOS	+ Activism Costs + Disengagement + Frame Displacement
Denmark		- POS	+ DOS	

8.3.2.3 Second order mechanism: Response to Mechanisms of Securitisation

The second order mechanism is the response by the social movement organisation to first order authority mechanisms and the new circumstances. In both cases, despite similar initial impacts of repression from the closing or opening of the DOS and POS – greater activism costs, disengagement and frame displacement – responses to the first order mechanism differ in the UK and Danish case studies.

8.3.2.3.1 Alliance Building vs. Front Groups

In the UK, the party has made increasing use of alliances. High levels of competition, a greater number of voices challenging the party and a closing down of media influence has forced the party into a position of greater engagement and the cultivation of allegiances between different Muslim groups to continue at a similar level of activism. The loss of influence and closing of political opportunities have seen a certain relinquishing of control over allegiances, with the party more willing to work openly and on an equal platform with a wider variety of individuals and organisations. This can be seen in public activist events such as demonstrations.⁸²⁸ Alliances with organisations such as CAGE and other anti-counterterrorism, anti-Islamophobia platforms show the party has

⁸²⁸ 'On the anti-Prevent activism, what I find most interesting is that the more conspiratorial aspects of the anti-Prevent activism and lobby do sit and resonate with broader mainstream communities... within the Muslim community we get staunch opposition, and from academics that sit more on the hard-left of the political spectrum'

looked increasingly to highlight the anti-securitisation frame as a means of responding to the impact securitisation has had on their activism. In embracing open alliances, HTB has concurrently been seen to disregard the use of closed front groups.

In Denmark, the use of alliances has been a tactic barely utilised and, when it has, it has been shown to have limited success for HTS, with other groups largely unwilling to work with the party branch. However, approaches which tend to mask or obfuscate party involvement have been seen to be used in more recent activism. This suggests that the use of front groups and alliances are at odds, or at least the decline of one is indicative of greater opportunities for the other.

Fig. 45: Alliance Building vs. Front Groups

Mechanism Type	Radicalised	Deradicalised
<i>Relational</i>	Closed Front Groups	Open Alliances

8.3.2.3.2 Contentious vs. Institutionalised Activism

The British branch has undergone a process of institutionalisation in which it has sought to pacify governmental concerns over the legal status of the party. This has involved a public disengagement from contentious forms of politics. In contrast to the traditional SMT understandings of institutionalisation, this has *not* been carried out in exchange for gains within existing governmental structures but rather to safeguard existing rights in a context of expanding problematisation and securitisation of Islamic activism.

In Denmark, the party has not undergone a process of institutionalisation, partly because securitisation processes have been different and partly because there has not been the same concern over the implications of banning the party by members. As a result, members have continued to engage in controversial forms of public activism. This shows that the mechanism of institutionalisation doesn't necessarily require gains, simply the perception that such an approach will mitigate expected losses in a hostile environment. We can therefore place these two forms of activism at alternative ends of the radicalised-deradicalised spectrum.

Fig. 46: Contentious vs. Institutionalised Activism

Mechanism Type	Radicalised	Deradicalised
<i>Environmental</i>	Contentious Activism	Institutionalised Activism

8.3.2.3.3 Radical vs. Moderate Framing

Finally, the impact of the closing or opening of the DOS or the POS also has an impact on the radicalisation of frames. In both these instances, the frames have been shown to become more ‘moderate’. By utilising the language of human rights as a master frame, HT in both the UK and Denmark have been able to spread the impact of patterns of repression to appeal to other groups beyond their core demographic.

Fig. 47: Radical vs. Moderate Framing

Mechanism Type	Radicalised	Deradicalised
<i>Cognitive</i>	Radical Framing	Moderate Framing

8.3.2.4 Second order mechanism impacts

One of the premises of such mechanistic social movement approaches is that mechanisms change the situation for both authority actors and social movement organisations. Such mechanisms have, therefore, impacted on the national approaches towards the party and to counterterrorism more widely. In Britain, this has led to greater recent cooperative interaction between Hizb ut-Tahrir members, and British security authorities and localised police forces.⁸²⁹ This has supported the de-escalation of language over Hizb ut-Tahrir and ensured it has been able to continue operating. In Denmark, police and security services have reported that they have found it increasingly difficult to engage with Hizb ut-Tahrir members and activists. This has, in turn, further enabled the continued targeting of HTS by counter-terror authorities and supported the discussions over proscription of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Denmark. We therefore account for the way in which SMOs such as HT can use

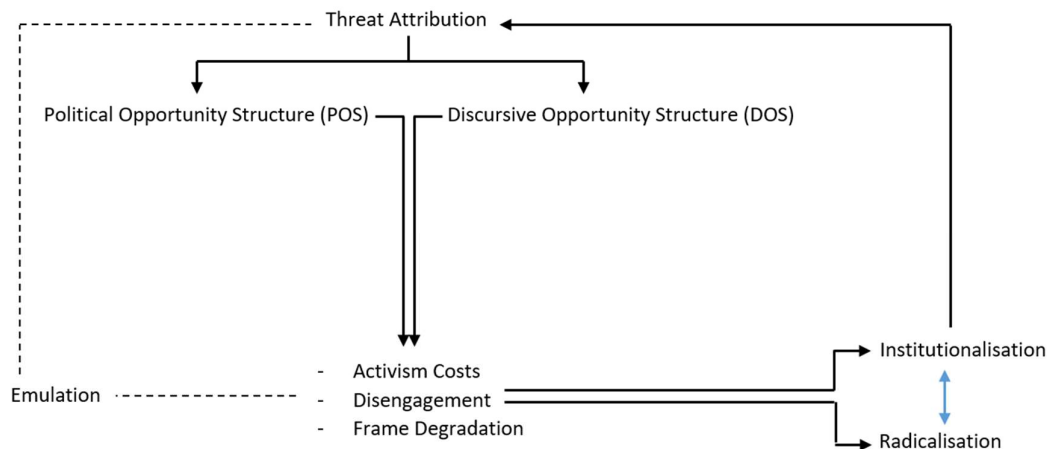
⁸²⁹ Hanif.

tactics to influence and adjust repression mechanisms towards them, accounting for challenger agency and authority response.

8.3.3 Modelling Interactive Securitisation

To conceptualise counterterrorism repression mechanisms within a model, based on the analysis above, the following diagram has been developed which represents a recasting of the Coleman macro-micro-macro model within the context of the present project:

Fig. 48: The Interactive Securitisation Model



Threat attribution occurs amongst authority actors, leading to (depending on the conceptualisation of the threat) the actioning of mechanisms against securitised SMOs to close the political opportunity structure (POS), the discursive opportunity structure (DOS) or – in other instances – both. In the immediacy (if such mechanisms are successfully executed) this results in increasing activist costs, the growth of activist disengagement and frame degradation – as is the case in both Hizb ut-Tahrir case studies in Britain and Denmark. This represents the first order mechanism, of macro-micro relations.

In response, the SMOs that are impacted by the securitised lens can chose to respond with greater institutionalisation, radicalisation, or a combination of either. These can be broadly divided into environmental,

relational and cognitive sub-mechanisms – in this case: contentious vs. institutionalised activism (environmental); open alliances vs. closed front groups (relational); and radical vs. moderate framing (cognitive). The choice of sub-mechanisms then impacts on the authorities, redefining the threat attribution that occurs and thereby changing the mechanisms that would be used in the following sequence. This represents the second order mechanism, of micro-macro relations. Emulation – here defined as organisational operations by ex-members as counter-extremist organisations – operates as an additional factor between the macro and micro levels, which alters both the level of threat attribution and the first order impacts on activism.

8.3.3.1 Further use of the Interactive Securitisation Model

To test the efficacy of this model, it is worth applying it to other case studies, to determine whether it is possible to draw out interesting findings of points for future research. From the data, we can see four relevant cases from which to test whether this model is adroit for this setting. Based on the data available in this study, it is possible to create four case studies, based on a combination of shifts within SMO tactics and authority responses to ‘terrorism’ and ‘extremism’. These are as follows:

1. *UK-HTB (2001-2008)*: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain is reaching the peak of its influence and membership in the UK but serious defections are occurring later in this period, leading to a large haemorrhaging of members and the establishment of counter-extremism organisations by ex-members by 2008. UK counterterrorism strategies are characterised by a responsive, ‘hard’ approach to an immediate terrorist threat and significant attention is paid to assessing HT’s threat and potential proscription.
2. *UK-HTB (2008-2017)*: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain is now under a long-term process of decline in terms of membership and influence, along with an institutionalisation of their activism centred around concerns over future proscription or breaking counter-extremism laws. Counterterrorism shifts throughout this period towards preventative approaches, prioritising soft, ‘pre-crime’ approaches, problematising Islamic activism, but authority discussion is less concerned with Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain and proscription is less of a direct possibility.

3. *UK-ALM (2001-2017)*: Al Muhajiroun faces constant threats of proscriptions, which are realised during this period, although the organisation dissolves before the threat comes into law. The party is characterised by increasingly contentious and aggressive styles of activism. The banning of the party leads to dispersal of activists but a continuation of activism, with front groups taking the place of Al Muhajiroun.

4. *DNK-HTS (2008-2017)*: After initial growth prior to 2008, Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia declines slowly, although the party continues to utilise some contentious formations of public activism or more incendiary rhetoric. Whilst ‘pre-crime’ approaches are enacted, Danish societal and government-level discourse is concerned about Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia and the role they play in society and other forms of activism, with continued discussions over organisational proscription and assessing HTS threat.

8.3.3.1.1 Case 1: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2001-2008)

Threat attribution has led to mechanisms which have sought to target the Political Opportunity Structure, impacting initially by increasing activism costs, creating disengagement and frame degradation. This has led to a mixed result, with no change in activism, increasing front groups and creating frame moderation. As such, it has neither institutionalised nor deradicalised Hizb ut-Tahrir activism in any significant way. Rather than representing equilibrium, such a situation is unsustainable for either party: threat attribution has not been assuaged by party tactics, which HT still under the securitised lens and related counterterror mechanisms, whilst authority mechanisms have been unable to instigate any significant change in the party.

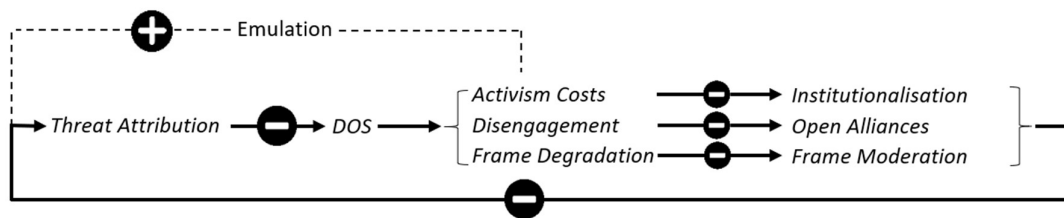
Fig. 49: Case 1: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2001-2008)



8.3.3.1.2 Case 2: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2008-2017)

In response to an unstable set of mechanisms – whereby both authority mechanisms and social movement responses were failing to move the balance in favour of repression-mobilisation in their favour, a new set of mechanisms were taken by authorities in desecuritising HTB by enabling the opening of the political opportunity structures. However, the closing of the discursive opportunity structures – through the problematisation of HT and other Islamic activist discourses – has been more effective in changing HTB. In response to this new set of sub-mechanisms, HTB has looked to respond through the institutionalisation of activism, the cultivation of open alliances to spread activist cost and frame moderation, to ensure continued activism within a tighter discursive framework. Whilst this has desecuritisised HT, the development of counter-extremism organisations by ex-members and their focus on problematising Hizb ut-Tahrir’s discourse has ensured that threat attribution has continued to take place and the mechanisms continue to be implemented, rather than stopped. This explains how HTB has continued to institutionalise and yet been unable to successfully remove themselves from the securitised lens.

Fig. 50: Case 2: Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain (2008-2017)



8.3.3.1.3 Case 3: al Muhajiroun (2001-2017)

The third case study is al Muhajiroun, which faced the closing of both the Discursive Opportunity Structure and the Political Opportunity Structure, through their government proscription and the problematisation of their discourse. Whilst this had an initial impact by increasing activist costs, disengagement and frame degradation, it led to the radicalisation of the organisation to counter this force, ALM responding through contentious activism, a proliferation of closed front groups and continued frame radicalisation. This resulted in a feedback of greater threat attribution. Whilst the group has ultimately disbanded – in response to threats of governmental

banning – there is still concern over front groups, as well as former members who have dispersed amongst international jihadi movements and organisations. As such, the use of sub-mechanisms which aim to close both the POS and the DOS have not been totally successful in their objective of deradicalising or institutionalising the organisation, a process which has informed government approaches to HTB and helped to lead to the development of a more nuanced approach by the UK Government towards HTB.

Fig. 51: Case 3: al Muhajiroun (2001-2017)



8.3.3.1.4 Case 4: Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia (2008-2017)

Finally, taking the data we have available on Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia and their interactions with the Danish context of securitisation, we can see that there has been a closing of the political opportunity structure, which has resulted in responses by HTS that have not seen the institutionalisation of activism, alongside a general increase in front groups and closed organisation, combined with frame moderation with the use of human rights framing. As such, we can see that not only is HTS very similar to HTB in its organisational capacity and approaches, but that authorities have responded to HT in very similar ways in the UK between 2001 and 2008 and in Denmark between 2008-2017. This offers some explanation of the very similar approaches to activism conducted by HTS in recent years with the way HTB conducted activism in the early years of the 21st Century.

Fig. 52: Case 4: Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia (2008-2017)



8.4 Repression-Mobilisation Nexus Conclusions

This chapter has sought to model the changes that have taken place in Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain and Scandinavia by recasting the Coleman model of macro-micro-macro relations based on the research data of this project. Firstly, it has found that there are clear links to be drawn between, on the one hand, authority mechanisms from counterterror policy, practice and policing, and on the other hand, changes in Hizb ut-Tahrir activism and decline. Secondly, findings in this chapter suggest that repression, when focussed through the closing of Political Opportunity Structures, has not in this instance led to the deradicalisation or institutionalisation of activism – a finding which questions certain assumptions about the way in which SMT conceptualises the supposed role and definition of repression in suppressing activism. Thirdly, it has highlighted the central role of more subtle, discursive formations of repression, as well as the impact that emulation has on creating a long-term impact on social movement organisations under the securitised lens. As well as methodically responding to the question of the impact of the securitised on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark within a counterterror context, these findings also add to our understanding of securitised repression as an interactive process within counterterrorism.

9. Conclusions

This project has aimed to understand and detail how the development of a securitised lens has impacted on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark, exploring: 1. How we know securitisation has been an issue for Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark; 2. How we can understand securitisation through counterterrorism as creating the perception of repression; and what long-term effects and changes of tactics such experience of perceived repression has had amongst the two case studies of the same SMO. But, in doing so, it has interacted with a plethora of far wider issues.

This thesis has updated our understanding of Hizb ut-Tahrir's recent operations in the West and how the party has sought to respond to fragmentation and activist decline by linking itself to issues such as human rights and concern over the reach and racialisation of counterterrorism. It has also explored recent developments in counterterrorism as it shifts towards countering-extremism, raising some of the issues around the difficulties in defining and articulating what 'extremism' is and how this relates to the practice of counterterror law. Theoretically, the project has shown that securitisation is a highly interactive process, that more discussion needs to be had over its various strands and iterations of securitisation theory, with current counterterror practices and response suggesting that we need to move away from imagining security as a top-down process. Finally, and perhaps most significantly for future research, this thesis has set out a primer and a schema for understanding the impact of proscription (and the threat thereof) on groups that are framed by authorities as 'extremist'. In a Europe increasingly engaged in responding to the threat of 'extremism' and witnessing a proliferation of counter-extremism approaches, it is important that we fully understand the impact of such trends, as well as its associated legislation, programmes and policing practices. It is integral, in this moment, that we consider and attempt to understand what impact approaches to tackling 'extremism' have on groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, as well as similar organisations and the civil and political context within which they operate.

9.1 Addressing the Research Questions

This project has responded the research questions outlined at the start of the thesis, with results suggesting that securitisation has become a significant issue for HT in Britain and Denmark, creating and perpetuating processes of decline and leading the changing tactics that differed between the two country case studies.

Initially, the project sought to establish the Indigenous Organisational Strength of Hizb ut-Tahrir in both the UK and in Denmark. In Britain, it found the last decade has seen a significant aging of the potential membership and a shifting in the demographics within Muslim communities that the party is able to directly engage with and attract. This has had inevitable consequences on its activism: just as the sudden rise of the party in the late 1980s and early 1990s, or the influx and promotion of youth following the splits of the Majaal Crisis and the Global Redress, led to the actioning of more radical youth-based activism, so opposing trends have likely encouraged the British branch of the party to be more inclined towards institutionalisation and against political contention. Such significant demographic shifts have not taken place in Denmark, and this branch has retained the youthful dynamic often associated with Western Hizb ut-Tahrir activities.

Alongside establishing changes in the Indigenous Organisational Strength of both Hizb ut-Tahrir case studies, the project also explored the framing of the party and the changes that have taken place in the Discursive Opportunity Structure (DOS), the discursive context within which the party operates. There was evidence of a securitised lens on discourse occurring within national media in both the UK and Denmark, but that this was stronger in the British context. In the UK, discussion around the party has largely been driven by events linked to terrorism and violence, whilst in Denmark this was linked to debates around their role in civil society and their proscription. Increasingly there has also been a decline in the ability of both party bodies to engage with national media, although this was again much less pronounced in the Danish case. In the UK, national media initially had relatively high levels of engagement with members, quoting from representatives and reporting on activist events. However, this engagement has radically declined and, whilst statements and press releases were continued to be released by the British party, they became increasingly irrelevant and ignored by reportage. Such engagement was replaced in the media by ex-Hizb ut-Tahrir members, openly hostile to the party and its activism. This has been accompanied by a rightward shift in the kinds of newspapers reporting on Hizb ut-Tahrir, suggesting a likelihood that the party has become further implicated in discussions of security where they were less likely to be before. As such, we see a closing of the DOS in the UK, a process that has not taken place in

Denmark where there is still some (diminished) engagement between HTS and the media and HTS is less likely to be framed as directly linked to terrorism or violence. The DOS therefore represents an important factor in building both the securitised lens and understanding the responses that occur amongst contentious activist organisations in response to its problematisation under counter-extremism discussions.

The greater focus of the securitised lens on Hizb ut-Tahrir has greatly impacted on the party in Britain and Denmark because of various reasons. Firstly, interviewees consistently spoke of the impact of securitisation – both on repressing activism and on changing organisational tactics. Rather than discussing concerns over Islamophobia and violence from far-right groups – which often overtly target Islamic activist groups – members and activists largely conceptualised state authorities as the main or only actor driving repression and mobilisation. This can also be seen through an examination of mechanistic approaches, the actioning of certain groups of mechanisms directly or indirectly resulting in the diminution of spatial, support and discursive resources, the repression of activists and members, the legal problematisation of party activism and the degradation of frames. Interviewees from both the British and Danish case studies – despite their different histories and national contexts – singled out these securitisation process and the securitised lens as key to their changing tactics and as implicated in the stultification of their activism and generalised decline. As such, we see an important role being played by the securitising lens on the party.

Exploring the Political Opportunity Structures (POS), this thesis finds that ‘harder’ forms of repression have been perceived as being actioned against the Scandinavian branch than the British one. Whilst interest by the Home Office in responding to the activities of HTB has declined in recent years, policy and legislation against HTS has increased. This includes legislation that has been seen as targeting Hizb ut-Tahrir, such *Lov 50, Lov om ændring af udlændingeloven* (Amendment to the Alien’s Act, Radical Preacher Law, 2016), which was designed to toughen responses against religious preachers seen as promoting hate, or the *Lov om ændring af folkeoplysningsloven og ligningsloven* (Act amending the Public Education Act and the Tax Act, Public Information Law, 2016), which prevented organisations or associations that are deemed to be anti-democratic in their nature or actively working against Danish democratic processes from accessing public funds or renting municipally-owned rooms or services. Other forms of perceived repression particularly important in the Danish case included employment deprivation and concerns over surveillance. This stronger articulation of

counterterrorism against HTS, the closing of the POS alongside an open DOS, has meant not resulted in a similar decline in activist contention because the party has not perceived the same balance of incentives and threats to institutionalise as has been present in the UK context.

The project has therefore found that, whilst HTB and HTS have both been affected by the securitised lens, this has manifested itself in different ways. Undergoing a far more dramatic decline in numbers and influence, the British branch has responded to the greater securitised lens by adapting to its surroundings through a form of institutionalising, aligning its activism with British counter-extremism limitations – or membership-perception of such – to ensure its continued legal operation. This project has shown that HTB has sought to institutionalise its activism whilst remaining outwardly an avowedly anti-democratic, anti-integrationist political organisation largely in response to discussions over its proscription by the UK Government. Whilst government-level debate on banning the party in Britain has not been revisited since 2010, responses to these concerns have greatly weakened the party branch, entrenching activism on the course it remains on to this day. HTB's adaptation led to it embracing the political deradicalisation and de-escalation of its more extreme elements and has allowed HTB to circumvent further discussion over its proscription, successfully navigating the growing (and perhaps bewildering) scope of recent counterterror legislation. Whilst this has contributed to somewhat of a de-securitisation process (as identified by Hanif),⁸³⁰ threat perception by authority actors towards Hizb ut-Tahrir has remained in place in Britain due to the emulation of repressive policies by counter-extremist groups.

This project has highlighted a particularly British manifestation of counter-extremism, using the concept of emulation to show how certain non-government and non-authority organisations have helped to amplify the effects of counter-extremism. Such counter-extremism bodies in this case – involved in both CVE practice and research and including organisation such as Quilliam, the Tony Blair Institute, the Institute of Strategic Dialogue (ISD), or the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) – are all driven significantly by ex-members of HTB. The freedom with which early contributions from these parties were able to set the agenda of counterterrorism and counter-extremism approaches in the UK, particularly in the politically feverish response to terrorism in the years immediately after the London bombings in 2005, has created an

⁸³⁰ Hanif.

environment that is specifically hostile towards and problematic for HTB, largely through the promotion a counter-extremism approach which deliberately inverts much of the ideological foundations of core HT texts and tenets.

In contrast, the Danish branch has neither gone through such a dramatic decline nor adapted in the same way to authority adoption of a securitised lens. Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia has continued to find advantage in using more contentious and controversial forms of political activism, the party branch continuing to utilise more inflammatory statements and events as is felt necessary. In Denmark, authorities, politicians and media have targeted HTS more directly, closing down the political opportunity structure for it to operate, whilst discursive opportunities have, meanwhile, remained open. This has disincentivised more mediated forms of engagement, dissuading HTS from creating open alliances with other – less incendiary – groups and preventing institutionalisation, even whilst other elements of HTS activism become more moderate (such as its frames). Furthermore, there is even recent evidence from demonstrations found during fieldwork that HTS has started to tentatively use front groups – or, at least, deliberately obscure their involvement in public activist events – at a time when HTB has moved away from such tactics and has attempted to be more open about their activism. As such, whilst both party branches seem to be undergoing general organisation decline – and despite their significant organisational, ideological and contextual similarities – the securitised lens has impacted on both Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia but has resulted in some of their tactics shifting in polar-opposite directions.

To establish this finding as the result of interactive processes with counterterrorism policies, programmes and policing, required the project to model a theoretical groundwork. This modelling draws on the mechanistic approaches of McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow to create a temporal process to account for a repression-mobilisation nexus. However, whilst such mechanistic social movement theories are a useful starting point for looking at repression and response, it required a deep dive into how to understand, classify and qualify repression. As such, the project has sought to further integrate a reconceptualisation of repression that goes beyond the spatially or temporarily localised delineations which has limited much of previous social movement theory approaches.⁸³¹

⁸³¹ Earl, "Political Repression: Iron Fists, Velvet Gloves and Diffuse Control."

In doing so, the model has attempted to show how differentials between repression mechanisms and SMO conditional factors in the UK and Denmark have contributed towards different tactical responses by HTB and HTS. This model offers a means to approach Islamic activist SMOs that have faced direct or indirect repression mechanisms through counterterrorism, as is shown through its application to different processes of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, Hizb ut-Tahrir Scandinavia and al Muhajiroun in the previous chapter.

Using such a model, we have been able to demonstrate the impact that the securitised lens and its extension into counter-extremism has had on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark. However, whilst the project has suggested the findings outlined above, there are some limitations that need to be addressed – questions that the project has been unable to adequately answer and issues that have been raised by my approach.

9.2 Project Limitations

There are some important limitations that need to be addressed within this project. The organisational change and decline of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Scandinavia could plausibly be impacted by other factors that have occurred outside of the securitisation paradigm, some of which have been highlighted in this thesis. By attempting to view the decline through a lens of critical terrorism and securitisation studies, this thesis risks over-emphasising the role of repressive authority mechanisms and under-estimating other factors that may have been more influential. Like the man who only wields a hammer, examining events through a lens of securitisation can risk the misinterpreting and misapplication of critical security approaches at times when they could be irrelevant. Other contributory factors to decline may, for instance, include the ossification of organisational structures, which would go some way to explain why groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir or al Ikhwan – with structural hierarchies developed in the mid-20th Century – have been outflanked by more innovative and malleable articulations of Islamic activism which can develop and adapt with more speed and fluidity. The role of generational change – whilst covered to a certain extent in this thesis – may also need greater exploration, as organisational decline may represent simply the natural fracturing and decline of a party which has failed to properly innovate and attract new recruits, irrespective of the political authority context. However, these such factors only offer limited means of conceptualising nuanced and complex patterns of temporal decline and the

advantage of the account laid out in the thesis is its incorporation of the party's interaction with its political context.

Another limitation with the work is that, whilst bringing in a variety of voices from different authority actors, it has sometimes struggled to express the diversity within authority structures and risks slipping into the reductionist renderings of counterterror state actors that have somewhat bedevilled critical terrorism and securitisation studies. The author is aware that the variety of competing and often contradictory voices and actors within authority structures can be understated, leading to misconceptions of the nature of state power. However, this risk of reductionism was, in this study, rendered somewhat of a necessity when examining the lens of securitisation through the lived experiences of Hizb ut-Tahrir members: in seeking to prioritise the perception of repression from below – within HTB and HTS activism – there was an almost inevitable bias against the powers of the state. On this point, Hanif has again offered an alternative viewpoint on the same topic, which examines the lens of securitisation from the point of view of authority actors, but my thesis has deliberately focussed efforts on the counter-view, from the HT members themselves – a view often maligned in research and analysis because of the group's high barriers for access.⁸³²

There are inevitable problems with ascribing causation, that current renderings of mechanisms can only assuage to a certain extent. This project has used mechanisms as a means of demonstrating what the researcher perceives as likely to have happened, when considering the primary evidence collected. However, I have naturally carried my own set of biases into the study and it is therefore inevitable that the resulting model has been developed far more as an art than an exact science. Furthermore, the relevance of the model to contexts and groups beyond the case studies disaggregated here is yet to be fully tested and whilst it offers some tantalising opportunities for understanding the impact of counterterror legislation, it is still only a promontory from which to begin future research voyages than any kind of reliable map for pioneering other research questions.

⁸³² Hanif.

Further limitations inevitably come from the limited access of the researcher to the clandestine group. Whilst the project was arguably more successful than attempts by some other scholars to access HT – with ethnographic study and semi-structured interviews being held with several high-ranking members and activists in Britain and Denmark – there were avenues of analysis that were beyond the reach of the project. This includes, for instance, full analysis of the organisational structure of the group, or deeper insights into HT’s tactical developments through party communiqués or internal party interaction between international branches. The reliance of the research on either members and ex-members who had a public face or those who were willing to speak to external researchers may also have skewed the research and led to author failing to account for trends amongst more minor or less externally-engaged individuals. Problems with access plagued not only the researcher when attempting to access HT members but formed an even more considerable blockage when looking to access authority actors. The securitised context therefore also resulted in high barriers of entry for the researcher to counterterrorism officials and politicians and some that were interviewed would only do so if they were not recorded and their words not attributed to them directly. The study has attempted to manage these problems as best as possible – with data from interviews of those willing to engage complimented by additional sources – but there will inevitably be some information in the study that is neither verifiable nor replicable, despite the researcher’s best efforts.

9.3 Findings Beyond the Research Questions

What is lost from the study in terms of its limitations is hopefully made up for by the additional findings the project has uncovered which were beyond the scope of the initial research questions outlined that the start.

Firstly, the project has offered an update on the literature on the meso-level organisational and tactical changes that have occurred in Hizb ut-Tahrir. These have, importantly, come directly from party members and representatives themselves and this project derives its importance and integrity from giving a voice to Hizb ut-Tahrir activists to narrate the changes that have taken place in their organisation. This is an important task within the current context of discussions over extremism. At the early stages of the project in 2014 and 2015, peers largely seemed surprised that researchers were still interested in Hizb ut-Tahrir, a party that held far more appeal for study during the 1990s and early 2000s when they were at their bombastic zenith. Yet, as the research

project developed, so did the project's relevance. The extension of discussions over extremism and the re-centring of the party within British and European discussions on the newly developing topic of 'counter-extremism' has led to Hizb ut-Tahrir re-occupying space in research and debate. Its decline and continuation can teach us much about the longevity of social movement organisations in hostile circumstances, as well as the malleability of so-called 'Islamist' parties and ideas. Therefore, the task of updating the literature on Hizb ut-Tahrir has grown in relevance and interest throughout. I am particularly pleased to offer some findings here that do not seem to appear in other academic analysis of the party, proffered by voices previously unheard in the literature which offer information that, at times, contradicted assumptions by others – and indeed myself. As such, the long and sometimes seemingly fruitless months spent chasing members and ex-members for interviews has been made worthwhile by such findings. I hope they will offer a reference point for those who are also interested in the recent comings and goings of Hizb ut-Tahrir.

The thesis has also offered some additional findings on how the use of social movement and securitisation theories could be advanced in future research. Within this context at least, the project seemed to successfully assuage some of the problems identified with SMT and securitisation approaches, and the idea of repression acted as a more than adequate conductor for doing this. I hope that such an approach should also offer a point of departure for future scholars critical of counterterrorism, one which branches out beyond the arguably narrow human rights-based approach that has characterised the critical literature. Beyond this, the model developed hints at another long-term finding from this project. One by-product of this theoretical approach we are left with is the conceptual discovery that securitisation is not *one* process, but many – a plethora of different actions and reactions that are constantly challenged, co-opted and contested, highly dependent on the context. As such, future research must avoid casting securitisation as a monolithic process, easily identifiable across different national contexts but as many different processes that, rather, constitute *quanta of securitisation*. Future research is needed to disaggregate this further, but the approach demonstrated within this thesis certainly offers the starting point for this process and has demonstrated some interesting and important findings on how and why Hizb ut-Tahrir – and national authorities – have changed and developed their tactics within the liberal counterterror state.

Finally, I would argue that the most significant by-product of this thesis has been the raising of questions about current assumptions of counterterrorism and counter-extremism and the appearance of a hazy apparition of how we might, in the future, answer them. The work has, for instance, thrown into question the idea of cumulative radicalisation – a concept that has become relatively popular since the growth of discussions over extremism. Both the interviews conducted with HT members and the way it led to the establishment of the accompanying theoretical model suggested that assumptions that so-called ‘Islamists’ operate in a reciprocal manner with the far-right to further fuel ‘radicalisation’ were, in this context, wrong.⁸³³ No members interviewed in either in Britain or Denmark cited far-right groups as influential in the development of organisational tactics, individual motivations or activist disengagement. Most members and ex-members stated that they had negligible to no interactions with far-right groups and that their motivations for action came entirely from concerns about injustice from the state – centring on issues such as the projection of Western power, Islamophobia and counterterrorism.

Whilst this research represents just the one group – Hizb ut-Tahrir, albeit in two national contexts – it is an important case study because authors such as Ebner have used Hizb ut-Tahrir to confirm their hypothesis that cumulative radicalisation was taking place between ‘Islamists’ and the far-right, and this has become an accepted reading. Not only was there no evidence of this from the extensive research I carried out over several years with Hizb ut-Tahrir, but most interviewees stated the opposite. I am satisfied to conclude, therefore, that the idea of ‘cumulative radicalisation’ as laid out by Ebner is wrong, a fundamental misreading of processes that were taking place. What she had perhaps observed is that there are similar tactics being used by groups that are labelled ‘extremist’, but such similarities are – within a social movement theory reading – more convincingly shown to be due to such organisations being contentious actors, problematised by state authorities. Similarities in tactics apply to all manner of activist organisations that offer a challenge to certain fundamental ideas of authorities and the governments in power. There are, furthermore, clear examples of outbidding tactics occurring in studies of social movement organisations, which such cumulative or reciprocal approaches to radicalisation may be clumsily hinting at.

⁸³³ Knott, Lee, and Copeland; Macklin and Busher; Ebner.

The prevalence of concern over how the state had interacted with the party by HT members – particularly through counterterrorism – strongly suggests that researchers should prioritise not a cumulative approach to understanding how the party engages or disengages in political radicalisation, but a macro-authority and meso-challenger approach to understanding changes in problematised and securitised SMOs. The interactions between HT and authorities were shown to be far more important in understanding their political motivations and tactics than some chimera of an interaction between unconnected contentious movement organisations. This certainly doesn't negate the important findings by Abbas, for instance, that establish clear connections between structural and physical articulations instances of Islamophobia and political radicalisation,⁸³⁴ but it does render practically meaningless the concept of reciprocal radicalisation when applied in a narrow way to 'Islamist' groups and the far-right because it deliberately and negligently fails to account for the most important and influential actor of all – the state. The approach of this thesis, therefore, highlights the merits and importance of placing analysis of 'extremist' groups squarely within their national-political context, the need to engage directly with the group themselves through close discussion and (careful) legitimisation of their grievances, as well as in dissecting the political interactions that take place between authority and challenger actors.

9.4 Concluding Remarks

On 29th November 2019, Jack Merritt (25) and Saskia Jones (23) were killed when a supporter of al-Muhajiroun attacked them at a conference on prisoner rehabilitation in the justice system.⁸³⁵ Whilst much focus has been on the questions this poses about the limitations of current rehabilitation schemes, one thing that hasn't adequately been asked is whether this has implications for the way in which proscription has been applied to groups like al Muhajiroun. Findings and analysis from this thesis strongly suggest that the threat of proscription in the UK, and the freedom that HTB was given to moderate by authorities, has been an active component in the institutionalisation of the party and its move away from contention. Furthermore, it also suggests that the proscription of al Muhajiroun has led to what looks to be a further political radicalisation of the social movement organisation and its supporters.

⁸³⁴ Tahir Abbas, *Islamophobia and Radicalisation: A Vicious Cycle* (London: Hurst, 2019).

⁸³⁵ Lizzie Dearden, "London Bridge Attack: Terrorists to Be Reviewed by Government before Being Released from Prison," *Independent*, 2nd December 2019 2019.

This is one of the most important discussions going forward, introduced by this thesis. The modelling and approach developed here offers the start of a conversation on how all social movement organisations are impacted by discussions over proscription. With proscription lists growing in Europe in response to rising governmental concern over ‘extremism’, it will be a critical conversation going forward. This project has offered a basis, therefore, not just for looking at Hizb ut-Tahrir but any other organisation problematised under counterterrorism and counter-extremism policy, programmes or policing. Such organisations have been and will continue to grow, due to the poorly defined nature of terms such as ‘extremism’ and, as the securitised lens grows, so will the need to understand in its impact on wider networks of activists.⁸³⁶ As such, this project has offered the foundations for both looking at Islamic activist groups – such as al Muhajiroun, al Ikhwan or al Qaeda – as well as various non-Islamic groups facing the threat or enactment of proscription – such as National Action, National Front, Combat 18 and the Identitarian Foundation/Generation Identity, as well as organisations such as the Loyal to Familia (LTF) gang, the first organisation to be banned in Denmark in recent years – many of which operate and respond to threats in similar ways.⁸³⁷ Whilst this project therefore offers an update on Hizb ut-Tahrir and the counterterror context within which it operates, one of the longest lasting impacts of the project should be the framework for looking at how these interactions occur between activists and organisations problematised under counterterrorism and counter-extremism, and authorities.

In response to our first question, on how the development of a securitised lens has impacted on Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain and Denmark, we do have some definitive answers. It has impacted on HT greatly in both Britain and Denmark, closing avenues for political and discursive engagement, limiting sites and means of activism. In Britain, it has resulted in institutionalisation and continual decline in a repressive process shored up by aggressive counter-extremism organisations that are particularly hostile to HT’s style of recruitment and activism. In Denmark, the lack of emulating mechanisms has prevented such significant decline in HTS. However, repressive mechanisms continue to target the Danish party branch more explicitly and the internationalisation of counter-extremism through programmes increasingly sold as a commodity (largely by Britain to other states),

⁸³⁶ Richard McNeil-Willson et al., "Polarisation, Violent Extremism and Resilience in Europe Today: An Analytical Framework for the Brave Project (Concept Paper)," Global Governance, Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Studies (Florence: European University Institute, 2019).

⁸³⁷ Dominic Casciani, "National Action Charges: Man Accused of Mp Murder Threat," *BBC*, 26th October 2017; Gadd, "Danish Government to Go to Court to Ban Criminal Gang.," "Ltf Gang Ban: Five Already Charged with Contravening It."

as well as the continued open hostility of HTS to the state will probably lead to a decline in the future more akin to that of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain in the last decade. Meanwhile, the more significant decline of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain – despite desperate grassroots attempt to shore up the party – will most likely continue due to the managing of HTB by British authorities and the hostile environment within which the party sits in the UK.

... with each generation, HTB is getting watered down, and weaker and weaker and weaker. And I think, to be honest with you, I think my projection is that they may do something radical within the next few years, which is to dismantle their structure. I could foresee that happening. I think we're getting that way because the Arab leadership just doesn't want the headache of it anymore.⁸³⁸

As such, this thesis suggests that the securitised lens and its related repressive mechanisms have not only greatly impacted HT in the contemporary counterterror state, they will – in likelihood – contribute towards the ultimate decline and dismemberment of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, a once dynamic and troublesome Islamic activist social movement organisation. The question of whether counterterrorism and counter-extremism approaches in the West are preventing or enabling 'terrorism' is a hotly contested and highly contentious one that continues to rankle at the heart of national and international debate. But, if British (and increasingly international) approaches which target extremism achieve nothing else, it will – somewhat ironically – have contributed towards the demise of an Islamic activist group that has long since been deemed to be politically impotent and legally harmless.

Hizb ut-Tahrir's institutionalisation and managed decline in Britain – in contrast to the continued contention of other manifestations of the party elsewhere and the political radicalisation of groups like al Muhajiroun who have been banned – give us an important insight into the different impacts that proscription can have. It suggests that, in this instance at least, proscription and the forced prevention of contentious organisations from operating will not always yield desired results by authorities. In fact, it offers a small discussion on how the use of counterterrorism and counter-extremism policies and programmes, without adequate consideration, may create a larger problem than the one it was trying to cure. This thesis is therefore a starting point for many future

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studies in a long War on Terror that will continue to impact on the lives of many and provides a new means of analysing the concept of 'extremism' and the act of proscription. Just as the study into Hizb ut-Tahrir grew in relevance throughout the duration of the project, so the findings here should become more applicable in the years to come.

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