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The Psychology of Terrorism Revisited: An Integrated Model of Radicalization and Terrorism

Milan Obaidi

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

Florence, March 2016

European University Institute
Department of Political and Social Sciences

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Department of Political and Social Sciences - Doctoral Programme**

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List of Papers

This dissertation is based on the following papers, which are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.

- I Obaidi, M. (2016). The Dichotomy of Person-Situation: The Role of Intra-individual Level Variables in Explaining Radicalization and Terrorism. Manuscript in preparation.
- II Thomsen, L., Obaidi, M., Sheehy-Skeffington, J., Kteily, N., & Sidsnius, J. (2014). Individual Differences in Relational Motives Interact with the Political Context to Produce Terrorism and Terrorism-support. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. 37, 377-378. doi:10.1017/S0140525X13001581
- III Obaidi, M., Kunst, J., Kteily, N., Thomsen, L., Sidsnius, J. (2016). Threat Perception and the Cycle of Violence in the Age of Terrorism. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- IV Obaidi, M., Bergh, R., Sidanius, J., & Thomsen, L. (2015). The Mistreatment of My People: Victimization-by-proxy and Behavioral Intentions to Commit Terrorism among Muslims in Denmark and Sweden. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- V Bergh, R., & Obaidi, M. (2015). The Normal Personalities of Extremists: Examining Violent and Non-violent Defense of Muslims. Manuscript submitted for publication.

ABSTRACT

In the media there are two common explanations for terrorist attacks: Those who commit these acts are either described as mentally ill or as religious fundamentalists. For example, when Anders Breivik killed 77 teenagers he was declared insane suffering from paranoid and schizophrenia, whereas the perpetrators of 9/11 attacks were described as religious zealots. Unfortunately, the scientific literature also simplifies radicalization and terrorism in a similar fashion; the field is divided between person and situation explanations of terrorism and radicalization. However, to understand terrorism and radicalization adequately the dichotomy of person-situation needs to be readdressed. This dissertation begins to explore the premises that the potential for participating in asymmetrical collective violence must be understood as interplay between intra-individual, social psychological and external/societal factors. Broadly speaking, this dissertation aims to answer the following question: What are the social and psychological factors and processes that contribute to the motivations behind the radicalization of first, second and third generation of Muslim Europeans? This dissertation first addresses the dichotomy of person and situation and proposes an integrated model of terrorism and radicalization. Second, integrating perspectives from various line of research I demonstrate how factors from the different domains of research relate, and more importantly, complement each other in shaping circumstances, which will make radicalization more or less likely to occur. Finally, I explore the influence of person factors such as personality traits. While previous research on extremism and violent has overlooked the potential role of non-pathological personality differences, it is proposed here that non-pathological personality characteristics would predict both violent and non-violent behavioral intentions and actual behavior among Muslims in defense of their group. Therefore, this work aims to extend knowledge on terrorism beyond existing literature, which tends to focus exclusively on either situational factors or psychopathology.

Keywords: Homegrown Terrorism and Radicalization, Social Psychology, Personality, Person-Situation Dichotomy, Individual differences

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To Clas

Chapter 1: Introduction

Terrorism

Brief background and aims

On the evening of November 13th of 2015 three suicide bombers detonated their explosives near The Stade de France in, Saint-Denis in the suburb of Paris. These attacks were coordinated with mass shootings at cafés, restaurants and a music venue in central Paris by the suicide bombers' accomplices. During these carefully planned and coordinated attacks, the perpetrators managed to kill 130 people and injured over 300. Seven of the perpetrators were also killed during the standoff between the French police and the perpetrators. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) later claimed responsibility for the attacks as retribution for the French airstrikes on ISIS targets in Syria and Iraq, and gradually, it became clear that the perpetrators were European nationals with Muslim backgrounds.

The Paris attacks of November 13th are but one example of terrorist attacks committed by European Muslims with migrant backgrounds against their home societies and fellow citizens in the recent years. To mention a few, since the 9/11 Al-Qaeda attacks the West has witnessed the 2004 Madrid and 2005 London bombings, the 2014 shootings at the Jewish Museum in Brussels, the 2015 attacks on the Charlie Hebdo magazine and on a Jewish supermarket in Paris, on the Jewish synagogue and on a discussion event of free speech and satirical cartoons in Copenhagen, on a right-wing cartoon competition in Texas, an attempted attack on a Paris-bound passenger train and recently the killings in San Bernardino, California. In the aftermath of these attacks many wanted to know what mechanisms drove the perpetrators to engage in killing of innocent people.

Thus, the pressing question is: what are the causes and mechanisms behind the motivation of some first, second and third generation of Muslim Europeans with migrant backgrounds to commit act of asymmetrical political violence against their home societies? The starting point of this dissertation is that a prevention, or at least reduction of such acts, requires a better understanding of what drives them in the first place. Hence,

the overall aim of the current dissertation is to explore the social psychological factors behind the motivation of some Muslim Europeans with migrant background to support and commit terrorism against Europe.

The simplicity of the above question can be deceiving, and few scholars, security experts and policy makers seem to know the answer. However, the answer to above question is urgent, as with emergence of ISIS the threat of terrorism to Europe seems to have increased in recent years. Five of the 2015 terrorist attacks coincide with the rise of ISIS. Therefore, knowledge of what drives some to commit terrorism is crucial in light of recent threats to Europe, and in light of at times harsh public debate about Muslim Europeans of migrant and refugee backgrounds that may potentially contribute to recruiting participants for terrorism against the West. Thus, the radicalization of Muslim minorities can potentially lead to polarization and vicious circle of outgroup hostility and negativity between Muslim and non-Muslim Europeans.

The existing answers to the above question are plentiful, but a problem with many of them is that they are not based on any empirical evidence, but rather armchair argumentation. In fact, a review conducted by Lum and colleagues revealed that 96% of articles on terrorism from peer-reviewed sources were thought pieces, and only 3% included empirical analysis (Lum, Kennedy, & Sherley, 2008, see also Ranstorp, 2006 & 2009; Sageman, 2014; Silke, 2004). Furthermore, in a number of cases there is also evidence available that seems to directly contradict the proposed explanations.

One conventional answer to why people do these kinds of deeds is that the perpetrators have fallen prey to fundamentalist religious ideas and doctrines (e.g., Ginges, Hansen, & Norenzayan, 2009; see also Harris, 2004; Dawkins, 2007). But evidence indicates that those who get drawn to radicalism are “far from being religious zealots, a large number of those involved in terrorism do not practice their faith regularly” (Travis, 2008). For example, only 21% of Lebanese suicide bombers had a strong adherence to Islamist religious beliefs while the majority had strong communist and socialist ideological orientation (Pape, 2005). Further, Pape & Feldman (2010) examined more than 2200 cases of suicide attacks worldwide since 1980 and their research revealed that half of the attackers were secular. Hence, religion and religious fundamentalism do not seem to be the principal cause of terrorism.

So another suggestion has been that if it is not religious fundamentalism per se then they must be bad, evil or suffer from mental illness (Laqueur, 2003; Lankford, 2014). However, the prevalence of mental illness and psychopathology is no more common among radicalized individuals than the general population (Travis, 2008; Bhui, Warfa & Jones, 2014). A third common assumption is that they are disadvantaged, poor and poorly integrated into Western societies (e.g., Kahn & Weiner, 2002). Nevertheless, evidence shows no link between poverty and terrorism (see, Piazza, 2006). On the contrary evidence from several studies illustrate that individuals who commit act of terrorism tend to be at least as educated or more advantaged compared to the general population they belong to (Krueger & Maleckova, 2003; Sageman, 2004). In fact, individuals in full time education rather than employment and high earners are more likely to support and sympathize with violent protest and act of terrorism (Bhui, Warfa & Jones, 2014).

Against this background it would seem that the research community knows less about Islam-related terrorism than we would like to admit. The aim of this dissertation is to fill some of the holes in our psychological understanding of this phenomenon. This dissertation begins to explore the idea that the potential for participating in extremist behavior must be understood as interplay between intra-individual, external and societal factors. My goal is to explore 1) when and why some Muslim Europeans with migrant backgrounds may be drawn to extremist behavior 2) and how individual psychological characteristics, external and relational structures relate to each other in explaining extremist behavior.

Before, embarking on this journey it is important to note that in this dissertation I do not claim that terrorism is something endemic to Muslims (or any other particular group for that matter). This dissertation is neither an attempt to isolate Islam related violence from other forms of violence. In fact, Islamist terrorism shares many features and commonalities with other non-Islamist terrorist organizations and groups as it is outlined below. The aim is to understand the roots of group-based violence, and I use Islamist violence as an example of this. The case of Islamist violence is also informative because of the status, power, and demographic dynamics surrounding Muslims living in the Western world.

Further, as illustrated in study III outgroup hostility and the endorsement of radical attitudes and intentions can be explained by same social-psychological factor among both Muslims and non-Muslim Europeans. For example, the motivation behind Anders Breivik's massacre is not so different from Mohammed Merah's who murdered four men and three children in Toulouse, France in 2012. Threat perception to cherished values was central in both cases. A recent study in France showed that the pervasive Islamophobia was the result of Muslims being perceived as threatening, based in large part on cultural differences between the native French and the Muslim population of the country (Adida, Laitin & Valfort, 2016). Therefore, we cannot exclude the possibility that certain social or political factors can set the scene for the radicalization of certain individuals. For example, Western foreign policy is often mentioned as a cause of terrorism among the Muslim population. The former head of MI5, Baroness Manningham-Buller attributes the UK's participation in the 2001 military invasion of Afghanistan and the 2003 invasion of Iraq to increased terrorist threat to the UK. Further, she claims that the UK's involvement in these wars has radicalized a whole generation of European Muslim youth (NEWS, BBC, 2010). Thus, person, group-based, social and political grievances together may lead to endorsement of terrorism (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008). Therefore, personal, local and global grievances are important in understanding terrorism and various forms of terrorist actions should be seen as an individual process that occurs within particular social and political context rather than attributing terrorism to be something inherently "Islamic".

Terrorism, Radicalization and Extremism

Definitions

Terrorism conducted by Western born individuals with Muslim background is perceived to pose a significant threat to Western societies. Nevertheless, an objective and universally accepted definition of terrorism does not exist (Silke, 2004). In fact, in 1988 Schmid and Jongman enumerated as many as 109 different definitions of terrorism. This is clearly reflected in the way different agencies and departments within the same governmental apparatus use different definition of terrorism. For example, the Department of State¹, the US Department of Defense² and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)³ have differing definition of the concept, which emphasize various defining properties. The proposed definitions vary in their emphasis on properties such as the characteristics of intended victims, the characteristics of the terrorists, the motivation, the form and intensity of the violence, the legal issues, and the aims and effects of the terrorist acts (della Porta, 2013). For example, the United States Department of State defines terrorism as “premeditated politically motivated violence perpetrated in a clandestine manner against noncombatants”. Noncombatants, in this sense, understood as civilians and noncombatant military personnel, as oppose to combatants. Thus, this definition does not include terrorism against military unites and combatant military personnel. However, many Islamist terror organizations do not differentiate between civilians and military combatant and noncombatant personnel. For example, Bin Laden declared in a fatwa that “The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies, civilians and military, is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it

¹ The Department of State uses the definition of terrorism defined by Title 22 of the U.S. Code as: “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience”

² The US Department of Defense defines terrorism as the unlawful -- or threatened use of --force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives.

³ The US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines terrorism as the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a Government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

is possible to do it in” (PBS Newshours, 1998; see also Tausch et al., 2011). Thus, based on this Bin Laden claims that civilian and military targets should not be differentiated.

One of the fundamental challenges in defining terrorism is the lack of specifying what we really refer to when we use the term terrorism (Taylor, 2010). As Taylor puts it “Are we concerned with violence (including murder), aggressive behaviors, or challenging behavior that gains meaning from some political context? Are we to understand terrorism from an individual perspective, a social perspective, state perspective, or a global perspective? Are we concerned with the potential to commit violence (as in the contemporary emphasis on radicalization processes) or is terrorism something very focused; related to the expression of actual, rather than potential, violence?” (Taylor, 2010, p.122). The term terrorism seems to oversimplify various forms of violence, actors, warfare and motives and lump them together as a single unit creating a difficult challenge for an adequate scientific inquiry of the phenomenon.

Further, to make matters worse, the diversity of the terrorist groups and their activities make it even more difficult to distinguish terrorism from political violence, national liberation, revolutionary, conventional and guerrilla warfare (Stevens, 2005). These concepts are often used interchangeably or lumped together under same category (Monahan, 2012). Nonetheless, fundamental differences exist between these various categories and terrorism. For example, Guerrilla warfare is often organized in a large group, including a large number of individuals who identify themselves as soldiers belonging to a form of military unit, which often seize and hold territory (Crenshaw, 1997; Laqueur, 1999). Terrorists, in contrast, do not attempt to hold or seize territories (ISIS aside)⁴ and they operate in small cells or as lone wolf outside any chain of command. Further, the question is who defines a particular behavior as act of terrorism. For instance, the perpetrators themselves may not perceive act of national liberation against an occupying power as terrorism.

Moreover, no agreement has been reached concerning who can be identified as a terrorist. The concept becomes more contested when it is defined in a manner that complies with the interests of specific agencies involved. For example many government

⁴ Some claim that ISIS is not a terrorist group. To what extent ISIS can be described as a terrorist group or not see, e.g., Cronin (2015).

agencies do not include state-based and state-sponsored violence as act of terrorism. The definition endorsed by the United States Department of State excludes state-based and state-sponsored terrorism (Crenshaw,1997; Hoffman,1998). Crimes committed by authoritarian regimes against their citizens according to the United States Department of State could not be described as act of terrorism. Therefore, a unifying definition of terrorism has been a contested source of disagreement and debate not only among scholars, but also security experts and policy makers (Schmid, 1993). As such Richard Baxter (1974) expressed concerns about the usefulness of the terrorism concept altogether - “We have cause to regret that a legal concept of "terrorism" was ever inflicted upon us. The term is imprecise; it is ambiguous; and above all, it serves no operative legal purpose” (Baxter, 1974, p. 380). della Porta (2013) agreed, stating that terrorism is a much-contested term and proposes, “[...] it too plagued by conceptual stretching to be kept as a social science concept” (della Porta, 2013, p. 7).

In sum, it is clear that a comprehensive and universally accepted definition of terrorism does not exist yet. Policy makers, and scholars disagree about what constitutes terrorism. However, many (e.g.,AIVD, 2006; Borum, 2004; Hoffman, 1998; Pet, 2006; Stern & Berger, 2015) agree that the core elements in terrorism *involve a deliberate act of force, violence or threat of violence against civilians or noncombatants with intent to create fear in the pursuit of political change and to achieve political goals*. Further, act of terrorism is meant to have psychological effects not only on the intended victims but a particular audience at large. Hence, in this dissertation terrorism is perceived as a weapon of weak against the strong used to create far-reaching psychological effects and to create fear beyond the intended victims (e.g., civilians and combatant and noncombatant military personnel) with deliberate aim to achieve certain political and societal changes.

Radicalization and extremism

To narrow the focus of this dissertation it is important to distinguish between *terrorism* and *radicalization*. Terrorism is a phenomenon, a set of observable behaviors, but radicalization is a *process*, a psychological transformation that the person goes through (e.g., Taylor & Horgan, 2006; McCauley & Moskalenko; 2008). The term radicalization received much attention following September 11th terrorist attacks. Still,

just like the terrorism term, many scholars and agencies have added their own nuances to the concept. Nonetheless, Kühle & Lindekilde (2010) found that one of the core defining property of radicalization is a gradual process that follows a linear process. This definition is in line with so called radicalization theories or path models/pathways (see e.g., Borum, 2003; Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman, 2009; Moghaddam, 2005; Wiktrawicz, 2005; for more comprehensive and sophisticated process models of terrorism see McCauley & Moskalenko; 2008; Taylor & Horgan, 2006).

Theories and path models of radicalization try to identify the alleged steps, or phases of “violent” radicalization by retroactively tracing the alleged phases, which led to a terrorist act (e.g., Klausen, Campion, Needle, Nguyen & Liberti, 2015). These theories and models have been helpful to guide the thinking about radicalization, but they also suffer from a selection bias that they focus only on “violent” cases of radicalization (For methodological discussion see, King, Keohane & Verba, 1994). Focusing solely on violent cases of radicalization implies that the path to radicalization always leads to violent outcomes, and this leaves no room for alternative outcomes (For a comprehensive critique of phase models see Veldhuis & Staun, 2009). Some people may radicalize in a non-violent way or withdraw from radicalization all together. Thus, in current dissertation radicalization can be seen as a psychological transformation where an individual increasingly adopts an extremist belief system, regardless if it ultimately results in actual violence or not. Radicalization as such does not necessarily have to result in terrorism. The perspective I take here is rather that when people endorse a certain belief system, with goals for what society should look like, the ways to realize those beliefs can fork into different paths that involve violence or not. Analogously, a socialist belief system is often described as branching into a social democratic direction (when violence is not endorsed) or communism (when violence is seen as justified).

Islamism can be defined as a political and religious belief system that aims to establish a caliphate and conquer the world. It strives to implement a holistic interpretation of Islam in accordance with religious doctrine and Sharia law with or without use of violence to achieve its objectives. Islamism, as such, does not necessarily have to include a violent dimension (Mozaffari, 2007).

In this dissertation I also distinguish between (a) “virtual radicalization”, a process by which people may express support and willingness to commit terrorism or encourage others to do so (attitudinal transformation and growing behavioral intentions to commit terrorism, AIDA, 2004) and (b) actual violent radicalization, a process by which people de facto commit violence against fellow individuals (PET, 2009). Since the outburst of violent radicalization is rare In this dissertation I will mainly deal with radicalization in the first sense – that is support for terrorism and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism. I focus on virtual radicalization because support for terrorism and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism are more accessible to scientific inquiry than the actual act of terrorism (due to practical and ethical reasons).

Finally, it is worth noting most of the literature on Islamic terrorism has focused on attitudinal outcomes (e.g., Ansari, 2013; Cherney & Povey, 2013; Cinnirella et al., 2013; Fair & Shepherd, 2006; Levin, Henry, Pratto, & Sidanius, 2003; Tausch, et al., 2011; Yougov, 2005). In contrast, this dissertation moves beyond the issue of attitudes towards terrorism and focuses on those predicting violent as well as non-violent behavioral intentions to defend and support Muslims and/or Islam. This is an important move forward because behavioral intentions are often better predictors of actual behavior than are attitudes (e.g., De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999; Klandermans et al., 2002; see also Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Thus, I empirically distinguish between violent and non-violent outcomes, and include behavioral intentions for both. It is possible that some antecedents are common to both types of intentions, whereas other antecedents are unique to one or the other. Indeed, some scholars have suggested that “many of the claims regularly deployed to explain terrorism apply to far wider, non-violent populations” (Bartlett & Miller, 2012, p. 16). Therefore, by focusing on both violent and non-violent behavioral intentions, this dissertation seek to establish the crucial factors that lead some to endorse violent and others to endorse non-violent means of improving the conditions of their group.

To define violent as well as non-violent radicalization I follow the definition developed by the Dutch intelligence services (AIVD, 2004), describing it as “the (active) pursuit of and/or support to far-reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to (the continued existence of) the democratic legal order (aim), which may

involve the use of undemocratic methods (means) that may harm the functioning of the democratic legal order (effect). [...] a person's (growing) willingness to pursue and/or support such changes himself (in an undemocratic way or otherwise), or his encouraging others to do so" (AIVD, 2004, pp. 13-14). I am using this definition to encompass both violent and non-violent radicalizations, which cover both actual behavior, attitudinal transformation, but also willingness to encourage others to pursue far-reaching changes in society (paper V).

A related concept to radicalization is the word extremism. In fact, the word extremism or extremist violence often appears in the literature of terrorism and radicalization, but it is rarely defined (e.g., Silber & Bhatt 2007). In this dissertation I follow Mandel's definition of extremism as a political term, which encompasses actual or attitudinal properties such as behavior, belief system, ideas, intentions, attitudes and values that are not in accordance with norms of the society and fall far outside of what society considers normal. Extremist behavior, ideas, intentions and attitudes can be expressed in various ways and may - or may not lead to use of violence to achieve certain political goals (Kühle & Lindekilde, 2010). Further, to provide a clear definition of violent radicalization in particular I follow the Danish intelligence services' (PET) definition, according to which violent radicalisation is described as "a process, by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of undemocratic or violent means, including terrorism, in an attempt to reach a specific political/ideological objective" (PET, 2009, p. 1).

Islamist "Homegrown" Radicalization

The perception in the West has always been that threat of Islamist terrorism and radicalization came from outside the Western world. The common belief was that the threat of terrorism came from Jihadists abroad - individuals with close ties to networks such as Al Qaeda and transnational extremist networks, primarily originating from North Africa and the Middle East (Precht, 2007). Concepts such as domestic, self-radicalized, and self-trained entered recently into the academic terminology and mainstream public debate. It was first with the London bombings of 2005 and then with the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh in 2004 (but see Roy, 2004) that a new concept was

introduced into scientific circles and public debate: namely “homegrown” radicalization (Precht, 2007; Crone & Harrow, 2011). Scholars, policy makers and public alike quickly adopted the term “homegrown”. But what does it mean to be homegrown and who can be called homegrown? In the following section I will discuss the definitional ambiguities related to the concept of homegrown.

The Concept of Homegrown and Definitional Issues

While few radical groups can fulfill all suggested criteria associated with homegrown, several key overlapping themes emerge when researchers and policy-makers define the term (e.g., Kirby, 2007; Kohlmann, 2008; Krueger, 2008; Precht, 2007; Silber and Bhatt 2007; Vidino, 2007). Two distinct features lie at the core of the term: a) the quintessential idea that homegrown groups are composed of individuals born and raised in the West: b) and evolved independently with marginal ties to other radical groups. Nevertheless scholars differ in what they mean by the West or Western countries. For example, Precht (2007) suggests that, a “distinctive factor of homegrown terrorism is that it is carried out by persons who have had their formative phase of upbringing and cultural influence in the Western world” (Precht, 2007, p. 15). As Crone & Harrow (2011) note, Nesser (2008) proposes a more strict definition, which only includes individuals who are born and raised in Europe. Nesser’s definition excludes individuals who are born outside and who have had their formative phase of upbringing and cultural influence outside the Western world. However, a review of homegrown terrorism in the West demonstrated that only a minority of those involved in terrorist plots was born *and* raised in the West (Crone & Harrow, 2011). In reality radical networks and autonomous individuals involved in radical activities show a great deal of diversity in terms of their birthplaces and upbringings. For example in the Glasvej case in Denmark, one of the alleged radicals was a Danish citizen - because he was born in Denmark. He was, however, raised in Pakistan. He moved to Denmark when he was 18 years old. According to the above criteria, he would not be considered as a homegrown radical.

Further, the aforementioned criteria are intertwined with the second core feature of homegrown radicalization - the autonomy of radical groups. That is, in order to be considered a homegrown radical, one should be self-recruited and self-radicalized

without having any specific identifiable ties to transnational terrorist groups. Some argue that the new wave of jihadis that emerged in the aftermath of 9/11 is self-starters who have little or no affiliation with other radical networks (Kirby, 2007; Andersen, 2009; Vidino, 2009b). Nevertheless, in many cases of Islam-related terrorism, the alleged radicals seemed to have had some form of contact with international groups, have traveled abroad or attended training camps (Precht, 2007; Crone & Harrow, 2011). Several cases of radical activities in the West, which originally were perceived to have had been carried out by autonomous individuals with no discernable links to external radical organizations were later shown to be linked to foreign radical groups outside Europe. For example, the Hofstad⁵ group was originally seen as a self-recruited and autonomous network of individuals who operated without any direct foreign (non-Western) international support. However, later it emerged that the group had links to militants in Europe and North Africa, and three members of the network had attended training camps in Pakistan (Nesser, 2005). Hence, the increasing amount of evidence illustrates that many individuals who were initially believed to be autonomous homegrown radicals in fact had ties with Islamist militants abroad. In sum, the idea that homegrown radicals in Europe operate independently without any discernable ties to external terror networks is questionable, as the mounting evidence seems to predict the opposite. As Kohlman (2008) puts it, “While these young men (and, increasingly, women) may have no formal contact with any terrorist organization, they can become virtual partners of al Qaeda by carefully studying its online knowledge base and executing terrorist attacks against its enemies [...] contemporary homegrown terrorist networks do not emerge merely as the result of coincidence or happenstance but, rather, with the active support and endorsement of particular high-ranking al Qaeda spokesmen and military commanders” (p. 98). The mere reliance of homegrown networks on al Qaeda’s narrative, and al Qaeda jihad-related guidelines should be seen as an extensive connectedness to external radical networks outside the Western world.

A third core criterion of homegrown proposes that in order to be considered a homegrown one should be radicalized within the Western countries (Krueger 2008;

⁵Al Qaeda inspired militant Islamist group in the Netherlands composed of Dutch-born, mainly second-generation Muslim immigrants of North African origin (Nesser, 2005).

Vidino, 2009a) and the terrorist plot has to be conceived in the target country and has to be planned by the residents of that particular country (Krueger, 2008). Therefore, the first attack on the World Trade Center (1993) is considered homegrown as it involved a substantial number of U.S residents⁶. In contrast, the second attack (2001), which was planned abroad, is not considered homegrown (Krueger, 2008, pp. 2-3). Here, the focus is not on the place of birth and upbringing, but rather where the process of radicalization has taken place. It is the geographical component that determines who is a homegrown radical.

At the other end of the continuum we have those who emphasize to a lesser extent that radicalization should emanate from within the Western countries (Bjelopera, 2011; Pregulman & Burke, 2012). According to Bjelopera (2011), the term ‘homegrown’ refers to those activities, which are committed “within the United States or abroad by American citizens, legal permanent residents, or visitors radicalized largely within the United States” (Bjelopera, 2011, p. 6). This suggests a looser definition of homegrown, which can be applied to many types of radical groups and radical individuals with a variety of characteristics and backgrounds. According to this definition, both David Headly and Colleen LaRose would be perceived as homegrown despite the fact that their activities were mainly conducted outside the U.S. For example, Colleen LaRose, soon after her conversion, established contact with an extremist group and joined a plot to kill Lars Vilks, a Swedish cartoonist who was perceived by some radical Muslims to have insulted the prophet Muhammad (Johnson, 2010). Nevertheless, the definition stands in sharp contrast with the idea - suggested by some - that in order to be considered a homegrown radical, the attacks must have been planned and carried out in the host societies – that is, the threat should come from within the borders of the Western countries (Vidino, 2009b & 2007). This implies that the choice of target must be domestic, such as the assassination of filmmaker Theo von Gogh and the London bombings of 2005. This also implies that the choice of targets should be motivated by domestic grievances as opposed to 1980s jihadists who were mainly motivated by the grievances originating from their country of origin (Roy, 2004). According to this criterion, Colleen LaRose and David

⁶ However, several of the perpetrators of 1993 World Trade Center bombings were not American citizens, legal permanent residents or visitors. For example, Ramzi Yousef was born in Kuwait to Pakistani family of laborers, who entered U.S. illegally in 1992.

Headly would not be considered homegrown.

The current review of the literature concerning the term homegrown shows that researchers and policy-makers tend to rely on different denominators in defining the concept homegrown (Andersen, 2009; Bjelopera, 2011; Kirby, 2007; Kohlman, 2008; Mullins, 2011; Nesser, 2008; Precht 2007; Pregulman & Burke , 2012 Vidino, 2009a, 2009b). The assumption that a homegrown radical must have been born or brought up, self-generated and radicalized in the Western world, in fact, has frequently proved to be inadequate. Various plots have shown that people have different degrees of belonging to the West and different degrees of autonomy in regard to militant networks outside the Western world.

Further, the term homegrown bears a Western-centric connotation with it. Homegrown in this sense implies the West and excludes the idea that a Palestinian “lone-wolf” extremist, who self-radicalized through internet reading about Jihad, while having no ties to extremist groups, could be considered a homegrown terrorist. According to Merriam Webster dictionary homegrown means, “grown or produced at home or in a particular local area”. According to this a self-radicalized Palestinian “lone-wolf” extremist with or no ties to extremist groups can be defined as homegrown.

In sum, the core features of homegrown are contradictory, misleading and lack clarity and structure in the connotations of the concept. The various defining properties seem to be inadequate to capturing the variety of backgrounds and belongingness many radicalized individuals have exhibited. There is a need to broaden the definition – a definition that takes the diversity of radical groups into consideration as the jihadist networks in the West have proved to be extremely diverse (Crone & Harrow, 2011).

By now it should be evident that there are some ironic and contradictory features of the existing definitions. Nevertheless, I will adopt the term homegrown in the lack of a better term. Since this dissertation is a psychological one I define homegrown in a broader sense and irrespective of any demographic component. This is because the Muslim population in Europe is not a homogenous entity. Muslims come from variety of ethnic, religious, educational and societal backgrounds. Further, in general Muslims are divided between those who are born and raised in Europe (native-born) and those who have immigrated to Europe later in their life (foreign-born) and I propose that this

distinction is important. For example, the degree to which perceived relative deprivation predict anti-western violence should differ between native and foreign-born Muslims. Based on self-categorization principles (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987) native-born Muslims would feel more deprived since they may see themselves as Europeans and part of Europe, while nonetheless having experiences of exclusion and group-based inequality and this may have implication for attitudes toward violence against the West (paper IV). Therefore, this dissertation adopts a definition of homegrown relying on a psychological definition, which emphasizes the sense of belongingness irrespective of country of birth, upbringing, citizenship or any discernable ties to extremist groups. My definition necessitates a sense of belonging to the host country. That is, in order to be perceived homegrown one needs to have ties to the host country. Further, homegrown will include persons involved in radical activities within the Western boundaries. They may have ties to transnational militant groups and they may have been in infamous terrorist camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan, but the core idea is that they have been radicalized in the West prior to their journey to terrorist camps and conflict zones such as Syria and Iraq. As Roy puts it, although the London bombers had been to Pakistan and trained in training camps, they were radicalized prior to their departure. This indicates that their conduct was already part of their indoctrination. Their mind was made up within the Western country (Roy, 2008 & 2010).

The History of Homegrown Terrorism

The 2004 bombings of Madrid and the 2005 London bombings appeared to differ from previous Islamist related terrorism in Western world. Individuals born and raised in the West staged these attacks, and they appeared to be inspired by al-Qaeda's global Jihad ideology, rather than transnational extremist networks. Yet despite the seeming new pattern of these attacks the phenomenon of domestic homegrown radicalization is not unknown to the Western world. Anarchist groups of the late 19th and early 20th century that carried a number of political assassinations and other less discriminate attacks mainly orchestrated in Europe can be described as domestic homegrown radicals. These groups were responsible for the murder of many state leaders, including the assassinations of French president, Sadi Carnot in 1894, the US president William Mckinley in 1901, the

prime minister of Spain, Antonio Cánovas in 1897, the Empress Elizabeth of Austria in 1898 and King Humbert of Italy in 1900 (Marone, 2015). While politically different from Islamists of today, their anger, discontent, alienation and their tactics to achieve their goals bore resemblance to Islamist groups of today.

However more recent and Islam inspired homegrown networks have long existed in the United States. Incidents of homegrown Islamist radicalization have been recorded in the U.S. since late '70s (Vidino, 2009a). Like the United States, Europe also has a relatively recent history of homegrown terrorist activities dating back to the 60s and 70s. These earlier terrorist attacks bore similar trademarks to today's homegrown Islamist radical activities, but they were orchestrated by secular left-wing nationalist and separatist groups. Several left-wing nationalist and separatist groups managed to carry a series of lethal attacks in Europe mainly for secular ideological reasons. The most prominent left-wing groups within Europe included, the West German Red Army Faction (RAF), the Italian Red Brigades, the French Action Directe (AD), the Basque Separatist Group (ETA) in Spain, the Belgian Communist Combatant Cells (CCC) and the Irish Republican Army (IRA). However, the homegrown radicals of today – sometimes also called new terrorism or religious terrorism- differ significantly from the left-wing groups of the '60s, '70s and 80's in terms of motives, organization, convictions, goals and methods (see della Porta, 1995; Hoffman, 1998; Laqueur, 1999).

Ideologically, many left-wing terrorists, emphasized idealism and they were heavily influenced by revolutionary political ideology such as Marxism or Communism. They were also anti-imperialistic. The ruling government was, in general, perceived as authoritarian, repressive and corrupt. Therefore, their main goal was to destabilize society and overthrow the regime in power in order to achieve a classless society (Precht, 2007). The path to realize their motives and ideologies was through aggression, force and undemocratic means (della Porta, 1995). Whereas the left-wing groups of the '60s, '70s and 80's were ideologically motivated and sought short-term and immediate political influence, the homegrown radicals of today are motivated by religious beliefs and imperatives which seek to achieve large-scale and long-lasting social changes. Religious terrorism mainly reflects a shift from secular political ideology to religious ideology, where it is motivated by religious zealotry (Crenshaw, 1997).

Despite the differences several parallels exist between the ultra-left and the contemporary Islamist radical groups. While left extremists were fighting for a communist revolution, religious extremists of today fight the holy war to establish a worldwide caliphate. They appear to be motivated by al Qaeda's narrative - that is, a global, indistinct suffering of ummah (Roy, 2008 & 2010), which can be paralleled with left-wing extremists' struggle to create an equal society based on Marxist ideology. For example, a deep-seated aversion towards US imperialism and symbolism of globalization can be identified as a common denominator for both groups (Roy, 2008). Further, by looking at the core feature of Islamist rhetoric we discover the same disparagement and critique of the existing social order, Western dominance and materialism that once was one of the driving forces behind ultra-left groups of the '60s, '70s and 80's (Hemmingsen, 2006, Hemmingsen in Aagaard, 2009). For example, an analysis of all documented suicide attacks between 1980 and 2003 showed that Islamist terrorist attacks were primarily set in motion as a consequence of foreign occupation, domination, and frustrated aspirations for autonomy (Pape, 2005). Indeed, Sidanius, Henry, Pratto, & Levin, 2004 found that Lebanese Muslim students largely attributed the cause of the 9/11 attacks to American and Israeli oppression. Moreover, attributing the cause of the attacks to anti-dominance motives was highly linked with strong support for the violent actions. Henry, Sidanius, Levin, and Pratto (2005) observed that Arabs in Lebanon who endorsed anti-Western aggression were driven by a motivation to equalize perceived realistic power differences between the subordinate (Arab) and dominant (Western) groups.

Although the so-called new terrorism can be characterized as religious terrorism, a closer look at Islamist radicals reveals that they are not in possession of ideological manifestos, Islamist literature or intellectual ideological books, but in possession of videos of combat and handbooks to make a bomb (Roy, 2008; Hemmingsen, 2006). As della Porta notes "even though the language of these groups [suicide bombers] might be archaic, their rationale tends to be secular (della Porta, 2013, p. 4).

Further, homegrown radicals of today are not characterized by a clear chain of command and structure with a clearly defined set of economic, social, and political objectives. In contrast to ultra left activists of the '60s and '70s Islamist homegrown radicals of today appear to be decentralized, loosely organized and operate outside any

structure or chain of command with the exception of ISIS. They tend to operate in small groups and in many cases without any help from the militant groups, which have inspired them. “They usually remain aloof from communal group” (Roy, 2008, p. 17; Roy, 2007). A number of recent terrorist plots in the West have been mainly self-radicalized and carried out by so-called lone wolves. There are many examples thereof, such as the terrorist attack in Toulouse, France by Mohmamed Merah who killed four men and three children; the case of Faisal Shahzad in May 2010 who tried to blow up a car bomb in Times Square in New York and Major Nidal Malik Hasan, who shot and killed 13 and injured 32 at the military base Fort Hood in Texas in November 2009.

In sum, the so called new terrorism and left-wing extremism differ in many aspects, but perhaps the most important difference is that while political extremism may rely on a global proletariat (similar to the Jihadist interpretation of ummah) the quests have always been carried out within a state (except for the West German Red Army Faction that later became an international organization). This is simply not true for Islamist terrorism. Islamist extremists operate as members of social groups belonging to a broad community that cuts across national borders, and their quest is not within a state, but globally. Many recent terrorist attacks by radicalized Muslim Europeans share two main themes. First, the motivation to commit an act of terrorism did not seem to be anchored in direct, personally experienced adversity, but is rather explained by intense anger and outrage at Western countries’ foreign policy towards other Muslims. Second, the terrorists did not act as individuals, but rather as members of a social group belonging to a broad community that cuts across national borders. Thus, Western foreign policy and military interventions in Islamic countries are seen as general injustices against Muslims globally (see paper IV).

Proposed explanations of radicalization

Identifying and understanding the main explanations of Islamist radicalization is an important question that has occupied the attentions of academics and the public alike. Indeed, interest in this question intensified after the September 11th, 2001. Scholars have proposed a variety of factors that can facilitate the emergence of radicalization. In this dissertation I will discuss these factors as clustered into three broad research traditions. The first research tradition focuses mainly on external factors such as economic, political, cultural and religious issues, also called the root cause factors. The second line of research was developed around collective action and mainly draws upon social psychological models and theories. The third line of research focuses on intra-individual causes of radicalization.

Each line of research focuses on different causal factors that can make a person receptive to engage in extremism. However, none of the factors have been adequate in themselves to explain the process of radicalization. It is important to note that radicalization is a multidimensional phenomenon and its causes can vary individually across different context (for overviews, see Bjørge, 2005; Borum, 2004; Nesser, 2004; Silber & Bhatt, 2007; Taylor & Horgan, 2006; Victoroff, 2005). Therefore, a more comprehensive model of radicalization is needed that integrates the different line of research – a model that provides a framework for how different factors at different level of analysis may all shape conditions that push some individuals to radicalize. Below I will describe each line of research briefly and propose an integrated model of radicalization as a framework with which the different factors of radicalisation from various line of research can be analysed. The aim is to identify how factors from the different domains relate, and more importantly, complement each other in shaping circumstances, which will make radicalization more or less likely to occur.

The Root Cause Model

The first line of research focuses on external factors as the main causes of extremism and terrorism. In this case, researchers have suggested that the cause of extremism can be traced back to specific material conditions (Khosrokhavar, 2009; Kruglanski & Fishman, 2006). The root cause model assumes that asymmetrical

mobilization is a response to an objective state of disadvantage. The two main academic fields that mainly focus on objective factors as root cause of violence are sociology and social and political science. A review of the literature dealing with the topic of terrorism and extremism within this line of research showed that the themes often cited as causal factors of radicalization and terrorism could broadly be categorized between social, cultural, and political and economic factors. However, it is important to note that some overlaps exist and some factors can tap onto more than one category.

Political and economic factors include Western foreign policy (e.g., Pape, 2005 & 2006) political instability (Piazza, 2008; Kurrild-Klitgaard, Justensen & Klemmensen, 2006) oppressive governments (Li, 2005) and poor political and socioeconomic opportunities (Mullins, 2007; Gurr, 1971; Kahn & Weiner, 2002). Cultural factors include religion and religiosity (Gartenstein-Ross & Gorssman, 2009; Hassan, 2001) religious fundamentalism (Ginges, Hansen, & Norenzayan, 2009; Harris, 2004; Dawkins, 2007) civilizational and cultural related incompatibilities and clashes as it is expressed in Orientalist notion and “clash of civilization thesis” (Huntington, 1996; Lewis, 1990) and moral commitments and communal values (Ginges & Atran, 2009). The final category includes social factors such as search for social support (Sageman, 2004) sense of obligations and duty to one’s family, community, values and religion (Hafez, 2006) globalization and modernization (Roy, 2004) and various demographic factors (Li, 2005; Fair & Shepherd, 2006). A common feature of these factors is that they can be categorized as societal *preconditions* or *instigators*. Preconditions may create an environment rendering a person receptive to extremist ideology, but radicalization and terrorism cannot solely be explained by preconditions (Kruglanski & Fishman, 2006). For example, many people (e.g., Muslim Europeans with migrant backgrounds) experience injustice, alienation and discrimination on a daily basis; however, only a fraction of these people get involved in extremist behavior. For example, Krueger & Maleckova (2003) and Piazza (2006) found no evidence suggesting that poverty generates terrorism (see also, Atran, 2003). This is supported by available research among members of Militant groups in the Middle East and Palestinian suicide bombers showing that support for violent attacks does not decrease among those with higher living standards and higher educational attainment. Furthermore, Krueger and Maleckova, (2003) showed a positive

correlation between higher levels of educational attainment and better economic conditions and terrorism.

Although, objective conditions are certainly important as contributing factors in predicting radicalization and terrorism, nevertheless this line of inquiry has been criticized from a number of angles (McPhail, 1971; Gurney & Tierney, 1982; Finkel & Rule, 1975). The main point of criticism is that objective conditions' often have low predictive power regarding any type of collective action (e.g., Green, Glaser, & Rich, 1998). Social psychological research demonstrates that disadvantaged individuals often unconsciously internalize, justify and even defend the status quo (Jost, Banaji & Nosek, 2004; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Therefore, it is possible that they don't recognize and perceive the disadvantage they are exposed to, which may explain the poor predictive power of objective grievances on violent extremism. Further people endure high levels of discrimination before they embark on the path to collective action (Wright, Taylor, Moghaddam, 1990). The second point of criticism concerns the fact that subjective (psychological) feelings may not necessarily mirror objective conditions, suggesting a role for *perceived relative deprivation*. Nevertheless, this does not imply that preconditions such as perceived social injustice, or poverty are irrelevant to radicalization. Specifically, these factors may not be *sufficient* conditions for radicalization in themselves, but they may still serve as contributing factors under certain conditions (Kruglanski & Fishman, 2006).

The Social Psychological Model of Collective Action

Following the criticism of root cause models, research on causes of radicalization and terrorism has seemed to shift towards social psychological models of collective action. The different focus here is analogous to the classic distinction in psychology between *physical* and *psychological environments* (e.g., Lewin, 1936). Physical environment refers to external world outside the organism, and includes social variables, whereas psychological environment refers to subjective world, and includes person's psychological perception of the objective world (e.g., Ekehammar, 1974).

According to van Zomeren, Postmes & Spears (2008) the literature on collective action could be organized into three theoretical domains. Each theoretical domain focuses

on different subjective factors, as potential cause of collective action, which include perceived injustice, perceived efficacy and identity. The analyses by van Zomeran et al. (2008) suggests that social identity directly affects collective action, but that it is also indirectly related to this outcome through perceived injustice and efficacy. Both among high and low power groups ingroup identity would be a reliable predictor of collective action. Several theoretical models in social psychological research suggest that identification with highly-valued social groups is a key predictor of engagement in collective protest on behalf of those groups (e.g., Kawakami & Dion, 1995; Phalet, Baysu, & Verkuysten, 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Van Zomeran et al., 2008; Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, and Mielke, 1999; Simon & Sturmer, 2004). Nevertheless, only *some* identities carry the necessary ingredients for collective action (Sturmer & Simon, 2004), such as those involving identification with a social movement. For example, identifying with a gay movement was shown to be an important predictor of collective action rather than the mere identification with the wider social group (gay people) (Simon et al., 1998). As van Zomeran et al., (2008) also pointed out in their meta analysis “ultimately, it may not necessarily be social identity or identification per se that prepares people for collective action, but rather the content of social identity” (van Zomeran et al., 2008, p. 522).

Further, based on the literature linking relative deprivation to collective action van Zomeran et al., (2008) proposed that *group-based* injustice was more likely to be related to collective action rather than the feeling of *personal* deprivation (Smith & Ortiz, 2002). Furthermore, they emphasized the distinction between cognitive (e.g., awareness of injustice, Kawakami & Dion, 1993) and affective components of injustice (e.g., group-based emotion such as anger, resentment and contempt; van Zomeran, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004), and suggested that cognitive appraisals precede emotions where “group-based emotions such as anger form a conceptual bridge between group based appraisal and specific action tendencies” (van Zomeran et al., 2008 p. 506). Based on this reasoning they further proposed that the affective component of injustice was a better predictor of collective action than the cognitive component, because emotions are the intermediate variables that connect cognition with behavior. Furthermore, emotions transfer the effect of identification of the outcome variable. Nevertheless, this does not

render the effect of identification as irrelevant since identification according to van Zomeren et al., (2008) also has a direct effect on the outcome variable.

Most models of radicalization do not distinguish between affective and cognitive components of injustice, and they often neglect to include the affective component. In this dissertation we address this shortcomings and extend this work by focusing on both components of relative deprivation (paper IV).

The last pillar in the model is perceived group efficacy. In the formulation of their model of collective action, van, Zomeren, et al. (2008) highlighted the importance of perceived group efficacy in collective action. They operationalized perceived efficacy as a group-based belief that one's group can resolve group-based problems through unified effort. However, more recent research by Tausch et al., (2011) suggests that perceived group efficacy beliefs may be less important, or inversely related, to nonnormative (including violent) collective action tendencies.

Although, the social psychological model of collective action has received a lot of support (e.g., Phalet, Baysu, & Verkuyten, 2010; Ricolfi, 2005; Sageman, 2004; Stern, 2003; Tausch et al., 2011; Victoroff, Adelman & Matthews, 2012), it is not without its limitations. Similar to root cause model the social psychological models of collective action has been criticized for the lack of predictive power, which many have called the "specificity problem": That is why some, but not others, get involved in extremism (Horgan, 2005; Sageman, 2004; Taylor, 1998). However, it is important to note that the so-called "specificity problem" is not exclusive to social psychological models of collective action, but this is true for most any psychological model. From pragmatic point of view the best models of human behavior are simply the ones, which explain most variance in the dependent variable. As long as there is variance in the independent variable that is unrelated to the dependent variable one could make the argument that the particular model falls short of explaining why some people get involved in certain behavior while others may not. In this sense, it is fruitless to discard the root cause models or social psychological models of collective action because any model can suffer from "specificity problem". This also suggests that none of the lines of research into terrorism can take precedence over one other with reference to this problem. Instead, a more fruitful question is how to combine different causal variables at different level of

analysis to explain most variance in radicalization, terrorism or extremism. Therefore, it is important that the current models of collective action extend beyond the effects of social psychological variables and include individual level variables such as personality traits and external factors to bring us closer in explaining who is more or less likely to get pulled into extremism.

If social psychological models of collective action explain 20-30% of variance in extremism (e.g., Tausch et al., 2011), then stable individual difference measures could help to fill (some of) the gap. Yet social psychological models of collective action have so far neglected the role of stable individual psychological variables, which are not so malleable to sudden social changes. For example, certain social context may provide an opportunity for people to be violent such as membership in violent terrorist networks. Nevertheless, it is important to note that some people who join violent terrorist networks might be more violent in general than others (Buss & Perry, 1992). Therefore, the role of individual psychological processes may provide us with additional insight into why some individuals, but not others become involved in extremist violent.

Individual Psychological Variables

The third tradition of inquiry into extremism has emphasized individual level factors such as mindsets, cognitive dispositions or ideological belief systems as the psychological basis of extremism (Borum, 2014). Certain mindsets, cognitive disposition or ideological belief system are often adopted by people because they satisfy certain psychological needs and motives such as need for closure, order, structure and need for avoiding uncertainty and ambiguity. For example, some suggest that extremist ideology is often appealing to people with heightened need for cognitive closure (Kruglanski & Orehek, 2013) and various studies have linked heightened need for closure with attitudes such as racism (Roets & Van Hiel, 2006) and stereotyping (Bar-Tal & Labin, 2001).

Work on psychological uncertainty also demonstrates a link between feelings of uncertainty and increased conservative attitudes, worldviews and convictions (McGregor, Zanna, Holmes & Spencer, 2001). A plethora of research also suggests that individual differences in ideological beliefs are associated with attitudes towards terrorism (Doosje Loseman & van den Bos, 2013; Levin, Henry, Pratto, Sidanius, 2003; Victoroff, Adelman

& Matthews, 2012; Henry, Sidanius, Levin, Pratto, 2005; Hogg & Adelman, 2013; Hogg, Meehan & Farquharson, 2010; Pyszczynski et al. 2006; Routledge & Arndt, 2008). A study of support for terrorism among Lebanese Muslims and Christians found that low degree of social dominance orientation (SDO) in combination with identification with less powerful groups strongly predicted support for militant organizations and feelings that the September 11 attacks were justified (Levin, Henry, Pratto and Sidanius, 2003, see also Henry, Sidanius, Levin & Pratto, 2005).

Individual personality characteristics and psychological needs and motivations may influence the sort of reactions one is likely to exhibit in particular situations. That is, many social factors that lead to violence could be analyzed as triggering certain psychological responses, and ultimately behaviors, within *particular* individuals. More broadly, it is well established that personality predispositions and psychological motives can be sensitive to changes in the social environment (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Sulloway, 2003; Hogg & Blaylock, 2012). For example, people with a low level of tolerance for fear and uncertainty might be particularly vulnerable to indoctrination into radicalized groups (e.g., Doosje et al., 2013). Still, although this line of work might be useful in distinguishing radicals from non-radicals, it is important to recall that these variables cannot account for the whole picture of what explains extremism and collective action.

Toward a Comprehensive Model of Radicalization

By now it should be evident that a more parsimonious model of radicalization should take many levels of analysis, and a multitude of unique predictors into consideration. To fully understand Islam-related radicalization we need to focus not only on the individual characteristics, (e.g., personality traits, characteristics, needs and motivations), *or* the situational (e.g., social conditions and settings) *or* social factors (e.g., intergroup relations). Instead, it would be advantageous to consider all of them, rather than debating if one is better than the other.

The current dissertation starts from the premise that radicalization is best understood as an interplay between the *person*, *group* and *environment*. Each level of analysis addresses different causal factors, fitting into the larger theoretical framework

for the causes of violent radical behavior. The aim is to identify how factors from the different domains relate, and more importantly, complement each other in shaping circumstances, which will make radicalization more or less likely to occur. In figure 1 I present a conceptual model of radicalization, which encompasses different factors from three line of research on terrorism and radicalization, and I will elaborate and illustrate how each line of research complement each other.

First, following a long line of psychological theorizing (e.g., Kruglanski, 1975; Miller, Smith & Uleman, 1981; Ross, 1977) I distinguish between external and internal explanatory factors. External factors refer to contextual variables affecting the person and these include, among others, demographic, political, socioeconomic and cultural variables that can be described as preconditions for extremist behavior. At the opposite side, the model presents the internal psychological variables and these include stable psychological variables such as personality traits. The third part of the model indicated in large elliptical mid circle constitutes the social psychological variables and they include factors such perceived injustice, social identity, group-based emotions and cognition and group processes. The social psychological component is presented between the external and internal components of the model because the social psychological variables can be divided or categorized into externally social (objective) and psychological (subjective) factors. Therefore, the social psychological component of the model incorporates variables that are shaped by both external and internal components of the model. The mid component of the figure by dotted lines illustrates this.

Further, social psychological component of the model distinguishes between social cognition and social emotions, again following a long line of psychological theorizing on this point (see e.g., van Zomeren, et al., 2008). The last part of the model at the bottom of the figure presents the various outcome variables, which include attitudes towards terrorism, behavioral intentions to commit terrorism and actual behavior.

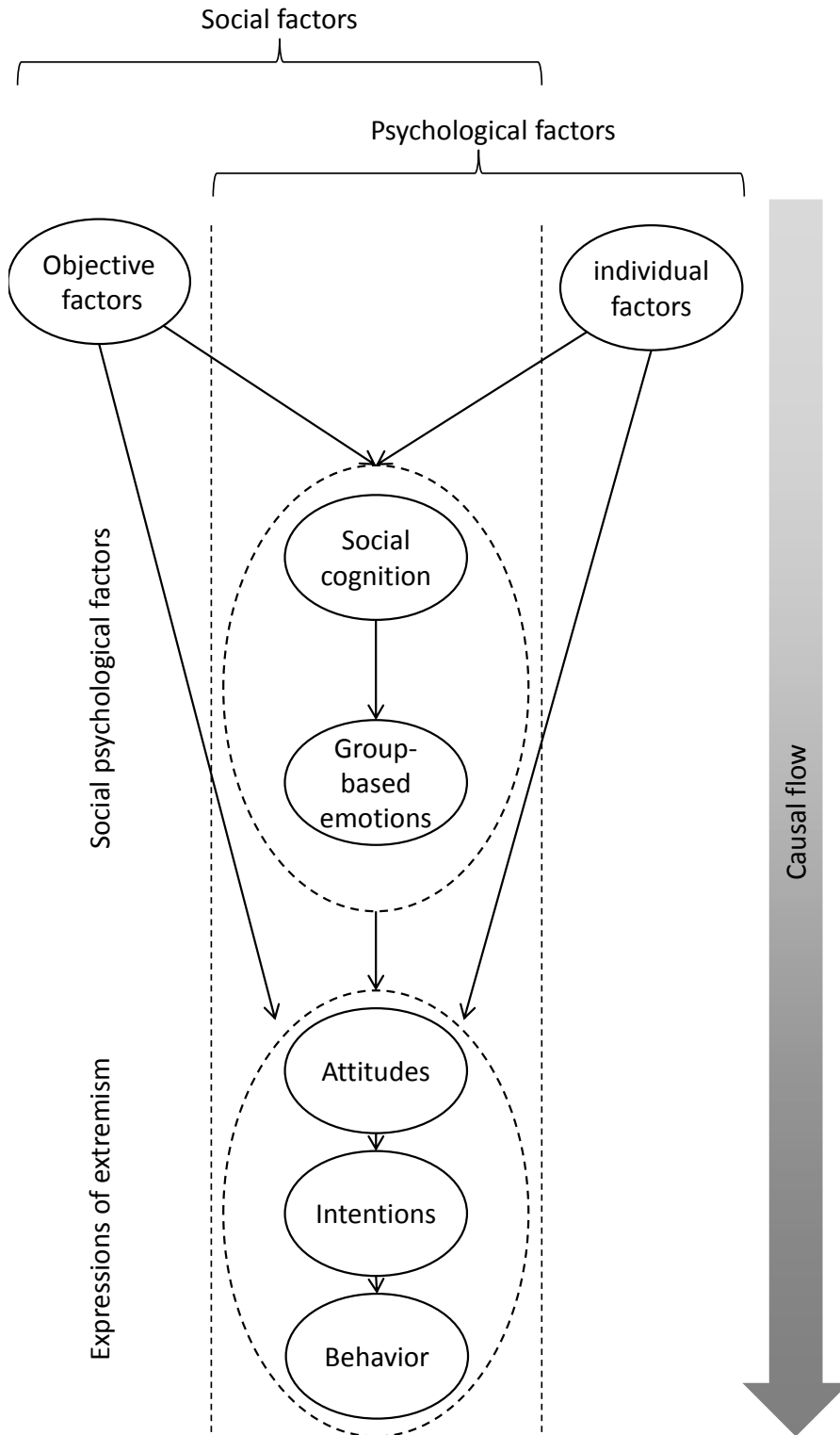


Figure 1. An integrated model of Radicalization.

The overarching ideas of the model are theoretically elaborated in connection to a review of the literature, as reflected in paper I of dissertation. A critical point here is that scholars of terrorism have traditionally approached terrorism as either involving individual or social factors, but rarely as a combination of the two. More specifically, in much of the early work on extremism, researchers relied mainly on models of psychopathology as explanations (Cooper, 1978; Johnson & Feldmann, 1992; Pearlstein, 1991; Pearce, 1977; Post, 1987). This tradition has fallen out of favor overall, but since the terrorist attacks of September 11th there has been a renewed interest in psychopathology as a cause of extremism (e.g., Gottschalk & Gottschalk, 2004; Lankfort, 2014; Razaque, 2008; Sprinzak, 2001). In paper II I address this and argue that violent radicalization cannot be reduced to only involve mental illnesses or external situational factors; it is also necessary to consider the role of non-clinical individual differences. Paper II focuses on the right corner of the conceptual model (individual factors) and here it is argued that terrorism is more than mental illness and make a case for importance of individual differences in making some to be drawn to radicalism.

As discussed in the introduction social psychological model of collective action can be quite useful in explaining radical behavior. In paper III, involving seven correlational and experimental studies, I combine different social psychological variables to investigate violent attitudes and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism against the West among Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant. Here, the focus is on social identity and perceived symbolic and realistic group threat, which is illustrated by the mid circles of the integrated model. That is social cognition (perceived symbolic and realistic threats) mediate the role of social identity (Muslims identification) on attitudes toward anti-western violence and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism. In addition we demonstrate that while a specific group of people with adherence to specific ideology, religion, culture, values and morality, radical behavior is not endemic to certain social context. Specifically, we show that the occurrence of extremism is neither exclusive to social status such as high nor low power groups. We propose that during times of intergroup conflict people from all walks of life regardless of any social, political, cultural and religious background come to perceive each other as threats, and as a consequence show similar aggressive intergroup responses. Specifically, we demonstrate

that outgroup hostility among both non-Muslims and Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant is driven by perceived intergroup threat, and symbolic threat in particular.

In order to explain why some individuals are likely to radicalize, while others not, it is nonetheless important to also consider the effect of preconditions in relation to the relational make-up of social structure that surrounds individuals prone to radicalization, and further how these individuals perceive and respond to their social circumstances. Paper IV in this dissertation addresses this issue. Here, we investigate how objective factors relate to social psychological ones leading some to endorse behavioral intention to commit terrorism. Here, across two studies among Danish Muslims we tested if victimization-by-proxy processes motivate behavioral intentions to commit acts of terrorism. We used Muslim identification, perceived injustice of Western foreign policies, and group-based anger (social psychological variables) to predict violent and non-violent behavioral intentions. More importantly, we compared path models of those Muslims who did and did not have personal experience of Western-led occupation (objective factors).

Finally, individual personality characteristics and psychological needs and motivations may influence the sort of reactions one is likely to exhibit in particular situations. That is, many social factors that lead to violence could be analyzed as triggering certain psychological responses, and ultimately behaviors, within *particular* individuals. Thus, at the *individual level*, factors such as personality traits, “normal” psychological and individual characteristics are therefore assumed here to be valuable in explaining why some people are more or less prone to radicalize. This would be the focus of Paper V in this dissertation. The aim of this paper was to examine to what extent non-clinical personality variables predict violent as well as non-violent behavioral intentions among European Muslims to support their religious group.

Aims and overview of papers

The general aim of the current dissertation is to investigate the social psychological factors behind the motivation of some first, second and third generation of Muslim Europeans with migrant background to support and commit terrorism. In essence, the dissertation raises the question of why and when some Muslim Europeans may want to support and commit terrorism against Europe and how different causal factors at different level of analysis can explain this.

The current dissertation is based on two theoretical and three empirical papers. The empirical papers comprise together twelve empirical studies conducted in three different contexts and among Muslim Europeans (Denmark and Sweden), Arabs in Lebanon and non-Muslim Europeans. As the hypotheses, methods and results for each study are described in the following chapters, here I will briefly describe the aim for each chapter, which includes various theoretical and empirical papers.

Since the attacks on world trade center in 2001 there has been a significant increase in academic work Islamist terrorism. Despite this, scholars to enduring degree struggle to solve the puzzle of violent radicalization. Even more the field has failed to develop adequate theory to explain the phenomena. One of the specific aims of this dissertation is to propose an integrated model of radicalization as a framework with which the different factors of radicalization from various line of research can be analyzed. Paper I reviews the field of psychology of terrorism to identify possible pitfalls that make the task of theory building difficult. First, a widespread adaptation of an interactionist approach for understanding terrorism is encouraged. Evidence from social psychological research is reviewed and presented to make a case for an approach that emphasizes the interplay between personal, situational and right societal factors. Further, paper I argues that an interactionist approach - besides serving as a framework for research - will provide us with avenues to understand how relevant traits and situational factors interact causing some to radicalize; help researchers to better understand differences among radicals; and to identify why some Muslim youth become radicalized, but not others; or why some might participate in terrorism in a certain context, whereas others will refrain from it.

The field of psychology of terrorism is divided between personal and situational explanation of terrorism. Paper II is a response to Lankford's book (2012) "The myth of Martyrdom: what really drives suicide bomber, rampage shooters, and other self-destructive killer". By responding to Lankford we do not only address the long existing "either or" rhetoric concerning psychology of terrorism, but also the reemerging assumption that mental health is the core explanation of terrorism. Hence, Paper II offers a complementary argument and empirically supported theoretical perspective suggesting that in understanding terrorism and radicalization we must go beyond the dichotomy of person and situation and broaden our focus by including not only intra-individual level factors, but also social, ideological, relational and political.

The second specific aim of the dissertation was to examine how various causal variables from different line of research could complement and relate to each other in explaining radicalization and terrorism. Paper III, focuses specifically on social psychological variables of collective action in explaining attitudes and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism in defense of Muslims. I mainly focused on social psychological demission of the integrated model including social (social identity) and psychological (social cognition) variables, which included perceived symbolic and realistic threats as potential explanation for anti-western violence.

Paper IV examines how social psychological variables of collective action relate to objective factors in explaining behavioral intentions among Danish Muslims to commit terrorism against Europe. More important was the question of whether victimization-by-proxy processes motivate behavioral intentions to commit acts of terrorism by comparing Muslims born in Denmark with those who immigrated to Denmark from Muslim countries targeted by Western countries foreign policy and military interventions. Here, we mainly focus on social psychological demission of the integrated model including social (social identity) and psychological (cognitive and affective components, namely perceived injustice and group-based anger) variables.

The final specific aim was to examine whether personality traits predict behavioral intentions to commit terrorism among Muslims. Paper V goes beyond the situational and mental health models of terrorism and proposes a third and overlooked possibility, namely that many people endorsing violence on behalf of a group might be

normal in a clinical sense, but not necessarily random individuals. We propose that they could have non-pathological personality signatures. In two studies we test whether non-clinical personality variables predict violent as well as non-violent behavioral intentions among European Muslims in Denmark and Sweden to support their religious group.

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Chapter 2: Theoretical papers

Paper I

The Dichotomy of Person-Situation – The Role of Intra-individual Level Variables in Explaining Radicalization and Terrorism

Abstract

Through this paper, we argue that in order to understand violent radicalization researchers have to adopt a multifaceted approach, reflecting on the intra-individual level variables and social and contextual factors alike. We argue that in addition to psychological proclivities, a comprehensive understanding of violent radicalization requires the recognition of the interaction between intra-individual, social psychological and external/societal factors. We demonstrate this in a three-fold approach. First, we examine the literature on the current terrorism research. We will examine the existing polarizing dichotomy between person-oriented and situation-oriented approaches and its implications for understanding terrorism. In the second part, we argue that intra-individual psychological variables have tremendous merit in explaining violent radicalization. We suggest that personality traits, psychological needs, motivations, feelings, wants, thoughts and desires are important in predicting why some people join militant organizations, but not others. Finally, we conclude this paper with the presentation of some empirical evidence from the literature supporting our argument that intra-individual level factors can be useful in explaining a great deal of variance in violent radicalization. By recognizing merits from various sides, we will view these accounts as complementary rather than contradictory.

Keywords: Terrorism and Radicalization, Person-situation dichotomy, Individual differences, Personality traits, Situationism, Social psychology

Background and Aim

In the wake of the Paris, Beirut and Sinai attacks many have begun to pose a familiar, but yet a complex question. That is, what drives some people to kill their own fellow citizens? To disentangle the factors that drive this kind of violence is not simple. This task has been proved to be a challenge.

We see one main reason for why scholars to enduring degree struggle to solve the puzzle of violent radicalization and terrorism. Many argue that the controversy surrounding the person-situation debate within the field of psychology seems to have long been resolved (e.g., Funder, 2006). A plethora of research provides evidence demonstrating that both sides of the debate are right (Webster, 2009). Nevertheless the dichotomy of person and situation is not fully resolved when it concerns to the psychology of terrorism. Indeed, the person-situation dichotomy continues to strongly influence the way we understand terrorism and radicalization today. It seems that scholars in the field, be it homegrown or suicide terrorism, have often fallen prey to the temptation to polarize the field between the personal and situational determinants of radical behavior.

This paper focuses on theoretical approaches in psychology of terrorism. Here, we call for the integration of internal (nonpathological factors) and situational factors in understanding terrorism, as opposed to an exclusive adherence to either psychopathologies or external factors as a source of explanation.

The objective is threefold. First, the aim is to review the litterateur on terrorism and to address the existing dichotomy that continues to polarize the academic field of psychology of violent radicalization in person-and situation-oriented approaches. Further, to highlight the implications of this dichotomy for understanding violent radicalization. Second, we will argue that it is a fallacy to assume that intra-individual psychological variables have less merit in explaining violent radicalization. We will propose that non-pathological psychological factors have a great utility in explaining violent radicalization and suggest that in interaction with situational factors our general psychological characteristics and proclivities found, and shared among all of us may account for why some people from a given social group in a specific context endorse violence, while others refrain from it.

Finally, we will present recent empirical evidence from various disciplines of individual psychological literature illustrating that normal psychological variables have great potential in explaining violent radicalization, and that a comprehensive understanding of violent radicalization requires the recognition of psychological proclivities and the dynamic interaction between intra-individual and social psychological variables on the one hand, and contextual processes on the other.

Previous and Current Approaches to Study of Terrorism

Despite many efforts to understand violent radicalization as a multifaceted phenomenon (e.g., Crenshaw, 1990a; Crenshaw, 1990b; della Porta, 1995; Horgan, 2005; Kruglanski & Fishman, 2009; Taylor & Horgan, 2006; Thomsen, Obaidi, Sheehy-Skeffington, Kteily & Sidanius, 2014), scholars of terrorism often explain terrorism as either an individual or a group and social phenomenon (for an overview see Victoroff, 2005).

Earlier psychological approaches to understanding terrorism mainly focused on individual explanations, proposing a variety of psychopathological theories (For reviews, see Victoroff, 2005; Borum, 2003). Indeed, many analysts argued that terrorism was a manifestation of psychopathology (e.g. Cooper, 1978; Pearce, 1977; Johnson & Feldmann, 1992; Post, 1987; Pearlstein, 1991). Although initially appealing, a model in which psychopathology forms the basis of terrorism has since fallen out of favor (see, Atran, 2003; Corrado, 1981; Hoffman, 1999; Horgan, 2005 & 2003; Kruglanski & Fishman, 2006 & 2009; Pape, 2005 & 2003; Post 2005; Post, Ali, Henderson, Shanfield, Victoroff & Weine, 2009; Sageman, 2004; Silke 2003 & 2008a; Shaw, 1986). Put this differently, some work suggest that terrorists do not have any diagnosable psychopathological conditions (see Corrado, 1981; Bond, 2004). However, some suggest that this observation may only apply to member of terrorist organizations, also called group-based terrorism (Spaaij, 2010). Recent studies of lone-wolf terrorists show that odds of mental health prevalence are much higher among this sub-population compared to group-based terrorists (see, Corner & Gill, 2015; Gill, Horgan, Deckert, 2014; Spaaij, 2010).

Once it became apparent that the cause of terrorism could not be attributed to mental illness, the scientific focus turned to the idea of “normalcy” viewing terrorists as “normal” people (e.g., Crenshaw, 1981; Ferguson, Burgess, & Hollywood, 2008; Horgan, 2005; Kruglanski & Fishman, 2006; Zimbardo, 2007). More emphasis was given to group-oriented and organizational factors (e.g., Ginges, Hansen, & Norenzayan, 2009; Merari, 2002; Pedahzur, 2005; Post, 2005; Post, Ali, Henderson, Shanfield, Victoroff, & Weine 2009). For example, Ginges, Atran, Sachdeva, and Medin (2011) noted that “in sum, a key difference between terrorists and most other people in the world may lie not so much in individual pathologies, personality, education, income, or any other demographic factor but in small-group dynamics where the relevant trait just happens to be jihad” (p. 517). This consensus has prevailed for over four decades, and has shifted focus away from individual level factors. As a result, social scientists began to overemphasize the role of group and contextual factors as the primary cause of terrorism. According to the current approach, violent behavior is the product of social influence, primarily caused by external factors, also referred to as “the power of the situation” (Ross & Nisbett, 1991, p. 27).

The widespread emphasize on situational factors resulted that the role of individual psychology was downplayed. Many began to agree that individual psychology had no merit in explaining terrorism. One clear example of this development is the link between personality and terrorism, where influential researchers also adopted downplaying person factors and the link between personality and terrorism is rejected all together (e.g., Horgan, 2003; McCormick, 2003; Silke, 2003). However, data presumably confirming this is indeed limited, both in quantity and quality. Studies often cited as evidence of non-existence link between personality and terrorism are characterized by highly speculative nature, drawing their conclusion from biographical or circumstantial details. For example, most often they either lack data (e.g., Morf, 1970; Heskin, 1980) or fail to report the measures (e.g., Lyons and Harbinson, 1986) and the methods by which personality is assessed with (e.g., Rasch, 1979). Nevertheless, it does not refrain scholars from referring to these studies to discards the potential role of personality in explaining terrorism (e.g., Horgan, 2003). Further, many studies rely on non-standardized, ad hoc instruments measuring mainly pathological aspects of personality (e.g., Schbley, 2003;

Gottschalk & Gottschalk 2004, Merari et al., 2010). Taken all these studies together one commonality emerges: Terrorism is manifestation of personality defect, assuming that terrorist behavior is the result of pathological dysfunction rooted in certain traits. Here, we would like to emphasize two main points. First, it is important to note that psychological variables are more than psychopathology. Therefore, we need to distinguish between normal personality traits and psychopathological abnormalities. It is our understanding that most researchers do not distinguish between these two and personality is often confounded with psychopathology. Second, because of the enduring argument that terrorists do not suffer from psychopathology it should not imply that personality traits are irrelevant to terrorism. We shouldn't throw the baby out with bathwater. Third, no convincing evidence yet exists confirming the common assumption that personality traits are not linked to terrorism. As Merari puts it the idea that terrorists do not share personality characteristics "rests on the absence of research rather than on direct findings [...] such studies have not been published, the only scientifically sound conclusion for now is that we do not know whether terrorists share common traits, but we cannot be sure that such traits do not exist" (Merari, 2010, p. 253).

For these reasons, it is premature to exclude non-clinical personality variables as potential factors in explaining extremist behavior because certain personality traits may increase the likelihood of engaging in extremist violence. In other areas of psychology personality variables are included in predicting people's attitudes and behavior (e.g., Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and it is widely acknowledged that personality and situational factors influence people's behavior and feelings (e.g., Richard, Bond, & Stokes-Zoota, 2003; Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi, & Goldberg, 2007). Further, the idea that personality and situational variables interact to cause behavior is also widely accepted (Webster, 2009). Research on personality traits of extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience and neuroticism (McCrae & Costa, 1987) shows that certain traits predict a wide range of psychological phenomena (e.g., Ekehammar, Akrami, 2003; Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). For example, a large body of research shows that the above traits are associated with political mobilization and normative collective protest (e.g., Ha, Kim, & Jo, 2013; Opp & Brandstätter, 2010). Despite this, to our knowledge, at the time of writing not a single work has been identified looking at the link between

normal personality traits (e.g., big five factors mentioned above) and terrorism (see paper V). Paper V in this dissertation shows that non-clinical personality traits predict behavioral intentions among Muslims to support their group with violence. For example, violent behavioral intentions were associated with low emotionality and openness. On the other hand non-violent behavioral intentions were predicted by higher degrees of altruism/empathy. These results indicate, some personality traits might increase the probability that some individuals may engaging in extremist violence and those who engage in violence might have discernible personality traits.

The Influence of Situationism on the Field of Psychology

The dichotomy of person-situation is not exclusive to theories of radicalization. It echoes an old controversy in psychology, dividing the field between those who view situational factors as the determinant of human behavior and those who attribute human behavior to personality traits (Funder, 1997). Since this dichotomy influences the research on radicalization and terrorism today, we will give a brief historical overview of person-situation debate.

Walter Mischel was the first to initiate the person-situation debate with the publication of *Personality Assessment* (1968). Mischel argued that personality traits play a minor role in predicting behavior. He argued that the differences within individual behavior across different contexts and settings are greater than those that exist between different people facing similar contexts and situations. The publication of this work led to a significant decline in focus on traits in academic circles (for a historical review, see Swann & Seyle, 2005), and the situationist perspective has since become the favored model in explaining human behavior. Support for Mischel's critique came from a large number of social psychological studies in the years to follow (e.g., Haney, Banks & Zimbardo, 1973) demonstrating the tremendous impact that immediate situational contexts have on people.

By the 1960s, the psychology of collective violence was dominated by situationism (Berkowitz, 1999). This development influenced how collective violence was broadly perceived and the academic approach to collective violence has since been mainly guided by situationism and social psychology (e.g., Milgram, 1963; Haney, Banks,

& Zimbardo, 1973). The situationist perspective influenced not only how violent behavior was understood in general, but also had a great impact on how terrorism is understood today.

The situationist perspective often explains deviant behavior as the product of social influence. It implies that people become involved in collective violence because their circumstances turn them into evildoers. In his book, Vetlesen (2005, p. 20) citing Bauman (1989) captures the core idea of the situationist perspective in accounting for deviant behavior: “cruelty correlates with certain patterns of social interaction than it does with personality features or other individual idiosyncrasies of the perpetrators”. Hence, “cruelty is social in its origin much more than it is characterological”. The widespread focus on external factors as the primary determinate of collective violence can be traced back to four major studies, which have shaped academic perspectives and popular understandings of violent behavior. In the following section, we will briefly review each work in a chronological order, focusing on their implications for understanding human potential for violence.

The Holocaust Studies, the Banality of Evil and Classical Social Psychological Studies

In the landmark study of the Holocaust, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, the historian Hilberg (1961) argues that the Holocaust was the result of a huge bureaucratic machinery involving perpetrators, who “were not different in their moral makeup from the rest of the population. The German perpetrator was not a special kind of German.” (Hilberg, 1985, p. 1011). Hilberg hypothesizes that the bureaucratic system, a systematically implemented program, played a vital role in turning an otherwise average and unremarkable group of individuals into cruel evildoers. According to Hilberg’s view, the perpetrators were not outcasts, but rather a representative group of people originating from the general German population, and as such they reflected its values and morals. Hence, according to Hilberg our focus should be on the larger system within which ordinary men perform horrific acts. The social conditions are perceived as the driving force while individual psychological characteristics are downplayed.

Arendt (1963) adopted a similar approach in her book “*Eichmann in Jerusalem: A*

report on the banality of evil”, in which she described Eichmann as an average man with ordinary motives; a man who did not operate out of any ideological conviction. She depicted Eichmann as a thoughtless, unimaginative, career-seeking official who blindly obeyed orders. In line with Hilberg, Arendt reaches a similar conclusion that unremarkable people are capable of remarkably inhuman acts once placed in a context conducive of harmful acts. In her account, deviant behavior is the product of social circumstances, independent of psychological proclivities.

In his experiments, Milgram (1963, 1974) demonstrated that ordinary people could be led to harm fellow individuals as long as an authoritative person asked them to do so. The main idea behind the experiments was to demonstrate the power of the immediate situation. The experiments showed that the immediate situation had tremendous influence on people’s feelings, thoughts and behaviors. The role of dispositional factors was generally neglected in these experiments. In the words of Milgram: “the disposition a person brings to the experiment is probably less important a cause of his behavior than most readers assume” (Milgram, 1974, p. 205). Milgram’s experiments supported Arendt’s and Hilberg’s thesis that ordinary people are capable of committing extremely evil acts when placed in extraordinary circumstances. These experiments once again emphasized the external determinants of behavior. Milgram’s experiments suggest that violence, according to Vestlesen’s interpretation (2005), is: “an – often unintended – by-product of obedience to authority. [Harm-doing] has more to do with patterns of social interaction than with the character and motivation of the acting individual” (Vestlesen, 2005, p. 5).

The fourth study that significantly influenced the field was the Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE; Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973). The simulated experiment showed how ordinary young men became susceptible to the power of social conditions once placed in a particular environment with particular roles. Stanford Prison Experiment reinforced the already established idea that our behavior is best understood as product of social influence. Following the Stanford prison experiment, most studies on harmful behavior emphasized the power of social context (Berkowitz, 1999). This trend has prevailed for over four decades, and as we discuss here, still strongly influences how we understand deviant behavior today.

The Influence of Situationist Perspective in Terrorism Research

The influence of situationism is equally central in research studying suicide terrorism. Social and environmental factors are often emphasized as major determinates of terrorist behaviors (see, Atran , 2003; Merari, 2002; Pedahzur, 2005; Pape, 2005; Sageman, 2004; Sprinzak, 2000; Taylor & Horgan, 2006). Influenced by the situationist perspective, experts for years have attributed the causes of suicide bombings to external factors, thus dismissing the role of internal factors and individual differences. As Pedahzur puts it, "...most suicide terrorists can be described as ordinary people...personality and psychological traits play only a secondary role in the make-up of a suicide terrorist." (Pedahzur, 2005, pp. 123-124). Similarly, Atran (2003) highlights situational factors as determinate of suicide attacks: "a legitimate hypothesis is that apparently extreme behaviors may be elicited and rendered commonplace by particular historical, political, social, and ideological contexts" (Atran, 2003, p. 1536). Equally, Merari (2002) sees suicide terrorism primarily as an organizational phenomenon: "The key to creating a terrorist suicide is the group process. Terrorist suicide is an organizational rather than an individual phenomenon" (Merari, 2002, quoted in Kruglanski & Golec, 2005, p. 2).

These approaches to terrorism are in line with situationism, based on the thesis of the banality of evil and the classic social psychological experiments. Many scholars of suicide terrorism draw directly upon these, as well as past studies of genocide, the Holocaust and other mass killings to provide support for their claims. Scholars rely often on Milgram and Arendt's work when they explain the motivations of suicide terrorists. For example, Stern (2003) refers to the thesis of banality of evil, while Atran (2003) draws parallels to Milgram's obedience studies claiming that it is the '*sense of obligation*' in response to authority that drives suicide attacks. Similarly Post (2005) and Post et al., (2009) adopt a situationist perspective and draw directly upon Milgram's thesis of obedience and conformity: "As we've come to understand, the terrorists involved in 9/11 had subordinated their individuality to the group. And whatever their destructive,

charismatic leader, Osama bin Laden said was the right thing to do for the sake of the cause was what they would do..." (Voice of America, 2009⁷).

Nevertheless, the preference for situational explanations is not exclusive to suicide terrorism, but is rather equally influential in understanding radicalization and terrorism in the West in general. Bandura (2002) argues, for example that: "it requires conducive social conditions rather than monstrous people to produce heinous deeds. Given appropriate social conditions, decent, ordinary people can do extraordinarily cruel things" (Bandura, 2002, p. 109). Similarly, McCauley proposes that: "we have to face the fact that normal people can be terrorists, that we are ourselves capable of terrorist acts under some circumstances" (McCauley, 2004). Others argue that situational and contextual factors surpass personality traits and individual psychology in their predictive power of violent behaviors. For instance, Horgan (2003) claims that: "despite their attractiveness (via the simplicity any potential results would imply), personality traits are useless as predictors for understanding why people become terrorists" (Horgan, 2003, p. 114). Furthermore, the most cited and applied models of terrorism and radicalization also adopt the situationist perspective by attributing terrorist behavior to external variables. The models proposed by the Danish Intelligence Services (PET, 2009), Borum (2003), Klausen, Campion, Needle, Nguyen & Liberti (2015), Moghaddam (2005), Precht (2007) and Wiktorowicz (2005) all emphasize situational factors as main factors in radicalization. All of these models have a top-down approach, with external factors being the primary determinant of terrorist motives.

In understanding terrorism perhaps we have been so occupied with the idea of normality that we have come to overlook the merit of non-clinical individual psychological variables. Although the quest for a "terrorist personality" has been doomed to be fruitless, according to some, violent radicals may still display certain traits that can distinguish them from the general population. We have to bear in mind that individual differences and normal personality characteristics may still be relevant in differentiating those who commit terrorism from those who do not.

⁷ Retrieved Feb. 4/2013 from- <http://www.voanews.com/content/a-13-2006-10-04-voa28/316486.html>

The Pitfalls of the Situationist Perspective

We acknowledge that powerful settings and situations can have a strong influence on human behavior. Classic social psychological experiments have taught us a lot about the origin of deviant behavior (Asch, 1951; Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973; Milgram, 1963; Sherif, 1935). However, they do not fully explain the psychology of terrorism. When psychological variables at the individual level are ignored, terrorism is no longer perceived as a multifaceted phenomenon that relies on both social context and intra-individual level factors. Therefore, the current approach fails to explain why some people radicalize while others not, even when they have been exposed to the same social and behavioral circumstances. To give but one example the current approach falls short of explaining the psychology of homegrown terrorism in the West. Homegrown radicals often appear to be self-radicalized, decentralized, loosely organized, operate independently and outside of any structure or chain of command (Andersen, 2009; Kirby, 2007; Vidino, 2009). As Roy puts it: “they usually remain aloof from communal group” (Roy, 2008, p. 17; Roy, 2007). In fact self-radicalized individuals have orchestrated many terrorist plots in the West. There are innumerable examples of this: Mohmamed Merah who killed 11 people in March 2012 in Toulouse, France; Faisal Shahzad who tried to blow up a car bomb in New York in May 2010; Muhudiin Mohamed Geele who attacked the Danish cartoonist Kurt Westergaard in his home in Aarhus, Denmark in 2010; Ander Breivik who killed 77 teenagers at a youth political camp in Norway; Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly who in December 2010 blew up first a car and then himself in Stockholm; Lors Dukajev who in September 2010 blew up a letter bomb in a toilet at the Hotel Jørgensen in central Copenhagen and injured himself; Major Nidal Malik Hasan, who shot and killed 13 and injured 32 at the military base Fort Hood in Texas in November 2009; Omar Farouk Abdulmusom, who in December 2009 tried to blow up a plane over Detroit with explosives hidden in his underwear; Mir Amal Kansi who shoot and killed two people outside the CIA headquarters in Langely in January 1993. In most cases, these individuals did not give up their individuality to the group, clearly suggesting that their motivation was influenced by mechanisms other than obedience and strong social influence. Further, Ferguson, Burgess & Hollywood (2008) illustrate through qualitative interviews that members of paramilitary groups in Ireland joined clandestine

groups based on rational decision making as opposed to be mindlessly manipulated. A similar parallel can be drawn to many perpetrators of the Holocaust. Historical accounts of the Holocaust (e.g., Mandel, 1998; Goldhagen, 1996; also Newman & Erber, 2002; Haslam & Reicher, 2006) show that many people engaged in the Holocaust without any obvious external pressure. People did not murder Jews because they were forced or because they feared punishment if they refused; their decision was based on self-initiation. For example, Goldhagen (1996) reported that the perpetrators often acted voluntarily and without any pressure from authority figures. Further, in many cases the perpetrators did more than what was expected of them. Authority pressure and obedience had little part in motivating them. It is important to note that the above examples are not an attempt to diminish the power of situational determinates of behavior, but to simply emphasize that individual behavior is not entirely dependent on external factors alone. As we shall argue in the following individual psychological factors in combination with right social and contextual factors are more important determinant of behavior than it has been acknowledge by terrorist researchers.

How Important are the Dispositions a Person Brings to the Social Context?

The conventional wisdom is that strong settings surpass the influence of individual differences (Kenrick & Funder, 1988). However, evidence to support this claim is rather ambiguous (see Cooper & Withey, 2009). Further, experimental evidence tells a different story. Various studies show that the influence of individual differences does not entirely disappear even in strong settings. For example, 35% of subjects in Milgram's experiments did not obey the experimenter (Blass, 1991). Further, individual differences in authoritarianism distinguished obedient individuals from non-obedient ones. Obedient individuals were significantly more authoritarian than disobedient individuals. Similarly, the extent to which people administered the highest level of shocks was predicted by feeling of moral responsibility (Staub, 2011). These findings indicate that individual differences influence our behavior and that the influence of individual differences does not entirely evaporate even under the influence of a powerful circumstance.

To illustrate the importance of individual differences in influencing our behavior

and decision to seek out certain context Carnahan and McFarland (2007) revisited the Stanford Prison Experiment. They found that, compared to “a psychological study”, volunteers for “a psychological study of prison life” scored higher personality related measures like authoritarianism and social dominance orientation (SDO) and scored significantly lower on dispositional empathy and altruism. Individual differences in relational motives such as social dominance orientation and authoritarianism predicted people’s likelihood of selectively volunteering for prison study.

The same degree of self-selection has been observed in study of radical activism (eg., Olsen, 2009; Sageman, 2004). Olsen illustrated that radical activist self-recruited themselves rather than being manipulated or coerced into the radical movements (Olsen, 1999). Similarly, della Porta’s work into leftist organization of 60s and 70s shows that members of terrorist organization prior to their membership into radical organizations possessed a well-established political ideology orientation that resonated with the organization they became involved in (della Porta, 1995). Wiktorowicz (2005) in his study of Al-Muhajiroun argues that a fit between organization’s values and ideologies and individual’s initial interest is a prerequisite for joining a radical network. He argues, that recruitment becomes possible when the movement’s schemata resonate with the predisposed and already primed individual’s needs.

Similarly, Vetlesen (2005) concludes that people are attracted to groups and ideologies “on the condition that the ideology in question resonate deeply and existentially with psychological dispositions - needs and longings, desires and fears – to be found in the individual” (Vetlesen, 2005, p. 50). This is consistent with a number of studies demonstrating that individual differences and motives predict the sort of situations and environments one chooses to enter. For example, research on SDO shows that people who score high in SDO are more selectively drawn to pursue careers in hierarchy-enhancing institutions, such as law-enforcement (Haley & Sidanius, 2005).

The Often-neglected Role of Individual Differences in Terrorism Research

In the following we devote our attention to intra-individual level factors by highlighting the importance of such variables in known cases of terrorism. Countless case studies of radicals document that certain individual psychological traits, regularities, attributes and characteristics are overrepresented among radicalized individuals compared to the general population. There is reason to believe that certain psychological and cognitive factors make some to be drawn toward radicalized networks and certain features of social and contextual settings pull them toward such radicalism.

One recurring theme recorded by various researchers is need for identity and belonging (della Porta 1992; Roy, 2008; Crenshaw, 1990b). Crenshaw (1990b) proposes that the comfort of belonging to a likeminded group can be an important psychological incentive in the process of radicalization. For example, being part of a well-defined group has been shown to reduce emotional uncertainty (Hogg, Meehan & Farquharson, 2010). Terrorist organization can provide a safe heaven for some marginalized and alienated individual. Many radicals may join an extremist organization in search for identity and sense of belongingness (e.g., Johnson & Feldman, 1992). Individuals who lack a coherent sense of identity may be particularly vulnerable to indoctrination (Post, 1987). Many Islamist converts to Islam such as Jamie Paulin-Ramirez⁸, Michael Finton⁹ and Zachary Chesser¹⁰ are assumed to have turned to extremist organizations in quest for identity and sense of belongingness (Kleinmann, 2012). For example, the former Islamist Morten Storm is an ideal example of someone who experimented with extreme forms of identities before embarking on the path to become a Jihadist. Before converting to Islam he was a member of the Danish branch of Bandidos where he succeeds in earning the title of "Denmark's youngest psychopath". Later he traded his Islamic faith to become an undercover agent for Danish Intelligence Services (PET) (Wivel, 2013).

⁸ Jamie Paulin-Ramirez, a USA citizen and convert to Islam who was arrested in charged of attempt to assassinate a Swedish cartoonist who depicted prophet Muhammad as a dog.

⁹Michael Finton also known as Talib Islam, an American convert to Islam who in 2009 attempted to bomb the Paul Findley Federal Building in Springfield, Illinois. Later, he was charged with attempted murder and attempt to use of a weapon of mass destruction.

¹⁰ Zachary Chesser, an American citizen, an Islamist and a convert to Islam. In 2011 he was arrested, charged and sentenced to 25 years in prison for aiding Al-Shabaab in 2010.

In addition to identity and need for belonging, scholars have recorded a variety of personal rewards and incentives for participating in militant activities (e.g. Atran, 2008; Silke, 2008b). One such reward is the belief that martyrs would be reward afterlife. Such beliefs have been shown to influence support for suicide attacks (Ginges, Hansen, and Norenzayan (2009). Another most cited incentive for participating in militant activities is need for adventure and sensation seeking. Stern (2003) found a positive correlation between willingness to participate in suicide terrorism and desire to seek out situations marked by danger and excitement. In a study of former perpetrators of politically motivated organized violence, Olsen (2009) found that the perpetrators described militant activities as thrilling and entertaining and compared the militant activities to extreme form of sports such as bungee-jumping and parachuting. Preoccupation with adventure and excitement emerged also as one of the main factors in motivating people to join radical Islamist networks in the West (Silber & Bath, 2007; see also Bokhari, Hegghammer, Lia, Nesser & Tønnessen, 2006; Roy, 2010). Similarly, Morf (1970) documented how members of Front de Liberation de Quebec (FLQ) preferred to live in extremes; they loved excitement, were fascinated by spy stories and their decision to become member of the militant organization was often coupled with the lure of adventure and thrill seeking. Morf went on to claim “the six conspirators had lived a real life of adventure, reminiscent of that of the high sea pirates of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries as described in boys’ books. It seems that the liberation of Quebec had only been a pretext to give free rein to those romantic criminal tendencies which may lurk in many people, and to satisfy their thirst for adventure and personal independence” (Morf, 1970, p. 37). Further, Morf documented that several members of FLQ, prior to their involvement in the FLQ, had been attracted and involved in military activities. One had been a former sergeant in the French Foreign Legion, served in Canadian armed forces and one was enrolled in the Royal Canadian Navy. Furthermore, explicit fascination and attraction to violence and military combative lifestyle was a recurring and common theme among members of FLQ which led Morf to conclude that violent actions seemed to provide them with feeling of enormous empowerment, excitement and liberation (Morf, 1970). A recent example of attraction to military activities is the case of Mohammed Merah, who killed four men and three children in Toulouse, France, over a period of 10 days. According to French

defense ministry Merah unsuccessfully tried to join the French armed forces and the French Foreign Legion before he left for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Another pattern of attributes, which is often recorded in the literature and closely related to the attraction to combative life style, is prior history of delinquency and an overt attraction and socialization into the use of violence (see, Bakker, 2006; Roy, 2008; Silber & Bhatt, 2007). In a study of 242 European Jihadist almost one quarter of them had a history of criminal offences prior to their arrest (Bakker, 2006). For example, Lors Dukajev who tried to detonate a bomb in a hotel in Copenhagen in Denmark had been convicted in absentia in Belgium for assault and attempted murder. The former Islamist Morten Storm had a career in petty crime at age of 16. As a teenager he had been in and out of prisons and had a reputation for terrorizing his hometown (Wivel, 2013). Similarly, the mastermind of 2004 Madrid bombing Jamal Ahmidan, and his accomplices all had been previously involved in delinquency. Also, Jose Padilla, Richard Reid, Khalid Abdul-Latif, Antonio Martinez, Mohamed Mamdouh, and the plotters of the Bronx Synagogues all had a lengthy criminal records and had been in and out of prison before being radicalized. More recently, several of Paris attackers of November 2015 had a story of delinquency and were known by the police for petty crimes.

The final recurring theme is involvement and previous history of activism in various social movements and organizations or what some call “wandreres”. For example, Charles Gagnon, member of FLQ, belonged to various leftist parties in Quebec. Omar Bakri Mohammed, the founder and worldwide leader of al-Muhajiroun had a long history of activism in the Middle East before he launched al-Muhajiroun. Many radicals of 60s and 70s also had previous history of involvement in various social movements organizations (della Porta, 1995). Similar examples of “wandreres” have been also recorded in Danish Galsvej case of terrorism. One of the convicted individuals has described to be on a shopping spree among different environment in the hope of gaining militant belongingness.

In sum, by identifying how recurring certain themes, and patterns could be related to personality traits and how they relate and interact with background conditions social and contextual variables could be of valuable knowledge in research in terrorism. This might be useful in creating a set of conceptual starting points that potentially could pave

the way for future research. It is important to note that we do not claim that certain recurring themes and psychological propensities can be seen in all cases of terrorism, but rather it is an attempt to show that intra-individual variables are important and should be given more attention in research in terrorism.

So far we have argued for the importance of individual difference in making some people susceptible to be drawn towards radical groups. In the following we will present recent empirical studies that lend support to previous sections main claims.

Empirical Evidence in Support of Individual Differences in Terrorism Research

The idea that general individual differences in psychological traits, needs, motivations, feelings, and thoughts predict people's attitudes towards different social and political issues has long been recognized (see, e.g., Carney, Jost, & Gosling, 2006; Jost et al., 2003a, 2003b). For instance, individual differences in emotional uncertainty predict people's attitudes toward a variety of social and political issues (Jost, Napier, Thorisdottir, Gosling, Palfai & Ostafin, 2007). A plethora of research suggests that individual differences in personality, affective, and cognitive style are associated not only with social and political orientations (e.g., see Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003a, 2003b) but also predicts attitudes towards extremism (Doosje & van den Bos, 2013; Henry, Sidanius, Levn, Pratto, 2005; Hogg & Adelman, 2013; Hogg, Meehan & Farquharson, 2010; Levin, Henry, Pratto, Sidanius, 2003; Pyszczynski et al. 2006; Victoroff, Adelman & Matthews, 2012).

Recent research supports the role of normal psychological variables in explaining individuals' degree of attraction to radical orientation. For instance, Doosje and colleagues (2013) showed that emotional uncertainty, in combination with experienced group deprivation and perceived group threat, was the key determinant of radicalization of Muslim youth in the Netherlands. Similarly, strong national identification coupled with high context relevant uncertainty emerged as a strong predictor of support for intergroup violence in the context of Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Hogg & Adelman, 2013). Individual difference in SDO among Lebanese Muslims and Christians in combination with identification with less powerful groups strongly predicted support for militant organizations and feelings that the September 11 attacks were justified (Levin, Henry,

Pratto, & Sidanius, 2003). In a similar vein, Henry, Sidanius, Levin & Pratto (2005), focused on the dynamic of intergroup conflict and illustrated that the dynamics of the intergroup conflict and the status of the perpetrators was important for the relationship between SDO and support for violence. Despite the typical feature of SDO such that high degree of SDO predicts violence towards outgroup the results showed that this relation was reversed for the less advantaged group. That is, those who were low in SDO were more supportive of violence toward the West.

Moreover, scholars have proposed that feelings of guilt, shame, anger, humiliation and revenge are potent causes of terrorism (Stern, 2003; Ricolfi, 2005; Khosrokhavar, 2005; Atran, 2003; however, empirical research investigating role of emotions and terrorism is scarce, but see, Tausch et al., 2011; paper IV). Tausch and colleagues found that intergroup emotions in response to perceived injustice contributed to the motivation of people to support both normative and non-normative action against the outgroup. The study demonstrated that feelings of contempt evoked by the British foreign policy towards Muslim countries mediated support for violence against both military and civilian targets in the West (Tausch et al., 2011). Similarly, paper IV of this dissertation shows that anger is a potent predictor of violent behavioral intentions among Danish Muslims.

In sum intra-individual level variables can have a tremendous merit in research on radicalization. As research shows both sides have merits that can complement each other bringing us a step close to understand terrorism. Meta-analytic evidence suggests that the predictability of intra-individual level variables is no lower than social psychology variables (Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi, & Goldberg (2007). Therefore, it is fruitless to pitch these accounts against each other. A more parsimonious approach would be integrate them and draw upon on various components of both person and situation.

One of such concepts that recognizes the importance of both person and situation in predicting behavior is the concept of affordance - central in Gibsonian ecological psychology. An affordance is a relation between an individual's abilities and aspects of situations that enable those abilities (Chemero, 2003). In other words affordances are determined by the fit between properties of the environment and properties of our own capabilities/proclivities to carry out certain behavior. Thus, our behavior and actions in a

particular context or environment are dependent on the affordances available for us in that particular context. For example, as noted before it appears that people selectively engage in their surroundings and selectively seek out certain experiences and certain behavioral settings. Which setting people choose to enter is based in part on the psychological possibilities that the setting offers to them. In case of Abu Ghraib affair it is likely that certain characteristics distinctive of Abu Ghraib prison made that social context as a particular location where certain activities could be carried out. American guards voluntarily placed themselves in that context based on the kinds of functional opportunities or affordances the prison setting extended to them. In other words there was a fit between properties of the prison settings and properties of soldiers capabilities/proclivities leading to mistreatment of the prisoners.

The importance and usefulness of affordances in predicting human behavior has long been recognized in other areas of psychology (e.g., Jayawickreme & Chemero, 2008; Jayawickreme & De Stefano, 2012; Chemero, 2003). Indeed, the concept of affordance could also be useful in studying terrorism (Taylor & Currie, 2012) – it recognizes not only the importance of individual characteristics and traits in predicting behavior, but also that such characteristics and traits are elicited in appropriate opportunities. Further, because affordances are in part determined by abilities, in a particular context different people will perceive different affordances (Jayawickreme & Chemero, 2008), clearly recognizing the power of individual difference in determining behavior.

Moreover, future research can concentrate on ISIS's propaganda campaigns and the specific content of such propaganda and the personality of those who are particularly susceptible or get drawn to such messages. It is likely that certain people are more susceptible to certain messages than others. A vast number of studies show how certain individuals are drawn to different settings (Carnahan & McFarland, 2007) and how people either excel or fail to excel in settings that are conflicting with their traits (Holland, 1996). By focusing on personality-based self-selection we might be able to identify traits that make some individuals vulnerable to ISIS and other terrorist networks' messages.

Conclusion

In this paper we aimed to draw attention to the often-neglected role of intra-individual level variables in predicting terrorism. We argued that individual differences in combination with social and structural factors might increase an individual's susceptibility to become involved in extremist activities. The reviewed literature suggests that individual psychological differences, motives, needs and feelings in combination with social and environmental factors may motivate some people to embrace radical beliefs and ideology. Further, it suggests that certain psychological characteristics can predispose some individuals to seek out certain context that fulfills certain needs. For example, propensity for violence and deviant behavior may result in preference for settings or environment that offer possibility for such predispositions to be thrived. Everything else being equal certain psychological characteristics may prone people to get involved in settings compatible with their psychological makeups. Therefore, individual psychological variables can be of valuable source of knowledge in solving the puzzle of terrorism.

In sum, it is time to leave the person and situation dichotomy in psychology of violent radicalization behind and adopt an integrated model where intra-individual, social psychological and external/societal factors are considered in understanding violent radicalization and terrorism.

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Chapter 3:

Paper II

Individual Differences in Relational Motives Interact with the Political Context to Produce Terrorism and Terrorism-Support¹¹

Abstract

The psychology of suicide terrorism involves more than simply the psychology of suicide. Individual differences in social dominance orientation (SDO) interact with the socio-structural, political context to produce support for group-based dominance among members of both dominant and subordinate groups. This may help explain why, in one specific context, some people commit and endorse terrorism, whereas others do not.

Keywords: Suicide Terrorism, Individual Differences, Social Dominance Orientation, Relational Motives

¹¹ **Author Note:** L. Thomsen drafted the paper, M. Obaidi, J. Sheehy-Skeffington, N. Kteily, & J. Sidsnius provided substantial editing.

Background and Aim

We agree with Lankford (2013) that one cannot understand suicide terrorism without considering individual factors as well as contextual ones, and must distinguish perpetrator from audience effects. Nevertheless, although being willing to kill oneself is a necessary condition for executing suicide bombings, this need not imply that what really drives suicide bombers, rampage shooters, and other self-destructive killers is simply suicidality proper, conveniently disguised as political terrorism in cultural and religious contexts that ban individual suicide. Firstly, in the case studies he uses to make the latter point, Lankford not only seeks to estimate reliable predictors of suicide – such as prior suicide attempts, expressed death wishes, and debilitating depression – but also includes many “soft” risk factors such as the deaths of parents or siblings in childhood, unemployment, divorce because of infertility, and even disciplinary problems in school. Without knowing the base rates of both kinds of factors among the general population, it is impossible to evaluate the degree to which they lead people to commit suicide, let alone suicide terrorism, particularly when considered in the often wartorn, occupied settings from which Lankford draws many cases. Just as a suicidal mental condition is insufficient to drive suicide terrorism, so it may likely be unnecessary.

The case of Anders Behring Breivik – who shot 77 teenagers at a political youth camp after seeking to blow up the Norwegian governmental building – demonstrates the uncertainty of clinical judgments based on interpretations of written or limited data records. Although Lankford concludes that Breivik was clearly suicidal because his writings named the plight of conservative “brothers and sisters” being pushed toward suicide, and because he anticipated dying during his terror mission, a final forensic-psychiatric assessment (following extensive clinical interviews and 24 hour observations) not only concluded that Breivik was not psychotic, but found absolutely no evidence that he was suicidal (NTB, Norwegian News Agency, 2012). Breivik expressed fear of getting killed by the police on being taken captive. What clearly is necessary for committing any such acts of terrorism is the willingness to kill civilian others. We agree that this homicidal intent is likely fueled by rage and that cultural and ideological endorsement facilitates suicide terrorism. But both respond to the political reality in which a community finds itself. For example, Pape (2005) argues that suicide terrorist attacks in

Lebanon ebbed and flowed with the absence and presence of the Israeli occupation (whereas suicidal intent presumably remained fairly stable).

Dismissing this as simply being the result of increased access to weapons and enemy targets ignores the role of the political context in fueling rage towards an enemy group: relationally motivated moral outrage (Rai & Fiske, 2011) that they are subordinating, humiliating, discriminating against, victimizing, persecuting, and killing us, or threatening to do so, culminating in the intended killing of perceived enemy civilians. Such political context effects may play a role even in cases of remote identification with group members suffering at times of conflict or oppression (Sheehy-Skeffington, 2009). For example, we recently found that support for a variety of terrorism-related statements among Muslim citizens living in Denmark, ranging from general understanding of terrorism to personal willingness to use violence to defend Islam, was predicted by perceptions of general Muslim suffering and was mediated by the anger this suffering evoked (Obaidi et al., in preparation). These victimization-by-proxy effects were even stronger among Danish-born than among foreign-born Muslims (Sidanius et al., 2013), and held even when controlling for the effects of personal experiences of discrimination – a structural factor indicated in radicalization among British Muslims (Travis, 2008).

In understanding how individual factors play into these processes, such that some people in a specific context endorse or commit acts of terrorism while others in the same context do not, we must go beyond the biographical and psychopathological to the relational and ideological/political. The degrees to which people like, want, and seek relationships that are communal, hierarchical, or egalitarian underpin many psychological phenomena (Thomsen, 2010). One particularly potent dimension of relational motives is social dominance orientation (SDO): the motivation to create and maintain between-group dominance hierarchies (Pratto et al., 1994; 2006). Individuals high in SDO support hierarchical intergroup structures, in which some groups dominate others, whereas individuals low in SDO favor intergroup equality. These motives, and the cultural context that embeds them, influence both the societal endorsement of suicide terrorism, and the attitudes of those willing to commit it themselves. For example, by looking at the negative relationship between SDO and

support for terrorism against the West among Lebanese and Syrians, our work has demonstrated that counter-dominance is an important ideological motivation undergirding support for terrorism against dominant groups (Henry et al., 2005; Levin et al., 2003; Pratto et al., 2014). Conversely, among members of dominant majority groups in the West, the desire for group-based dominance increases support for violence, wars of conquests, and terrorist acts in retaliation against a threatening group or country (Ho et al., 2012; Thomsen et al., 2008). Further supporting the crucial interaction of individual relational motives and the structural context, the effect of group identification on terror support among subordinate groups (e.g., of Arab identification among Lebanese) is particularly strong among those who are low in SDO, whereas identification with dominant groups (e.g., national identification among Americans) particularly increases support for violence among those high in SDO (Kteily et al., in preparation; Levin et al., 2003; Thomsen et al., in preparation). Again, Breivik's self described radical identification with a Christian in-group and desire to preserve its dominance would fit this picture.

Conclusion

In sum, we concur that it is crucial to consider both the person and the situation in understanding suicide terrorism. Research and theory in the social dominance tradition explicates how individual differences in relational motives interact dynamically with the socio-structural context in shaping people's attitudes towards actions of group-based violence. Just as social psychology involves more than the situation, and individual differences are more than the psychopathological, so the psychology of suicide terrorism is more than simply the psychology of suicide.

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Chapter 4: Empirical Papers

Paper III

Threat Perceptions: The Cycle of Violence in the Age of Terrorism¹²

Abstract

In a series of seven experimental and correlational studies, we demonstrate a common psychology of outgroup hostility among non-Muslims Westerners, Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant that is driven by perceived intergroup threat. Across the studies, perceived symbolic threat predicted Islamophobic attitudes and behavioral intentions to engage in anti-Islam movements among native, non-Muslim Europeans, while both symbolic and realistic threats predicted support of, and behavioral intentions to engage in, anti-Western terrorism among Muslims and Arabs. Perceived cultural incompatibility between Islam and Arab culture and the West emerged as the stronger predictor of outgroup hostility in all examined populations. Importantly, these symbolic threat perceptions seemed to propel political and cultural conflicts into negative feedback loops, exacerbating intergroup hostility. Specifically, our results demonstrated that one group's negative perceptions led to hostile attitudes in another, leading to a vicious circle of intergroup hostility. Implications for intergroup research and prejudice reduction are discussed.

Keywords: Terrorism, Islamophobia, Threat Perception, Vicious Circle of Hostility, Clash of Civilization, Intergroup Relations

¹² **Author note:** Data collection for the studies conducted in Denmark and Sweden was partial funded by Harvard University. M. Obaidi designed, collected and analysed the data for studies 4a, 4b, 6 and 7; J. Kunst designed, collected and analysed the data for studies 1 and 2; N. Kteily designed, collected and analysed the data for study 5; M. Obaidi drafted the paper, N. Kteily, J. Kunst, J. Sidanius and L. Thomsen provided editing.

Background and Aim

Intergroup relations between Muslim and non-Muslim populations have become increasingly hostile over the last two decades. For example, since the dramatic attacks of 9/11, Western non-Muslim majority countries have been the target of several deadly attacks, including the 2004 Madrid and 2005 London train and bus bombings, the November 2015 Paris massacre and the December 2015 killings in San Bernardino, California, to name just a few. For their own part, Western powers have also engaged in large-scale violence, typically involving drone strikes and assassinations, cumulatively resulting in the slaughter of many hundreds of innocent men, women and children whose fate is generally relegated to the status of “collateral damage”. Western terrorists and vigilantes have also contributed to this violence: across Sweden, Norway and Germany, there have been some 580 acts of arson and murder directed against individual refugees, refugee accommodations, and even against housing used to house unaccompanied refugee children (Der Spiegel, 2015). Thus, existing evidence indicates that vicious cycles of reciprocal violence between Muslims and non-Muslims seems to be occurring with ever-greater frequency (Kteily, Hodson, & Bruneau, in press).

How do these events of terrorism and reprisal impact intergroup relations between non-Muslims and Muslims? There is good reason to believe that hostile intergroup perceptions and actions serve only to confirm and reinforce each groups’ views of its counterpart, and its willingness to engage in violence (Kteily et al., in press). For example, in the year following the attacks of September 11th, the number of hate crimes against American Muslims increased by 1,700 percent (Anderson, 2002). Similar developments have been observed in many European societies (see Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, & Cotterill, 2015). This may have radicalized some young Western Muslims (Abbas, 2012), which in turn should make them more threatening to Westerners (see also Kunst, Sadeghi, Tahir, Sam, & Thomsen, in press). Nevertheless, although examining the macro-level trends suggest that reciprocal retributive perceptions may be contributing to ongoing violence, these potential negative feedback loops remain largely unexplored at the psychological level.

Here, we aim to demonstrate a common psychology of outgroup hostility among both non-Muslim Westerners and Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant that is

similarly driven among both groups by perceived realistic, and, especially, symbolic threats to the ingroup (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; McCauley & Moskalko, 2008; Stephan and Stephan; 2000; Stephan, Ybarra, Morrison, 2009; Riek, Mania & Gaertner, 2006). More specifically, we test whether such threat perceptions can explain support for anti-western violence and behavioral intentions to commit acts of violence among Muslim residents of Europe and Arabs in the Middle East on the one hand, as well as support for Islamophobic hostility among native, non-Muslim Europeans on the other. Importantly, we propose and test whether these threat perceptions within both groups are mutually reinforcing each other, forming a vicious circle of intergroup hostility. Below, we develop our prediction that these cycles of intergroup hostility will be driven by both realistic and symbolic threats, with the latter taking on particular prominence.

Symbolic Threats as Predictors of hostile Attitudes and Violence towards the outgroup

Symbolic threats are threats to a group's religion, values, norms, morals, philosophy or identity. A broad range of theoretical perspectives highlights the importance of symbolic resources, and the hostility that individuals harbor towards those who reject or threaten the ingroup's values. For one, individuals across social groups make negative attributions towards groups whose values and worldview are incompatible with their own (Brandt, Reyna, Chambers, Crawford, & Wetherell, 2014), and react strongly to acts that threaten their moral convictions (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005; Tetlock, 2003; see also Parker & Janoff-Bulman, 2013). Similarly, research on image theory (e.g., Alexander, Levin, & Henry, 2005) suggests that an important source of contempt towards outgroups is the sense that they are culturally inferior, and integrated threat theory proposes that when people perceive certain social groups as symbolically threatening, they express more prejudice and hostility towards them (see Riek et al., 2006 for a review). Several previous studies empirically confirm the link between perceived symbolic threats and negative attitudes toward foreigners (Esses, Haddock, & Zanna, 1993; Esses, Hodson, & Dovidio, 2003). For example, symbolic threat has been associated with self-reported willingness to expel immigrants across 17 countries (McLaren, 2003) and perceived cultural incompatibility has been shown to be an

important source of support for outgroup violence (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita, 2007; see also Huntington, 1993; Lewis, 1990).

Accordingly, symbolic threat perceptions likely also mobilize Westerners' opposition to Islam and Muslims in powerful ways. In the West, Islamic culture is often framed as a symbolic threat (Saeed, 2007), a societal perception highly salient to Muslims (Kunst, Sam & Ulleberg, 2013; Kunst, Tajamal, Sam, & Ulleberg, 2012). For instance, several leading European politicians have openly expressed concerns about the number of Muslim refugees entering Europe, arguing that they pose a threat to European Christian identity, values and norms. Hungary's prime minister, Viktor Orban, put it this way: "Those arriving have been raised in another religion, and represent a radically different culture. Most of them are not Christians, but Muslims (...) This is an important question, because Europe and European identity is rooted in Christianity" (Mackey, 2015). Consistent with this, symbolic threats and perceived value incompatibility between Muslims and native Westerners predicted greater levels of prejudice towards Muslims in previous research (González, Verkuyten, Weesie, & Poppe, 2008; Pedersen & Hartley, 2012). Against this background of research, we expect symbolic threat to be a predictor of outgroup hostility towards Muslims among non-Muslim majority populations (Hypothesis 1).

The outgroup hostility of Muslims in Europe towards non-Muslims should similarly be grounded in symbolic threats from perceived value incompatibility, public criticism of Islamic culture, and from perceiving pressure to reject their culture of origin and assimilate into European societies (Kunst et al., 2015, Kunst & Sam, 2013). Although the link between symbolic threat and support for violence among Muslims remains relatively understudied, there is some suggestive evidence that supports this prediction. For example, various Gallup polls in Muslim countries suggest that the notion of a fundamental clash between civilizations has widespread support among many Muslims, who see Western principles and values as threatening, inferior and fundamentally different from their own (Gallup Poll, 2002a; Gallup Poll, 2002b). Documenting a link between symbolic threat and violence, Bueno de Mesquita (2007) found that public support for terrorism in 14 Muslim countries was positively associated with the belief that the United States poses a threat to Islam (see also Fair & Shepherd, 2006). Also in

the context of homegrown terrorism in Europe, Doosje and colleagues showed that perceived symbolic threat reliably predicted violent intentions among young Dutch Muslims (Doosje, Loseman & Van den Bos, 2013; see also van Bergen, Feddes, Doosje & Pels, 2015). Thus, to the extent that both ethnic Arabs and Muslims perceive their cultural practices and values to be threatened by, superior to, or incompatible with those of the West, they may also be more supportive of violence targeting Western societies (Hypothesis 2).

Realistic Threats as Predictors of hostile Attitudes and Violence towards the outgroup

Realistic threat is a second category of threat that has predicted outgroup negativity in previous research. In contrast to symbolic threats, realistic threats target a group's political, economic and military power, general physical well-being and welfare. Realistic threats typically arise from the perception of competition over scarce resources such as jobs, land, and political and economic power, but also from threats to the general well-being and welfare of a group (e.g., Ashmore & Del Boca, 1976; Bovasso, 1993; Bobo, 1983; Quillian, 1995). The role of realistic threats in predicting outgroup hostility is well established (Bizman & Yinon, 2001; Stephan et al., 1999). For examples, realistic threat has been shown to predict attitudes towards racial out-groups in both African American and White samples (Stephan et al., 2002), and negativity towards Asian Americans (Maddux, Galinsky, Cuddy, & Polifroni, 2008). Indeed, a meta-analysis by Riek et al. (2006) found an average effect size of $r = .42$ between realistic threats and negative outgroup attitudes. Hence, on first sight, one may assume that anti-Muslim resentment may also be driven by the concern that Muslim immigration constitutes a realistic threat to native Europeans. Yet, while we agree that realistic threat is a potent predictor of negativity towards immigrants in general, we do not believe that it underlines hostility towards Muslims in particular, given that public discourse mostly frames relations between Islam and the West in symbolic terms.

Among Muslims and Arabs, however, we predict that realistic threat will predict attitudes and behavioral intentions of anti-Western violence (Hypothesis 3). From this minority and low-status perspective, support for intergroup violence can be understood not only as

a result of perceived cultural incompatibility or symbolic threat, but also as an act of counter-dominance behavior based on a rejection of the concrete physical costs imposed by the outgroup on the ingroup, such as loss of economic and political opportunities or even loss of life (Khosrokhavar, 2009). Consistent with this view, Pape (2005) analyzed all documented suicide attacks between 1980 and 2003 and concluded that they were primarily a consequence of foreign occupation, domination, and frustrated aspirations for autonomy (see also Obaidi, Bergh, Sidanius & Thomsen, 2016) – factors we would term counter-dominance motives (Thomsen, Obaidi, Sheehy-Skeffington, Kteily, & Sidanius, 2014). Similarly, a large-scale study by Mostafa and Al-Hamdi (2007) found strong support for a counter-dominance perspective in eight Arab countries: in their work, negative attitudes toward U.S. foreign policy were predicted by realistic threats such as perceptions of American imperialism, military presence in Iraq, and material support of Israel. Moreover, Sidanius et al. (2015) found that support for ‘resistance’ violence and groups such as Hezbollah was driven by a drive for counter-dominance among Lebanese Muslims and Christians (see also Levin, Kteily, Sidanius, Pratto, & Matthews, in press; Levin et al., 2012; Sidanius et al., 2004).

Overview of Studies

Across seven studies, we test our general prediction that threat perceptions among Westerners/non-Muslims and Arabs/Muslims contribute— in similar ways— to a mutually-reinforcing deterioration of relations between these groups. Importantly, we examine not only how realistic and symbolic threats may explain negative intergroup affect, but also support for highly consequential real-world phenomena such as support for violence and behavioral intentions to engage in hostile collective movement or even to commit violence. By examining these questions among both advantaged and disadvantaged group members, and by using both experimental and correlational approaches, our work makes important contributions to a literature that has largely employed only correlational methods, and tended to take a one-sided focus on advantaged group members. Across all seven studies, we predict that symbolic and realistic threats will contribute to out-group hostility. For reasons outlined above, we expect symbolic threat to predict hostility among non-Muslim Westerners, while expecting both symbolic and realistic threats to uniquely predict hostility among Muslims

and Arabs. Finally, from an exploratory perspective, we were interested in comparing the relative contributions of symbolic vs. realistic threat within the latter group.

Study 1

Rationale

Due to increasing rates of immigration, minority groups in many countries, including Norway and the US, are projected to become the numerical majority groups (either nation-wide or in certain geographical areas; Thorenfeld & Meland, 2009; US Census, 2008). Members of the current majority groups often perceive such demographic shifts as threatening, leading to greater support for conservative ideologies (Craig & Richeson, 2014). In Europe, “Eurabia” has become a term often used by individuals spreading such dystopian scenarios in terms of Muslim immigration. As Carr (2006) puts it, “in the nightmare world of Eurabia, the future will become the past once again and Christians and Jews will become oppressed minorities in a sea of Islam” (p. 4).

In Study 1, we tested the specific prediction that a threat to one’s numerical majority status would increase Islamophobic hostility among native Norwegians. Given that Muslim immigration is mostly presented as symbolic threat in Western public discourse (see Kunst, Tajamal, Sam, & Ulleberg, 2012 for a review) and in line with earlier research (González, et al., 2008), we expected especially symbolic threat to mediate and hence to drive these effects.

Method

Participants

A total of 96 native Norwegians ($M_{age} = 28.6$ years, $SD_{age} = 6.5$; 79.2% male) were recruited through postings on online social networks (e.g., Facebook groups unrelated to the topic) for a study on “social issues”.

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to either an experimental condition highlighting the demographic increase of immigrants or a control condition. In the demographic increase condition, participants watched a short, edited video clip from a

major Norwegian TV channel. In the video, new, statistical reports were cited suggesting that ethnic Norwegians may become a minority in Norway within 50 years (and within 20 years in Oslo) due to immigration. Adult immigrants and children from predominantly Muslim countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan were shown while these statistics were presented. The video further stated that ethnic Norwegian children are already a minority in many schools and kindergartens in Oslo. In the control condition, participants watched an unrelated video from the same TV station that was matched in length and dealt with the importance of using glasses while driving. After watching the video, participants first completed the symbolic and realistic threat measures in randomized order and subsequently completed a measure of Islamophobia and other measures unrelated to this study.

Measures and Materials

Symbolic threat. Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt that different aspects of the Norwegian culture are threatened by immigration. These aspects were Norwegian (1) cultural habits, (2) values and norms, (3) cultural traditions and (4) culture in general. Responses were rated on 5-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all threatened*) to 5 (*threatened to a high degree*) and the four-item scale was reliable ($\alpha = .97$).

Realistic threat. Using the same scale, four items assessed realistic threat ($\alpha = .94$). Here, participants rated the degree to which they felt that the Norwegian (1) labor market, (2) welfare system, (3) economic wealth of Norwegian citizens and (4) the Norwegian economy in general were threatened by immigration.

Islamophobia. The 8-item behavioral-affective subscale of the islamophobia scale (Lee, Gibbons, Thompson, & Timani, 2009) was used to measure participants' negativity toward Muslims ($\alpha = .94$). Specifically, on 10-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 10 (*totally agree*), participants were asked to indicate their agreement with statements such as "I would support any policy that would stop the building of new mosques in Norway" and "Muslims should not be allowed to work in places where many Norwegians gather, such as airports."

Results

Participants on average experienced greater symbolic ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.49$) than realistic threat ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.35$, $t(95) = -3.52$, $p = .001$, 95% CI of the difference [- .53, -.15]). We observed that the experimental manipulation affected both symbolic and realistic threat, as well as Islamophobia: Participants who watched a video about the demographic increase in the number of immigrants perceived higher degrees of symbolic ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.49$) and realistic threat ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.40$) than those in the control condition (symbolic threat: $M = 2.56$, $SD = 1.43$, $t(94) = -2.20$, $p = .030$, 95% CI of the difference [-1.25, -.065]; realistic threat: $M = 2.22$, $SD = 1.22$, $t(94) = -2.46$, $p = .016$, 95% CI of the difference [-1.19, -.13]). Moreover, participants in the demographic increase condition expressed more Islamophobia ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 3.03$) than those in the control group ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 2.89$, $t(94) = -2.09$, $p = .039$, 95% CI of the difference [-2.46, -.063]).

Having established these effects, we used structural equation modeling (SEM) with Maximum Likelihood (ML) Estimation to test a mediational model in which symbolic and realistic threat mediated the effects of the numerical threat condition (0 = control, 1 = demographic increase condition) on Islamophobia. In this (fully saturated) model, the experimental threat induction predicted both symbolic and realistic threat; of these, we observed that only symbolic threat predicted Islamophobia as expected (see Figure 1). Analyses using bootstrapping with 5000 random re-samples indicated that, whereas there was a significant indirect effect of the experimental condition on Islamophobia through symbolic threat ($\beta = .14$, 95% CI [.03, .31]), the indirect effect of condition on Islamophobia through realistic threat was nonsignificant ($\beta = .05$, 95% CI [- .01, .16]).

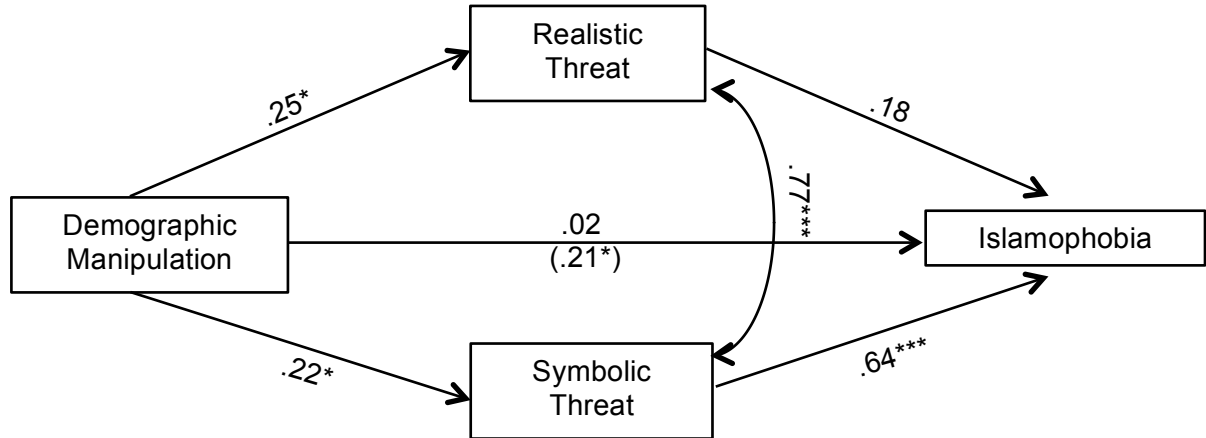


Figure 1. Mediation model for Study 1. Standardized coefficients are displayed. $*p < .05$, $***p < .001$. Coefficient in parenthesis is based on the unmediated model.

Study 2

Rational

Study 1 suggested that symbolic threat in particular fueled Islamophobia among majority members. In this study, we wanted to test whether these effects were limited to negative attitudes towards Muslims or would also apply to behavioral intentions. Specifically, we wanted to test whether religious (e.g., Christian) identity would be associated with more support for joining a Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West (PEGIDA)-like movement. We further sought to test the degree to which realistic and symbolic threats would mediate this relationship, examining whether effects would again be mediated by symbolic threat in particular as hypothesized.

Method

Participants

A total of 205 Norwegian participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 30.26$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 12.11$; 56.6% females) were recruited through snowball sampling on Facebook.

Measures.

Religious identity. Three items from Thomsen, Green, and Sidanius (2008) were used to measure participants' religious identity ($\alpha = .92$). Specifically, participants rated how strongly they identified with their religious group, how close they felt to other people of their religious group and how often they thought about themselves in terms of their religious group on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*very weakly/not close at all/never*) to 7 (*very strongly/very close/very often*).

Realistic and symbolic threat. We adopted a measure from González et al. (2008) to measure realistic ($\alpha = .76$) and symbolic ($\alpha = .93$) threat. Each threat was measured using three items (e.g., symbolic threat: "Muslims are a threat to the Norwegian culture"; realistic threat: "Because of the presence of Muslims, unemployment in Norway will increase") rated on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*).

Support of PEGIDA-like movement. On the same scale, participants indicated their agreement with six items denoting different degrees of behavioral support for a PEGIDA movement. These items varied in the degree of involvement from more mild forms of support (e.g., "I would be positive towards a march against the Islamization of Norway") to stronger forms (e.g., "I would organize a march against the Islamization of Norway"), forming a reliable construct ($\alpha = .96$).

Results and Discussion

Religious identity was positively related to PEGIDA support ($r = .15, p < .05$), and symbolic ($r = .17, p < .05$) but not realistic threat ($r = .04, p = .54$). Both type of threats were related to more support of PEGIDA (symbolic threat: $r = .34, p < .001$; realistic threat: $r = .20, p = .005$).

In the mediated model using ML estimation, $\chi^2(3, N = 203) = 4.68, p = .197$, $\chi^2/df^{13} = 1.56, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .05, 90\% CI [.00, .14], SRMR = .04$, the different threat measures fully mediated the effect of religious identity on PEGIDA support.

¹³ The procedure also included a video manipulation, where participants either watched a video portraying Norwegian islamists or a control video. Because the manipulation had no significant effect on the dependent variables, we do not treat it as predictor in consecutive analyses but control for it as covariate.

Specifically, religious identity had an indirect positive effect on PEGIDA support mediated by symbolic threat (see Figure 2). Bootstrapping showed that this indirect effect was significant ($\beta = .05$, 95% CI [.01, .13]), whereas the indirect effect via realistic threat was nonsignificant ($\beta = .00$, 95% CI [-.01, .03]).

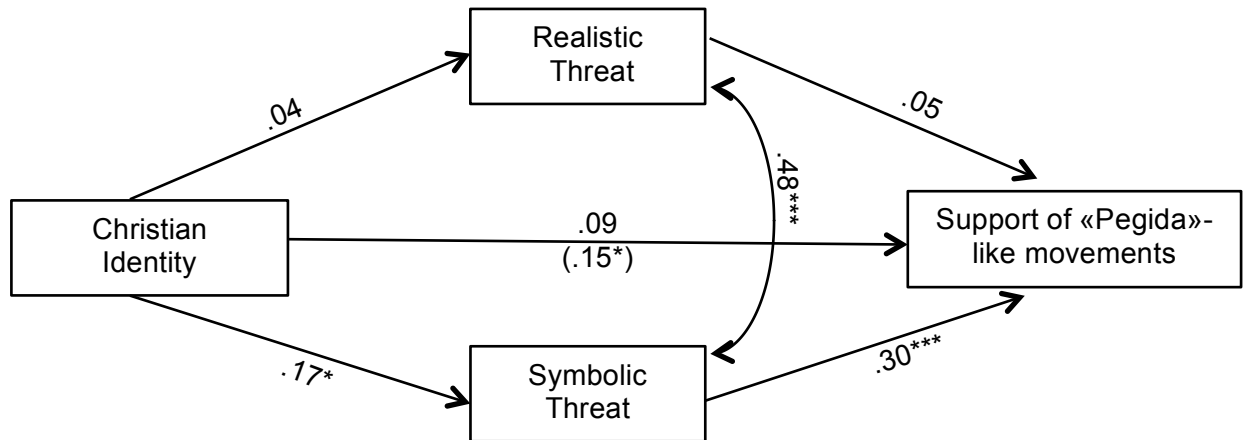


Figure 2. Mediation model for Study 2. Standardized coefficients are displayed. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Coefficient in parenthesis is based on the unmediated model.

Study 3a and 3b

Rational

The first two studies showed that symbolic threat in general predicted ethnic Norwegians' hostility towards Muslims. Here, we sought to examine whether the same or similar processes explained hostile attitudes among low status minority groups. Taking the minority and low-status perspective, in Studies 3a and 3b we focused on the attitudes and perceptions of Muslim residents of Denmark. The Danish context is of particular interest for several reasons, all of which suggest that Muslims might be experiencing high levels of symbolic and realistic threat: Specifically, Denmark was embroiled in the controversy surrounding *Jyllands Posten's* publication of cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad; second, the rise and success of the anti-immigration Danish People's Party in the country has resulted in Denmark adopting what has been called the most restrictive

immigration policy in Europe (Reimann, 2011), including the recent controversial law that seizes valuable items from refugees and a bill to lengthen the amount of time for family reunification from one to three years; and third, in the last twelve years, Denmark has participated in several wars in Muslim-majority countries. As in Study 2 we examined religious (i.e., Muslim) identification given research suggesting that identification is an important antecedent of perceived threat.

Method

Participants and procedures Study 3a.

We sampled 257 (68.9% female) Danish Muslims from 32 different Islam-related Facebook websites in Denmark (e.g., “Islam the ideology” and “The Danish Muslim Community”) from February 15th to May 1st 2013. These websites were selected from a pool of 80 identified Islam-related Facebook groups in Denmark. After obtaining permission from the administrators of Facebook websites, we invited each person individually to participate in the study. Participants received no personal compensation for participation; instead, we paid 20 DKK (approximately \$4) to a charitable cause of their choice. Age was measured in a truncated format to increase anonymity due to the sensitive nature of the study. Most participants were between 18 and 34 (88.5% of the total sample). We aimed to recruit a diverse sample: For example, we used not only Facebook groups consisting solely of well-educated secular Muslim immigrants, but also included websites that primarily targeted traditional and practicing Muslims with strong religious beliefs and cultural values.

Study 3b. In Study 3b we followed the same data collection procedure as in Study 3a and sampled 226 (59.3% female) Danish Muslims. Data collection started June 1st 2013 and was completed August 30th 2013. The majority of participants were between 18 and 34 years old (82.9% of the total sample).

Measures.

The surveys were conducted in Danish and included measures of Muslim identification, symbolic and realistic threats and attitudes toward anti-Western violence. Some measures were derived from a prior study based on qualitative interviews (Obaidi, 2016). All items were answered on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Muslim identification. Three items measured Muslim identification (e.g., “I feel strongly connected to other Muslims”; $\alpha = .93$, Study 3a; $\alpha = .92$, Study 3b).

Symbolic threat. Symbolic threat was assessed using three items (e.g., “Non-Muslim westerners hold values that conflict with the values of people like me”; $\alpha = .76$, Study 3a; $\alpha = .77$, Study 3b).

Realistic threat. Realistic threat was assessed using three items (e.g., “Muslims are disadvantaged because the West keeps them down”; $\alpha = .83$, Study 3a; $\alpha = .85$, Study 3b).

Attitudes towards anti-Western violence. Attitudes toward anti-western violence were assessed using three items (e.g., “In general, I understand some Muslim groups’ reasons for the use of violence, even though I do not condone the violence itself ”; $\alpha = .70$, Study 3a; $\alpha = .74$, Study 3b)¹⁴.

Results

Study 3a. Variable descriptives and intercorrelations can be found in Table 1. We examined the same path model here as in Study 2. The analysis was performed using MLM estimation. This estimation was chosen because it is robust to non-normal data that could be expected for the extreme measure of anti-Western violence. We first estimated the fully saturated model, and then trimmed a non-significant path between Muslim identification and support for anti-western violence. The trimmed model fit the empirical data well (Satorra-Bentler $\chi^2(1) = 1.65$, $p = .20$, $CFI = 0.99$, $RMSEA = .05$, 90% CI [.00, .18], $SRMR = .02$; See Figure 3a).

¹⁴ Attitudes towards anti-Western violence adopted from Tausch et al. (2011).

Table 3a. Descriptive statistics and variable intercorrelations in Study 3a.

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Muslim identification	4.76	1.81	-			
2. Perceived Realistic threat	4.72	1.65	.35**	-		
3. Perceived Symbolic threat	3.62	1.59	.51**	.42**	-	
4. Anti-Western Violence	3.03	1.77	.17**	.30**	.38**	-

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

The results of the path analysis showed that both symbolic and realistic threats predicted attitudes towards anti-Western violence. Nevertheless, symbolic threat emerged as stronger predictor of attitudes towards anti-Western violence. The effect of symbolic threat on attitudes towards anti-Western violence was twice the size ($\beta = 0.44$, 95% CI [.33, .56]) of that for realistic threat ($\beta = 0.22$, 95% CI [.11, .33]). Indeed, a model with these parameters constrained to equality produced a significant deterioration in model fit, indicating a significant difference between the two paths (Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square Difference, $TRd(1) = 4.08$, $p = .04$). Bootstrapping showed that the indirect effects of Muslim identification on attitudes towards anti-Western violence via each of symbolic threat ($\beta = .18$, 95% CI [.11, .25]) and realistic threat ($\beta = .09$, 95% CI [.03, .14]) were significant.

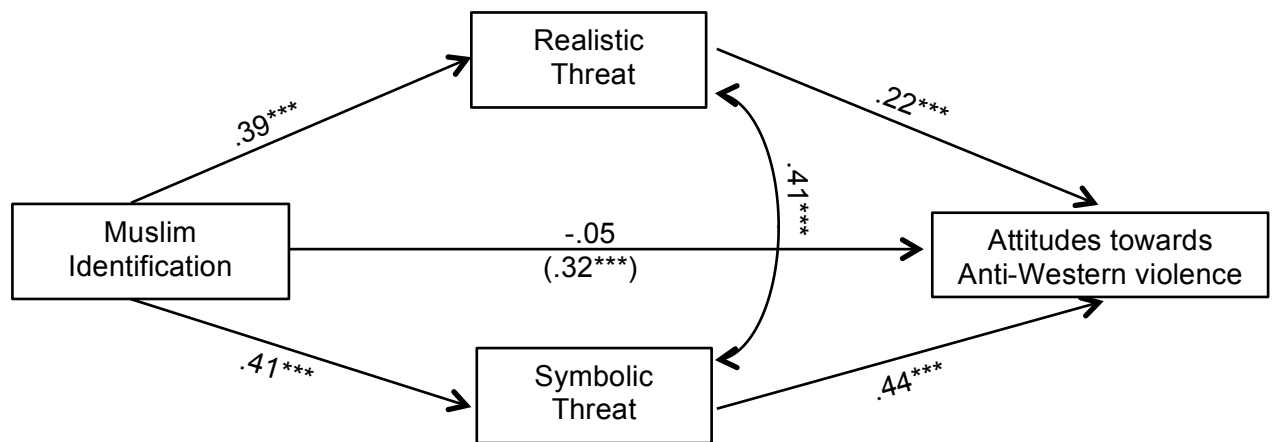


Figure 3a. Path model and standardized path coefficients (study 3a) for relations between Muslim identification symbolic and realistic threats and positive attitudes toward anti-Western violence (*** $p < .001$).

Study 3b. Variable descriptives and intercorrelations can be found in Table 2. In Study 3b we set out to replicate the effects from Study 3a. We examined the same path model here as in Study 3a, obtaining highly consistent results. All paths were significant except the path from Muslim identification to attitudes toward violence. We examined the model fit trimming this path, and observed that it fit the empirical data well (Satorra-Bentler $\chi^2(1) = 0.44, p = .51, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 90\% CI [.00, .15], SRMR = .01$; see Figure 3b). The effect size of symbolic threat on attitudes towards anti-Western violence was greater $\beta = 0.31, 95\% CI [0.16, 0.45]$ than that for realistic threat $\beta = 0.18, 95\% CI [.05, .31]$. However, in this case, constraining these parameters to equality did not indicate significant model deterioration (Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square Difference, $TRd(1) = 1.33, p = .25$), indicating that these paths were statistically equivalent.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and variable intercorrelations in Study 3b.

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Muslim identification	5.06	1.71	-			
2. Perceived Realistic threat	4.78	1.64	.38**	-		
3. Perceived Symbolic threat	3.80	1.68	.40**	.50**	-	
4. Anti-Western Violence	3.23	1.80	.32**	.44**	.56**	-

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Last, bootstrapping showed that the indirect effects of Muslim identification on attitudes towards anti-Western violence via each of symbolic threat (indirect effect $\beta = .15, 95\% CI [.07, .23]$) and realistic threat (indirect effect $\beta = .06, 95\% CI [.01, .11]$) were significant. In sum, Studies 3a and 3b suggested that each of symbolic threat and realistic threat play an important role in predicting aggressive attitudes towards the West, with some evidence that symbolic factors might be particularly important.

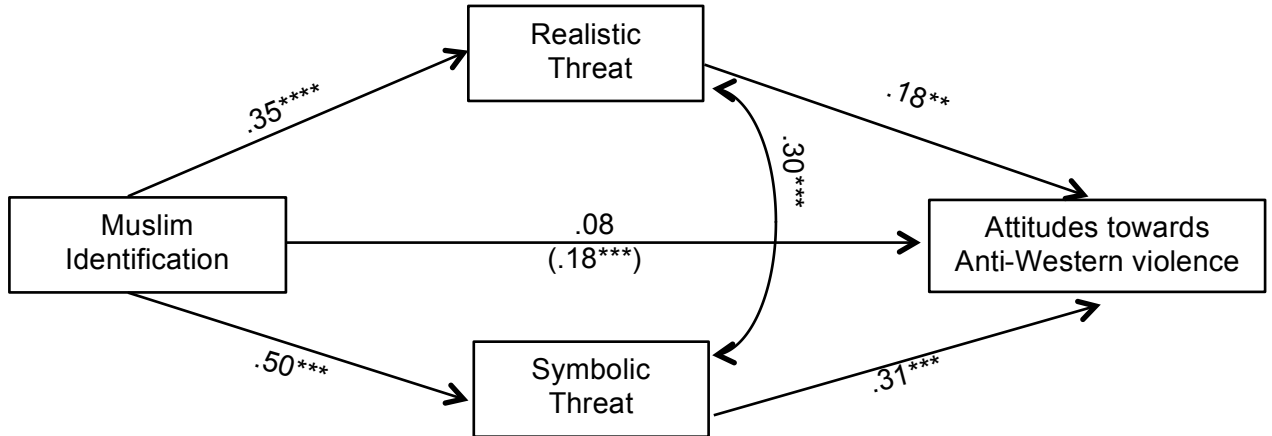


Figure 3b. Path model and standardized path coefficients (study 3b) for relations between Muslim identification, symbolic and realistic threats and attitudes toward anti-Western violence (** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$).

Study 4

Rational

The aim of Study 4 was to replicate the findings from Studies 3a and 3b in a different context and population. Specifically, we focused on the Middle Eastern context of Lebanon because many have proposed a causal relationship between Western foreign policy in the Middle East and Arab grievances resulting in negative attitudes toward the West. For example, some claim that Western foreign policy toward Iraq and Afghanistan, the presence of US military forces on Arab land, and the US's unconditional support for Israel have created a breeding ground for Arab grievances and a potential source of support for anti-western violence (Pape, 2003). Similarly, the perception that the West is biased and aggressive against Islamic values is prevalent among many in Arab countries (Wike & Grim, 2007). Furthermore, many believe that Western values, morals and “decadent culture” have a corrupting influence on the local traditional value systems and on their society in general (Gallup Poll, 2002b). For instance, various Western cultural values are perceived as having greater detrimental influence on Arab societies relative to political or economic factors (Gallup Poll, 2002b).

As we focused on Lebanon in an international context instead of a classic immigration context, we framed realistic and symbolic threat in the context of

international Islamist extremism. Specifically, realistic threat was operationalized as feeling economically exploited and physically threatened by America, while symbolic threat was operationalized as incompatibility between Arab and American culture and the feeling of American culture being inferior (and thus, a potential ‘contaminant’ of Arab culture).

Method

Participants and procedures. We conducted interviews with respondents taken from random stratified samples in the Spring of 2010, across a number of Lebanese cities. Participants were ethnic Arabs primarily belonging to one of the three dominant religions and religious sects: Sunni Muslims ($n = 61$), Shi’a Muslims ($n = 29$), and Maronite Christians ($n = 63$). The remaining participants were Muslims who did not identify their sect ($n = 11$), Orthodox Christians ($n = 14$), Roman Catholics ($n = 9$), and Druze ($n = 13$). Thus, our final sample included 200 participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 37.57$, $SD = 15.11$; 50.5% male)¹⁵.

Using the Kish Grid approach (McBurney, 1988), we inventoried all family members among households that agreed to participate and randomly selected one individual to be interviewed such that both genders had an equal likelihood of being included. The interviews were conducted in Arabic by trained residents contracted by the polling firm Zogby International. Participants received the equivalent of \$10 for participating. All measures were translated into Arabic by Zogby International and subsequently back-translated into English by a different group at the firm to ensure translation accuracy¹⁶.

¹⁵ The analyses presented here uses items drawn from the same dataset (with partial overlap) that has been used in Levin et al. (2012, 2015a, 2015b), Sidanius et al. (2015), and Pratto, Sidanius, Bou-Zeineddine, Kteily, & Levin, (2014). However, this prior work investigated different theoretical questions.

¹⁶ In the current study we re-analyzed data examined in Levin et al., 2012 and Sidanius et al., 2015. Although these authors examined support for anti-Western violence, they did not address the structural relations examined here (i.e., symbolic and realistic threat mediating the effects of Arab identification).

Measures.

The survey included a range of measures meant to assess different research questions. For the purposes of the present research, we focus on measures of Arab identification, symbolic and realistic threat, and attitudes toward fighting Americans. Across the survey, responses were indicated on 1-5 scales, with responses of *don't know*, *not sure*, or refusals to respond coded as missing data.

Arab identification. Arab identification was assessed using five items (e.g., “How important is it to you to be Arab?”, $\alpha = .91$). Responses were provided on a 1= *not at all* to 5= *very much* scale.

Realistic threat. Realistic threat was assessed using four items (e.g., “Americans, as a group, endanger the physical safety of Arabs”, $\alpha = .91$)¹⁷. Responses were provided on a 1= *strongly disagree* to 5= *strongly agree* scale.

Symbolic threat. On the same 1-5 scale, symbolic threat was assessed using three items (e.g., “Americans, as a group, possess values that directly oppose the values of Arabs”, $\alpha = .68$).

Anti-American violence. Violence towards the U.S. was assessed using three items forming a reliable scale ($\alpha = .75$). The first item was “Arabs should fight Americans”, assessed on a 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree* scale. The final two items were preceded by the stem “How much do you support or oppose the following actions against Americans. The specific actions were “Attacking military targets” and “Killing civilians”. These two items were assessed on a 1 = *strongly oppose* to 5 = *strongly support* scale.

¹⁷ There were some further items reflecting perceptions about what goals Americans wanted their government to pursue, some of which are potentially relevant to realistic threat. These items were: “Americans want their government to maintain control over the oil resources in the Middle East”, and “Americans want their government to dominate Arab societies”. We decided to exclude these variables as they did not capture realistic threat as cleanly or directly as the variables we include. However, we note that results were very similar when these variables were included, with the exception that symbolic and realistic threat had more similar levels of prediction.

Results and Discussion

Variable descriptives and intercorrelations can be found in Table 3. We examined our hypotheses using structural equation modeling. Consistent with our theorizing, we treated Arab identification as an exogenous variable predicting both realistic and symbolic threat, as well as anti-American violence. We also modeled paths from symbolic and realistic threat to anti-American violence, as well as a covariate between symbolic and realistic threat (see Figure 4).

Table 3. *Descriptive statistics and variable intercorrelations in Study 4.*

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Arab identification	3.65	.89	-			
2. Perceived Realistic threat	4.01	1.02	.30***	-		
3. Perceived Symbolic threat	3.23	1.02	.62***	.55***	-	
4. Anti-American Violence	2.50	1.18	.47***	.56***	.71***	-

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

The analysis was performed using MLM estimation in Mplus. The model was fully saturated. As can be seen in Figure 4, Arab identification was strongly related to both symbolic and realistic threats, which were inter-correlated. Most importantly for our purposes, we observed that symbolic threat and realistic threat were each unique predictors of support for anti-American violence, where symbolic threat appeared as the strongest predictor. Indeed, when taking into account the effects of symbolic and realistic threat, the direct path from Arab identification to anti-American violence was no longer significant, indicating full mediation. When we trimmed this path from the model, we observed that the model fit the data well (Satorra-Bentler $\chi^2(1) = 1.497$, $p = .22$, $CFI = .998$, $RMSEA = .05$, 90% CI [.00, .20], $SRMR = .011$). Bootstrapping showed that Arab identification had significant indirect effects through realistic threat (standardized indirect effect = .07, $p = .001$) as well as symbolic threat (standardized indirect effect = .36, $p < .001$), where the path through symbolic threat again appeared strongest.

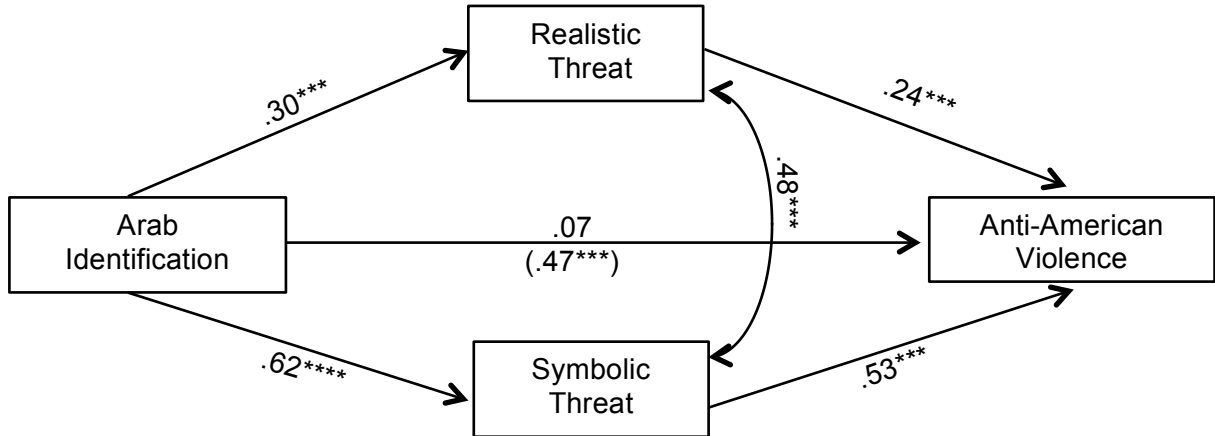


Figure 4. Structural equation model predicting anti-American violence support among Arabs as a function of Arab identification, symbolic threat, and realistic threat. *** $p < .001$.

To explore the question of relative predictive power of realistic and symbolic threat more formally, we set the paths from symbolic and realistic threats to anti-American violence to equality and examined the subsequent deterioration in model fit. Indeed, when we constrained these paths, we observed significantly poorer model fit (Satorra-Bentler $\chi^2(2) = 13.556, p = .001, CFI = .962, RMSEA = .17, 90\% CI [.09, .26], SRMR = .038$; Satorra-Bentler chi-square difference = 11.67, $df = 1, p < .001$), suggesting that the pathway from symbolic threat to anti-American violence was significantly stronger than that from realistic threat.

Study 5

Rational

Study 4 demonstrated that perceiving the culture of the (Arab) ingroup to be superior to that of the (Western) outgroup, which is seen as morally inferior and direct opposition to the ingroup, relates strongly to support for anti-Western violence among Arabs in Lebanon. Returning to the Scandinavian context, in Study 5 we sought to test whether the (meta)perception that the (Western) outgroup sees one's own (Muslim) culture as inferior and incompatible with Western culture will also lead to support for

violence against it. To examine this question, we directly manipulated the perception that one's culture and lifestyle is seen as incompatible and inferior to the dominant group in society and assessed its effects on support for violence.

Method

Participants and procedures. We followed the same data collection procedure as in Studies 3a and 3b, randomly sampling 152 Muslim respondents (63.8% female). Most participants were in the 18-34 age range (82.4%).

Measures and materials.

Experimental manipulation. A random half of the participants were presented with a scenario that described ethnic Danes as feeling symbolically threatened by Muslims because they perceive Islamic culture, norms and values as incompatible with and inferior to Danish culture, norms and values. The other half was presented with a non-threatening control condition describing Danes' preference for various TV programs (see SOM for full details). Both scenarios were followed by a filler task in which participants rated their preference for a series of graphical icons.

Dependent variable. After the experimental manipulation and filler task, participants completed a three-item anti-western violence scale ($\alpha = .70$) from Studies 3a and 3b.

Results and Discussion

Participants in the threat condition expressed greater support for anti-Western violence ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.75$, 95% CI [2.6, .3.3]) than did participants in the control condition ($M = 2.28$, $SD = 1.29$, 95% CI [1.9, .2.6], $F(1, 149) = 7.273$, $\eta^2 = .05$, $p = .008$). Whereas prior studies assessed how the ingroup perceived the outgroup (i.e., as realistically or symbolically threatening), the current study was distinguished by the fact that it examined *meta*-perceptions (i.e., how the ingroup was perceived by the outgroup). Consistent with our earlier studies, symbolic threat (here manipulated by making participants feel that their values were rejected by the outgroup) increased support for anti-Western violence among Muslims in Denmark.

Study 6

Rational

We had several aims in Study 6. First, we wanted to replicate our effects in a different context, among Muslim residents of Sweden; second, we sought to use meta-perceptual primes to induce realistic as well as symbolic threats, allowing us to compare these two types; finally, whereas earlier studies assessed attitudes towards violence, we here measured behavioral intentions to commit terrorism. Behavioral intentions are better predictors of actual behavior than mere attitudinal support (see De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999).

Similar to Denmark, Sweden has seen a recent rise in right-wing rhetoric and political representation. Indeed, the country has witnessed an increase in anti-Muslim and immigration rhetoric, and hate crimes against Muslims have been increasing in recent years across different Swedish cities (Reuter, 2015). This made Sweden an ideal context in which to examine our predictions, and increased the plausibility and ecological validity of our meta-perceptual manipulations of threat.

Method

Participants and procedures. We followed data collection procedures similar to those in Study 6. From a pool of 10 randomly selected Swedish Islam-related Facebook websites, we randomly sampled 161 Muslim respondents (57.4% women). Most participants were in the 18-34 age range (86%).

Measures and materials.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions (see SOM for full content). In the symbolic threat condition, we used the same material from Study 5 (with minor adjustments for the Swedish context). In the realistic threat condition, participants were presented with a scenario that described ethnic Swedes' support for Western foreign policy in Muslim countries. In a control condition, participants were presented with a text describing ethnic Swedes' preference for various TV programs.

After the experimental manipulation, participants completed a six-item scale ($\alpha = .86$; Bergh & Obaidi, 2016), which measured participants' behavioral intentions to

commit terrorism in defense of Muslims (e.g., “I will personally use violence against people harming other Muslims that I care about.”).

Results

We used ANOVA to test the effect of the threat manipulation on behavioral intentions to commit terrorism. The analysis showed that the overall effect of the threat manipulation was significant, $F(2,155) = 7.07$, $\eta^2 = .08$, $p < .001$. Participants in the symbolic threat condition expressed stronger behavioral intentions to commit terrorism in defense of Islam and/or Muslims ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.62$, 95% CI [2.7, 3.5]) compared to those in the realistic threat ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.59$, 95% CI [2.3, 3.0],) or control conditions ($M = 1.95$, $SD = 1.30$, 95% CI [1.5, 2.4]). Post hoc analyses using the Scheffé test indicated that the only significant difference was between the symbolic threat and the control conditions ($p = .01$). In line with Study 6, then, the perception that ethnic, non-Muslim Swedes saw Muslim culture as culturally inferior and in opposition to Swedish culture had a significant effect on Muslims’ behavioral intention to employ violence in defense of Muslims.

General Discussion

In a series of six studies, combining correlational and experimental techniques across various contexts, we demonstrate a common psychology of outgroup hostility among both non-Muslims, Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant— one that is driven by perceived intergroup threat, and symbolic threat in particular. As expected, similar patterns emerged among Muslims and Arabs on the one hand, and among non-Muslim Westerners on the other, providing evidence of similar drivers of hostility across all three groups. Moreover, our research suggested ways in which vicious cycles of mutually reinforcing hostility and violence might unfold among real groups.

In our studies, we hypothesized that non-Muslim Europeans might see Muslim culture and practices not only as incompatible with, but also as clashing with and inferior to Europeans’ cherished values and way of life. We expected that this would lead to more Islamophobia and mobilization against Muslims. We further hypothesized that the same mechanism would be relevant to minority and low-power groups, where symbolic threats

could function as powerful rallying forces among Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant. For example, we expected that many Arabs would see American culture and practices as inferior and opposed to their own culture, which would be associated with a greater willingness to support violence against American; we expected a similar process would lead Muslims in Europe to indicate more violent behavioral intentions towards the West. Notably, the existence of such a process might lead to a vicious cycle of hostility: for example, Muslim and Arab support for violence might confirm Europeans' impression that these groups pose a threat, provoking some Europeans to respond with aggression, and so on (see also Kteily et al., in press). We attempted to explore whether there was evidence for a process fundamental to such a vicious cycle in a series of seven correlational and experimental studies across various contexts and populations.

The first two studies suggested that symbolic threat was a potent driver of Westerners' anti-Muslim attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, it was the only predictor of Islamophobia and support of PEGIDA-like movements. These findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating that perceived symbolic threat is a stronger predictor of anti-immigrant attitudes than are realistic threats (McLaren, 2003; see Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014 for a review): Thus, the hostile reaction among Europeans to the influx of Muslim immigrants into Europe seems to be rooted primarily in the fear of 'cultural contamination' that mass immigration from Muslim countries potentially brings with it, rather than fear of economic competition. Our findings concord with real-world events: For example, the Charlie Hebdo attacks coincided with a publication of the bestseller "Submission", whose plot presents a France no longer governed as a secular society with democratic principles, but overtaken by Muslims and Sharia law.

One possibility that might account for the non-significance of realistic threat as a predictor of Islamophobia in the European context is that ethnic Europeans may not perceive immigrants as serious contenders for scarce resources such as jobs and social and political power: Many immigrants, and refugees in particular, have experienced considerable downward mobility upon their arrival to their host countries often arriving with little material resources or social support. At the same time, it is important to note that if the study was run today, realistic threat might play a more important role than it

did in our work because of the substantial uptick in welfare costs that the recent refugee influx has imposed on European countries. For example, Sweden had to cut spending from schools, health and job sectors and foreign aid budget in order to cover the extra costs of the refugee crisis, which might increase anti-refugee hostility rooted in economic threats (Dickson & Ahlander, 2015).

Switching to the low-power group's perspective, in three studies we wanted to test whether the same social psychological processes observed among majority members would also be discernible among low power groups' attitudes and behavioral intentions towards violence against the West. Whereas the vast majority of research that investigated support for anti-western violence has been conducted in the context of Middle East (e.g., Levin, et al., 2015; Sidanius et al., 2015; Sidanius et al., 2004) in this paper we included Muslims living in Denmark and Sweden, and Arabs living in Lebanon. Realistic threat of Western foreign policy and military interventions predicted support for anti-western violence for Muslims in Denmark and Arabs in Lebanon despite differences in their social contexts and in their exposure to foreign policy and military intervention¹⁸. Nevertheless, and consistent with the European samples, symbolic threat generally emerged as the stronger predictor of attitudes towards anti-western violence in all three contexts. This is consistent with the observation that the rapid rise and dissemination of Western culture via globalization seem to have spread Western culture to all parts of the world. Often this development has confronted many Muslims with values and practices that they might subjectively experience as in conflict with Islamic culture (Barber, 1996, Khosrokhavar, 2009). Western foreign policy and military interventions might be perceived as a temporary phenomenon that will eventually come to an end. On the other hand, it is possible that Muslims and Arabs perceive the cultural forces of Westernization as difficult or even impossible to stop, rendering them especially threatening.

From the Western perspective, large parts of the European public perceive the growing number of Muslim population to Europe as an invasion. Although, many Europeans see the co-existence of different ethnic minorities as appealing and enriching, many others genuinely perceive it as a major threat to Europe, where they feel that

¹⁸ We observed that the effect of realistic threat was somewhat larger among Arabs in Lebanon. One possible explanation might be that the long ongoing conflict between the Arab nations and the West has led to a greater impact of realistic threat in this sample.

European values and traditions give way to an Islamic way of life, leading potentially to the disintegration of secular values (see, Roy, 2008; Keple, 2004). For example, some perceive certain demands from the Muslim population such as serving halal meat in public schools as Islamic values overrunning and gaining momentum over the European way of life. The fear of being culturally alienated within their own societies and potentially subjected to Islamization leads many Europeans to reject Islamic culture (Parekh, 2009). This fear is particularly pervasive among those who believe that European culture is superior to Islamic culture and the mobilization of these individuals is a reality in many European countries now (Erlanger & Bennhold, 2015).

Another consistency among high and low-power groups was the fact that ingroup identity played a role. We reasoned that ingroup identity would be a reliable predictor of perceived group threat because it is well established that ethnic and religious identification promote the feeling of experienced threat towards the in-group (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). In fact, in all four studies in which it was included— among Muslims in Denmark, Arabs in Lebanon and ethnic Europeans — ingroup identification exerted indirect effects on support for anti-Western violence and Islamophobia respectively, mediated by symbolic and realistic threats. These results again support the notion of a common psychology predicting intergroup aggression among low and high power groups

A Pew Global Attitudes project in 2006 investigated the way Muslims and non-Muslims in the West and elsewhere perceived each other (Wike & Grim, 2007). The results demonstrated that both groups held highly negative attitudes towards each other, where each group ascribed a wide array of negative characteristic to one another, such as being immoral, violent, selfish and arrogant. The important question is: what are the intergroup consequences of such outgroup negativity on both sides? In the last two studies, we aimed to answer this question and demonstrated how threat perceptions expressed by one group could reinforce negative attitudes in the other group, hence, fomenting a vicious circle of intergroup hostility (see also Kteily et al., in press; Kunst et al., in press). The rise of far right parties in Europe in the recent years has resulted in a negative image of Muslims as invaders. This perception of threat among Europeans has likely resulted in the expression of Islamophobic attitudes, which in turn might have led

some Muslims to respond with increased aggression. In line with this proposition, our results demonstrated that threat perceptions among ethnic Danes and Swedes led to high degrees of support for violence and behavioral intentions to commit violence in defense of Muslims among these subpopulations. One group's negative perceptions led to hostile attitudes in another, leading to a vicious circle of intergroup hostility. It is likely that such processes are quite general, and not only applicable to the relationship between Muslim and non-Muslims, making it all the more important to understand them well. For example, future work could examine the extent to which reciprocal perceptions of symbolic and realistic threat are contributing to tensions between Sunni and Shia Muslims in many countries.

Strengths and Limitations

Our manuscript has a number of strengths. For one, it simultaneously examined the role of both symbolic and realistic threats. Previous work, particularly in the area of Islamic terrorism, has focused on one form of threat only and mainly in the context of Middle Eastern countries (but see Levin et al., in press; Sidanius et al., 2015), leaving uncertainty regarding the unique role of each type of threat, and the generalizability of the effects. Determining the relative contributions of realistic and symbolic threat has broad implications for policy making and improving the intergroup relations between the Muslim world and the West. Learning that both the symbolic and realistic (particularly physical) forms of threat are important contributors— with the symbolic threats being predominant— suggest that those interested in intergroup harmony will need to focus both on changing perceptions of cultural incompatibility and highlighting shared values, as well as working to correct any overestimates on both sides of the physical threat posed by the counterpart.

Another strength of the current work is its experimental approach, and its focus on highly consequential outcome variables. In a recent meta-analysis, Riek et al. (2006) commented that one of the major limitations in the domain of realistic and symbolic threats is the shortage of experimental studies. A similar concern applies in the domain of terrorism research, which has documented only correlational evidence for drivers of terrorism (see Arce, Croson, Eckel, 2011). Examining these questions experimentally is

important because it allowed us to establish causality between symbolic threat and aggression. We were in fact able to show that priming symbolic threat increases self-reported behavioral intentions to engage in terrorism among Muslims in Sweden, highlighting just how pressing it is to address this issue.

With this in mind, it should be acknowledged that although our work has highlighted various contributors to violence, it did not put forward effective solutions. Recent work has suggested that providing individuals with information that the outgroup humanizes them can be effective in reducing outgroup dehumanization (Kteily et al., in press), while highlighting the genetic overlap between groups in conflicts (e.g., Jews and Arabs) may reduce intergroup aggression (Kimel, Huesman, Kunst, & Halperin, in press). It is possible that the positive effects of such messages might extend to reducing symbolic (and even possibly realistic) threats. Alternatively, giving individuals statistics on the very small proportion of outgroup members who actually engage in violence or pose physical threats might contribute to a reduction in (at least certain forms) of realistic threat. Finally, highlighting shared values across the various Abrahamic religions might help to attenuate mutual feelings of symbolic threat that result out of categorization mechanisms (Kunst & Thomsen, 2015; Kunst, Thomsen, & Sam, 2014). Whichever approaches turn out to be effective in attenuating these threats, our work makes it clear that efforts are critically important.

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Supplemental Material

Study 1

Table 1. Study 1.

Threat Manipulation and Items Used to Assess Symbolic and Realistic Threats and Islamophobia. Symbolic and Realistic Threats Were Assessed Using a Scale of 1 = Not at Threatened to 5 = Threatened to a High Degree. Islamophobia was measured on a scale of 1 = Totally Disagree to 10 = Totally Agree.

Threat Manipulation

- Participants were randomly assigned to see either a news video citing statistical reports suggesting that ethnic Norwegians may become a minority in Norway within 50 years (and within 20 years in Oslo) due to immigration or a control video. Then in randomized order 1 and 2.

Symbolic Threat

1. To which degree do you feel the following aspects of Norwegian culture as threatened by immigration? [Response format: 1 not at all threatened – 5 threatened to a high degree]

- Cultural habits
- Values and norms
- Cultural traditions
- The Norwegian culture in general

Realistic Threat

1. To which degree do you feel the following aspects of the Norway as threatened by immigration? [Response format: 1 not at all threatened – 5 threatened to a high degree]

- Labor market
- Welfare system
- Economic wealth of Norwegian citizens
- The Norwegian economy in general

Islamophobia

1. I would support any policy that would stop the building of new mosques in the Norway.
 2. If possible, I would avoid going to places where Muslims would be.
 3. I would become uncomfortable speaking with a Muslim.
 4. Just to be safe, it is important to stay away from places where Muslims could be.
 5. I dread the thought of having a boss that is Muslim.
 6. If I could, I would avoid contact with Muslims.
 7. If I could, I would live in a place where there were no Muslims.
 8. Muslims should not be allowed to work in places where many Norwegians gather, such as airports.
-

Study 2

Table 2. Study 2.

Items Used to Assess Religious Identity, Symbolic and Realistic Threats and Support of PEGIDA¹⁹. All items were answered on 7-point likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Religious Identity

1. How strongly do you identify with other people of your religious group?
2. How close do you feel to other people of your religious group?
3. How often do you think about yourself in terms of your religious group?

Symbolic Threat

1. Norwegian norms and values are being threatened because of the presence of Muslims.
2. Muslims are a threat to the Norwegian culture.
3. The Norwegian identity is being threatened because there are too many Muslims.

Realistic Threat

1. Because of the presence of Muslims, Norwegians have more difficulties in finding a job.
2. Because of the presence of Muslims, Norwegians have more difficulties in finding a house.
3. Because of the presence of Muslims, unemployment in Norway will increase.

Support of PEGIDA-like movement

1. I would be positive towards a march against the Islamization of Norway.
 2. I would like a Facebook-group that is against the Islamization of Norway.
 3. I would sign a petition against the Islamization of Norway.
 4. I would donate money to an organization that is against the Islamization of Norway.
 5. I would participate in a march the Islamization of Norway.
 6. I would organize a march against the Islamization of Norway.
-

¹⁹ PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against Islamicization of Europe).

Studies 3a and 3b

Given the difficulty in reaching our samples, studies 3a, 3b, 4, 5 and 6 were part of a larger battery of variables, collected to answer different research questions within the same surveys. See below the complete list of items for each study (table 7, 8, 9 and 10).

Items for studies 3a and 3b were translated to Danish from English.

Table 3. Studies 3a and 3b.

Items Used to Assess Symbolic and Realistic Threats, Muslim Identification and Attitudes towards Anti-western Violence. (Studies 3a/3b). All items were answered on 7-point likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Symbolic Threat

1. Non-Muslim westerners hold values that conflict with the values of people like me.
2. Non-Muslim westerners threaten the way of life of people like me.
3. The West is threatening Muslims' religious identity.

Realistic Threat

1. I think Muslims are disadvantaged because the West oppresses them.
2. Muslims are disadvantaged because the West keeps them down.
3. The foreign policy of Western countries harms Muslims worldwide.

Muslim Identification

1. I feel strongly connected to other Muslims.
2. I strongly identify with other Muslims.
3. I feel very connected to my religious community

Attitudes towards Anti-western Violence

1. Those who harm Muslims should be subjected to the same treatment.
 2. In general, I understand some Muslim groups' reasons for the use of violence, even though I do not condone the violence itself.
 3. I can understand why some Muslims might have wanted to commit acts of violence in Europe, even though I do not condone the violence itself.
-

Study 4

Items for study 4 was translated to Arabic from English.

Table 4. Study 4.

Items Used to Assess Symbolic and Realistic Threats, Arab Identification and Attitudes towards Violence. Items for study 4 was translated to Arabic from English. All items were assessed on a 1=strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree scale

Symbolic Threat

1. Americans, as a group, possess values that directly oppose the values of Arabs.
2. Americans, as a group, hold values that are morally inferior to the values of Arabs.
3. In general, how do you perceive the culture of Arabs and Americans? (Reponses format: 1 = strongly oppose to 5 = strongly support)
 - Arab culture is far superior to American culture.
 - Arab culture is somewhat better than American culture
 - American and Arab cultures are equal.
 - American culture is somewhat better than Arab culture.

Realistic Threat

1. Americans, as a group, take economic resources away from Arabs.
2. Americans, as a group, limit the economic opportunities available to Arabs.
3. Americans exploit Arabs for resources and keep all the profits for themselves.
4. Americans, as a group, endanger the physical safety of Arabs.

Arab Identification

1. How important is it to you to be Arab?
2. How close do you feel to other Arabs?
3. How much do you have in common with Arabs across the Arab world?
4. How important is it to you to be a member of the Arab world?
5. How close do you feel to other members of the Arab world?

Attitudes towards Anti-American Violence

1. Arabs should fight Americans.
 2. How much do you support or oppose the following actions against Americans:
 - Attacking military targets. Assessed on a 1 = *strongly oppose* to 5 = *strongly support* scale
 - Killing civilians. Assessed on a 1 = *strongly oppose* to 5 = *strongly support* scale
-

Study 5

Table 5. Study 5

Threat Manipulation and the Measure of Attitudes towards Anti-western Violence. Attitudes toward Anti-western Violence was measured on 7-point likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Attitudes Towards Anti-western Violence

1. Those who harm Muslims should be subjected to the same treatment.
2. In general, I understand some Muslim groups' reasons for the use of violence, even though I do not condone the violence itself.
3. I can understand why some Muslims might have wanted to commit acts of violence in Europe, even though I do not condone the violence itself.

Threat Manipulation

The following section is a summary of the most recent poll about ethnic Danes attitudes towards Muslim immigrants in Denmark. Please read the summary and answer the following questions.

- “The majority of native Danes see the presence of Muslim immigrants in Denmark as a problem, and they see Islamic culture and religion as backward. They see Islamic values, norms and traditions as incompatible with Danish values, norms and traditions. Because of this, native Danes believe that Muslim immigrants pose a threat to Denmark. Furthermore, the study shows that Danes do not think that Muslims belong to Danish society”.²⁰

Control Condition

- “The majority of people in Denmark in average watch between 3 to 5 hours of television a day. The majority of hours spent in front of the television, are concentrated between the hours of 7 pm to 11 pm. In terms of program preferences, the study shows that elder generations prefer programs with traditional cultural contents while younger generations of Danes prefer reality shows”.
-

²⁰ Parts of the text for experimental threat condition were taken from several statements made by Danish politicians and the public alike.

Study 6

Table 6. Study 6

The Content of Realistic and Symbolic Threat Manipulation, Control Condition and the Measure of Behavioral Intentions to Commit Terrorism in Defense of Islam and/or Muslims. Violent Behavioral Intentions was answered on 7-point likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Violent Behavioral Intentions

1. If nothing else helps I'm prepared to use violence to defend Muslims.
2. As a last resort I'm personally ready to use violence for the sake of other Muslims.
3. I will personally use violence against people harming other Muslims that I care about.
4. I'm ready to go and fight for Muslims in another country.
5. I'm not prepared to use violence in any situation. (R)
6. I will not personally use violence to help Muslims. (R)
7. Even as a last resort, I will not use violence for the sake of others Muslims. (R)

Symbolic Threat Manipulation

The following section is a summary of the most recent poll about ethnic Swedes and Western-influenced politicians' attitudes towards Muslim immigrants in Sweden. Please read the summary and answer the following questions

- "The majority of native Swedes and Western-influenced politicians in the country see the presence of Muslim immigrants in Sweden as a problem, and they see Islamic culture and religion as backward. They see Islamic values, norms and traditions as incompatible with Swedish values, norms and traditions. Because of this, native Swedes believe that Muslim immigrants make Swedes feel uncomfortable in their own country. Further, the study shows that ethnic Swedes do not think that Muslims belong to Swedish society".

Realistic Threat Manipulation

The following section is a summary of the most recent poll about ethnic Swedes attitudes towards Western foreign and military interventions in Muslim countries. Please read the summary and answer the following questions

- "The majority of native Swedes support Western foreign and military policies in Muslim countries. They consider intervention in Muslim countries useful in terms of exploiting Muslim resources and maintaining Western military and economic domination over Muslims. Swedes believe that Western foreign policy and military intervention in Islamic countries will benefit Sweden as a nation economically from greater access to resources in Islamic countries (such as oil), and militarily, by allowing Sweden to maintain a military advantage over Muslim world".

Control Condition

- "The majority of people in Sweden in average watch between 3 to 5 hours of television a day. The majority of hours spent in front of the television, are concentrated between the hours of 7 pm to 11 pm. In terms of program preferences, the study shows that elder generations prefer programs with cultural and political contents while younger

generations of Swedes prefer reality shows”.

Note. (R) = Reverse scored.

Chapter 5

Paper IV

The Mistreatment of My People: Victimization-by-proxy and Behavioral Intentions to Commit Terrorism among Muslims in Denmark and Sweden²¹

Abstract

Islamist radicalization is often explained by the suffering of Muslims in Islamic countries during Western-led wars. However, many terrorist attacks have been carried out by European Muslims with no personal experiences of war. Across three studies among Danish and Swedish Muslims we tested if victimization-by-proxy processes motivate behavioral intentions to commit acts of terrorism. We used Muslim identification, perceived injustice of Western foreign policies, and group-based anger to predict violent and non-violent behavioral intentions. More importantly, we compared path models of those Muslims who came from conflict zones and those Muslims who did and did not have direct personal experience of Western-led occupation, and we found similar effects in all three groups. That is, vicarious psychological responses mimicked those of personally experienced adversity. In fact, participants born in Western Europe were, on average, more strongly identified with Muslims, perceived Western foreign policy as more unjust, reported greater group-based anger, and were more inclined to help Muslims by non-violent, but not violent, means.

Keywords: Homegrown terrorism, Victimization-by-proxy, Social identity, Group-based injustice and emotion, Western foreign policy

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Background and Aim

Documents from the inner circles of the Islamic State surfaced on April 18, 2015 in one of Europe's biggest newspapers. The article in *der Spiegel* outlined "the blueprint for this state" (Reuter, 2015). One such calculated strategy was to use inexperienced foreign radicals alongside Chechens and Uzbeks in the civil wars in Syria and Iraq, rather than domestic fighters. This strategy presents a perplexing reality to scholars and experts studying terrorism. Among academics and policy-makers, many have argued that Muslim terrorism results from the experience of direct exposure to Western-led military interventions/occupation/drone attacks and foreign policies in Muslim countries (e.g., NEWS BBC, 2010; Bergen, 2011; Erlanger, 2013; Gerges, 2005; Kepel, 2004; Mearsheimer, 2011; Nesser, 2006; Pape, 2003 & 2006; Sageman, 2004). Presumably, however, the Islamic State did not consider it necessary that their fighters had personal experience from wars or Western occupation. Instead, they believed that they could simply import radicalization that had sprung to life elsewhere, for example within the West. By the summer of 2014 the Islamic State was proven right. Using their foreign fighters, they had conquered vast territories (e.g., Reuter, 2015) and inspired terrorist attacks in Europe committed by radicalized European citizens. Here, we demonstrate the effects of what we refer to as victimization-by-proxy processes on such homegrown Islamist radicalization and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism in Europe.

When Muslim radicals in the West provide reasons for their attitudes or actions, they often refer to wrongdoings toward Muslims in the Islamic world at the hands of the West. Khosrokhavar (2005) describes this in terms "humiliation-by-proxy". Lickel, Miller, Stenstrom, Denson, and Schmader (2006) similarly argued that vicarious retaliation is a phenomenon where a "member of a group commits an act of aggression toward the members of an outgroup for an assault or provocation that had no personal consequences for him or her but which did harm a fellow ingroup member" (p. 372). The present work also stresses vicarious processes. However, we broaden the focus beyond that of previous studies. First, not all acts in defense of a group are retaliatory or violent, so we anchored our inquiry within the broader collective action literature to also encompass non-violent outcomes (Wright, Taylor & Moghaddam, 1990). Second, based on combined insights from the collective action, social identity, and intergroup emotion

literatures, we did not limit our focus to feelings of humiliation, but we rather focused on an interplay of group identification, perceived injustice, and group-based anger (Smith, 1993).

The proposed victimization-by-proxy argument rests on three interrelated ideas. The first is based on the social identity literature (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The second idea is that the foreign policies of Western countries are not only triggering factors for seeing the world in terms of “us” and “them”, but also a driving force of group mobilization among Muslims, native and war-zone-born alike. Third, we argue that different group-related events trigger emotional and behavioral reactions that largely mirror the expected consequences if people had experienced the events personally (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2002). We begin by briefly reviewing the extant literatures related to each of these ideas.

Social identity theory outlines how the pursuit of self-esteem at the group level is linked to prejudice and discrimination (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Expanding these analyses, self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987) describes the cognitive processes and consequences associated with social identity salience or, more informally, a “group mode” of thinking. In situations where groups are perceived as fairly distinct and group membership appears informative for understanding the social dynamics at hand, the theory suggest that people will enter a group mode of thinking – especially when they have goals, previous experiences, et cetera that are associated with the particular group categorization. When this happens, the self and fellow group members are perceived as a unified entity – “us” (Turner et al., 1987) – and group identification will subsequently influence individuals’ reactions to the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Now consider the case of Muslim identity in the West. Many scholars discuss a developing “clash of civilizations” between Muslims and non-Muslims (Huntington, 1996 & 1993; Lewis, 1990), and from the perspective of self-categorization theory, this should make Muslim identity highly salient among members of this group. Some have also commented that the extremist ideologies propagated by Islamic radicals aim to indoctrinate Muslims into thinking similarly in order to unite them (Loza, 2007) and to induce a sense of collective grievance and victimization (Wagemakers, 2008). Thus,

when Western Muslims consider themselves as agents on behalf of the global Muslim community or Muslims living under occupation (rather than on behalf of the Danish or Danish immigrant community, for example), Muslim identity processes should be an important contributing factor. This should especially be the case for Western-born Muslims because their link to the people that suffer in Muslim conflict zones precisely rests on Muslim identification (rather than on being born into the countries that suffer occupation or drone attacks by the West).

Research suggests that highlighting the ways in which people are similar to the victims of unjust treatment leads to increased feelings of injustice, anger and a stronger tendency to act against the perpetrator (i.e., Gordijn, Wigboldus, & Yzerbyt, 2001). More broadly, intergroup emotions theory suggests that appraisal of situations that affects other members of the in-group, but not the person herself/himself, may trigger intergroup emotional and behavioral responses (Smith, 1993; Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007; Mackie, Devos & Smith, 2000). For example, witnessing members of the ingroup being unjustly treated leads people to respond vicariously with anger and aggression. These emotional and behavioral reactions further depend on how strongly people identify with the victims (e.g., Gordijn et al., 2001; Gordijn, Yzerbyt, Wigboldus, & Dumont, 2006; Yzerbyt, Dumont, Wigboldus & Gordijn, 2003).

Hence, according to the social identity and intergroup emotion literatures, group identity should strengthen the individual's perception that his or her ingroup is a target of unjust treatment, which in turn should intensify the group's emotional and behavioral reactions to such perceived injustice (Grant, 2008). Feelings of injustice and group-based emotions, in turn, should increase the individual's likelihood of participation in collective action against the transgressors (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 1999).

The Present Research

When it comes to research on radicalization and terrorism, as opposed to collective action research in other areas, the literature is rich in theory but rather poor in empirics (Silke, 2004). For example, even if several scholars have stressed vicarious processes in many group behaviors, a fundamental prediction in this reasoning remains untested – namely that the factors motivating Muslim violence should be similar for

people born and raised in the West and for those who have directly experienced Western-led military intervention in their countries. The aim of this paper was to directly test this hypothesis. That is, we did not solely propose a model of victimization, but we focused on directly testing if a model based on vicarious processes would mimic one based on direct experience. We first, in studies 1 and 2, tested the victimization-by-proxy argument in a path analytic framework where we compared Muslims born in Denmark with those who immigrated to Denmark from Muslim countries targeted by Western countries foreign policy and military interventions such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan (henceforth referred to as native- versus foreign-born Muslims). Second in study 3 we wanted to validate the results from studies 1 and 2 by comparing Muslims born in Sweden with those with direct personal experience of Western foreign policy.

Inspired by previous research, we examined a model exploring violent and non-violent behavioral intentions based on key predictors from the social identity literature (Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, & Mielke, 1999; Simon et al., 1998), perceived injustice literature (Smith, Pettigrew, Pippin & Bialosiewicz, 2012) and intergroup emotions theory (Smith, 1993; Smith et al., 2007). Specifically, we modeled Muslim identification and perceived injustice (against Muslim countries by the influence of the West) as independent variables, group-based anger as a mediator, and the two types of behavior intentions as final outcomes.

A few things are worth noting about the model in itself. First, the order of the variables in the model was meant to reflect the cumulative insights in the literature on the causal relations between identification, cognitive appraisals, group-based emotions, and behavioral intentions (Smith, et al., 2012). Specifically, a number of studies suggest that both group identification and cognitive appraisals (e.g., perceived injustice) influence attitudes and behavioral intentions (e.g., van Zomeren et al., 2008; Dumont, Yzerbyt, Wigboldus & Gordijn, 2003). Research also indicates that group-based emotions mediate these effects (Gordijn et al., 2006).

Second, we focus on *behavioral intentions* rather than attitudes or support of violence, because the former tend to be better proxies of behaviors (see De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999; Klandermans, Sabucedo, & De Weerd, 2002; see also Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977, for meta-analysis see Kim, & Hunter, 1993). Third, a growing literature

suggests that there are different psychological factors associated with violent versus non-violent group mobilization and collective action (Tausch et al., 2011; Livingstone, Spears, Manstead, & Bruder, 2009); consequently we wanted our model to account for this possibility. Fourth, whereas previous research has documented somewhat different effects of group-based anger and group-based contempt, we found these two variables to be highly correlated in our samples ($r = .87$), so we focused on anger alone to reduce multicollinearity.

However, the most important question in this paper concerned the differences versus similarities between native- and foreign-born Muslims. Thus, using a multi-group approach (native- versus foreign-born Muslims), we directly tested whether the factors underpinning Muslim (violent and non-violent) mobilization differed based on direct experiences from Western foreign policies and occupations. A victimization-by-proxy argument would suggest that this is not the case, and that the explanatory models should be quite similar in both groups. Importantly, this is not to suggest that there are no psychological differences between these two groups, but if the model for native-born Muslims would mimic the one for foreign-born Muslims, we would, at the very least, have evidence for the claim that several *key predictors of extremism* operate in a vicarious fashion.

A second aim of the paper was to examine potential mean differences between native and foreign-born Muslims on Muslim identification, perceived injustice, group-based anger as well as violent and non-violent behavior intentions. From a personal experience account, it would be reasonable to expect higher levels of, for example, intergroup anger and perceived injustice among foreign-born Muslims who have directly experienced the consequences of foreign occupation. However, a victimization-by-proxy position perspective would rather predict that perceived injustice, group-based emotions and corresponding actions tendencies can be elicited even when Muslims have *not personally* experienced Western foreign policy and military interventions (see Smith, 1993).

Method

Participants study 1

We sampled 226 (134 women) Muslims from 32 different Islam related Facebook websites in Denmark from February 15st to May 1st 2013. We selected these websites in such a way so as to provide demographic and ideological diversity. For example, we included websites for practicing Muslims with strong religious beliefs and adherence to traditional Islamic values, but also other websites with more moderate and secular Muslims.

Table 1. *Demographic Information for Each Sample.*

	<u>Study 1</u>	<u>Study 2</u>
<u>Variables</u>	<i>n (%)</i>	<i>n (%)</i>
<u>Birthplace</u>		
Native born	71 (36.2)	114(53.8)
Foreign born	125(63.8)	100(46.7)
<u>Gender</u>		
Female	134(59.6)	177(68.9)
Male	91(40.4)	80(31.1)
<u>Age</u>		
16-17	11(4.9)	28(10.9)
18-24	123(54.4)	138(53.7)
25-34	77(34.1)	75(29.2)
35-44	12(5.3)	10(3.9)
45-74	3(1.3)	6(2.4)
<u>Socio-economic status</u>		
Upper class	5(2.2)	3(1.2)
Upper middleclass	31(13.9)	32(12.5)
Middleclass	159(71.3)	174(68.0)
Lower middleclass	26(11.7)	34(13.3)
Working-class	2(.9)	13(5.1)
<u>Immigrant status</u>		
First generation	143(63.9)	130(50.6)
Second generation	62(27.7)	105(40.9)
Third generation	3(1.3)	6(2.3)
One parent Danish	7(4.0)	5(1.9)

Of the total sample, 71 were born in Denmark, 125 in conflict zones and 24 outside the conflict zones (the last category of participants were excluded from further analyses; see introduction for rationale). Participants received no personal compensation

for participation, but instead we paid 20 DKK (approximately \$4) to a charitable cause chosen by each participant. Respondent ages ranged from 16 to 74, with the majority between 18-34-age (i.e., 88.5% of the total sample). Importantly, this age distribution matches those who join terrorist organizations in Europe (e.g., Bakker, 2006; Roy, 2007; see Table 1).

The surveyed Muslim residents in Denmark constituted a prime example of a “*hidden*” and “*hard-to-reach*” population (see Heckathorn, 1997). In many cases, immigrant group membership involves low visibility with strong privacy concerns (e.g., many have little trust in the socio-political system of their host countries, and may hold uncertain legal status). Further, the media coverage of recent terrorist attacks in Europe linked to Muslims added additional difficulties to the data collection. Considering these factors, the sample size was determined by the amount of data that could be collected within the time frame of three months (the same was true in Study 2). Power considerations are discussed in the results section.

Participants study 2

Study 2 involved the same data collection procedure as in Study 1 from June 1st to August 30th 2013. We sampled 257 Muslims (177 women), where 114 were born in Denmark, 100 in conflict zones and 41 outside the conflict zones. The majority was in the 18-34-age (82.9% of the total sample).

Measures

The surveys for Studies 1 and 2 included measures of Muslim identification, the perception of Western countries’ foreign policy and military interventions, group-based anger, and violent and non-violent behavioral intentions to defend and/or support Muslims or/and Islam (see Table 2 for all item, means, standard deviations and reliabilities).

Table 2. *Items, Reliabilities, Mean Levels and Standard Deviations for Muslim Identification, Perceived Injustice, Group-based Anger, Violent and Non-violent Behavioural Intentions for Native- and Foreign-born Muslims Study 1 and 2.*

Instruments	Items
Muslim identification Study 1 ($\alpha = .87, M = 5.83, SD = 1.32$) ($\alpha = .91, M = 4.64, SD = 1.73$) Study 2 ($\alpha = .86, M = 5.86, SD = 1.27$) ($\alpha = .93, M = 4.80, SD = 1.79$)	(1). Being a Muslim is important to me. (2). I feel strongly connected to other Muslims. (3). I strongly identify with other Muslims. (4). I feel very connected to my religious community.
Perceived injustice Study 1 ($\alpha = .82, M = 5.39, SD = 1.18$) ($\alpha = .84, M = 4.88, SD = 1.32$) Study 2 ($\alpha = .88, M = 5.23, SD = 1.34$) ($\alpha = .88, M = 4.98, SD = 1.43$)	(1). Western military interventions in Muslim countries are immoral. (2). The foreign policy of Western countries harms Muslims worldwide. (3). The foreign policy of Western countries is anti-Islamic worldwide. (4). Muslims benefit from Western military interventions in Muslim countries. (R) (5). The foreign policy of Western countries towards Muslim nations cannot be justified. (6). Muslims in Muslim countries suffer because of the foreign policy of Western countries.
Group-based anger Study 1 ($\alpha = .89, M = 4.90, SD = 1.72$) ($\alpha = .89, M = 4.13, SD = 1.67$) Study 2 ($\alpha = .90, M = 4.65, SD = 1.81$) ($\alpha = .92, M = 4.34, SD = 1.82$)	(1). I feel angry when I think of Western countries' foreign policies towards Muslim countries (2). I feel outrage when I think of Western countries' foreign policy towards Muslim countries. (3). I feel furious when I think of Western countries' foreign policy towards Muslim countries.
Violent behavioral intentions Study 1 ($\alpha = .90, M = 1.87, SD = 1.39$) ($\alpha = .80, M = 1.64, SD = 1.27$) Study 2 ($\alpha = .68, M = 1.57, SD = 1.22$) ($\alpha = .79, M = 1.47, SD = 1.01$)	(1). I am ready to use violence against other people in order to achieve something I consider very important. (2). I am ready to use violence against other people in order to change Western countries' foreign policy towards Muslim countries.
Non-violent behavioral intentions Study 1 ($\alpha = .90, M = 5.30, SD = 1.92$) ($\alpha = .80, M = 4.90, SD = 1.87$) Study 2 ($\alpha = .68, M = 5.77, SD = 1.62$) ($\alpha = .79, M = 5.19, SD = 1.88$)	(1). To improve the disadvantaged position of Muslims I would sign a petition to the government. (2). I will sign a petition to change Western countries' foreign policy towards Muslim countries.

Note. (R) = reverse coded.

Given the difficulty in reaching our sample, the present study was part of a larger battery of variables, collected to answer different research questions within the same

survey. Variables not included here concerned, for example social dominance orientation and ethnic identification. Bivariate correlations between all focal variables for both studies and for all respondents are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Correlations between Variables for Native- (Below Diagonal) and Foreign-Born Muslims (Above Diagonal).*

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Study 1					
1. Muslim identification	-	.32**	.39**	.12	.32**
2. Perceived injustice	.47**	-	.67**	.01	.38**
3. Group-based anger	.41**	.74**	-	.29**	.44**
4. Violent behavioral intentions	.21	.06	.15	-	.09
5. Non-violent behavioral intentions	.22	.36**	.47**	-.00	-
Study 2					
1. Muslim identification	-	.42**	.52**	.23*	.35**
2. Perceived injustice	.49**	-	.75**	.26**	.42**
3. Group-based anger	.38**	.67**	-	.41**	.43**
4. Violent behavioral intentions	.17	.23*	.34**	-	.17
5. Non-violent behavioral intentions	.55**	.48**	.37**	.19*	-

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Statistical Considerations

In our main analyses we tested the extent to which a model of violent and non-violent behavioral intentions would differ between native- and foreign-born Muslims in Scandinavia. Specifically, if the model fit would not deteriorate when we assume all paths to be equal for native and foreign-born Muslims, we would have support for the victimization-by-proxy perspective. Importantly, this is a no-difference hypothesis, but structural equation modelling (and path analysis) provides a comparably rigorous way of testing such claims. Specifically it is well-known that models with many parameters easily turn into a significant misfit to the data (MacCallum, Browne, & Cai, 2006). In our case, we tested for the significance for differences between the two groups for all paths in the model. Thus, we compared a model with free estimates for all paths in both groups with another model where all paths were set to be equal across groups (14 *df*).

If the equality-constraints, as compared to the free model, would deteriorate the fit from being close (RMSEA = .05) to acceptable (RMSEA = .08) then the power would be .97 to detect the difference (Preacher & Coffman, 2006). Also, if the RMSEA would go from .00 to a close fit (.05), the power for this comparison would be .63 (see also

MacCallum et al., 2006, for a discussion about the irony that poor fitting models are associated with better power). Finally, throughout all analysis of this paper, we used the robust maximum likelihood estimator in Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2012) to account for missing data (< 3%) and skewed distributions in, for example, violent intentions.

Results

Preliminary Path Analyses

To examine the notion of victimization-by-proxy we first wanted to establish that our theoretical path model fit the data in Study 1, and could be replicated in Study 2 (disregarding whether participants were born in Denmark or came from conflict zones). Thus, we first modeled all estimated coefficients as free to vary across both studies, and in a second model all coefficients were constrained as equal in the two studies. That is, we examined whether the results of the path analysis could be replicated across studies. If the model was indeed replicable, then we should not suffer any significant deterioration in model fit when constraining the model parameters to equality across studies.

In fact, constraining the paths as equal across studies did not affect the fit compared to the free model, scaled $\Delta\chi^2(9) = 8.91, p = .45$. This indicates a lack of systematic differences between Studies 1 and 2, and that the overall model was replicable. Indeed, the constrained model, assuming all paths to be identical in Study 1 and 2, had excellent fit overall, scaled $\chi^2(11) = 10.82, p = .46, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 90\% CI [.01, .07], SRMR = .03$. Thus, in a follow-up analysis, we combined all available data. Here we found that Muslim identification and perceived injustice was unrelated to violent behavioral intentions ($\beta_s < 0.11, p_s > .07$). Nonetheless, we kept them in the model so that we could compare native- and foreign-born Muslims in the main analyses. The other standardized effects ranged from 0.17 to 0.64 ($p_s \leq .01$). We also tested whether these relations were robust to the introduction of demographic variables for age, gender and education. All paths that were significant without these control variables remained just as strong in this analysis ($\beta_s > 0.19, p_s \leq .003$).

Multigroup (Native- versus Foreign-Born) Path Analyses

The main question of this paper was whether the psychological underpinning of violence and non-violence would differ depending on the experience of Western countries foreign policy and military interventions in the Muslim world. To examine this question, we ran a similar multi-group path analysis as in the preliminary results, but instead of comparing Studies 1 and 2, we focused on comparing native- and foreign-born Muslims in Denmark (see participant section for details on this categorization). That is, to gain more reliable estimates in the native and foreign-born groups, we combined the data from the two samples (see preliminary path analyses, Figure 1).

Compared to the unconstrained model, the fit did not deteriorate when we assumed that all paths were identical across native- and foreign-born participants, $\Delta\chi^2(9) = 5.69, p = .77$. In fact, the constrained model had excellent fit; $\chi^2(11) = 6.40, p = .85, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 90\% CI [.01, .04], SRMR = .02$. This indicates that the empirical relationships in the model, for example between Muslim identification and endorsement of violence, are *not* strongly influenced by the fact that one comes from Muslim countries targeted by Western sanctions and military interventions²². The results from the unconstrained model, showing the (minor) variation across the two groups, are illustrated in Figure 1.

²² We measured violent behavioral intentions with two items. Nevertheless, for conceptual reasons we ran additional analyses where we only included the item that was directly related to violent behavioral intentions in defense of Islam/Muslims (see Table 2). The results of path model analysis showed that all relations were close to identical to the results in the model with using both of the items for extreme behavioral intentions (β s = original estimate +/- 0.05).

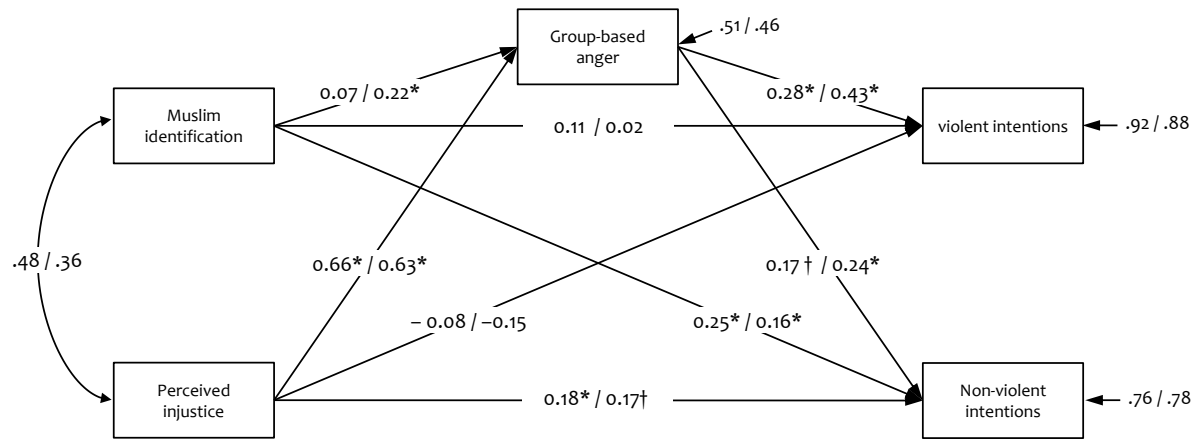


Figure 1. Standardized results of a multi-group (native- versus foreign-born) path analysis to predict violent and non-violent intentions to defend Islam and other Muslims. † $p = .055$ (perceived injustice \rightarrow non-violence), and $p = .075$ (anger \rightarrow non-violence). * $p < .05$.

Next we tested the indirect effects of Muslim identification and perceived injustice (via group-based anger) on violent and non-violent intentions among both native and foreign-born Muslims. For that purpose we derived bootstrapped confidence intervals for these effects based on 5000 draws. There was a marginally significant indirect effect of Muslim identification on non-violent intentions for foreign-born Muslims ($\beta = .05$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.10]), and this dropped to a non-reliable effect among native-born Muslims, $\beta = .01$, 95% CI [-0.02, 0.04]. There was a similar trend for violent intentions, ($\beta = 0.09$, [0.04, 0.15]), and (0.02 [-0.02, 0.06]). In addition, there was an indirect effect of perceived injustice on non-violent intentions among foreign-born participants ($\beta = 0.15$, 95% CI [0.05, 0.25]), and a weaker, unreliable indirect effect among native-born participants ($\beta = 0.11$ [-0.01, 0.24]). Finally, the most noticeable indirect effects were found for perceived injustice in relation to violence, both within the foreign- ($\beta = 0.27$, [0.14, 0.39]) and native-born groups ($\beta = 0.19$ [0.07, 0.31]). Overall, the indirect effects were typically stronger among native-born Muslims, but as expected from the overall model results the discrepancies were typically rather small.

Mean Differences between Native- and Foreign-born Muslims

Finally, we examined mean differences between native and foreign-born Muslims on all variables in our model in a series of ANOVAs (see Figure 2). Native-born participants in fact scored higher on Muslim identification ($F[1, 407] = 53.09, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12$), group-based anger ($F[1, 403] = 8.99, p = .003, \eta^2 = .02$), perceived injustice ($F[1, 406] = 7.94, p = .005, \eta^2 = .02$), and non-violent intentions ($F[1, 404] = 9.38, p = .002, \eta^2 = .02$). We found no significant difference with regards to violent behavioral intentions, $F(1,406) = 1.05, p = .31, \eta^2 = .003$, indicating that even the endorsement of violent behavioral intentions does not differ between native-born Muslims and foreign-born Muslims who came from countries that have been the target of Western foreign policy and military interventions.

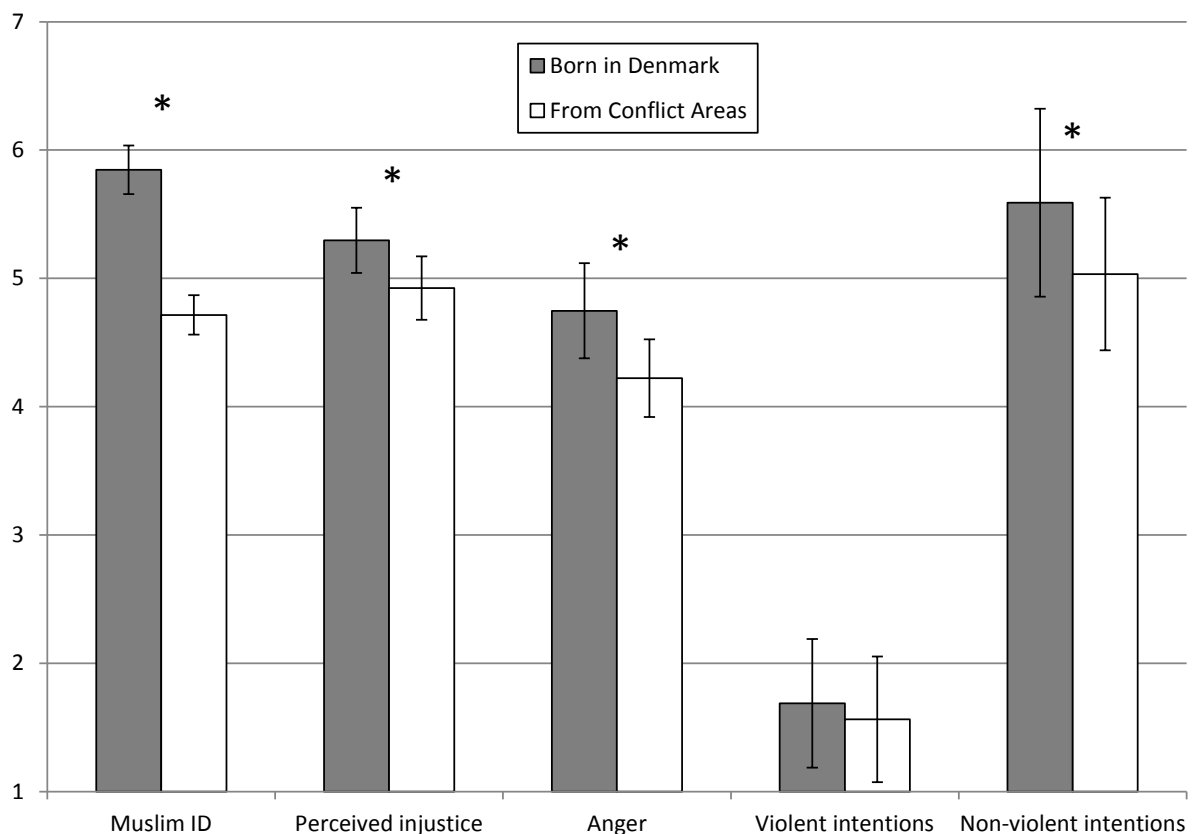


Figure 2. Mean levels of study variables for participants born in Denmark versus coming from countries targeted by interventions by Western powers. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals. * $p < .01$.

Discussion

As first studies on the thesis of victimization-by-proxy, we found support for the notion that vicarious psychological process could explain behavioral intentions among Danish Muslims to use violence in defense of Islam and/or Muslims. In two studies the psychological process motivating Muslim violence against the West did not differ between those coming from countries that have been the target of Western foreign policy and military interventions and those born in Denmark. Further, we also examined mean differences between native and foreign-born Muslims and the results showed that native-born Muslims on average, more strongly identified with Muslims, perceived Western foreign policy as more unjust, reported greater group-based anger, and were more inclined to help Muslims by non-violent, but not violent, means.

Participants Study 3

Studies 1 and 2 showed that the key mechanisms in extremism operate in vicarious fashion – that is, mimicking the effects of direct experience. One of the limitations of studies 1 and 2 is that we cannot be sure that participants born in conflicts zones actually count themselves as having direct personal experiences of Western foreign policies and military interventions. This is important because the entire argument of victimization-by-proxy rest on the idea that those who have not personally experienced Western foreign policy would be as inclined to commit terrorism against the West as those who have. Therefore, in study 3 we assessed the direct personal experience of Western foreign policy to validate our results from studies 1 and 2. In study 3 we sampled people who have had direct personal experience of Western foreign policy and compared them with people with no personal experience of Western foreign policy. If victimization-by-proxy process account for Muslim extremism then we should not find any difference between these two groups in their intentions to commit act of terrorism against the West as response to Western foreign policy and military interventions. Another aim of the study 3 was to use a more specific measure of violence and non-violence in defense of Muslims and/or Islam to improve the predictability of behavioral intentions (see table 5).

We analyze study 3 separately for two reasons. First this study was conducted in a

different context (among Swedish Muslims) and second, we used different measures (e.g., violent and non-violent intentions). Study 3 was conducted in Sweden and involved the same data collection procedure as in Studies 1 and 2. We sampled 161 (88 women) Muslims from 10 different Islam related Facebook websites. Due to the difficulties of obtaining respondents from this population, it took over 6 months to complete the data collection.

Of the total sample, 86 indicated that they have had personally experienced Western foreign policy such as wars and occupation. Participants received no personal compensation for participation, but instead we paid 20 SEK (approximately \$3) to a charitable cause chosen by each participant. Respondent ages ranged from 18 to 68, with the majority between 18-34-age (i.e., 86% of the total sample). (see Table 4).

Table 4. *Demographic Information for Each Sample.*

	<u>Direct personal experience of Western foreign policy</u>	<u>No personal experience of Western foreign policy</u>
<u>Variables</u>	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
<u>Experience of Western Foreign policy</u>		
Personal experience	86(45.2)	0(0)
No experience	0(0)	71(54.8)
<u>Gender</u>		
Female	47(54.7)	40(56.3)
Male	35(40.7)	28(39.4)
<u>Age</u>		
18-24	37(43)	34(47.9)
25-34	36(41.9)	27(38.1)
35-44	9(10.5)	4(5.5)
45-74	4(4.7)	5(8)
<u>Socio-economic status</u>		
Upper class	1(1.2)	0(0)
Upper middleclass	11(12.8)	9(12.7)
Middleclass	47(54.7)	42(59.2)
Lower middleclass	7(8.1)	12(16.9)
Working-class	18(20.9)	7(9.9)
<u>Immigrant status</u>		
First generation	58(81.7)	41(47.7)
Second generation	10(14.1)	39(45.3)
Third generation	0(0)	2(2.3)
One parent Danish	0(0)	1(1.2)

Measures

The surveys for Study 3 included measures of Muslim identification, the perception of Western countries' foreign policy and military interventions, group-based anger, violent behavioral intentions and non-violent behavior to defend and/or support Muslims or/and Islam (see Table 5 for all items, means, standard deviations and reliabilities).

Table 5. *Items, Reliabilities, Mean Levels and Standard Deviations for Muslim Identification, Perceived Injustice, Group-based Anger, Violent and Non-violent Behaviour Intentions for Personal Experience and no-experience of Western foreign policy, Study 3.*

Instruments	Items
Muslim identification No experience ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.87$) Direct personal experience ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.84$)	(1). Being a Muslim is important to me. (2). I feel strongly connected to other Muslims. (3). I strongly identify with other Muslims. (4). I feel very connected to my religious community.
Perceived injustice No experience ($\alpha = .96$, $M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.96$) Direct personal experience ($\alpha = .95$, $M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.86$)	(1). Western military interventions in Muslim countries are immoral. (2). The foreign policy of Western countries harms Muslims worldwide. (3). Western foreign policies and military interventions in Islamic countries are intentionally anti-Muslim. (4). Western foreign policies and military interventions in Islamic countries oppress Muslims. (5). Western foreign policies pose a threat to Muslims' wellbeing.
Group-based anger No experience ($\alpha = .94$, $M = 4.94$, $SD = 2.02$) Direct personal experience ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.98$)	(1). I feel angry when I think of Muslim sufferings caused by Western foreign policies (2). I feel outrage when I think of Muslim sufferings caused by Western foreign policies. (3). Muslims suffering caused by western countries' foreign policies makes me angry.
Violent behavioral intentions No experience ($\alpha = .85$, $M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.59$) Direct personal experience ($\alpha = .88$, $M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.54$)	(1). If nothing else helps, I'm prepared to use violence to defend Muslims. (2). As a last resort I'm personally ready to use violence for the sake of other Muslims. (3). I would personally use violence against people harming other Muslims that I care about. (4). I'm ready to go and fight for Muslims in another country. (5). I'm not prepared to use violence in any situation (R). (6). I would not personally use violence to help Muslims (R).
Non-violent behavior intentions No experience ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 4.55$, $SD = 3.43$) Direct personal experience	(1). Taken part in a public debate defending Muslims/Islam. (2). Signed a petition defending Muslims/Islam. (3). Written a letter to an authority defending Muslims/Islam. (4). Post a statement in social media in defence of Muslim/Islam.

($\alpha = .84, M = 3.81, SD = 2.75$)

(5). Post a pro-Muslim comment on social media (for example Facebook or Twitter).

(6). Donated money to help a Muslim charitable organization (before this study).

Note. (R) = reverse coded.

Given the difficulty in reaching our sample, the present study was part of a larger battery of variables, collected to answer different research questions within the same survey. Variables not included here concerned, for example perceived symbolic and realistic threats, perceived dehumanization and Islamophobia. Bivariate correlations between all focal variables for both studies and for all respondents are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. *Correlations between Variables*

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Muslim identification	-	.50**	.52**	.29**	.43**
2. Perceived injustice		-	.72**	.29**	.51**
3. Group-based anger			-	.23**	.45**
4. Violent behavioural intentions				-	.25**
5. Non-violent behavioral intentions					-

Note. ** $p < .01$

Results

Path model for predicting violent and non-violent behavioral intentions

We followed same analysis procedures as in studies 1 and 2. In our first analyses, we examined a path model testing the hypothesized relations between Muslim identification, perceived injustice, group-based anger and violent and non-violent behavior. The model fitted the empirical data well scaled $\chi^2(4) = 2.00, p = .73, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 90\% CI [.00, .09], SRMR = .02$). Hence, the final model including all estimated relations is presented in Figure 3. With the exception of one path from perceived group-based anger to non-violent behavioral intentions we replicated the victimization model proposed in Studies 1 and 2. Any further trimming resulted in poorly fitting model (e.g., $RMSEA > .12, CFI < .94$).

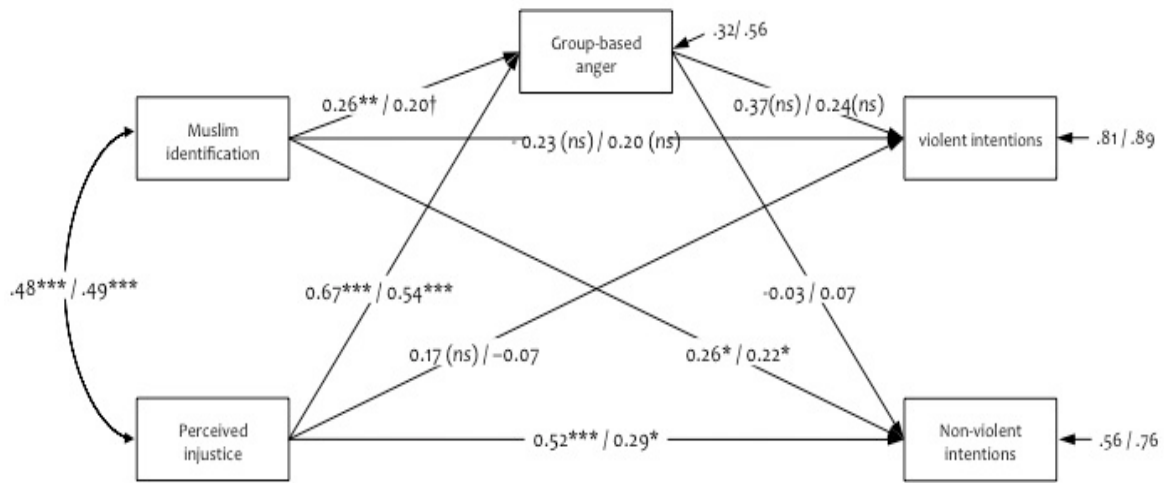


Figure 1. Standardized results of a multi-group (personal- versus no-experience) path analysis to predict violent and non-violent intentions to defend Islam and other Muslims. † $p = .067$ (Muslims identification \rightarrow group-based anger), * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

As in studies 1 and 2 we found that Muslim identification and perceived injustice were unrelated to violent behavioral intentions ($\beta s < 0.07$, $p s > 0.5$). The other standardized effects ranged from 0.22 to 0.60 ($p s \leq .002$). Similar to studies 1 and 2 we also tested whether these relations were robust to the introduction of demographic variables for age, gender and education. All paths that were significant without these control variables remained just as strong in this analysis ($\beta s > 0.21$, $p s \leq .003$).

Multi-group path analysis for direct experience and no experience of Western foreign policy

A multiple group path analysis was performed to see whether the model proposed above applied to those who with direct personal experience of Western foreign policy and those with no experience. We first ran a baseline model in which we allowed all relations between the variables to vary between the two groups. This model had excellent fit to the data Scaled $\chi^2(8) = 6.50$, $p = 0.59$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 90% CI [.00, .12]. Next, we tested a model in which all relations between the variables were constrained to be equal across both groups. This model also provided good fit Scaled $\chi^2(14) = 12.9$, $p = .54$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 90% CI [.00, .10]. In fact, the difference in fit between these

models was non-significant (Scaled Chi-Square Difference $TRd(6) = 6.6, p = 0.4$) indicating that the relationships between the variables appear to be highly consistent across the two groups.

In addition to direct personal experience of Western foreign policy we also asked our participants whether any of their family members have personally experienced Western foreign policy to test whether the psychological underpinning of violence and non-violence would differ depending on family members' direct personal experience of Western countries foreign policy and military interventions. Some argue that grievances, particularly caused by the loss of loved ones due to military action can be a potent factor of terrorism (Monahan, 2010). This is important because among native-born Muslims there might be people whose family members have personally experienced Western foreign policy. Therefore, although native-born Muslims have not personally experienced Western foreign policy their family member might have, which can indirectly victimize these individuals leading to behavioral and intentional consequences. To make sure that the victimization of some native born Muslims were not the consequence of family members experience of Western foreign policy, but was caused by vicarious process, we ran additional multi-group path analysis where we compared people with and without family members who have personally experienced Western foreign policy. Consistent with previous analyses our results showed that the relationships between the variables appeared to be highly consistent across the two groups (Scaled Chi-Square Difference $TRd(6) = 7.11, p = 0.3$) lending additional support to the thesis of victimization-by-proxy.

To further examine the indirect effects of Muslim identification and perceived injustice (via group-based anger) on violent and non-violent behavioral intentions among those with direct personal experience versus no experience, we derived bootstrapped confidence intervals for these effects based on 5000 draws. There was a marginally significant indirect effect of Muslim identification on violent behavioral intentions among those with no direct experience of Western foreign policy ($\beta = .09, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.03, 0.17]$) and this dropped to non-significant effect among those with direct personal experience of Western foreign policy ($\beta = .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.02, 0.13]$). The most noticeable indirect effects were found for perceived injustice in relation to violence, both within both groups with no direct experience- ($\beta = 0.26, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.10, 0.17]$) and direct experience of

Western foreign policy ($\beta = 0.15$ [0.02, 0.13]). Overall, in line with studies 1 and 2 the indirect effects were typically marginally stronger among those with no direct experience of Western foreign policy, but as expected from the overall model results the discrepancies were typically rather small.

Mean Differences between direct personal Experience- and no-experience of Western foreign policy

Finally, we examined mean differences between direct personal experience- and no-experience on all variables in our model in a series of ANOVAs (see Figure 4). Participants with no direct experience of Western foreign policy in fact scored higher on group-based anger ($F[1, 154] = 1.60, p = .2, \eta^2 = .01$), perceived injustice ($F[1, 154] = .654, p = .4, \eta^2 = .00$), non-violent behavioral intentions ($F[1, 155] = 2.27, p = .1, \eta^2 = .01$). However, participants with direct experience of Western foreign policy scored higher on violent behavioral intentions ($F[1, 154] = .120, p = .7, \eta^2 = .00$) and we found no difference in Muslim identification between the two groups ($F[1, 151] = .0, p = .9, \eta^2 = .00$). Nevertheless, it is important to note that none of these results were significant, indicating that there was no significant difference between those with direct personal experience-and those with no direct personal experience of Western foreign policy.

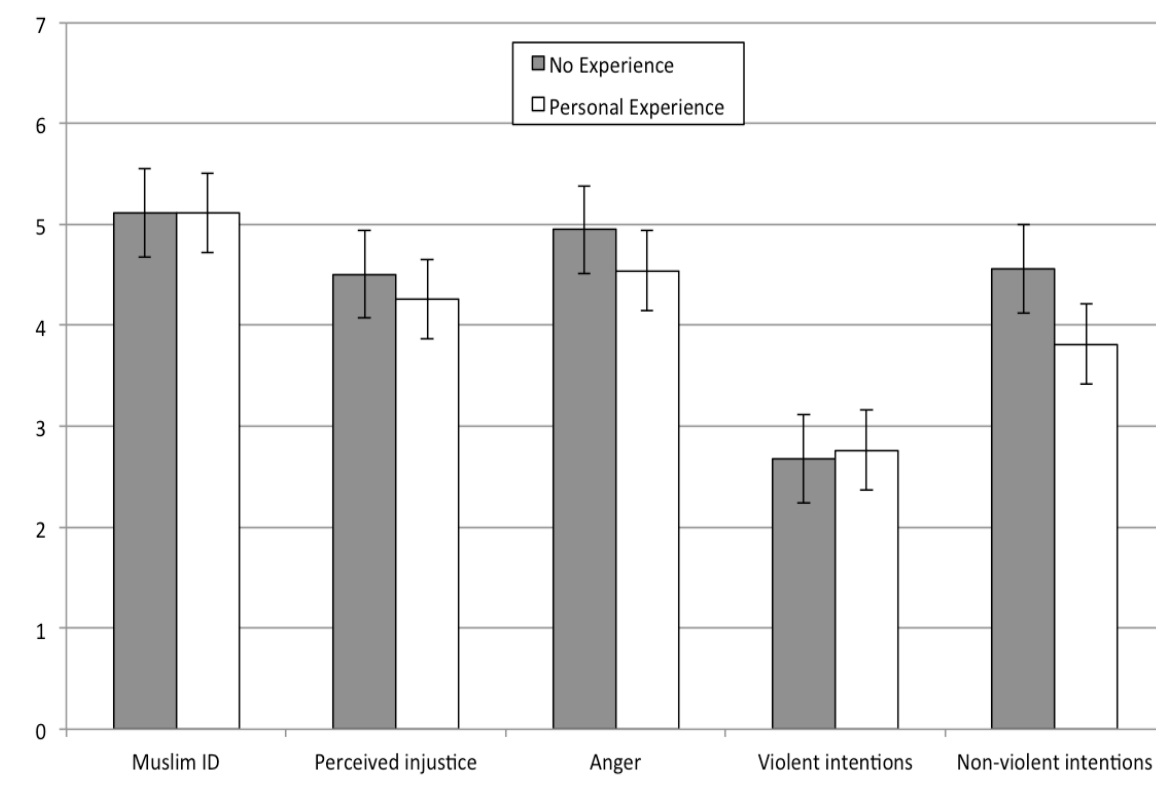


Figure 4. Mean levels of study variables for participants with direct experience of Western foreign policy and versus no experience. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Discussion

The present studies tested if victimization-by-proxy processes could explain behavioral intentions to use violence in defense of Islam and/or Muslims. To do so we tested a model based on existing insights on collective action, social identity as well as intergroup emotions theories, and we ran multi-group path analyses to compare results among foreign- and native-born Muslims in Denmark and Sweden. In this way, we compared the processes that affect intentions to use violence among Muslims with, versus without, personal experience of Western-led war/occupation. We also examined mean differences between native and foreign-born Muslims in both countries for all the variables in the model. To our knowledge, this is the first empirical study that directly tests whether key mechanisms in extremism actually operate in vicarious fashion – that is, mimicking the effects of direct experience.

Following a victimization-by-proxy account for Muslim extremism, we predicted that behavioral intentions to defend Islam and Muslims should be underpinned by perceived injustice, Muslim identification, and group-based anger among people from conflict areas (e.g., Iraq and Afghanistan) people with direct experience of Western foreign policy *and* for people born and raised in the West without experience of Western foreign policy. Across our three studies, the multi-group path analyses revealed similar results for all three groups of participants, indicating that inclinations to commit violence in defense of Islam and Muslims, for example, need not be anchored in personally experienced adversity – vicarious psychological responses can have the same effects. Among participants born in Denmark and Sweden, personal experience of wars, for example, could not possibly account for their Muslim identification, perceptions of global wrongdoings by the West, or subsequent anger and behavioral intentions. Even so, we found these variables to be linked to each other in a similar way as they were among participants who had migrated from areas targeted by military interventions or sanctions from the West. As such, these studies provided initial evidence for the victimization-by-proxy perspective.

Discussing the path model it should be noted, as a caveat, that we did not *individually* test every single path for differences between the two groups. This also implies that there could be more than mere statistical noise to some of the discrepancies. Still, running tests for individual paths would require a priori knowledge about which ones to focus on in particular (i.e. equivalent to planned contrasts), and they would also be associated with reduced power (see MacCallum et al., 2006). Also, as the constrained models fit the data so well, even in absolute terms, a generic model would seem preferable in terms of parsimony, as compared to unique models for native and foreign-born Muslims.

Beyond the path model, additional results from studies 1 and 2 showed that native-born participants were *more* identified with Muslims, perceived Western foreign policies as *more* unjust, felt *more* group-based anger and showed *stronger* intentions to support Muslims by non-violent means. Similarly, in study 3 we found the same trends although these results were not significant. This finding is striking giving that it is directly opposite to what would be expected from a personal experience account. Still, this result appears

in line with other propositions that second and third generation European Muslims particularly struggle with identity crises, feelings of alienation and anger, which makes them particularly vulnerable to extremist ideologies (Roy, 2005). Further, most likely the perception of Muslim suffering caused by Western foreign policy may resonate with their personal of discrimination in European societies where many second and third generation of Muslim Europeans experience on a daily basis. Further, personal grievances can be combined with group grievances leading to higher degree of Muslim identification, anger and alienation (McCauley and Moskalenko, 2011).

Besides demonstrating victimization-by-proxy processes on Muslim behavioral intentions to commit political violence, the current paper speaks to another issue that has been well-debated, but empirically understudied in the literature. Specifically, many have emphasized the role of emotions, and especially anger, for predicting Islamist terrorism. Nevertheless, these accounts are often based on anecdotal evidence (e.g., Atran, 2003; Gerges, 2005; Richardson, 2006; Ricolfi, 2005; Stern, 2003). Also, while some have shown that anger is related to violence (e.g., Livingstone et al., 2009), Tausch et al., (2011) have found that the predictive power of anger weakens as the criterion actions become more extreme. In this paper we asked about anger specifically in relation to foreign policy of Western countries, and we found that anger does indeed predict support for the use of violence in all three studies.

Overall, an important lesson from this inquiry is that the current focus on the relation between Muslims and non-Muslims in the Middle East must be complemented with a stronger focus on the intergroup dynamics *within* Western societies. Research suggests that ethnic identity has become increasingly salient in the West with public discourse dividing the population into 'us' (ethnic Westerners) and 'them' (particularly Muslims; e.g. Dittrich, 2006; Hervik, 2004, see also Massad, 2015). From this perspective, increases in Muslim identification and accompanying group-based emotions might result in feelings of alienation and exclusion. Evidence suggests that Muslims in Europe, but also globally, face not only socioeconomic inequalities, but also political and cultural isolation (Stewart, 2008). Specifically, second-generation immigrants in Denmark are likely to feel deprived because they see themselves as Danes, but nevertheless experience exclusion and group-based inequality. Some argue that second

and third-generation Muslim Europeans, in particular, perceive themselves as second-class citizens and feel disenfranchised within a society that does not fully accept them. Many may identify as Muslims, rather than Dane or German, because of blocked social mobility (Franz, 2007). Such native-born experiences and perceptions could perhaps explain why our native-born participants scored higher on non-violent intentions and higher on all the examined predictors of violent and non-violent collective action and protest. It is also possible that the mean differences reflect that foreign-born Muslims find it easier to appreciate how Denmark has offered their families a new home, and that they subsequently feel less mistreated, and so on. Either way, there is a need to direct more focus on how Muslim extremism at global scale may originate from within the West.

Belmi, Barragan, Margaret, and Cohen (2015) recently suggested that situations involving a social identity threat easily generalizes to a global sense that one's group is maltreated in society, which in turn leads to anti-social attitudes, intentions and disruptive behaviors. Our argument here is similar, but we extend it by noting that perceived mistreatment of one's group does not only generalize to an idea of how a particular society works (in this case Danish society), but rather how the world as a whole works. Thus, while we could not argue that experiences in one's closest surroundings are irrelevant, we find it interesting just how far these generalizations seem to go. Specifically, the current findings indicate that Muslims born in Denmark do not merely experience feelings specifically tied to Danish Muslims and mobilization in order to change that society in particular (by violent or non-violent means) – they seem to think, feel and act on behalf of a global Muslim community. From a social identity perspective, it can be argued that increasing hostile intergroup relations between Muslims and non-Muslims may lead to a distinctiveness threat to which Muslim Europeans may respond by reasserting their threatened Muslim identity (Brewer, 1991). Because of a heightened sense of Muslim identity, Muslims most likely identify with both the suffering of Muslims in Europe and the suffering of Muslims abroad and, as a result, feel obliged to act on the basis of their Muslim identity. From a perspective stressing direct experience that makes little sense. However, it fits with the victimization-by-proxy argument. Clearly, a “strong” victimization-by-proxy argument, that is entirely blind to personal experience, seems implausible, but a moderate version – stressing an abstract sense of mistreatment,

potentially based on far-reaching generalizations of observed events, seems all the more convincing.

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Chapter 6

Paper V

The Normal Personalities of Extremists – Examining Violent and Non-violent Defense of Muslims²³

Abstract

Individuals becoming terrorists are often described as either “mentally ill”, or as “most anyone” under the pressure of contextual circumstances. We argued that extremists might be “normal” in a clinical sense while nonetheless bearing certain personality signatures. Indeed, results from two studies ($N = 188$ and 193) suggest that both violent and non-violent behavioral intentions among European Muslims are predicted by basic personality traits. Violent intentions were related to low openness to experience and low emotionality, whereas non-violent intentions were primarily related to empathy/altruism. When substituting non-violent intentions with actual behaviors the results were similar, suggesting that the findings are not merely self-report artefacts. Overall, the personality model explained 13-23% of the individual differences in these intentions, which matches the predictive power of social psychological models. The findings show that extremism is no exception to the principle that both person and situation factors influence human thoughts, feelings and behavior.

Keywords: Extremism, terrorism, violent and non-violent intentions, HEXACO personality.

²³ The first and second author made equal contributions to this paper.

Background and Aim

In light of recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Beirut it is natural to ask who would do such things. Within the psychology literature that question has received two schematic answers. The first answer is ‘someone who is mentally ill’. The second answer is ‘most anyone’, at least when a person’s social surroundings are set up in a certain way. Illustrating the first position, Lankford (2014) commented that “suicidal motives, mental health problems, and personal crises are the most significant reason why fewer than 300 suicide terrorists usually blow themselves up each year” (p. 352). In stark contrast, Ginges, Atran, Sachdeva, and Medin (2011) noted that “in sum, a key difference between terrorists and most other people in the world may lie not so much in individual pathologies, personality, education, income, or any other demographic factor but in small-group dynamics where the relevant trait just happens to be jihad” (p. 517). Today most scholars side with Ginges and associates (e.g., Pape, 2003; Post, Ali, Henderson, Shanfield, Victoroff, & Weine, 2009; Sageman, 2004).

In this paper we propose a third and overlooked possibility, namely that many people endorsing violence on behalf of a group might be normal in a clinical sense, but not necessarily random individuals. We propose that they could have non-pathological personality signatures. More broadly, non-clinical personality traits have been found to be related to political mobilization and normative collective action (e.g., Gallego & Oberski, 2012; Ha, Kim, & Jo, 2013; Opp & Brandstätter, 2010), and here we expanded such inquiries to also incorporate violence. We also considered the possibility that different personality traits are associated with violence versus non-violence to support a group. As simple as these ideas are they have neither been documented nor seriously considered. The reason, we will argue, is found in a situationist zeitgeist in the extremism literature.

Personality and Extremism – Absent Effects or Absent Efforts?

For most parts the person-situation debate in psychology has been resolved like the nature-nurture debate – by recognizing merits from both sides and by viewing these accounts as complementary rather than contradictory (e.g., Funder, 2006). Today the biological reality of traits, as well as their impact on important life outcomes (e.g.,

divorces and longevity), is beyond reasonable doubt (e.g., DeYoung, 2010; Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi, & Goldberg, 2007). Likewise, the impact of the immediate situation and the broader context on social behaviors is equally undeniable (Asch, 1956; Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973; Milgram, 1963; Sherif, 1935) However, as illustrated in the opening paragraph, there is still a clear “either-or” rhetoric of person and situation factors when it comes to explaining extreme group behaviors. Yet if person and situation factors usually interact or complement each other, then this “situation only” case would be the exception that proves the rule. An alternative view is that the conclusion could represent a statistical type II error – a failure to detect actual personality effects because of limited data and constrained sampling in terms of study populations and instruments.

The data speaking against person effects are indeed limited, both in quantity and breadth. The lack of breadth is linked to the pre-occupation to discuss normality versus abnormality. Work that supposedly address the personality hypothesis confound traits with demographics and pathology, or lack data altogether (Gottschalk & Gottschalk, 2004; Lyons & Harbinson, 1986; Morf, 1970). For example, Gottschalk and Gottschalk (2004) suggested that the personality of extremists is marked by “pathological hatred”. In addition, the studies have often relied on ad hoc measures (e.g., Schbley, 2003) and/or very small samples (e.g., Merari, Diamant, Bibi, Broshi, and Zakin, 2010). Naturally, these problems do not prove anything in favor of a trait approach, but they do suggest that extremism researchers have jumped to conclusions that are unwarranted by the available data. In essence, the extremism literature has overlooked that even “normal” people systematically differ from each other, and these differences may also matter for an attraction to “abnormal” behaviors (e.g., terrorism). Perhaps this is the simple reason why personality effects have not yet been documented.

The History Repeating Itself

The rhetoric in the extremism literature is similar to the prejudice literature some decades ago, and the historical trajectories are practically parallel. When Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950) initiated their authoritarian personality project they were looking for pathological characteristics. Their authoritarian personality was believed to be a “syndrome” that included psychopathic and schizophrenic

tendencies. Over time, however, this view fell into disfavor and social psychologists recoiled to argue that the real explanations should be traced to identification processes and intergroup dynamics (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). This reaction is paralleled by the arguments in the extremism literature today (see e.g., Ginges et al., 2011).

So do group dynamic explanations always get the best of individual difference perspectives? We do not think so, and there is a good reason why. When Altemeyer (1981) re-introduced the authoritarianism concept, he got rid of the Freudian and pathological aspects in the earlier theory. The result was one of the best predictors of anti-minority prejudice ever conceived (e.g., McFarland, 2010). Further, when the personality status of authoritarianism was challenged (e.g., Reynolds, Turner, Haslam, & Ryan, 2001), others confirmed personality effects for core traits (like the Big-Five) as well (e.g., Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003). Today it is difficult to deny that basic personality tendencies predict many prejudices (for a meta-analysis, see Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). As such the prejudice research boils down to a simple lesson: The idea that personality would be irrelevant turned out to be empirically false, and it was advanced in the first place because researchers were focusing on psychopathology and the wrong instruments.

The same might also be true for other “high-profile” phenomena in social psychology. For example, Zimbardo (2007) has argued that there were no personality effects at play in his infamous prison experiments, and that participants were normal and healthy (just like most terrorists and the prison guards in Abu Ghraib). However, Carnahan and McFarland (2007) demonstrated that a whole range of personality and ideological variables explain attraction to a prison study like Zimbardo’s. Quite possibly, they found Zimbardo’s missing personality effects because they looked beyond pathology and because they had better predictors (as well as better statistical power). If this is correct, just as it was in the case of prejudice, then we could expect to repeat the historical lesson in the extremism literature as well.

The Current Research

The aim of this paper was to examine to what extent non-clinical personality variables predict violent as well as non-violent behavioral intentions among European Muslims to support their religious group. Because of practical and ethical difficulties of reaching Muslims engaged in terrorism, we focused on behavioral intentions for group-based violence and non-violence in the general population of European Muslims. Noteworthy, if personality predisposes individuals for violence then these inclinations should still show up in non-extremist samples. Further, intentions tend to be better than attitudes as proxies of behaviors (De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999; see also Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977), so the external validity should at least be on par with studies focusing on attitudinal support for violence in normal populations (e.g., Ginges, Hansen, & Norenzayan, 2009).

As for the personality variables in focus we were especially resolute not to let specific traits speak to the role of personality at large. Instead, we aimed to cover a wide gamut of human personality. For that reason we used the HEXACO personality model (Ashton & Lee, 2007). Until recently it has been a widely endorsed viewpoint that five broad personality dimensions provide good coverage of human personality (e.g., McCrae & Costa, 2008). The HEXACO model was introduced to account for observations that in many languages there is evidence of six dimensions (Ashton & Lee, 2007). Our interest in the HEXACO model was also guided by recent research suggesting that the last extracted factor, honesty-humility, is an important predictor of various group attitudes (e.g., Sibley, Harding, Perry, Asbrock, & Duckitt, 2010). It could also bridge basic personality research with the claim in (some) clinical research that extremists have psychopathic traits (Cooper, 1978); honesty-humility is inversely and strongly related to such tendencies (e.g., Lee & Ashton, 2014). The remaining factors of the HEXACO model are agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotionality, extraversion, and openness to experience.

Among the HEXACO variables our clearest expectations were to find an association between low openness and endorsement of violence. This prediction follows a long line of research suggesting that dogmatism is associated with intolerance toward dissimilar others (e.g., Brandt, Chambers, Crawford, Wetherell, & Reyna, 2015) and non-

critical submission to authorities (e.g., religious ones, Duckitt, 2001). We predicted that narrow-mindedness regarding values would be associated with violence, rather than the aspects of openness that deal with intellectual capacities (for a discussion on this distinction, see DeYoung, Quilty, & Peterson, 2007). To test this hypothesis we included additional items specifically focusing on these different nuances.

Study 1

Study 1 took place in Denmark, the country of the (first) Muhammad cartoon controversy. Besides from Belgium, Denmark has also been the European country producing most homegrown Muslim fighters per capita since 2012 (Neumann, 2015).

Method

Participants and Power Analysis. We aimed to use sample size around 200 based on a power analysis assuming personality correlates of .20, $\alpha = .05$, and a power of .80. The effect size estimate was (conservatively) based on meta-analytic data on personality correlates in group attitudes (see Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). Thus, we recruited 213 participants from a range of Danish Facebook groups related to Islam. Given that the participants came from a hard-to-reach population, it took us two months to collect this amount of data. Only those reporting to be Muslim (practicing or non-practicing) were kept for the analyses ($N = 188$; 69% women).

To avoid indirect identification on a sensitive topic like this the demographics were sparse and we asked for age in bins of five years (and 18-20/>76). The type age was 20-25, and 83% were between 18 and 30. This age distribution was a slightly lower than the age of European Muslims convicted for terrorist crimes (e.g., Bakker, 2006). 14% had completed high school, 48% were enrolled in university studies, and 24% had earned a university degree, and 14% gave miscellaneous answers to the question about education. No compensations were given directly to the participants. Instead we asked each participant to split a donation of 30 DKK (~\$4.5) as they wanted between three Muslim charity organizations.

Materials.

To assess personality, we used the Danish translation of the 100-item HEXACO-PI-R inventory (Lee & Ashton, 2004; Zettler, 2015). Each of the six factors includes 16 items, such as “I tend to be lenient in judging other people” (agreeableness, $\alpha = .78$), “I clean my office or home quite frequently” (conscientiousness, $\alpha = .79$), “I worry a lot less than most people do” (reversed emotionality, $\alpha = .80$), “I avoid making ‘small talk’ with people” (reversed extraversion, $\alpha = .81$), “I wouldn’t want people to treat me as though I were superior to them” (honesty-humility, $\alpha = .80$), and “I enjoy looking at maps of different places” (openness, $\alpha = .82$). The 100-item inventory also includes an interstitial facet scale labelled altruism (double-loading on honesty-humility and agreeableness) of four items (e.g. “I am a soft-hearted person”). To get a better measure of altruism/empathy we also included four items from the 200-item HEXACO-PI-R ($\alpha = .70$). In addition, we collected a set of items from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) to assess both intellect and value facets in openness (see Supplemental materials; see also De Young et al., 2007). However, because of low reliability in the value composite ($\alpha = .40$), we only examined the intellect composite ($\alpha = .72$), as compared to the HEXACO instrument.

For the purposes of this study we created three measures to use as dependent variables. These included non-violent intentions to defend Islam and other Muslims ($\alpha = .72$), a violent intentions counterpart ($\alpha = .87$), and intentions to assist Muslims carrying out acts of violence ($\alpha = .76$). The last items were included because of the possibility that those willing to assist violent extremists might have different personalities compared to those willing to carry out violence themselves. All items included in the behavioral intentions inventories are presented in the Supplemental materials, along with basic descriptive statistics. For validation purposes we also included four items to measure Muslim identification ($\alpha = .86$) as previously used among Danish Muslims (e.g. “being a Muslim is important to me”, see Obaidi, Bergh, Sidanius, & Thomsen, 2015). Three questions asked about conservative attitudes as related to Islam, social and economic issues, but these were not analyzed. Finally, we included behavioral reports of 11 non-violent acts, but they were not included in the main analyses due to having a multidimensional (and difficult to interpret) factor structure.

Results

Preliminary Results. Behavior intentions to personally use violence were strongly correlated with behavioral intentions to assist violent others ($r = .74, p > .001$). Thus, we combined all items related to violence into the same index ($\alpha = .90$). The decision to do so was also supported by an exploratory factor analysis (see Supplemental materials for details). This aggregate for violent intentions was unrelated to non-violent intentions ($r = .08, p = .28$).

In line with previous research (e.g., Phalet, Baysu, & Verkuyten, 2010), we found that both non-violent and violent intentions were related to Muslim identification ($r = .27$ and $.38$ respectively, $ps < .001$). Addressing discriminant validity, we anticipated men to score higher than women on violent intentions but not non-violent ones. Indeed, this was the case, $t(182) = 4.31, p < .001, d = 0.65$ for violence, and $t(182) = -0.75, p = .45, d = -0.12$ for non-violence.

HEXACO Regression Analyses. To test the influence of the personality variables on the different behavioral intentions, we ran regression analyses using a robust maximum likelihood estimator to obtain unbiased standard errors with missing and/or skewed data (Muthén & Muthén, 2012). Both non-violent and violent intentions were predicted by personality ($R^2 = .16$ and $.13, p = .002$ and $.006$ respectively), but in different ways. Non-violent intentions were predicted by altruism, agreeableness, and marginally by conscientiousness ($p = .055$). Still, the agreeableness relation seemed to reflect a suppressor effect by altruism ($\beta = 0.08, p = .32$, without altruism). Violent intentions were associated with low emotionality and openness. All coefficients are presented in Table 1.

With the addition of age and gender (dummy coded: Female = 0, Male = 1) as covariates²⁴, the personality effects were at least on par with the original model with one exception. Specifically, the emotionality-violence relation dropped in strength ($\beta = -0.14$,

²⁴ Education was not included as it was unrelated to both of the outcome variables ($r = -.11$ and $.04$ for non-violent and violent intentions respectively), but also because it is not exogenous in relation to personality (as opposed to age and gender).

$p = .07$). As could be expected from the preliminary results, there was a unique effect of gender on violent intentions ($\beta = -0.22$, $p = .004$). All standardized results from this model are presented in the Supplemental materials.

Table 1. *Standardized Relations between HEXACO Personality Variables and Violent and Non-Violent Intentions in Study 1.*

	Violent intentions			Non-violent intentions		
	β	95% CI	p	β	95% CI	p
Agreeableness	0.00	[-0.18, 0.19]	.971	-0.21	[-0.35, -0.06]	.004
Conscientiousness	-0.02	[-0.18, 0.15]	.854	0.15	[-0.01, 0.30]	.056
Emotionality	-0.23	[-0.39, -0.07]	.003	-0.06	[-0.21, 0.08]	.380
Extraversion	-0.08	[-0.26, 0.09]	.359	0.04	[-0.11, 0.19]	.597
Honesty-humility	-0.13	[-0.30, 0.05]	.139	-0.06	[-0.22, 0.10]	.436
Openness	-0.18	[-0.34, -0.02]	.028	0.07	[-0.08, 0.22]	.380
Altruism	-0.03	[-0.23, 0.17]	.753	0.42	[0.24, 0.60]	<.001

Note. Confidence intervals based on bias-corrected bootstraps (5000 draws). All significance testing is based on Robust Maximum Likelihood (MLR) estimation.

Openness Facets. In our final analyses we compared HEXACO openness and IPIP intellect as predictors of violent and non-violent intentions. As in the main analyses, HEXACO openness negatively predicted violent intentions ($\beta = -0.23$, 95% CI [-0.41, -0.05]²⁵, $p = .02$), but not non-violence ($\beta = 0.03$, 95% CI [-0.12, 0.18], $p = .68$). Intellect revealed an opposite pattern, it positively predicted non-violence ($\beta = 0.21$, 95% CI [0.06, 0.35], $p = .005$) while being unrelated to violence ($\beta = 0.05$, 95% CI [-0.16, 0.25], $p = .65$).

Discussion

As a first study on basic personality and Muslim extremism, we found support for the notion that such variables indeed predict behavioral intentions to support Muslims with violence. Those endorsing violence scored lower on emotionality and openness. That is, these individuals reported, for example, less fear and stress (emotionality) as well as less imagination and more mental rigidity (openness). As we further expected, those

²⁵ All confidence intervals were based on bias-corrected bootstrapping (5000 draws).

endorsing non-violent support of Muslim were characterized by other traits, most notably higher altruism/empathy.

Study 2

Study 2 was mainly aimed as a replication of the effects from first study. This study took place in Sweden, following closely behind Denmark at the top of the list of European countries exporting most fighters per capita to Syria and Iraq (Neumann, 2015). In this replication we focused specifically on the characteristics that were most clearly predictive of violent and non-violent intentions in Study 1 – that is, altruism, emotionality and openness. Another aim of the study was to provide further validation of the notion that personality predicts behavioral inclinations among Muslims – and not just self-reported intentions. Thus, we provided an opportunity to donate a part (or all) of the participation reward to the Red Crescent. We predicted that donations would be positively related to non-violent support of Muslims, but not violent intentions. We further hypothesized that the altruism measure would predict the decision to donate, just like it predicted non-violent intentions in Study 1. Finally, since the choice to donate was done anonymously we expected donations to relate to honesty-humility (see also Exline & Hill, 2012).

Method

Participants and Procedure. As in study 1, we aimed for a sample size around 200 based on our initial power analysis. In this study we recruited participants from a yearly Muslim convention in Sweden (“Muslim family days” – the largest meeting place for Muslims in Scandinavia). This provided us with a heterogeneous group to sample from, and some consider the event to be controversial due to links between invited speakers and Hamas as well as the Muslim Brotherhood (Gudmundson, 2014).

260 surveys were handed out, 225 were returned. Participants who were missing more than one third of the responses (one whole page in the survey) for the independent (personality) variables were excluded, leaving 185-187 for the different analyses (62% women). The median age was 20 ($SD = 6.35$). 35% had completed high school (18%

were enrolled), and 13% had earned a university degree (32% were enrolled in university studies). The remaining 2% had no education beyond elementary school.

At the convention our research assistants gave each participant a survey, an envelope and two 20SEK bills (~\$5). Participants were requested to put the surveys in the envelope, and they were also informed that they could also put any of the money in it and we would subsequently donate it to the Red Crescent. Although bills provided a more crude measure of donations (0, 20 or 40 SEK), we chose this alternative to prevent the possibility to tell from the sealed envelopes if participants had put any money in it. To further reduce social desirability effects the participants were sent off to complete the survey and they were requested to only return with enclosed envelopes.

Materials.

As the study was conducted with a paper-pencil questionnaire at a convention center, we kept it short by using the 60-item version of HEXACO (Ashton & Lee, 2009; α s = .64, .60 and .61 for emotionality, honesty-humility, and openness respectively). The interstitial altruism facet ($\alpha = .76$) and the additional intellect (openness) items ($\alpha = .65$) were measured as in Study 1, and so were the non-violent ($\alpha = .64^{26}$) and violent intentions²⁷. Again we combined the items for violence and violence-assistance into one index ($\alpha = .84$).

Results

Preliminary Results. In this case the relation between violent and non-violent intentions was weakly negative, $r = -.19$, $p = .01$. As in Study 1, we also examined gender differences in violent and non-violent intentions as an initial validation of our construed (and now translated) measures. As predicted, men scored significantly higher than women on violent intentions, $t(177) = 2.46$, $p = .02$, $d = 0.38$. On the other hand, women scored higher on non-violent intentions, $t(177) = 2.17$, $p = .03$, $d = 0.33$.

²⁶ One item removed to increase Cronbach's α from .44 to .64. Overall the reliabilities were lower in this study, seemingly because of language difficulties with items involving double negations (e.g., disagreeing with an item including "not").

²⁷ For follow-up analyses we also measured the six additional emotionality items from HEXACO-PI-R 100. We also included six items of perceived superiority of Muslims as a potential mediator of some personality effects. However, no mediating effects were found.

HEXACO Regression Analyses. All the effects from Study 1 were replicated in this sample using HEXACO-60 variables. Again, both non-violent and violent intentions were predicted by basic traits ($R^2 = .23$ and $.21$ respectively, $ps < .001$), and the different outcomes had different personality signatures. Altruism was rather strongly and positively related to non-violent intentions, but it was also negatively related to violent intentions. The openness relationships revealed a similar pattern, but with a stronger (negative) effect on violence. Finally, emotionality was only related (negatively) to violent intentions. All coefficients are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. *Standardized Relations between HEXACO Personality Variables and Violent Intentions, Non-Violent Intentions, and Non-Violent Behavior in Study 2.*

	<u>Violent intentions</u>			<u>Non-violent intentions</u>			<u>Non-violent behavior</u>		
	β	95% CI	p	β	95% CI	p	β	95% CI	p
Emotionality	-0.21	[-0.36, -0.07]	.003	-0.03	[-0.16, 0.10]	.646	0.06	[-0.12, 0.24]	.490
Openness	-0.26	[-0.41, -0.12]	<.001	0.16	[0.02, 0.31]	.031	0.10	[-0.08, 0.27]	.292
Altruism	-0.18	[-0.31, -0.06]	.004	0.40	[0.28, 0.53]	<.001	0.22	[0.00, 0.44]	.048

Note. Confidence intervals based on bias-corrected bootstraps (5000 draws), except in the logistic regression for non-violent behaviors. Such results are not available in Mplus for standardized effects and maximum likelihood estimation. All significance testing is based on Robust Maximum Likelihood (MLR) estimation.

As in Study 1 we also tested a model including age and gender as covariates. The inclusion of these demographic variables did not change the magnitude or interpretation of any of the personality relations. In this case, there were no unique gender or age effects once the role of personality had been considered (see Supplemental materials for details).

Openness Facets. Comparing the predictability of HEXACO openness and IPIP intellect we again found that the latter was positively associated with non-violent intentions ($\beta = 0.24$, 95% CI [0.09, 0.39], $p = .002$), but not the violent counterparts ($\beta = -0.05$, 95% CI [-0.22, 0.12], $p = .55$). Further, as in study 1, HEXACO openness was negatively related to violent intentions ($\beta = -0.31$, 95% CI [-0.48, -0.14], $p < .001$), but only marginally to non-violent intentions ($\beta = 0.14$, 95% CI [-0.02, 0.30], $p = .08$).

Behavioral Validation. 31% of the participants chose to donate their entire reward, whereas 69% kept the whole amount. Responses were recoded into a binary variable (0 =

no donation, 1 = donation) as nobody donated half. As expected, donations were positively related to non-violent intentions (point biserial $r = .16$, 95% CI [.01, .29], $p = .02$). Donations were also negatively related to violent intentions (point biserial $r = -.18$, 95% CI [-.01, -.31], $p = .01$). Finally, we ran a logistic regression with donations as the dependent variable and the HEXACO variables as predictors. As in the case of non-violent behavioral intentions, altruism was the strongest predictor of donations. In fact, that was the only significant predictor ($\beta = 0.22$, $p = .05$, see Table 2 for all results). However, adding honesty-humility to the model this variable turned out to be a better predictor ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < .001$) and the empathy relationship dropped to non-significance ($\beta = 0.06$, $p = .59$).

Discussion

This study replicated all the personality relations observed in Study 1, but in this case there was also evidence of an inverse relationship between endorsing violent and non-violent behaviors. This was true for the simple correlation between the two classes of intentions, but it was also evident in the personality relations. Further, actual behavior to support Muslims by non-violent means, assessed through donations to a Muslim charity organization, was positively related to non-violent behavioral intentions and negatively related to violent intentions. Although the correlations were modest, they provide some buttress against the idea that the findings would merely be methodological artifacts stemming from the use of self-reports. As expected on conceptual grounds, there was a fairly strong relation between self-reported altruism, and especially honesty-humility, in relation to donating behaviors.

General Discussion

Research on extremism tends to pitch person and situation explanations against each other as if they were mutually exclusive. In this paper we aimed to show that the dominant (situationist) interpretation, which disregard any influences of person characteristics (e.g., Ginges et al., 2011), provides an incomplete picture of extremism. Indeed, our two studies provide evidence that violent behavioral intentions among European Muslims are associated with two non-clinical personality traits – low openness and low emotionality. In contrast, non-violent intentions were positively related to

altruistic/empathic dispositions and to a lesser extent higher openness, at least some aspects thereof. Further, the overall explained variance (13-23% in the main analyses) suggest that a basic personality model fairs just as good as social psychological models of extremism and collective action (using similar dependent variables and populations; see e.g., Tausch et al., 2011).

Given our results we would not conclude that personality variables are better explanations for extremism than situational ones, they rather capture complementary effects. For example, Atran (2010) argued that the making of a terrorist is primarily traced to the social dynamics of friends and family, but personality factors could help explain why certain circles of families and friend are susceptible to violence when other ones are not. Indeed, the simple fact basic personality is heritable (e.g., Jang, Livesley, & Vernon, 1996), could partly underpin the family effect. Also, people choose friends based on personality (Selfhout et al., 2010), which could underpin the friendship effect. On the other hand, the expressions of personality are always bounded by situational factors (extraversion, for example, is hard to express in solitude; Funder, 1991). In this case the situational specificity remains undetermined; it could be rather narrow (personality predicts violent intentions among some Scandinavian Muslims) or rather broad-spanning (personality predicts most any counter-dominance violence).

In terms of the different personality effects both the emotionality and openness relations with violence are worth further attention. First of all, emotionality/neuroticism is the basic personality trait that figures most in the clinical literature as a risk factor for mental problems related to, for example, anxiety and depression (e.g., de Moor et al., 2015). However, mental health problems are for most part associated with *high* emotionality or neuroticism, and our participants endorsing violence were rather found at the opposite end of the spectrum. The negative relation was in part accounted for by known gender difference in both emotionality (women higher; e.g., McCrae et al., 2005) and violence (men higher; see e.g., Eley, Lichtenstein, & Stevenson, 1999), but not fully so. As such, our findings stand in contradiction to Lankford's (2014) suggestion that terrorists are predisposed for psychological problems known to be associated with high emotionality or neuroticism. These results rather suggest that Muslims endorsing violence are less emotional than the average person. An alternative view though is that

we have tapped into a mentality of entirely *absent* emotionality – a psychopathic nature. However, this perspective is contradicted by the lack of relations with honesty-humility, the best basic personality predictor of psychopathy (e.g., Lee & Ashton, 2014). Indeed, one of the reasons why we chose to assess personality with HEXACO rather than a Big Five inventory was that we would have the best possible leverage to test the notion of a “psychopathic extremist”. These data showed no evidence thereof.

Perhaps the most interesting findings for openness was the fact that aspects related to intellect revealed quite distinct results as compared to the HEXACO with more focus on values and interests (Ashton & Lee, 2007). Specifically, it would seem difficult to predict violent intentions based on a person’s intellect, but all the more easy with measures including inflexible values and conventional interests. Higher scores on intellect rather seem to imply that the individual endorses non-violent means to support a group.

Discussing the measures and populations used, the most obvious limitation of our inquiry is that self-reports in the “normal” populations can be questioned for validity when predicting actual terrorist acts. Also, despite that we could expect to see personality signatures at the early stage of a radicalization process (and hence detectable in normal population samples) our data do not speak to the possibility that other factors nudge or divert people from actual violence. Still, these criticisms are hardly confined to these studies; they could nullify a long list of other psychology papers as well (see e.g., Ginges et al., 2009; Tausch et al., 2011). Nonetheless, we took some tentative steps to address this concern by incorporated actual behaviors to validate the findings for non-violent group mobilization; those who scored higher on empathy and non-violent intentions also donated money to a higher extent. Also, just like the violent and non-violent intentions were weakly and inversely related in Study 2, the same was true for the relation between violent intentions and donating behaviors. Still, for natural reasons we did not have a behavioral counterpart for the violent intentions.

With the caveat that self-reported attitudes intentions may not always imply actual violence, the take home message of this paper is that personality predictors deserves be taken serious, just like their social psychological counterparts. In countless domains of psychology it has been documented that both personal and situational factors influence

peoples' thoughts and feelings and actions (e.g., Richard, Bond, & Stokes-Zoota, 2003; Roberts et al., 2007). The current findings suggest that neither violent nor non-violent group mobilization represent exceptions to that basic principle.

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Supplemental Material

Openness Intellect and Values

In addition to the HEXACO personality variables we sampled additional openness items from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) to assess aspects of the factor specifically related to intellect and values (<http://ipip.ori.org/newIndexofScaleLabels.htm>). Considering that our participants were Muslims we chose items without political or cultural contents being specifically associated with the Western World. We also chose items that would not involve language skills as Danish and Swedish would be a second language to many participants. The selected items are summarized in Table S1.

Table S1. *Items Used to Assess Intellect versus Value Aspects of Openness (Study 1/2).*

Intellect ($M = 3.70/3.73$, $SD = 0.56/0.60$, $\alpha = .72/.65$)

1. I like to solve complex problems.
2. I can handle a lot of information.
3. I enjoy thinking about things.
4. I am not interested in abstract ideas. (R)
5. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas. (R)
6. I tend to analyze things.
7. I learn quickly.

Values ($M = 2.54/-$, $SD = 0.69/-$, $\alpha = .40/-$)

1. I believe that there is no absolute right or wrong.
 2. I believe that criminals should receive help rather than punishment.
 3. I believe in one true religion. (R)
 4. I believe that too much tax money goes to support artists. (R)
-

Note. (R) = Reverse scored. The value items were not included in the analyses, nor included in the Study 2 survey because of the low reliability of the scale.

Items Measuring Behavior Intentions

Table S2. *Items for Assessing Behavior Intentions to Support Muslims Using Violence, Assisting Others Using Violence, and Non-Violence (Descriptive Statistics Study 1/2).*

Violent intentions ($M = 2.11/2.62$, $SD = 0.93/0.94$, $\alpha = .87/.82$)

1. If nothing else helps I'm prepared to use violence to defend Muslims.
2. As a last resort I'm personally ready to use violence for the sake of other Muslims.
3. I will personally use violence against people harming other Muslims that I care about.
4. I'm ready to go and fight for Muslims in another country.
5. I'm not prepared to use violence in any situation. (R)
6. I will not personally use violence to help Muslims. (R)
7. Even as a last resort, I will not use violence for the sake of others Muslims. (R)

Violence-assistance intentions ($M = 1.95/2.45$, $SD = 0.85/0.94$, $\alpha = .76/.53$)

1. I'm prepared to assist others carry out acts of violence to defend Muslims.
2. If I can help Muslims by assisting people using violence, I will do so.
3. I'm not prepared to aid someone who is using violence to defend Muslims. (R)
4. No matter what the situation is, I will not assist someone harming others in defense of Muslims. (R)

Non-violent intentions ($M = 4.19/3.93$, $SD = 0.59/0.83$, $\alpha = .72/.64$)

1. To help Muslims, I will sign petitions.
2. I'm prepared to stand up for Muslims by peaceful means.
3. I will express my support for Muslims by taking parts in public debates.
4. I'm not prepared to take part in a peaceful demonstration for Muslims. (R)
5. I will not express my support for Muslims in public. (R)
6. I am not prepared to take part in debates to defend Muslims. (R)

Note. (R) = Reverse scored. The first two scales were combined in the analyses due to their high correlation ($\alpha = .90/.84$).

Correlation Matrices and Descriptive Statistics

Table S2. Means (*M*), Standard Deviations (*SD*) and Correlations between Study Variables in Study 1.

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Agreeableness	3.13	0.52	1.00									
2. Altruism	4.28	0.48	.44**	1.00								
3. Conscientiousness	3.58	0.51	.15*	.20**	1.00							
4. Emotionality	3.35	0.55	-.07	.37**	-.07	1.00						
5. Extraversion	3.40	0.54	.32**	.16*	.19**	-.20**	1.00					
6. Honesty-humility	3.78	0.56	.29**	.52**	.31**	.07	.07	1.00				
7. Openness to Experience	3.31	0.60	.09	.15*	.01	-.02	.20**	.08	1.00			
8. Openness - Intellect	3.70	0.56	.09	.21**	.25**	-.13	.25**	.19*	.41**	1.00		
9. Non-Violent Intentions	4.19	0.59	.00	.32**	.19**	.08	.09	.14	.12	.22**	1.00	
10. Violent intentions	2.05	0.85	-.07	-.23**	-.06	-.23**	-.08	-.19*	-.21**	-.05	.08	1.00

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table S3. Means (M), Standard Deviations (SD) and Correlations between Study Variables in Study 2.

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Altruism	4.01	0.71	1.00							
2. Emotionality	3.19	0.58	.29**	1.00						
3. Openness to Experience	3.20	0.61	.24**	.10	1.00					
4. Openness - Intellect	3.73	0.60	.32**	.08	.50**	1.00				
5. Honesty-humility	3.50	0.64	.44**	.10	.19**	.22**	1.00			
6. Non-Violent Intentions	3.93	0.83	.43**	.13	.30**	.32**	.28**	1.00		
7. Violent intentions	2.56	0.85	-.31**	-.30**	-.34**	-.20**	-.24**	-.19**	1.00	
8. Donation	-	-	.21**	.09	.13	.11	.32**	.16*	-.17*	1.00

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Exploratory Factor Analysis for Behavior Intentions

For the purposed of our studies we created items to assess non-violent and violent behavior intentions, as well as a willingness to help others carrying out violence. However, an exploratory factor analysis in Study 1 (using robust maximum likelihood [MLR]) suggested that only two factors had eigenvalues above chance level. Specifically, this was concluded in a parallel test with 50 random datasets (see e.g., Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). Also, from a one- to two-factor solution the RMSEA dropped from .11 (poor fit) to .08 (acceptable fit), and beyond that the fit improvements were smaller (.07 for a three-factor solution). A scree-plot including the results of the parallel test is presented in Figure S1. Geomin rotated loadings (for the two-factor solution) are presented in Figure S2.

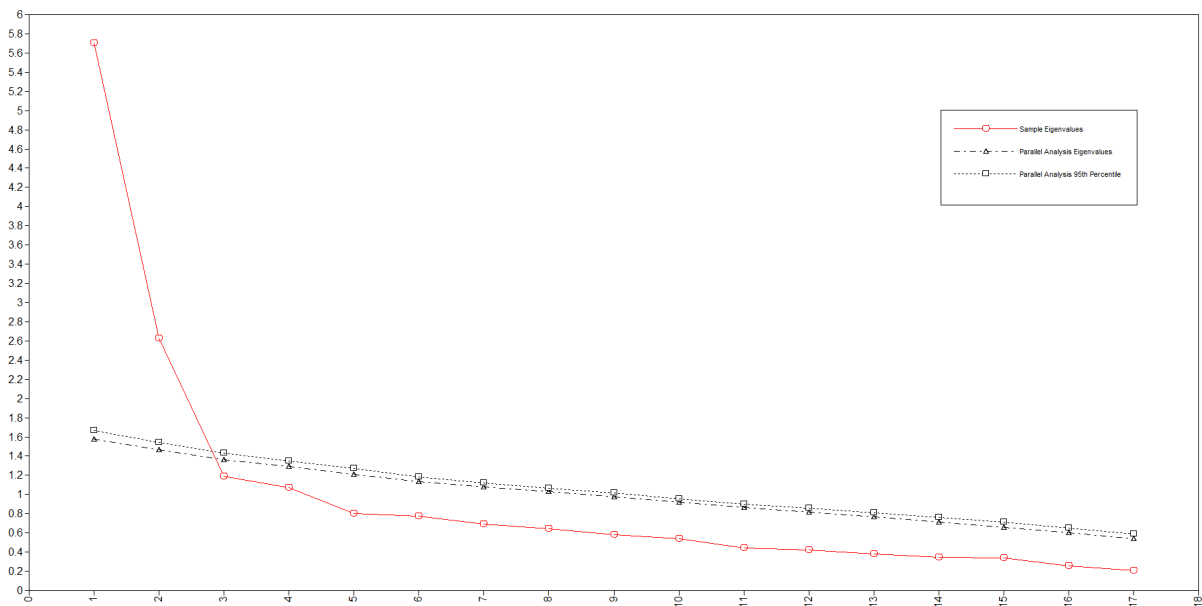


Figure S1. Scree plot from parallel test with 50 random datasets, the analysis are based on all items for violent, violent assistance, and non-violent behavior intentions.

GEOMIN ROTATED LOADINGS (* significant at 5% level)

	1	2
V1	0.812*	0.029
V2	0.834*	-0.084
V3	0.697*	0.037
V4	0.555*	0.168
V5R	0.666*	0.010
V6R	0.698*	0.047
V7R	0.594*	0.016
A1	0.729*	-0.016
A2	0.665*	-0.138
A3R	0.702*	-0.151
A4R	0.504*	-0.085
NV1	-0.087	0.406*
NV2	0.011	0.461*
NV3	-0.006	0.703*
NV4R	-0.218*	0.416*
NV5R	0.003	0.667*
NV6R	0.030	0.684*

Figure S2. Mplus screenshot showing the rotated loadings in the two-factor solution for violent (v1-v7r), violent assistance (a1-a4r), and non-violent (nv1-nv6r) behavior intentions.

Study 2 results

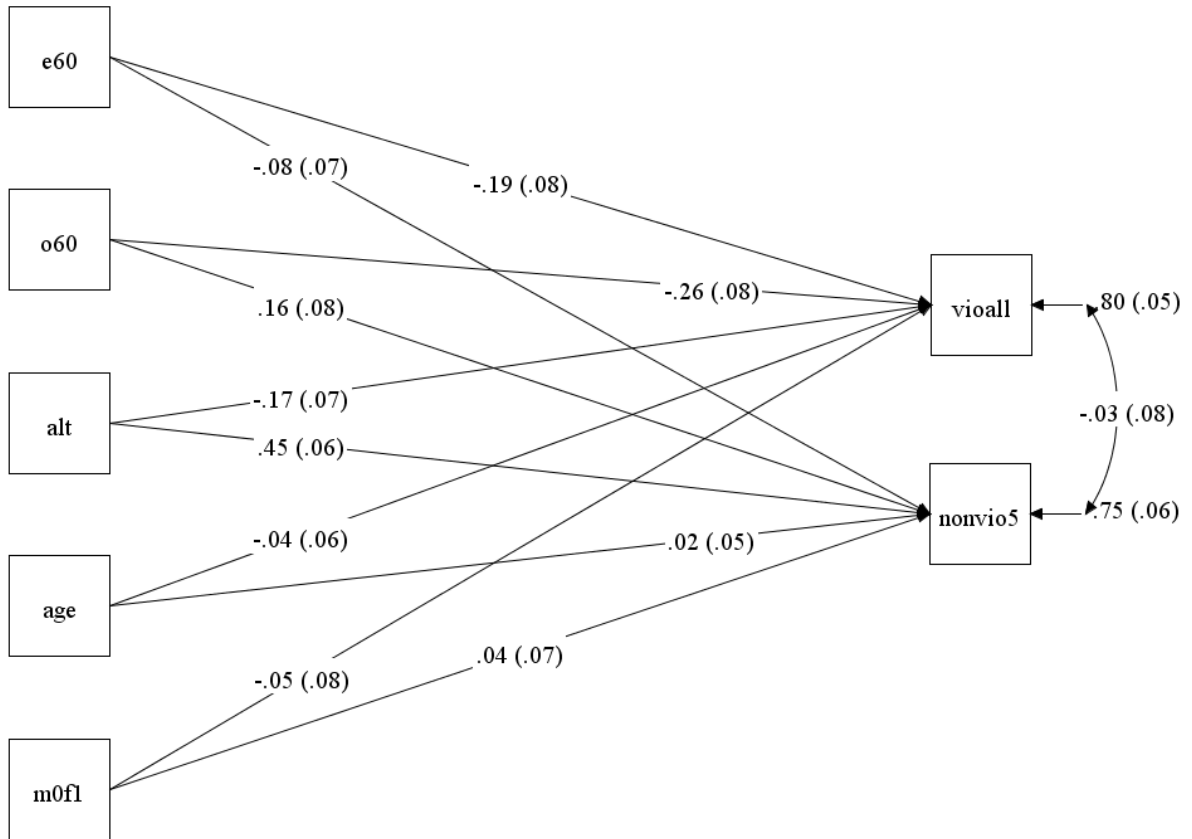


Figure S4. Standardized results (standard errors) from the main regression results with the addition of gender (f0m1) and age as demographic covariates.

Chapter 7:

General Discussion

This dissertation explored the social psychological factors behind motivation of some Muslim Europeans to support and commit terrorism against Europe. Broadly speaking, this dissertation began to explore the premises that the potential for participating in asymmetrical collective violence must be understood as interplay between individual potential, and external and societal factors. This is different from existing literature, which tends to focus exclusively on either situational factors or psychopathology.

Theoretical papers

Paper I in this dissertation argued that the dichotomy between personal and situational determinate of radical behaviors needs to be readdressed. As argued here, the phenomenon as complex as terrorism and radicalization cannot be attributed to either situational or individual level factors alone. Nevertheless this has been the trend for decades in the field of terrorism. Previous explanations of terrorism have tended to emphasize individual explanations and the current trend, on the other hand, is strongly influenced by the situationist perspective.

However, the current approach does not only cloud our understanding of terrorism, but it falls short of explaining the phenomenon adequately. First, to a large extent, it disregards the personality variables in explaining terrorism, rendering the conceptualization of terrorism as a multifaceted phenomenon irrelevant. The importance of individual variables has been recognized in other areas of psychology and it is widely accepted that individual variables influence an individual's behavior (Webster , 2009). Second, the current approach fails to explain why some young Muslims participate in terrorism when others do not, even when they are exposed to the same social and behavioral settings. Therefore, in paper I a widespread adaptation of an interactionist approach for understanding terrorism is encouraged. Evidence from social psychological research is reviewed and presented to make a case for an approach that emphasizes the

dynamic interplay between personal, situational and right societal factors. Person and situation factors usually interact or complement each other (Webster , 2009).

Further, paper I argues that an interactionist approach - besides serving as a framework for research - will provide us with avenues to understand how relevant traits and situational factors interact causing some to radicalize; help researchers to better understand differences among radicals; and to identify why some people become radicalized, but not others; or why some might participate in terrorism in a certain context, whereas others will refrain from it. Finally, evidence from social psychological research is reviewed and presented to make a case for a model that emphasizes the interplay between personal, situational and right societal factors. The core ideas from paper I is elaborated and exemplified in paper II and empirically tested in paper III, IV and V of this dissertation.

Paper II is a response to Lankford's (2014) assumption that "suicidal motives, mental health problems, and personal crises are the most significant reason why fewer than 300 suicide terrorists usually blow themselves up each year" (p. 352). By responding to Lankford I did not only address the long existing "either or" rhetoric concerning psychology of terrorism, but also the reemerging assumption that mental health is the core explanation of terrorism. The take-home message from paper II is that extreme behavior is more than the sum of psychopathologies and external factors. Thus, paper II offers a complementary argument and empirically supported theoretical perspective suggesting that in understanding terrorism and radicalization we must go beyond the dichotomy of person and situation and broaden our focus by including not only intra-individual level factors, but also social, relational, ideological and political explanations (see also, Taylor & Horgan, 2006). By focusing only on internal factors we will run the risk of omitting the role of ideology and social factors. Social context may matter just as much as individual psychology. Thus, the risk factors that Lankford argues cause suicide attacks cannot alone explain why some people become suicide bombers while others do not. These examples illustrate the need for a unified model of radicalization, which includes both the person and the situation in understanding such extreme acts as terrorism. Here, in particular, I emphasize that a variety of individual variables that are unrelated to

psychopathology, but are nevertheless of central importance to how different people consider an act of terrorism.

Empirical papers

The three empirical papers of this dissertation make individual contribution in filling some of the gaps in our understanding of terrorism. Each paper draws on different approaches to terrorism focusing on different causal factors that can make a person receptive to engage in extremism, as discussed under in chapter two. In the following I will mainly focus on major findings of each paper and how they relate to the proposed integrated model.

Major Findings - Relations to the Three Approaches and Integrated Model

Social Psychological Variables

Following the SIMCA model by van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears (2008) in paper III I mainly focused on social psychological variables of collective action. In a series of seven correlational and experimental studies across various contexts I demonstrated a common psychology of outgroup hostility among both non-Muslims and Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant that is driven by perceived intergroup threat, and symbolic threat in particular. As expected, similar patterns emerged among Muslims and Arabs on the one hand, and among non-Muslim Westerns on the other, giving evidence to this common psychology. Further, I demonstrated the social psychological processes that propel political and cultural conflicts into negative feedback loops among various groups. These studies mainly drew upon social psychological component of the integrated model. These studies demonstrated two key findings based on the integrated model. As predicted our results demonstrated how various variables not only predicted but also complemented each other in explaining both attitudes and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism against the West among Muslim in Sweden and Denmark and Arabs in Lebanon as well as Islamophobic attitudes and support of anti-Islamic movements among native, non-Muslim Europeans. For example, in studies where group identification was included as exogenous variable it was shown that group identification had no direct effect on outgroup attitudes. Nevertheless, as proposed by the SIMCA

model group identification was indirectly related to various outcome variables through the effect of perceived symbolic and realistic threat, indicating full statistical mediation. Threat perceptions mediated the relationship between identity and various forms of collective action.

Furthermore, in study 1 it was experimentally shown how objective factors related to social psychological variables in explaining outgroup hostility. Study 1 tested the specific prediction that a threat to one's numerical majority status (objective variable) would increase Islamophobia among native Norwegians. As expected, the experimental manipulation affected both threat measures (symbolic and realistic threats) as well as the Islamophobic measure. Moreover, participants in the demographic increase condition were more Islamophobic. In the SEM model, experimental threat predicted both symbolic and realistic threat, of which only symbolic threat in turn predicted Islamophobia, clearly showing how objective variables can complement social psychological variables in explaining Islamophobic attitudes.

Although paper III has demonstrated that various social psychological variables, the cognitive (threat perceptions) and social (social identity) components in particular seemed to be associated with outgroup hostility, one limitation is that we did not include the affective component of the integrated model, which can bring us a step further explaining the extent to which some people (but not others) under certain circumstances would endorse violent tendencies. The perception of injustice is often emphasized in models of radicalization (e.g., Moghaddam, 2005), but these models do not always distinguish between the cognitive and affective dimensions of injustice and as a result these models only focus on cognitive dimension of deprivation. In paper IV I extended the previous research and the findings of paper III. In paper IV I included not only the affective component of injustice, but also how objective variables relate and complement the social psychological variables.

Objective and Social Psychological Variables

In paper IV using two correlational studies, I investigated how objective factors (native/foreign distinction) relate to social psychological ones (perceived injustice, group-based anger and social identity) leading some to endorse behavioral intention to commit

terrorism. Here, across two studies I tested if victimization-by-proxy processes motivated behavioral intentions to commit acts of terrorism among Danish Muslims with migrant backgrounds. More importantly, I compared path models of those Muslims who did and did not have personal experience (native- and foreign-born) of Western-led occupation (objective factors). In the main analyses I examined whether the psychological underpinning of violence and non-violence would differ depending on direct experience of Western countries foreign policy and military interventions in the Muslim world. Thus, I examined how objective factors (personal experience versus no personal experience of Western foreign policy) impinge on the psychological variables in the integrated model. Logically, one might assume that individuals who have personally experienced Western military intervention and policy would be more prone to regard Western foreign policy as unfair and express more emotional and behavioral intentions to change it than those who do not have such personal experience. However, results showed that perceived injustice (e.g., perception of Western foreign policy), group-based emotions and corresponding actions tendencies can be elicited without Muslims necessarily having personally experienced Western foreign policy and military interventions. In other words, I illustrated that being aware that members of their group suffer abroad, European-born Muslims may be *victimized-by-proxy* and react accordingly, such that the general pattern of psychological reactions among foreign and native-born Muslim citizens did not differ demonstrating the influence of immediate contextual factors on Muslim-Europeans' behavioral intentions regarding violence. It is important to note that these studies go beyond proxy processes shown in intergroup emotions theory (IET, Smith, 1993; Mackie, Devos & Smith, 2000). Whereas, most previous studies have focused on lab-based manipulation among student samples in this study we investigate the role of victimization-by-proxy in a real population.

The current paper also addressed another central variable: namely group identification. This variable is central in various studies in this dissertation. I proposed that Muslim identification has both direct and indirect effects on both violent and non-violent behavioral intentions and attitudes (see also Phalet et al., 2010). In general, strong group identification leads to strong-shared understanding of social phenomena and vice versa (Swaab, Postmes, van Beest, & Spears, 2007). Therefore, how Muslims feel about

and appraise Western countries' foreign policy (paper IV) and perceive threats to their group (paper III) should be affected by their shared Muslim identity. According to the social identity model of collective action (SIMCA), Muslim group identification underlies the perception of Western countries' foreign policy and group threat because it provides the basis for the group-based perception of victimization and perceived threat. Results from paper III and IV showed that Muslim identification did not predict attitudes towards violence and violent behavioral intentions directly. The effect of Muslim identification was mediated through other social psychological variables. These results are important because they disconfirm the popular belief in the West that Muslims and Islam as a religion are inherently violent (Wilders, 2013, see also Jolly, 2011).

Further, in paper IV, I focused not only on the cognitive but also affective component of perceived injustice. In this paper I asked about anger specifically in relation to foreign policy of Western countries, and I found that anger does indeed predict support for the use of violence. These results show that combining various factors of the integrated model can bring us a step further in explaining under which circumstances some but not others would endorse violent tendencies.

Individual Psychological Variables

In previous papers (III and IV) I established the importance of social, objective social psychological variables in explaining attitudes and behavioral intentions to comment terrorism among Muslims in Europe and Arabs in the Levant and anti-Muslim attitude and intention among non-Muslims in Europe. In paper (Paper V) I proposed that many people endorsing violence on behalf of a group might be normal in a clinical sense, but that they could have non-pathological personality signatures. In this first study I investigated the relation between basic personality traits and extremism. Hence, paper V addressed one of the common misconceptions about the role of personality traits in predicting terrorism. Paper V showed that non-clinical personality traits predict behavioral intentions among Muslims to support their group with violence. For example, violent behavioral intentions were associated with low emotionality and openness. On the other hand non-violent behavioral intentions were predicted by higher degrees of altruism/empathy. These results indicate, that some personality traits might increase the

probability of some individuals to engage in extremist violence and those who engage in violence might have discernible personality traits. Paper V illustrated that a basic personality model fairs just as good as social psychological models of extremism and collective action (using similar dependent variables and populations; see e.g., Tausch et al., 2011). Given our results I would not conclude that personality variables are better explanations for extremism than situational ones, but they capture complementary effects.

General findings of empirical papers

The studies in this dissertation extend existing psychological research on terrorism in a number of ways. First, placing this dissertation in the broader literature on terrorism and radicalization it is also important to note that there is much theory, but very little empirical data (Ranstrop, 2006 and 2009; Silke, 2004). The empirical work we do have suffer from major methodological and substantive shortcomings (for a comprehensive critique of empirical work see Veldhuis & Staun, 2009). Our results, along with a relatively small number of social psychological studies (e.g., Tausch et al., 2011), provides an important step toward an empirically grounded literature on, for example, why some Muslims come to support the use of violence, whereas others do not.

Second, most of the literature on Islamist terrorism has focused on attitudinal outcomes (e.g., Ansari, 2013; Cherney & Povey, 2013; Cinnirella et al., 2013; Fair & Shepherd, 2006; Levin, Henry, Pratto, & Sidanius, 2003; Tausch, et al., 2011; Yougov, 2005). In contrast, this dissertation moves beyond the issue of attitudes towards terrorism and focuses on those predicting violent as well as non-violent behavioral intentions to defend and support Muslims and/or Islam. This is an important move forward because behavioral intentions are often better predictors of actual behavior than are attitudes (e.g., De Weerd and Klandermans, 1999; Klandermans et al., 2002; see also Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977).

An important note about the findings throughout this dissertation is their robustness. By including various measure of terrorism I aimed to establish robustness of the integrated model. For example, in paper III I included both attitudes and behavioral intentions toward terrorism. I showed that various forms of outcome variables were predicted by the same processes and not only among Muslims, Arabs but also non-Muslims, in various contexts.

Furthermore, I empirically distinguished between violent and non-violent outcomes, and included behavioral intentions for both and actual behavior for non-violent. To our knowledge, there is only one study of Islamist terrorism comparing extreme (often violent) and non-extreme outcomes as explained by, for example, group-based emotions (Tausch et al., 2011). Still, the extreme outcome in their paper was attitudinal (support for violence). I hypothesized that some antecedents are common to both types of intentions, whereas other antecedents are unique to one or the other. As predicted, anger was a better predictor of violent behavior intentions (paper IV) and different personality traits were related to different behavioral intentions (paper V).

A novel aspect of this dissertation is that it relies on both correlational and experimental methods. For example, in paper III we include both correlational and experiential methods to investigate the role of symbolic and realistic threats in predicting outgroup hostility. In a recent meta-analysis Riek et al. (2006) commented that one of the major limitations in the domain of realistic and symbolic threats is the shortage of experimental studies. The existing studies manipulating threats have also shown weaker effects on out-group attitudes than those found in correlational studies. Riek and associates (2006) cautioned against premature conclusions regarding this discrepancy as it was based on as few as three experiments. Nonetheless, these findings and the cautionary advice given by Riek et al. (2006) suggest a need for more experimental studies on this topic. A similar concern can be raised in the domain of terrorism research. To our knowledge, most studies investigated the homegrown terrorism in the West cannot establish the causality between the examined variables (e.g., Doosje et al., 2013). Despite their important contribution to the field of homegrown terrorism research, previous studies are correlational and often involve only a single sample, providing limited bases for causal influence. Examining these questions experimentally is important for several other reasons. First, a mixed methods approach can produce results that are more robust and compelling compared to single method studies. Second, although experiments are recognized as important in research on ‘terrorism’, they are rarely implemented (Arce et al., 2011). This problem compounded by the fact that this area of research relies heavily on secondary data and frequently eschews empirical tools. Indeed, only three percent of research papers in major terrorism journals involve the use of

inferential analysis (Silke, 2004). To address these limitations, in the current dissertation, I used both experimental and correlational data to examine support for terrorism, behavioral intentions and actual behavior among Muslims, residing in Europe, Arabs residing in the Middle East and non-Muslims in Europe.

Another limitation of previous research on Islamist terrorism is that the majority of studies have been conducted in the context of the Middle East among Arab populations. Hence, given the emerging discourse on “homegrown terrorism” and the recent Islamist attacks in many European countries, it is important to identify predictors of European Muslims’ attitudes and intentions towards violence, and to compare these to findings in the Middle Eastern context. This distinction is important because differing social context influences the perception of threat and injustice. This is particularly important because different sources of threat and deprivation may underlie different social context. According to integrated threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2000), which type of threat is the dominant predictor of outgroup prejudice and hostility may vary across different contexts (Bizman & Yinon, 2001).

Key Limitation

I faced a number of limitations while conducting the studies included in this dissertation. One of the major challenges was the task of gaining access to my research participants. The group of native and foreign-born Muslim residents in Denmark and Sweden that I surveyed for my studies constitutes a prime example of “*hidden*” and “*hard-to-reach*” populations (see Heckathorn, 1997). In many cases, immigrant group membership involves low visibility and strong privacy concerns (e.g., many have little trust in the socio-political system of their host countries, and may hold uncertain legal status; Agadjanian & Zotova, 2013). Pre-migration experiences add additional layers of complexity to data collection since many are persecuted in their respected countries. Such circumstances often make this population suspicious of any kind of inquiry concerning their background and socio-political matters of any nature. The recent terrorist attacks in Europe and media coverage of incidents of terrorism linked to Muslims have made this particular population even more suspicious about studies of this kind. Illustrating this difficulty, the data collections for different studies took between two to six months to

complete. Facing such difficulties and the limited funding put a great deal of restriction on study design and testing additional hypotheses and the conclusions I could draw.

Further, because of the sensitive nature of this topic I faced a great deal of challenges conducting the studies. It made it difficult to conduct advanced experiments and face-to-face interviews since the use of anonymous surveys to protect participants' anonymity was crucial. Similarly, because of the sensitive nature of the survey I had to avoid asking identifying questions about participants backgrounds to ensure and protect their anonymity. In addition I was forced to avoid posing questions about direct use of violence for ethical reasons. Furthermore, research shows that the predictive power of various social psychological variables weakens as the criterion actions become more violent (Tausch et al., 2011). In line with this many of my dependent variables (measure of violence) suffered from floor effect, which posed a statistical challenge to analyze the data. This had implication for the conclusions I could draw from my data.

To give a specific example of the challenges I faced during my data collection was the process of validating some of my results obtained from a "normal" sample in a sample of de facto radicalized Muslims. Taken together, findings from this dissertation have clear and potentially fundamental implications for terrorism prevention. For instance results from paper V could provide information about "risk factors" for becoming an extremist. The use of violence seems more appealing to people who are more dogmatic and less fearful and stress-tolerant, so cues to such dispositions could be things to look for in prevention efforts. Also, with knowledge about different personality dispositions of violent and non-violent behaviors could help avoid harmful stereotypes that all Muslims would be potential extremists. Avoiding such stereotypes does not only have practical utility, but it could be considered a basic principle in a democratic and civilized society. Broadly speaking, in the guessing game of who might become a terrorist, my findings suggest that knowledge about an individual's personality is important. As important as I think that these findings could be in combating terrorism, it is a critical issue in this kind of research to make sure that they are validated by the highest standard possible. My findings seem quite clear as far "normal" samples go, but as I mentioned these studies have been conducted among Muslim population without any ties to radicals. In other words, we know that certain personalities express more

willingness to use violence to defend Muslims, but we do not know if people with these dispositions also turn this willingness into actual extremist behaviors. For that reason it would be important to know if people who are known to associate or flirt with terrorist organizations have the same personality dispositions as those who “only” show a willingness to use violence. If so, we would have strong proof that personality predicts an actual inclination for violence. Thus, in a planned third study I wanted to validate these results in sample of radicalized individuals, but it was unfortunately impossible to gain access to a radicalized sample despite my multiple inquiries and requests and contact with various governmental agencies. In some cases I never received a reply to my inquiry and in some cases I had to wait ten months to receive a discouraging reply. This is problematic in a field where first hand data is a rare commodity and much of anti-radicalization policies and the writing on the terrorism is still built on piecemeal anecdotal evidence (see Lum et al., 2008; Sageman, 2015).

Another limitation of this dissertation is the use of self-report measures. Conducting research about sensitive topics involves the risk of social desirability bias, which can introduce a systematic error in responses. One could of course reduce social desirability bias by use of indirect measure such as peer ratings or implicit measures such as Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998). Nevertheless, these measure are not without their limitations. Indirect measure such as peer rating requires from participants to answer question from the perspective of another person. However, it is unclear to what extent the information obtained about another person represents information about oneself. Furthermore, based on some evidence it seems that incongruence exists between the prediction obtained about others and the information if the respondents had been asked directly (Hoch, 1988). In this sense indirect measures may produce unbiased responses, but they may be invalid as it may introduce attitude-irrelevant variance (Robert, Fisher & Gerard, 1998). Further, both tests come with ethical dilemmas, such as involuntary screening procedures and “reporting” on one’s friends. IAT can be used diagnostically, that may tempt some people (e.g., government officials at the airports) to use it screening passengers from the belief that it tells the “truth” without there being validating evidence for that.

Finally, it is important to note that the endorsement of violence in all studies of this dissertation is low among the populations I investigated. Further, it is important to note that I do not claim that support and behavioral intentions to commit terrorism translate into act of terrorism and that radical beliefs are a proxy for actual act of terrorism. Most people who hold radical ideas (e.g., support terrorism and extremism) do not engage in act of terrorism. However, at the same time holding radical ideas can be problematic to the extent that such beliefs may result in action. I acknowledge that there is a gap between these two constructs, as many Muslim Europeans experience adversaries and grievances in European societies, which may prone them to support terrorism as a just response, yet only a fraction of them becomes terrorists. I also acknowledge that a great deal of variability exists in the degree to which attitudes predict behavior (Ajzen, 2000). Furthermore, due to correlational nature of studies in this dissertation one should be careful in making claims about causal inferences.

Although, the mean correlation between attitudes and actual behaviors ranges from $-.20$ to $.73$, (indicating a high degree of attitude-behavior consistency: Glasman & Albarracin, 2006) and a medium-to-large change in intention ($d = 0.66$) leads to a small-to-medium change in behavior ($d = 0.36$) (Webb & Sheeran, 2006) one cannot claim with certainty that the violent and non-violent attitudes and behavioral intentions will translate into actual behaviour. Such claim needs to be validated by measure of actual behavior. For example, in paper V I included measure of actual behavior to validate the findings for non-violent group mobilization. However, due to practical and ethical difficulties, as mentioned above, I could not include measure of actual violent behavior. Nevertheless, I took certain measures to assure a higher degree of attitude-behavior consistency. For example, attitudes based on direct experiences have been shown to be better predictors of behavior compared to indirect attitudes (for a meta-analysis, see Kraus, 1995). In this dissertation the various dependent variables were closely related and measured in relation to my participants direct experiences. For example in papers III and V I investigated the direct experience of Western foreign policy. Similarly, violent and non-violent attitudes and behavioral intentions were measured in relation to Western policy. My participants indicated to what extent they wanted to support or use violence to change Western foreign policy to defend Muslims and/or Islam.

Future Research - An Integrative Dynamic Approach

This dissertation showed that in order to adequately understand radicalization and terrorism we need to identify how factors from the different domains relate, and more importantly, complement each other in shaping circumstances, which will make radicalization more or less likely to occur. Future studies should focus more on the role of individual level variables, particularly non-clinical variables. Several prominent scholars of radicalization and terrorism have argued that there is no personality effects at play in making people prone to violence (e.g., Horgan, 2003; Silke, 2003). Nevertheless, as discussed in paper I and V the data speaking against person effects are indeed limited, both in quantity and breadth, suggesting that terrorism researchers have jumped to conclusions that are unwarranted by the available data. However, paper V showed that between 15 and 25% of the individual differences in violent inclinations could be traced to differences in peoples' personalities illustrating that a basic personality model fairs just as good as social psychological and sociological models of terrorism. Based on this and virtually no existing data on the person effects of terrorism it is time to pay more attention to individual variables along side of social psychological and external/societal ones.

Further, future studies should investigate the extent to which different factors from various different line of research potentially interact with each other in making some receptive to terrorism. As it was argued in paper I and empirically shown elsewhere, individual differences interact with social context explaining various social phenomenon. For example, Thomsen et al., 2008 demonstrated that individual differences in SDO and RWA interacted with social context in explaining ethnic prosecution for fundamentally different reasons. One research design could be a longitudinal study of terrorism focusing on the dynamic interaction of individual differences and social context over time, demonstrating how various individual, social and group level determinates of extremism develop over time.

Closing Words

To conclude, understanding what motivates terrorism among some people against the West is both theoretically important and practically consequential. For example, radicalization of minorities can harm the coexistence of different cultural groups. In order to prevent such harmful developments it is important to know what motives some people in first place to radicalize. In this dissertation I aimed to fill some of the gaps in our understanding of radicalization and terrorism. It is important to note that I do not claim that my results and the causal variables investigated in my studies are the core causes of homegrown radicalization in Europe. Causes of radicalization and terrorism are broad and vary from person to person and from context to context. To make matters worse person and situation factors usually interact, which adds additional layer of complexity to the phenomenon. So “one-size fits all” model does not exist. But my results tell a clear story that in understanding radicalization and terrorism we need to broaden our understanding of these concepts and avoid relying on “either or” approaches.

The current dissertation seems to bring up more questions than it answers because it illustrates the complexity and the multidimensionality of terrorism and radicalization. In some ways, it makes a “bold” move by focusing and granting intra-individual variables same acknowledgment a long side of social, group and contextual determinates of extremism. This work calls for more empirically based research on effects of person in the area, although it may appear as a bold and controversial move by some, particularly, those who do not see any merit in individual level variables. Nevertheless, I hope that these results can be seen as step in the right direction and hopefully be used as a stepping-stone to generate more empirically based research on causal factors of extremisms.

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