



# Contemporary Voices

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## Articles

### Terrorism Driven by High Population Growth

by Mario Coccia



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#### Abstract

*A fundamental problem in conflict studies is how to explain the root causes of terrorism. This study suggests that terrorism thrives in specific regions with high growth rates of population that may generate income inequality and relative deprivation of people. In addition, geospatial analysis here reveals that countries with high association between fatalities for terrorist incidents and population growth are mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, Middle East, East and South Asia. Overall, then, one of the causes of terrorism is due to sociodemographic factors combined with psychosocial risk factors.*

**Keywords:** Terrorism; Population Growth; Demographic Factors; Income Inequality; Poverty; Relative Deprivation, Psychosocial risk factors.

#### Overview of the problem

This paper has two goals. The first is to analyse the possible association between demographic factors and effects of terrorist attacks. The second is to suggest that terrorism thrives in the presence of high growth rates of population, which can support socioeconomic and psychosocial risk factors. These topics are basic in modern society because terrorism is growing both in rich and developing nations (Newman, 2006; Reardon, 2015). Many studies endeavour to clarify the direct and indirect determinants of terrorism (Abadie, 2005; Crenshaw, 1981; Newman, 2006; Freytag et al., 2011; McAllister and Schmid, 2011), though predictors of terrorism are often unclear factors in different societies (Krueger and Malečková, 2009). Some sources of terrorism are economic factors (Blomberg et al., 2004; Krueger and Malečková, 2003), political factors (Coggins, 2015), social factors (Krueger and Malečková, 2003), etc. However, *whether* and *how* demographic factors cause and sustain terrorism are hardly known. The study here confronts this scientific problem trying to analyse and explain whenever possible, the role of demographic factors associated with effects of terrorist incidents.

#### Theoretical framework and working hypothesis

The UN General Assembly claimed that terrorism can be due to socioeconomic issues of poverty, inequality, underdevelopment and the absence of social justice in some regions (United Nations, 2016). A popular hypothesis in these research fields is that terrorism and other forms of political violence are due to poverty and poor distribution of economic resources (Piazza, 2006; Piazza and Von Hippel, 2014). This "rooted-in-poverty hypothesis" explains terrorism as "expression of socioeconomic discontent and desperation" (Piazza, 2006, p. 160). In particular, terrorist organizations can use poor socioeconomic conditions as a base to foster their criminal activities (cf.,



Blomberg et al., 2004; Enders and Hoover, 2012; Krieger and Meierrieks, 2011). In fact, low levels of socioeconomic development increase the appeal of political extremism, encourage political violence and instability in society (Piazza, 2006). Piazza (2006, p. 463) also argues that unlike popular opinion, “no significant relationship between any of the measures of economic development and terrorism can be determined. Rather, variables such as population, ethno-religious diversity, increased state repression and, most significantly, the structure of party politics are found to be significant predictors of terrorism”. The study of these variables, such as demographic factors, is basic for understanding the sources and effects of terrorism in society. In general, scholars show that population growth can support resource scarcity and violence in countries (Christens and Speer, 2005; Lee, 2016). The theoretical background of these studies is the theory of Malthus (1817) that argues geometric growth rates for population, while food resources have arithmetic growth rates. The dissimilar rates of growth between population and subsistence food tend to decrease natural resources and generate a looming crisis and environmental conflicts. Many scholars are current proponents of neo-Malthusian approaches to explain economic and social issues, such as Ehrlich (1968) that foretold a coming crisis from overpopulation and limited resources (cf., Meadows et al., 2004). Linstone (2003, p. 288) argued that: “The world population is expected to increase from 6.2 billion to 9.3 billion in 2050 and 98% of this growth will be in the poorer countries” (cf., Rapoport, 2004). Ehrlich and Liu (2002, p. 188) observed that:

high population growth rates are expected to continue in many developing nations, with a projected annual growth rate for people aged 20–34 of 2.82% as opposed to a rate of 0.16% in developed countries during the years 2000–2050 ... In the face of such growth, job opportunities may be doomed to become much rarer.

In this context, Kaplan (2000) argued a possible threat to developed countries can be due to population increase of poor countries. Visaria (1989, p. 7) argues that one of the most serious consequences of the acceleration in population growth is the difficulty of generating adequate employment opportunities for the growing labour force of countries. Cassils (2004) claims that the poorest regions of the world, where population growth is still rapid, will continue to suffer with a decreased life expectancy because of resource depletion, conflicts and diseases. In general, the mismanagement of this equilibrium between population and natural–economic resources in specific regions can cause problems of violent crime and conflicts (Peluso and Watts, 2001). Krieger and Meierrieks (2010, p. 914) claim that: “Terrorism is also positively linked to larger populations, but this may simply indicate that terrorism is more likely in more populous countries”. Cassils (2004) suggests that population growth can contribute to the overexploitation of resources and space, reducing the freedoms of individuals mainly in poor and unstable regions of the globe, and possibly give rise to more violence and terrorism. In particular, the interconnections between overpopulation and low economic growth of specific areas are a critical factor of growing insecurity worldwide (Cassils, 2004, p. 172). However, *whether* and *how* population growth influences terrorism is hardly known. The studies discussed above suggest a critical relation between population growth and terrorism that can lay theoretical foundations to explore a hypothesis of general causes of terrorism driven by population growth.

Suppose that terrorism is a specific and distinct type of violent crime. This crime, in general, is due to some group organized that has technical skills to carry out a terrorist action directed to challenge a nation’s authority and induce fear and anxiety into civilian population (cf., Crenshaw, 1981, p. 380). Rice (2009, p. 253) argues that: “similarities between terrorism and crime are ... evident”, then the psychosocial research of crime is well positioned to frame environmental risk factors that can support terrorism’s psychological space (cf., LaFree and Dugan, 2009).



The working hypothesis of the study here is:

- *Hypothesis of terrorism driven by population growth*: The effectiveness of terrorism is positively affected by high growth rates of population over time and space, *ceteris paribus*.

The purpose of the present study is to see whether statistical evidence supports the hypothesis that fatalities from terrorist attacks are associated with high growth rates of population between countries.

## **Materials and methods**

The study here analyses whether under the condition of high growth rate of population, confirmed fatalities for the incident from terrorist attacks increase, even when controlling other factors.

### **1.1 Sample and sources**

The sample of this study is based on  $N=132$  countries. Source of data is Democracy Cross-National Data by Norris (2015), World Development Indicators (World Bank, 2008) and Global Terrorism Database (START, 2015).

### **1.2 Measures**

The measures of terrorism effectiveness, growth rates of population and other socioeconomic indicators are as follows.

GTD defines terrorist attacks (Global Terrorism Database codebook, 2015, p. 8): “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation”. Effects of terrorist attacks in society are measured by the number of total confirmed fatalities for the incident for 2002-2014 period. This number includes all victims and attackers who died as a direct result of the incident (Global Terrorism Database, START, 2015).

- Annual population growth rate, 1975-2002 and 2002-2015 period, is the exponential rate of growth of midyear population from year  $t-1$  to  $t$ , expressed as a percentage. Source of data is Norris (2015).
- Freedom House standardized scale 100 pts 2000 measures democratization. Source of data is Norris (2015).
- Kaufmann political stability 2000. It measures perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism. Source of data is Norris (2015).
- Ethnic fractionalization index -combined linguistic and racial- (Alesina et al., 2003). Source of data is also Norris (2015).
- Human development index (HDI) 2005 (Norris, 2015).
- Gross Domestic Product per capita US\$ 2002 –GDPPC. Source of data is the World Bank (2008) and Norris (2015).
- Income Gini coefficient 2004 is a measure of the deviation of the distribution of income among individuals or households within a country from a perfectly equal distribution. Source of data is also the World Bank (2013) and Norris (2015).

### 1.3 Research Design and Data Analysis Procedure

The approach here performs a country-level analysis worldwide ( $N=132$  countries). Statistical analyses apply the Statistics Software SPSS® version 24. Skewed variables are *ln*-transformed before including in statistical analyses. Statistical techniques to support the hypothesis of previous section are:

- Descriptive statistics, bivariate correlation and partial correlation (with control variables Gini coefficient of income inequality).
- Regression analysis with linear models. The specification of the model of simple regression is:

$$\ln Y_{i,t} = \lambda_0 + \lambda_1 \ln x_{i,t} + u_{i,t} \quad [1]$$

country  $i=1, \dots, N$ ;  $t=time$

where:

- $Y_{i,t}$  = Number of total confirmed fatalities for the incident from terrorist attacks over 2002-2014 (dependent variable)
- $x_{i,t}$  = Annual population growth rate 1975-2002 (explanatory variable)
- $u_{i,t}$  = Error term

The model [1] is estimated with the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method.

This study also calculates arithmetic mean and standard deviation between the following geoeconomic regions based on Regional categories of the dataset by Norris (2015): North America, Central America & Caribbean, South America, East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Middle East & North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and Australasia & Oceania. In particular, this classification is used to analyse and compare demographic and socioeconomic factors underlying effectiveness of terrorist attacks between these geoeconomic regions of the globe.

- *Geospatial analysis of the association between lethality of terrorism and population growth*

The association between annual population growth and number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents of country  $i$  (ASCT $_i$ ) is given by:

$$ASCT_i = \text{annual population growth rate (1975-2002)}_i \times \text{number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents over (2002-2014)}_i \quad (i=\text{country, with } i=1, 2, \dots, N) \quad [2]$$

The sample of this analysis is based on  $N=132$  countries. Countries  $i$  are divided in four categories:

1. low association:  $ASCT_i \leq 25^{\text{th}}$  percentile
2. moderate association:  $25^{\text{th}}$  percentile  $< ASCT_i \leq 50^{\text{th}}$  percentile
3. high association:  $50^{\text{th}}$  percentile  $< ASCT_i \leq 75^{\text{th}}$  percentile
4. very high association:  $ASCT_i > 75^{\text{th}}$  percentile



A geographic map of the globe visualizes each country according to the category to which it belongs.

## Results

- *Statistical evidence with correlation and regression analyses*

The bivariate correlation shows a coefficient of Pearson correlation  $r=.40$  ( $p\text{-value} < .001$ ), which indicates a positive linear relationship between levels of annual population growth rate and number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents. The partial correlation, controlling income inequality, also reveals a positive relationship between these variables ( $r= .30$ ,  $p\text{-value} < .01$ ). These results are consistent with the hypothesis stated above about the positive association between annual population growth and confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents (Table 1).

*Table 1. Correlation between LN number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents over (2002-2014) and LN annual population growth rate (1975-2002)*

Bivariate correlation $r$	.40
$p\text{-value}$	.001
Partial correlation	.30
$p\text{-value}$	.009
Control variable: Income Gini coefficient 2002y	

The OLS estimation of the model [1] in table 2 indicates that a 1% higher level of annual population growth rate, increases the expected number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents by about 0.62% ( $p\text{-value} < .001$ ).

*Table 2. Regressions of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents on annual population growth rate*

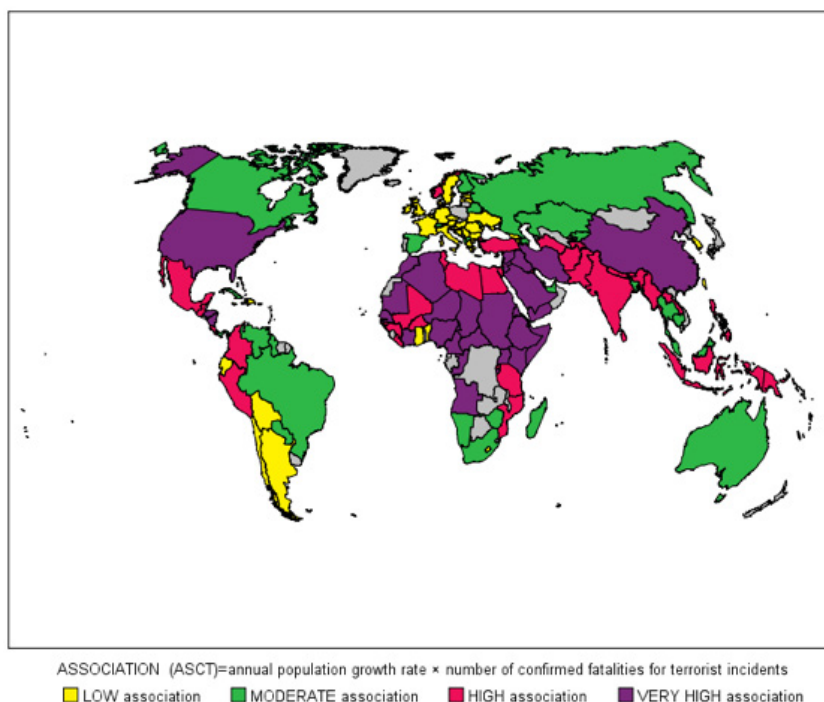
<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
LN number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents over 2002-2014	
<i>Explanatory variable:</i>	
LN annual population growth rate 1975-2002	
Constant $\lambda_0$	-0.15
(St. Err.)	(0.14)
Coefficient $\lambda_1$	0.62***
(St. Err.)	(0.14)
$R^2$ adj.	0.15
(St. Err. of the Estimate)	(1.35)
F	20.77
(Sign.)	(0.001)

Note: \*\*\*=  $p\text{-value} < .001$ ; other variables, such as wealth of nations, income inequality, etc., have not been added in the model of regression here because either they are not significant (e.g., LN Income Gini coefficient 2004 has  $p\text{-value} = .939$ ) or national wealth and Human development Index, etc. are, together with demographic factors, already represented by annual population growth rate between countries.

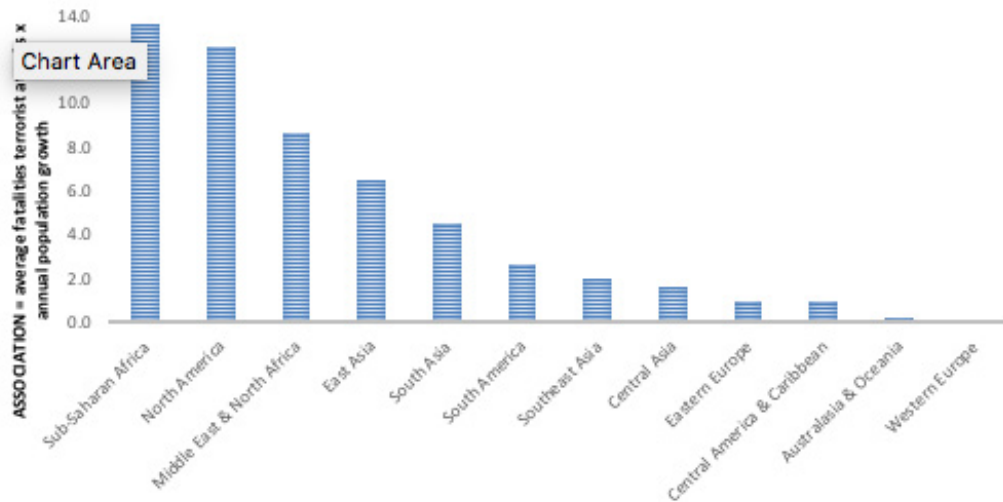


- *Geospatial analysis of the association between terrorism and population growth*

The spatial distribution of the association between annual population growth rate and number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents is in figure 1, whereas figure 2 shows the association under study between geoeconomic regions of the globe. The geospatial analysis here reveals that high levels of growth rates of population are associated with high number of confirmed fatalities for the terrorist incident in some regions of the globe, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East & North Africa, East and South Asia. However, an exception is the high association in the USA that may be due to different factors, such as the US foreign policy for the Middle East and other regions, US deterrence policy and preventive actions against non-state organizations of terrorism, US military actions, etc. These factors may nourish revenges of terrorist cells and individuals with deteriorated behaviour- at domestic, transnational and international level - that attack the civilian population in order to induce fear and anxiety in advanced society.



*Figure 1. Global association between annual population growth rate 1975-2002 and number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents over 2002-2014 between countries. Note: colour grey indicates missing values.*



*Figure 2. Association between annual population growth rate 1975-2002 and number of confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents over 2002-2014 between geoeconomic regions of the globe.*

Table 3 shows the arithmetic mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) of socioeconomic variables under study between geoeconomic regions. Results confirm previous statistical analyses. In this context, Ackoff and Rovin (2003, p. 146) claim that inequality of the distribution of wealth, low opportunities for economic development and low quality of life contribute to “the frustration and alienation that give rise to terrorism” (cf. Ezcurra and Palacios, 2016). A study for the Heritage Foundation in 2002 also argues that countries prone to terrorism are the least advantaged economically (Ackoff and Rovin, 2003, p. 146).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics between geoeconomic regions of the globe

Geoeconomic Regions	N.confirmed fatalities for terrorist incidents (2002-2014)	Freedom House standardized scale 100 pts (2000)	Kaufmann political stability (2000)	Ethnicfractionalization (combined linguistic and racial) (2002)	Annual population growth Rate (2002-2015)	Human development index (2005)	GDP per capita (US\$) (2002)	GINI coefficient (2004)
Central America & Caribbean	M 1.13	89.25	0.50	0.39	0.61	0.80	\$8,386.00	39.65
	SD 3.55	16.28	0.63	0.23	0.56	0.10	\$9,426.55	3.720
South America	M 1.32	74.03	-0.21	0.44	1.41	0.78	\$2,654.94	51.73
	SD 4.08	19.07	0.70	0.19	0.53	0.06	\$1,480.19	5.040
East Asia	M 5.23	64.26	0.40	0.14	0.70	0.84	\$10,714.8	36.30
	SD 17.67	36.41	0.49	0.15	0.48	0.12	\$14,473.9	9.609
Southeast Asia	M 0.93	42.13	-0.23	0.47	1.47	0.74	\$3,713.00	41.10
	SD 3.07	23.91	1.04	0.19	0.50	0.12	\$7,045.06	5.150
South Asia	M 1.99	52.02	-0.47	0.49	1.93	0.62	\$746.57	33.68
	SD 6.56	20.90	0.95	0.23	0.73	0.09	\$668.883	1.940
Central Asia	M 0.85	63.68	0.00	0.34	1.42	0.73	\$4,250.06	38.24
	SD 2.19	28.97	0.94	0.24	0.67	0.14	\$7,545.36	6.650
Western Europe	M 0.23	97.36	1.17	0.23	0.45	0.94	\$25,861.8	31.13
	SD 2.91	4.15	0.26	0.21	0.62	0.02	\$9,693.64	4.510
Eastern Europe	M 1.63	60.95	-0.29	0.40	0.12	0.80	\$2,709.85	31.77
	SD 10.89	27.24	0.91	0.18	0.97	0.07	\$2,561.54	5.170
Middle East & North Africa	M 2.80	35.70	-0.25	0.44	1.79	0.80	\$7,677.41	37.99
	SD 13.87	18.33	0.82	0.22	0.52	0.07	\$8,279.25	3.010
Sub-Saharan Africa	M 5.11	51.04	-0.64	0.65	2.03	0.51	\$926.26	48.32
	SD 15.27	22.92	1.03	0.23	1.00	0.12	\$1,515.71	10.69
Australasia & Oceania	M 0.19	83.48	0.46	0.27	1.36	0.76	\$4,496.92	40.77
	SD 0.601	17.82	0.89	0.23	0.66	0.15	\$6,559.16	8.790

Source : Norris (2015), START (2015). Note: M=arithmetic mean, SD=Standard Deviation.





## Discussion

The statistical evidence reveals that, in average, regions with a high incidence of fatalities for terrorist incidents have also high growth rates of population. The positive correlation between population growth and terrorism found here can be explained with the theory of association between population density and poverty (cf., Curtis, 1975). Sociological studies also consider the perspective that high density of population produces deteriorated human functioning, which leads to violent crime (Thiessen and Rodgers, 1961). Other studies reveal that frustration generated by high levels of (population) density can stimulate violent behaviour and aggression between individuals (Regoezi, 2003).

In addition, high growth rates of population modify the structure of population, increasing younger age categories (cf., Ehrlich and Liu, 2002). Younger populations in the presence of poverty in socioeconomic systems can be unable to achieve valued goals: the "blockage of goal-seeking behavior" (Agnew, 1985) is a source of frustration in society. Ehrlich and Liu (2002, p. 187) confirm that the vast majority of terrorists were young adult males: "Based on the information from the FBI's most wanted terrorist list. . . approximately 90% of those on the list were all males and from 22 to 34 years old when their first alleged terrorist act took place" (cf., Crenshaw, 1981, p. 384). Another possible effect of high growth rates of population is higher economic inequality in society (cf., Coccia, 2017; see also Tab. 3 here). The relationship between high growth rate of population, income inequality and terrorism can be explained with the sociological theory of "relative deprivation": inequality breeds social tensions and the less well-off individuals feel dispossessed when compared with wealthier people (Stack, 1984). Hsieh and Pugh (1993) argue that poverty and income inequality are an indicator of resource deprivation, which is associated with violent crime. Arthur (1991) finds in criminology that homicides can be explained with an individual's reaction to resource deprivation or material disadvantage that causes personal frustration and diffuse hostility (cf., Nettler, 1984, p. 229). Stolzenberg, Eitle and D'Alessio (2006) confirm that violence is based on economic deprivation that acts as a motivational factor in the manifestation of crime. Overall, economic inequality of countries, also driven by high growth rates of population, combined with poor economic resources in society, engenders resentment, hostility, frustration, which can be precipitating factors of terrorism and violence (cf., Blau & Blau, 1982). Messner and Golden (1992) claim that: " 'relative deprivation' . . . and that the inability of the disadvantaged to get a fair redistribution of resources, or more open access to wealth, generates anger and frustration, which ultimately leads to more crime" (as quoted by Stolzenberg et al., 2006, p. 304, original emphasis). As a matter of fact, high levels of population growth, in the presence of income inequality, induce feeling of disadvantage and unfairness that leads poor people to seek compensation and satisfaction by all means, including committing crimes against other individuals in society (Fajnzyblber et al., 2002, p. 2). According to Gilligan (2001), income inequality affects personality of people and generates disrespect and humiliation, which are amongst the most common triggers to violence and possibly to terrorism. In short, economic inequality and high population growth can generate negative social interactions, resource deprivation and low sense of control over one's life (Elgar & Aitken, 2010). These psychosocial risk factors may support terrorism in society.

## Concluding observations

Terrorism and crime are alike (Rice, 2009) and are affected by demographic, socioeconomic and environmental features of particular locations (Cozens, 2008, p. 431). On the basis of the argument presented in this paper, we can therefore conclude that –in average- terrorism is also correlated to high growth rates of population, combined with poverty, high income inequality and political instability of countries, *ceteris paribus*. This theory here suggests main predictions: societies with low



growth rates of population, low income inequality, low relative deprivation, high standard of living and quality of life of young generations are not likely to produce a high effectiveness of terrorism. This study also predicts that current trend of high growth rates of population, associated with high income inequality and political instability in some societies (and communities) can continue to feed terrorism and terroristic threat for many years to come.

The results here can support fruitful insights for a policy of conflict resolution that ameliorates socioeconomic conditions of population, and indirectly reduces terrorism, such as programs of economic aid directed to eliminate income inequality and improve the standard of living and opportunities of young people in society (*cf.* Ackoff and Rovin, 2003; Ehrlich and Liu, 2002; Frey *et al.*, 2003). The aim is to provide education and economic opportunity for young population to contrast the anti-modernization advocated by fundamentalists in society (*cf.*, Krieger and Meierrieks, 2010, 2011). In particular, the rising economic prosperity of certain regions may help to lower high growth rates of population, which may be the *distal causes* of terrorism in society. In fact, Krieger and Meierrieks (2010, p. 902) confirm that social policies ameliorate short-run and long-run socioeconomic conditions of population (e.g., reduction of unemployment, poverty, inequality, and dissatisfaction), and indirectly can reduce relative deprivation of people and terrorism as a result. Fajnzylber *et al.* (2002) claim that economic growth and equal distribution of income reduce poverty, and the rate of poverty alleviation has a crime-reducing effect.

Overall, then, this study suggests that empirical and theoretical analyses should deeply investigate the effects of demographic factors on specific societies to understand *why* terrorism is happening in order to defuse the underlying principal causes. Findings of the study here can clarify whenever possible, one of the distal causes of terrorism that is the association between growth rate of population and lethality of terrorism. However, these conclusions are of course tentative, since we know that manifold factors causing terrorism are often not equal over time and space.

## About the author

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## Are there Wolves among the Sheep?

### Assessing the threat of Unaffiliated Actor Terrorism in the Context of the European Migration Crisis

by Alasdair Kempton



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### Abstract

*The European Migration Crisis is increasingly linked to an exponentially rising threat of terrorism in Europe and a rapid disintegration of the EU's security and integrity. However while the narrative of the terrorist 'wolves' hiding among the refugee 'sheep' becomes increasingly prevalent, little quantitative analysis has been made to substantiate it. This paper seeks to interrogate the evidence behind a key claim prevalent in that narrative; that 'lone wolf' terrorists have entered Europe under the cover of the crisis. On the basis of the available data, this paper contends that such a threat is minimal, the crisis presenting a social problem rather than a security issue.*

**Keywords:** Lone Wolf; Terrorism; Europe Migration Crisis; Threat

### Introduction

In 2015 a record-breaking 1.3 million people applied for asylum in the European Union, sparking what has become known as the "European Migration Crisis" (hereafter EMC)<sup>[1]</sup>. Of these, 29% (378,000) were fleeing Syria, nearly 15% (193,000) from Afghanistan while another 9.7% (127,000) came from Iraq<sup>[2]</sup>. By the end of the second quarter of 2016 another 305,700 asylum seekers had applied for internal protection in the EU<sup>[3]</sup>. This wave of migration coincided with a string of deadly terrorist attacks, the largest of which struck Paris (2015), Nice (2016) and Brussels (2016), killing hundreds and injuring more than a thousand. These attacks, and the use of the crisis as 'cover' for the infiltration of some of the attackers, legitimised fears that the 'migrant tide' brought with it the proverbial 'wolves in sheep's clothing', and once inside, that Europe's Schengen Area of free movement would allow such terrorist 'wolves' to strike anywhere in the EU<sup>[4]</sup>. Non-refoulement clauses in the European Convention on Human Rights mean that even when suspected extremist or political criminals are detected among refugees, returning them to their country of origin may be illegal, granting them an opportunity to wander Europe (potentially unmonitored)<sup>[5]</sup>. Many European countries have begun re-imposing border controls invoking the 'exceptional circumstances' clause of the Schengen Zone, and some doubt these 'temporary measures' will prove temporary<sup>[6]</sup>.

[1] Pew Research Center, "Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015", August 2016 p.4

[2] *ibid*, p. 9

[3] Eurostat, 2016 *asylum in the EU Member States*, Media release, 22 September, Eurostat, < <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7662180/3-22092016-AP-EN.pdf/22f5de3b-b5a8-4195-82fe-3072a4a08146> > accessed 30/8/2017

[4] Kelly Greenhill, 2016 "Open Arms Behind Barred Doors: Fear, Hypocrisy and Policy Schizophrenia in the European Migration Crisis" *European Law Journal* Vol 22 No. 3 pp 317-332

[5] Maarten Bolhuis, Joris Van Wijk, 2015, "Alleged Terrorists and Other Perpetrators of Serious Non-Political Crimes: The Application of Article 1F(b) of the Refugee Convention in the Netherlands" *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol 29 No. 1 pp 19-38

[6] Greenhill, *op cit* pp 317-318





Nevertheless, while fear and rhetoric appear to drive policy, with the notable exception of the Paris/Bataclan attack there is little evidence supports the contention that the migrant crisis has aided the infiltration of pre-formed terrorist 'cells'. Europol reports and the analysis of other attacks in the section below highlight the predominance of local actors (existing residents and citizens) rather than apparent asylum seekers, as the instigators of violence<sup>[7]</sup>. If anything, the predominant flow of militants appears to be in the *other* direction; by 2015 it has been estimated that more than 2,000 'foreign fighters' had left from Germany, the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark, with only around 20% returning<sup>[8]</sup>. During the same period Islamic State media endeavored to dissuade residents of the conflict zones from seeking asylum on foreign shores, urging them to stay and fight instead<sup>[9]</sup>. More recently, however the consistent loss of Islamic State territory over the last 18 months has reversed this trend somewhat as escaping foreign fighters seek to return home<sup>[10]</sup>. Finally, not all attacks are carried out by organised cells. Increasingly 'lone wolf' or single attacker incidents (such as the Nice truck attack) are drawing the attention of policy makers and academics alike. This paper seeks to assess the incidence of radicalised migrant 'lone wolves' as an alternative terrorist threat. After specifying the methodology, the paper will compare unaffiliated actor attacks from the 'peak' of the EMC between 2015-16 with data from the five years previously. The trends present in this data, as well as an overview of conceptions of radicalisation which explain them, will then be presented. Ultimately, this paper will argue that despite popular narrative, crisis migrants do not pose a significant terrorist threat to Europe.

## Methodology

The issues of sudden migration and political refuge span across many factors, from economic and cultural concerns to the value of individual human security. Already some authors have begun exploring the issues of prejudice and fear produced by the crisis<sup>[11]</sup>. Others have examined the issue of 'weaponised migration' directly threatening the structure and integrity of the European Union<sup>[12]</sup>. In this way, migration is understood by policy makers as "a form of barbarian warfare" not dissimilar to the sacking of Rome<sup>[13]</sup>. Very little, however, has focused on assessing the objective risk *actually posed* by the migrants themselves<sup>[14]</sup>. This paper seeks to address this gap, providing an exploratory quantitative analysis of the objective threat of unaffiliated actor terrorism posed by incoming crisis migrants, and a brief outline of the actors who have committed them. Data for this paper will be sourced from the Global Terrorism Database, as well as Europol's annual *European*

[7] *ibid*, p. 6; Boaz Ganor, "An Intifada in Europe? A Comparative Analysis of Radicalization Processes Amongst Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Versus Muslim Immigrants in Europe" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 34 (No 8, 2017): 587-599, pp 592-593

[8] Lasse Lindeskilde, Preben Bertelsen & Michael Stohl, 2016, "Who Goes, Why and With What Effects: The Problem of Foreign Fighters from Europe" *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27 No 5: 858-877

[9] Europol, *op cit* pp 25-26; for an example of such propaganda from the source see "From the Battle of Al-Ahzb to the War of Coalitions" *Dabiq* 11, Islamic State, <<http://www.clarionproject.org/docs/Issue%2011%20-%20From%20the%20battle%20of%20Al-Ahzb%20to%20the%20war%20of%20coalitions.pdf>> accessed 30/10/2016 pp 22-23

[10] Anne Speckhard, Adrian Shajkovic & Ahmet Yayla, "What to Expect Following a Military Defeat of ISIS in Syria and Iraq?" *Journal of Terrorism Research* 8 (No 1, 2016): 81-89, p. 82; Martin Gallagher, "the 2016 'Lone Wolf' Tsunami- Is Rapoport's 'Religious Wave' Ending?" *Journal of Strategic Security* 10 (No 2, 2016): 60-76, pp 74-75

[11] *ibid*; Pew Research Center, *op cit*; Alexandros Sakellariou "Fear of Islam in Greece: Migration, terrorism and "ghosts" from the past" *Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 45:4, 2017 pp 511-523

[12] Greenhill, *op cit*; Fabrizio Tassinari, 2016 "The Disintegration of European Security: Lessons from the Refugee Crisis" *Prism* Vol 6 No 2 pp 71-83; Thomas Nail, "A Tale of Two Crises: Migration and Terrorism after the Paris Attacks" *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 16 (2016 No 1): 158-167

[13] Greenhill *op cit*, p. 158

[14] Erika Brady recently undertook an assessment of European Security in the wake of the migration crisis, though her analysis provided little context for who was committing the attacks and how, focusing instead. Additionally, a recent study by Bove and Böhmelt undertook to make a detailed, worldwide quantitative assessment of the relationship between migration and terrorism. While an undoubtedly worthwhile study, their results were somewhat diffuse, analysing migration generally (rather than crisis/conflict-induced migration driving the EMC), and the timeline (from 1970-2000) limits any applicability to the actors and ideologies that have become the focus of the so-called 'war on terror'. See Erika Brady, "An Analysis of Patterns of Change Arising from the Syrian Conflict: Islamic Terrorism, Refugee Flows and Political Destabilization in Europe" *Journal of Terrorism Research* 8 (2017): No 1: 53-67; Vincenzo Boe, Tobias Böhmelt, "Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?" *Journal Of Politics* 78 No 2: 572-588



*Union Terrorism and Trend Report*<sup>[15]</sup>. Additional information on specific case studies will be sourced from available publications, reports and news releases. It will focus on the apparently emergent threat of unaffiliated 'lone wolf' terrorist actors; self-radicalised individuals or small groups who undertake to commit an attack without direction from a higher organisation<sup>[16]</sup>. The inquiry will compare such attacks committed with a professed Islamist or Jihadi ideology, that have occurred in Europe in the five years leading up to the crisis (2010-2014), and those that occurred in its peak between 2015 and 2016. In approaching these incidents, only reasonably identifiable acts of religiously or politically motivated violence will be addressed. Non-terrorist incidents involving recent migrants, such as the wave of sexual assaults experienced across Germany in New Years of 2015/16, will be excluded. Ambiguous cases and competing reports, where present, will be identified. This approach will be taken so as to contain the scope of the inquiry to the extant terrorist threat posed by recent migrants, rather than a statement on European security generally.

## **The Lone Wolf Threat**

In recent years, great concern has arisen around the possibility of radicalised migrants committing 'lone wolf' attacks<sup>[17]</sup>. 'Lone wolf', lone actor or 'stray dog' attackers have no direct connection with any existing terrorist organisations, though they may act in response to propaganda from one<sup>[18]</sup>. 'Lone wolves' may latch on to any number of ideologies, blending them with their own personal grievances<sup>[19]</sup>. Their independence means traditional intelligence sources (Signals or Human Intelligence) have very little to trace, making them notoriously difficult to detect before an attack<sup>[20]</sup>. Most importantly, a 'lone wolf' attack can come from any segment of the population, and need not necessarily be motivated by 'conventional' or mainstream extremist ideology.

The primary question for this analysis then, is to what extent (if any) are recent migrants/asylum seekers (having arrived in Europe) *more* vulnerable to ideological radicalisation *and* subsequent violent action than the existing population? In other words, does the migration crisis exacerbate the existing potential for lone wolf attacks *beyond* the effects of population increase?<sup>[21]</sup> The 2016 *European Terrorism Situation and Trend Report* presents the view that Sunni Muslim Diaspora are "... a real and imminent danger... that will probably continue to exist for a long time" that may be "specifically targeted by Islamist extremist recruiters"<sup>[22]</sup>. This concern is highlighted in previous

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[15] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2016). Global Terrorism Database. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd> The GTD is an open-source database of terrorist events from around the world, maintained by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) and the University of Maryland. For the purposes of this study, data sets were constructed by filtering the results to "Western Europe", and excluding cases that did not meet (or were ambiguous) all three of the GTD's criteria for terrorism. For notes on their collection methodology and the criteria, please see their website. Datasets used in this analysis in CSV form are available from the author, or may be freely replicated by following this methodology on the GTD website.

[16] There is some contention as to how 'alone' such actors may be and still considered truly 'lone wolves'. Hamm & Spaaij contend such a definition should be contained to only the actions of a single individual (Mark Hamm & Ramoon Spaaij, *The Age Of Lone Wolf Terrorism* [Columbia University Press: New York 2017]). Others, such as Simon, allow for individuals acting with support from one or two others, but not connected to a wider organisation (Jeffrey Simon, *Lone Wolf Terrorism: Understanding the Growing Threat* [Prometheus Books: Amherst, 2013]). For the purposes of this analysis the exact numbers are not important, what is is whether these actors have connections with transnational or local organisation which provides funding, resources or exerts command and control over the cell. When these connections are absent, those actors will be considered "unaffiliated". The use of the term 'lone wolf' is only relevant insofar as it has become popular in both public and academic discourse.

[17] Marco Funk & Roderick Parkes, *Refugees versus Terrorists* European Union Institute for Security Studies January 2016 p. 2; Europol, *op cit* p.26

[18] Brian Jenkins, 2011, *Stray Dogs and Virtual Armies: Radicalization and Recruitment to Jihadist Terrorism in the United States Since 9/11* Occasional Paper, Rand Corporation: Santa Monica; Peter Phillips, 2011 "Lone Wolf Terrorism" *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 17, No 1: 1-29

[19] Edwin Bakker E & Beatrice de Graaf "Lone Wolves: How to Prevent this Phenomenon?" in *Expert Meeting: Lone Wolves; How to Prevent this Seemingly New Phenomenon* ICCT – The Hague < <https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Bakker-deGraaf-EM-Paper-Lone-Wolves.pdf> >

[20] Henry Jackson Society, 2010 "Countering lone Wolf Terrorism: Sustaining the CONTEST vision" Henry Jackson Society May 17 <<http://henryjacksonsociety.org/2010/05/17/countering-lone-wolf-terrorism-sustaining-the-contest-vision/>>

[21] There is also the question of what threat might be posed by lone actors reacting against the recent migration wave. This violent reaction to a perceived 'tide of Muslim migration' was demonstrated in the Anders Breivik attacks in Norway, 2011. In combination with recent events (the massive increase in migration and incidents such as the New Years Eve Assaults) this path of radicalisation is an undeniable factor in European security. Nevertheless, it is not a threat posed by the migrants themselves, and thus is not examined in this paper.

[22] Europol, *op cit* p. 7



works on the ‘homegrown threat’<sup>[23]</sup>. However, cursory analysis of the perpetrators of lone wolf attacks does not support this. Based on data from the Global Terrorism Database, only ten<sup>[24]</sup> separate ‘lone wolf’ attacks of declared Islamist motivation were identified between 2010 and 2014, from a sample of 860 attacks<sup>[25]</sup>. Of these, three were conducted by a single individual, Mohammed Mera, who committed three separate shootings in Toulouse and Montaban (France) in March, 2012<sup>[26]</sup>. The majority of the attackers (seven of the eight identified) were European citizens, five of whom had been born in Europe<sup>[27]</sup>.

Date	Location	Attacker or Suspect	Fatalities	Injuries	EU Citizen?
14/05/2010	London	Roshonara Choudry	0	1	Yes
11/12/2010	Stockholm	Taimour Abdulwahb al-Abdaly	1 (attacker)	2	Yes (1992)
11/03/2012	Toulouse	Mohammed Mera	1	0	Yes
12/03/2012	Brussels	Unknown	1	1	Unkn
15/03/2012	Montauban	Mohammaed Mera	4	0	Yes
19/03/2012	Toulouse	Mohammed Mera	3	0	Yes
21/03/2012	Paris	Suspected – Frederic Jean Salvi	0	0	Yes (Susp)
19/06/2012	Toulouse	Unknown	0	1 (attacker)	Unkn
22/05/2013	London	Michael Adeolajo & Michael Adebawale	1	2 (attackers)	Yes (Adeolajo)
21/12/2014	Jous-les-Tours	Bertrand Nzohabonayo	1 (attacker)	3	Yes
<b>Totals</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	

Data Source: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) Global Terrorism Database, table compiled by author

Table 1: Identified Islamist Unaffiliated Actor attacks in Western Europe 2010-2014, GTD

These figures are similar (though some differences naturally arise from differing methodologies) to those presented in Europol’s annual *Terrorism Situation and Trend Report* across the same period, presented below.

[23] See Ganor, *op cit*; Bruce Hoffman, “The Evolving Nature of Terrorism” *The Social Contract* 21, (2010 No 1): 33-40; Nail *op cit*.  
 [24] There are two uncertain cases excluded from this set. The first is the failed bombing of a railways station in Bonn (Germany) in 2012. While three men were charged with the attack, as well as a planned assassination, there is little to suggest they had links to further terrorist organisations such as al-Qaeda (Reuters, “German man given life sentence over failed Bonn bomb attack” *Reuters World News* April 4, 2017 < <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-security-trial/german-man-given-life-sentence-over-failed-bonn-bomb-attack-idUSKBN175200?il=0> > accessed 22/08/2017; *Die Welle*, “Man accused of plotting Bonn station bombing” *Die Welle* March 14 2014 < <http://www.dw.com/en/man-accused-of-plotting-bonn-station-bombing/a-17498279> > accessed 15/08/2017). That being said, the possibility cannot be conclusively ruled out, as very little information beyond the media is available, and detail is sparse. Additionally, the shooting in the Jewish Museum of Belgium, suspected to have been carried out by Mehdi Nemmouche, may have been connected to Abdelhamid Abaaoud (architect of the November Paris Attacks) (Michael Weiss & Hassan Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror* [2nd Edition, Regan Arts: New York], p. 309). Given this possibility, and the suspect’s known travel to Syria, he likewise cannot be fully considered an “unaffiliated” actor, and thus has been excluded from this analysis  
 [25] These cases were identified as either “Iraqi Extremists” “Jihadi-inspired extremists”, “Muslim Extremists” and in one case (an arson attack on a Shi’a mosque in Belgium in 2012), “Sunni Muslim Extremists”. Some individuals committed multiple attacks, which are registered in the database as separate incidents. Where these incidents occurred on the same day, they have been considered in the above data set as a single ‘attack’. Attacks on other days are treated separately. This occurs in once case, Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly, has two entries on the same day for the failed 2010 Stockholm bombings. As these occurred on the same day they have been considered a single attack in this analysis  
 [26] START, *op cit*, Virginie Andre “Mehrah and Breivik: A Reflection of the European Identity Crisis” *Islam and Chirstian-Muslim Relations* 26 (2015 No 2): 183- 204 p. 184  
 [27] Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly, responsible for a failed suicide bombing in Stockholm (2010) and Betrand Nzohabonayo, who attacked a police station with a knife in France (2014), were both born overseas (Iraq and Burundi respectively), though they both been citizens of their countries of residence for many years.



Affiliation	Religious	Left-Wing	Right-Wing	Separatist	Single Issue	Not Specified
2010	3 <sup>[28]</sup>	45	0	160	1	40
2011	0	37	1	110	0	26
2012	6	18	2	167	0	26
2013	0(1) <sup>[29]</sup>	24	0(1) <sup>[30]</sup>	84	0	44
2014	2	13	0	67	1	116
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11 (1)</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>3(1)</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>292</b>

Data Source: Europol Terrorism Situation and Trend Report issues from 2011-2015, table compiled by the author

*Table 2: Failed, Foiled and Completed attacks in Europe by year and affiliation, 2010-2014*

While some discrepancies are evident, the overall trend of both the GTD and Europol’s own studies is reasonably conclusive. In the years leading up to the EMC, while acts of terrorism were present in European society the overwhelming majority of them can be attributed to other groups—most notably separatist groups such as ETA and various factions of the IRA, and enduring left-wing organisations<sup>[31]</sup>. These groups are decades (in some cases, centuries) of history operating within Europe. Religiously motivated attacks are a tiny proportion of the overall picture and it is difficult to conceive how they may pose in themselves a significant threat to European security or stability.

During the peak of the migration crisis between 2015-2016, a further 20 attacks were committed by unaffiliated actors declaring Islamist ideologies (from a sample of 565). Less than half resulted in the deaths of anyone other than the attacker, though two-thirds caused some injury. Only two attacks (Nice, 2016 and the 2016 Berlin Christmas Market attack) resulted in the deaths of more than 10, both were vehicular assaults. Of all the attacks, five appear to have been committed by recent migrants (arrived in the last five years), though only two had been committed by people who had arrived during the crisis<sup>[32]</sup>. Additionally, there are some unusual cases – for example the stabbing of a soldier in St Julien du Puy was initially reported as a retaliation to French bombing in Syria, but at least one subsequent report indicates this may have been since recanted by the soldier who was assaulted<sup>[33]</sup>. Finally, some prominent cases were *not* included in the analysis. The murder of a Polish woman in Reutlingen, despite being committed by a recent Syrian Asylum seeker, does not appear to have been motivated by Islamism in any way. It appears to have been a simple murder case, rather than an act of terrorism<sup>[34]</sup>. Finally, there is stabbing of a Police officer in Hanover by ‘Sofia S’ in March, 2016<sup>[35]</sup>. In this case, ‘Sofia S’ may have been in direct contact with

[28] In the 2010 TE-STAT, this category referred to “Islamist” rather than “Religious”. See *Europol, European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-STAT) 2011* (Europol: The Hague, 2011)

[29] While not listing it, the 2014 report acknowledges “two persons were killed in the UK in two separate terrorist attacks, one motivated by religious extremism and the other by right-wing extremist ideology”. *Europol, European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-STAT) 2014* [Europol: The Hague, 2014]. These incidents are (based on correlation with the GTD) the murders of Lee Rigby by Michael Abelowale and Michael Abelowale and the stabbing of Mohammed Saleem by white supremacist Pavlo Lapsyn. It is not clear why these attacks are excluded from their reports.

[30] See above.

[31] Additionally, the GTD dataset incorporates 24 entries coded as “Anarchists”, as well as numerous named organisations with similar leanings. It is unknown how such groups are coded by Europol.

[32] Phillip Oltermann, 2016 “Germany’s first attack by radicalised asylum seeker alarms officials” *The Guardian* July 20 < <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/19/germany-train-attack-could-prompt-rethink-of-counter-terrorism-policy> > accessed 30/7/2017; BBC 2016, “Ansbach explosion: Syrian asylum seeker blows himself up in Germany” BBC News July 25 <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36880758> > accessed 30/7/2017

[33] Sky News, “Soldier in France Stabbed over Syria – Reports” *Sky News* 27 May <<http://news.sky.com/story/soldier-in-france-stabbed-over-syria-reports-10295936>>; *Russia Today*, 2016 “Driver shouting ‘Allahu Akbar’ tried to run over pedestrians in Vienna – media citing police” *Russia Today* Sept. 30 < <https://www.rt.com/news/361115-vienna-amok-driver-attack/> > accessed 22/7/2017

[34] Darko Janjevic, 2016 “Police arrest Syrian man after woman killed in knife attack in Germany” *Deutsche Welle* July 24 2016 <<http://www.dw.com/en/police-arrest-syrian-man-after-woman-killed-in-knife-attack-in-germany/a-19424224>> accessed 28/7/2017

[35] Allan Hall A, 2016 “Teenage female ISIS fanatic was ‘radicalised at the age of seven and stabbed a German police officer because she was



ISIS representatives, posing some question as to whether it was truly a 'lone wolf' attack or directly ordered by representatives of the Islamic State<sup>[36]</sup>.

Date	Location	Attacker or Suspect	Fatalities	Injuries	EU Citizen?
21/08/15	Arras (train)	Ayoub El Khazzani	0	3	No
14/02/15	Coopenhaagen	Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussain	2	5	Yes
19/04/15	France	Sid Ahmed Ghlam – Suspected	1	0	Yes
26/06/15	Saint-Quentin-Fallavier	Yassin Salhi	1	2	Yes
17/09/15	Berlin	Rafik Mohaamed Yousef	1 (attacker)	1	No
17/11/15	Bradford	Unknown	0	1	Unknown
7/01/15	Paris	Tarek Belgacem	1 (attacker)	0	No
11/01/16	Marseilles	Not Identified (Minor)	0	1	No
24/03/16	Glasgow	Tanveer Ahmed	1	0	Unkn
16/04/16	Essen	Yusuf T. Mohamed B. & Tolga I.	0	1	Yes (3)
27/5/16	Saint Julien du Poy	Unknown	0	1	Unkn
13/06/16	Magnanville	Larossi Abballa	3 (incl. Attacker)	0	Yes
14/07/16	Nice	Mohamed Salmene Lahouaiej-Bouhlel	87 (incl attacker)	433	No
18/04/16	Wurzburg	Riaz Khan Ahmadzai	1 (attacker)	5	No
26/06/16	Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray	Adel Kermiche & Abdel Malik Petitjean	3 (incl. attacks)	1	1 (Petitjean)
24/07/16	Ansbach	Mohammad Daleel	1 (attacker)	15	No
5/10/16	Brussels	Hicham Diop – Suspect	0	4 (incl. attacker)	Yes
26/11/16	Ludwigshafen	Unidentified - Minor	0	0	Yes
5/12/16	Ludwigshafen	Unidentified - Minor	0	0	Yes
19/12/16	Berlin	Anis Amri	13	48 <sup>[37]</sup>	No
<b>Totals</b>			<b>115</b>	<b>521</b>	

Data Source: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) Global Terrorism Database, table compiled by author

*Table 3: Identified Islamist Unaffiliated Actor attacks in Western Europe 2015-2016, GTD*

Compared to the previous data set, there has clearly been an increased level of unaffiliated actor terrorism in the wake of the migration crisis. Twice as many such attacks (after noted exclusions) have occurred in the two years of the 'peak' migration crisis as compared to the previous five. Again, this is reflected in similar data presented by Europol, though again differing methodologies lead to slightly different results.

unable to make it to Syria" *Daily Mail* March 5 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3476986/Teenage-female-ISIS-fanatic-radicalised-age-seven-stabbed-German-police-officer-unable-make-Syria.html>> accessed 26/7/2017. Due to the offenders age and apparent 'radical' family, this attack has been removed from the 'lone wolf' cases.

[36] *ibid*

[37] GTD lists injuries as 48, however subsequent media reports this year have presented alternate figures of between 50 and 58 (Berliner Zeitung, "Anschlag in Berlin: Zahl der Verletzten liegt nun bei 56" *Berliner Zeitung* 6 March 2017 <<http://www.berliner-zeitung.de/berlin/polizei/anschlag-in-berlin-zahl-der-verletzten-liegt-bei-56-26147624>> accessed 5/09/2017, Samuel Osborne, "Independent "Berlin 'attack' as it happened: At least nine killed and 50 injured as lorry ploughs into Christmas market" *The Independent* December 2016 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/berlin-christmas-market-attack-truck-dead-injured-live-latest-updates-kaiser-wilhelm-memorial-church-a7485406.html> accessed 05/09/2017).

Affiliation	Jihadist <sup>[38]</sup>	Left-Wing	Right-Wing	Separatist	Single Issue	Not Specified
2015	17	13	9	65	0	107
2016	13	27	1	99	0	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>109</b>

Source: Europol Terrorism Situation and Trend Report issues from 2016-2017, compiled by the author

Table 4: Failed, Foiled and Completed attacks in Europe by year and affiliation, 2015-2016

## Analysis

The keys to the 'lone wolf' phenomenon are the process of self-radicalisation (the development of extreme ideology without direct association with an extremist organisation) and the radicalisation of action, that is, the decision to commit an attack (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2014 pp 72-73; Neumann 2013 pg 873)<sup>[39]</sup>. The exact process of self-radicalisation is a contested subject, and no clear model has gained consensus yet.<sup>[40]</sup> McCauley & Moskalenko provide two broad profiles for understanding the motivations of this form of attacker; the *caring-consistency* profile (motivated by a perceived personal responsibility, a moral imperative to act in the face of injustice, and/or to alleviate broader human suffering) and the *disconnected-disordered* profile (socially isolated, dealing with personal grievance and typically suffering from acute or chronic mental health issues)<sup>[41]</sup>. Baran, in focusing on specifically Islamist radicalisation, highlights how extremist ideology can be conveyed through ostensibly non-violent organisations such as *Hizb ut-Tahrir* (the Party of Liberation, HT), acting as "a conveyor belt to terrorism", priming its members for recruitment or radicalisation further down the track<sup>[42]</sup>. In the present decade, that same role can be played through online material produced in vast quantities by the Islamic State and others. Other radicalisation theorists seek to delineate theological elements and a perceived 'normalisation' of Muslims in the literature as the 'pool' from which 'lone wolves' are drawn, arguing that ideology is simply the justification, not the root cause, of violent action<sup>[43]</sup>.

While there has certainly been an increase in Islamist violence during the EMC, the contention that such violence is brought by the migrants themselves seems difficult to substantiate. Even in the face of the recent crisis, only a very small minority of the cases involved recent asylum seekers. In those cases, initial reports suggest mental health issues may have been at play<sup>[44]</sup>. Recent studies into refugee mental health have highlighted the extreme psychological stress recent migrants experience. In particular, the prevalence of severe cases of Prolonged Grief Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in such migrants can be especially high<sup>[45]</sup>. This supports McCauley &

[38] In the 2015 and 2016 reports, this category replaced "Religious Extremism".

[39] Clark McCauley & Sophia Moskalenko, "Towards a Profile of Lone Wolf Terrorists: What Moves an Individual From Radical Opinion to Radical Action" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26 (2014 No 1): 69-85; Peter Neumann, "The trouble with Radicalization" *International Affairs* 89 (2013 No 4): 873-893. Neumann terms these "cognitive radicalization" and "behavioural radicalisation" (sic) respectively (Neumann, 2013 . 873). There are undoubtedly other terms as well, but they reflect essentially the same processes.

[40] Neumann, *op cit* p. 874.

[41] McCauley & Moskalenko, *op cit*; Clark McCauley, Sophia Moskalenko & Benjamin Van Son, 2013 "Characteristics of Lone-Wolf Violent Offenders: A Comparison of Assassins and School Attackers" *Perspectives on Terrorism* 7 No 1: 4-24. McCauley and Moskalenko also highlight the need for weapons experience or other opportunity in order to 'cross the gap' and commit an act of violence (2014 pp 81-8). However the recent attack in Nice shows how opportunities may be created through surprisingly simple means. Restricted access to firearms or bomb-making materials need not slow down a creative or determined mind.

[42] Zeyno Baran,, "Fighting the War of Ideas" *Foreign Affairs* 84,(2005 No 6): 68-78, p. 68

[43] Kundnani A, "Radicalisation: the journey of a concept" *Race & Class* 54 (2012 No. 2): 3-25, p. 22

[44] Oltermann, 2016 *op cit*; M Eddy, 2016 "Afghan Teenager Spoke of Friend's Death Before Ax Attack in Germany" *The New York Times* July 19 < <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/20/world/europe/germany-train-ax-attack.html> > accessed 27/7/2017; BBC 2016, *op cit*

[45] G Hassan, P Ventevogel, H Jefee-Bahloul, A Brakkil-Oteo, L Kirmayer, "Mental health and Psychosocial wellbeing of Syrians affected by armed conflict" *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences* 25 (2016):129-141 131-132



Moskalenko's contention of the *disconnected-disordered* profile and its prevalence in Lone-wolf attacks<sup>[46]</sup>. But what of the attacker's motivations? Was it as simple as a psychological snapping point or are they driven by an underlying extremist ideology? In the case of the Ansbach Bomber, there appears to be little evidence to support the contention that the perpetrator previously held any extremist beliefs; one neighbor even claimed he had discussed religion with the attacker previously, during which he had outwardly rejected Islamic State's ideology<sup>[47]</sup>. The Bavarian train attacker, however, is a less clear case; material found in the attacker's residence and an apparent Martyr video released after the attack suggests the teen may have already embraced (in part or in whole) extremist ideology preceding the attack<sup>[48]</sup>. The extent to which he accepted extremist views before receiving the news of his friend's death, or whether this news triggered his *ideological* radicalisation as well is as yet unclear.

Moreover, in both cases clear 'trigger points' which appear to have driven the perpetrators to violent action can be identified; In the case of the Ansbach attack, the bomber had been rejected refugee status and faced deportation, while the 17- year-old Afghan responsible for the Bavarian train attack had recently been notified of a friend's death in Afghanistan<sup>[49]</sup>. These appear to be 'unfreezing' moments for the attackers, situational crises that pushed them to radical action<sup>[50]</sup>. Alternatively, this evidence may be taken as a validation of critical interpretations of the 'lone wolf' phenomenon (such as those provided by Kundnani). Ideological motivations in both these cases seem far less prevalent than in other cases of domestic terrorism (from lone-wolf actors or organised cells). The psychological stresses evident in their actions likewise highlight causes other than politics or religion, even if such ideologies were expressed by the attackers themselves. No evidence, however, supports the existence of any 'conveyor belt' of Islamist ideology priming migrants for terrorist action.

This data generally matches Europol's own studies which showed that 63% of those arrested on terrorism-related charges in 2015 were EU citizens, the majority of which (58% of total arrests) were EU born<sup>[51]</sup>. In 2016 that number dropped significantly, to 437 (43.6%) in 2016<sup>[52]</sup>. In the vast majority of Islamist terrorism cases identified through the GTD (excluding those identified as migrants, recent and past, and cases where biographical details were unavailable), the perpetrators were *descendant* of migrants, either second or third generation. This is in line with Ganor's contention that the primary threat of 'lone wolf' Islamism comes not from migrants themselves (who are often fleeing the horrors of conflict, and enjoy a relative increase in their well-being following migration) but from disaffected children who "reject minority status" and begin a process of "downward assimilation"<sup>[53]</sup>. Psychological research has also highlighted the vulnerabilities of second-generation adolescent migrants to further stress-factors post-settlement, leading to an increased risk of emotional and behavioral problems<sup>[54]</sup>. Additionally, it is possible that the crisis itself is polarizing *existing* communities within the state and thus feeding the conditions for radicalisation. As it has begun to lose its 'local' war in Iraq, Islamic State media has shifted from the recruitment of foreign experts and fighters towards encouraging 'lone wolf' actions<sup>[55]</sup>. Given the massive rate at which

[46] McCauley & Moskalenko, *op cit* p. 83

[47] BBC 2016, *op cit*

[48] Olterman, *op cit*, Eddy, *op cit*.

[49] Olterman, *op cit*. BBC 2016 *op cit*.

[50] McCauley & Moskalenko, *op cit* p. 82

[51] Europol, 2016 *op cit* p. 11. These statistics reflect all persons arrested for terrorism-related offences, including aiding foreign fighters and attempting to leave to serve foreign groups, and are thus not representative of the lone wolf threat per se (Europol, 2016 pp 10-11). Nevertheless they are supportive of the trend towards EU citizens offending, rather than migrants.

[52] Europol, 2017 *op cit* p. 50.

[53] Ganor, *op cit*; Lenkin, 2011 as cited in Ganor, 2011 pg 592; Crul & Vermeulen, 2003 as cited in Ganor, 2011 pg 593

[54] G Stevens, S Walsh, T Huijts, M Maes, K Madsen, F Cavallo, M Molcho1, 2015 "An Internationally Comparative Study of Immigration and Adolescent Emotional and Behavioural Problems: Effects of Generation and Gender" *Journal of Adolescent Health* 57 (2015): 587-594, p. 593

[55] Donna Farag, "From Tweeter to Terrorist: Combating Online Propaganda When Jihad Goes Viral", *American Criminal Law Review* 54 (2017): 843-883, pp. 859, 873-874; Greg Simons, "Islamic Extremism and the war for hearts and minds" *Global Affairs* 2 (No 1, 2016): 91-99, p. 97



IS still publishes this material, both in their periodical *Dabiq* and across numerous social media platforms, it is possible this campaign will contribute to increasing 'lone wolf' radicalisation in the future<sup>[56]</sup>. Nevertheless, such campaigns require a sympathetic ear in order to be effective, often relying on exploiting existing issues, such as those outlined above, shaping dissent and anger rather than creating it<sup>[57]</sup>. The 'lone wolf' issue is not therefore an extant security threat per se, but a potential long-term issue of social policy, integration and mental health.

## Conclusion

While the broader threat the EMC poses to Europe's security and stability are complex, there are a number of false narratives around the threat of terrorism that should be addressed. With the exception of the Paris and Brussels attackers (who were in fact citizens rather than true asylum seekers), there is little evidence to suggest incoming 'migrants' have taken part in organised Islamist cells. Though some of those attackers may have utilised the crisis as cover to enter Europe, the organised attacks were committed entirely by EU citizens. Moreover, as citizens these attackers may well have entered the country through other means without detection (legally or otherwise), as other terrorists have before. Unaffiliated radicalisation also appears to be the domain of either long-term residents or citizens, with only a handful of recent migrants being identified in this data—only two who had arrived in the peak of the EMC. That being said, in a minority of asylum cases, extreme external psychological stresses combined with 'snapping points' such as refused asylum, may contribute to a violent reaction such as a 'lone wolf' attack. In these incidents, while the attackers may invoke popular ideologies, it is more likely the psychological stresses, rather than true attachment to a cause, drive their actions. There is a possibility that large waves of migration may contribute to populations that are vulnerable to radicalisation; particularly unaccompanied adolescent refugees and second generation migrants. Finally, ISIS's apparently impending defeat in Iraq and Syria may reshape the threat landscape somewhat as foreign fighters return to their homes, potentially retaining grievances or radical ideologies. Whether these returnees harbour sufficient motivation to commit a violent act remains to be seen. Data is likewise lacking on the effectiveness of the Islamic State's shift towards encouraging lone wolf action, though recent events in Manchester and Barcelona suggest that some influence may well be present. More research to uncover the processes that drive radicalisation, combined with increased social and mental healthcare could well contribute to a reduction in these incidents. Nevertheless, that possibility cannot be considered an 'extant threat' by any stretch of the imagination, nor can present migratory policy be dictated by the *potential* actions of the next generation. The social challenges posed by the EMC are numerous, but migrant terrorism is *not* among them.

## About the author

**Alasdair Kempton** is a commencing PhD Student at Monash University, Australia. His research explores issues surrounding the radicalisation process of unaffiliated actor terrorism. His wider research interests extend to the conduct of international and domestic terrorism, state security and state failure.

[56] *ibid*, pp 872-873

[57] Farag, *op cit* pp 859-860; Logan Macnair & Richard Frank, "To my Brothers in the West..." A Thematic Analysis of Videos Produced by the Islamic State's al-Hayat Media Center" *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 33 (No 3, 2017): 234-253 p. 238





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## Why there is no real difference between a Terrorist Organization and an Organized Crime faction, just a matter of interaction towards the State

by De Leon Petta



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### Abstract

*In general the literature regarding terrorism and organized crime normally identifies the differences between these groups when political and/or ideological issue is involved. Its basic assumption normally assume whereas terrorist and organized criminals share similar attributes in their organizational structure and cross their financial interests by buying and selling services and goods from each other, their differences would reside in the means and ends. However, it is more correct to say the decision of whether an organization is a terrorist group is only based on whether the political demands of the group colliding or converging with the state's interests.*

**Keywords:** Terrorism; Organized Crime; National State; Irregular Warfare; Sponsored Terrorism; Terrorism Definitions; Asymmetrical Conflicts

### Introduction

The endless discussion about what defines an organization as a terrorist organisation is relevant not only in academia but also in public administration and law. While the idea of terrorism as a tactic is much easier to achieve because every political actor can use such means, some authors have been trying to push the delimitation or definition of what would be a terrorist actor because such is missing from the literature. In contrast, other authors have, in the opposite direction, argued that there are already too many concepts, and the only problem left is that consensus is never achieved.. In fact, the problem regarding technical approaches to understanding terrorist groups and their structures is that the comparative analysis methodology often applies factors relevant to organized crime, since every aspect of one type of irregular group may be found in another. Even the common belief that criminal groups do not involve themselves in ideology, culture or religion may have exceptions that frustrate pragmatic discussions.

### *The useless search for a definition of terrorism*

It is not difficult for any researcher to find many sources trying to define terrorism, either under legal definitions, which largely vary among different specialists and countries, or based on the sociological aspects of terrorism that consume great amounts of debate time among academics. The search for a definition of terrorism has a very long history, but the 1945 conference in San Francisco deserves a special attention because the Philippines and Bolivia tried to define the concept of "aggression" in the text of the United Nations Charter by proposing the inclusion of "supplying arms, ammunition, money or other forms of aid to any armed band, faction or group" as a form of interference in internal affairs. However, this approach was suppressed by the Soviet Union. The reason for the Soviet Union's action was probably that an empty definition of aggression could eventually help the "socialist system", which was counting on internal factors of revolutionary situations to expand the





socialist model, leaving the socialist states free to openly speak against eventual repressions and give active support to revolutionary movements (Romaniński 1974).

It was only after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in New York and Washington (even though prior to this event such acts were already technically defined as terrorism) that the discussion really began to attract major attention from lawyers and academics, becoming part of mainstream research and political discussions, not only in the United States but in almost every part of the world. To Dedeoglu (2003), terrorism in general is the manifestation of local versus global issues. In addition, the problem is not exactly in defining terrorism, which is an act, but in defining terrorist, who is a subject of law. The European Convention, for example, considers the acts of one individual against another to be terrorism; however, it does not clarify the organizational aspect of terrorism. After the attacks of 9/11, the United Nations Security Council approved motions condemning terrorism and delimiting the fight against it, and it also created a list of organizations and individuals related to terrorism without establishing any definition. Those resolutions in general targeted top Taliban associates and people from the Middle East living in other countries, making it clear that the specific targets were 12 organizations embedded in a much bigger universe of international terrorism, which was composed of more than 300 organizations, some of which were more dangerous than the 12 selected groups. In fact, according to Dedeoglu him, this consensus in the UN on the fight against terrorism made it possible for a state to legitimize their list of organizations to be targeted.

This problem not only is found in formal international diplomacy and conventions but also has been an issue plaguing academics for decades. In fact, the attempts to define terrorism are largely in the academic literature. According to Meisels (2009), some social scientists have developed dozens or even hundreds different definitions, causing an overuse of the word "terrorism". For Meisels, the reason for such variance lies in the different objectives being sought in the definition. For legal experts, the definition aims at prosecutions and penalties against terrorists, while for social scientists, the objective is description and understanding. Authorities, in turn, will choose the definition that is most convenient for their own interests against irregular actors that may challenge their legitimacy, especially because even the state can commit terrorist acts eventually. This case regarding state behaviour is also made by Zanchetta (2016), who describes Operation Condor as a form of state-sponsored terrorism conducted by South American countries with support from the United States during the Cold War, using terrorist techniques to fight internal enemies and groups considered dangerous and subversive, which were mostly connected to communism. The actions developed by the governmental agents were technically true terrorist actions, such as international assassinations and kidnappings<sup>[1]</sup>.

It is possible to observe this mutable and fluid characteristic of the definitions of terrorism, and in general, the definition may change according to temporal contexts. Furthermore, it is interesting to observe the problems of definition and delimitation of terrorism by comparing and contrasting, for example, the United States and Brazil. In the United States, several law enforcement agencies may have different approaches towards the delimitation of terrorism. The concept itself was developed over a number of years, but the basic concept of terrorism was established in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. It was only during at the 1990s that attention was drawn towards developing a serious definition, and in particular, after the bombing of the Oklahoma Federal Building in 1995 and obviously with increasing urgency after 9/11 (Dedeoglu 2003). Also, according to Freilich et al. (2009), the perception of what constitutes the greatest terrorism threat to United States is in fact dynamic and may change over time; different surveys may eventually consider anti-

[1]Not described by Zanchetta, but worth consideration, is the failed car bomb in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, known as the "Attempt of Riocentro". This was a failed "false-flag" attack by the Brazilian government to explode a car bomb during a public event and accuse leftist groups of the attack; however, the car exploded with the two officials already inside the car.



abortion activists to be the greatest threat, while more recently, it may be Islamic jihadists. In Brazil, on the other end of the spectrum, there existed no legal definition of terrorism prior to 2016<sup>[2]</sup> (law n° 13.260). This law was created after pressure from international security agencies because the Olympics were being held in Rio de Janeiro in the same year, and only after strong protests due to concerns that such definition would be too broad and would eventually lead to social movements and NGOs being considered terrorist groups when making political demands in public marches or protests. Ramsay (2015) goes to another direction, exposing two main schools of thought regarding the concept of terrorism. While one school consists of the idea that creating a concept would be unhelpful and should be abandoned because terrorism is a social construct, the other is based on the idea that defining terrorism has more to do with inconsistencies and double-standards than really defining the term. Ramsay also states that terrorism already has a definition, even without an academic consensus, and the supposed lack of a definition has been exaggerated. Therefore, the problem is not to identify what is terrorism, but rather how and when to consider a group to be terrorists. Among the reasons for disagreement on this subject, the most important is probably the fact that what is a terrorist group to some is a freedom fighting organization to others. Ramsay also discusses whether irregular and clandestine groups that normally do not use violence should also be considered terrorists.

A similar line of thought was expressed by Khan (1987); “... a political disorder at the core of which lies an aggrieved group”, and “Although the article does not suggest that the political demands of all aggrieved groups are necessarily legitimate, the members of all aggrieved groups do share the perception that they have been wronged and that their grievances have been ignored”. Those aggrieved groups (or irregular groups) will get involved with two types of states, supportive states, which will give some kind of aid to those groups, and suppressive states, which will fight against these groups. In the end, the decision on whether to consider each group to be either a legitimate group or a terrorist group will be in the hands of each government and will be based on the confluence of interests and objectives shared by the aggrieved group and the state. For example, whereas the Soviet Union during the Cold War viewed Palestinian violence as legitimate, it considered the Afghan resistance to be terrorists. Whereas the United States in the 1980s described the Afghan warriors as legitimate resistance fighters, the US condemned the Palestinian resistance (a situation similar to what is currently occurring in the Syrian War). The decision of whether an organization is a terrorist group is based on whether the political demands of the group collide or converge with the state’s interests. This notion, exposed by Khan, is neutral and more realistic than most definitions because it considers the political interests behind the label of terrorism. Of course, civilian casualties may be awkward for the states that support these organizations; however, there are many cases of states ignoring those kinds of events if their interests or needs are high enough.

## **The difficult search to define organized crime**

While the methodology to define a group as a terrorist group is problematic, controversial and unclear because it involves political, moral and legal aspects. The discussions to define the concept of organized crime could only be described as controversial due to disagreements among the academics in an attempt to reach consensus. For some time, academics such as Duggan (1989) argued that there was a possibility that the Mafia was only a fantasy, an invention of politicians to explain their failures, or even an invention of Mussolini’s to punish political enemies. However, today, the literature no longer ignores the Mafia’s existence, and normally, no one denies it. When scientists explore terrorism and organized crime, they normally identify differences between these groups only in the political and/or ideological realms, considering that the structures, organizations

[2] Brazilian Federal Law on terrorism. [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/\\_ato2015-2018/2016/lei/l13260.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2015-2018/2016/lei/l13260.htm)



and *modi operandi* may be very similar in most cases. In fact, criminal groups can even use terrorist tactics, but the boundary is formed by the involvement of ideology and politics. According to Albanese (2007), whereas organized crime aims for profit or corruption, terrorist groups aim for political objectives. However, he also considered that eventually both types may cross paths and make deals; terrorists need criminal activity to fund their fights. To Abadinsky (2010), terrorists and organized criminal groups share many attributes in their structure and intersecting financial interests; terrorists and criminal organizations need to buy goods from each other, for example. It is generally agreed that the main differences between these groups reside in the means and ends of both types of irregular groups. While terrorist organizations would use their funds for political goals, the organized crime organization would seek to form a parallel government and at the same time coexist with the current one.

The search for delimitation of organized crime suffered from some of the same problems of terrorism; there were too many different point views regarding too many characteristics. This is a point that Abadinsky isolated into eight main aspects:

1. Has no political goals
2. Is hierarchical
3. Has a limited or exclusive membership
4. Constitutes a unique subculture
5. Perpetuates itself
6. Exhibits a willingness to use illegal violence
7. Is monopolistic
8. Is governed by explicit rules and regulations

Albanese followed a similar view, but he expanded delimitation a little bit more so that his list consists of eleven aspects, which are not rigid but rather may vary in the frequency of citations by different authors:

1. Organized Hierarchy
2. Profit rationale through crime
3. Use of force or threat
4. Maintenance of immunity to corruption
5. Public demand for their services
6. Monopoly in any particular market
7. Restricted association
8. No ideology
9. Specialization
10. Some secret code
11. Extensive planning

In the end, Albanese established a comprehensive definition of organized crime as a continuing criminal enterprise working rationally and aiming for profits from illicit activities, and such continuity is based on the use of force, threats, monopoly control and corruption of public officials.

However, even the most accepted characteristic, the hierarchical structure, is also a problem since some authors, such as Albin, et al. (2012), have established that organized crime can also be based on loose relationship structures and not a rigid hierarchical organization. Based on my own personal experience during interviews and field observations in Hong Kong, Brazil, Paraguay and



the United States, both arguments are true to some extent. The structure of an organized crime faction will behave according to the environment in which it exists and may adapt to environmental changes. Those groups will have a pyramidal structure when the law and its enforcement may be weak and there is social and political intolerance for criminal acts, normally following a high level of corruption. However, criminal groups may become flatter organizations when the political and social systems are efficient and can avoid those problems. The criminal structure will adapt to survive in the environment where it is inserted.

Other attempts to separate terrorism from organized crime are examples of epic failures, such as the lecture on *"Terrorism and Crime: Their Similarities, Differences, and Lessons Learned"* (2012). This demonstrated that the basic differences between organized crime and terrorism are the following aspects: *terrorism is not a specific offense; terrorism crosses jurisdictional boundaries; terrorists seek public recognition; terrorists operate towards a broader goal; terrorists are "altruists"; terrorists innovate; and terrorists mostly operate in dynamic groups.* The problems related to this presentation are enormous, especially because all those "differences" are in fact found in both groups. Organized crime, in many cases, is not considered a specific offense; both types of organizations may pursue public recognition; and most of them have "altruistic" relations with the local communities that host them, even if hypocritical. Pablo Escobar, for example, is still remembered in Colombian communities for his huge generosity towards the poor. In fact, criminal bosses are only more or less accepted and even supported in those communities because they can develop strong social relations between the organization and the local population. During the tsunami in Japan in 2011, several first-aid convoys to help the victims of damaged zones were openly sponsored by a Yakuza faction, the Yamagushi-gumi. There is no need to argue that innovation and the crossing of jurisdictional boundaries are obviously also characteristics of organized crime.

Another aspect that is interesting to explore is the eventual political goals. Academics mostly perceive the goals of organized crime to be exclusively monetary, not connected to any political or ideological beliefs. However, this is also not so easy to isolate. It is not difficult to find speeches by leaders of criminal organizations that invoke an ideological argument to support their existence, as Pablo Escobar Gaviria did in public speeches where he posed as a hero against the oppression of the Colombian government and American imperialism; some declarations by Yakuza bosses who perceive their initial mission as members of a group determined to *"preserve the Japanese traditions against alien ideologies like communism and liberalism"*; or motorcycle gangs who try to present themselves as groups that preserve the spirit of a *"true American way of life"*. Obviously, these are only "speeches", and of course, everything is about money, and the ideological discourse is merely rhetoric to justify their criminal actions. However, the social and symbolic capital that they have among the local population cannot be totally ignored, especially because, despite controversies, the same logic could be applied to many political actors whose reasons for engaging in politics are unlikely to be limited to political beliefs alone. Moreover, it is not difficult to find sources describing histories of terrorists who joined some cause because of the money involved. In fact, even the notorious Cold War terrorist Carlos *"the jackal"* was much more a private mercenary (or terrorist for hire) than necessarily someone driven by political ideology.

Furthermore, the zone of behaviour where organized crime can be separated from terrorist organizations is not clear at all. Many historical examples can be easily found. Criminal groups can use terrorist tactics, such as Pablo Escobar, who blew up flight 203 from Avianca on 27 of November de 1989, killing 110 people; the attempted car bombing targeting the police chief of Macau by the Triad boss Wan Kuok-koi in 1998; the explosion that killed the Italian Judge Giovanni Falcone by the Italian Mafia in 1992; or the recent dismemberments and beheadings by Mexican cartels that are technically equivalent those carried out by the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. However,





even with such notorious cases, the Triads, the Cartels, the Mafia, etc. are not considered terrorist organizations, and their leadership is not hunted by drones equipped with Hellfire missiles as occurs with Al-Qaeda or the Islamic State. In addition, while terrorist organizations draw a huge part of their funds from ordinary criminal activities (Shelley 2015), an organized criminal organization is still considered a different actor than the terrorist organizations, even when both exhibit similar behaviours, structures, sources, and methodologies, and the only very weak and tiny line of differentiation between them is the supposed ideological or religious aim. In fact, some criminal organizations can be legitimately recognized and studied by government authorities such as the Minister of Public Security of China in 1993, Tao Siju, who said that *"some Triad members were patriots and they should be respected if they upheld Hong Kong's prosperity"* (Lo 2010).

## **The tolerance zone**

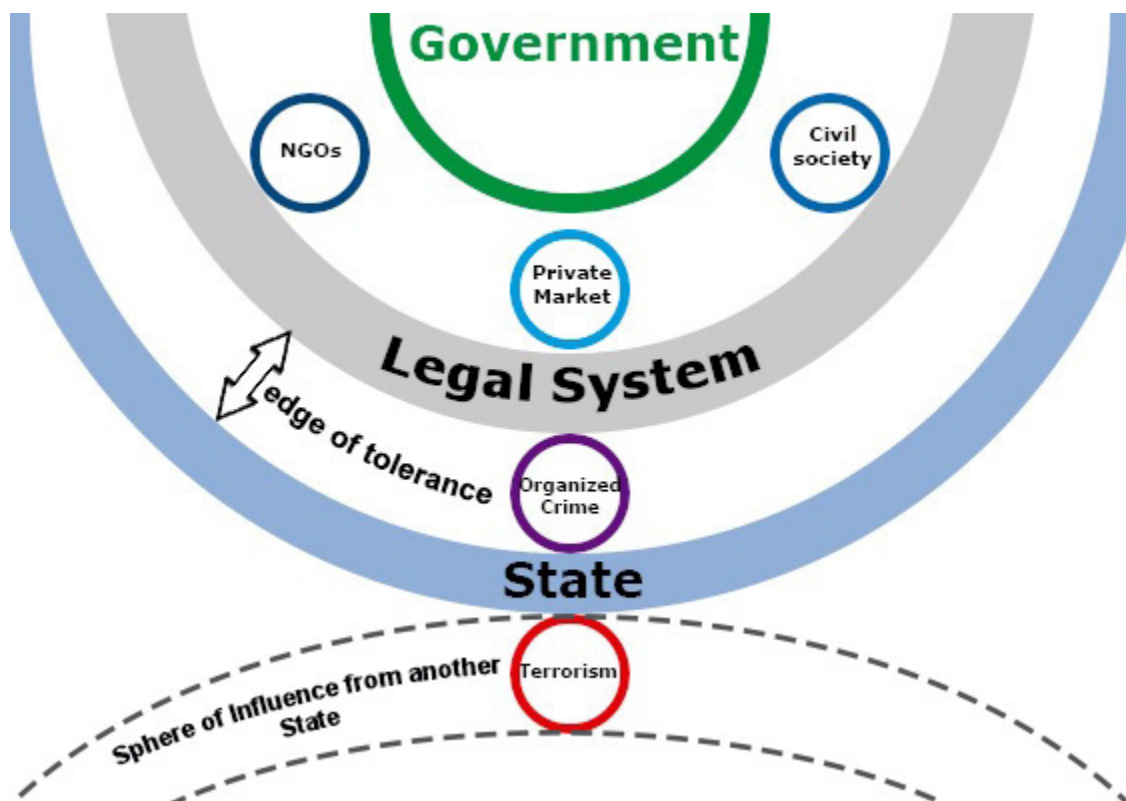
Considering that every kind of actor may use terrorist tactics, and the structure of labelled terrorist groups may be technically the same as that of organized crime groups, the more accurate approach is still the one suggested by Khan (2003) in his view of aggrieved groups, because in the end, the only real difference between these two kinds of groups is the tolerance of the central authority towards its existence. In other words, if the government and such groups have no more interaction at all this group will be defined as a terrorist group. This interaction is a fundamental strategy of a criminal groups to sustain their survival; without its connections inside the governmental machine, through corruption and paternalism, the criminal group will eventually disappear or replaced by another.

In fact, a very accurate and realistic way to understand terrorism would be by considering its level of interaction with the state, rather than considering its behaviour alone. Criminal groups are outside the legal system but may still have some type of relationship and interaction with the government and the state. In fact, such groups do not want to break all ties with central authorities; Pablo Escobar, for example, tried to run as a politician. However, terrorism represents a radicalization in this relationship, in which there is no more interaction and a conniving coexistence is no longer possible. In this case, such marginalized or irregular groups will seek to drop out of the current political system and disengage from the groups that are controlling that system, or they may seek to separate geographically and claim independence over a territory by defying the central authority. Although non-governmental agents such as NGOs or private companies are not legally part of the government, they are at least covered by the state and its legal enforcement system because they are included within it. Organized crime operates outside of this legal system, but it is not radicalized enough to endanger the existence of the state, nor is it a direct threat to the political groups at the political core of the government. Thus, despite legal violations, their existence may be tolerated by some groups and authorities (especially corrupt ones), and that is why state forces will not use all of their power against them. In turn, terrorist groups, once they are defined as such, are the last sphere of existence. When the state or the political-governmental core sees itself as threatened by this group, the group is considered to be outside the legal system and are beyond the tolerance zone, i.e., terrorists. In general, it would be fair to assume that there are different layers of interaction between the different actors/groups and the national state government.

The label of "terrorism" will be only applied by states concerned about specific non-governmental groups in a specific moment. In fact, even NGOs may be considered terrorist groups or a national security problem if the political groups at the core of the state decide that it is appropriate. In this case, it is worth noting the arrest of Greenpeace members after the attempt to board the Prirazlomnaya oil platform in Russia in 2013 (Walker 2013) and the banning of Greenpeace operations

in India because of its “potential threat to the nation’s economy” (Greenpeace and other NGOs threat to nation’s economy, IB report warns, 2014). Another interesting case demonstrating how a criminal group can cross the edge of tolerance and be considered a terrorist group, is the case of the Southeast Asian group Abu Sayyaf. According to former FBI Agent Charles Regini and General Benjamin Magalong, this group is technically a criminal group concerned only with the profit from criminal business, rather than any ideological purpose (Blair 2016). In fact, for decades Abu Sayyaf has been considered a bandit group involved in kidnappings for ransom, weapon and drug smuggling, especially methamphetamine smuggling, with the support of local government officials in Sulu province (Alindogan 2016). It is fair to say the inclusion of this group in the “terrorist layer” occurred only because it broke ties with the central authority in an attempt to create a separate Islamic state for the Muslim minority in the region, endangering the territorial sovereignty of the Philippine national state.

The opposite can also occur; for example, a group labelled a terrorist group may change its behaviour towards the central authority, becoming more docile while sustaining its criminal enterprises. More than simply escaping its terrorist label, this group can even turn into a useful tool for the political core of the government. This phenomenon may be observed in the Chechen scenario in relation to the Russian government. After their defeat in the First Chechen War, the Russian authorities learned important lessons about dealing with irregular groups backed by foreign powers. The



Russians used the support of local actors, through an alliance with Kadyrov’s clan (which initially had supported the Chechen secession movement), to consolidate their authority in occupied territories and help to stabilize the region through the provision of money and the “loan” of governmental legitimacy (Yashin 2016).

Figure 1



## Conclusion

What was attempted to be explained here is the fact that labels such as terrorism, organized crime and others legal business simply reflect levels or layers of interactions between the political groups inside the core of the government with groups outside this governmental sphere. Interpreting the terrorist label by understanding the different levels of interaction and the function of the state may help to explain when such group will or will not be described as terrorist group rather than “just” a criminal organization. As the authors explained, the definition of terrorism as an action or tactic is fairly discussed and generally agreed upon. The problem remains in the definition of who is a terrorist, and the reason is that the definition and delimitations are merely symbolic, and the final decision will only be made by political interests. Moreover, many discussions around the conceptualization of terrorism seem to ignore the difference between state and government, which is fundamental to the understanding of when such label is or not applied in some cases.

If the interactions of non-government actors with the state are defined in behavioural layers, levels or degrees, it is fair to assume that the first layer is composed by groups such as NGOs, social movements, private companies, etc., which are inside the legal system but outside the political core that controls the state (the government). The following layer would be criminal groups, which are outside the legal system but still covered by state gravity. These two layers are capable of directly and indirectly influencing the government; the legitimate actors through political pressure and the illegal groups through corruption or paternalism. As was previously noted, it is important to consider that criminal groups, despite their conflicts with governmental authorities, do not represent a major threat to national existence, and they may also have connections inside the government. The last layer, beyond state cover, would be the area where terrorist groups remain because, in this case, such groups are trying to cut all ties with the central authority, replace the groups inside the governmental core, or damage state sovereignty over a separatist territory.

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## A Preliminary Overview of ICT Use in the Boko Haram conflict: A Cyberconflict Perspective

by Shola Abidemi Olabode



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### Abstract

*This paper examines the use of information and communication technologies by the Boko Haram Islamist movement. While scholarly research on Boko Haram has developed in the last few decades, there is still a lack of research relating to crucial aspects of the conflict including the insurgents' increasing uses of ICT. This paper uses the Cyberconflict conceptual tool to understand Boko Haram's use of ICTs and contends that the use of digital media is particularly instrumental in the movement's guerrilla-style warfare. Salient attributes of Boko Haram's digital culture includes the use of the ICTs for information sharing, propaganda and psychological operations. Specifically, the study employed a qualitative approach relying on desk-based research, a combination of primary and secondary data and thematic analysis.*

**Keywords:** Boko Haram; Cyberconflict; Nigeria; ICTs; Digital Media

### Origin and Evolution of Boko Haram

Boko Haram translates as 'Western education is forbidden', and was a popular tag given to the group by civil society actors and media stakeholders in Nigeria due to the movements largely anti-western stance. Originally, the movement described itself as *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad* meaning 'People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad', and it has criticised being called Boko Haram. The group's evolution has raised curiosity as there is yet to be a consensus on the circumstances surrounding the exact date the movement emerged. Some theorists have historically linked the evolution of the group to the other previous jihadi insurrection in Nigeria. For instance, the Maitatsine uprising of the 1980s is a crucial example of a jihadist ethnoreligious conflict that can be juxtaposed with the Boko Haram insurgency especially regarding the group's violent militancy (Ayelabola 2013; Aghedo and Osumah 2012; Adesoji 2011; Danjibo 2009). Ayelabola (2013) explained that the Maitatsine was an anti-modernist movement that went on a rampage in Kano state in 1980 under the leadership of Mohammed Marwa. In the ensuing conflict, over 4000 individuals lost their lives, and hundreds of buildings wrecked in the eleven days of the conflict (Ibid; 114). The Boko Haram conflict has claimed even more lives in over a decade of war against the Nigerian state. As at 2012, The Nigerian Security Tracker, a project run by the Council on Foreign Relations, reported over 20,000 deaths in connection to the Boko Haram insurrection in Borno state in North-eastern Nigeria.

Some scholars have linked the group's development to historical events as in the case of the Maitatsine uprising of the 1980s. Adesoji (2011) historically connects Boko Haram's ideology to Mohammed Yusuf's father, who, as far back as the 1960s had been a staunch opponent of Western education. This trait is particularly evident in the narratives of the Boko Haram under Yusuf and subsequently Abubakar Shekau. The causal link demonstrates deeply sited grievances that



predates current events of Boko Haram. Nonetheless, the lack of agreement on the emergence of the movement reveals the difficulty in understanding the dynamics of violent insurgency and conflict groups. The reason has been that such movements are mostly inherently covert due to their reliance on guerrilla warfare.

Nonetheless, with varying perspectives emergent within political and social commentary in the media, and scholarly studies on Boko Haram, it is possible to trace the movement's development as a contemporary religious movement to 1995. Boko Haram existed under various manifestations dating from 1995. For instance, the movement took on the identity of a religious youth organisation, *Ahlulsunna wal'jamaah'hijra* (Shabaab Muslim Youth Organisation) in 1995 in Borno State Nigeria (Ayelabola, 2013: 118). At the time, Abubakar Lawal, a Muslim cleric in the city of Maiduguri (Aghedo and Osumah 2012: 585), led the youth organisation. The association of Boko Haram to the youth organisation is perhaps the earliest record the movement likened to a civil society organisation under Lawal. The group's metamorphosis to *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad* alias Boko Haram emerged under Mohammed Yusuf who took over the group between 2002 and 2009 (Ayelabola, 2013; Adesoji 2011).

The movement gained international notoriety in 2009 following clashes with security operatives, which led to the arrest and subsequent extrajudicial murder of Mohammed Yusuf, the leader of the movement. After Yusuf took over, the campaign experienced radical changes and took an aggressive stance on Islam and politics in the years that followed. In particular, the group took a firm position on political Sharia, which in simple terms refers to the 'religious law of Islam' (An-Na'im, 2008: 1). In a political sense, Boko Haram actors seek to enforce Sharia as the principal means of governance across the Northern region of Nigeria and indeed other parts of the country. Radical insurgency tactics and violent extremism have chiefly accompanied their strong stance on Sharia. Growing suspicion of the group's secret jihadist plans and confrontations with the police at different times prompted an onslaught by the security services on the group which resulted in the arrest of some of its members and a raid on the group's haven (see Walker 2012: 3).

In 2003, following public disagreements over rights to a local fishpond, the movement overpowered the police in the ensuing confrontation and seized the weapons of the police officers caught up in a frenzy. This clash highlighted the group as a significant threat to peace and stability. Security services, involving a joint operation between the police and military, subsequently besieged the group's mosque. In the onslaught that followed, Adesoji (2010: 98) explained that nine members of the Boko Haram camp were apprehended and dangerous machinery confiscated. Reprisal attacks from the group resulted in the capture and subsequent death of Mohammed Yusuf in 2009 (McConnell 2009; Adesoji 2010; Onuoha 2010; Hines 2009). Following a lull, Boko Haram re-emerged in 2010 under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau who has since led the most offensive and ongoing violent onslaught against the Nigerian government (Walker 2012: 5). Also, the group has targeted ordinary citizens, expatriate workers, media houses and practitioners, Muslims and Christians (Ayelabola, 2013; Agbiboa, 2013; Chothia 2012; Onuoha, 2010; Walker 2012). While the group's insurgency has been mainly in the North Eastern region, there have also been with sporadic events across other geopolitical areas in Nigeria. To articulate the general workings of Boko Haram especially as it relates to the organisational aspects of the groups uses of digital media, what follows is a discussion on the conceptual premise that informed the study.

## **Boko Haram and Cyberconflict Nexus**

In its original conception, the Cyberconflict framework provided an analytical approach for considering conflicts supported by ICTs and occurring in cyberspace, during the pre-social media

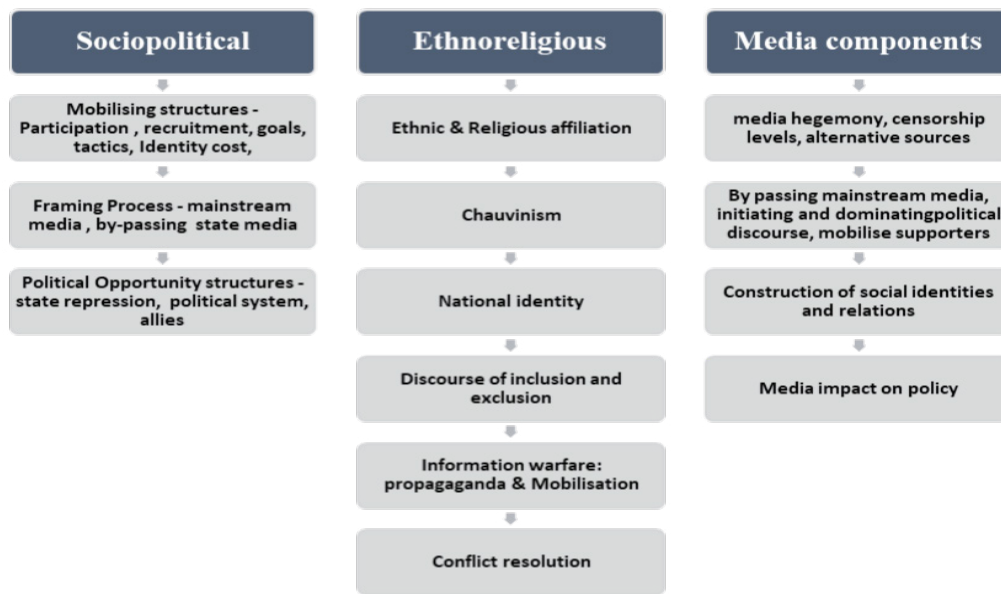


era (pre-Facebook 2004, YouTube 2005 and Twitter 2006) of digital media expansion. The framework helped in the examination of protests emerging online and transferring to real-life settings and vice versa between 2000 and 2005 (Karatzogianni 2012: 3). The frame subsequently became instrumental for articulating conflicts in the social media era (Karatzogianni 2009, 2012a, 2012b; Karatzogianni et al. 2017). The Cyberconflict conceptual framework ties to the principle of computer-mediated communication CMC (Karatzogianni 2006: 94). The thrust of the framework is to consider how ICTs serve as either resource or weapon in both online and offline propaganda conflicts between the state and political protest movements (Karatzogianni 2012: 1). For a concise description of disputes, the Cyberconflict approach sets the debate on computer-mediated conflict around two broad categories of conflicts that occur in the global landscape: sociopolitical and ethnoreligious.

To be clear, sociopolitical Cyberconflicts (Karatzogianni 2006) encompasses conflicts as in the case of anti-globalisation, anti-capitalist and anti-war movements and the effect of ICTs and the internet on their activities. Sociopolitical and economic inequalities and deficits in civil and political rights are usually characteristic of the struggle of such groups. The Zapatista movement of Mexico, the anti-globalisation and Occupy movements and the Arab uprising provide illustrative examples of sociopolitical Cyberconflicts. For the other type of conflict which Karatzogianni (2006) classifies as ethnoreligious Cyberconflict—as the name suggests, these are mostly ethnic, religious and culturally motivated movement in a confrontation with the state or opposition movements. In the Cyberconflict contexts, such contestations evolve in virtual spaces, as they are in typical real-life setting (Karatzogianni 2006: 5). It is crucial to state that the use of the phraseology 'ethnoreligious' does not necessarily mean that the conflict of such movements is exclusively ethnic and religious. Such affiliations exist, yet, the interests and struggles of the same movements could survive together with other socio-political and economic motivations.

The Cyberconflict framework provides a useful instrument for examining sociopolitical movements that adopt peaceful and non-violent strategies and ethnoreligious groups who opt for violent militancy conflict tactics. Therefore, the framework's tripartite structure, which ties together the elements of distinct theories to articulate contemporary types of conflict and the impact of ICTs enriches our understanding of both sociopolitical and ethnoreligious conflicts. The diagram below summarises the nexus between aspects of the Cyberconflict framework and ICTs. This model is crucial as it enables the study of the origins, development and demise of conflict movements among other characteristics (uses of ICTs). The conflict theory, like the SMT, is used to examine ethnic and religiously motivated movements, violent conflict, and culturally motivated protest groups.





Source: Based on the Karatzogianni (2006) Cyberconflict framework

*Figure 1: Visualizing Element of the Cyberconflict Conceptual Framework*

The framework demonstrates how ICTs serve innovative purposes as tools and resources to facilitate the activities of conflict movements. For instance, about mobilising structures in the diagram above, the ICTs play a role in helping to boost participation levels, recruitment and enhance the goals of the movement (Karatzogianni 2006; Garret 2006; Meier 2011). Similar connections exist between ICTs and framing processes and opportunity structures. The Arab Spring between 2010 and 2012 and the Occupy movements provide some illustrative examples of conflicts where ICTs served as a resource and played a facilitative role especially for mobilisation (Karatzogianni 2012; Castells 2011; Meier, 2011). Regarding ICTs as a weapon in ethnoreligious Cyberconflicts, we can see ICTs as a terrain for conflict in the India-Pakistan conflict between 1998 and 2003, Israel-Palestine 2000, and China-U.S 2001 Cyberconflicts (Karatzogianni, 2006: 344-352). In these examples, the internet was the primary site of contestation. Rival parties in conflict employed hacktivism, i.e. (website defacement, trojan virus, disruption of service to mention but a few). Also, armed insurgency and radical groups have also adopted the ICTs as tools in their rebellion. Al-Qaeda, which John E. McLaughlin a former CIA director labelled as driven mainly by 'ideology and the Internet' is an illustrative example. The internet's amorphous and borderless structure fits well with the tactics of such groups, and we can see new Islamist sect like the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and for the present study, Boko Haram exploiting the benefits of ICTs to facilitate their operations.

## **Methods and Materials Used**

The study principally relied on secondary data and some primary data online sources. These include online textual and audio-visual materials available on the movements online. The primary source of data collection included a selection of online news reports from mostly Nigerian online news media and a few global media sources online. The choice of mainly Nigerian media sources was because the media organisations operate in Nigeria and they provided a diverse array of perspectives, interviews and opinions on the movements. For example, online news sources provide



commentaries from movement actors, the government, civil society stakeholders, security experts, and ordinary Nigerians.

More so, media reports examined also provide up-to-date information and insights into the activities of Boko Haram. In total, five Nigerian newspapers online were identified and selected for analysis. Vanguard Nigeria and Premium Times were selected based on a simple Google search in which, for instance, Vanguard Nigeria and Premium Times Nigeria came top in the list among Nigerian online news sources concerning specified themes. For example, in search for the topic 'Boko Haram news', the aforementioned online media appeared in the top of news items on the subject. The interactive approach of the two sites, which allows for commentaries and a forum for discussion among participants, also informed the choice of the sites. Also, the researcher had followed political commentaries on the movement on the two sites between 2014. Across these five online media portals, 75 reports focusing on the Boko Haram were selected and examined to cover the period between 2006 and 2014. This specific period was chosen to reflect the structural dynamics in the origins, development and advances of the respective movement and due to some important events that took place within these periods, most importantly the mutations in the movement's tactics and strategy. The rest of the paper discusses Boko Haram's uses of ICTs.

## ***A Resource for Information Sharing***

The last few decades have seen an upsurge in the use of ICTs, the Internet, and social media among conflict movements across the globe. Over the years, 'right-wing militias in the USA, Islamist opposition movements originating in the Middle East and single-issue pressure groups such as environmental activists or human rights campaigners' (Rathmell 2000: 230 cited in Karatzogianni 2006: 22) have used the internet and ICTs as a medium to augment their activities. Similarly, 'many insurgents, from the provisional IRA through Mexico's Zapatistas to Lebanon's Hizbollah, have incorporated ICTs into their more traditional propaganda and fundraising activities' (Karatzogianni 2006: 22). Other's more sophisticated, have employed new media and in particular the internet as a weapon as in the case of hacktivism. Regardless of the institutional, structural, national, philosophical and systemic differences that exist between such radical movements, such 'groups have been quick to exploit ICTs for propaganda and psychological operations' (Rathmell 2000: 230). These are two fundamental dynamics explored by insurgency and radical movements in contemporary times. In the Boko Haram context, information sharing emerged as the major component of the groups ICT use, nonetheless, as will be subsequently demonstrated, a scrutiny of the contents and framings of the movement messages conforms to the two dynamics identified by Rathmell.

A salient characteristic of Boko Haram's media use is the constant shift and adoption of different media. The group's media strategy metamorphosed over the years. We see an incrementally change the Islamist's tactical repertoire from using old traditional media (the face-to-face communication and the uses of pamphlets, video recordings delivered to media houses) to new media tactics, which included telephone conversations with media houses to YouTube video postings and social media. As opposed to hacktivism which deploys the internet as a weapon, Boko Haram largely depends on digital media (the internet, ICTs, and social media), as a resource to advance its ideology and mobilisation. The conclusion here is informed by video postings of the movement, which helps to shed light on the purpose and objectives of ICT uses. For the hacktivist, the internet is the central terrain of conflict, however, in the present context, Boko Haram uses of ICTs does not include elements of hacktivism.

Indeed, the Boko Haram movement employs digital media to mobilise and recruit its members. The use of ICTs in the latter is less clear and perhaps not as compelling as other mechanisms like



face-to-face recruitment, the impact of kinship, peer pressure and the use of coercion in enlisting child soldiers and youths. For instance, one of the members of the movement interrogated by security operatives claimed he had been coerced to join the group (see. ENDS.ng. 23 September 2015) yet, new communication media have played an influential role in the group's mobilisation. Connell (2012) explained that, over the years, the deployment of new media technologies surfaced in the movement's tactical repertoire. For instance, internet forums became an avenue to expand and recruit adherents (Connell 2012, 89). It was these practices, in particular, the uses of online media among the leadership of the movement that informed the Nigerian government's decision to shut down networks of communication in three states (Maiduguri, Adamawa, and Yola), three of the most affected states in the movements guerrilla-style warfare.

The leader of the sect, Abubakar Shekau has exploited the internet to post several videos produced by the movement which ended up being rebroadcast on the YouTube platforms of media houses and by individuals. The medium serves as a haven from which the leader of the sect called for support and specific action from loyalists both in Nigeria and abroad. For instance, in one of the group's videos published by The New York Times (2014) the sect leader, after criticising world leaders orders his followers 'kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill' referring to mainly Christians in Nigeria. In another video, towards the end of his speech, Shekau issues a call to action. According to him, 'my brethren wherever you are, in Abuja, Lagos, or the south-south, wherever you are, commence attacks. Even as an individual, take up your swords and slaughter anyone you come across in his sleep. My brethren, take up knives and start slaughtering people. Just pick up your knife and break into homes and kill' (Audu 2014). Such calls to action have proven to be a call towards self-radicalisation especially for sympathisers across the country who may agree with the activities of the group, but (a) have no direct link to the leadership of the group (b) lack the psychological motivation to participate in the conflict. In this regard, one could link some of the spontaneous attacks in different regions of the country to the chilling effect of such instructions for which the group has claimed responsibility. The belief is that not all cases of individual suicide attacks, bombings and kidnappings can be directly linked to Boko Haram since the movement's leadership does not have direct contact with individuals in the different regions.

We may only attribute to some unified ideology or shared goal among the Islamist's, which Boko Haram leverages on in videos posted on the Internet via YouTube to motivate, manipulate and encourage adherents to act. Consequently, the video posting and messages propagated in those videos by the leader of the sect can serve as a self-radicalising mechanism, since the ideologies expressed in them (religious) are meant to gain the minds of sympathisers and adherents of the religion. The chances are that if followers listen to such sermons from the online handles sponsored by the group or YouTube broadcasts some fundamentalists could be caught up with the messages of Boko Haram. There is growing evidence to support the notion of self-radicalisation online (Onuoha 2014; Ibaba and Okoye 2017). Although the previous point is difficult to verify, nonetheless, one can assert that, as in the case of face-to-face radicalisation, the internet can replicate similar attributes. About the rise of ISIS since 2014, media commentary and political rhetoric demonstrate how the internet has become a haven for recruitment (see. Gilsinan, 8 December 2015). The networking factor played a role in the Nigerian government's decision to shut down mobile networks, including internet service in the region.

In a 2013 Daily Times report online, a top security official, while commenting on the telephone shut down, argued that the networks were suspended as part of an approach to demobilise Boko Haram. While the belief was that shutting communication networks will slow down the activities of the movement, the strategy proved ineffective as movement actors found alternative ways to bypass the limitation (censorship) on ICT platforms. The structure of the internet itself presents



a haven for insurgents to facilitate their activities, from organising, and recruiting members, to mobilisation, and coordination. For this school of thought, ICTs disregard conventional modes of media and warfare that can make insurgents' activities easily predictable and as such monitored by the state.

Digital media have provided a window of influence in the circle of global jihad for Boko Haram insurgents over the years. One could safely assert that the movement's exposure to the activities of other jihadist movements across the globe played a role in shaping the general workings of the movement. Such exposure is only possible with modern technologies of communication, and there is a reason to believe that Boko Haram has leveraged such technologies. Besides self-radicalisation within the movement, the group has used the medium to build networks with its contemporaries across the globe, training, especially as seen in the evolving tactical repertoire of the group that has changed continuously. Upon setting up its Twitter handle, some political analysts and commentators (BBC Monitoring, 4 March 2015; Cummings, 13 March 2015) were of the assumption that ISIS may be managing the Boko Haram public relations campaign, given the similarity between the group's latest drives to that of ISIS.

More specifically, the influence of global jihad movements on Boko Haram given the impact of ICTs and the Internet has been consistently demonstrated by the aspiration of Boko Haram to carry out the objectives of the Taliban or Al-Qaeda in Nigeria. As a result, some commentators have termed the group the 'Taliban' or as some others have 'the Al-Qaeda of Nigeria'. Following the death of Yusuf, the new leadership under Shekau vowed to carry out the goals and objectives of Usama Bin Laden in Nigeria (Vanguard 14 August 2009). As suggested in the report of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, members of the insurgency movement (Boko Haram) use internet forums to lobby and garner the sympathy and support of global jihadist organisations that are structured in other countries (Taliban/ Al-Qaeda).

These global Jihadist organisations have a track record of providing support to local and regional jihadist movements regarding training, funding, and procurement, technical and tactical know-how. In this context, careful observation of Boko Haram's modus operandi, tactical repertoire, and organisational set-up reveal a resemblance to popular jihadist and terrorist organisations across the globe. The movement operates using similar methods including kidnappings and the use of improvised explosive devices, also known as IEDs, in Afghanistan, suicide bombings, extrajudicial killings, and hostage taking. Boko Haram has also targeted attacks at international diplomat buildings in Nigeria, which reflects the group's grievances towards Western influence and presence in Nigeria.

In virtually all online videos of Boko Haram in which Shekau has appeared over the years the trail reveals a penchant for using ICTs for information sharing. The usual claims of responsibility for attacks carried out by the leaders of the insurgents are one illustrative example. For instance, in a recent video surrounding the abduction of over 200 girls from the school in a local community in Maiduguri, the leader of the movement is pictured in a video, where he, in his usual trend, claims responsibility for the abduction (see SaharaTv 5 May 2015). In the same video, the leader of the movement warns the public of the movement's next line of action and targets of its assault which include Christian and Muslim infidels. Furthermore, while justifying its initial attack on some media organisations, Shekau in another video (Alhaji Mani, 1 May 2012) circulated on YouTube promises to attack some other newspaper houses in Nigeria (including an online media owned by a Nigerian in New York, Sahara reporters). In the video, Shekau provides details regarding why the movement will attack the media organisations in addition to other targets, including Christians, and a Nigerian





woman who, according to Shekau blasphemed against the prophet Mohammed in 2002. In 2002, the country was thrown into conflict while hosting the Miss World beauty pageant, following claims of blasphemy against the Prophet Mohammed by a Nigerian woman (see. Isaacs and Butcher 23 November 2002). The movement uses such avenues created by ICTs as a means for advancing their propaganda.

One of the critical dynamics of the debate on Boko Haram's public relations is that the movement in most cases fulfils their promises by attacking its targets, which suggest weakness on the part of the government to respond to such intelligence. For instance, in 2014, a few weeks after Boko Haram issued a warning to the Nigerian government of its impending attack on schools, over 290 female students were kidnapped from their school in Chibok, a remote town in Maiduguri (see. TRAC Nigeria, April 19, 2014). The attack was in protest of girl child education. The movement has been critical of women's roles in society. Students kidnapped were mainly girls preparing for their senior secondary school examination. While some of the girls have since secured their release, many remain unaccounted for as at the time of writing (Tukur, 2017). Subsequently, a new video was published by the movement, in which Shekau again, claims responsibility for the abduction and restates his intention to sell the girls in the market (see Saharatv, 5 May 2014).

Besides sharing information, careful consideration of the messages in videos produced by the Boko Haram movement reveals how the information the insurgents disseminate serves as an informative guide and instruction manual for members of the movement across the country. Sequel to the point of mobilisation, it can be argued that the information contained in the speech of the sect leadership published either by the media or by the group itself provides its network with updates. These include the sect's next line of action, from instructions, and strategies, to targets and their general modus operandi. For instance, in the video where Shekau the sect's leader claimed responsibility for the attack on the Giwa Barracks in Maiduguri, he implores and instructs adherents of the movements across Nigeria to kill non-believers, in his words: 'Brethren, wherever you are, I pray this cassette meets you well. I give you the go ahead, whether you are two or three, take up your weapons and start killing them... kill kill kill, slaughter them, but do not eat, spare the old, women, children, the mentally unstable and those who repent. All those who refuse Allah kill. Not following the religion is a sin and against Allah... kill kill and kill that is the information for today' (Audu March 2014). A few weeks later, there were two serial bombings in Abuja the Federal Capital Territory where no less than about 70 ordinary citizens lost their lives with severe damage to properties worth millions (The Guardian, 2 May 2014). In the usual tradition of the movement, Shekau in another video claimed responsibility for the attack.

A 2015 African Independent Television (AIT) report corroborates the point on Boko Haram's propaganda, media and psychological operation. The report details the alleged arrest of the Boko Haram's ICT expert who is suggested to have been in charge of designing computer images, website, and providing internet accesses for the group. The report also demonstrated that such expertise enhances the movement's media and psychological operations (AIT 2015). The instruments of propaganda, media, and psychological operations are crucial to the success of actions of radical and non-radical conflict groups and the opposition (usually the state, although in the present case it also involves other civil society organisations and individuals the group targets).

## ***A Resource for Propaganda and psychological operations***

New media platforms have increased the competition between conflict movements and the state in projecting a superior image of dominance. Conflict groups use new media avenues to engage in psychological operations and propaganda by exploiting narratives that reflect the dynamics



mentioned earlier (dominance, superiority especially in creating fear in public). In the Boko Haram context, this strategy has been crucial in the group's narrative. Its leverage on ICTs to express and construct frame such dynamics of dominance in the conflict has enhanced the groups local and global presence. In other words, new media platforms, the Internet, and ICTs have become the principal instrument to convey the group's propaganda and psychological operations. For instance, the narratives of dominance and superiority have often manifested through the movement video postings on YouTube, videos sent to media houses which are later published online and, recently, video and images posted on the Twitter handle of the movement.

A video posted on YouTube by SaharaTv showing how the Boko Haram insurgents govern their captured territories is particularly telling of how the movement validates its superiority, dominance and creates fear in the public using ICTs. In the video, an unidentified man is buried alive in a shallow grave and stoned to death; another unidentified man has his hands chopped off (SaharaTv, 5 October 2014). The sect takes care in producing the videos to show gory details of their activities. Members are seen hoisting the flag of the Boko Haram sect and jubilant following decapitations and murder of their victims. Besides instilling fear in the territories in which the assailants hold sway, the publication of such videos creates fear in the Nigerian public domain. In the same video, other victims of the group are assaulted. This way the movement demonstrates how it is in control of its captured territories.

Having shot down a Nigerian fighter jet and captured a Nigerian Air Force pilot, another video emerged online. The video begins with the sounds of a gunshot in the background, music, a voice-over and video images of the wreckage of the jet. A few minutes into the video, surrounded by members of Boko Haram, and the movement's flag hoisted in the background, the voice-over fades out, and the camera then shows an injured pilot kneeling before the camera introducing himself, his place of assignments and mission. This introduction is interrupted by the commander of the movement with a brief prayer that is followed by a speech. According to him, 'God has made a covenant with us that infidels will not have victory over us, and he has a covenant with us that we will always have victory over them, in spite of their strength and might... this is a message to the entire world. As he stated, he is a pilot of the Nigerian Air Force... God gave us victory, and we brought down their jet. Here also lies the pilot we captured.' In the same video, global leaders and the Nigerian president (as at the time of writing) receive threats 'we would do to you what Allah has prescribed for you', and then the pilot is hacked to death' (See Boko Haram Militants Behead a Nigerian Air Force Pilot 2014). Similar beheadings of those considered infidels by the group have been posted online, especially on YouTube.

There are reasons to believe that, such postings have had a great deal of psychological effect on the Nigerian public and the Nigerian armed forces executing an offensive against the group. Media reports have revealed scenarios in which Nigerian troops had abandoned the fight, escaping the insurgents. For instance, in a 2014 Telegraph United Kingdom report online, key public figures in Nigeria had expressed disappointment over the failings of the military. The document, while quoting a top Islamic cleric in Nigeria explained that 'Soldiers take to their heels and abandon their bases, arms, ammunition and other military hardware on the approach of the insurgents... Nigerian Security Forces only surface after the deadly attacks and terrorise an already terrorised people by installing roadblocks and searching homes' (The Telegraph 25 November 2014). Shekau also made similar claims. Referring to weapons seized from the military, in a YouTube video, the sect leader claimed that, 'the war equipment that you see on display on the screen are from Baga and Doro. Your army kept deceiving the world that you can't fight us because you have no arms. Liars! You have all that it takes; you are just coward soldiers' (Audu 2015). The propaganda and psychological operations of Boko Haram account for one reason for low morale on the part of the Nigerian



military. Other reasons for the lack of confidence, as argued by some military officers, tie to issues of corruption within the military (misappropriation of funding meant for officers and lack of proper machinery to prosecute the battle to mention but a few) (Ibekwe 2015).

Sequel to the idea that the leadership of the movement uses its sermons in mosques to construct anti-nationalist, and anti-Western ideologies embedded in a religious guise, these messages have emerged on YouTube and have been instrumental in expressing the ideology and other propaganda of the movement. A careful consideration of the Twitter handle of the group reveals a salient characteristic of the movement's manipulation and psychological operation. For instance, there are images of child soldiers posted on the site. In reality, the use of child soldiers and women as shields can be seen as a tactic to slow down the military onslaught on the movement. This approach distracts the military and the government who know that various human rights issues had already tainted the military's image in their prosecution of the war against the insurgents. The forceful enlisting of children into the army of the insurgents will make it difficult for the military to confront the sect in view to avoiding further human rights backlash. Also, the use of children demonstrates the reach and doggedness of the group.

Other propaganda and psychological manipulations include hoisting of the logo and flag of the organisation synonymous with images of the Islamic state on Twitter. The group in several videos have displayed weaponry and other military apparel, and artillery (displays of cars, anti-aircraft weaponry, thousands of live ammunition, videos of operations against the military) it has succeeded in seizing from the military during raids on army barracks. The display of such items demonstrates the group's penchant for positioning itself as the stronger side, winning the battle against the state security apparatus. The leader of the sect is fond of attributing such victories to the support of God, again embedding a religious philosophy to the support the group's activity:

'We announce our allegiance to the caliph of the Muslims, Ibrahim ibn Awad ibn Ibrahim al-Husseini al-Qurashi and will hear and obey in times of difficulty and prosperity, in hardship and ease, and to endure being discriminated against, and not to dispute about rule with those in power, except in case of evident infidelity regarding that which there is proof from Allah.' (Tukur 2015)

Again, relying on the ideological propaganda of religion which the group has consistently exploited, the text above extracted from an audio message broadcasted on the internet from Boko Haram to ISIS demonstrates another salient feature of the group's propagandist and psychological operations, in its strides to connect with other jihadist movements across the globe. Shekau bases the movement's move towards allegiance on the Quranic provision that every Muslim must have a leader or risk dying, which implies that the movement was struggling with the conflict. Arguing that Shekau was exploiting religious texts for manipulative gains, a prominent rights campaigner explained that Boko Haram's message indicated a stronger ideological philosophy compared to previous messages and suggested that the government should exploit superior Islamic texts to counter the insurgent's psychological operation (World Bulletin 2015).

Another striking feature of Boko Haram since its inception is about the efforts to link up with similar jihadist movements directly and indirectly. This drive shows the group's quest to situate itself as a global player, especially within global jihadist circles. Before the evolution of ISIS, Boko Haram has made efforts in their (Shekau) speech, to connect to other similar movements. For instance, in one of Shekau's statements, he pledges that Boko Haram will carry out Usama Bin Ladin's goal in Nigeria. While such acts demonstrate Boko Haram's loyalty to global jihadist movements (from Al-Qaeda and the Taliban to ISIS), it also paints a scenario indicating some working relationship between Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda even though there is no sufficient evidence to suggest how



(if at all) these groups work together. Following Boko Haram's declaration of allegiance to ISIS, the Islamic State through its spokesperson responded by accepting Boko Haram's loyalty in a similar audio message, which also circulated on the internet.

The tactic is of crucial significance to Boko Haram's struggle to assert hegemony, especially in the face of the ongoing onslaught on the movement. For instance, Boko Haram's most recent pledge of allegiance came in the wake of the regional military attack on the group which has dislodged them from their haven. Besides establishing itself as a global jihad player, the move to ally with global jihad groups helps Boko Haram maintain a greater sense of meaning and relevance among its supporters, members, and sympathisers at home and abroad. While in the face of conflict, morale among adherents may gradually fade out; the global allegiance may serve as an instrument for attracting more members mainly from the supporters and sympathisers of global jihad movements (Moftah 2015). One point to note, however, is again how the movement uses religion as the basis for such alliance. Nonetheless, if successful in its propaganda, the assumption is that this tactic will be instrumental in recruiting more individuals into the group. Experts and political commentators have argued that Boko Haram uses global jihadi groups to boost its recruitment drive (Matfess 13 March 2015; Moftah, 3 October 2015; Tisdall 8 March 2015; News24 3 September 2015). The move could also have other positive effects on the Boko Haram movement, especially regarding global jihadist groups providing training and funding to support Boko Haram activities in Nigeria (Matfess 13 March 2015).

According to a 2015 World Bulletin report, the alliance between Boko Haram and ISIS will pose further threats to a country already struggling to grapple with increasing insurgency activity. The report hinges its assertions on the belief that, with the more sophisticated and better funded ISIS, Boko Haram stands to benefit from ISIS's strategic planning capacity, including a better public image from the movement's sympathisers across the globe. As it were, 'it appears that they are getting more recruits by the day... the alliance with ISIL had been expected since Boko Haram had in the past made veiled comments to this effect. The statement is a way of saying yes, we have expanded the scope of our operations and ideology and... foreign support' (World Bulletin report 2015).

## **Conclusion**

By considering Boko Haram's use of ICTs, we can underscore the movement's strides to get its message to different audiences and contend with competing narratives on its activities. Boko Haram is not the first group that uses ICTs as part of its tactical approach, as demonstrated groups like Al-Qaeda led by Usama Bin Laden used the internet and more recently, ISIS. It is safe to argue therefore that there is a transnational influence on the activities of conflict movements of this nature. Such effects have been occasioned by the window of opportunity created by exposure to ICT. Following this belief, Boko Haram's exposure to activities of similar groups across national boundaries via ICTs has helped the organisation situate its operations within global terrorism. The alliance of Boko Haram to Al-Qaeda and subsequently allegiance to ISIS bear testament to this point. Ultimately, we see a growing trend in the use of ICTs by conflict movements in this category mainly because the tools fit well with their covert operations and guerrilla-style warfare. The study found that Boko Haram relies on ICTs for information sharing, psychological operations, and propaganda activities, which are challenging for the government to manage in the digital age.





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## Militarisation, Memorialisation & Multiculture: Muslims and the 2014 Centenary Commemorations of World War One in Britain

by Max Cohen



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### Abstract

*This article focuses attention on the efforts by army officials, peers, politicians, academics, religious leaders and supportive British Muslims to include Muslims from the past and present in the UK 2014 Centenary Commemorations. Through insights from critical military studies I argue that these sites of memorialisation represent complex, multi-layered forms of militarisation that garner support for war and reveal the shifting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in the national community. As well as the advocates of these initiatives, I also analyse statements made by British Muslim opponents of the Poppy Hijab, revealing the contested nature of militarism in society.*

**Keywords:** Militarization; Memorialization; Multiculture; UK; Muslims; Centenary; Commemoration; War on Terror

Since 2014, the UK has been commemorating and celebrating the Centenary of the First World War (WWI). Every year, commemorations take place around Armistice Day in Britain and other Commonwealth countries to honour the sacrifice of all who have suffered or died in war. During these events, the poppy is sold by veteran's charities to raise money for the armed forces community. The poppy is an iconic emblem of British collective remembrance of military sacrifice which has been promoted nationally by the veterans' charity, the Royal British Legion, since 1921. During the 2014 Centenary Commemorations, army officials, peers, politicians, academics, religious leaders and supportive British Muslims have spent considerable energy on highlighting the contribution that Muslims have made to the British military throughout history. The legacy of the 'forgotten army' of 400,000 Muslim soldiers who fought for Britain during WWI has been revived after it was revealed that only 22% of the British public knew of their sacrifice (Lockley, 2016). Moreover, the memory of Khudadad Khan, the first Muslim to be awarded the Victoria Cross (the highest accolade of the UK's honours system) in 1914, has been unearthed in a number of official commemorative settings. This memorialisation of Muslim soldiers has been done in conjunction with a series of initiatives to include contemporary British Muslims in the commemorations, including the creation of the Poppy Hijab. The Poppy Hijab combines the Islamic headdress, the hijab, with a poppy motif, giving British Muslim women the opportunity to join in on the Remembrance events. It was supported by a range of veteran's charities, think-tanks, army officials, Muslim models and elements of the right-wing press, including *The Daily Mail* (Doyle, 2014) and *The Telegraph* (Sanghani, 2015). However, the Poppy Hijab has also been divisive and some Muslim women have publicly voiced their opposition to the symbol (Hooper, 2014; Ahmed, 2015).

This article will argue that these sites of memorialisation represent complex, multi-layered forms of militarisation that garner support for war and reveal the shifting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in the national community. To demonstrate my argument, I will combine insights from critical military studies with literature concerned with the construction of identity through memorialisation. There are two main insights from critical military studies that I will use in this article. First, I will use scholarly work concerned with the ways in which military power interacts with the boundaries of



national identity. Second, I will use Vron Ware's concept of *militarised multicultural* to understand the military's motivations behind involving Muslims in the Centenary Commemorations. However, in order to apply *militarised multicultural* to the Centenary Commemorations, I will interweave this concept with literature on memorialisation and identity to draw attention to how *militarised multicultural* is being reinforced through sites of memorialisation.

Critical military studies is a field of inquiry concerned with military power in all its manifestations. Critical military scholars insist on remaining 'sceptically curious' about military power (Enloe, 2015, 7) and emphasise that we should not take its 'character, representation, application and effects' for granted (Basham *et. al*, 2015, 1). Importantly, critical military studies challenge the tendency among dominant traditional military studies to conceptualise the civilian and military realms as separate spheres. In contrast, critical military scholars claim that the boundaries between the civilian and military domains are blurred (*ibid.*). This critical literature shares similarities with scholarship that has begun to think about militarism and international relations in 'sociological' terms; a phenomenon that is sustained and contested through social practices by actors at all levels of society (Stavrianakis, 2015; Shaw, 2012). Militarism, by this logic, is understood as a multi-layered and complex form of power.

For critical military scholars, the militarisation of the boundaries of national identity describes the process in which militaries are resituated at the centre of national life (Ware, 2012a, 279). Militarisation involves the 'encroaching of military forms, personnel and practices upon civilian institutions or social orders' (Otley 1978: 322). Critical military scholars shed light on processes of militarisation to acknowledge how military values, institutions, preferences and norms become embedded and normalised in society, presenting militarism and war 'as necessary and natural extensions of nation states' civil society' (Kelly, 2012 723). In this sense, the preparation for war is as important as the conduct of war for critical military scholars. As Woodward (2005, 727) has written, conflict constitutes 'the endpoint of processes, practices, ideas and arguments which make it possible. Armed conflict is only possible if a whole host of things fall into place'. Britain provides a particularly important case-study for critical military studies as the UK's deployment of troops overseas has always been an important and legitimate means of achieving foreign and security policy aims (Fey, 2012, 47). Since 1991, the UK has militarily intervened in Bosnia, Iraq, Kosovo, Macedonia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Libya. Only the United States has used its military more often in the service of foreign policy goals (Gaskarth, 2016, 105).

Importantly, scholars have emphasised militarisation to be an exclusionary process. Qureshi and Zeitlyn (2012) have described how in the process of mobilising militarism during the War on Terror, Britain forged and consolidated a militaristic national identity in contradistinction to the Muslim 'Other'. This construction of the Muslim identity as the 'enemy within' has been made easier under a generalising narrative that presumes Muslims to be inherently risky and a threat to Britain's 'way of life' (Qureshi & Zeitlyn, 2012, 4). Since the beginning of the War on Terror, British Muslims have been disproportionately targeted by a series of security measures that use race as a frame of reference for expulsions, incarcerations, surveillance, policing and repression (Pitcher, 2009). Moreover, the media has played a central role in perpetuating this discourse, fostering suspicion and hostility in British society towards Muslims. Against this background of exclusionary militarisation, the complexity of the relationship between British Muslims, the armed forces and British identity is brought into sharp focus. In an environment of suspicion and hostility surrounding Muslims, British Muslims have been drawing on military institutions and symbols during the Centenary Commemoration to authenticate their British identity and prove that 'not all Muslims are extremists'. However, for some Muslims, incorporation into the fold of Britishness is contingent upon their conformance with particular configurations of British identity (Ware, 2010a, 315-6). Moreover, as militarisation





has been predicated on the exclusion of Muslims, the limited modes of inclusion into the national community are relatively precarious for Muslims and are always able to be called into question (*ibid.*).

To explain the military's motivations to include Muslims from the past and present in the Centenary Commemorations, I will use Vron Ware's notion of *militarised multiculturalism*. The concept, *militarised multiculturalism*, is Ware's most important contribution to the literature understanding the military's recruitment of ethnic minorities. Due to legal requirements and allegations of institutional racism, the armed forces have been recruiting ethnic minorities since the 1990s. *Militarised multiculturalism* explains how a visibly diverse army plays a key role in projecting a particular image of Britishness (Ware, 2012a, 256). Ware claims that a visibly diverse and progressive image of the armed forces reinforces militarisation in at least three ways. First, it works as a recruitment strategy to attract more ethnic minorities to join the forces. Second, it helps build support for unpopular foreign policies (Ware, 2012a, 279). Lastly, it conceals the endemic nature of institutional racism in the military and, more broadly, structural racism built into the fabric of postcolonial British society (*ibid.*).

However, there is a gap in Ware's work in connection to sites of memorialisation. Thus, in order to complete this article's theoretical framework I will bring in literature on memorialisation to demonstrate how *militarised multiculturalism* operates through sites of remembrance. Memorialisation is the process by which collectives remember and reflect on memories of the past. Jay Winter (2006) has written about how sites of remembrance and shared loss are pivotal in informing a shared sense of national identity. During the 2014 Centenary Commemorations, Britain's sense of being a tolerant, diverse and liberal nation has been informed by the memorialisation of the Muslim soldiers' sacrifice from WWI. According to Bongiorno (2014, 97), multicultural memories of military history mobilise a pluralistic notion of what constitutes the defence of the nation. One key argument of this article is that in sites of remembrance the strategic representation of ethnic minorities, as noted under *militarised multiculturalism*, is being reinforced through memorialisation. I will demonstrate how progressive values are being interwoven with Britain's military history, giving historical and virtuous legitimacy to contemporary processes of militarisation. By mobilising the memory of the Muslim soldiers' sacrifice from WWI, participants in the Centenary Commemorations are lending historical legitimacy to multilayered processes of militarisation.

The role of memory is also important for actors during the Centenary Commemorations who challenge the military's dominant historical narrative. The initiative of the Poppy Hijab, which I will focus on in the end of this article, has polarised opinion amongst British Muslims. Those who publicly reject the Poppy Hijab bring a number of things to light about militarism. For one, their opposition demonstrates the complexity and contested nature of militarism. However, the fear amongst these Muslims of being branded a 'traitor' or, worse, an 'extremist' for rejecting military institutions reveals how the Muslim identity has been externalised during the War on Terror as the boundaries and patterns of Britishness have been drawn along military lines. Moreover, by offering an alternative story of events, these actors are disrupting the idea that Britain's wars have been waged to promote values of diversity and liberty. Their counter-narrative tells a concealed history of racial discrimination of Muslims, which in recent years has been heightened under processes of militarisation during the War on Terror.

This article will be split into two main theoretical and empirical sections. To begin, I will outline my conceptual framework provided by insights from critical military studies and the literature surrounding memorialisation and identity. This section is split into four subsections. First, I will trace how the boundaries of British identity have been militarised during the War on Terror. This includes examples of the increasing presence of the military in civil-society and the equally important role



British society has played in (re)producing militarism. Moreover, scholars emphasising the banality of militarism will provide insights into how we can understand the Centenary Commemorations as sites of militarisation. Second, I will deal with the exclusion of the Muslim identity under processes of militarisation. The available modes of inclusion and exclusion open to Muslims during the War on Terror will provide ideas of how Muslims can exhibit particular configurations of British identity or risk coming under suspicion as an 'enemy' or a 'threat'. Additionally, it will be important to emphasise the UK right-wing media's role in these exclusionary dynamics because of their positive coverage of the Centenary Commemorations which I will cover in the empirical section. Under the third subsection, I will outline Vron Ware's important concept of *militarised multiculturalism*. This will be central to understanding the military's motivations to involve Muslims during the Centenary Commemorations. Finally, in the last section, ideas about memorialisation and identity formation in sites of remembrance will be sketched out. These insights will allow me to demonstrate how *militarised multiculturalism* can be stretched through time through the mobilisation of multicultural memories of British military history.

In the empirical section, I will analyse statements surrounding the 2014 Centenary Commemorations made by public officials, academics and Muslims online and in the media. The combination of Vron Ware's notion of *militarised multiculturalism* and ideas about memorialisation and identity will be used in the analysis. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate my argument that sites of memorialisation represent complex, multi-layered forms of militarisation that garner support for war and reveal the shifting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in the national community.

## **The Militarisation of British Identity**

This section will outline how the boundaries of British identity have been militarised during the War on Terror. The close connection between national identity and military service is a long standing Western tradition. As Krebs (2006: 16) affirms, throughout history military institutions have been 'shapers of nations'. This connection between national identity and militarism becomes most visible in times of war when the military and public support is mobilised behind the state. As with all wars, states look to build and consolidate a unitary and coherent national identity in order to sustain support for their efforts (Robinson, 2012).

During Britain's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the military was re-situated at the centre of British national life (Ware, 2010b, 1). As public support for the wars began to wane, the UK government and military embarked upon a considerable project of militarisation to increase the presence of the military in British society. In a 2008 'Report of Inquiry into National Recognition of our Armed Forces', the government and armed forces set out 'to identify ways of encouraging greater understanding and appreciation of the Armed Forces by the British public' (MoD, 2008, 28). Recommendations included increasing visibility of the armed forces—including wider use of uniforms in civilian areas – and improving contact between the military and civil society including public outreach programmes intended to build understanding and encourage support (MoD, 2008, 6-14).

Subsequently, the government created Armed Forces Day in 2009 as an annual celebration to celebrate the service of men and women in the British military. The military has also been used in unconventional settings such as providing strike cover for fire-fighters, standing in for private security contractors at the London Olympics in 2012, providing school citizenship classes and paramilitary leisure activities such as boot-camp fitness training (Basham, 2016a, 11). There have also been calls for the reintroduction of national military service to tackle youth knife and gun crime (*ibid.*). During the London 2012 Olympics, after the failure of a private security company to acquire



a large enough workforce, military personnel were deployed to provide security for the event in the biggest ever peacetime operation to protect UK airspace (Booth & Hopkins, 2012).

The military has also increased its presence in educational environments. Dubbed by critics as the 'militarisation of education', the armed forces predominantly target schools in working class areas of the UK, seeking to recruit youngsters (Sangster, 2012). Revealingly, military personnel make around 11,000 visits to secondary schools and colleges in the UK each year (*ibid.*). Moreover, since 2011 the government has spent over £45 million on education initiatives promoting a 'military ethos' in schools and £50 million to expand cadet forces in state schools (Forces Watch, 2015).

Misleadingly, the term militarisation 'often implies something being *done* to society by the military' (Basham, 2016a, 11). However, it is important to emphasise that military values, norms, preferences and institutions are embedded (and contested) by supporting actors in civil society as much as by 'top down' military pressure (Bernazzoli & Flint, 2009). 'Militarism', Basham (2016a, 11) rightly stresses, 'is not imposed'. In regards to sites of remembrance, the commemorative events in the UK town Wootton Bassett in 2007 provide a clear example of British society's participation in processes of militarisation through sites of memorialisation. In 2007, repatriated soldiers killed during the war in Iraq were transported through the UK town of Wootton Bassett. After a few months, these repatriations garnered attention in the town and spontaneous gatherings of up to a 1,000 people began to line the streets during the year to pay their respects to the dead soldiers. For critical military scholars Jenkins *et. al* (2012, 357), the unchoreographed and mature ways in which these crowds gathered to show their respect served as a clear example of how 'militarism is a process that also entails non-state actors behaving in non-orchestrated ways'.

For Bernazzoli and Flint (2009, 398) it is the 'banality' of militarism, in the sense of its (re)production in everyday practices and routines, which makes it so powerful. Quotidian celebrations of military institutions and values make militarism 'more than merely an elite ideology, or a set of beliefs with which state institutions indoctrinate the less powerful sectors of society' (Bernazzoli & Flint, 2009, 398). This includes the intrusion and acceptance of military symbols in popular culture. For instance, Vron Ware has noted how 'the figure of the soldier is ubiquitous throughout the [British] media, constantly visible in news, military bulletins, films, digital games, forums, art and photography' (Ware, 2012b, 11). This diffuseness of militarism helps to normalise the military's presence, presenting militarism and war 'as necessary and natural extensions of nation states' civil society' (Kelly, 2012, 723). In regards to the suggestion that Muslim women should wear the Poppy Hijab we can see that this critical literature is useful for understanding how something as banal as wearing a commemorative piece of clothing can be a form of militarisation. The poppy, as an iconic symbol of British collective remembrance of military sacrifice (Basham 2016b), offers an example of how everyday interactions between people and military institutions can help to organise public spaces and people's bodies in accordance with military interests. In similar fashion, opponents of the Poppy Hijab can be understood as opponents of militarism. Their rejection of military symbols illuminates how militarism is a form of power that is multilayered, contested and constantly evolving.

## ***Militarisation and the Muslim Identity***

Pivotal to this article's discussion of the relationship between Muslims and the British armed forces, it is important to understand militarisation as an exclusionary process. In the process of mobilising militarism at home during the War on Terror, a militaristic British national identity has been forged and consolidated in contradistinction to the Muslim 'Other' (Qureshi & Zeitlyn, 2012). Notably, the contours of inclusion and exclusion under militarisation are constantly shifting. The 'Other' is not a fixed and immutable category, but is 'reformulated according to political circumstances as they vary



over time' (Roberts, 2004, 728). This explains how Muslim communities have been identified as the 'new' suspect community during the War on Terror whilst previously demonised groups such as the Irish community have been re-included into the fold of Britishness (Pantazis & Pemberton, 2009).

This transformation of Muslims into the mould of the 'enemy within' occurred, in part, through a range of security measures implemented to counter the threat of terrorism in Britain. The threat of 'home-grown' terrorism came to be acknowledged by UK authorities after it was revealed that three of the four bombers involved in the 7/7 terrorist attacks in London in 2005 were British-born males of Pakistani immigrants. However, under a generalising narrative that presumes Muslims to be inherently risky and a threat to Britain's 'way of life', these security measures disproportionately targeted Muslim people by using race as a frame of reference for expulsions, incarcerations, surveillance, policing and repression (Pitcher, 2009). In the initial stages of the war, the security services systematically built up 'widespread intelligence about particular groups or communities deemed potential security risks', rather than specifically targeting activities against individuals with demonstrable links to terrorist organisations such as Al Qaida (Fekete, 2004, 8). At each juncture of the Terrorism Act 2000, with amendments made in 2001, 2005 and 2006, the definition of terrorist offences and the police's powers expanded (Klausen, 2009, 404). Under the Anti-Terrorism Act, which granted the Home Secretary increased powers to outlaw suspect foreign terrorist groups operating within the UK, 31 out of 40 proscribed described themselves as mainly Islamic in inspiration (Birt, 2006, 695-6). By September 2004, 664 persons, nearly all of whom were Muslims, had been taken into detention without trial under anti-terrorism legislation (Modood, 2006, 47). Moreover, Muslims were disproportionately targeted in the upsurge of police stop-and-searches. Between 2001-02 and 2003-04 there was a 393 percent rise in stop-and-searches of Asians and Asian people were stopped nearly twice the frequency between 2003-04 and 2005-06 (Pitcher, 2009, 148). The result of this racially framed security policy is that by merely 'belonging to a particular community or group is, in itself, a security threat' (Fekete, 2004, 8).

In the UK, a racially charged narrative that demonised 'cultural representations' of Muslims and Islam ran alongside these security measures (Amin-Khan, 2010). In this narrative, Muslims have been aligned with 'backwardness' and 'barbarism'; a people 'obsessed with praying, veiling, intolerance towards others, demands for special treatment, regularly testing the tolerance and goodwill of 'host' countries' (Williamson & Khiabany, 2010, 86). This discourse, propagated in the media and by public officials, has homogenised all Islamic people as one, monolithic group. Islamic culture is constructed as static, immutable, fixed and cabined whilst 'pluralisms, contests and dissent that exist within the tradition' are closed off (Kapur, 2002, 217). These cultural representations have been key to the War on Terror, confirming the ways in which this discourse permeates through different levels of militarisation. This is connected to the ways in which the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been justified in language reminiscent of Britain's colonial era, with an 'enlightened' Western realm seeking to 'save' Muslims from 'barbaric savages' (Mutua, 2001). This narrative works to reinforce militarism by formulating the War on Terror into a Manichean format of 'good' versus 'evil'. Moreover, as Edward Said (1997, xxii) has written, the central role of the nation in producing sentiments of alienation amongst minority communities (e.g. through security measures) is eradicated in this exclusionary discourse:

'much of what one reads and sees about Islam... represents the aggression as coming from Islam because that is what "Islam" is. Local and concrete circumstances are thus obliterated. In other words, covering Islam is a one-sided activity that obscures what "we" do, and highlights instead what Muslims and Arabs by their very flawed nature are'.





The British right-wing media (including *The Daily Mail*, *The Sun* and *The Telegraph*) has played a central role in perpetuating this narrative. Tellingly, in a report by the European Council against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2016, the UK's right-wing press was damned for using 'offensive, discriminatory and provocative terminology' in relation to Muslims (Dearden, 2016). Moreover, in 2017 British media organisations were forced to retract and correct a 'consistent stream' of inaccurate and misrepresentative stories in the news which predominantly associated Muslims with violence and extremism (Sherwood, 2017). It is worth noting the powerful influence which the right-wing media has on British political and social discourse. *The Daily Mail*, *The Sun* and *The Telegraph* are amongst the most read newspapers in both print and online in the UK (Ponsford, 2015). Indeed, according to a 2016 poll by YouGov, the British press is said to be the 'most right-wing in Europe' (Dahlgreen, 2016).

In this context of exclusion, how have Muslims been expected to integrate during the War on Terror? Crucially, the construction of the Muslim 'enemy within' contains within it an important dichotomy that distinguishes between 'moderate' and 'extremist' Muslims. As Mamdani (2002, 766) has written, after 9-11 the discourse surrounding Muslims shifted from one associated with Samuel Huntington's famous *Clash of Civilisations* theory, which 'demonized Islam in its entirety', to a more moderated discourse which distinguished between 'good Muslims' and 'bad Muslims'. By the same token, this good/bad Muslim dichotomy is similarly expressed in the notion of the 'moderate' versus the 'extremist' Muslim. For instance, in 2006 Michael Gove (2006), the ex-Secretary of State for Justice, wrote in *The Guardian* newspaper that the government should do more to 'engage with moderate Muslims' in order to tackle extreme Islamist ideology. For Gove, engaging with the 'moderate' Muslim would broaden the debate 'beyond the agenda of the most theologically conservative and politically militant [Muslims]'. As Back et. al (2002, 450) argue, 'the injunction to be moderate is ultimately the precondition for inclusion within the space offered to minority communities'. This dichotomy between 'moderate' and 'extremist' offers Muslims a choice of endorsing a particular kind of (militarised) British national identity or to come under suspicion as 'obscurantist and isolationist, or rejectionist, anti-West and possibly a supporter of violence and terrorism' (Birt, 2006, 693).

These modes of inclusion and exclusion are useful for thinking about British Muslims who either join or publicly venerate the military as a way to demonstrate their British identity. As an institution at the centre of British life, sites of remembrance offer a symbolic and institutional apparatus for Muslims to exhibit their British credentials and prove they are not an enemy of the state. As we will see in the discourses surrounding the 2014 Centenary Commemorations, acts of remembrance frequently give way to discussions of Muslims using sites of memorialisation to prove their Britishness and steal attention away from extremists. On the other hand, opponents of the Poppy Hijab who reject military institutions are anxious to not be labelled an 'extremist' for their unorthodox position.

## **Militarised Multiculture**

Focusing attention on the military, I will explore Vron Ware's concept of *militarised multiculture* to understand the military's motivations to include Muslims in the Centenary Commemorations. In relation to the armed forces' recruitment of ethnic minorities, *militarised multiculture* helps us to understand how a visibly diverse army plays a key role in mediating a progressive image of British identity (Ware, 2012a, 256). *Militarised multiculture* captures the ways in which ethnic minority soldiers are presented by the military to the public, for example through advertisements. In this way, *militarised multiculture* speaks to a superficial form of multiculturalism where ethnic minorities are used in a tokenistic manner to uphold a progressive, liberal image of Britain.





To illustrate her concept, Ware (2012a, 280) uses the example of an image in an exhibition opened by the Ministry of Defence in 2002, entitled, 'We Were There'. The exhibition was intended to be a tribute to the contribution made to Britain's defence by ethnic minority communities over the past 250 years. The image that Ware draws attention to showed a British Muslim soldier 'giving thumbs up to a Chinook helicopter delivering aid, explained by a caption that read: 'Flight Lieutenant Sohail Khan in Pakistan where he helped with the earthquake relief effort' (Ware, 2012a, 281). For Ware (2012a, 282), by celebrating how a Muslim uniformed man was 'bringing aid to the vulnerable in the interests of British security', the image suggested that 'military service was not about *fighting* Muslim antagonists, it was about *helping* them'. This sort of strategic representation does work for militarisation in at least three ways. First, by posturing a multicultural image with a commitment to cultural diversity, the military is 'repositioned in the centre of national life' (Ware, 2012a, 279). Second, this process works as a recruitment strategy to attract more ethnic minorities to join the forces. Third, it helps to build support for unpopular foreign policies, 'or at least allaying public unease at the horrific costs entailed in endless deployments' (*ibid.*).

Ware also situates *militarised multiculturalism* in the context of the rise of Islamist extremism and the threat of British Muslims being vulnerable to radicalisation. Against this background, the recruitment and representation of Muslims in the military is used to counter extremist ideology and, as Ware (2012a, 282) asserts, 'to manage the risk of 'home-grown terrorism''. As I will delineate in the empirical section, the memorialisation of Muslim soldiers during the Centenary Commemorations involved mobilising multicultural representations of the armed forces to counter extremist ideology in the War on Terror.

Another important feature of *militarised multiculturalism* is how this virtuous image of Britishness conceals the endemic nature of institutional racism inscribed in British institutions. Following public allegations of racist bullying and discrimination in the armed forces, since the 1990s the British military has been undergoing significant changes to increase the role of ethnic minorities in its ranks. Steps taken by the armed forces to be a more accommodating employer for ethnic minorities have included introducing religiously sensitive dress codes and food preparation, increasing outreach schemes and specialist recruitment teams that target ethnic minority communities and monitoring race relations activities (Basham, 2013, 113). Furthermore, in 2005 Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh and Hindu chaplains were appointed to provide a support network for soldiers of religious minorities.

As well as adapting to wider normative changes in society, a range of regional and domestic equality legislation has placed responsibilities and obligations on armed forces across the Western world to better represent their respective populations. These include, on a national basis, 'The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Equality Act 2006, and the Equality Act 2010', and regionally, 'a number of European Union Directives in the area of E&D and human rights (Hussain & Ishaq, 2016, 36). Furthermore, not only does Ware point out how ethnic minorities serve as a strategic asset at home, but also how they are used strategically abroad. After a decade of disastrous military expeditions, Britain learnt that 'a better knowledge of 'culture' and specifically of 'cultural difference' was an essential tool in modern warcraft' (Ware, 2012b, 10). The deployment of Muslim soldiers in Afghanistan to operate as intermediaries between the military and Afghan people is a clear example of this (Ware, 2012a, 21-22). Indeed, the UK government would not have been able to conduct military operations in the War on Terror without recruiting soldiers from Commonwealth countries (Ware, 2012a, 280). However, despite these efforts the military has continuously been struggling to gain more Muslim recruits. As of 2016, there are 650 Muslims serving in the UK armed forces, representing only 0.33% of the armed forces as a whole (MoD, 2016). Moreover, only 42% of ethnic minority personnel are from the UK, with the remaining 58% coming from foreign and Commonwealth countries (*ibid.*).



Paradoxically, institutional racism is both a motivation and an obstacle for the armed forces to recruit more ethnic minorities. In an important study, Hussain and Ishaq (2002) provide polling data on British Pakistani Muslims' perceptions of the Armed Forces. Importantly, the authors find that the majority of those questioned believe institutional racism to be the main reason why Muslims would not join the military (Hussain & Ishaq, 2002, 604). Victoria Basham (2009a; 2013) has also written extensively on the issue of institutional racism in the armed forces. Through interviews with sexual and ethnic minorities in the military, she reveals the realities of bullying, harassment and discrimination in the ranks. The conclusion she draws from her fieldwork is that despite the military's efforts to recruit minorities, the armed forces 'continues to privilege white, heterosexual male ways of being over those of 'others'' (Basham 2009a, 412). This is largely because the institutional racism within the military is a reflection of structural racism in wider British society. Paraphrasing Cynthia Cockburn (1989, 217), Basham states that the armed forces' diversity policy may 'give disadvantaged groups a boost up the ladder' but the 'structure of that ladder and the disadvantages it entails' remain in place' (Basham 2013, 113). Against this background, it is clear what kind of work a visibly diverse army can play in constructing a progressive, liberal veneer for the British military.

As we have seen, Ware's notion of *militarised multicultural* is useful for understanding the intentions of the military during the 2014 Centenary Commemorations. However, a gap in Ware's work is applying *militarised multicultural* to sites of memorialisation. In sites of memorialisation, the role of memory in producing shared national experiences is crucial to processes of militarisation. Before turning to the empirical section, I will outline the powerful role of memory in sites of remembrance to complete this article's theoretical framework. As I will discuss, memorialisation reinforces Vron Ware's notion of *militarised multicultural*, in relation to the military's strategic representation of ethnic minorities to inform a progressive sense of national identity.

## Memorialisation

The role of memory in processes of militarisation is significant because of the powerful role it plays in forging a shared sense of national identity. Following Jay Winter (2006, 18), we can understand 'collective memories' as powerful social constructions: key to the formation of identities, both personal and national. In sites of remembrance, a sense of 'collective memory' is created 'when collectives come together to recall significant events, events which tell them who they are as a group' (Winter, 2006, 154). This conceptualisation of memory is useful for understanding Britain's annual remembrance commemorations which involve mutually inclusive rituals, symbols and stories of remembrance, subscribed to widely in British society (Mycock, 2014, 107). British war commemoration typically draws upon shared experiences and memories of past conflicts, encouraging sites of shared loss (*ibid.*).

According to Paul Gilroy (2005, 2006), the memories of Britain's previous wars play a central role in mediating the relationship between British identity and Muslims during the War on Terror. Gilroy has discussed how a 'melancholic' memory of Britain's lost imperial stature continues to shape the dominant cultural and psychological dynamics of British society. Through his notion of British 'postcolonial melancholia', Gilroy explains how the UK has come to terms with its loss of imperial status through an assertive and discriminatory British nationalism along racial lines. For example, expressions of a 'thwarted desire for greatness, for the need to retain a place at the top table, and to the pleasures of punching above our weight' are explained as aftershocks of the nation's loss of Empire (Gilroy, 2006, 30). Moreover, Britain's longing for greatness reproduces an 'imperial impulse' directed towards inferior subjects like immigrants and Muslims (Roberts, 2008, 164). Importantly, postcolonial melancholia diverts British culture into the 'arid pleasures of morbid militia' (Gilroy,

2005, 434), in part, through the memorialisation of war. In contemporary negotiations of identity during the War on Terror, Gilroy (2006, 30) focuses our attention on how 'a heavily filtered and simplified projection of plucky British struggle against Nazi Germany has been brought back into the centre of our embattled public culture':

'Why is that war celebrated as the very core of national identity by people too young to be touched by living memory of it? Why do all of Britain's subsequent conflicts acquire irrefutable legitimacy if they can be presented as its analogs or extensions? Why has life in that wartime been moulded to represent the last occasion on which authentic, undiluted, monocultural Britons were absolutely certain as to who they were and what they stood for?'

Here, we can extract an important idea from Gilroy's work. His notion that Britain's subsequent conflicts can 'acquire irrefutable legitimacy' through memory of past conflicts is pertinent regarding the Centenary Commemorations and the War on Terror. As I will highlight, the remembrance events have featured discourses which attempt to universalise certain values across British military history, lending legitimacy to Britain's contemporary efforts in the war against extremism and terrorism.

However, contra Gilroy, rather than presenting an 'authentic, undiluted, monocultural' notion of Britishness, the 2014 Centenary Commemorations have involved a considerable effort to shed light on the contribution of Muslim soldiers to Britain's efforts during WWI. These efforts can be seen as attempts to mobilise ideas of Britain as a tolerant, liberal and diverse society. As Bongiorno (2014, 97) has written, regurgitating multicultural memories of military history mobilises a pluralistic notion of what constitutes the defence of the nation. In this way, sites of memorialisation bring historical context to Ware's notion of *militarised multiculturalism*. By stretching *militarised multiculturalism* through memory, the liberal image of Britain takes on timeless proportions. As a matter of comparison, Australia has also attempted to recover a kind of multicultural history of its armed forces in recent years during its version of remembrance commemorations. These efforts have focused on reviving the contribution ethnic minorities made to the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps during WWI, which has been largely neglected in history. Commenting on these attempts in Australia, historian John Hirst has called this mode of argument 'contribution history', in which a seemingly timeless history of multiculturalism lends validity to the contemporary situation surrounding national identity:

'In its continuing search for legitimacy multiculturalism has declared itself ancient. Australia, it is claimed, has always been multicultural. Its population has always been diverse.... Its society is the summation of the 'contributions' made by the various ethnic groups which have constituted its population' (Hirst, 2006, 68).

In the context of Britain's Centenary Commemorations surrounding Muslim soldiers from history, memorialisation strives to counter the effects of time by perpetuating 'a static and eternal image of an idealized and polished past' (Renard, 2008, 296). A timeless memory of British *militarised multiculturalism* 'enshrines the past and sets it in stone' (Renard, 2008, 303). This remaking of military history along multicultural lines manages to construct 'a history that is immutable, sacred and free of rancour and political division, a history that can justify the existence of the nation and remain relatively uncontested' (Mckenna, 2014, 167).

However, memorialisation must also be understood as a contested process. As Winter has written, memory today is 'a source of fractured national, ideological, and cultural forms, forms which are resistant to linear reconstruction' (Winter, 2006, 19). This contested nature of military memories is underlined by how sites of memorialisation can be used in different ways for different political



agendas. For instance, British pacifists use the annual remembrance commemorations to shed light on the horror, waste and tragedy of WWI to legitimise their anti-militarism stance (Winter, 2006, 287). Similarly, in Rwanda memorialisation has been key to contemporary methods of conflict prevention after the brutal civil war and genocide which tore the country apart in the early 1990s. Williams Nkurunziza, the Rwandan High Commissioner, claimed that memorial sites remind Rwandans of the 'failure' of 1994, helping the Rwandan nation to defend itself 'against a recurrence of genocidal ideology' (quoted in McCann, 2013).

Who or what group has the greatest control over memories is important in defining dominant historical narratives. In the context of Britain's remembrance commemorations it is clear that military preferences predominantly infuse sites of memorialisation. Notably, Mycock (2014, 101,) has linked the memorialisation of WWI during Britain's 2014 Centenary Commemorations to the military's desire to recruit more soldiers, arguing that the promotion of commemorative acts and patriotic national myths has been 'driven by a need to justify the scale of losses in [WWI] in the name of the British nation... not least so that others might risk their lives in future wars'.

The construction of dominant historical narratives can subjugate alternative memories which pose a different story of events (Noon, 2004, 341). In other words, the rhetorical construction of memory can be 'concocted at the expense of other historical narratives and to the actual detriment of other humans' (Noon, 2004, 342). Moreover, Bongiorno (2014) has highlighted the danger of including everyone in participating in national commemorative rituals 'if the terms of that inclusion remain unequal'. As he states, 'it becomes easier to criticize as ungrateful those who remain aloof, and as disloyal or even dangerous those sufficiently bold to offer critique' (Bongiorno, 2014, 96). These points are relevant in regards to British Muslims' relationship to the British military and commemoration. In the final part of this article's empirical section, I will give voice to Muslims who contest the dominant narrative instituted during the Centenary Commemorations.

## **The 2014 Centenary Commemorations**

In this empirical section, I will explore the initiatives intended to draw positive connections between Muslims and the British armed forces during the 2014 Centenary Commemorations. These initiatives coincided with an intensification of the War on Terror including the rise of the extremist terrorist organisation Isil in the Middle East and the controversies surrounding young British Muslims travelling to fight in the Syrian civil war alongside enemy jihadists. In this context, there was increasing pressure on Muslims to challenge stereotypes associating them with extremism and to demonstrate their contribution to British society.

These sites of memorialisation reveal militarisation to be a multilayered form of power that plays an important role in drawing the boundaries between inclusion and exclusion in the national community. In order to demonstrate my argument, I will begin by looking at a statement surrounding the Centenary Commemorations by the head of the British army. Subsequently, statements supporting the memorialisation of the esteemed Muslim soldier Khudadad Khan will be reviewed. These examples shed light on the military's exploitation of sites of memory to gain more recruits and to legitimise Britain's campaign in the War on Terror. The combination of Vron Ware's notion of *militarised multiculturalism* and the powerful role of memorialisation will be used in the analysis. Thereafter, I will look at the case of the Poppy Hijab. This section will be split into two parts. First I will explore the arguments of 'advocates' of the Poppy Hijab, followed by the opinions of 'opponents'. Both these Muslim voices reveal the multilayered and contested nature of militarism, the power of memorialisation in military settings and the ways in which military institutions and





symbols act as markers of British identity. I will also show how the coverage of the Poppy Hijab by the right-wing media reinforces the limited modes of belonging available to British Muslims.

As an indication of the desperate times of under-recruitment in the military, military officials have been candid about the use of the Centenary Commemorations to attract more Muslim soldiers. In an interview with the BBC (Malik, 2017) surrounding the military's relationship to British Muslims, head of the British Army General Sir Nick Carter acknowledged the role of memorialisation in the military's recruitment strategy. In the context of the military's endemic recruitment difficulties during the War on Terror, Carter (quoted in Malik, 2017) responds to a journalist's question asking what the army needs to do to recruit more British Muslim soldiers:

'It comes back to understanding what we share in common. It comes back to understanding that the British Army, in support of our government's policy [the War on Terror], stands for values and standards which are I think common to all of our society and particularly the Muslim society that we're seeking to recruit from. I think it's about reminding ourselves that we've got this extraordinary shared historical legacy and that's very resonant as we commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First World War where many Muslim soldiers lost their lives in support of what the British Army and our government was trying to do at that stage'.

In this quote, the role of values and memory prove to be a central component of the armed forces' recruitment strategy. Indelible values associated with military power are constructed in Carter's attempts to blur the boundary between recruitment and remembrance. Carter universalises unspecified 'values and standards', which underpin the government's War on Terror, across British society. Moreover, he claims these values to be compatible with the apparently monolithic 'Muslim society', disregarding the 'pluralisms, contests and dissent that exist within' Muslim communities (Kapur, 2002, 217).

The memorialisation of Muslim soldiers from WWI is central to Carter's strategy to attract more Muslim soldiers. He highlights how the memory of the Muslim soldiers who died during WWI can be re-invoked as a powerful reference point of the contribution which Muslims have made to Britain in the past, and therefore can make in the future. In line with Ware's notion of *militarised multiculturalism*, Carter discloses the military's strategic representation of ethnic minorities as a central part of its recruitment technique. In this context, however, *militarised multiculturalism* is given historical validity as the close relationship between Muslims and the armed forces is framed as an 'extraordinary shared historical legacy'. In the words of Hirst (2006, 68), the military has declared multiculturalism 'ancient'. This mythology of amity between Muslims and the military distorts the vexed history of exclusion Muslims have suffered in Britain. Moreover, to the benefit of the military's recruitment aims, such a progressive image of British-Muslim relations conceals the institutionalised racism that plagues the armed forces. This rhetorical strategy is indicative of Renard's (2008, 296) conception of the capacity for memory to 'stop time': '[a] static and eternal image of an idealized and polished past' is projected, bestowing the values of diversity and exceptionalism on British military history. Moreover, values underpinning the UK's wars are constructed as essential qualities of Britishness, serving to legitimise both the military's attempts to recruit more Muslim soldiers and their efforts in the War on Terror.

## **Khudadad Khan**

The memory of the British Muslim soldier Khudadad Khan who served during WWI has provided the military with a heroic protagonist to personalise this narrative. In October 2014, army officials,



peers, MPs, historians and religious leaders signed a letter in *The Telegraph* calling for greater recognition of Khudadad Khan, the first Muslim to be awarded the Victoria Cross (the highest accolade of the UK's honours system) in 1914. This letter was written on the same day as the Minister for Communities led formal tributes to Khudadad Khan. And on the following year, on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2015, MP Eric Pickles presided over the laying of a memorial paving stone for the soldier's sacrifice. The supporting actors in these various sites of memorialisation eulogised Khan's service to the nation by retelling the Muslim soldier's bravery and heroism on the Western Front. For example, in the letter written in *The Telegraph*, it begins with the story of Khan's courageous activities on the battlefield:

'As the line was pushed back, the machine gunner, badly wounded and massively outnumbered, held off the German advance long enough for Indian and British reinforcements to arrive and prevent the enemy making the final breakthrough. He was the sole survivor of his team' (Dannatt et. al, 2014).

Supportive statements surrounding Khan's memorialisation underscore the multi-layered processes of militarisation infusing these sites of memory. For instance, returning to the letter of support for Khan's memorialisation, according to the writers the sacrifice of Muslims for the nation must be recollected in order for contemporary multiculturalism to be realised:

'It is important today that all of our children know this shared history of contribution and sacrifice if we are to understand fully the multi-ethnic Britain that we are today. The gallant Sepoy Khan embodies that history' (Dannatt et. al, 2014).

Again, 'the shared history of contribution and sacrifice' is mobilised, evidencing *militarised multiculturalism* through memorialisation. The Muslim identity of Khan is used as a reminder of Britain's history of accepting and promoting diversity in the 'on-going battle of Britishness' (Ware, 2012a, 279). In this way, the memorialisation of Khan is used to characterise Britain's attachment to multiculturalism as a historical and ongoing commitment. Both Britain's troubled history of domination and exploitation which typify the colonial experience for many ethnic minorities (Bongiorno, 2014), and the contemporary circumstances of marginalisation of Muslims in the UK during the War on Terror, are washed over. Through memory, Britain's military and its wars accumulate an eternal image of progressive diversity and causal justness.

Importantly, the memory of Khan's heroism has also been used in support of the government's fight against Islamist extremism. Against the backdrop of young British Muslims leaving to fight for extremist groups like Isil in the Middle East, Muslim academic and one of the signatories of the letter in *The Telegraph* Dilwar Hussain (quoted in Malnick, 2014) explains how Khan's memorialisation can be useful to counter extremist ideology.

'the quiet dignity of our commemoration of Khudadad Khan's bravery and service is perhaps the most powerful riposte we could possibly send to the sickening extremism of Isil' (Hussain quoted in Malnick, 2014).

Memorialisation in this context serves to transport Khan's heroic soldiering from the Western Front to the febrile streets of contemporary Britain where young British Muslims are turning over to enemy lines. Effectively, Khan is transfigured into a symbolic recruiting sergeant for the contemporary armed forces. As Ware has written, his memory is mobilised to 'manage the threat at home' (Ware, 2012a, 282). A wider point can also be made here in relation to the legitimacy of the War on Terror. By recollecting the memory Khan's heroism, an essential national spirit is mobilised in favour of Britain's contemporary efforts in the War on Terror. The twin notions of diversity and just cause are



tactfully laced through Britain's military history, attaching 'irrefutable legitimacy' (Gilroy, 2006, 30) to Britain's contemporary 'good' versus 'evil' fight against Islamist extremism.

Intriguingly, in this comment Hussain also makes use of the atmosphere of respect and peacefulness ('the quiet dignity') inherent to Remembrance settings as a rhetorical device to counter the 'sickening extremism' of Isis. Consequently, not only is the memory itself useful, but the very act and performance of memorialisation is weaponised to counter extremist ideology. In this example of militarisation through memorialisation, the threat of extremism is countered and the War on Terror is refuelled.

## ***The Poppy Hijab***

The interactions between militarism and the boundaries of British identity are elucidated most forcefully in the case of the Poppy Hijab. These interactions shed new light on the complex ways in which militarisation processes work through sites of remembrance. Before exploring the coverage in the right-wing media and the opinions of opponents to the initiative, I will begin my analysis by focusing on the advocates of the Poppy Hijab.

### ***Advocates***

By listening to advocate Muslim voices the deeply complex and multilayered nature of military power is revealed. In an environment of suspicion and hostility surrounding Muslims, these British Muslims have been drawing on military institutions and symbols during the Centenary Commemoration to authenticate their British identity and prove that not all Muslims are extremists. For advocates, the Poppy Hijab provides Muslims with a symbol to disrupt and break free from stereotyping narratives that question their contribution to British society. As Maxwell (2006, 738) has written, the 'acceptance of national symbols, institutions, and tangible involvement and investment in the community' are powerful forms of political and civic participation that will increase the likelihood of minority communities identifying with the nation. In other words, the Poppy Hijab offers alienated Muslims a powerful tool to assert their Britishness.

Tabinda-Kauser Ishaq, the Muslim arts student, who worked with British Future and the Islamic Society of Britain to design the Poppy Hijab endorsed the message behind the garment to challenge notions of 'self-segregating' Muslims who do not want to take part in 'normal' British society:

'It's to send out the message that Muslims do care about Remembrance Day and it's to tackle a lot of the misconceptions that are out there. There's a lot of misconceptions that Muslims don't commemorate those that we lost at war and we really want to tackle that' (quoted in Ahmad, 2014).

Moreover, Ishaq (quoted in British First, 2014) validates the idea that the armed forces are the epicentre of British identity and endorses the Poppy Hijab as an embodiment of multiculturalism:

'It's a simple way to say that you're proudly British and proudly Muslim'.

In similar terms, the British military's official Imam, Asim Hafiz outlines how the Poppy Hijab provides Muslims with a symbol of national identity. His approval of the clothing is justified by its potential to destabilise extremist narratives – propounded by both the far-right of British politics and radical Islamists – which claim Islam and British culture are incompatible:



‘[T]o ensure that [Muslims are] not tarnished with an unfavourable brush, it’s only right that we do as much as we can... that we raise awareness that the vast majority of Muslims just want to get on with their everyday life, that we’re just as British everyone else. We need to shut out radicals and extremists on all sides of the divide, so that they are a minority and they are no longer heard’ (Hafiz quoted in Sommers, 2014).

In these examples, the shifting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are overlapping with processes of militarisation. In the UK, ‘one can’t draw sharp lines any more between military and other types of power’ (Selby quoted in Stavrianakis & Selby, 2012, 65). These advocates reinforce the idea that military institutions are the ‘index of true Britishness’ (Qureshi, 2013, 402). Consequently, from a critical perspective it is important to pay close attention to these processes of militarisation and question whether alternative modes of identity are in danger of being marginalised through the Poppy Hijab.

Sughra Ahmed, president of the Islamic Society of Great Britain, has been a main proponent of the Poppy Hijab. In her comments in the media, she has been more forthcoming about refiguring the Muslim identity to counterbalance disproportionate coverage apportioned to Islamist extremists. However, Ahmed’s comment demonstrates how easy it is for these supportive discourses of the Poppy Hijab to slip from revering Muslims’ contributions to British society to reinforcing processes of militarisation. Moreover, in her support for militarised forms of multiculturalism Ahmed (quoted in Doyle, 2014) leans to sidelining different kinds of engagement with British society:

‘It’s also a way for ordinary Muslim citizens to take some attention away from extremists who seem to grab the headlines.... This symbol of quiet remembrance is the face of everyday British Islam – not the angry minority who spout hatred and offend everyone’.

This statement does work for militarism in two ways. First, by constructing a false dichotomy between extremists and ‘ordinary’ Muslim citizens, Ahmed reinforces the limited identities available to British Muslims constructed during the War on Terror. Second, by saying Remembrance ‘is the face of everyday British Islam’, other forms of British and Muslim identity, such as opposition to militarism, are struck out of existence.

Memorialisation has also been key for supporters of the Poppy Hijab. Advocates have been keen to draw connections between the Muslim soldiers of WWI and British Muslims today. For example, Sughra Ahmed (quoted in Doyle, 2014) has insisted on connecting the Poppy Hijab initiative to the memorialisation of Khudadad Khan:

‘We’re launching this today as it’s exactly 100 years since the first Muslim soldier was awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery – Khudadad Khan from Pakistan, who was fighting for Britain on the Western Front in the First World War’.

Along similar lines, one anonymous model of the Poppy Hijab connects her and other models’ support for the Poppy Hijab with her reverence for the sacrifice of Muslim soldiers from the past. She is mindful of the Islamophobic context in which the events have gained significance, highlighting the ways in which the Poppy Hijab can challenge perceptions that Muslims are antithetical to Britishness. Again, in this comment, sites of memorialisation reveal the ways in which military institutions patrol the parameters of national identity:

‘This whole anti-Muslim feeling that everybody has, I think it would be a really good way of Muslims showing that we are British, we are proud of everything that Muslims have done and contributed to the war’ (quoted in Ahmad, 2014).



The role of memorialisation is important here in regards to Muslims and British identity. By identifying with the Muslim soldiers who came before her, the anonymous model conflates the identities of the Muslims who served Britain during WWI with Muslim identities in contemporary British society. Muslim contributions to Britain are framed as a linear progression, from military sacrifice to acts of Remembrance. Memorialisation, in this context, lends legitimacy to the models' claims to Britishness and refashions Britain's military history as a benign sort of multiculturalism. Accordingly, advocates of the Poppy Hijab are simultaneously declaring multiculturalism 'ancient' (Hirst, 2006, 68) whilst performing it as a perennial feature of British society. Furthermore, the military garners an enduring progressive image, reinforcing *militarised multiculturalism* through sites of memorialisation.

Despite these advocates' positive attitudes, the Poppy Hijab has been contentious for some British Muslims. In the final section below, the multilayered and complex characteristics of militarism are further revealed. This opposition to the Poppy Hijab sheds light on alternative forms of British identity which reject military institutions. However, the anxiety amongst some of the opponents of being associated with 'extremism' for rejecting the Poppy Hijab illustrates the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in processes of militarisation.

Before turning to the voices of opposition to the Poppy Hijab, it is worth shedding light on the coverage of the events by the right-wing media. This coverage reinforces the limited modes of belonging available to British Muslims and helps us to gain a sense of how some of the opponents perceived the initiative. *The Daily Mail* and *The Telegraph* have played a central role in promoting the Poppy Hijab (Doyle, 2014; Sanghani, 2015). Due to their history of demonizing Muslims in Britain, it may appear puzzling for this section of the press to highlight positive contributions made by British Muslims to society. However, as Ware (2012a, 279) states, anyone who shows affiliation with the armed forces is 'qualified to sit at the high table of patriotism, as long as they [are] supervised by their hosts who [are] renowned for condemning anything that smack[s] of multiculturalism'.

The language used by the papers in their coverage of the Poppy Hijab is also revealing. In their headlines publicising the Poppy Hijab, the press belie an implicit tone of pressuring rather than of acceptance of Muslims' contributions to the Centenary Commemorations. *The Daily Mail* (Doyle, 2014, emphasis added) promoted the headdress with the headline: 'The Poppy Hijab that Defies the Extremists: British Muslims Urged to Wear Headscarf as Symbol of Remembrance'. Similarly, *The Telegraph's* (Sanghani 2015, emphasis added) coverage of the Poppy Hijab ran with the headline: 'Why British Muslims Need a 'Poppy Hijab' to Remember World War One'. The uses of the words 'urged' and 'need' in these headlines suggest that Muslims *should* or are *required* to wear the Poppy Hijab in order to show they are not a threat to British society. This sort of coverage reiterates the pressure on Muslims to demonstrate their British values. Moreover, as some of the opponents suggest, it also exposes the Poppy Hijab as a proxy for reinforcing Muslims' exclusion under militarisation.

## Opponents

The opponents of the Poppy Hijab have expressed their discontent with the garment via statements and opinion pieces in the media. In their rejection of the Poppy Hijab, these Muslims are contesting two layers of power operating under processes of militarisation. In the context of the Muslim as the enemy 'Other', Muslims who reject military symbols are not only denying a particular configuration of Britishness, but also risk falling into the trap of being labelled an extremist. Their opposition can be perceived, at best, as being at odds with British society, and at worst, as Islamist extremism. As Allen (2014) has written, the Poppy Hijab is a 'shrouded loyalty test': '[n]ot only do Muslims have to prove they're not the enemy but so too that they're not a traitor either' (Allen, 2014). Consequently,



other important forms of political engagement with British identity, such as opposition to war, can be suppressed and vilified.

Writing in the British newspaper *The Independent*, British Muslim Sofia Ahmed (2015) angrily rejected the Poppy Hijab in an article titled, 'No, I Won't Wear the "Poppy Hijab" to Prove I'm Not a Muslim extremist'. Rather than a powerful multicultural symbol, the Poppy Hijab represents a marketing tool for the British military that puts pressure exclusively on Muslims to demonstrate their allegiance to the nation. As she states:

'No other religious group is pressured to prove their allegiance in the same way. Somehow I don't think we'll be seeing a budding Jewish designer marketing a poppy kippa anytime soon' (Ahmed, 2015).

In a similar vein, Faeza Vaid, executive director of the Muslim Women's Network UK, questions why it is specifically Muslim women who are expected to demonstrate their British credentials:

'The idea is to show that we all care about the same things, but why is the burden on Muslim women to prove that sense of shared identity? We wouldn't expect... Sikh men to wear poppy turbans. If you look at it like that it is just ludicrous' (Vaid quoted in Hooper, 2014).

For some, the positive coverage by the right-wing media exposes the Poppy Hijab as a test of allegiance to the nation. Raising scepticism over the initiative's association with elements of Britain's right-wing press, Faeza Vaid casts doubt over the particular formation of British identity offered by the Poppy Hijab, viewing it as a tool for assimilation rather than multiculturalism. Vaid claims the Poppy Hijab provides a way for Muslims to be incorporated into Britishness, but on the condition of conformance to some predetermined criteria. In this way, the Poppy Hijab does not offer Muslims a conduit for inclusion into the nation; rather, it reinforces Muslims' exclusion from British society:

'The fact that it is being promoted by the likes of the Daily Mail, part of the thinking is, 'Okay, you are a little bit British but not British enough. We will accept you, but on our terms'' (Vaid quoted in Hooper, 2014).

Opponents of the Poppy Hijab also shed light on the marginalisation of alternative modes of British Muslim identity under militarisation. Sofia Ahmed affirms that her decision to not wear the poppy is a rejection of militarism. She perceives the Poppy Hijab as part of a wider militarisation strategy to garner Muslim support for the War on Terror. As she writes, the Poppy Hijab is 'nothing but a cynical PR campaign to co-opt Muslim opposition to aggressive foreign policy'. However, in her piece, Ahmed expresses anxiety that without buying the Poppy Hijab, she risks being labelled an extremist. Here, she tries to dissociate her anti-militarism stance from being conflated with extremism, revealing the shifting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion under processes of militarisation. Moreover, she highlights what she perceives as the racial undertows pervading British society through the exclusive attention on judging Muslim behaviour:

'Refusing to wear the poppy is not an 'extremist Muslim' stance; it's an ideological position based on anti-war sentiment. Nobody would accuse a white person of extremism for refusing to wear one' (Ahmed, 2015)

To reinforce the point, Ahmed focuses our attention on occasions of racial profiling and anti-Muslim hatred that she has suffered. These experiences are clear examples of everyday forms of inclusion and exclusion constructed under processes of militarisation. Her contention is that the Poppy Hijab



might be able to provide her with an emblem to better represent herself as non-threatening to society:

‘Admittedly, I almost thought I should buy one - because it might make walking through security checks at airports a little easier. I could get on a train without being accosted by a fully uniformed soldier, drunkenly telling me he joined the army to “kill dirty Muslims”’ (Ahmed, 2015).

The role of memory is also important to Ahmed’s contestation of military power. In this final quote, Ahmed challenges the military’s attempts to construct and weave values of diversity and tolerance through British history. She uses her grandfather’s experiences of UK race-relations since the end of the British Empire. Before emigrating from India to Britain, Ahmed’s grandfather was ‘one of the 2.5 million Indian men’ to fight for Britain during the Second World War. Despite his service to the nation, Ahmed cites the racial hatred her grandfather suffered after he returned to Britain, because of discourses propounded by far-right politicians and political organisations. In similar ways to antecedent speakers, Ahmed lends historical legitimacy to her argument by unifying her experiences of Islamophobia with her grandfather’s experiences of discrimination. Her conclusion that Muslims have suffered racist abuse throughout the 20th Century stands to counter the positive narrative of British diversity and tolerance constructed during the Centenary Commemorations. ‘Confronted with the memorial laziness of collective memory, or with the oppressive force of official memory’, opponents of the military’s narrative such as Ahmed reclaim their own version of history ‘which is concealed in the official and collective versions’ of events (Renard, 2008, 299). In this way, Ahmed is disrupting the dominant historical narrative laid down by military authorities:

‘Only a few decades after the war, this man, who survived bombings, ground invasions and prison camps for the sake of Britain, arrived on these shores to be met with racial hostility and discrimination that he would have to endure until he went to his grave. He lived in the UK through the speech by Enoch Powell, and groups like the National Front telling him to ‘go back where he came from”. The sad fact is that our forefathers laid down their lives for this country and they were rewarded with nothing but humiliation and degradation. Things haven’t changed much, the rise of Islamophobia means their grandchildren and great grandchildren suffer new hues of abuse and negative stereotyping’ (Ahmed, 2014).

In summary, opponents of the Poppy Hijab have demonstrated that militarism is an exclusionary form of power that garners support for war. War is supported through the recruitment of new soldiers and the attachment of certain values associated with progressiveness to the armed forces. However, in the last example, Sofia Ahmed uses history to her own advantage. The memory of her grandfather’s discrimination in Britain coupled with her own experiences sends ruptures through the dominant historical narrative of British exceptionalism promoted during the 2014 Centenary Commemorations.

## Conclusion

This article has argued that the 2014 Centenary Commemorations in Britain represent complex, multi-layered forms of militarisation that garner support for war and reveal the shifting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in the national community. Specifically, this article focused on the efforts by army officials, peers, politicians, academics, religious leaders and supportive British Muslims to include Muslims from the past and present in these events. The analysis throughout this article was informed by critical literature in relation to militarisation and memorialisation.



At the beginning of the first section, insights from critical military studies illustrated how the boundaries and patterns of British society were drawn along military lines during the War on Terror. It was important to emphasise militarisation as an exclusionary process in these circumstances. The construction of the Muslim as the 'Other' was shown to be integral to the consolidation of Britain's militarised identity. A narrative that relied upon racial and cultural stereotyping of Muslims fed into processes of militarisation and facilitated discriminatory security measures. Thus, by tracing the footsteps of military power, we can find some answers as to why and how categories of people become the enemy 'Other' in times of war. Moreover, the exclusionary effects of these militarisation processes revealed the limited modes of identity available to Muslims under processes of militarisation.

In the third sub-section, I sketched out the strengths of Vron Ware's concept, *militarised multiculturalism*, as a conceptual tool to understand and explain the relationship between the military and ethnic minorities. The strengths of Ware's concept lie in its encapsulation of the many complex issues surrounding ethnic minorities and the military under the broad categories of militarisation and multiculturalism. However, this article recognised a gap in Ware's work in connection to sites and processes of memorialisation. Thus, an important contribution of this article was to draw together Vron Ware's concept of *militarised multiculturalism* with literature concerned with processes of memorialisation in nations with complex, multicultural histories. By combining the literature on the memorialisation of multiculturalism with *militarised multiculturalism*, this article indicated how processes of militarisation can be reinforced through sites of memorialisation. Importantly, by allowing these different bodies of academic literature to speak to each other, this paper provides an excellent starting point for further lines of research concerned with the relationship between militarisation, memorialisation and multiculturalism. Indeed, such research will be essential in the coming years as the Centenary Commemorations will come to some sort of culmination in 2018. The manner in which these, and other, sites of remembrance continue to operate in the UK and elsewhere should hopefully be the source of much academic intrigue.

The blurring between sites of memorialisation and processes of militarisation was brought to light by the armed forces' explicit intentions to use the remembrance commemorations to recruit more British Muslim soldiers. This article elucidated how the memorialisation of Muslim soldiers from WWI played into and strengthened processes of militarisation. For the armed forces, the revival of the historical legacy of a multicultural military served to legitimise the military's image and their contemporary efforts in the War on Terror. Furthermore, the memorialisation of the heroic Muslim soldier Khudadad Khan was shown to be a form of mobilisation to counter extremist ideology in the War on Terror.

At the same time, this article analysed statements made by a number of contemporary British Muslims who have either been supportive of the initiatives or have explicitly opposed them. For participant British Muslims, commemorative activities provide an opportunity to validate their British credentials in an atmosphere where their identity is constantly called into question. To legitimise their claims to British identity, advocates of the Poppy Hijab constructed the military-Muslim relationship in the UK as a harmonious bond that stretches throughout history. This revealed the ways in which military power and processes of memorialisation interact with the contours of British identity. It has been important to note how the military has benefited from initiatives such as the Poppy Hijab, also. The Poppy Hijab works to reproduce militarism in everyday settings. The military stands to gain from these processes as allegations of institutional racism are obscured behind a veneer of a visibly diverse army. Revealingly, the right-wing media's pressuring style of reporting confirmed the limited forms of inclusion available to Muslims in military settings. Furthermore, it was noted how alternative forms of identity can be at risk of being marginalised under militarisation. All in



all, this demonstrates the complex ways in which processes of militarisation, memorialisation and multiculturalism overlap through banal acts of remembrance.

On the other hand, this article shed new light on the opponents of the Poppy Hijab. These actors contest militarism by rejecting the Poppy Hijab and by posing alternative historical accounts of British multiculturalism. For them, the Poppy Hijab is a marketing tool for the armed forces, reducing multiculturalism to banal acts of militarism. The limited available modes of identity to Muslims in the War on Terror were illuminated through the opponents' attempts to disentangle their opposition to militarism from allegations of 'extremism'. However, by advancing an alternative story of racial discrimination and anti-Muslim hatred in Britain, some Muslims have challenged the official narratives of the Centenary Commemorations. According to this paper, through the description of her grandfather's experiences, Sofia Ahmed (2014) is doing two important things in this regard. First, in similar ways to critical analysts, she is seeking 'to return historical memory to its proper place, as one dimension of an ongoing social struggle over the meaning of the past' (Noon, 2004, 342). Second, her counter-narrative disrupts the military's portrayal of history, thus undermining the legitimacy of their attempts to gain more recruits and garner support for war.

The complexity of the relationship between Muslims and the British military means there is ample potential for further lines of research on this topic. One strong possibility is for the application of critical security studies. As this article demonstrated, security measures were central to the exclusion of Muslims during the War on Terror. Moreover, through a critical military studies lens this article perceived Muslims' use of military institutions to prove they are non-threatening to society as banal acts of militarisation. However, from a critical security studies standpoint, these activities could also be observed as 'de-securitising' moves through militarisation, or even as 'acts of resistance to banal securitisation' (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2013, 358). These are just some preliminary ideas, exemplifying the great potential for these events to be located at the intersection between critical military studies and critical security studies.

Another possibility for research is in regard to the Poppy Hijab, which is well disposed for further semiotic analysis. My argument around the opposition to the headdress claimed that Muslims who reject the Poppy Hijab were in contestation with two layers of power under processes of militarisation. These layers of power referred to how opponents risked denying a particular configuration of Britishness, but were also vulnerable to being labelled an extremist. Yet, there are also important gender politics flowing through this initiative that situates Muslim women at the epicentre of the fight against radicalism and extremism (Allen, 2014). More critical analysis intent on deconstructing the multiple layers of power behind the Poppy Hijab would be fruitful, especially as the hijab continues to be at the heart of political controversy in the UK and other Western liberal democracies.

One limitation of this article is that the main source for the Muslim voices has been from the media. Without undermining the importance of the statements made in these settings, more research involving interviews with Muslim participants would be rewarding. Interviews could allow interested scholars to gain a better understanding of Muslims' relationship with the armed forces. This would give voice to more British Muslim citizens, whose voices and identities have been severely restricted since the onset of the War on Terror. My final section on the voices of opposition to the Poppy Hijab has sought to listen to, and think critically about, some of the alternative modes of British Muslim identity that have been sidelined under processes of militarisation. The intention has been to illustrate how military institutions and processes of militarisation are constantly evolving, never fully resolved and should always be open to question.



## About the author

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## Where Does Securitisation Begin? The Institutionalised Securitisation of Illegal Immigration in Sweden: REVA and the ICFs.

by Stina Fredrika Wassen



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### Abstract

*This article investigates how securitisation processes may become institutionalised by examining how the securitisation of illegal immigration at the EU level trickled down and became internalised by the Swedish government and police post-2001. Utilising discourse analysis, it investigates how the Swedish government and police spoke about REVA and the ICFs to show how the two institutions internalised the securitisation of illegal immigration. By applying a sociological understanding of Securitisation Theory, whereby not only speech acts but also contexts and bureaucratic developments are considered, it demonstrates how processes of securitisation can unfold also when securitising speech acts seem hidden.*

**Keywords:** Securitisation Theory; Migration; Border Security; Copenhagen School; Institutionalisation

### Introduction

From the end of 2012 until mid-2014, Sweden witnessed an intense public debate regarding REVA and an increase of internal controls of foreigners (ICFs) carried out by the police. As gradually became known, REVA ("Rättssäkert och Effektivt Verkställighetsarbete"), meaning 'Legally Secure and Efficient Enforcement' was a government initiated project lasting between 2008 and 2014, which sought to increase the number of executed deportations of illegal immigrants from Sweden (Justitiedepartementet 2008b, p.5).<sup>[1]</sup> Through the discussion about REVA, it became known that the great increase in ICFs was a result of Sweden operationalising the Schengen Agreement in 2001, as well as a result of a governmental aim to increasing the number of deportations through REVA.

After REVA became known to the public, journalists and citizens wrote articles and organised protests condemning a seemingly new and intensified governmental focus on finding and deporting illegal immigrants (Heberlein 2013; Lindell 2013; Stark 2012; Åberg 2013). Interestingly, as the government and police began to defend REVA and the ICFs, it became evident that neither institution understood why REVA and the ICFs resulted in intense resistance.

Looking at REVA and the ICFs through the lens of securitisation theory (ST), interesting questions arise. The intensified focus from the government to increase the number of deportations of illegal immigrants clearly points to a securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden. Still, the lack of securitising speech acts on behalf of the government and the police, depicting illegal immigration as a security threat and REVA as the solution to this threat, calls into question a strictly speech

[1]As the discourse utilised by the Swedish government and the police use the terminology of 'illegal immigration', this is the language adopted henceforth in this article. Here, illegal immigration refers to people who either reside in Sweden without having applied for asylum or a residence permit, or people who have had their asylum request rejected but have not left the country. Acknowledging that 'illegal immigration' is not a neutral terminology referring to undocumented migrants, this terminology will still be used henceforth as it is the language employed in the Swedish context.



act approach to securitisation (Wæver 1995). Still, as the founding figures of ST themselves put it, even when the language of security is absent, the process of securitisation may still be taking place (Buzan et al., 1998). In such instances, the threatening character of an issue has become so taken for granted that securitising actors no longer have to justify why an issue poses a threat—the securitisation has become *institutionalised* (ibid).

As many scholars have already demonstrated, immigration has not always been seen as a potent security issue within the European Union (EU) (Boswell 2003; Huysmans 2000; van Muster 2009). Equally, before the 1980s, collaboration on the issue of immigration between EU member states was primarily orchestrated via the United Nations and the Council of Europe, and not through EU institutions (van Muster 2009, p.2; Lavenex 2001). However, as European integration increasingly became understood as a key issue for economic and political stability in the 1980s and 1990s, various platforms within the EU—not least the Schengen Agreement—began to link the topic of immigration to that of terrorism, trafficking and other illegal activity (van Muster 2009; Boswell 2003; Bigo 2002; Bounfino 2004; Mitsilegas et al., 2003). Over the past three decades, immigration has, as Ulrich Beck put it, increasingly become the scapegoat for all the current ills of society (1992, p.75). Truly, the Schengen Agreement has played a crucial role in this securitisation of immigration at the EU level (van Muster 2009; Mitsilegas et al., 2003). As borders within Schengen have been removed, pressure has risen on member states to implement so-called compensatory measures (CM), such as ICFs, in order to counter illegal stay and entry in and to the Schengen area (Boswell 2003; Ette & Fais 2007).

Against this backdrop of a preceding securitisation of illegal immigration on the EU level, the article will investigate how this securitisation process has trickled down to the national level of Sweden, and how it has become institutionalised by the Swedish government and police. Because REVA and the ICFs were not preceded by any justification on behalf of the government or the police, and only became a topic of political debate *after* the media and the public became aware of them, the case study of Sweden serves a particularly valuable example with which to investigate the concept of *institutionalisation* within ST. By examining the increase in ICFs in Sweden post-2001, and the emergence of REVA in 2009, the article asks – *Where Does Securitisation Begin?*

The aim of this article is to examine how the securitisation of illegal immigration has become institutionalised in Sweden through the ICFs and REVA. In doing so, the article will expand on and further develop the existing ST, as well as the current literature regarding the securitisation of immigration. Secondly, by looking specifically at the case study of Sweden, the article will examine how the institutionalisation of a securitisation processes may materialize through bureaucratic and institutional developments, where the threat image is implicit. This specific case study will also illuminate how securitisation processes may not only include one actor-audience relationship, but rather, that multiple relationships—where actors and audiences may change place—can exist. Subsequently, the article will contribute to the existing, albeit underdeveloped, literature on institutionalisation within ST.

In order to explore how the Swedish government and police have institutionalised the securitisation of illegal immigration through REVA and the ICFs, this article will use discourse analysis (DA). Whilst acknowledging the existence of multiple classifications of discourse (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002, p.9; Hansen 2011), the definition utilised here regards discourse as: a series of written or spoken utterances that intersect over a specific topic, policy, identity or alike, and which frames that 'issue' in a certain way, and which also limits the possible responses to the 'issue' described. Building on this definition, the usefulness of adopting DA for this particular investigation lies in the ability of DA to highlight what dominant discourses exist and how they serve to create structures of power and



meaning. Indeed, as Hansen (2006) notes, discourses not only define identities, but also ultimately construct them in relation to one another, creating power structures where some are empowered and others constrained, and where the ability to speak is unevenly distributed. In addition, adopting DA is useful as it helps us to expose the efforts made to make certain discourses and meanings internalised and taken for granted (Milliken 1999). As will be demonstrated in this article, whilst discourses and the meaning of words constantly change, discourse as the representation of things, when reproduced over and over again, may become institutionalised and taken for granted (Neumann 2008, p.61). The ability of DA to go behind and deconstruct 'apparent' meanings of things and to investigate the underlying structures and power dynamics at play (van Dijk 2000) is why it proves particularly useful for this article.

A note on selection: to examine the government's discourse surrounding REVA and the ICFs, a keyword search was conducted using [www.google.se](http://www.google.se) in order to study where and how the Swedish government had mentioned and/or discussed REVA and/or the ICFs. In so doing, four main types of texts were located. Firstly, the appropriation directions regarding REVA, issued between 2008 and 2013 from the government to the police, were analysed in order to examine how the government has spoken about the need to increase the amount of deportations of illegal immigrants. Secondly, parliamentary debates that discussed REVA and/or the ICFs were examined in order to show how the government had spoken about the need for REVA and the ICFs. Thirdly, a close study of the governmental report from 2004 discussing border controls in Sweden was analysed in order to observe how the government's views on illegal immigration had become influenced by Sweden's membership in Schengen. In total, 10 texts were selected for the purpose of examining how the government has spoken about REVA and the ICFs. In order to also examine the official view held by the police regarding REVA and the ICFs, a keyword search was again conducted using [www.google.se](http://www.google.se) in order to locate where and how the police had mentioned and/or discussed REVA and/or the ICFs. In so doing, two main types of texts were identified. Both official statements publicised on various local police organisations' web sites, and two official reports by the National Police Board were analysed in order to study the official view held by the police regarding REVA and the ICFs. In total, 9 texts were selected for the purpose of examining how the police spoke in regards to REVA and the ICFs. Clearly, the list of texts analysed in section 4 is by no means exhaustive and for a larger study a bigger pool of texts would have been included. However, due to the limited scope of this article, the above mentioned texts were chosen as they arguably best display the official view held by the government and the police towards REVA and the ICFs.

This article is divided into five sections. Section 1 provides an overview of the original formulation of ST and explores how the concepts of macrosecuritisation and institutionalisation have so far been articulated within ST. Section 2 engages with two of the key shortcomings of the original formulation of ST, that of the Actor–Audience Relationship, and that of the role of Contexts and Moves within ST. By engaging with the notion of securitising practises, the section also seeks to reignite the concept of institutionalised securitisation in order to develop a more readily available tool when looking at how institutionalisation works empirically. Section 3 introduces the case study of Sweden and looks closer at how the securitisation of illegal immigration has become institutionalised through REVA and the ICFs. By utilising DA of how the government and the police have spoken about REVA and the ICFs, section 4 examines how the two actors have internalised the securitisation of illegal immigration. In section 5, it will be argued that the securitisation of illegal immigration at the EU level has trickled down to the national level of Sweden, resulting in an institutionalised securitisation of illegal immigration by the Swedish government and the police.



## 1. The Copenhagen School and Securitisation Theory: A New Framework for Analysis

The ST was originally articulated by the CS; a group of scholars from diverse theoretical backgrounds who came together to develop a new approach to security studies. As stated at the onset of the defining work of ST, *Security: a new framework for analysis* (Buzan et al., 1998), the traditionalists' conceptualisation of security, which focuses merely on military issues and state security, was too narrow. The CS's development of ST should be seen as a response to the calls for a 'widening and deepening' of the traditional security agenda (Nye & Lynn-Jones 1988; Buzan 2009; Wæver 1995, Farrell 2002). The initial formulation of ST draws heavily on constructivism, which becomes apparent through its notion of security issues as socially constructed as well as its key focus on language as performative and self-referential (Wæver 1995). ST seeks to move beyond the traditional focus on state and military security and instead "explore the logic of security itself to find out what differentiates security and the process of securitisation from that which is merely political" (Buzan et al., 1998, p.4-5). As such, ST refutes the realist argument that pre-existing threats can be readily located 'out there.' Instead, the CS's aim is to incorporate constructivist thinking in order to understand how, by whom and under what circumstances an issue is constructed as a security threat (ibid).

### *Speech Act, Audience and Facilitating Conditions*

The CS contends that security issues are socially constructed. More specifically, by drawing on the work of John L. Austin (1962) and John R. Searle (1969), the CS proclaims that security is a speech act (Buzan et al., 1998). According to the CS, uttering security does more than simply describe a pre-existing threat (Williams 2003; Ciutã 2009). As Ole Wæver puts it: "the utterance *itself* is the act" (1995, p.55 *original emphasis*). Saying 'I do' at a wedding, or naming a child at a baptism, are assertions that not only describe a pre-existing materiality, but also serve to create "social reality for issues" (Stritzel 2014, p.20). Consequently, in a securitisation process, speech acts work to depict issues as "posing an existential threat to a designated referent object" (Buzan et al., 1998, p.21). In so doing, a speech act moves an issue out of the realm of normal politics and legitimises the use of emergency measures to deal with it (ibid). The CS elaborates that what is meant by existential threat and emergency measures depends on the realm or sector in which the designated referent object exists.<sup>[2]</sup> In short, the uttering of the word 'security' is the securitising move that seeks to take an issue "beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics" (ibid, p.23).

However, for a securitisation to be rendered successful, a securitising move does not suffice on its own. As the CS makes evident, an issue is only successfully securitised "if and when the audience accepts it as such" (Buzan et al., 1998, p.25). Against the backdrop that Ole Wæver already in his earlier work formulated security as a speech act (Wæver 1995), we can see how the CS's conceptualisation of securitisation, as in need of audience acceptance, seeks to combine the notion of language as 'self-referential' with the idea of security as an intersubjective practise. For the CS, the securitising actor and the audience together negotiate the construction of security (Buzan et al., 1998). As a continuation of the argument that securitisation is an intersubjective practise, the CS describes three main 'facilitation conditions' that aid the successfulness of a securitisation process (Buzan and Wæver 2003, p.72).

[2]Sectors (military-, political-, economic-, societal-, environmental-sector) for the CS, serve to identify specific kinds of interactions. Within each sector a variety of referent objects and threats can be identified (Buzan et al., 1998:7-8). Importantly, referent objects may reside in multiple sectors at once (Wæver 1999). Identifying different sectors promotes the CS's claim that in theory, any issues can become securitised (C.A.S.E. 2006: 453).





The first facilitating condition is that which refers to the internal grammar of the speech act. This means that a speech act has to construct a threat in such a way that it makes sense to the audience in relation to pre-existing logics of security. More specifically, the speech act must create “a plot that includes existential threat, point of no return, and a positive way out” (Buzan et al., 1998, p.33). The second facilitating condition declared by the CS, refers to external conditions regarding the actor speaking security. Certainly, not every actor is equally able to activate successful securitising processes and the CS emphasises that actors in a relative position of authority will have a greater chance for making a speech act work (ibid). The third, and final facilitation condition has to do with the threat itself. Arguably, if attributes of a perceived threat can be linked to issues that already are regarded as threatening, this can serve to aid a new process of securitisation (ibid).

## *Macrosecuritisation*

Traditionally, the CS has been mainly interested in processes of securitisation taking place at the so-called ‘middle level’ of world politics where “collective political units”, usually states, create friendly or hostile links to each other (Buzan & Wæver 2009, p.253). The argument behind this focus has been that it is the middle level that provides the most activity, and also, that it proves difficult to find audiences at the individual and/or system level of world politics (ibid). The concept of macrosecuritisation then, has been developed in order to “broaden the scope and temporality of a speech act” and to study “the procedural dynamics entailed at different stages of a securitisation process” (Donnelly 2013, p.47). More specifically, macrosecuritisation refers to the ways in which over-arching securitisation processes structure various lower-level securitisations and/or ties them together (Buzan & Hansen 2009; Buzan 2006). One such example has been the Cold War, which for decades served to influence multiple lower-level securitisation processes (Buzan & Wæver 2009). As Buzan (2006) noted, the Global War on Terror can also be regarded as a successful macrosecuritisation.

As with any securitisation, macrosecuritisations require actors, speech acts and accepting audiences (Buzan & Wæver 2009, p.265). The CS contend that in order for a macrosecuritisation to be successful, the securitising actor is most likely a major international power and/or institution. Additionally, successful macrosecuritisations depend on the construction of a higher-level referent object, able to mobilise “the identity politics of a range of actors within [a] system” (ibid, p.268). The strength of this concept is its ability to highlight how securitisation processes never stand on their own but that they often contain several interlinked layers and parallel developments. Further, this umbrella-type securitisation opens up for the existence of multiple audiences across different layers and units and it provides the tools for investigating how different layers and processes interlink (ibid, p.275).

## *Institutionalised Securitisation*

In addition to macrosecuritisation, institutionalisation is another feature of ST by which the CS aims to expand the scope and temporality of speech acts. Indeed, whilst the CS argues that by saying security, something is done (Wæver 1995, p.55), they do not argue that a speech act is defined solely by the utterance of the word security (Buzan et al. 1998, p.27). Patently, there are cases when the word security is used without securitisation taking place as well as instances that operate according to the logic of securitisation without the direct use of the word security (ibid). The CS asserts that processes of securitisation can become institutionalised, whereby the threatening character of an issue has become so internalised that actors no longer have to convince an audience that something is a security threat (ibid). Put differently, institutionalised securitisation makes itself evident when the need for elaborate rhetoric describing the threatening nature of an issue has



become surplus. As the CS contends, when securitisation has become institutionalised, “constant drama does not have to be present, because it is implicitly assumed that when we talk of *this* [...], we are by definition in the area of urgency” (Buzan et al. 1998, p.27 *original emphasis*). One such example of a securitisation that has become institutionalised is the securitisation of HIV/AIDS (Elbe 2006).

In addition, institutionalised securitisation also includes developments whereby already securitised words eventually become so taken for granted that an actor only has to utter that word in order to move new issues into the space of emergency without detailed arguments regarding the threatening character of them. Terrorism is one such word that, when linked to other issues, for example religious fundamentalism, instantaneously securitise them (Buzan & Wæver 2009, p.267). Interestingly, Didier Bigo’s (2000) idea of ‘security continuum’ also seeks to address how fear for one securitised concept may affect people’s feelings towards other issues. For example, crime, unemployment, drugs, terrorism, and migration are often merged together in institutional documents, aiding a general but never justified fear for all phenomena equally. Indeed, the idea of “security continuum” links well to the concept of institutional securitisation in so far as it serves to show how already securitised words such as ‘terrorism’ has been used in such a way as to aid the securitisation of other phenomena, such as migration.

An additional way in which the concept of institutionalised securitisation is used is to refer to the ways in which institutional and bureaucratic procedures may be created in order to deal with a threat that is seen as persistent and/or recurrent (Buzan et al., 1998). As Marco Antonio Vieira has pointed out, an issue has become institutionalised “only if the threat (either perceived or real) is resilient enough to demand the build-up of standing bureaucracies and procedures” (2007, p.140).

After having briefly covered the CS’s original formulation of ST we now move on to investigate its shortcomings. The CS’s formulation of ST has received multiple and constantly evolving criticisms from a vast array of scholars. This massive collection of reviews has formed what is now spoken of as the ‘second generation’ within ST. The next section will first engage with existing criticism of the CS and thereafter advance beyond the current debate in order to improve the concept of institutional securitisation.

## **2. The Second Generation and the Re-ignition of Institutionalised Securitisation**

### ***Audience(s) and Actor(s)***

The central claim of the CS is that (in)security is intersubjectively constructed in a dialectic process within which both actor and audience are key. Whilst securitising actors provide securitising moves, audience acceptance is crucial for the success of any securitisation process (Buzan et al., 1998). Despite the centrality of this relationship for the CS however, it has been left largely under-theorised. As Myriam Dunn Cavelty notes, whilst the CS argues that the success of a securitising move is dependent on the acceptance by an audience, “it remains largely unclear what audience must accept what argument and for how long” (2008, p. 26). Following this uncertainty, several scholars have sought to demonstrate that both actor and audience within a securitisation process constantly vary. For instance, Bigo (2000) and the C.A.S.E Collective (2006) have revealed how not only political elites but also special agencies may occupy the role of securitising actors. In a similar vein, by examining how securitisation processes may work in non-democratic contexts, Juha Vuori (2008) has shown how the audience may vary between power elites, the military, or a group of fundamentalists (ibid, p.72). Importantly, Vuori contends that it does not make sense to try and



allocate a constant audience within ST, as both audience and actor are context dependent (ibid, p.72).

Apart from identifying the existence of multiple kinds of actors and audiences, scholars have also shown how securitising actors may target multiple audiences at the same time (Balzacq 2005; Roe 2008; Vuori, 2008). In addition, Michael Williams (2011) has stressed how, in a securitisation process, an audience is not a passive category. Rather, securitisation takes place in a dialectic process *between* actors and audiences. As Paul Roe has made evident, through examining the UK's decision to invade Iraq in 2003, it is greatly misleading to perceive an audience as one single coherent actor. To the contrary, Roe's work points to how one securitisation process may contain multiple audiences and that the links between audiences and actors are multifaceted and complex (2008). In addition, after having been inspired by Balzacq's notion of moral and formal kinds of support (2005, p.184-185)<sup>[3]</sup>, Roe argues that not only may a securitisation actor need the support from different audiences; securitisation is a patent two-stage process. This process includes one "stage of identification", wherein a securitising move is made, and one "stage of mobilisation" where necessary responses to the perceived threat are developed (ibid, p.620). In short, not only does an audience provide different kinds of support, there are also differences as to what an audience is asked to concur with, i.e. "this is a threat" and/ or "given that this is a threat, this is what I propose we do about it" (ibid, p.622). In addition to this claim presented by Roe, it is of importance that we do not perceive of audience acceptance as a zero sum game. Truly, a securitisation move can be accepted by some part of an audience whilst simultaneously be rejected by another. What is important then, is that an actor receives the support (formal or informal) of enough of the audience—"the critical mass" (Vultee 2011, p.83) – in order to legitimise the use of extraordinary measures to deal with it.

As the authors above have shown, we must constantly 'look and see' (Wittgenstein 1958; Donnelly 2013), in each case of securitisation who the actors and audiences are and what role they play in the process of constructing a threat, as well as legitimising the measures suggested or used to deal with it. In addition, we must acknowledge that processes of securitisation take place among entities where power is not evenly distributed and that this affects actors' and audiences' ability to make or accept a securitising move (Vuori 2008). Just like Hansen has argued that some individuals are less able than others to speak security (2000), the question should also be asked regarding audiences' (in)ability to accept securitising moves. Accordingly, applying this 'sociological' approach to securitisation (which will be discussed at length below) – whereby social-historical contexts are seen as key in order to understand how securitisation works – allows us to see how actors and audiences are truly mutually constituted and context dependent. In effect, it also allows us to recognise that neither actors nor audiences, are "fully constituent [entities], across the board, [...] but emerging [categories] that must be adjudicated empirically, before being set as a level of analysis" (Balzacq 2011a, p.2).

## Contexts and Moves

In addition to the various critiques directed at the CS for its failure to provide adequate theoretical clarity regarding the concepts of actors and audiences, the CS has also been criticised for relying too much on the idea of language as performative, which has made the CS put too much emphasis on the speech act as an event and as a self-referential practise (McDonald 2008; Balzacq 2011a). Indeed, this kind of focus makes itself present in *Security: A new Framework of Analysis* (1998), as well as in Wæver's earlier work (1995). It is problematic in two main ways.

[3]There are multiple ways in which an audience can accept a speech act. A securitising actor is sensitive to both *formal* and *moral* support. Although moral support is generally needed to a securitisation to be successful, it is formal support by institutions that can sanction extraordinary measures to actually be implemented (Balzacq 2005).



Firstly, the way in which the CS stresses the importance of language as performative, serves to make securitisation seem to be something that happens at a particular moment in time (McDonald 2008). This is problematic for several reasons. By focusing on 'moments of securitisation', the CS ignores the way in which issues can become constructed as security threats over extended periods of time (Bigo 2002; Abrahamsen 2005). Truly, securitisation is not an immediate or irreversible act (Salter 2008, p.325). For instance, the securitised issue of the war on drugs in the US has continued to rise and fall as a prominent 'thing' in the public imagination, "largely independent from the 'actual' or empirical degree of threat" (ibid). Thus, the fixity of the CS formulation of securitisation, which describes a very lineal trajectory of politicisation, securitisation, and (hopefully) de-securitisation<sup>[4]</sup>, hinders investigation as to how security issues move in and out of security sectors over time (ibid).

A second problem with the CS's notion of securitisation, which relies too much on a speech act approach to securitisation and that pays too little attention to context and historical factors, is that it does not help us understand why a certain securitising move is successful at a particular moment in time. Also, such an approach does not provide clarity as to why a certain actor can speak security, or why a securitising move is received in a certain manner (McDonald 2008, p.576). For all of these questions, analysis has to include a wider time-span and a more constructivist understanding of how securitising discourses emerge and unfold, which a strictly textual and language-focused ST does not allow. With all of this in mind, the analysis undertaken in this article adopts a sociological approach to securitisation (Balzacq 2010). Rather than taking categories such as audiences and actors as static and pre-given, a sociological view permits us to constantly 'look and see' (Wittgenstein 1958; Donnelly 2013) and ultimately unpack, how actors securitising moves and audiences are all embedded in larger contexts and discourses (Stritzel 2007). As Mark Salter puts it, "the discourse of securitisation must be understood as situated within a relationship between speaker-audience and within a context that predates the actual securitizing act" (Salter 2008, p.326).

## *Securitising Practises*

In addition to the arguments previously made, the fruitfulness of adopting a sociological approach towards securitisation is that it allows for analysis to not only take discourse into account, but also practises. Because a sociological approach not only focuses on speech acts, it permits us also look at what happens beneath and above the level of securitising discourse. As pointed out by Balzacq (2011b), only focusing on what goes on at the discursive level misses out on the subtle, but decisive, processes of securitisation that exist around it (ibid, p.15). Indeed, a sociological take on securitisation makes way for research to focus on practises in addition to speech acts (Bigo 2001a; Bigo & Tsoukala, 2008).

As has already been alluded to, securitisation may occur even when the word security is absent (Buzan et al., 1998). Indeed, the very nature of institutionalised securitisation, whereby a security issue has been taken so much for granted that actors no longer have to explain its threatening character, often results in a lack of drama, usually associated with a securitising move. Whilst it would be misleading to say that securitising discourse is absent in cases of institutionalised securitisation, securitising discourse may nonetheless become hidden. In order to reveal the processes at play in cases of institutionalised securitisation, analysis must therefore be able to also examine various institutions and practises that have been set up in order to deal with a given threat. As Sarah Léonard notes, in instances like these, "the acts of the bureaucratic structures or networks linked to security practices and the specific technologies that they use [...] may play a more active role in securitisation processes than securitising speech acts" (2011, p.235).

[4]For explanation regarding de-securitisation see for example (Buzan et al., 1998; Aradau 2004; Behnke 2006; Hansen 2001; Knudsen 2001).



As pointed out by Balzacq (2011b, p.15) “securitising practises are enacted primarily through policy tools”. For Balzacq, policy tools refer to “tools used by agents [and/or] agencies to cope with public problems, defined as threats” (ibid). Because tools rest upon a kind of knowledge about a certain security issue, they can be seen to embody a specific threat image as well as a notion about what ought to be done about it (ibid, p.16). As a result, policy tools adopted to deal with security issues tell an audience “what the securitising actor is thinking” (ibid, p.17). Whilst Balzacq (2008) has explained the difference between policy tools and ‘instrument of securitisation’ in great length (2008, p.79), the way in which his argument will be utilised here concurs with Léonard’s use of it.

In accordance with Léonard, securitising practises are understood as “activities that, by their very intrinsic qualities, convey the idea to those who observe them – directly or indirectly – that the issue they are tackling is a security threat” (Léonard 2011, p.237). There are two types of practises. The first are those practices that are often utilised in order to combat matters widely perceived as security issues. For instance, using the military to tackle an issue that previously has not been combatted in such a way, tells those observing that this is a serious matter. The second set of practises are the so-called ‘extraordinary’ (ibid). Importantly, “extraordinary” here only means that the securitising practise used to combat the specific issue at hand, has not been utilised for this particular purpose in the past.

Whilst the difference between these two sets of practises may be vague (indeed the two types overlap), the utility of adopting such a broad approach to “extraordinary measures” is linked to a more comprehensive understanding of what securitisation means (Léonard 2011, p.238). Rather than following the narrow understanding of securitisation, visible in how the CS arguably focuses too much on the existential character of threats, this broader understanding of security allows the subsequent analysis to approach the practises adopted by the Swedish government and police as *securitising practises*.

## *Reigniting the Concept of Institutionalised Securitisation*

As the analysis above makes evident, although the CS theorists themselves put forth the idea of institutionalised securitisation (Buzan et al., 1998), the concept does not sit well with the CS’s understanding of security as a speech act. Indeed, the traditional understanding of securitisation focuses too much on specific actors speaking security in particular moments in time, and too little on overarching contexts, discourses, and practises that perpetuate the idea of an issue as threatening. On the basis of this criticism, a new conceptualisation of institutionalised securitisation emerges. By building on the sociological understanding of securitisation outlined by Balzacq (2010; 2011b), the approach adopted in the subsequent analysis of the institutionalisation of the securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden will be able to go beyond the shortcomings of a strictly speech-act focused notion of securitisation in two main ways.

Firstly, by building on the idea that context and socio-historical processes really matter, the analysis undertaken below will contribute to the understanding that in order to properly grasp how processes of institutionalised securitisation emerge and unfold, we must focus not only on discourse as speech-acts but also as securitising practises, institutions, and bureaucratic developments. As the discussion above has sketched out, processes of securitisation may still be on-going even when securitising speech-acts seem concealed. By examining both bureaucratic developments as well as securitising practises, the article will be able to show how securitisation is not only about speech acts, but also about “the creation of networks of professionals of insecurity, the systems of meaning they generate, and the productive power of their practices” (Watson 2009, p.24). Indeed,





as the case of the institutionalised securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden shows, even when elaborate securitising rhetoric seems absent, a progressive securitisation may be taking place.

Secondly, whilst a range of second generation scholars (McDonald 2008; Salter 2008; Stritzel 2007; Balzacq 2011b) have engaged with how the CS's narrow notion of time, and its dependency on language as the only form of securitising moves, prohibit a comprehensive understanding of how processes of securitisation work when becoming institutionalised, further empirical and theoretical analysis is needed. Thus, the analysis below seeks to stress how multiple actors and audiences, on multiple levels, over extended periods of time, and in multiple ways, have, and continue to shape the institutionalisation of illegal immigration in Sweden. Whilst continuing attempts have been made (Bigo 2000; C.A.S.E. 2006; Balzacq 2005; Roe 2008) to develop a richer understanding for how various actors and audiences co-constitute security issues, an additional development will be made here. The analysis of institutionalised securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden will show, that not only do different kinds of actors and audiences exist but also, as the institutionalisation of a securitisation process emerges and evolves through different levels (international and national), actors and audience may change places. Indeed, categories of actors and audiences are not mutually exclusive. Social subjects and/or institutions may at one point of a securitising process serve as the audience of a securitising move, and may at a later stage materialise as the securitising actor. On this premises, the argument proposed here is that we must begin to conceptualise securitisation as a multi-tiered process where the possibilities for actor–audience relationships are endless.

### ***3. The Increase in ICFs and the Implementation of REVA: Institutionalising the Securitisation of Illegal Immigration in Sweden***

#### ***Setting the Stage - the Securitisation of Immigration and the EU level***

As mentioned at the onset of this article, immigration has not always been seen as a potent security issue within the European Union (EU) (Boswell 2003; Huysmans 2000; van Muster 2009). Equally, before the 1980s, collaboration on the issue of immigration between EU member states was primarily orchestrated via the United Nations and the Council of Europe, and not through EU institutions (van Muster 2009, p.2; Lavenex 2001). However, in the 1980s and 1990s, European integration increasingly became understood as a key issue for the economic and political stability of Europe. Simultaneously, various platforms within the EU increasingly linked the topic of immigration to that of international terrorism, trafficking and other illegal activity (van Muster 2009). Indeed, the Schengen Agreement contributed to the securitisation of immigration at the EU level (ibid). It is with this pre-established securitisation of immigration at the EU level in mind, that this section explores how the securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden has become institutionalised. It does so by examining how two parallel developments – the implementation of the ICFs and REVA, have served to alter and intensify the ways in which the Swedish government and police work with the search for, and deportation of, illegal immigrants.

#### ***REVA in the Public Eye***

During 2013 and 2014, major Swedish media outlets continuously reported on the newly discovered REVA project. According to the journalist Linda Stark, whose article in the magazine *Re:public* in December 2012 began the intense public debate surrounding REVA, REVA had resulted in a large increase of ICFs and an intensified police search for illegal immigrants, with the aim to increase the number of deportations of illegal immigrants in Sweden (Stark 2012, p.2). Following this, all major



Swedish newspapers began to write about how REVA was directly linked to a substantial increase in the number of ICFs and multiple public demonstrations against REVA were organised (Rasmusson 2013; Karlsson 2013; Expressen 2013; Bergquist 2013; Hrustic 2013). Also, as citizens began to observe an increase in ICFs in the subway of Stockholm in the early spring of 2013, human rights organisations and individual activists created Facebook groups in order to warn illegal immigrants of when and where ICFs were taking place (Expressen 2013). As a result of popular criticism, politicians and police began to counter the intense and widely shared opposition towards REVA. For instance, the Stockholm police issued a statement on 1st March 2013, declaring that REVA had nothing to do with the ICFs (Polisen 2013a). Likewise, the Chairman of the National Social Insurance Committee, Gunnar Axén from the Conservative Party - Moderaterna - defended REVA by stating that the project had not called for an increase in ICFs, but only for a more effective decision making process in regards to deportations of illegal immigrants (Axén 2013). Whilst it is correct that REVA did not *explicitly* ask for an increase in ICFs, statistics from the Central Border Control Agency nevertheless confirm that the number of ICFs in Sweden increased from 28 092 in 2009, to 42 467 in 2012 (Leander 2014, p.6). In order to understand how this development took place, we must trace the two aforementioned parallel processes - the ICFs and REVA - back to their origin. The next section will map out the first of these two developments, the effects on the Schengen Agreement on Swedish border policing post-2001.

## *The Schengen Agreement and the ICFs*

Sweden became an operational member of Schengen in March 2001 (SOU 2004). Whilst the official aim of the Schengen Agreement has been to create a zone of free movement, the agreement has meant that external border controls have been replaced by so-called CMs, such as the ICFs (van Muster 2009). As visible in the Swedish governmental report on border policing from 2004, the government recognised the demand by the Schengen Agreement to intensify the number of ICFs, as a CM, in order to counter “illegal smuggling of people and other criminal activity” (SOU 2004, p.62).

Despite the Swedish government clearly recognising the demand for the increase in the number of ICFs, the employment of the ICFs continued to be a task only carried out by Swedish border police until 2007 (Leander 2014). Then, in 2007, the National Police Board decided that ICFs should be an integrated part of everyday police work. The National Police Board also decided that from then on, annual statistics would be collected on the number of ICFs carries out in order to make sure that the CMs called for by the Schengen Agreement were met (Leander 2014, p.7). In 2011, the National Police Board published the report, ‘The National Police Board’s General Recommendations Regarding ICFs’, which made clear that ICFs had to be an integral part of everyday police work, and which called on each regional police authority to work actively with ICFs (Rikspolisstyrelsen 2011, p.2).

## **REVA**

The second parallel development that has institutionalised the securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden is REVA. REVA, which stands for “Legally Secure and Efficient Enforcement”, is a governmental project initially implemented in the region of Skåne in 2009 with the aim of making the deportation process of people whose asylum request had been rejected more effective, in order to thereby increase the number of deportations (Justitiedepartementet 2008a). REVA is a united action project comprising three governmental agencies—the Swedish Migration Board, the Swedish National Police Board, and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. The project was initiated by

the Swedish government in 2008 through its annual appropriation directions to the three above mentioned government agencies. REVA was included in the appropriation directions between 2008-2013, after which the procedures introduced through REVA were made standard procedures of the three governmental agencies (Leander 2014). The report, which preceded REVA was partly financed by the European Return Fund (Migrationsverket 2012). On the recommendations made by this report, REVA set out to make the collaboration between the three government agencies work more effectively with the ultimate aim of increasing the number of deportations (ibid).

In terms of increasing the number of deportations, REVA was successful. Between the start of 2008 and the end of 2012, the number of executed deportations rose from 4800 to approximately 7000 (Polisen 2013b, p.11). In Stockholm, the number of executed deportations increased by 47% between 2010 and 2012 (Fremnell 2013, p.1). The great rise in the number of deportations carried out by the police can be explained both by an increase in the number of deportation cases received by the police from the Migration Board, and because of the police's increased efficiency when executing deportations (Polisen 2013b, p.11). Thus, REVA succeeded in its aim of making the police deport more illegal immigrants than before.

In terms of the relationship between REVA and the ICFs, REVA did not officially give the police, or any other governmental body, extended authority to search for illegal immigrants. Nevertheless, the appropriation directions to the National Police Board between 2008 and 2013, whilst never explicitly demanding an increase in ICFs, *did*, by demanding an increase in the number of executed deportations, put increased pressure on the police to further extend the number of ICFs carried out. As the police chief of the Border Control Agency in Malmö, Kristina Hallander Spångberg, explained in a 2013 radio interview, the 2009 report, which aimed at making the Police's deportation process more effective, made the police carry out ICFs in a more effective manner (Landelius 2013). In 2014, Kristina Hallander Spångberg further explained that *because* the appropriation directions from the Swedish government between 2008 and 2013 declare that the police had to increase the number of deportations of illegal immigrants, it had resulted in both an increase of ICFs and a more effective collaboration between the Police, the Migration Board, and the Prison and Probation Service (Leander 2014, p.8-9).

After having first been implemented in the region of Skåne, REVA was thereafter implemented by all regional police organisations post-2011 (Polisen 2013b, p.12). As statistics from the Central Border Control Authority demonstrates, the number of ICFs continued to increase steadily after the implementation of REVA.

2007	10 202
2008	17 185
2009	28 092
2010	33 630
2011	36 640
2012	42 467
2013	28 930

(Leander 2014, p.6; Polisen 2014, p.5)

*Table 1: Total number of ICFs in Sweden between 2007-2013*

When examining the statistics as outlined above, a few things need to be kept in mind. Firstly, the city of Malmö saw a rapid increase in gang related violence in 2011. This resulted in the local police authority increasing the number of police personnel patrolling the city. Whilst this was meant as an effort to prevent further crime taking place, it also resulted in further increasing the numbers

of ICFs in Malmö during 2011 (Funke 2014). Secondly, as mentioned above, 2011 was the year in which the National Police Board published a report calling on all regional police authorities to make ICFs an integral part of everyday policing, which arguably also added to the rapid increase in ICFs (Rikspolisstyrelsen 2011, p.2). Thirdly, the increase in ICFs does not follow an increase in total immigration to Sweden. As the figures from 'Statistics Sweden' show, whilst the ICFs rose rapidly between 2007-2013, Sweden witnessed a downfall in total immigration in 2010 and 2011 (see appendix 1). Finally, whilst no single explanation has been found to explain the downfall in ICFs between 2012 and 2013, statements made by local police officers indicate that the downturn in ICFs is a result of insufficient economic resources (Sandin 2014; Jalkner 2013).

As the above sections make evident, the processes by which the number of ICFs increased as a result of Sweden joining Schengen, and how the number of deportations rose due to REVA, involve three main actors: the EU through the Schengen Agreement, the Swedish government, and the Swedish police. These three actors have together served to institutionalise the securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden. Subsequently, in order to better unpack this process, the next section will turn to examining the language used by the two actors at the national level of Sweden—the Swedish government and the Swedish police.

The EU has certainly played a central role in the institutionalisation of the securitisation of illegal immigration. However, this article wants to examine how this process has trickled down to the national level in Sweden. Thus, the next section will only focus on how the Swedish government and police have spoken about REVA and the ICFs. It will be shown how the securitisation of illegal immigration has been taken for granted due to an underlying acceptance of illegal immigration as a potent security issue. The next section will firstly conduct a DA over the language that has been used in relation to REVA and the ICFs by the government and the police. Secondly, the section will turn once again to ST in order to spell out exactly how we see an institutionalisation of the securitisation of illegal immigration taking place in Sweden.

#### **4. Internalising Securitisation: REVA and the ICFs as understood by government and police**

##### *The Government – 'This is Not That Remarkable'*

In order to understand how the Swedish government made the Swedish police increase the number of deportations of illegal immigrants, we must go back to December 2008 when the first of a total of 18 appropriation directions was issued. Whilst the appropriation directions analysed below are those directed at the Swedish National Police Board, the same appropriation directions were simultaneously issued to the Swedish Migration Board, and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. The appropriation direction, issued in December 2008 to the National Police Board read:

"The National Police Board, the Migration Board, and the Prison and Probation Service shall through consultation evaluate the work conducted to execute deportations and refusals of entries. The institutions shall, based on this evaluation, take necessary action in order to *increase the number of enforced deportations and refusals of entry*" (Justitiedepartementet 2008b, p.5 *emphasis added*).

In the appropriation direction to the National Police Board for 2010, the government declared that the institution would be given 10,000,000 SEK in order to "*further improve and make more*



effective the work conducted in relation to refusals of entries and deportations that have had their final judgement" (Justitiedepartementet 2009, p.5 *emphasis added*).

After having issued an almost identical appropriation direction in 2010 (Justitiedepartementet 2010, p.7) the appropriation direction for 2012, requested an even greater increase in the number of deportations:

"The Swedish National Police Board [...] shall through consultation make more effective the work conducted to execute deportations and refusals of entries, with the purpose of *substantially increasing* the amount of applied verdicts" (Justitiedepartementet 2011, p.7 *emphasis added*).

In 2012, the appropriation direction for 2013 even further emphasised the importance of increasing the number of deportations carried out by the police by adding that:

"The Swedish National Police Board [...] shall through consultation make more effective the work conducted to execute deportations and refusals of entries, with the purpose of, *relative to the number of deportations in 2012, substantially increase* the amount of applied verdicts of people registered at the Swedish Migration Board" (Justitiedepartementet 2012, p.4 *emphasis added*).

As the REVA project was coming to an end in 2013, the government told the National Police Board that REVA should be incorporated as standard procedure in everyday police work:

"...The National Police Board shall report how the experiences of the common strides towards affectivity and implemented projects *will be utilised henceforth*" (Justitiedepartementet 2013, p.5 *emphasis added*).

As has previously been alluded to, as a result of REVA, both the number of executed deportations, and the number of ICFs rose substantially (Polisen 2013b; Leander 2014; Polisen 2014). When this increase became known to the public towards the end of 2012, massive public debate erupted questioning the legitimacy of this kind of prioritisation by the Swedish government. Many journalists, citizens and politicians argued that this kind of prioritisation was highly problematic. Simultaneously Sara Karlsson, a Social Democratic Member of Parliament, questioned the ruling government's, and the appointed Attorney General's decision to give special financial aid to the police as part of REVA, whilst neglecting other areas of police work (Riksdagen 2013a). In the debates on these matters between Karlsson and the Attorney General Beatrice Ask during 2012, the government's view on REVA and the ICFs became clear. As Beatrice Ask declared in response to Karlsson's question on 12 March 2013:

"It is correct [...] that the REVA project has been intensified [...] This is not that remarkable [...] We have sufficient problems today with people who, after having had their asylum request denied, refuse to leave Sweden [...] This has huge financial implications" (Riksdagen 2013a, p.5).

In a similar debate one month later, Attorney General Ask explained further:

"Over the last years, there has been a massive increase in the number of cases of refused asylum requests that have been handed over from the Swedish Migration Board to the police. Right now that number is at about 19,500. This is a lot. This is not acceptable, neither from an economic- nor from a humanitarian perspective, and this is why the government has put clear pressure on the Migration Board, the police and the Prison



and Probation Service to make their work with deportations more effective" (Riksdagen 2013b, p.2).

In addition to the rhetoric displayed by the government regarding REVA, examining the language used concerning the ICFs in the governmental report "Border Control Law—a More Efficient Border Control" from 2004, also shows how the government did not problematize the implementation of the ICFs. As the government declared, "in order to ensure that the free movement [between Schengen member states] does not aid international criminality, compensatory measures must be set in place" (SOU 2004, p.58). The report further described the CM as measures taken in order to "prevent the smuggling of persons and other criminal activity". Further, the report also stated that the Schengen Agreement meant an obligation upon Sweden to "expel people who do not have the right to reside within the Schengen territory" (ibid, p.62). And also, that the compensatory measures are meant to "prevent people who pose a threat to the general order and security from entering and residing within the Schengen Area" (ibid, p.282).

The same view and argumentation was again used by Attorney General Ask in 2006 when the ICFs were debated in the parliament:

"As Sweden joined Schengen in 2001 we also agreed to pursue so-called compensatory measures. The aim of these compensatory measures is to prohibit that the removal of the border controls [between Schengen member states] lead to increased criminality and illegal immigration. To reinforce the ICFs is an important part of these measures" (Riksdagen 2006, p.1).

## *The Police - 'We Only Follow Orders'*

As the majority of media reports from 2013 make evident, the actions undertaken by the government and the police were interpreted as securitising practises (Léonard 2011), signalling to the public that illegal immigrants were seen as an increasing security issue that had to be dealt with forcefully (Bankel 2013; Dagens Nyheter 2013). However, as the written responses by the police examined below show, the police merely saw themselves as carrying out orders given by Schengen and the Swedish government, and not as political actors whose actions communicated a message to the public. As one such official statement reveals, the police tried to calm down the public debate by declaring that it only followed the rules set out by higher authority:

" [...] REVA is a project meant to increase the number of applied verdicts in relation to deportations. The commission *comes directly from the government*. The ICFs are so-called compensatory measures [...] All Schengen member states have undertaken the task to carry out ICFs in order to counter illegal stay within the Schengen area" (Sahlström 2013, p.1 *emphasis added*).

Similarly, the regional police organisation in Stockholm declared that REVA "is partly financed by the European Return Fund [...] REVA corresponds to the Government's intention to make more effective the work with increasing the number of deportations and applied verdicts" (Fermnell 2012, p.1). A comparable message was also provided by the National Police Board in its report regarding deportations from 2013. The report clarified that, "The appropriation direction from 2012 *declares* that the National Police Board, the Migration Board and the Prison and Probation Service shall collaborate in order to make the efforts concerning deportation more effective in order to increase the number of applied verdicts" (Polisens 2013b, p.9 *emphasis added*). In another report regarding ICFs, the Police stated that, "in line with the Schengen Agreement, the Swedish police,

not only can, *but has to*, conduct ICFs” (Polisen 2014, p.5 *emphasis added*). The same arguments regarding REVA and the ICFs were repeatedly stated in various official statements and opinion pieces by both local police authorities and the National Police Board (Fremnell 2012; Norberg 2013; Rikspolisstyrelsen 2013; Polisen 2009; Nitz 2013).

## *Institutionalisation of Securitisation of Illegal Immigration in Sweden: a Multi-tiered Process*

The aim of this article has been to investigate how the Swedish government and police have institutionalised the securitisation of illegal immigration. As stated in the introduction, the article set out to answer the question—Where Does Securitisation Begin?

As the diagram below demonstrates, the first stage of the process by which the securitisation of illegal immigration has trickled down to the national level of Sweden was through the Schengen Agreement. The Schengen Agreement called on Sweden to implement CM, e.g. the ICFs, in order to assure that the free movement within Schengen did not result in the “illegal smuggling of people and other criminal activity” (SOU 2004, p.62). In addition, the EU has also, through the European Return Fund, ‘spoken security’ to the Swedish government by finically supporting REVA, which aimed at increasing the number of deportation of illegal immigrant (Migrationsverket 2012).



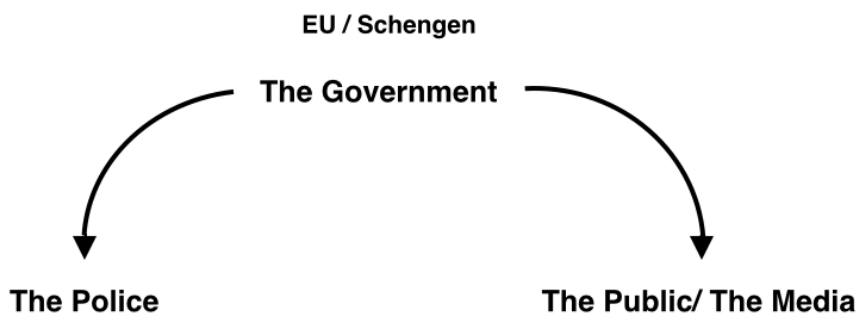
*Figure 1. How the Securitisation of Illegal Immigration at the EU Level has Filtered Down to the National Level of Sweden through the Schengen Agreement.*

As previously explained, the result of the EU ‘speaking security’ to Sweden in this way has been clear. Firstly, the ICFs were made customary practice by the Swedish police post-2001. And after the National Police Board declared that the ICFs should be an integral part of everyday police work, the ICFs rose by 183,5% between 2007 and 2013 (Leander 2014, p.6; Polisen 2014, p. 5). Secondly, the process by which the government’s REVA project called for a considerable rise in executed deportations, resulted in an increase by 45,8% between 2009 and 2013 (Polisen 2014).

The second stage of the process by which the securitisation of illegal immigration at the EU level has trickled down to the national level of Sweden, concerns how the Swedish government and police have institutionalise this securitisation. This stage of the process concerns the REVA project itself. Judging by the appropriation directions to the police between 2008 and 2013, it is clear that the government saw illegal immigration as a potent security issue. After the first few appropriation directions in 2008 and 2009 ordered the police to increase the number of executed deportations, the appropriation directions in 2011, 2012 and 2013 asked the police to “*substantially* increase the amount of applied verdicts” (Justitiedepartementet 2012, p.4 *emphasis added*). Consequently, not

only did the government order the police to prioritise the execution of deportations, but this order also intensified over time.

Indeed, as Bigo (2001b) argues, the place in which security is most often spoken in Western societies today is not primarily in political speeches, but rather within bureaucratic systems. As the context surrounding REVA and the appropriation directions to the police show, they were neither preceded by any official political debate, nor by any evident securitising move on behalf of specific politicians. Rather, it is the appropriation directions *themselves* that display how illegal immigration is perceived as a potent security issue by the Swedish government, one that ‘goes without saying’. As evident by the appropriation directions between 2008 and 2013, the Swedish government has already institutionalised the securitisation of illegal immigration, which is why no elaborate rhetoric is needed. To quote the CS, when securitisation has become institutionalised, “constant drama does not have to be present, because it is implicitly assumed that when we talk of *this* [...], we are by definition in the area of urgency” (Buzan et al., 1998, p.27 *original emphasis*). As the image below clarifies, in the second phase of the institutionalisation of the securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden, the Swedish government spoke security to both police and the public, through the appropriation directions, and the succeeding political debates, regarding REVA.



*Figure 2. How the Swedish Government has Spoken Security to the Police and the Public Through REVA.*

Withal, the institutionalised character of the securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden also becomes evident when recognising that intense debate and contestation regarding REVA only arose *after* the project became public in 2012. Indeed, only then did REVA and the ICFs become criticised and problematised, and not by the ruling government, but by journalists and citizens. Indeed, the way in which the government and police refused to see the problematised issues surrounding REVA and the ICFs exposes how the threat image of illegal immigration at the EU level has been internalised by the two institutions.

As also displayed above, in regards to how the police spoke about REVA and the ICFs, the official statements issued by the police clearly show how they tried to elevate the criticism by stating that the police only followed orders set out by the government and/or the EU. The lack of clear securitising moves on behalf of the police, explaining why illegal immigration poses such a great threat to the Swedish society, also shows that the securitisation of illegal immigration has become institutionalised (Fremnell 2013; Norberg 2013; Rikspolisstyrelsen 2013; Polisen 2009).

In addition to how the initial lack of debate regarding REVA reveals how the securitisation of illegal immigration has become institutionalised, the government’s decision to make REVA standard bureaucratic procedure in 2012 also points to this institutionalisation (Justitiedepartementet 2013). As Vieira argues, an issue has become institutionalised “if the threat [...] is resilient enough to demand the build-up of standing bureaucracies and procedures” (2007, p.140). Indeed, in the case

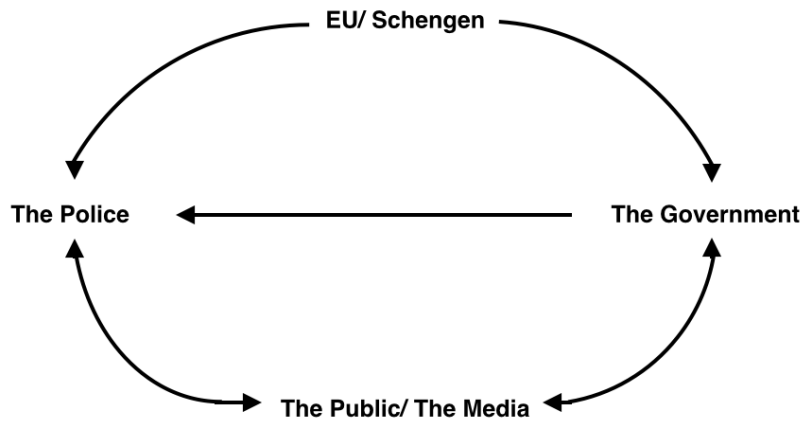


of Sweden, one becomes strikingly aware of the lack of elaborate rhetoric bluntly depicting illegal immigration as an existential threat, and REVA as the solution to that threat. Thus, whilst the CS tells us that we should not be fooled by an absence of drama, the case of REVA clearly shows the usefulness of taking Léonard's (2011) claim seriously.

As REVA displays, in instances of institutionalised securitisation, bureaucratic structures may actually "play a more active role in securitisation processes than securitising speech acts" (2011, p.235). Just like Léonard suggests, the case of REVA shows how "securitising practises" (2011, p.237), i.e. the intensified focus on executing deportations and carrying out ICFs by the Swedish police, indeed are activities that, "by their very intrinsic qualities, convey the idea to those who observe them, directly or indirectly, that the issue they are tackling is a security threat" (Léonard 2011, p.237). Indeed, the many critical newspaper articles regarding REVA confirms how these securitising practices, in themselves, have served to communicated to the public that the government and the police saw illegal immigration as a pressing security threat to Sweden.

By examining the case of how the securitisation of illegal immigration has become institutionalised in Sweden, the need for a more dynamic understanding of institutionalisation within ST becomes apparent. Certainly, applying a strictly speech acts approach to securitisation (Waever 1995) when investigating processes of institutionalised securitisations makes it difficult to make sense of the Swedish case study, as securitising discourses have become so internalised that they no longer have to be uttered. Truly, as previously examined in section 2, applying a sociological approach (Balzacq 2011) when looking at the institutionalisation of securitisation processes proves much more useful. Such an approach goes beyond the focus on speech acts to include historical contexts and developments, political and bureaucratic, in order to map out how processes of securitisation evolve and change over time.

By adopting a sociological approach to securitisation, analysts are also given sufficient theoretical tools to examine, as this Swedish case study shows, how securitising actors and audiences may change over time. As REVA and the ICFs display, the Swedish government and police have at one point possessed the position of the securitising audience, spoken to by the EU through the Schengen Agreement. Then, later, the same government and police possess the role of the securitising actors, which through REVA and the ICFs replicate the same securitisation of illegal immigration towards the Swedish media and public. As the below imaged shows, the answer to the original question of this article—Where Does Securitisation Begin?—is that if we take historical and contextual factors seriously, we can begin to trace the process of securitisation of illegal immigration back, through bureaucratic developments and political initiatives. When doing so for this case study, we see how the securitisation of illegal immigration did not begin at the national level of Sweden, but has filtered down from the international level of the EU. We also see how the process of institutionalised securitisation is multi-tiered and complex, with several actor- audience relationships taking place at the same time. Thus, what the case of the institutionalised securitisation of illegal immigration in Sweden shows, is that we must always look at the context, historical, political, and social, in order to be able to see how processes of securitisations change and evolve over time.



*Figure 3. The institutionalisation of the securitisation of illegal immigration transcends both the level of the EU and the national level of Sweden. The process involves several, and parallel, actors - audiences relationships.*

## 5. Conclusion

This article has investigated how processes of securitisation work when they become institutionalised. This was done by looking at the case study of Sweden, and specifically at the emergence of the ICFs and REVA. Consequently, the article has sought to show how the securitisation of illegal immigration at the EU level has been internalised and replicated by the government and police at the national level of Sweden. Thus, the article has shed light on the question – *Where Does Securitisation Begin?* This was done by developing further the concept of institutionalisation within ST. By bridging ST with the specific case study of Sweden, the article advanced a more dynamic concept of institutionalisation, one that also accounts for historical contexts and bureaucratic developments in order to examine how securitisation may advance even when securitising discourses seem hidden.

The article began by looking closer at the original formulation of ST. Special attention was given to the concept of institutionalisation within ST. By thereafter engaging with, and expanding on, the various critiques posed by the second generation, the article sought to advance a more applicable understanding of institutionalisation within ST. Especially, the importance of adopting a sociological approach to ST was highlighted, as well as the importance of also including institutional- and bureaucratic developments, in addition to speech acts, when looking at processes of institutionalised securitisations. Indeed, the article has aimed to also highlight how securitising practises can further processes of securitisation.

As the article moved to its cases study, the way in which the securitisation of illegal immigration, through the Schengen Agreement, has trickled down to the level of Sweden became most apparent. It was examined how the ICFs became gradually intensified in Sweden, as a CM, post 2001, and how the REVA project was implemented in 2008. As revealed, the ICFs and REVA were not preceded by any national political discussion on the necessity or implications of these developments. Subsequently, it was demonstrated how the securitisation of illegal immigration has become internalised by the Swedish government and police. By then conducting DA of the language used by the government and the police in regards to REVA and the ICFs, the way in which both institutions had internalised illegal immigration as a potent security threat became apparent.





By returning to the concept of institutionalisation, the article concluded by arguing for the necessity of approaching cases of institutionalised securitisation through a sociological approach. It has been argued, that such an approach will help analysis go beyond the notion of 'moments of securitisation' and instead look at how processes of institutionalised securitisations emerge over extended periods of time, and may transcend the international level down to the national. The article argued for the necessity to not take securitising actors and audiences as pre-given categories, but to constantly 'look and see' (Wittgenstein 1958; Donnelly, 2013), in every new case of securitisation, who the actor(s) and the audience(s) really are. Indeed, as the empirical example in Sweden has revealed, there may exist an endless number of actor-audience relationships at the same time.

Indeed, this article has raised questions about what happens when processes of securitisation become institutionalised. Obviously, further analysis is required regarding the role that the public and the media have played in the case of Sweden. Whilst this article briefly looked at how the public and media pushed back against the government's and the police' securitisation of illegal immigration, further analysis should be conducted in order to map out exactly how the public and the media has effected the securitisation process in Sweden. Also, the article has not had time to examine how exactly the relationship between the EU and Sweden has furthered the securitisation of illegal immigration. Because of this, further study regarding the relationship between the EU and Sweden should be undertaken.

What this article has hoped to do, is to show that we must continue to be critical towards that which might be taken for granted. Indeed, even if bureaucratic and institutional developments are often explained as 'natural' responses to deal with 'obvious' problems, we must always seek to go beyond the 'obvious'. As this and other investigations display, state security does not necessarily imply security for the person. Ergo, the task at hand is to keep questioning the established power structures at play that benefit some whilst silencing others.

## About the author

**Stina Wassén** graduated from the University of St Andrews with a bachelor's degree in International Relations in 2015 and completed an MSc in International Migration and Public Policy at the London School of Economics in 2016. During her university studies, Stina focused on international relations theory, international security, migration and mobility and EU law and politics. She now works as an analyst at the corporate intelligence firm Kroll in London.

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