

Going All the Way: Politicizing, Polarizing, and Radicalizing Identity Offline and Online

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Abstract

This essay conceptualizes radicalization as a collective process that evolves within the context of global, national, or local intergroup tensions. People do not radicalize on their own, but as part of a group in which a collective identity is developed. Some members of the group may take a radical activist route to promote or prevent social change. Their interactions with their opponents intensify, while their ideas and beliefs sharpen. In this essay, I propose an interpretative framework to analyze radicalizing collective identities. The framework departs from the notion that supranational processes shape and mold the micro level of (radicalizing) citizens' demands, the meso level of social movements and political parties, and the macro level of national political systems. The answer to questions such as who radicalizes, why people radicalize, and the forms radical action takes lies in the interaction of supranational processes, national political processes, and the context of political mobilization. It is argued that radicalizing identities are key in this process, no radicalization without identification!

When do people go beyond moderate collective action to choose more extreme, radical forms of action? Research on both conventional collective action and political violence suggests that radical forms of action are usually preceded by more moderate forms of support. In the social movement literature, Klandermans (1997; Oegema & Klandermans, 1994) identified four distinct stages of social movement engagement, from being a sympathizer, to becoming an active participant. Similarly, in the political violence literature, scholars have emphasized the incremental nature of engagement in radical action, utilizing a staircase metaphor (e.g. Moghaddam 2005). Indeed, in both the social movement and political violence literatures, there has been a well-articulated need to understand commitment to collective efforts to bring about social change as a process (Horgan, 2008). There are two transformations relevant to understanding the process of becoming a (radical) activist, more specifically: (i) the shift between sympathy and active support (Oegema and Klandermans, 1994); and (ii) the shift between support for moderate collective action and more extreme strategies (Thomas, 2013). Three processes are particularly useful for describing these shifts, respectively *politicization*, *polarization*, and *radicalization*.

In this article, I will discuss these three processes. I argue that politicization and polarization are interrelated but different processes both nested in the process of radicalization. Finally, I will venture an initial conceptualization of contextualized radicalization. However, I will start off with an exploration of the role of social identification in moderate and radical collective action.¹ This is because identification processes play a crucial role in politicization, polarization and radicalization. In fact, I argue that there is no radicalization without identification (cf. Van Stekelenburg et al. 2010).

Identity & politicization, polarization, and radicalization

Radicalization due to group grievances – when people perceive harm inflicted on a group that they belong to or have sympathy for – accounts for the larger portion of political and

ethnic radical violence (McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008). The more people identify with a group at stake, the higher the chances they are willing to fight for that group (Van Stekelenburg 2013). Hence, identity processes play an important role in radicalization processes.

Identity is our understanding of who we are and who other people are and reciprocally other people's understanding of themselves and others (Jenkins 2004). As for 'understanding who we are', Klandermans and de Weerd (2000) distinguish an individual personal level and a collective group level. For the individual level, they rely on the distinction made by Tajfel and Turner (1979), who argue that a person has one personal and several social identities whereby a *personal identity* refers to self-definition in terms of personal attributes, and *social identity* refers to self-definition in terms of group memberships. *Collective identity* at the collective group level concerns "the shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests, experiences, and solidarity" (Taylor and Whittier 1992). According to Klandermans and de Weerd, *group identification* forms the link between collective and social identity and thus forms the bridge between the individual and collective level of identity. What is the role of social identity, collective identity, and group identification in the context of radicalization? A focus on identity in the context of radicalization is not new. In fact, it reflects a growing consensus among many radicalization researchers about identity as having a role in the radicalization process leading to violence (Post 2007). To be clear, these researchers are not referring to personal identities, but rather social and collective identities. This can be explained by the large share of radicalization due to *group* grievances, which, by definition, implies social and collective identities.

Social identity

Social identity is seen as a cognitive entity; if one of the many social identities people have becomes salient, then people see themselves less as unique individuals and more as the prototypical representatives of their in-group. People have many social identities that remain latent most of the time. A particular identity is said to be salient if it is "functioning psychologically to increase the influence of one's membership in that group on perception and behavior" (Turner et al., 1987, p. 118). When social identity becomes more salient than personal identity, people think, feel, and act as members of their group. The notion of identity involves two criteria of comparison between people: 'sameness' and 'distinctiveness'. In the late seventies, a social psychological identity perspective on protest emerged in the form of social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner 1979). Tajfel and Turner (1979) showed that social categorization according to some trivial criterion such as the 'blue' or the 'red' group suffices to make people feel, think, and act as a group member. Compared to this 'minimal group paradigm', real-world intergroup conflicts such as the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, with histories, high emotional intensity attached to them, and socio-political consequences can be seen as 'maximal group paradigms' that bring group membership powerfully to mind. When individuals consider themselves as part of a group, in other words, they identify with that group, this identity becomes psychologically important, and can be the basis for various behaviors in case of group threat or group grievances, including moderate and radical collective action participation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Collective identity

Collective identity is conceived as an emergent group phenomenon. According to Melucci (1985: 793), a collective identity is: "an interactive, shared definition of the field of opportunities and constraints offered to collective action produced by several individuals that

must be conceived as a process because it is constructed and negotiated by repeated activation of the relationships that link individuals to groups". Hence, identity is not a given fact; identity is a practical accomplishment, a process. Identifying ourselves or others is a matter of meaning, and meaning always involves interaction: agreement and disagreement, convention and innovation, and communication and negotiation (R. Jenkins 2004; Van Doorn et al. 2013). As the Elaborated Social Identity Model (Reicher 1996a,1996b) holds, "identities should be understood not simply as a set of cognitions but as practical projects". In this account, identities and practice are in reciprocal interaction, each mutually enabling and constraining the other. In other words, collective identities are constantly 'under construction', and collective action is one of the factors that shape collective identity. Taylor (2013) therefore conceives of social movements as discursive communities held together not only by common action and bonds of solidarity, but by identities, symbols, shared identity discourse, and practices of everyday life that attribute participants' experiences to particular forms of social injustice. Hence, people do not radicalize on their own, but as part of a group – a discursive community – in which a collective identity is constructed and negotiated. Some members of the group may take a radical activist route to promote or prevent social change. Their interactions with their opponents intensify, while their ideas and beliefs sharpen.

Politicization, polarization, and radicalization involve tough identity work, all taking place within the abovementioned discursive communities. Identity work encompasses the range of activities individuals and groups engage in to give meaning to themselves and others by selectively presenting or attributing and sustaining identities congruent with their interests (David A. Snow 2013). Identity work involves boundary work. For instance in the form of designing and displaying protest placards avowing and attributing contrasting identities or verbal constructions and assertions as when collectively vocalizing adversarial epithets during protest events. This type of identity work has been found to be widely practiced, even among the downtrodden and stigmatized, as in the case of movements and associated protests among the homeless (D.A. Snow and Anderson 1987).

Identity work involves framing processes entailing the confirmation and accusation of relevant characteristics. Movement activists and leaders' identity talk includes identity attributions about individuals and groups construed as capable of overcoming injustice or solving the problem the movement has identified. They include collective identity claims about the movement and its allies and typically involve positive identity attributions such as 'heroes' and 'heroines', 'innocent victims', 'aggrieved populations', and 'future generations'. Antagonists – individuals and groups identified as the movement's opponents or 'enemies' – are designated as the responsible agents for the problem or issue the movement seeks to overcome or as obstructionists standing in the way of the changes the movement seeks. Movement activists and leaders often vilify their opponents referring to them by caustic labels such as 'baby killers', 'fascists', 'capitalist pigs', 'gun grabbers', and the like (Benford and Hunt 1992). Such vilifying framing of the collective character of an antagonist/opponent functions to demarcate boundaries between 'us' and 'them', good and evil, and right and wrong. Identity work, finally, plays a significant role as well when identities fully politicize and the societal context is differentiated into opponents and (potential) allies. Allied and potential allied social movement organizations, the media, sympathizers, and bystanders all are presumed to be persuadable and thus constitute the target of a movement's 'consensus mobilization' efforts (Klandermans 1988) to align themselves with the movement and perhaps even contribute significant resources to the movement. For this reason, a great deal of social movement identity work is directed towards these audiences.

Group identification

Group identification links social identity to collective identity, and thus individuals to groups. Because group identification bridges individual and collective identity processes, it is the social psychological answer to the question of what drives people to participate in protest. The stronger the group identification, the more shared beliefs and fate are incorporated in the individual's social identity and the more people are prepared to take action on behalf of the group. Huddy (2003) argues that it is not group identification *per se* but the strength of such identification that influences group members' readiness to view themselves and act in terms of their group membership. She criticizes social identity literature for neglecting the fact that real-world identities vary in strength; identifying more or less strongly with a group, she argues, may make a real difference, especially in political contexts. Social movement participation may help people to change their stigmatized or 'spoiled' imposed identities into strong and empowered social movement identities. Q10

Group identification is crucial in the process of politicization, polarization, and radicalization. In particular, the following two identity processes – spurred by strong group identification – can be held responsible (Turner et al., 1979, 1987): social categorization (seeing oneself as similar to some group of people and different from others), and in the context of radicalization most important: self-enhancement (seeing one's own group positive in relation to relevant out-groups). Social categorization is a cognitive tool for the ordering of the social environment in terms of groups and helps people to define their place in society (Turner et al., 1987). Self-enhancement, on the other hand, is a reaction to threatened social identities. Group members try to enhance their social self-esteem by searching for positive group distinctiveness, because any threat to the position of the group implies a potential loss of positive comparisons (Haslam, Oakes, Turner, & McGarty, 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Group members attempt to 'repair' their self-esteem through in-group favoritism and out-group derogation (Haslam & Turner, 1995; Turner et al., 1987). By portraying 'us' as good and 'them' as evil, bipolar group relations create a push for distinctiveness by which the groups drift apart and polarize and simultaneously radicalize. In case of protracted bipolar conflicts as for instance pro-life and pro-choice movements, each new incident starts off the whole process again. Important though, from incident to incident social identification becomes stronger and ideas and feelings become more radical (Van Stekelenburg et al. 2010). Konaev and Moghaddam (2010), for example, showed how President Bush of the United States and President Ahmadinejad of Iran influenced both in-group and out-group through their actions, resulting in a process of mutual radicalization. These two leaders radicalized each other as well as their respective constituencies. Q11
Q12

Politicization & polarization

Politicization and polarization are interrelated but different processes both nested in the process of radicalization. Identification plays a crucial role in all three processes.

Politicization of identities is key to the dynamics of contention. Protest movements are built on politicized identities, and they are populated by people with politicized identities. Politicization of identities is thus simultaneously a characteristic of collectivities and people (Van Stekelenburg et al. 2013). At the individual level, a process of politicization typically begins with the awareness of shared grievances. The second step is that an external enemy is blamed for these grievances and claims for compensation are made. The identity fully politicizes if in the course of this struggle the group seeks to win the support of third parties such as more powerful authorities (e.g. the national government) or the general public (Simon and Klandermans 2001). When conflicts are augmented by involving society

(or even the world) at large, the societal context is differentiated into opponents and (potential) allies. Bystanders are forced to choose sides in a conflict, which no longer allows the comfort of neutrality. They become allies or must accept the consequences of being deemed an enemy.

At the group level, Taylor and Whittier (1992, p. 175) show how strong bonds existing in social networks contribute to the formation and politicization of collective identities. Within these networks, individuals come to see themselves as part of a group when some shared characteristic becomes salient and is defined as important; they become conscious of their group membership. Consciousness consists of both raising awareness of group membership and the realization of the group's position within society, in comparison to other groups. This position must be perceived as illegitimate or unjust to make group membership politically relevant. The boundaries of the position are not clear-cut, stable, and objectively given, but exist in the shared meaning attributed to group membership by group members. Taylor and Whittier show how women within their networks negotiate in order to change symbolic meanings of daily life's thinking and acting 'the politicization of daily life'. As a result, boundaries are drawn between 'a challenging and a dominant group' (p. 175). The politicization of collective identities involves thus a process that unfolds as a sequence of politicizing events that gradually transform the group's relationship to its social environment.

This brings us the process of polarization. Polarization defines other groups in the social and political arena as allies or opponents. When groups polarize, a strict distinction between 'us' and 'them' evolves. Both groups assert that what 'we' stand for is threatened by 'them', tribute is paid to the in-group's symbols and values, and the out-group is derogated. An external enemy is blamed for the group's predicament, and claims for compensation are leveled against this enemy. Polarization can be seen as an instance of movement/counter-movement dynamics in which the in- and out-group 'keep each other alive' (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). In-group and out-group mutually reinforce each other, identifying themselves in opposition to each other and regarding the other as the main target of their actions. The more polarized group relations are and the more politicized its members, the more likely they will engage in (radical) collective action directed at the government or the general public to force them to intervene or to take sides.

Radicalization

For Wilkinson (1986, p. 30), political violence is the "deliberate infliction or threat of infliction of physical injury or damage for political ends". Della Porta prefers to define political violence as a "particular repertoire of collective action that involves physical force, considered at that time as illegitimate in the dominant culture" (1995, p. 3–4). Moderate social movements are often internally fragmented along radical and moderate lines over what constitutes appropriate means and desirable ends (Tarrow 1998). Such within-movement interactions often lead to breakaway groups seeking more radical goals and actions. In this shift, members of the group break away from the moderate path and take a radical activist route to promote or prevent social change. By breaking away, radicalizing group members thus turn their back on the society at large *and* on their fellow activists. This means a 'double marginalization', both from society and from the movement (della Porta 1995, p. 107). Such double marginalization often implies material, social, and psychological isolation. The group's isolation is an important factor in explaining its deviation from the 'normal' perception of reality (della Porta 1995, p. 186) and strengthens the tendency toward violence (della Porta 1995, p. 51). In this narrower, ideologically homogeneous network, worldviews are created largely based on mediated experience, stereotypes, and prejudices shaping even more detached imagined realities. What group members feel, think, and do is severely restricted.

In fact, in isolation, no deviance from the group norm is accepted and the degrees of freedom decline to nearly zero.

While Wilkinson and della Porte both focus on the repertoire of action, Moghaddam (2005) Q13 considers of radicalization as a *process*. He conceives the process of radicalization as a multi-story building with a staircase at its center. People are located on different floors of the building, but everyone begins on the ground floor. Thought and action on each floor are characterized by particular psychological processes. The ground floor starts with subjective interpretations of material conditions, perceptions of fairness, and adequacy of identity. Only some individuals move up from the ground floor to the first floor, in search of ways to improve their life conditions. These individuals attempt to improve their own situation and that of their groups. On this floor – the floor of politicization – they are particularly influenced by options for individual mobility and voice. When people feel their voice is listened to during the decision-making process, they ‘buy into’ the system. However, when they feel they have no voice, they become more dissatisfied and detached and may climb up to the second floor – the floor of polarization – where they come under the influence of persuasive messages telling them that the cause of their problems is external enemies. Some individuals keep climbing up to reach the third floor, where they adopt a morality supportive of radicalization. Gradually, those who have reached the third floor become separated from the mainstream norms and values of their society, which generally condemn radical activism. They take on a view supportive of an ‘ends justify the means’ approach. Those individuals who continue to climb up to the fourth floor adopt a more rigid style of categorical ‘us versus them’, ‘good against evil’ thinking. Their world is now unambiguously divided into ‘black and white’; it is seen as legitimate to attack ‘the forces of evil’ in each and every way feasible. Eventually, some of these individuals move up to the fifth floor and take part in and directly support terrorist actions.

The higher people move up the staircase to radicalization, the lower the degrees of freedom (Moghaddam 2005). Individuals on the ground floor have a wider range of behavioral options. After people have become part of a terrorist group or network and reached the highest floor, the only options left open to them are to try to kill, or be killed or captured. Radicalization is thus as a collective intergroup process, rooted in fear and frustration about group-based feelings of social exclusion and perceived threats. People do not radicalize on their own but as part of a group and through the socially constructed ‘reality’ of their group. It is a process in which identification processes interact with characteristics of the socio-political context to shape and mold trajectories of change in individual and groups (Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010).

In conclusion, in the trio of politicization, polarization, and radicalization, identity processes thus play a crucial role. As for politicization, group identification not only strengthens shared grievances and emotions but also entails identification on a higher societal level. A politicized identity is by definition a dual identity in that it involves both identification with the aggrieved in-group and identification with the more inclusive entity that provides the context for shared grievances, adversarial attributions, and the ensuing power struggle for social change (Simon and Ruhs 2008). (Simon and Ruhs 2008). Identity processes play a crucial role in polarization as well. Research demonstrates that threats from counter-movements can shape a movement’s collective identity (Einwohner 2002). First of all, the presence of powerful opponents makes identities more salient for activists (Van Dyke 2003). Second, polarization implies a split in terms of friends and foes. Polarization, finally, also induces a strategic reformulation of ‘who we are’. Einwohner (2002), for instance, shows how radical animal rights activists responded to opponents’ claims that they were overly emotional by presenting alternate identity characteristics to the public, while in private they often embraced the ‘emotional’ characterization.

Contextualizing radicalization

A final step in substantiating my claim that there is no radicalization without identification is the contextualization of radicalization. Contextualization is crucial in the explanation of radicalization, as characteristics of the socio-political context – both supranational and national – may foster or hinder processes of radicalization. These are not simple mechanisms as evidenced by the fact that people's opinions, worries, and concerns are not linked in a straightforward manner to the structural characteristics of the context in which they develop. Take, f.i., the observation that while 9 percent of the French population is Muslim compared to 5.8 percent of the Dutch population (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larkin, 2010), 34 [Q14](#) percent of French citizens display an unfavorable attitude toward Muslims compared to 51 percent of the Dutch (PEW, 2005). If structural factors such as actual diversity were the only explanation for such intergroup attitudes, we would expect the French rather than the Dutch to be more negative about Muslims and thus more susceptible to radical appeals. If, on the other hand, perceived threat is a major factor, one could understand that after the terrorist attacks in Madrid and London, Spanish (94 percent) and British (91 percent) citizens were more worried about terrorism and thus susceptible to radical beliefs and actions, but how can one make sense of the 96 percent of Portuguese who were even more concerned about terrorism? Figures like these illustrate that one should be careful in relating radicalization in a simple manner to characteristics of the socio-political context. Nor should one be satisfied with static conceptions such as 'terrorist personality' (Taarnby, [Q15](#) 2003, cited by Simon and Ruhs 2008) to explain radicalization. Hence, radicalization should not be treated in social isolation, nor as a personality entity, yet explanations of radicalization are in need of contextualization.

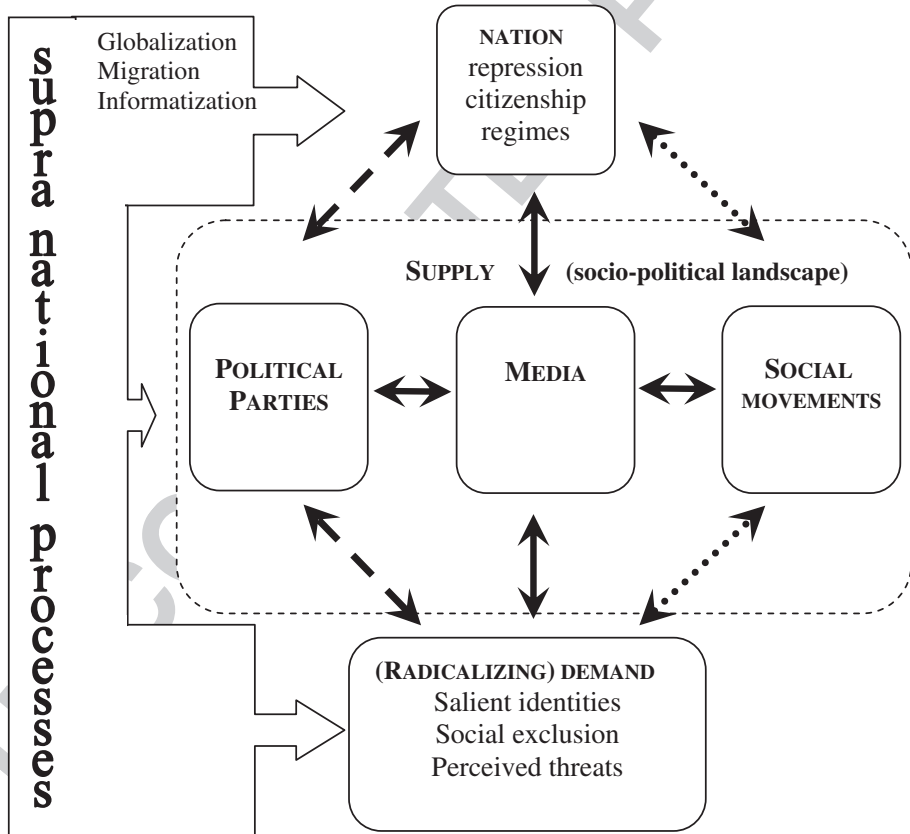
In contextualizing radicalization, identity plays again a crucial role. Matters of identity become more problematic and unsettled as societies become more structurally differentiated, fragmented, and culturally pluralistic, loosening in some instances and shattering in others the cultural and structural harbors to which identities were once anchored, thus giving rise to the construction, reconstitution, extension, negotiation, and challenge of various combinations and permutations of identities (Snow 2013). The latter part of the 20th century has generally been regarded as one such period of identity and collective identity effervescence and clustering, with a number of scholars characterizing this period in terms of identity crises and collective searches for identity (Barber 1992, Castells 1997; Gergen 1991; Giddens 1991). [Q16](#)[Q17](#) Supranational processes such as globalization, migration, and virtualization are seen to create [Q18](#)[Q19](#) new tensions and frustrated groups that demand changes in their own (radical) way. Identities become politically relevant, groups feel threatened or socially excluded, and grievances transfer from one setting to the other and resonate in different contexts. These developments have created a context wherein conflicts are partly rooted in local tensions and the workings of national socio-political systems and partly in supranational contexts. Explanations of contemporary radicalization must therefore take national and supranational contexts into account.

Additionally, contemporary radicalization may result in the form of support for radical parties and/or radical movement organizations. Hence, people can radicalize along two different routes: through participation in radical political parties or through participation in radical social movements (see also Jenkins and Klandermans' diamond model 1995 and , Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2013a,b). The radical party route is often overlooked by social movement scholars. Hutter and Kriesi (2013) argue that by neglecting this route, social movement scholars [Q20](#) tend to overlook the populist radical right parties. As a matter of fact, since the 1990s, Right-Wing populist politics is well represented in national politics in many Western countries, including France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Austria, and the like, and most recently in the

United States with the Tea party. Figure 1 visualizes an interpretative framework for radicalization that combines these two routes: taking supranational next to national contexts into account and focusing on the political arena next to the social movement sector.

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This interpretative framework for contextualized radicalization integrates influences from the supranational, the national, and the mobilizing context. At a general level, radicalizing demand, supply, and mobilization are supposedly shaped by the supranational and national context. At a specific level, the mobilizing context is further colored by characteristics of the political arena, the social movement sector, and the role of media. The framework departs from the notion that supranational processes shape and mold the micro level of (radicalizing) citizens' demands, the meso level of social movements and political parties, and the macro level of national political systems. The answer to questions such as who radicalizes, why people radicalize, and the forms radical action takes lies in the interaction of supranational processes, national political processes, and the context of political mobilization. People can take two routes to radicalization: via party politics or movement politics.



- Route 1 to radicalism: radicalization of the social movements organisations
- - - Route 2 to radicalism: radicalization of the (conventional) political arena

Figure 1 Contextualized routes to radicalization.

National level

Radicalization has been thought to stem from a failure of the nation to absorb the demands of frustrated, marginalized groups. The political opportunities and repression are identified as determinants of the incidence and type of protest in democratic polities (Tarrow 1998). Claims making by the extreme right, for instance, depends on a combination of discursive opportunities deriving from the prevailing model of citizenship and the political opportunities made available by mainstream parties for far-right mobilization (Koopmans et al. 2005).

Repression might radicalize the protesting group and further unite those people who are opposed to the state (Tarrow 1998). This is what Della Porta (1995) shows in her comparative study between Germany and Italy: the more repressive the police, the more likely that radical elements grow within the movement. Violence by the rebellious group tends to bring repression, scaring away non-violent sympathizers, dividing the society, and resulting in a small group of militants whose politics revolve around violence and who get trapped in a violent conflict with state authorities. The main paradigm predicting radicalization in social movement studies, departs from the so-called 'end-of-protest-cycle argument' (della Porta 1995). The end-of-protest-cycle argument roots in the notion that although violence tends to appear from the very beginning of a protest cycle, the more dramatic forms of violence occur when the mass phase of the protest cycle is over. Clashes with opponents or the police during demonstrations are the more widely diffused types of political violence during the height of the cycle. In the last phase, aggression carried out by small groups of militants and direct attacks on persons become more frequent. Koopmans observes a similar pattern in the rise of racist and extreme right violence in Germany (Koopmans 1997). Such violence as mobilization declines is attributed to people's dissatisfaction with protest outcomes and their attempts to compensate for the "reduction in numbers" with increased radicalism (della Porta 1995), reinforced by a repression apparatus that becomes more effective toward the end of a cycle.

Nation's citizenship regimes also impact on radicalization through the formation of identities. Indeed, European countries are experimenting with an array of integration strategies, from extreme *assimilation*, that is, washing away intergroup differences to relativistic *multiculturalism*, that is, cherishing the intergroup differences. These different citizenship regimes evoke different identity formation strategies of migrants (Ersanilli and Saharso, [Q21] 2012), which may foster or inhibit radicalization (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larkin, 2010).

Supranational level

Three supranational processes – globalization, migration, and virtualization – are thought to shape and mold the micro, meso, and macro level of dynamics of radicalization.

Globalization

While the formation of supranational institutions like the United Nations or the World Trade Organization has progressed rapidly, individual member states have undergone uncertain internal transitions, take former Yugoslavia or the USSR for instance. There is a tension between the relatively fast changes at the macro level and the slower pace of change at the psychosocial level (Moghaddam 2008). These contradictory pressures are captured by the concept of *fractured globalization*, that is, "the tendency for socio-cultural disintegration to pull in a local direction at the same time that macro-economic and political systems are set up to accelerate globalization. A result is that local languages and cultures are under threat" (Moghaddam 2008, p. 13). "Just as globalization speeds ahead and group-based differences

seem to be disappearing, there is also an ethnic revival and the re-emergence of ethnic pride and ‘being different’” (Moghaddam 2008). With respect to identification, the all inclusive cosmopolitan identity seems to enhance the need to belong and thus strengthen the perceived threats related to minority identities (Brewer 1991). Social movement literature increasingly acknowledges that in response to globalization processes, social movement activity is uploaded to the transnational level and at the same time downloaded to the local level (e.g. della Porta et al. 1999; Keck and Sikkink 1998). Processes of rapid diffusion and scale shift are exemplified by a global crisis of the *ummah*. This crisis is downloaded by European Muslims who locally reinterpret. Local conflicts are also uploaded, as illustrated by the Danish cartoon conflict. Clearly, the socio-political context in which movements operate to spread their aims and ideas is neither exclusively national nor only supranational, but a mix of supranational, national, and local settings.

Migration has increased the diversity of Western societies tremendously. Large groups of people, both natives and migrants, try to protect their ways of life and compete for scarce resources such as jobs and houses as well as for political influence (Koopmans and Olzak 2004). In this volatile context, intergroup conflicts increase the socio-political relevance and psychological salience of collective identities and thus the likelihood that social groups and their political entrepreneurs make collective claims and undertake attempts to mobilize their members for (extreme) collective action (e.g. for natives see Klandermans and Mayer 2006 for immigrants see; Klandermans et al. 2008; Simon and Ruhs 2008). Moghaddam (2008) argues that for a variety of reasons, Islamic terrorism will be a greater threat in Europe than in the United States. He suggests a “distance-traveled hypothesis” (Moghaddam 2008, p. 11), which proposes that the distance immigrants have to travel in order to settle in a host country determines the (material, educational, and other) resources needed to succeed in the migration. Muslims need to have more resources to move from the Middle East and North Africa to settle in the United States than they do to settle in Europe. The greater resources of American Muslims in part explain the greater success of Muslims in the United States, particularly in terms of economic and educational attainment, relative to Muslims in Europe (Moghaddam 2008). A lack of the resources that give access to the polity, on the other hand, may be a reason to resort to violent action repertoires (della Porta 1995).

Virtualization stands for the influence of traditional and new media in radicalization. Vliegthart (2007) shows the tight reciprocal interaction between the political and media debate and populist radical right parties’ support. He shows that traditional media as newspapers and television are most strongly influenced by real-world developments, especially events such as 9/11; the media in turn influence the parliamentary debate and the public’s support for anti-immigrant parties. Thus, traditional media appear to play a dominant role in radicalizing demand. However, next to the influence of traditional media, I point to the influence of new media on radicalization. New Web technologies, like text messaging, YouTube, discussion forums, and social networking sites play an important role in contemporary mobilization and participation, both moderate and radical (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Earl and Kimport 2011; Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013). The internet makes self-organized action feasible, by on the one hand lowering information, communication, and coordination costs, and on the other hand offering a space and tool to produce, express, and perform (radical) political dissent (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans, 2013). The Internet helps to steer loosely coupled structures (Lacquer 1999) and make grievances, ideas, and ideologies travel rapidly from one context to the other. The term ‘CNN effect’ has been coined to describe the influence of satellite news on intergroup conflicts in other parts of the world: “The idea is that a global conscience comes into being through the global mass media” (Moghaddam 2008, p. 128). Through satellite

television and the Internet, people are more informed about the struggles of their brothers and sisters worldwide with which they feel emotionally connected. New media spur intergroup conflict because ‘explosive import products’ such as the war in Iraq or fights between activists and the police during a G20 summit are vividly transmitted and facilitate the creation of global activist identities such as the Black Bloc and Jihadi Muslims.

The Internet also augments activists’ tactical repertoire, be it offline actions that are supported and facilitated by the Internet or online actions that are Internet-based (Van Laer and Van Aelst 2010). Internet-supported actions involve the Internet as a device that reinforces the traditional tools of organizers by making it easier to organize and coordinate. Smartphones make it possible to continuously document activists ‘on the spot’ about actions and interaction with the police and thereby change the tactics of groups like the ‘Black Bloc’ (McPhail and McCarthy 2005). Internet-based action involve the Internet’s function of creating new and modified tactics as for instance online petitions, e-mail bombings and hacktivism expanding the action toolkit of (radical) social movement organizations.

The Internet may also strengthen identification, and thereby radicalization. This occurs because online anonymity and reduced social cues decrease perceived differences among members, foster identification with a group, and reinforce group’s unity (Brunsting and Postmes 2002). Through these processes, online groups create relatively underground solidarity, which may contribute to participation in radical action. In addition to a relatively underground shelter where feelings of solidarity and identification can be nourished, the Internet is a great resource for a wealth of cheap information, information which can be combined in so-called cut-and-paste ideologies.

Together globalization, migration, and virtualization have a profound impact on what citizens currently think, feel, and do. Today’s societies are increasingly described in terms of uncertainties and threat (Moghaddam 2008), fears (Bauman 2006), and risk (Beck 1992). Such collective fear enhances radicalization (Bar-Tal et al. 2007). Perceived threat and social exclusion fuel radicalization especially if citizens do not trust their government to solve their problems. Globalization and migration create dynamics that serve to include some and exclude others in a connected but polarized global context. It results in salient identities and ensuing clashes of ideologies (Moghaddam 2005, 2008). Often groups that experience threatened identities are less concerned with policy and legalization than with cultural targets such as social norms, media representation, and cultural messages about the group. These groups do not so much reflect a desire to change government as they desire to create a cultural turn in which their cultural norms are accepted and they are treated with respect and dignity. Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2009) define this as a conflict of principle. Such conflicts easily turn into fierce confrontations as they cannot be solved by compromises like conflicts of interest. In societies where “threat is in the air” (Moghaddam 2008), prejudice is high (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007), just like hate toward other groups (van Stekelenburg et al. 2010), which fuels (radical) conflict behavior.

In sum

This essay demonstrates that identity processes are key to the process of radicalization. It starts off with nesting the processes of politicization and polarization into radicalization. It continues with demonstrating that within this trio, identity processes are crucial. In a final step, it is argued that the explanation of politicization, polarization, and radicalization needs contextualization, as these processes are molded and shaped by contextual characteristics; both supranational and national. It shows how processes of globalization, migration,

and virtualization affect politicization, polarization, and radicalization simultaneously at the micro level of citizens, the meso level of party and movement politics and the macro level of national measures of repression and 'safety'. It argues that identity plays a crucial role in all levels. I hope this 'roadmap' has been useful in exemplifying and relating the multitude-multilevel explanations for radicalization, and substantiates my claim that single level explanations are not able to capture the complex process of radicalization. Obviously, it is not more than a descriptive start, in need of empirical scrutiny. The last words will be devoted to where I think the lacunas are. What are the challenges scientific explanations of radicalization face? I will mention a few and there might be (much!) more.

To start with the claim that identification is crucial for radicalization. But what about the so-called lone wolves? They are not part of a group, but they are expected to strongly identify with a group or category. A lone wolf in the context of terrorism doesn't mean a loner who acts completely on his own and without any reference outside. "A lone wolf comes with an ideological background and he has contact with other extremists, but he is not a part of a command structure, he is not a part of an organization that conducts terrorism. In the words of Verta Taylor (2013), they are part of a discursive community. So, you could have an Islamist lone wolf who is a part of an Islamist ideological framework, but he is not a member of Al-Qaeda for instance, or you could have a Right-Wing extremist who conducts terrorism but is not a part of an organization, but he also draws his ideas from somewhere".² The Danish security police have warned against exactly that kind of a mixture, a threat from people who are not necessarily a part of a group but they create their own frames and then, they conduct terrorism or violence on that basis.³

The forwarded framework presumes that there are two routes to radicalization: party politics and movement politics. Little is known about how these routes vary or interact, how such variation is determined, or how it impacts on who radicalizes, for what reasons and why people take the one route rather than the other. And how identity processes differ, to what extent does identification with a party or a social movement organization differ? And how does that affect their feelings, thoughts and behavior? Of course, in trying to achieve social change people will attempt to keep their costs and their risks to a minimum (cf. McAdam 1986). Therefore, one can expect that citizens demanding radical social change initially prefer the low costs/risks route of party politics. However, this is only possible if there is a supply of radical party politics that impresses as effective. Kriesi's (2009) suggestion that the extreme right mobilizes via party politics seems to be confirmed by the supply of populist extreme right political parties in many European countries. The radical left, on the other hand, tends to choose movement politics. Hence, movement politics have been dominated by the so-called 'left-libertarian movement family' (della Porta and Rucht 1995), although in the United States, we do encounter radical right movements (f.i. anti-abortion and recently the so-called Tea party, a radical right anti-government campaign). Thus, I expect the radical left such as the 'Autonomous' Black Block to opt for the movement route, if only because globalization has made them critical to the legitimacy of democracy. This might also be a reason why Islamic Jihadi's opt for the social movement route. However, the potential differentiated role identity plays in these routes is an unanswered question.

A final interesting issue is the relation between the two routes. As far as moderate political participation is concerned, the two routes have always been intimately related. That is to say, people who participate in party politics are also likely to participate in movement politics (Barnes and Kaase 1979). However, if the route via the political representational system does not live up to citizens' expectations, chances are that the protest route via social movements will be used more frequently. This raises the question whether the two routes for radical political

participation are as intimately related as those for moderate forms of participation and to what extent failing radical party politics would similarly make people shift to movement politics.

Short Biography

Jacqueline van Stekelenburg is associate professor at the Sociology Department of the VU University Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She studies the social psychological dynamics of moderate and radical protest participation, with a special interest in group identification, emotions, and ideologies as motivators for collective action. She co-authored (with Klandermans) "Individuals in movements: a social psychology of contention" (In *The Handbook of Social Movements across Disciplines*, Springer, 2007) and (with Klandermans and van der Toorn) "Embeddedness and Grievances: Collective Action Participation Among Immigrants" (In *American Sociological Review*, 2008). She edited (with Roggeband and Klandermans) *The Future of Social Movement Research: Dynamics, Mechanisms and Processes* (University of Minnesota Press 2013). She is currently conducting an international comparative study on street demonstrations with Bert Klandermans (VU University Amsterdam) and Stefaan Walgrave (Antwerpen University) funded by the European Science Foundation entitled *Caught in the act of protest: Contextualized Contestation* and a study on emerging networks and feelings of belonging funded by the Dutch Royal Academy of Science entitled *The evolution of collective action in emerging neighbourhoods*.

Notes

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¹ The literature on collective identity and social movements is extensive; this contribution therefore only touches upon a few movement dynamics in which identity may operate (for overviews see Stryker et al. 2000; and more recently Snow 2013; Taylor, 2013).

² <http://theforeigner.no/pages/news/breiviks-ideology-part-cut-and-paste-extremist-authority-says/>

³ <http://theforeigner.no/pages/news/breiviks-ideology-part-cut-and-paste-extremist-authority-says/>

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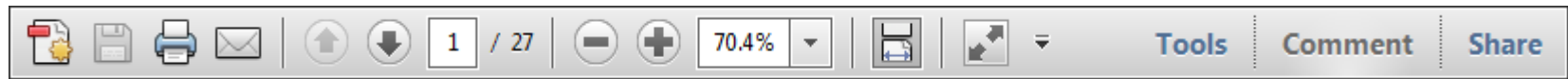
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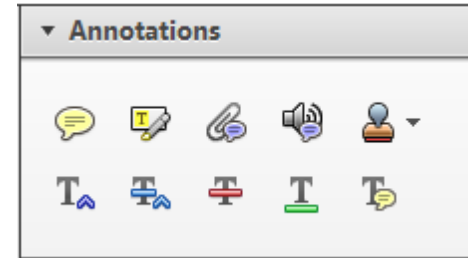
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1. Replace (Ins) Tool – for replacing text.

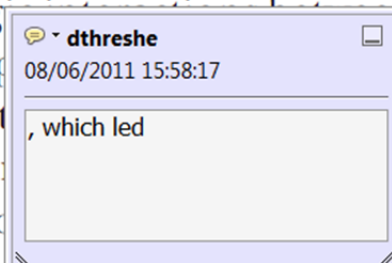


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standard framework for the analysis of microeconomics. Nevertheless, it also led to the emergence of strategic behaviour. The number of competitors in the industry is that the structure of the market. The main components of the market level, are exogenous variables. An important work on this by Shirasaka (henceforth) we open the 'black b



2. Strikethrough (Del) Tool – for deleting text.



Strikes a red line through text that is to be deleted.

How to use it

- Highlight a word or sentence.
- Click on the [Strikethrough \(Del\)](#) icon in the Annotations section.

there is no room for extra profits and the number of competitors are zero and the number of firms (net) values are not determined by Blanchard and ~~Kiyotaki~~ (1987), perfect competition in general equilibrium. The effects of aggregate demand and supply in the classical framework assuming monopoly are an exogenous number of firms

3. Add note to text Tool – for highlighting a section to be changed to bold or italic.



Highlights text in yellow and opens up a text box where comments can be entered.

How to use it

- Highlight the relevant section of text.
- Click on the [Add note to text](#) icon in the Annotations section.
- Type instruction on what should be changed regarding the text into the yellow box that appears.

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4. Add sticky note Tool – for making notes at specific points in the text.



Marks a point in the proof where a comment needs to be highlighted.

How to use it

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- Type the comment into the yellow box that appears.

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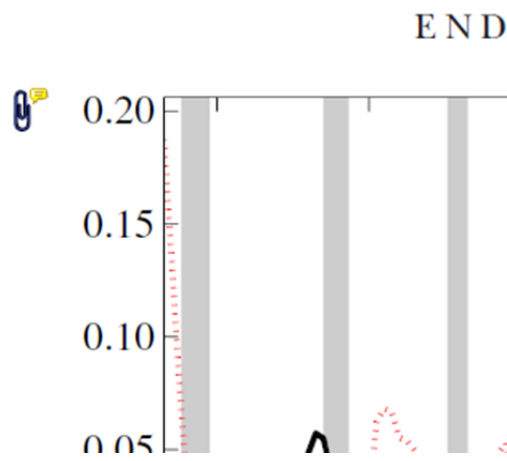
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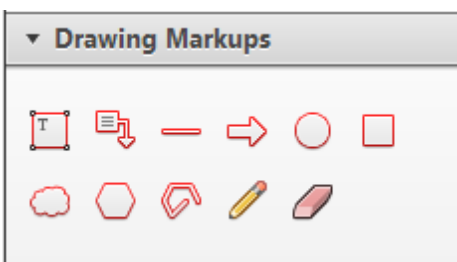


Inserts a selected stamp onto an appropriate place in the proof.

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- Select the stamp you want to use. (The [Approved](#) stamp is usually available directly in the menu that appears).
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of the business cycle, starting with the
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 general equilibrium models with nomin
 ed and supply shocks. Most of this literat

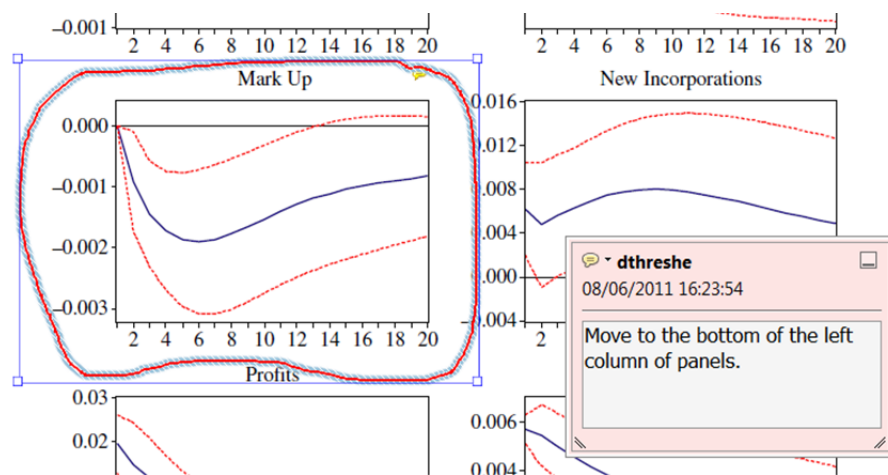


7. Drawing Markups Tools – for drawing shapes, lines and freeform annotations on proofs and commenting on these marks.

Allows shapes, lines and freeform annotations to be drawn on proofs and for comment to be made on these marks..

How to use it

- Click on one of the shapes in the [Drawing Markups](#) section.
- Click on the proof at the relevant point and draw the selected shape with the cursor.
- To add a comment to the drawn shape, move the cursor over the shape until an arrowhead appears.
- Double click on the shape and type any text in the red box that appears.



For further information on how to annotate proofs, click on the [Help](#) menu to reveal a list of further options:

