RADICAL ISLAM ANTHOLOGY

CENTRE ON RADICALISATION & TERRORISM

October 2018

The following publication is a compilation of contributions from a multinational array of speakers who attended the Radical Islam Conference hosted by the Henry Jackson Society on the 6th and 7th of December 2017. Essays have been edited for consistency as well as for fluency in the English language. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and are not necessarily indicative of those of The Henry Jackson Society or its Trustees.

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About CRT at The Henry Jackson Society

The Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism (CRT) is unique in addressing violent and non-violent extremism. By coupling high-quality, in-depth research with targeted and impactful policy recommendations, we aim to combat the threat of radicalisation and terrorism in our society.

The Henry Jackson Society is a think-tank and policy-shaping force that fights for the principles and alliances that keep societies free, working across borders and party lines to combat extremism, advance democracy and real human rights, and make a stand in an increasingly uncertain world.

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Glossary of Abbreviations

CAIR	The Council on American Islamic Relations
CONTEST	The UK's counter-terrorism strategy
CTSA	Counter-Terrorism and Security Act
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
EU	European Union
DoD	Department of Defence
DoS	Department of State
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FIS	*Front Islamique du Salut* (Islamic Salvation Front)
GCHQ	Government Communications Headquarters
ICCT	International Centre for Counter-Terrorism
IERA	Islamic Education and Research Academy
IDCI	Islamic Dawah Centre International
IFE	Islamic Forum of Europe
IGPN	National Police General Inspectorate
IPA	Investigatory Powers Act
IR	Islamic Relief
IRFI	Islamic Research Foundation
IS	Islamic State
ISNA	Islamic Society of North America
MAB	Muslim Association of Britain
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MEND	Muslim Engagement and Development
MI5	The UK Security Service
MP	Member of Parliament
MRDF	Muslim Research and Development Foundation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
UK	United Kingdom
UKIM	United Kingdom Islamic Mission
US	United States

Glossary of Terms[1]

Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
A Turkish social conservative political party. The current party leader, and President of Turkey, is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

**Al Qaeda (AQ), includes Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Al Qaeda
in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb**
(Proscribed March 2001) Inspired and led by Osama bin Laden, the group's aims include the expulsion of Western forces from Saudi Arabia, the destruction of Israel, and the end of Western influence in the Muslim World.

Al Shabaab
(Proscribed March 2010) An organisation based in Somalia that has waged a violent campaign against the Somali Transitional Federal Government and African Union peacekeeping forces since 2007, employing a range of terrorist tactics including suicide bombings, indiscriminate attacks, and assassinations. Its principal aim is the establishment of a fundamentalist Islamic state in Somalia, but the organisation has publicly pledged its allegiance to Osama Bin Laden and has announced an intention to combine its campaign in the Horn of Africa with Al Qaeda's aims of global jihad.

Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party)
One of the two major political parties in India. As of 2018, it is the country's largest political party in terms of representation in the national parliament and state assemblies, and it is the world's largest party in terms of primary membership.

Boko Haram (Islamic State West African Province)
(Proscribed July 2013) A Nigerian militant Islamist group which forbids Western education and proscribes secularism. Founded by Mohammed Yusuf, the group pledges allegiance to IS and advocates for the universal adoption of sharia law in Nigeria. In 2014, it established a caliphate in parts of Northern Nigeria, and led a violent insurgency in parts of Chad and Cameroon.

En Nahda Party
A Muslim democratic political party in Tunisia also known as the 'Renaissance Party'. Founded as the Movement of Islamic Tendency in 1981, it rejects radical Islamism as a form of governance appropriate to Tunisia, but Islam remains an important guiding feature of its policy.

Extremism
An ideology, which when implemented would significantly and negatively impact the human rights of certain sectors of society, such as women, religious or ethnic groups, persons with disabilities, and so on. By extension, violent extremism is an ideology that would justify the use of violence against these sectors of society.

Fidesz (Hungarian Civil Alliance)
A national-conservative and right-wing populist political party in Hungary that has secured a parliamentary supermajority in 2010, and retained this in the 2014 and 2018 elections.

Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front)
A Sunni Islamist political party based in Algeria, with the core objective of establishing an Islamic state by sharia law. It was officially made legal as a political party in 1989, before it was

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[1] Unless otherwise cited, the proscriptions used herein have been issued by the Home Office, published in 'Proscribed Terrorist Organisations Home Office (2017), available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/670599/20171222_Proscription.pdf, last visited: 6 August 2018.

dismantled in a military coup in 1992, following some electoral successes. It was officially banned by the Algerian government in March 1992.[2]

Hamas

(Proscribed March 2001) Hamas aims to end Israeli occupation in Palestine and establish an Islamic state.

Hizb al-Wasat (Party of the Center)

A moderate Islamist political party, founded in 1996 as a splinter group of the Muslim Brotherhood. The party asserts that its aim is to promote a tolerant version of Islam with liberal tendencies.

Hizb ut-Tahrir

Founded in Jordan in 1952, this revolutionary Islamist group seeks to overthrow governments in Muslim-majority countries – either peacefully or via a military coup – and establish an Islamic state ruled under sharia that would eventually expand, annex, or colonise all existing countries. The group claims to be a non-violent political party.

Indoctrination

To teach a specific viewpoint or ideology without allowing anyone to criticise or question it, often in reference to religious ideas.

International Union of Muslim Scholars

An organisation of Muslim Islamic theologians headed by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, founded in 2004 and headquartered in Qatar.

Islam4UK

Islam4UK is an alternative name for the organisations already proscribed in 2010 and 2011 under the names Al Ghurabaa and The Saved Sect.

Islamic State (Daesh)

(Proscribed June 2014) Islamic State is a brutal Sunni Islamist terrorist group primarily active in Iraq and Syria. The group adheres to a global jihadist ideology, following an extreme interpretation of Islam, one that is anti-Western and promotes sectarian violence. IS aims to establish a caliphate governed by strict sharia law in the region and imposes its rule on people using violence and extortion. Islamic State was previously proscribed as part of Al Qaeda.

Islamism

The belief that Islam is a totalitarian political ideology. It claims that political sovereignty belongs to God rather than the people. Islamists believe that their reading of the sharia should be state law, and that it is the religious duty of all Muslims to work towards and pledge allegiance to an Islamic state that reflects these principles.

Jabhat al-Nusra (Al-Nusra Front)

(Proscribed July 2014) Following an order by the UK in July 2013, the al-Nusra Front and Jabhat an-Nusra li-ahl Sham should be treated as alternative names for the organisation that is already proscribed as Al Qaeda.

Jamaat-e-Islami

The oldest political party in Pakistan. It was founded in 1941 by Maulana Maududi, an Indian journalist and Islamic theologian. The group – which has a full organisational structure and constitution – aspires towards the removal of manmade political systems in order to create an Islamic state ruled under sharia.

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[2] Wellman, J.K. and Lombardi, C., *Religion and Human Security: A Global Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2012), p.253.

Jemaah Islamiyah (Islamic Congregation)
(Proscribed November 2002) Jemaah Islamiyah's aim is the creation of a unified Islamic state in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Southern Philippines.

Jihadism
A militant strand of Sunni Islamism which advocates the use of violence against non-Muslims (or other Muslim groups such as Shia or Sufi Islam) as part of a broader struggle for the establishment of an Islamic State.

Katibat al-Battar al-Libiyya
A core Islamic State unit that was headquartered in Syria before some of its members dispersed to Libya.

Lone Wolf
An individual who prepares and commits violent acts alone, outside of any command structure, and without material assistance from any group. The individual may be influenced or motivated by the ideology and beliefs of an extremist group or terrorist organisation, and may act to support it.

Majlis Shurat al-Mujahdin (Mujahideen Shura) or
Council in the Environs of Jerusalem
A coalition of Al-Qaeda-affiliated Salafi-Jihadist groups active in the Gaza strip and the Sinai Peninsula. The group is a proscribed terrorist organisation according to the United States Department of State (DoS).

Moro Islamic Liberation Front
Formed in 1977, Moro Islamic Liberation Front is an Islamic separatist organisation based in the southern Philippines. It seeks an independent Islamic state or autonomous region for the Filipino Muslim minority, known as the Moro people. It began as a splinter group of the Moro National Liberation Front.

Moro National Liberation Front
Active since 1972, the Moro National Liberation Front was the leading organisation among Moro separatists in the Philippines.

Muslim Brotherhood
Founded in Egypt in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood aims to establish an Islamic state by using entry-level tactics – including political participation – as a means to advocate social and political reform. The group claims to be a non-violent political party.

Radicalisation
The process by which individuals and/or groups come to adopt extremist ideologies.

Salafism
Salafists are ultra-conservative followers of Islam. The word Salafi was originally used to describe the earliest generations of Muslims, and was later adopted by a modern group of Muslims led by al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh at the turn of the century as a response to European imperialism.

Self-starter terrorist
An individual who is not completely alone in their radicalisation process (unlike a 'lone wolf') and is loosely connected to an overarching terrorist network. Although unlikely to have met recruiters in person, they use instructions, manuals, and low-investment techniques to carry out their attacks.

Sharia4Belgium [3]

A Belgian radical Salafist organisation, which calls for Belgium to convert itself into an Islamic state.

Shas

An ultra-Orthodox religious political party in Israel led by Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. Since it was founded in 1984, it has been part of the majority of government coalitions.

Sufism

Sufism is a dimension of Islamic mysticism found in both Sunni and Shia groups.

Supporters of Islam or Ansar al Islam

(Proscribed October 2005) A Sunni terrorist group based in Iraq and Syria. In August 2014, the group merged with IS. However, some factions within the group rejected the merger, and continued to function as an independent organisation.

Taliban

An extreme religious or political group that governed Afghanistan from 1996-2001, enforcing an extreme interpretation of Islamic law. Founded by Mullah Omar, it has a strong insurgency movement in Pakistan and Afghanistan, where it fights against their incumbent governments and allied NATO forces.

Terrorism

The use of violence or illegal force targeted at civilians by non-state actors that seeks to bring out political or societal changes.

The Knesset

Literally translated to mean, 'the gathering', the Knesset is the national legislative branch of the Israeli government.

Vlaams Belang

Right-wing populist and Flemish nationalist political party in the Flemish Region and Brussels of Belgium.

Wahhabi

An ultraconservative Islamic movement to restore 'pure monotheistic worship', also known as tawhid. It is rooted in the 18th century scholarship of Muhammad Bin Abdul Wahhab.

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[3] The organisation was declared a terrorist group in February 2015 by a Belgian Judge, 'Sharia4Belgium trial: Belgian court jails members', *BBC News*, 11 February 2015, available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-31378724, last visited: 6 August 2018.

Glossary of Foreign Language terms [4]

Ansar
Literally translated as the 'helpers', this term refers to the local inhabitants of Medina who helped and aided the Prophet and the *muhajirin* when the emigrated from Mecca (*hijrah*).

Dabiq
Online magazine used by Islamic State for the purposes of radicalisation and recruitment.

Dar al-Harb
Literally translates to "Lands of War"; a reference to territories outside of the *Dar al-Islam* (Land of Islam), or Islamic State. An ancient Islamic concept dating back to long before the emergence of contemporary jihadism, it is frequently used by Islamist extremists in reference to lands outside of the Islamic caliphate such as Europe or North America. Sometimes referred to by Islamists as *Dar al-kufr* (see below).

Dar al-Islam
"Land of Islam"; Islamists commonly define *Dar al-Islam* as any land under Muslim control which implements the religious principles of *sharia* as divine law.

Dar al-kufr
"Land of Disbelief".

Dawah / da'wa
Literally translates as "invitation", the proselytising or preaching of Islam.

Emir
A leader.

Fatwa
'Religious edict'; an authoritarian statement on a point of practical knowledge of *sharia* law from an Islamic scholar.

Gendarme [5]
A member of a body of soldiers, especially in France, serving as an armed police force for the maintenance of public order.

Gendarmerie [6]
One of two national police forces of France, along with the National Police. Its areas of responsibilities include smaller towns, rural and suburban areas, as well as military police overseas.

Hadith
Record of the traditions or sayings of the Prophet Mohammed.

Hijrah
Emigration in the way of Allah to a perceived Muslim land. Islamic dating begins with the *hijrah* of Islam's prophet Mohammad from Mecca to Medina (both in Saudi Arabia), in 622 CE.

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[4] Arabic terms have been adapted from Bewley, A., *Glossary of Islamic Terms* (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 1998).

[5] *Gendarmie*, in Merriam Webster's online dictionary, available at: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gendarme

[6] 'Gendarmie National,' *The Ministry of the Interior*, available at: https://www.gendarmerie.interieur.gouv.fr/, last visited 28th August 2018.

Ijtihad

Literally translated as "effort, physical or mental, expended in a particular activity", *ijtihad* is an Islamic legal term referring to the exertion of a jurist's mental faculty in finding a solution to a legal question.

Jihad

Literally translated as "struggle"; interpretations range from a personal effort to live according to Islam to defending Islam by means of an armed struggle, and physically fighting in the way of Allah in order to establish Islam. In the context of this paper (unless stated otherwise), jihad should be taken to mean 'armed struggle'.

Kafir (pl. *kaffir* or *kuffar*)

"Non-believer" (referring to non-Muslims); the term could also be used derogatorily to suggest a (Muslim or non-Muslim) person's disbelief in God and/or denial of truth.

Khalifa / Caliph

The ruler of a caliphate.

Khilafa / Caliphate

Islamic state; an expansionist state governed by a *khalifa* and implementing *sharia* as state law.

Kufr

Disbelief.

Kulturkampf

A German term referring to the conflict between the German imperial government and the Roman Catholic church from 1872 to 1886.

Laïcité

Based on three core principles: freedom of conscience and freedom to express one's convictions as long as it does not cause a public disturbance, separation of church and state, and equality for all in the eyes of the law, no matter what their beliefs and convictions may be. *Laïcité* guarantees that both believers and non-believers are accorded the freedom to express their convictions. It also protects those who wish to practice a religion or to practice none at all, to convert from one religion to another, or to disavow religion altogether. It guarantees religious freedom as well as freedom from religion – no citizen in a secular republic can be coerced into following a particular religious dogma or creed[7].

Muhajirin

The Companions of the Messenger of Allah who accepted Islam in Mecca and made *hijra* to Medina.

Mujahid

A person who takes part in *jihad* as armed struggle.

Qisas

Literally translates as 'retribution'.

Shahada

One of the five pillars of Islam; used for legal testimony in a court of law, means bearing witness in most cases that there is no God but Allah, and that Mohammed is the messenger of Allah; can also mean martyrdom.

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[7] Definition by French Government, translated by Julie Decroix, available at:
https://www.gouvernement.fr/observatoire-de-la-laicite, last visited: 28 August 2018.

Sharia / Shariah

Literally translates as 'road'; the Muslim religious code of conduct; a range of diverse traditions and interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence, from strict rules to broad principles and objectives.

Tazkiyya

Purification, chastening; pronouncement of someone's integrity or credibility; attestation of (a witness') honourable record.

Ulama

Literally translated as 'the learned ones'; scholars.

Ummah

The fraternity of believers or, the transnational Muslim community.

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FOREWORD

Foreword

Nikita Malik

Director of the Centre on Radicalisation and Terrorism
Henry Jackson Society

In early December 2017, the Henry Jackson Society brought together leading experts for our very first Radical Islam conference, in order to discuss the prominence and rise of Islamist extremism.

A key takeaway from the conference was a growing need to create an international network to combat the threat of Islamism. This anthology of essays brings together contributions from the network to map and understand this threat. In doing so, it suggests essential next steps.

The compiled work contains articles from scholars, academics, politicians, and activists in attendance at our conference, all working to recognise and confront Islamism in their fields. The Anthology raises several important points.

First, as reflected in many of the essays contained herein, organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood linked Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) (in the United States), as well as Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND) and CAGE (in the United Kingdom) gain credibility through their work with other organisations and individuals. However, the movement against Islamism is small, and it requires allies. As such, there is a pressing need to create a network concerned with combatting Islamism, which includes Muslim and non-Muslim voices. This network of allies and affiliates must intellectually counter the network of Islamists who operate in a stronger and more sustainable capacity.

Second, the threat of terrorism is a global one. This includes new and evolving tactics employed by non-violent extremists within the global arena of the internet. Individuals are becoming increasingly radicalised on their laptops and phones, and communicating the logistics of terrorist attacks on encrypted messaging services. Governments must share more information on new tools and techniques with each other to counter these threats and increase their vigilance.

In the United Kingdom, for example, while it remains an offence to keep, publish, or distribute extremist content – both online and offline – a new 'three strikes' law applies a penalty of up to 15 years in jail for those who view terrorist-related material online three or more times. Human rights groups have argued that in some cases, this may violate Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, namely the right to receive information.

Any change in legislation will be met with challenges – and rightly so – but legislation must keep up with the times. For years, the Centre on Radicalisation and Terrorism (CRT) at the Henry Jackson Society has argued that vulnerable individuals should not have easy access to extremist and instructional terrorist material.

Regulating the online space is crucial to obstructing the flow of logistical information and the consumption of propaganda, both of which are critical in forming the backbone of threats to national security. Therefore, a new network could push for law enforcement and criminal justice responses to identify, investigate, and disrupt activity among Islamist extremists, by

strengthening international legal cooperation. After all, it is in all of our interests to prevent a repeat of 2017, which saw five terror attacks occur in the United Kingdom alone.

Third, at the core of confronting and defeating Islamism is understanding why individuals are attracted to, and convinced by, the claims of Islamist extremists in the first place. Unlike the organisations of the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Qaeda, which aspire to form an Islamic state at some point in the future, the Islamic State (IS) was the first to re-establish a caliphate, giving their followers physical territory to migrate to. This attraction, coupled with IS' sophisticated use of media and social media to spread its message, has led to a greater mobilisation of recruits for IS than its competitors.

In Western societies, extremists have become increasingly adept at staying within the confines of the law, posing as non-violent moderates to win legitimacy, while continuing to promote the narratives and literalism of jihadists. These efforts must be tackled with more sophisticated and nuanced counter-messaging.

Many individuals drawn to Islamism struggle with a lack of belonging in their countries of residence. This lack of belonging presents unique problems in giving individuals a sense of identity, cause, and purpose – particularly when it comes to allegiance towards their countries, their societies, and their armed forces. People vulnerable to radicalisation crave a feeling of brotherhood, often fulfilled by organisations like Islamic State. This global ummah is rooted in religion, and transcends nationality, ethnicity, and class.

Groups like Sharia4Belgium and Hizb ut-Tahrir are especially effective at communicating an idea of membership, which is at the heart of a jihadist propaganda narrative. The growth of a cottage industry of books and public lectures from Islamists, which warn Muslims that they are losing their children to Westernisation, has furthered the agenda of extremists. These messages must be recognised, analysed, and countered appropriately by governments working with community groups, schools, and the police.

However, it must also be remembered that much of the useful information used to interdict terrorism has come from members of the public, often through community policing, and often from members of the Muslim community who are concerned about their family members. There should therefore be greater coordination between counter-terrorism police and the intelligence services, and community policing in the UK and internationally.

Finally, it is clear that a crime-terror nexus has operated in the backdrop of terrorist activity, from the days of al-Qaeda and the Taliban, to the more recent Islamic State. Criminals and terrorists have areas of mutual interest – the illegal acquisition of weapons, documents, and money – which means some of the same instruments, such as organised crime units, can be used to capture terrorists or would-be terrorists. There is a clear opportunity, therefore, to disrupt the activities of those who disseminate Islamist extremism within the law by focusing on their peripheral criminal activities, such as tax evasion, fraud, and records of domestic violence.

This anthology pushes for an increased focus on measures to reduce the appeal of Islamism, violent, and non-violent extremism, and to protect those who may be vulnerable to its message. I have picked up on a few of the themes covered to follow, and encourage those with an interest in radicalisation and terrorism to read the essays contained herein.

PART 1

Why It Is Wrong to Empower Non-violent Islamists

Salah al Ansari
Senior Researcher, Quilliam

Following the Arab uprising in 2011 and the emergence of political Islam as a key factor in the politics of the Middle East, some observers, academics, and analysts have argued that it is time to rethink political Islam. The proponents of this position put forward three arguments in support of the proposition that the two brands of Islamism – classical and modern non-violent – are different, and that we should therefore rethink our approach to them:

1) Concerns over political monopoly: politics will be monopolised by the violent Islamists if non-violent Islamists are alienated.

2) Shields of protection: non-violent Islamists act as a firewall against violent Islamists. They could play the role of facilitators for dialogue with violent Islamists.

3) Reforming through empowerment: the most powerful argument is that the political practices of modern non-violent Islamists in power are different from their practices when they were in the opposing side. Accordingly, it is suggested that non-violent Islamists will abandon their classical ideology when they are incorporated into a democratic process.

This article explores this hypothesis with particular attention to the third argument mentioned above. It challenges this proposition and argues that Islamist ideology *cannot* be reformed through empowerment. By 'Islamist ideology' I refer to the core ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood, with particular reference to the views of Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb; constituting a significant barrier to any democratic transformation.

Before setting out the counter-argument, it is important first to understand the case advanced by the advocates *for* modern Islamism. This position is championed by Shadi Hamid and William McCants in their recently edited volume, *Rethinking Political Islam*.[8] In essence, the argument of the various commentators is that when Islamists have come to power in countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco, their policies have acquired a more democratic shade. We should therefore begin to distinguish the new and modern Islamists from the classical and violent Islamists.

For example, Peter Mandaville argues that Islamist movements were evolving rapidly by the mid-1990s, and that there were clear signs that these groups could no longer be understood in reference to their original vision of Hassan al-Banna or Abul A'la Maududi.[9] Mandaville notes that in 1996, a group of young leaders within the Egyptian Brotherhood split from the movement and attempted to establish a separate political party, *Hizb al-Wasat* (Party of the Centre). They were not satisfied with the Brotherhood's conservative leadership and its inability to modernise its vision and agenda. By the mid-2000s, Islamist parties had become a fixture in the mainstream politics of Morocco, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, and Kuwait. Similarly, Turkey's Justice and Development party, whose roots lay in Turkey's Islamist movements, won a landslide election victory in 2002 and have now been in power for more than fourteen years.[10] Once in

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[8] Hamid, S. and McCants, W., *Rethinking Political Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[9] Mandaville, P., 'Islamism and U.S. Foreign Policy' in *Rethinking Political Islam* (2017): pp.205-7.

[10] Ibid.

power, the party's internal politics changed, and they no longer appeared to act in typical classical Islamist manner. Therefore, so the argument goes, Islamist political parties should be empowered and can be used as the vehicle through which to bring about a democratic process.

However, the notion that power has changed, or will change, the Islamist ideology is questionable. This is why.

Empowering Islamists Failed to instill Democratic Culture

It could be argued that Islamists did not survive long enough in power to be given the opportunity to rethink their classical views, which may have been reformed if they survived in power for longer. However, in the *Sunni*-majority countries, non-violent and violent Islamists were empowered for long periods of time before the Arab uprising – yet their ideology remained unchanged.

Islamists were in power in Sudan, almost exclusively, for almost 20 years, but we have not seen any serious departure from the vision of al-Banna and Qutb. The slightly more liberal views of Hasan al-Turabi[11] do not indicate significant shifts from the original Islamist vision. Al-Turabi in particular only proposed certain minor reforms to issues relating to corporal punishments and gender. Notably, even this modest effort was not endorsed by the official group, either in Sudan or in Egypt.

When it comes to violent Islamists, *Hamas* came to power in Palestine in 2006. What changes have occurred in their ideology since then? None. While it is true that *some* policies pursued by *some* Islamists could be described as democratic, they are not significant enough to be described as diverging in any significant way from the original vision of al-Banna and Qutb.[12] It is important to note that since the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood 90 years ago, their core ideological foundation has not been reformed, regardless of whether they were in power or in opposition.

The attempts of post-Islamist rational thinkers, such as Fathy Uthman, to create change collapsed before they were able to do so. They were disregarded by the mainstream Islamists, who would only refer to Uthman when they wanted to boast about their progressiveness to a Western audience.

Some might argue that this analysis does not apply to Tunisia because in 2016, Rashid al-Ghanoushi, the leader of *en Nahda* party, declared the separation of religion and politics. However, the declaration was extremely vague and did not theologically engage with the vision of the founding fathers of Islamism. He declared that *en Nahda* was a moderate civil national party that had "an Islamic point of reference".[13] What does this mean? What is this reference?

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[11] There are some humble contributions from Sa'd al-Uthmani, who become the Prime Minister of Morocco in 2017, in his book *Tasarrufat al-Rasul bi al-Imama* (*the Behaviour of the Prophet as Imam*). He held that we need to rethink the levels of the Prophetic *hadith* and distinguish between his role as statesman and as Prophet: his views as statesman are not binding. The views are important, but not entirely new, and do not contain any clear debunking of the core views of the founding fathers of Islamism. It should also be noted that he developed these views a long time before he came to power. His book is downloadable from this link: http://www.fassael.ma/images/article/livre-tasarofat.pdf, last visited: 28 August 2018.

[12] It could be argued that the brotherhood has renounced certain ideological position through the writing of Hudaybi's book *Du'ah la Quduah* ("Preachers, Not Judges"). Yet, the book only predominantly renounces violence and *takfir* (pronouncing someone as unbeliever). There is a debate about author of the book. There are several authors, such as Fu'ad 'Allam, who argued that scholars from al-Azhar have written the book and they only asked Hudaybi to put his name on it to give it legitimate authority for his fellow Islamists. For more see Patrick Poole's article: https://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2007/05/the_us_and_the_muslim_brotherh.html, last visited: 28 August 2018.

[13] 'هل يحذو الاسلاميون حذو النهضة ويقرون فصل الدين عن الدولة؟', BBC News, 23 May 2016, available at: http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2016/05/160522_comments_tunisia_nahdah_reform, last visited: 10 August 2018. See also, 'النهضة التونسية.. إسلامية أم علمانية؟', Al Jazeera, 28 June 2018, available at: http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/opposite-direction/2016/6/25/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A8-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9, last visited: 10 August 2018.

Where are its boundaries? It should be stressed that one of the most common tactics of Islamist politicians, and politicians more broadly, is the use of vague and general terms designed to avoid the need to make any specific or detailed proposals. This approach affords them the freedom to manipulate and interpret any situation in a manner which allows them quickly to shift their position from one side of the argument to the other.

We might also consider the statement of Amr Darrag, the former Foreign Secretary of Egypt under the Islamist president Mohamed Morsi, who stated that he believed there was a need for a truly independent political party with a strong grounding in an Islamic worldview, that sought to translate this into a living reality. He further argued that the party needed to pursue a principled but pragmatic approach to politics.[14] What is the Islamic worldview that needs to be translated? Is it Islamic morality? How can this apply to the modern state? Essentially, Darrag and al-Ghanoushi's attempts at redefining their parties are best understood in the context of politics and the presentation of ideas, rather than as constituting a fundamental theological shift.

In short, it is clear that the core theologies of Islamism remained intact even after its stakeholders come into power. Al-Banna and Qutb are revered as role models and spiritual fathers. Their works continue to constitute the foundation of the textbooks with which they train the new generation of Islamists.

Empowering Islamists Did Not Secularise Their Ideology

The pseudo-democracy of Islamist regimes is designed to erode democratic culture. Whether in power or in opposition, living under repressive regimes or in democratic Western countries, it is surprising that Islamist literature does not include any works that directly or indirectly promote democratic values. On the contrary, the most dominant books that are employed to shape the minds of the new generation are those that attack secularism and rival religious or political schools of thought.

For example, in his book *al-Dawa*, the former guide of the Muslim Brotherhood Mustafa Mashhur (1996-2002) treats the essential democratic values of liberty and diversity as un-Islamic principles that undermine Islamic unity. The book also discredits any new ideas that could break from the vision of the founding fathers, considering them to be a deviation from the true path of God which must be eliminated. Mashhur reaffirms his commitment to the values of al-Banna that consider competition between political parties as conflict between truth and falsehood, good and evil, and the allies of God against the allies of the devil.[15]

President Morsi issued a declaration on 21 November 2012, in which he granted himself almost total power while simultaneously neutralising the judicial system. He did so by announcing that the courts were barred from challenging his decisions. In defence of this decision, the Muslim Brotherhood and its sympathisers stated that it was intended to protect the elected institution from the unelected bodies – the Egyptian judiciary.[16] Here lies the core of the problem: the Islamists' strategy to Islamise the institutions of the state to indefinitely remain in power. But the fact remains that Morsi was at the peak of power, yet could not, or did not, wish to establish the central democratic principle of the separation of powers.[17]

The situation is not much better in Tunisia. The declaration of al-Ghanoushi did not change the party's position to political and religious diversity. During 2017/2018, Rim Benrjeb, a Tunisian

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[14] Darrag, A., 'Politics or Piety?' in *Rethinking Political Islam* (2017), p.225.

[15] Tammam, H., *Tahwalat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin*, 2nd ed., (Cairo: Maktabat Madbouly, 2010), pp.49-51.

[16] 'Political Islam, and the Muslim Brotherhood review', House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee (2017), available at: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmfaff/118/118.pdf, last visited: 26 July 2018, p.18.

[17] Ibid.

journalist, went undercover to investigate the classes run by the Tunis branch of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, which is strongly linked to the *en Nahda* party and led by Yusuf al-Qaradawi. She attended various classes in Islamic and Arabic studies run by the Union as training courses for future Islamist male and female preachers. Benrjeb found that the lecturer directed their religious understanding of the topic in question towards demonising secularism and rival Islamic interpretations. The teachers stressed the merits of the application of the law of retaliation (*Qisas*), which included corporal punishment,[18] while attacking liberal Islamic thinkers whose work had shown that these punishments could be reinterpreted to be in harmony with human rights.[19]

As a result of the often clear links between Qutb's work and extremism and terrorism, some Islamists tend to distance themselves from him and instead associate themselves with al-Banna as a voice of moderation over Qutb. An example of this position is that of Amr Darrag.[20] Yet, the reality is that the actual barrier to the democratic transformation of the Muslim Brotherhood is the writings of the founder himself. Here is what al-Banna stated about the foundational pillar of democracy referring to citizenship and loyalty:

In his critique of rival political nationalist parties, al-Banna stated:

> *The essential difference between us and them is that we count Islamic creed as our national identity but they count earthly boundaries and geographical frontiers. Any part of the world where a Muslim says the shahada ("There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger") is a home for us, it has its own sacredness, holiness, love; sincerity and jihad are to be maintained for its sake. The nationalists are not like this. They care only about those who exist in a narrow and limited piece of land (the state).*[21]

These are the views that are not only taught, but revered and respected, by the current members of the group.

The case for rethinking political Islam in this manner is problematic because it conflates ideological reform with merely tactical political adaptations which have no direct impact on the religious worldview of the ideology. This means that classical Islamist ideology, sooner or later, will be reproduced repeatedly under the religious justification of not shifting away from the original vision of the founder, and which provides a hotbed for violence.

There is not a single unified, official written statement in which the groups clearly state that they have theologically shifted from the ideas of al-Banna and Qutb. The deliberate vagueness and silence of the formal leading body of Islamists, the Muslim Brotherhood, in relation to their key ideological position on matters such as the nation state versus the caliphate, the *ummah*, and the application of classical Islamic law, has to be challenged.

The core ideological and theological foundations of al-Banna and Qutb are the main sources for educating future Islamists, and their vision and agenda are irreconcilable with democracy. Power

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[18] This is also the same position of Ibrahim Munir, Secretary General of the International Organisation of the Muslim Brotherhood and the spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, who held the same view whilst living in a Western liberal democracy. When asked about his position on corporal punishment and the death penalty, he refused to give an answer regarding corporal punishments such as flogging, beating, and amputation. His addressed the death penalty and avoided specific mention of the corporal punishments which were specifically asked about. Corporal punishment is a central topic in the narrative of the Islamists, which they use to discredit any governments and brand them as un-Islamic or infidel. See the UK government report here: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmfaff/118/118.pdf, last visited: 28 August 2018.

[19] 'تحقيق من داخل فرع الاتحاد العالمي لعلماء المسلمين بتونس: جهاز دعوي خفي لحركة النهضة', *Nawaat*, 24 April 2015, available at: https://nawaat.org/portail/2018/04/24/%D8%AA%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%82-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AE%D9%84-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A-%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%85/, last visited: July 2018.

[20] Darrag, A., 'Politics or Piety?' in *Rethinking Political Islam* (2017), p.225.

[21] Al-Banna, H., Majmu at Rasa'il al Imam al Shahid Hasan al Banna (Cairo: Dar al-Shihab, nd, 1990), pp.21-22.

will not reform ideology, and nor will it inspire leadership to change their ideological worldview. Ideological change has to be solidified and proven by producing alternative theologically-nuanced narratives that renounce classical Islamist positions. These reformed narratives must then be publicly adopted by the official leadership and become the basis of the state's social and educational framework. Only at this point might we consider re-assessing political Islam.

The Best Strategy to Deal with Political Islam Is Democracy

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It has become a well-worn adage in the 20th century and beyond. Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill famously spoke of democracy in the House of Commons in 1947 when he said:

> *Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time...*

Democracy, then, is the best system of governance we have developed to date. And yet there are those that worry about other systems that may undermine democracy. For instance, many people see various ideologies that are Muslim or Islamic, in whole or in part, as a threat to not only the West and to democracy, but to the world as a whole. The rise of Islamist terrorism, not solely attributable to the post-9/11 era, but certainly associated with that iconic event, has led to a conviction that those who belong to the Islamic faith are inherently inimical to our beliefs, our societies, and our ways of life. The response, according to this view, must therefore be one of constant vigilance and strength: we must see through the veil of false representations of Islam for what it really is: a totalitarian system that seeks to overthrow our systems of governance and dominate us.

I will argue in this short essay that this approach is largely wrong. There are times and occasions in which a vigorous response, up to and including the use of armed force, is required to neutralise certain actors whose agendas do pose a significant (albeit non-existential) threat to us. The scope and size of this threat has been vastly over-exaggerated, however, and led to some actions that are not only ineffective, but undermine the spirit and superiority of our democratic and rule of law system of governance. In the vast majority of cases, it is the very democratic systems and customs we have painfully created over centuries that carry the best methods to counteract these threats (assuming we agree that they do pose threats – this is not always the case).

It must first be emphasised that those who are often co-described as 'Islamist', and hence unwanted, are not in fact monolithic. For the purposes of this essay, I will define three related but separate categories (I have borrowed these from earlier descriptions of Salafist movements [22]: this paper is not concerned narrowly with Salafist Islam but the distinctions are nonetheless useful for illustrative purposes):

1) 'Quietist' Muslims: devout Muslims content with becoming better believers but who seek no role in the political system (threat to us: nil);

2) 'Political' Islamists: devout Muslims who want to gain an active role in the governance of a society (threat to us: low but variable);

3) Islamist extremists: devout Muslims who use violence to defeat the perceived 'enemies of Islam' and to impose their particular interpretation of Islam on others – Muslims and non-Muslims – by force (threat to us: severe but not existential).

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[22] 'Politics and the puritanical', *The Economist*, 25 June 2015, available at: https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2015/06/25/politics-and-the-puritanical, last visited: 6 August 2018.

Quietist Muslims are no different than adherents of any other faith (Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, etc.) who are content to express their beliefs as closely as possible to what they perceive to be the most authentic interpretation of that faith. They sometimes see the 'outside world' as corrupt and want as little to do with it as possible (some even withdraw from it to devote themselves fully to religious observance). People in this category have little interest in governance or the beliefs of others, save for those who seek to convert the 'lost' in order to save their souls. Quietists pose no challenge to Western democratic systems.

Political Islamists on the contrary, as their name suggests, seek to become part of the political process. They will put forward candidates for political office and often form political parties. Tunisia's *en Nahda* and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) are two examples from the 20th and 21st centuries. Their conception of politics is obviously tied closely to their identity as Muslims. In this they are little different from Orthodox Jewish political parties in the Israeli *Knesset*, such as *Shas*, or the Hindu *Bharatiya Janata* Party (BJP) in India.

Political Islamists have often been accused of support for democracy as long as this support goes only as far as 'one man, one vote, one time', i.e. that if a party of this ilk were to gain power through the democratic process, it would subsequently abolish democracy and serve as a religious dictatorship. This conviction led the Algerian Army to launch a coup in 1992 when the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which had garnered more than half the votes in local elections in 1990 and were leading the national vote in January 1992, was ousted. Better a military dictatorship than an Islamist one, or so was the thinking behind the move. The subsequent Algerian civil war went on to claim at least 250,000 lives. Similarly, after the Muslim Brotherhood won the first post-Mubarak elections in Egypt in 2012, President Mohamed Morsi was overthrown in a coup a year later for similar reasons.

Not all Islamist parties have been ejected via the intervention of the military, however. Tunisia's *en Nahda* party won a plurality in the post-Arab Spring era only to see its support wane: it opted not to put forward a candidate for the November 2014 presidential election but still retains 69 of the 217 seats in the Tunisian Parliament.

Some analysts see close links between some political Islamist parties and Islamist extremist groups (see below). The Muslim Brotherhood is particularly tainted with this image, due in large part to the fact that its creator, Hassan al-Banna, declared that:

> *Allah is our objective; the Prophet is our leader; the Quran is our law; Jihad is our way; dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.*[23]

Al-Banna also declared that 'jihad of the heart' was not more important than 'jihad of the sword' and that it would be necessary to use force against Egypt's then colonial overseer, Great Britain. Sayyid Qutb, a member of the MB in the 1940s and 1950s, is seen by many as one of the most important Islamist extremist ideologues of the 20th century.

The Muslim Brotherhood's ties to terrorism must nevertheless be nuanced by the fact that there are several Muslim Brotherhoods. *En Nahda* is one variety: there are others in Qatar and Jordan as well as Egypt. Each must be judged by its actions and manifestos.

Finally, there are Islamist extremists. Individuals who belong to this third grouping are terrorists and are members of terrorist groups such as *Al Qaeda*, Islamic State, *Al Shabaab*, *Boko Haram*, *Jemaah Islamiyah*, the *Moro* Islamic Liberation Front, and many others. These groups usually adhere to a hateful, non-normative, intolerant version of Islam (some members are more

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[23] 'Muslim Brothers, Muslim Brotherhood, al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, Hizb Al-Ikhwan Al-Muslimoon, al-Ikhwan ("The Brothers")', *FAS*, 8 January 2002, available at: https://fas.org/irp/world/para/mb.htm, last visited: 6 August 2018.

'religious' than others) and believe that violence is both divinely sanctioned (and required) and the only way to impose their views on others. Their views on democracy can best be seen in the words of Abdallah Azzam, the 'spiritual father' of *Al Qaeda*:

Jihad and the rifle alone; no negotiations, no conferences, and no dialogues. [24]

It should be clear that the only response to groups that use violence to achieve their goals is the application of the law (investigation, arrest, charges, trials, and incarceration) or violence (in the worst case scenario). Some groups may entertain negotiation or participation in the political process at least initially (the Taliban in Afghanistan are a good example) but it is far from obvious that even in these cases there is a commitment to upholding democratic principles.

What then should be the response to 'Islamists' within a democratic system? The 'Quietists' do not pose any threat to the standing order. Their energies lie outside the realm of politics, in most cases, and they hence have no interest in either participating in or changing governance regimes. Their interpretation of Islam may cause some concern but this is no different than Hindu nationalism in India and ultra-Orthodox Judaism in Israel. As long as it rests outside the political process, it cannot undermine democracy in any serious way (if these adherents resort to violence they then become religious extremists and can be dealt with as we do with other terrorists). Islamist extremists need to be identified and neutralised, either through the courts or on the battlefield. Those that do not die for their 'cause' must be incarcerated for long periods of time, or subject to deradicalisation or disengagement programmes (although these too have their challenges). Ex-terrorists who truly renounce their previous convictions and beliefs can be used as dissuasive elements to prevent others from following in their footsteps (with proper vetting of course).

This leaves us with the political Islamists. There is no one response that adequately covers what to do in these cases. Each must be studied and considered on its own merits. The *en Nahda* example from Tunisia illustrates that some Islamist parties 'play by the rules'. In other instances, military action has undercut any analysis of what may have happened if Islamist parties had been allowed to take power (Algeria) or finish out their mandates (Egypt). The tremendous human toll in Algeria, post-FIS, demonstrates that the eviction of a perceived threat from an Islamist political party may in fact lead to a Pyrrhic victory.

Democracies hold within their very mechanisms the best way to deal with parties and platforms that hew to positions that some perceive as anti-democratic: the ballot box. All parties must appeal to the electorate and it is the electorate that decides, wisely or not, which one will govern. In addition, most countries have charters, constitutions, parliaments, assemblies, or laws that determine what the rules of the game are. In a democratic system, the fundamental rules of the game can be changed only with the explicit consent – through elections – of the electorate. If a given party states that it will adopt policy X if elected and it garners enough votes from citizens in favour of policy X, that policy can become law if it does not violate some higher principle (i.e. a constitution, although there are usually mechanisms to change constitutions as well). If a political Islamist party participates in an election, it must by definition follow the ground rules.

In our obsession with the dangers of allowing a political Islamist party to take part in elections, only to see them change the system once in office (the 'one man one vote one time' fear), it should be pointed out that it is not only parties from that part of the political spectrum which are capable of such moves. Political parties in both Poland (PIS) and Hungary (*Fidesz*) are currently undermining, in the views of many, basic democratic rights in their nations. And yet

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[24] McGregor, A., 'Jihad and the Rifle Alone": 'Abdullah 'Azzam and the Islamist Revolution', *The Journal of Conflict Studies* Vol XXIII. 2 (2003).

they were elected by a majority of constituents. Should they be banned as well? What about Hindu nationalist parties in India?

In the end, democracy works best in the light of day. Anyone can put forward a platform and seek to hold office. If that particular platform appeals to a majority (or in many cases a plurality) of the electorate, then that party gets the chance to govern. If the electorate tires of that party, it 'throws the bums out of office' in the next election. Political Islamists should be given the chance to throw their hat in the ring if they agree to abide by democratic principles and the rule of law. Denying them the chance to do so goes against what democracy stands for.

For those who see a threat from political Islamism in the West, a reality check is in order. In no Western country (North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand) do Muslims constitute anywhere close to a plurality, let alone a majority. The chances of an Islamist party gaining power and surreptitiously changing the fundamental nature of the political system of any Western country are zero (unless a given nation's electorate, including the vast majority of voters who are not Muslim, inexplicably voted them in). In Muslim-majority nations, citizens should have the democratic right to vote for whomever they wish. Who are we to dictate their choices?

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PART 2

Proportionality in the Modern Age

The Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE QC
Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, 2001-2011

The United Kingdom (UK) and Europe face an ever immediate, and constantly developing, threat from terrorism and extremism. Since 2016, there have been 49 terror attacks across countries from northern to southern Europe: the UK, Germany, France, Belgium, Sweden, Spain, and Finland. Between 2011 and 2016 one UK National, Fusilier Lee Rigby, was killed in a terrorist offence within the UK. In 2017 alone, there were five terror attacks in the UK, which led to the death of 36 innocent individuals, some of them children. Most of these attacks involved a 'soft' target, with attackers using an everyday object. During my tenure as the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, from 2001 until 2011, I repeatedly warned of this type of attack. They cause the most fear to the public. Their unpredictability and impact on innocent everydayness go more to the heart of our freedom than even an attack on iconic, hard targets such as Parliament.

Andrew Parker, Director General of MI5, has stated that terrorism is currently being "amplified and accelerated by the reach and tempo of technological change".[25] This is an area which now receives special consideration and attention from government, as the UK Government recognised in its revised counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) announced by Home Secretary Sajid Javid MP on 4 June 2018.[26] As the proliferation of extremist material increases online, individuals are being radicalised via their laptops and phones, and terrorists are able to communicate efficiently through encrypted messaging services. Governments must double and redouble methods by which they can keep on top of these tools and suppress the threat.

In its revised CONTEST policy, the UK Government has demonstrated and adopted the continued need for high level vigilance when tackling terrorism. The policy aims to address the changing nature of the terrorist threat, and ultimately reduce the 'safe space' terrorists operate within. This includes giving counter-terrorism authorities the ability to intervene in investigations at an earlier stage, leading to prosecutions for new precursor terrorism offences. For example, it will now be an offence, punishable by 15 years in prison, to view extremist content three or more times online. Material to this is the *Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Bill*, which had its First Reading in the House of Commons on 6 June 2018. Previously, it was only an offence to download extremist content, with a maximum penalty of ten years. This change clearly demonstrates the Government's advocacy and understanding of what they see as the need to establish ever more robust but still proportionate legislation in response to changing technologies.

Significantly, the new counter-terrorism policy will provide far greater coordination between intelligence agencies, local authorities, and businesses. MI5 and counter-terrorism police will be able to share relevant information with a range of partners, in order better to assess the risks some noticed individuals may pose to society. The Government has made it clear that any sensitive information which is shared will be safeguarded and protected by strict protocols and rigorous training and management. This increase in resources available to countering

[25] Parker, P., 'Speech to BFV Symposium', *MI5 Security Service*, 14 May 2018, available at:
https://www.mi5.gov.uk/news/director-general-andrew-parker-speech-to-bfv-symposium , last visited: 5 June 2018.

[26] Javid, S., 'Home Secretary announces new counter terrorism strategy', *Home Office*, 4 June 2018, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-announces-new-counter-terrorism-strategy, last visited: 5 June 2018.

terrorism is necessary and welcome; whilst it is important to protect the privacy of UK citizens, it is also vital that the public are sufficiently protected.

The argument for renewed counterterrorism legislation is highlighted when analysing the detail of the terror attacks that occurred in Britain in 2017, and the scale of the underlying threat. As mentioned above, 36 people were killed, and more than 200 were hospitalised. At any one time, the Security Service (MI5) and counter terrorism police have more than 500 live operations, involving approximately 3,000 *subjects of interest*, with a further 20,000 people categorised as *closed subjects of interest*. Even with unlimited resources, managing these operations would be a significant challenge. The deployment and methodology in the use of public money provided for this purpose from the public purse is a formidable challenge to ministers and their officials.

Three of the perpetrators of the 2017 attacks were known to MI5 – Khuram Butt [27] (London Bridge) was an active subject of interest, whilst Khalid Masood [28] (Westminster) and Salman Abedi [29] (Manchester) were closed subjects of interest. David Anderson QC (now Lord Anderson KBE), then Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, stated in his review of the 2017 UK terror attacks that if intelligence officers had interpreted two significant pieces of information about Abedi differently, it is likely he would have been placed under investigation before the attack took place. [30] Anderson concluded, therefore, that Abedi's attack might have been avoidable. It is plausible that had intelligence agencies been able to coordinate with local organisations in Manchester, there may have been a different outcome. My own view remains that the abolition in 2011 of *control orders*, which might have applied to Abedi, was a mistake.

The growing threat of terrorism is pertinent within the context of Brexit. At the time of writing, the future relationship between the UK and the European Union's (EU) security and defence services was yet to be answered or resolved. The possibility that national security cooperation of at least the current intensity between the UK and the remaining 27 members of the EU will not be sustained, and is a bargaining chip in the Brexit negotiations, is alarming.

The UK currently has numerous relationships vital for our continuing national security. The Five Eyes relationship is arguably the most important. However, NATO and bilateral arrangements, such as the Lancaster House Treaty with France, are also incredibly important. We have developed significant cooperation and intelligence sharing on counter-terrorism with the EU and its member states, and there is now cohesive work against terrorism from the dangerous Eastern borders of the EU to Ireland on the West. The remarkable transition from terrorism to constitutionalism in Northern Ireland is a shining light in a darkening European terrorism sky.

Additionally, the UK benefits from Europol, which deals with cyber security and organised crime; and with the *Schengen* and *Prüm* databases, which store forensics material including DNA. In 2016, over 3,000 cross-border investigations of organised crime and terrorism were initiated at Europol by UK agencies. The *Prüm* Convention, sometimes known as the *Schengen III Agreement*, is a convention between Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Luxemburg, the

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[27] It should be noted that Khuram Butt is dead: 'Who was London attacker Khuram Butt,' *CNN World*, 6th June 2017, available at: https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/05/europe/khuram-butt-london-attacker/index.html, last visited 31st August 2018.

[28] It should be noted that Khalid Masood is dead :'Khalid Masood: Everything we know about the London attacker,' *The Telegraph*, 27th March 2017, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/03/24/khalid-masood-everything-know-london-attacker/, last visited 31st August 2018.

[29] It should be noted that Salman Abedi is dead: 'Inquest into death of Manchester bomber Salman Abedi opens,' *The Guardian*, 16th June 2017, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/16/inquest-into-death-of-manchester-bomber-salman-abedi-opens, last visited 31st August 2018.

[30] Anderson Q.C, D., 'ATTACKS IN LONDON AND MANCHESTER MARCH-JUNE 2017 INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF MI5 AND POLICE INTERNAL REVIEWS', *MI5*, December 2017, available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664682/Attacks_in_London_and_Manchester_Open_Report.pdf, last visited: 6th June 2018.

Netherlands, and Austria on the stepping up of cross-border cooperation, particularly in combatting terrorism, cross-border crime, and illegal migration.

I consider those arrangements to be indispensable to the UK and the EU. The UK Government has made it clear in negotiations with its EU counterparts that we consider these instruments of cooperation vital in our efforts to combat the difficult, asymmetrical challenge presented by both violent Islamism and the growing threat of right-wing extremism. The Home Secretary has emphasised this by stating that "we [the UK] need, and we want, a deep and special security partnership with the EU after we leave – and the EU needs it too". [31] The RAND Corporation supports this conclusion, in a recent study they stated that the UK and EU "risk becoming weaker and less secure if the Brexit talks provoke a zero-sum approach to security and a messy divorce". [32]

Counterterrorism legislation, such as the Investigatory Powers Act (IPA) passed by Parliament in 2016, receives regular criticism for trespassing into the freedoms and rights of citizens. Whilst there is a clear need to protect the individual rights of the UK population, the proportionality argument includes the insurance that the nation remains safe and protected.

I share the belief that, due to the changing nature of the terrorist threat, and in particular the prolific use of technology to spread extremism and communicate privately, legislation needs to provide the security services with the means to monitor the modern-day terror threat. The IPA gives considerable power to the authorities, for example for the collection and retention of bulk data and the ability to work with operators to decrypt communications. It is very carefully controlled under the scheme of the Act. A very senior judge has been appointed to head the relevant and purpose-designed Commission of Scrutiny. It is my belief that we have achieved a proper balance of proportionality in this area. However, this is art not science, judgement not a measurement: it will continue to be debated, but I believe that currently the balance is achieved.

There is a lack of understanding of the extent to which our privacy is breached by the State. There is a casual assumption in the minds of some including some significant NGOs that the security services and Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) abuse their powers and constantly monitor the communications and internet traffic of their friends or high-profile individuals. This is inaccurate and untrue. This is simply not possible due to finite resources and, more important, the security services' work is strictly controlled and monitored by accepted ethical standards and by managerial protocols. Further, it insults some of our most capable and honourable public servants to suggest that they have the inclination to indulge in idle and pointless searches.

The collection and analysis of bulk data properly can be required in many different kinds of situations. A simple example is if there is a genuine suspicion that mobile phones on a particular network are being used in a certain city to plan a terrorist attack. In this scenario, it may be necessary to look at a much greater group of phones, and rapidly exclude the innocent, in order to identify the guilty. This simple and hypothetical scenario illustrates a situation where I believe it is justified for the state to briefly impose on the privacy of a small group of individuals in order to confront a genuine threat. In concept and quality, is it any different from a police speed trap which records the registration numbers and speeds of law-abiding drivers in order to catch those who are not obeying the law?

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[31] Javid, S., 'Home Secretary announces new counter terrorism strategy', *Home Office*, 4 June 2018, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-announces-new-counter-terrorism-strategy, last visited: 5 June 2018.

[32] Black, J. et al. 'Defence and security after Brexit: Understanding the possible implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU — Overview report', *RAND Corporation*, 2017, available at: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1786z1.html, last visited: 6 June 2018.

The threat from terrorism continues to develop at a fast pace, and it is vital that governments respond to developments with robust legislation. 2017 was a horrible year in terms of terrorism in the UK. Since 2013, counter-terrorism police and intelligence agencies have thwarted major terror plots in the UK. Since March 2017 alone, they stopped 12 Islamist attacks. This is an impressive record, but counter-terrorism authorities cannot drop their guard for a moment.

A Toolbox for Countering Extremist Religious Doctrines

Shmuel Bar

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Definitions of 'radical' or 'extremist' are relative to the mores and norms of the societies in which they exist. One definition of a radical or an extremist is: "one who advocates or resorts to measures that are counter to the norm" [33]. Such a definition forces us to define the "norm". Therefore, any discussion of counter-radicalisation must focus on the common culture and collective narratives of the community in which the radical ideology exists.

Attempts to uncover 'underlying causes' or 'driving factors' of radicalisation towards terrorism of *individuals* in Muslim communities tend to equate it with other forms of social violence in other societies. Indeed, violence exists in all cultures; however, I will stress that there are unique cultural and religious causes and dynamics that differentiates radicalisation of Muslims from corresponding phenomena in other societies.

Radicalisation of an individual tends to be incremental. One theory portrays a cycle of radicalisation that consists of: (1) pre-radicalisation, (2) self-identification, (3) indoctrination and (4) radicalisation [34]. A psychological explanation, meanwhile, attributes radicalisation to the quest for thrills, status, love, connection, and comradeship.

I will argue that the problem is not so much a response to the individual's own sense of grievance, but to the inconsistency between two worldviews in which s/he lives which are totally and diametrically opposed. The key drivers to radicalisation in Muslim societies are therefore collective as opposed to individual: not an individual rebellious response to dissatisfaction in society by rejection of any authority, but rather a replacement of the 'compromising' authority of parents, teachers, and *imams* with an alternative: militant, uncompromising, and seemingly pristine Islamic authority. In this sense, the Muslim radical is, in fact, a conformist. The toolbox for countering Islamic radicalism, therefore, must take this into account.

How 'Radical' is 'Radical Islam'?

The popular distinction between 'radical Islam' and 'moderate' or 'mainstream' implies that a clear border or firewall between the two exists. However, there is no doctrinal 'firewall' between the mainstream and the radical; it would be more correct therefore to view 'radical' on a spectrum – much of which remains within the borders of acceptable orthodoxy. Consequently, radicals can evoke common religious narratives and beliefs, and present logic that mainstream orthodox Muslims find difficult to refute, while the 'mainstream' often suffers from a sense of inferiority towards their zealous co-religionists.

Like any widespread ideological movement, radical Islamism can be viewed as a series of concentric circles, with the small *'hard-core'* of activists at the centre, surrounded by *active*

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[33] Definition of Extremism, *The Free Dictionary*, available at: https://www.thefreedictionary.com/extremism, last visited: 6 August 2018.

[34] One theory of radicalisation is proposed by Silber & Bhatt, where they claim radicalisation has four stages; (1) Pre-radicalisation, (2) Self-Identification, (3) Indoctrination and (4) Jihadisation. Silber, M., & Bhatt, A., Radicalisation in the West: The Homegrown Threat, New York City Police Department (2007), available at: https://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/files/NYPD_Report-Radicalization_in_the_West.pdf, last visited: 11 September 2018, p.5.

supporters (and financiers), *potential allies*; and finally a large passive, but *sympathetic*, population. The relative 'width' of each band differs from one organisation to another; the greater the legitimacy of the 'hard-core' in society, the 'wider' the inner band is. In other cases, the outer circle is the 'widest'.

The Crisis of Authority

Islamist radicalisation can be attributed, to a great extent, to a vacuum of modern secular or moderate religious leadership caused by a *crisis of religious and political legitimacy and authority*. Liberalism was repressed by authoritarian regimes and could not blossom in the absence of a strong middle class, this was the case in Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Iraq. The clerics no longer shared power with the rulers, but were called upon to support them nevertheless. This resulted in a steady decline of the *Sunni* orthodox religious establishments and a rise in the role of extra-establishment clerics.

In the absence of legitimate political leaders who could outline the political interest, this 'demand' began to be filled by the non-establishment *ulama*. This trend has resulted in the emergence of a 'supermarket' of 'scholars' who issue religious rulings and legitimise various ideologies. The age of information has also opened up a new venue for Muslims to acquire religious instruction: including instruction regarding the duties of *jihad* – without having to come in direct contact with the *Sheikh* he or she is consulting with. Islamic establishments and regimes in the Middle East traded tolerance of *jihad* for local calm, and lost ground to radicals in their societies. This has given rise to the 'Lone Wolf Syndrome'; the individual or small group which has absorbed the ideology and acts on it without any specific instructions.

This is compounded by a *breakdown of traditional sources of social authority* in societies with a relatively young population and the perceived intrusion of Western mores into traditional Muslim society. The conflict between Islam and the West is, in essence, a clash of values. The West may be likened to the *Sirens of the Odyssey*, a dangerous 'magnet', which once succumbed to, will jeopardise the core values of Islamic society – foremost among them, family values, the status of women, and the authority of the elders. Poverty and lack of economic horizons also feed Islamist radicalism. However, leaders of radical Islamic movements – mainly the Muslim Brotherhood and *jihadist* movements in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other countries – have also comprised of economic and social elites. This suggests that while *economic transformation* may be a necessary condition for the fight against Islamism, it is not a sufficient condition to uproot it.

Radicalisation in Immigrant Muslim Societies

The relations between immigrant communities and their home countries also play a pivotal role in radicalisation processes:

- Failure of Muslims in the 'diaspora' to *integrate, assimilate, and/or develop a local identification* with their new homes creates an 'identity-deficiency' that leaves the field open for the identification with an amorphous transnational 'virtual *ummah*' (the Trans-National Muslim 'Nation') in lieu of the lost national identity of the countries of origin, on one hand, and that of the not-yet-accepted countries of residence on the other hand.

- Exposure to events in the home country (behaviour of the regime towards the population) through the media and links to the home country have a radicalising effect on immigrants and weakens the development of a bond with particular local interests. The family based network of Al Qaeda is a case in point.

- Settlement of large numbers of immigrants in neighbourhoods or even cities in which they are the majority impedes assimilation and allows the community to continue to follow customs that are anathema to the host country (arranged marriages of minors, female genital mutilation (FGM)).

- The absence of Islamic teachers in the host countries who are acculturated to the host country's culture and mores has resulted in the importing of *imams* [religious teachers and Mosque officials] and school books from the home countries, where ideas may be more extreme.

- The free traffic of ideas facilitates the creation of a 'virtual *ummah*' – in lieu of the lost national identity of the countries of origin, on one hand, and that of the not-yet-accepted countries of residence on the other hand.

- *Jihad* is a 'criminality laundry': it allows people who are anti-social and violent to give vent to these tendencies with impunity and under the 'cover' of a legitimate (*jihadist*) cause.

Two main models of relations between Western majority cultures and Muslim immigrants can be described as: (a) the British form of declared pluralism and its variant – the Dutch concept of 'integration' while maintaining ethnic differences and; (b) the paradigm (epitomised in France) of *forced integration* through uniformity of appearances and de-communalisation of religion. Neither have established a balance between civil and ethnic identity, or succeeded in mitigating the attraction of second generation Muslims in Europe to radical Islam.

The Political Dimension

The Islamist political grievance towards the West is both a historic and current complaint; with the West being taken to task for what it did in the past, for what it is doing, and for what it is. The historic grievance begins with the Muslim victory over Byzantium, followed by the Crusades, and culminating with colonialism, patronising mandates, economic exploitation, and the existence of Israel. This sense of historic grievance is compounded by contemporary events such as those in Afghanistan and Iraq. While the Israeli-Arab conflict is a popular battle cry for galvanising radical Islamic groups, it seems that this issue was a marginal cause in the emergence of Islamic movements, and was treated by them as just another symptom of Western domination. The Palestinian issue is seen as a symptom of the Western conspiracy against the Muslims, and not a leading cause.

The Efficacy of Counter-Radicalisation Efforts

Counter-radicalisation efforts have been based on a number of approaches:

- *Moral arguments:* Efforts to denounce extremism on the basis that it contradicts universal principles such as freedom of religion, sanctity of civilian lives, etc.

- *Deradicalisation programmes* for 'de-programming' of individual radicals and community outreach.

- *Cultivation of liberal-reformist Muslim clerics and Sufi Islam or importing of moderate Islamic mores* into the Arab-Muslim communities as a moderate counterweight to radical Islam.

- *Fighting fire with fire:* attempts to cultivate the non-violent but fundamentalist religious authorities (such as Yusuf Al-Qaradawi and the Muslim Brotherhood) as a counter-balance to the Jihadist-Salafist movements.

Moral Arguments

The moral argument against radical Islamic ideology is usually based on Western morality. The message is based on the assumption that there are universal values, which all religions inherently subscribe to, and hence the counter message to Islamic radicalisation must come from those principles. However, whereas in the Judeo-Christian tradition, law is the codification of ethics, in Islam, ethics are derived from the divine law.

Deradicalisation Programmes

Deradicalisation programmes have been developed in a number of Muslim countries – notably Saudi Arabia and Yemen. However, the high level of announced recidivism (about 20% in the Saudi program) raises questions regarding the efficacy of the program and warrants a deeper look at its content. The weakness of the 'deradicalisation' campaigns in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States is that it is not the very legitimacy of waging *jihad* which mainstream scholars oppose, but the application of the principle of *jihad* to present circumstances, and the specific means used for fighting *jihad* in the cases under discussion.

Since 9/11 there have been efforts to promote liberal or *Sufi* Islam as a counter-balance to the radical narrative. These efforts have also met with limited success, as these streams remain out of the mainstream of Islamic orthodoxy, and certainly hard-line *Wahhabi* and *Salafi* schools that are the breeding ground of radicalisation and of the *jihadist* movement. Alongside the voices of the radicals, there exists a relatively small number of Islamic scholars who call for reform of one sort or another in Islam, and updating Islam or reconciling it with the West. These trends, however, remain a minority and their proponents are persecuted for their positions by the Islamic establishment. Therefore, the likelihood of an Islamic *Kulturkampf* over the relations with the non-Muslim world seems low. Another approach has been to import Islamic concepts from the periphery of the Muslim world (e.g. Indonesia) into Middle Eastern and Western Muslim communities. However, these efforts have invariably failed.

Conclusions

Counter-radicalisation efforts have been severely handicapped by political correctness. A practical approach to countering Islamist terrorism must accept that the real motivation is Islam, *as those terrorists perceive it*. It must also accept that the problem is not 'violent extremism' but any ideological worldview that justifies violence against innocents in society – whether the ideology is in a stage of latency or breakout.

Countering Islamism cannot be done either by turning a blind eye to its religious origins, or by relying solely on political, economic, or military means. The need to make use of religious tools, however, seems foreign to both Western strategic thought and futile. The attempts to deny the historic validity of militant Islamic traditions by reformist re-interpretation of Islam and revisionist reading of Islamic history will never gain sufficient credence in the Muslim world to undermine the traditional reading of Islam.

Since authority plays such a pivotal role in radicalisation, it is imperative to deal with radical clerics who have ties in the West. To do this, a clear 'line in the sand' must be drawn between legitimate religious beliefs, and those that will not be countenanced, notwithstanding their roots in religious doctrines. This implies legal steps against clerics who declare even conditional or post-factum support of acts of terrorism.

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PART 3

Can a Western Islam Emerge?

M. Zuhdi Jasser
President of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, co-founder of the Muslim Reform Movement

"New opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason but because they are not already common." – John Locke

In December 2017, the first Radical Islam Conference hosted by HJS led to the foundational establishment of a 'trans-Atlantic network' of counter-terrorism, counter-*jihadism* experts. This is vitally important to the security of Western civilisation. As an American Muslim, I have dedicated my life to educating everyone I can, and doing everything that I can, to expose and address the root causes of Islamism (aka Political Islam). Once we have a public consensus that Islamism is the problem, it will become natural to promote the ideas of liberty and universal human rights within Muslim communities as the solution. It is essential that diverse anti- and counter-jihadists work together in what we are doing in the West to minimise redundancy and amplify progress. With the ever-changing map of leadership across government, media, academia, and faith communities, the few thought leaders that understand the threat of Salafi-Jihadism need to amplify our voices to continuously educate Western leadership.

The role of reform-minded Muslim voices against Islamist leadership cannot be overemphasised. Muslims courageous enough and honest enough to face the dominant influence of Islamists inside and outside Muslim communities will need the strong shoulders of long established thought leaders and government influencers to stand on, since we are the only ones who can break through the false grievance narratives of Islamist groups.

Islamists have made a cottage industry out of promulgating a false premise of bigotry (aka Islamophobia – a word we should all reject) against anyone who is anti-Islamist. The premise of our work at the American Islamic Forum for Democracy [35] is that in fact being anti-Islamist and pro-liberty is actually pro-Muslim and in support of a modernised, 21st century Islam. There would be nothing more pro-Muslim than helping peaceful Muslims shed the yolk of medieval interpretations of *shariah* and the inviolability of the Islamic jihadist state.

Importance of Identity

At the centre of our work is the synergy of personal identity and national identity. This synergy, or its countervailing conflict, for many Muslims is at the core of this work on reform and modernisation. My own personal history as a US Naval officer and an avowed patriot is no aberration or mutation of Western Muslims, as some would say. In fact, I believe that this is the far more common narrative of a silent majority of Muslims in the West, who have abrogated the leadership of our communities to the Islamist theocrats. I was raised by patriotic American Muslim parents who were also strong adherents of their interpretation of the faith of Islam, and I know that there are a lot of Muslims out there who share my background and faithful underpinnings of my patriotism.

As a result of this passion for my nation, I joined the US Navy on a medical school scholarship, and served 11 years as a medical officer, feeling from the outset that the only country I would

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[35] American Islamic Forum for Democracy, available at: https://aifdemocracy.org/, last visited: 26 July 2018.

ever die for is the United States of America. I also contrarily, if not similarly, believed that I never wanted to dream for, let alone work for, and especially die for *'Jihad'* or for *'Islam'*, as that for me was simply a personal concept related to my relationship with God. God never needed me to die for him. My grandparents and parents taught me that while God watches all that I do and I will be judged on my behaviour and integrity, I never needed to prove my faith though a single action and especially with the collective *ummah*.

I also understood that Islamist global movements tapped into this false premise that Muslims must be loyal to the global *"ummah"* and its *jihad*. So I actively rejected it. I also knew that Muslim leaders needed to make this rejection a dominant idea in the West, and eventually, globally.

I further realised that with the oppressive domination of Islamist regimes and their *shariah* based legal systems across Muslim majority nations (aka Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, OIC), we have a unique responsibility in the West to use the laboratory of freedom to defeat Islamists.

All of this is unbelievably important to the security mission of our transatlantic network against Islamist terror. The only real way to counter Islamist radicalisation is to face the central power of familial, tribal, local, national, and global jihadist movements (like the Muslim Brotherhood). Our identity as free Americans is the only way to inoculate faithful Muslims in their belief in God and nation, and against Islamist supremacism. I know that I am not unique. There are many Muslims, if not a majority, who are not primarily or even secondarily influenced by an *imam* or by a local community which influences or dictates their collective interpretation of faith. For many, even if they have some exposure to clerics and Islamist collectivists, they do not buy into the negation of self and negation of national identity involved in global jihadism for the *ummah*.

While I am of *Sunni* extraction, this conversation can be superimposed upon any Islamists within communities whether of *Shia*, *Sunni*, or other heterodox extractions. The ideology of political Islam and its attendant identity movements that seek to impose an Islamic state identity along with its *shariah* laws upon communities transcends sectarian divides. The sectarian divides may balkanise Islamists and their non-Islamist counterparts, but the reforms long overdue against Islamic state identity movements apply across essentially every sect of Islam.

How Will a Western Islam Emerge?

There has been some obvious spontaneity to the emergence of Western characteristics within various practices of Islam in the West, but I would submit that this is *despite* the concerted efforts of the Islamic leadership (the Islamist establishment of Muslim Brotherhood legacy group and their petro-Islamist benefactors) to prevent that modernisation and liberalisation. However, that neo-modern and neo-Islamist evolution has been entirely uncoordinated and completely overshadowed by an extraordinarily dominant Islamist network in the West and the various forms of military dictatorships across Muslim majority nations of the OIC. In the West, that network includes the vast majority of mosques and organised Islamic institutions.

There is little doubt that modern liberal interpretations of Islam have begun to evolve, but without a coordinated effort to unite those liberal movements (classically liberal) they will likely never have the influence and bandwidth to take on, let alone defeat, the Islamists.

Our Muslim Reform Movement,[36] a coalition of very diverse Muslim leaders who share an enmity for Islamist ideologies and identities and share a passion for secular liberty and freedom, embraced our deep political and national differences from the US, Canada, and Europe and established our coalition on 4 December 2015.[37] The defining element of our Muslim Reform

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[36] *Muslim Reform Movement*, available at: https://muslimreformmovement.org/, last visited: 20 August 2018.

[37] 'Muslim Reform Movement #MuslimReform', *YouTube*, 4 December 2015, available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlAnr8bIIr8&list=PL-krldSWSHU1hhICcp2JhjXIjJzya6LhR, last visited: 20 August 2018.

Movement is the two-page Declaration of Principles that we diligently agreed upon and set forth as a defining document of our movement and our coalition. We believe that declaration[38] lays out the central ideological differences between an oppressive Islamist worldview and a worldview based in universal human rights and liberty.

Our declaration can, and should be, used as a firewall to delineate which Muslims are on the side of a Westernised interpretation of Islam (our allies) and which are Islamist or Salafi-Jihadist (our enemies). The emergence of a Western Islam will be based on this legacy.

The bottom line for Muslims open to reform is that they believe, fundamentally, that there should be no intermediaries between a Muslim and God. There should be no intermediaries between a Muslim's independent interpretation of their faith and God. When we talk about the emergence of a Western Islam, this is important with regards to legacy. I believe that any Muslim that will embrace and be part of leading this reform movement is going to be from those that deeply care about the Islam that our kids and our kids' kids will have. Only the Muslim leaders courageous enough to take on Islamist thinkers and use Western ideas as a starting point against the root of the cancer that is Islamism will be helpful.

So the Question Is How Do We Get There? What Is the Optimal, Most Strategic Western Response?

Using a football analogy, I want to give you the definition that I feel is in the end zone (the goal post), at the other end of the field we are headed across in this battle. Yes, whilst we might be at the one-yard line on the other end of the field, what can the goal post represent?

Western Islam in my eyes is a modern, free Islam, rooted in universal human rights, that gives Muslims the freedom to embrace national identities in their primary loyalty of citizenship rooted first and foremost in reason, and liberty, rather than theocracy and *shariah* state. I believe that is where we are headed, or where we think will ultimately be a universal type of Islam that can feel comfortable in any secular liberal democracy. So how do we get there?

The First Question Is Who Is the 'We'?

I think it is important that non-Muslims realise that this is not just our problem to be solved within the House of Islam. If we Muslims get this wrong, a quarter of the world's population will continue to be ruined by various forms of theocracy and repression. Eventually, in some form or another, the West will continue to be collateral damage to those theocracies and their neo-caliphate. Make no mistake. The *caliphate* exists today, and it is called the OIC. It is a 'neo-caliphate', and if left to their own devices, many of those Islamist nations may end up destroying each other across sectarian divides like that between Saudi Arabia and Iran. But ultimately, the entire OIC unites in a Machiavellian way fomenting the idea of a common non-Muslim enemy. Islamists in their *caliphate* divide the world into the *Dar-al-Islam* and *Dar-al-Harb*. Those of us living outside Muslim majority countries are considered to be living in the 'land of war'. The only evolution out of this paralysing, fossilised concept of Islamic and non-Islamic lands of peace and war is for Muslims to redefine *"ummah"*, from only Muslims, to include all of humanity. That is the premise of our Muslim Reform Movement: we are citizens of our secular nations and we reject the attachment of our Islamic faith identity to our national identities.

Prisoners of conscience from many of these nations need to become household names. Saudi prisoner of conscience, Raif Badawi, needs to become a household name. We need a whole of

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[38] 'Declaration', *Muslim Reform Movement*, available at: https://muslimreformmovement.org/first-page-posts/declaration/, last visited: 20 August 2018.

government strategy, from Department of State (DoS) to Department of Defence (DoD) to the White House which takes the information war against Islamism on the offense. We need to restart the same process as the Cold War but this time against Islamism rather than communism.

Look at our Declaration of the Muslim Reform Movement. [39] Those principles can be used on the granular level for vetting individuals as to whether or not they adhere to Islamism and it can also be applied to groups and even nation states. For example, should Turkey be part of NATO? Erdogan would never agree to many of the premises of our Declaration. So the answer is no.

In a discussion on the emergence and viability of a Western Islam, I prefer to think of an Islam that embraces the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In my opinion, the West does not have a monopoly on universal liberty or universal human rights. All humanity essentially is created with an innate desire to be free.

The question for 'we' Muslim reformers is, what is the division in the world today? The easiest division to look at leading Muslims is to boil it down to either 'revivalists or reformers'. *Revivalists* like the *Salafis* look backwards and want to bring back Islam at the time of the 7th century when it was first revealed, whatever their interpretation of it as they see through the *hadith*. Contrarily, *reformers*, for the most part, look forward and only hold on to that tradition which is not in conflict with the moral substance of a nation under God, and based in liberty for all. So if Salafis (*salaf* being friends of the Prophet) look backward, are all Islamists Salafists and are all Salafists Islamists? The best differentiation I have heard between Salafis and Islamists is that the Salafis use politics for religious control (as we see in Saudi Arabia) while the Islamists use religion for political control (as we see with the Muslim Brotherhood). The bottom line is that they are all drinking from the same trough and the same intoxicant – Islamism and its Islamic *shariah* state. The Islamists may pretend to look forward and have a 'neo-Salafi' way of modernising the old Islamic state, but theirs is still an Islamist state under *shariah* no matter how they try to mollify it or modernise it in Islamism 2.0, 3.0, or 4.0. The end of the Islamic state concept will be the demise of both Islamism and Salafism.

In the End It Is All About Driving Legacy

The question for 'reformers' as opposed to 'revivalists' is simple. The way we came up with our declaration is by asking ourselves, if the Prophet Mohammed were alive today, what would be the type of society, the type of state he would want to see as the ideal society? Our vision draws from the many enlightenment principles that John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison instilled into Western democracies through governments like the US, that have an Establishment Clause which protects against theocracy. Many tell us we need someone like a Martin Luther King in Islam. But, the evolution of a new school of thought in Islamic law, *shariah*, will take generations. We first need leaders and societies which allow that work to be done. We first need a John Locke. We need thought leaders who are able, within an Islamic identity, to separate religion from politics. Upon those foundations of citizenship within a liberal democratic identity, a future unravelling of Islamist *shariah* is bound to happen.

In this generation, we do have time to create networks that can lift up secular liberals that allow us to re-brand western universal principles as also Muslim principles. That is exactly what we do in some of our projects. When I talk to Muslim parents, I ask them to tell me the top 10 ideas that they think characterise Muslim culture. They talk about honesty, integrity, sanctity of family, and all these principles. I say if you can teach your kids these exact same things without using the brand of *Islam* or *sh*ariah, you can do it simply based on values and moral principles which are also the basis of Judeo-Christian principles. Almost universally, every one of them says I would

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[39] Ibid.

rather have my son or daughter embrace an honest Christian or a Jewish community than a traditional externally appearing religious, praying, covered Muslim that lies and is deceitful.

So in essence, you can say the key to a Western Islam is rooted in a societal identity based in morality, liberty, and equality, rather than what theocrats impose in an Islamist system.

The influence of state media from Saudi Arabia or Qatar's *Al Jazeera* or Iran's *PressTV* and all the Islamist social media bandwidths directly influence and dominate Muslim opinions in the US and in Europe. The only way to counter these tyrannical theocratic influencers is here in our laboratory of freedom. This anti-Islamist work cannot happen yet in Egypt or necessarily in Iraq, and definitely not in Syria, Iran, or Saudi. The OIC governments just do not allow the critical thinking necessary, and they certainly would not allow a non-Islamic state identity to evolve.

Eventually, just like the evolution of Americanism, Egyptians, Tunisians and others will need to determine what exactly their uniting 'Egyptianism' or 'Tunisianism' is, and if it will be based in universal principles or draconian Islamist ones. That is what we need to operationalise throughout the world, domestically and globally, and is the basis of our Muslim Reform Movement. The West can facilitate this by clearly defining which Muslims and their movements are allies sharing their beliefs in universal rights. For example, those Muslim allies must reject all violent *jihad*, reject the Islamic State, reject the existence of a *caliphate*, believe in equality between men and women, believe in the inviolability of free speech, and the religious freedom of all, including Muslims, to leave their faith.

We Must Go on the Offence

For too long, we have been on the defence. The Islamists are far ahead of us in their global strategy because they live on the offence and have pushed the West for too long into the defence. *Dawah* is their missionary work, spreading and educating Islamism abroad and moving forward their political movement (offence). Are we in the West contrarily doing a metaphorical *dawah* for liberty (offence)? For secular liberal democracy? No, I don't think that's part of our forward strategy and I used *dawah* as a metaphor obviously, but we desperately need to start an offence where we put those Islamists and Salafists on the defence. We need to go far beyond the current infinite whack-a-mole programme which just deals with terrorism, one end-point of the threat. They will keep coming back unless we confront Islamists. If we have an offence, we can then begin to chip away at their theocratic ideas with ideas of liberty and build allies in places as messy as Syria, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, but in the UK and in the US. That mission will ultimately inoculate Muslims against radicalisation.

Culture shifts what we focus on. We need to use this to our advantage to defeat the Islamist establishment. We have been completely out of the game of the cultural wars that the Islamists have been fighting, and it is long overdue that we have a platform and a voice in those battles. That is where the front line is.

Last, what do we do with passages of the Quran that have interpretations that are not compatible with modern society? We can either ignore them and cast them aside or modernise their interpretations. In fact, we likely need to do both. In order to have legitimacy within the vast majority of the Muslim faithful, the authenticity of the Arabic scripture of the Quran is inviolable. However, the narrative can be reformed about what time and place the passage applies to, or reading them beyond a literalism and simply applying an overriding principle or metaphor in light of modern day morality and identities (*ijtihad*).

If you were to stage this evolution of reform of a Western Islam, the first stage is creating the movement of those who are sick and tired of the clerics of the Islamic establishment. Then the

second stage is developing a Muslim identity outside the currently Islamist-dominated mosques. We have to help create, however small they may be, organisations and institutions that are Islamic yet rooted in Western principles.

Third, the West needs to take sides (in a whole-of-society approach) and define who our allies are, and realise this is a bi-partisan affair; it is not just, simply "the Muslim issue" as a wedge issue. The denial that the root cause of radicalisation and the enemy of freedom is Islamism must stop.

Can a Western Islam Emerge?

Hillel Fradkin
Hudson Institute

Our subject is 'Can a Western Islam Emerge?'

This question effectively raises four questions. Firstly, what would a Western Islam be? Secondly, what is necessary for it to emerge? Thirdly, what would facilitate its emergence? And fourthly, concomitantly, what are the obstacles its emergence must overcome?

Regarding the meaning of Western Islam, it seems necessary to point out for the sake of clarity that, as a matter of fact, a Western Islam *has* emerged. After all, there are millions of Muslims now living in Western Europe, not to mention the United States. Many, if not all, are living as Muslims and what they do and say is de facto a kind of Western Islam, or several kinds of Western Islam.

Within the context of this anthology and its concerns, however, I can hardly be in doubt that something different is meant: an Islam that *is* Western, in that it represents an accommodation with the West, or more precisely an Islam that *is* an accommodation with, or an adaption to, the modern, liberal democratic West, and both its principles and practices.

Why should we care about this kind of Islam? Presumptively, such an Islam would entail and facilitate future relations of Muslims and non-Muslims, as fellow citizens under a liberal democratic dispensation. Also presumptively, such a happy future, not to mention the present, is seriously in doubt. The most general reason is that there seems to be a serious conflict between modern liberal democratic principles and the practices and principles of contemporary Islam.

What does this conflict consist of? What are the respective principles and practices, and their differences?

Let us begin with the meaning of liberal democratic principles and practices. For present purposes, let me write generally and simply, if somewhat crudely. Roughly speaking, liberal democracy, as distinguished from democracy simply, asserts a fundamental distinction between the public and private sphere. That distinction rests on the primacy of the individual citizen, his or her primary rights, and their free exercise under the rule of law. Over time, this has resulted in a gradually fuller expression of the rights of the citizen, especially the most personal and the most private – those of gender and sexuality, for example. Indeed, today, we liberal democrats seem most concerned, even obsessed, with these private rights. As I will indicate, this has an important bearing on our subject.

What of Islam and its principles? Islam is said not to admit to a distinction between the public and the private. According to an old formula, *Fi Islam La Din Wa Dawla*, there is no religion and no state in Islam, in that there is no separation between them. Moreover, Islam prescribes duties rather than rights, duties that are embodied in the laws constituting the *sharia*. And also duties embodied in customs, especially familial customs. Such customs may proscribe some of the personal rights or freedoms that are said to be part and parcel of the liberal democratic order.

Well these are rather clear differences. But one might also say, so what? Liberal democratic principles are often so sharp and distinct that their application becomes difficult in some circumstances. The experience of applying these principles has been characterised by such departures. In the course of that long experience, some liberal democracies have accommodated groups that, on some basis or another, rejected some or all of those principles.

Precisely because liberal democracy stipulates a distinction between the public and the private sphere, some liberal democracies could, and did, permit groups and people to live as they liked in their private capacities, sometimes in a retired and retiring way.

George Washington, the first American president, put this view in a letter to the Jews of Newport, Rhode Island in the following way:

> *The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States … gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance.* [40]

He expressed the hope that:

> *the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid.* [41]

He did, however, stipulate one proviso:

> *[The Government] requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.* [42]

Thus there was one crucial obligation, the obligation to live their lives as citizens. And so the Jews did, and so did other groups both in America and in European countries. In America the most crucial case was not Jews, but Catholics.

And so one might think this might be the case for Muslims in European countries and America, at least over time. Muslims might go about their own ways in private, while acting in public as citizens. And so they often do. So what is the problem? What, if anything, does the Islam of Western Muslims lack for this happy dispensation?

There are at least three problems that attend this kind of Western Islam. Some have to do with contemporary Islam; some have to do with contemporary liberal democracy.

The first has to do with the issue just referred to: the question of citizenship. In contemporary liberal democracy, contemporary Western Muslims can exercise the rights of citizenship and frequently do in several ways, most obviously by voting. But it is one thing to vote as a citizen; it is another to understand oneself as a citizen, and thus to be a citizen in the full sense of the word. Such an account and its embrace would be a *sine qua non* of the kind of Western Islam that I believe we are talking about. Without it, Western Muslims cannot easily embrace their fellow non-Muslims as citizens and join them as members of a common society. It leads to a condition where Muslims may not simply live partially apart, as others have done under the liberal societal dispensation, but may live nearly totally apart. And so many do, in enclaves in which they are like non-Muslim expatriates in Muslim majority countries.

This problematic issue of citizenship is reinforced by two other problems or obstacles.

The first is strong movements and currents of thought in the wider Muslim world that declare that they should essentially remain non-citizens. This is one import of the movement known as Islamism. For Islamism declares that their primary, indeed only, loyalty is to the *ummah* – the

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[40] 'To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, 18th August 1790', in *Washington: Writings* (New York: The Library of America, 1997).

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

global community of Muslims. The general current mission of this community, guided by Islamism, is to re-establish, by fair means or foul, the former glory of Islam as the preeminent power in the world. Islamism teaches them to embrace the longing for past glory and regard their current condition in the West as merely temporary. There is no need to fully embrace the role of citizen except possibly as the means to render it in the future obsolete through the triumph of Islam.

The second thing that encourages Muslims to maintain their civic distance from the Western countries in which they live is the vast difference between Muslim mores and Western ones, especially in the sphere of family and gender. There was always some distance between the two, but it has grown ever wider through developments in Western democracies. As I noted before, and as is evident to every sentient being in the West, gender and sexuality issues have become the obsession of us liberal democrats, an obsession that has led to ever-greater refinements of the freedom we are supposed to entertain. But these are repugnant to many Muslims. In an earlier age, this difference might not have been so consequential, and led only to some separation, more or less uneasy. But we have now elevated our own views to first principles of justice and law. This sensibility now calls into question the autonomy of the private sphere for non-Muslims. Can it fail to do so for Muslims?

Given these circumstances and problems how might a Western Islam emerge?

Let me first stress again what I stressed before: the issue of citizenship. There needs to be an account of Muslim citizenship. Perhaps one will emerge. But it will not be easy. It is no accident that no such account is immediately available. Citizenship is associated with republics, and classic Muslim history had no experience of republics, none whatsoever. As Ibn Khaldun, the greatest Muslim historian, observed, what he called 'royal rule', monarchic rule, was the only form of rule in Muslim polities, albeit in many different forms. Indeed, Ibn Khaldun's account of politics understood 'royal rule' to be the *only* form of political rule. And royal rule knows only of subjects, not citizens. Thus, the Muslim tradition had no need to formulate an account of Muslim citizenship – nor did various aspects of Muslim thought encourage reflection on this score, rather the contrary.

This means that a new interpretation of Muslim experience and principles is needed. And such an interpretation might be required on other grounds as well. This cannot be ruled out. But the question is, who will do it? Who has the gifts to do it? For in other similar historical dilemmas, dilemmas of the West as well as the East, the way forward usually required some exceptional person, exceptional in intelligence, thoughtfulness, and leadership.

It would no doubt help if another problem mentioned before was overcome: the siren song of Islamism. One famous, or infamous, exemplar of the problem was the late Abu Musab al Zarqawi. He is best known as the vicious terrorist leader of *Al Qaeda* in Iraq, but he also tried his hand at political theory. In the context of the Iraqi elections, he pronounced judgement against liberal democracy, liberal rather than merely democracy, on the grounds that it was of alien, indeed Christian, origins. This is an emotionally powerful argument and there are others happy to make it. But it may lose its force, if and when it is shown that Islamism and everything related to it, is a failure and lacks any capacity to chart a Muslim way forward. This would make it easier for a Western Islam to emerge.

For better or worse, this means that the prospect of a Western Islam for Western European Muslims is partially entangled in the question of a Western Islam for Muslims as such.

But it is also partially dependent upon us non-Muslim liberal democrats. It has not escaped Muslim notice that we liberal democrats are, at present, not altogether clear about and confident in our principles. What then, they might ask, are we asking them to adapt to and join with?

Can then a Western Islam emerge? Yes, but it will require a lot of work that has scarcely, if at all, begun.

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PART 4

Integration and Assimilation of Muslims in Europe: A Path to Reformation and Patriotism

Ehsan Jami
Iranian-born Dutch politician

It seems that the debate about the integration of Muslims in the European society has been replaced by a debate about the tone of the debate. This signals that confusion has risen to a great height, and that it is necessary to return to the essence of the original debate.

First of all, it is important to realise that the debate about Islam and about a possible reformation of Islam is not exclusively a Dutch phenomenon, but international. In France, opinion makers and politicians have had a fierce debate about Islam, with sharp arguments. Apparently, the French think that a sensitive subject should not be covered with the mantle of love. In the Netherlands, we are just too scared to discuss Islam. This is understandable in the view of potential violence from Islamists. But a free society cannot admit to that. The Tunisian reformer Lafif Lakhdar said about the French Islam debate:

> This assimilation, which is necessary, does not mean that they (the European Muslims) have to give up their spiritual values or the best of their social values or their history. They should only give up those traditions that contradict the values of the International Declaration of Human Rights and derived UN Declarations, such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Conventions on Children's Rights and the Protection of Minorities. [43]

In the past, we made the mistake of assuming that people who grew up with a fundamentally different system of values in a non-Western country would find their place painlessly in the West. In every European country this mistake has been made and everywhere the consequences are the same. We are dealing with problems that occur worldwide and that lead to violence or threats of violence everywhere. The debate can no longer be suppressed. We fear that we may not be 'decent' in this debate. But what is decency? To threaten the participants of the public debate with death, is that decent? What is the alternative? Keep silent about the problems within the Muslim community? Keep silent about the thousands of Muslim women in the Netherlands who do not see the light of day because they are locked up? Keep silent about the homosexuals who face threats daily and are beaten by non-Western immigrants?

Keep silent about the Muslims who want to leave their faith, but do not dare because they are threatened and intimidated?

Since the rise of ex-Muslims and their shout for freedom of conscience in 2007 [44], there are

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[43] 'Tunisian Reformist Lafif Lakhdar: European Muslims Should Adopt Universal Values; There is Only One Civilization; The Koranic Verse on Wife-Beating Should Be Abrogated; When Bourguiba Abolished Polygamy in Tunisia, the Majority of Women Were Opposed; Why Bring the Mosque into French Schools When the Church Has Been Taken Out of Them', *Memri*, 16 October 2007, available at: https://www.memri.org/reports/tunisian-reformist-lafif-lakhdar-european-muslims-should-adopt-universal-values-there-only , last visited: 15 August 2018.

[44] 'New ex-Muslim group stands out', *The Guardian*, 22 June 2007, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2007/jun/22/religion.immigrationpolicy, last accessed: 11 September 2018.

more and more people who dare to say that they are ex-Muslims. I dare to say that 90% of Muslims in the Netherlands have not even seen the cover of the Quran, let alone the content.

After every attack in Europe, politicians, academics and opinion makers call for unity. Unity suggests that the majority of Muslims in Europe are of good will and against terrorism, and that terrorism is committed by a "lone wolf". But what are the facts? A poll in the United Kingdom in 2006 showed that one-fifth of Muslims in that country sympathised with the 'feelings and motives' of the suicide bombers who committed the 7 July 2005 terrorist acts in London.[45] In a 2007 Pew Research poll on whether suicide attacks and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in Europe to defend Islam, the result was as follows: 19% believed it could be justified, 10% sometimes, and 6% thought it could often be justified. In Britain, the result was that 9% of Muslims felt it could be justified, 12% sometimes, and 3% thought it could often be justified.[46] In Germany, 6% of Muslims thought it was justified at times, and in Spain 9% of Muslims thought it could be legitimate, and 10% and 6% thought it could often be justified to commit terrorist acts.[47] A survey conducted by ICM Research from 2014 shows the same picture. To the question of whether Muslims in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom support the Islamic State (IS) philosophy, the result was: France 16%, Germany 2% and in United Kingdom 7% of Muslims had a positive attitude towards the ideas of IS.[48] The picture will not be different in the Netherlands, I fear.

In the summer of 2015, I made a roundtrip to the Balkan countries. If you want to know what the Netherlands will look like in about 20 years, one should visit the capital of Macedonia (Skopje).

I have seen with my own eyes what the consequences of Islamism can be. The biggest problem is the silent Muslim majority and left-wing cultural relativism. They linger in the victim role. The harsh reality is that there is no longer any unity in European society. The 'us and them' society already exists: us, the law-abiding citizens (including Muslims) who believe in Western democratic values, and those who believe in Islamist death cults.

Meanwhile, the question may be asked why politicians are so eager to give Islamists every opportunity to settle in Europe. Why does one choose to censor and hinder Christianity and Judaism while pretending Islam is the best idea since the invention of the wheel? The existing laws and regulations do not provide a solution for the problems we are currently facing due to the threat of extremist fundamentalist Islam. Through the streets of European capitals, we see soldiers with machine guns marching past tourist attractions. In my opinion, if a country needs soldiers to guard its tourist attractions, they are already far too late. More disturbing is that most politicians do not have the insight to tackle the threat of extremist fundamentalist Islam.

Concrete solutions are up for grabs. Let us start by maintaining a strict separation of religion and state. This must be regulated at the vertical level (relationship between citizen and government) and the horizontal level (relationship between citizens and citizens). To be precise, I believe that it is necessary to abolish separate swimming for men and women on religious grounds, forbid visible religious attire for anyone who works in the government, and more. I would suggest the following:

- The governments of Western democratic countries must only actively support the secular initiatives within the Islamic community;

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[45] 'Poll Reveals 40% of Muslims want sharia law in UK', *The Telegraph*, 16 February 2006, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1510866/Poll-reveals-40pc-of-Muslims-want-sharia-law-in-UK.html, last visited: 15 August 2018.

[46] 'Poll finds some US Muslims support for suicide attacks', *Reuters*, 22 May 2007, available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-muslims-poll-idUSN2244293620070522, last visited: 15 August 2018.

[47] Ibid.

[48] 'One in six French people say they support ISIS', *Vox*, 26 August 2014, available at: https://www.vox.com/2014/8/26/6067123/isis-poll, last visited: 15 August 2018.

- Denaturalise nationals with a double passport who do not want to conform to the laws and regulations of the country they live in (for example, those who joined IS or any other terrorist organisation);

- Close the mosques where hatred is preached towards the West, its values, and culture;

- Abolish freedom of religion: religion is only an opinion and therefore falls under freedom of speech and should not receive any special privileges.

My goal is not to create division in any society. I want to raise problems that actually occur at this present moment. As a politician, I have read hundreds of emails from people who are threatened, intimidated, and expelled from their families for the simplest of reason: deciding not to believe in Islam anymore. I know the reality. And I want to do something about that. Not to sow divisions, but to help integrate people from a similar background as me into modern Western society, and this society is freer, richer, and more just than the societies that people like me left behind.

If there was ever a moment to stand up for our liberties, which our ancestors fought and defended with their blood, it is now. If we do not confront and fight the enemies of freedom, then we deny the essence of what we ultimately stand for and are therefore no better than those whom we are fighting against. Forget what the cosmopolitans and multiculturalists are saying: "I am a citizen of the world, everything is love and everything is beautiful". These are great lyrics for kids' songs, not a strategy to tackle Islamism, Islamic radicalisation, or the decline of our Western values. This is not out of hostility, but rather because in the course of history cultures have been lost, languages have been forgotten, and especially because history is written by the strong and not the weak.

Europe must stop trivialising the effects of Islamism ('Islam has nothing to do with terrorism') but argue sharply and force the Muslim community to filter out the Islamists from their communities and make a clear choice supporting European values. This is only possible if Europeans are willing to choose and protect their own identity and culture. The intelligence and security services cannot solve this problem alone. It is up to the society to tackle this problem. But for that, we first have to acknowledge what the problem is: It's Islamism, stupid! Stand your ground!

Because if you do not stand up for your own identity and culture, others will fill that gap.

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PART 5

Belgian Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq: An Overview

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Anyone who has kept track of the foreign fighter problem in the last few years knows that Belgium has a rather disproportionate number of fighters that joined jihadist groups in Syria and Iraq. In fact, at some point Belgium had the highest per-capita share of foreign fighters of all Western European countries.[49] At the base of this contribution to the foreign fighter contingent were three important *Salafi-Jihadist* networks. The first, and perhaps most important, of these networks was *Sharia4Belgium*, a network led by Belgian-Moroccan Fouad Belkacem, who was heavily inspired by the British based preacher Anjem Choudary and his organisation *Islam4UK*. In the mid 2000's, *Sharia4Belgium* was operating from the Northern city of Antwerp, where they were active in *street-dawah* (proselytisation) and preaching in public, sometimes in the busiest shopping areas of the city. Police, security forces and politicians at first hardly paid any attention to the group; referring to them as clowns in white dresses with long beards.[50]

The group, however, became very controversial when its leader Fouad Belkacem openly turned his back on Western civilization and began offending numerous public figures such as politician Marie-Rose Morel and Dutch poet Benno Barnard, as well as the Flemish nationalist political party Vlaams Belang.[51] This eventually led to a series of convictions of Belkacem, ending with his incarceration. Around the time Belkacem was locked up, *Sharia4Belgium* disbanded itself in early October 2012. Just a few days later, top-ranking members of the organization travelled to Syria to join the ranks of *Jabhat an-Nusra*, al-Qaeda's branch in Syria. One of the first key members of *Sharia4Belgium* to travel to Syria was Houssien Elouasaki, from the city of Vilvoorde. Houssien travelled to Syria all by himself, and left Belgium a month prior to the abolishment of *Sharia4Belgium*. When he arrived at the Turkish-Syrian border, he found himself in a predicament, since he had no one in the ranks of *Jabhat an-Nusra* to give him *tazkiyya* (a personal recommendation by a *jihadist* fighter to join a certain group). So Houssien did the next best thing after he managed to cross the border, by joining the ranks of one of Syria's first *jihadist* groups, *Majlis Shurat al-Mujahdin*, led by Abu Athir al-Absi.

Houssien was a very prolific user of social media. By using his Facebook and Twitter accounts, he began recruiting his old friends to join the ranks of al-Absi's group. It did not take long before Houssien attracted a few dozen of his "brothers". Not only did Belgian *Sharia4Belgium* members join him, but also a group of Dutch and French jihadists. Out of recognition for his massive attraction of new recruits, al-Absi made Houssien, the *emir* of the *muhajirin* (the migrant fighters who joined the group), while al-Absi himself led the *ansar* (the local fighters). Both groups lived a luxurious life in Syria. The foreign fighters lived in a palace, located on a stretch of land that even had a park and a swimming pool, whilst the local fighters were housed in a villa nearby. Both compounds had been seized from regime officials. It was the period of

[49] Van Ostaeyen, P. and Van Vlierden, G., 'The Role of Belgian Fighters in the Jihadification of The Syrian War', European Foundation for Democracy, March 1, 2017, p.4.

[50] 'Vorige regeringen noemden Sharia4Belgium clowns met lange baarden' *Knack*, June 14, 2016, Available at: http://www.knack.be/nieuws/belgie/vorige-regeringen-noemden-sharia4belgium-clowns-met-lange-baarden/article-normal-691759.html, last visited 6th August 2018.

[51] 'Sharia4Belgium: van oprichting tot huiszoeking', *Het Laatste Nieuws*, October 11, 2014, available at: https://www.hln.be/regio/antwerpen/shariah4belgium-van-oprichting-tot-huiszoeking~a641b1c5/, last visited 6th August 2018.

the so-called "Five Star Jihad", in which foreign fighters illustrated on their social media accounts that they were living luxurious lives and had nothing missing in Syria.

The apparent luxury and ease of life, which was broadcasted on the social media of those who made it to Syria, attracted a massive wave of new fighters from Belgium and Western Europe. Hence, I distinguish three separate waves of foreign fighters joining the war in Syria and Iraq. The first wave consisted out of diehard jihadists, like Houssien, who joined the fight as soon as possible. The second cohort included those who were attracted by social and/or peer pressure: those who were recruited by family members, former friends, or colleagues to join the war. The recruitment in this category was largely performed via social media. The last category consists of those who left after June 29, 2014, when the Islamic State (IS) *caliphate* was announced by the group's former spokesman al-'Adnani, a group I would refer to as "Caliphate Warriors".

As the war dragged on, and more and more foreign fighters joined the war zone. They were not only limited to Syria, but extended over the Iraqi border. In Belgium, officials started looking into the groups they had neglected for so long. The "clowns in white dresses with long beards" suddenly turned out to be some of the most active foreign fighters on the battlefield. Besides *Sharia4Belgium*, it became clear that other networks were also actively recruiting for the war. Another network closely affiliated with *Sharia4Belgium* was Jean-Louis Denis's *Resto du Tawheed* (Restaurant of the Oneness (of God)). Denis, nicknamed *Le Soumis* (the convert), apparently ran an improvised kitchen around the Brussels North railway station, where he and his wife distributed food among needy Muslims. Denis, however, was also actively recruiting new foreign fighters to join their brothers' ranks in Syria or Iraq. It then seemed that the remainder of the *Sharia4Belgium* disciples shifted towards Denis' group after Fouad Belkacem was incarcerated. Denis, himself, was arrested and convicted to five years of prison in 2016.[52]

Another shadowy group was the so-called *Zerkani* network, which only became known because of its most famous recruit, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the ringleader of the Paris and Brussels attacks. Zerkani operated in the shadows: he shunned all kinds of social media, unlike *Sharia4Belgium* – who had their own social media profiles, YouTube channel, and even their own website. Zerkani was nicknamed *Papa Noël* (Father Christmas), not just because of his bearded appearance as some believe, but because he distributed up to €6,000 in cash to those of his group who wanted to leave for Syria or Iraq. The *Zerkani* network had some rather particular modus operandi, instead of proselytising like *Sharia4Belgium* and *Resto du Tawheed*, Zerkani and his men operated like a band of thieves in and around the Brussels Central Station and their homebase Mölenbeek. The group specialised in mugging tourists in the busy city centre of Brussels, money that was invested in new recruits joining the *jihad* in Syria and Iraq. It is said Zerkani himself did not possess a cell-phone of his own.[53] The group would become infamous soon enough, however.

In the summer of 2013 it would seem that Abdelhamid Abaaoud joined the ranks of *Katibat al-Battar al-Libiyya*, a Libyan elite-branch of IS fighters mostly of North African descent.[54] In the summer of 2014, a Twitter account under the name "the lover of martyrs," closely affiliated with *Katibat al-Battar*, published a list of fighters killed in the ranks of the Libyan branch. Among the purportedly deceased Belgian fighters with links to the *Zerkani* network was Abu 'Umar al-Belgiki, a.k.a. Abdelhamid Abaaoud. By faking his own death, Abaaoud was able to go off the grid for several months, giving himself the opportunity to prepare for a terror plot

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[52] 'Celstraf voor moslimprediker Jean-Louis Denis gehalveerd', *Het Laatste Nieuws*. November 18, 2016, available at https://www.hln.be/nieuws/binnenland/celstraf-voor-moslimprediker-jean-louis-denis-gehalveerd-a073a0c3/, last visited 6th August 2018.

[53] 'La galaxie Zerkani: 22 djihadistes jugés à Bruxelles sont dans la nature', *La Dernière Heure*, 26th March 2016, available at: http://www.dhnet.be/actu/faits/la-galaxie-zerkani-22-djihadistes-juges-a-bruxelles-sont-dans-la-nature-56f5aded35702a22d5bbf860, last visited 6th August 2018.

[54] Van Ostaeyen, P., *Katibat al-Battar* and the Belgian Fighters in Syria, January 21st 2015, available at: https://pietervanostaeyen.com/2015/01/21/katibat-al-battar-and-the-belgian-fighters-in-syria

in Belgium that was thwarted by a Belgian commando raid in Verviers the following January. This was later proven, however, to be only the beginning. In November 2015, a group of returned foreign fighters, consisting of core members of the *Zerkani* network and *Katibat al-Battar al-Libiyya*, attacked several locations in the French capital of Paris; in total 130 people died, around 413 were injured.[55] Abaaoud himself was killed in a firefight with French special forces a few days after the attacks. Alas, it was sadly not over yet.

On March 22, 2016, during the morning commute, three bombs exploded in the centre of Belgium's capital, Brussels. The first two bombs targeted Brussels International Airport, the third one, set off minutes later, created havoc in the Brussels Maelbeek metro-station. 32 civilians were killed and more than 300 wounded in what turned out to be the heaviest attacks on Belgian soil since the end of World War II. The crack-down of the network behind the Paris and Brussels attacks happened swiftly, but most certainly did not clear the *jihadist* threat to Europe.

The summer of 2016 witnessed a whole new phenomenon, that of network and inspired attacks. Rachid Kassim, a French jihadi who had his kneecap smashed by a bullet, opened up a Telegram channel called *"Sabre de Lumière"* to inspire people throughout France to commit attacks on law enforcement officials and other "Crusader" targets. Two married police-officers were brutally killed at home, a Catholic priest in Northern France had his throat slit during mass, and the security services succeeded in thwarting an attack on the Notre Dame cathedral in Paris.[56] Rachid Kassim was considered to be a high value target for the coalition forces; he was taken out by a drone strike in Mosul in early February 2017.[57]

2016 was the turning point for the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. After first losing Mosul, its de facto capital of Raqqa was reconquered by the international coalition. This meant that from now on, the world would have to deal with foreign fighters returning back home, foreign fighters being captured by the coalition forces, and a group of foreign fighters that virtually disappeared off the face of the earth.

After facing the issue of hundreds of people leaving to join the war of IS and other *jihadist* groups in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere, the security threats imposed on the home countries only increased. Following the multiple attacks on European soil, Western security forces are now faced with the next big issue; how to deal with those coming back. At this point there is no consensus among Western countries on how to deal with returnees or captives who want to return. Only a few countries developed a coherent strategy on how to deal with their returnees but the majority of the Western countries seem to be very reluctant to repatriate those who went fighting. In the United Kingdom for example, it is not uncommon that those who joined sides with Kurdish militia YPG and returned home, end up in court and get convicted for joining a terrorist group. Other countries like Belgium and The Netherlands remain very reluctant to even let those, who went to fight abroad, return. For many more months, if not years, the issue of returning foreign fighters will remain on the European agenda. Over and above this, the fight with Europe's alienated, radicalised youth has not yet stopped. In fact, we have just seen the beginning of what is sure to be a decade long struggle with radical, jihadist Islam.

[55] On November 13, 2015 a Group of Islamic State fighters struck Paris in a series of consecutive attacks. At 9:20 PM a first terrorist detonated his suicide belt outside the Stade de France. At 9:25 PM the 10th district of Paris was attacked, the terraces of the bar "Le Carillon" and the restaurant "Petit Cambodge" came under heavy fire. 15 people were killed. Five minutes later a second terrorist detonates his suicide vest outside the Stade De France. Nearly simultaneously the bar "A la Bonne Bière" is attacked in the 11th district, Five people are killed. A few minutes later gunmen kill 19 people on the terrace of restaurant "la Belle Equipe". Around 9:40 PM an SVBIED is activated inside the restaurant "Le Comptoir Voltaire". From 9:40 PM until 0:20 AM the Bataclan concert hall is besieged by ISIS-fighters, 89 people get killed in the raid. See: 'Timeline of Paris attacks according to public prosecutor', *Reuters*, November 14th 2015, available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-shooting-timeline-idUSKCN0T31BS20151114, last visited 6th August 2018.

[56] 'Les flux furieux de Rachid Kassim,' *Libération*, September 16th 2016, available at: http://www.liberation.fr/france/2016/09/16/les-flux-furieux-de-rachid-kassim_1499709, last visited 6th August 2018.

[57] 'Top French Isil recruiter linked to Brussels attack 'killed in airstrike' in Mosul', *The Telegraph*, February 10th, 2017, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/10/top-french-isil-recruiter-linked-brussels-attack-killed-airstrike/, last visited 6th August 2018.

Islamists' efforts to subvert national institutions from within: The French case

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Over recent years, France has become a main target in Europe for terrorist attacks. Since 2012, more than 240 people have been killed, and more than 900 wounded. To these figures, we must also add that more than half of planned attacks (50 out of 78 since 2013) were foiled.[58]

Despite a series of public policies put in place under both the Sarkozy and the Macron governments, the threat of terrorism remains extremely high and radicalisation is a particularly worrying phenomenon. As Professor Gilles Kepel reminds us, France is the European country which has the most *jihadists*.[59]

To Kepel, this is for several reasons, among them a rejection of France's colonial history and also of the constitutive principles of the French Republic. In his book *Terreur dans l'Hexagone*, he explains the Salafists' need to dissociate themselves from France and even to break with French identity, based on their opposition to gender equality, *laïcité*[60] and democracy[61].

France is not the only democracy targeted. The strategy of Islamists is to defeat our democratic societies, as instructed by Abou Moussab al-Souri, considered to be the man who has inspired *jihadist* attacks in Europe since 2012. In January 2005, he published his *Global Islamic Resistance Call* online. In this manifesto, he specifically recommends targeting Jews, "apostate" Muslims, and especially Europe, which represents the West's "soft underbelly".[62]

In France, this opposition to democratic societies has concretely manifested itself on several occasions, as demonstrated by the attacks on police officers. This is because the police can be viewed as tangible embodiments of the state's authority and democratic institutions.

When it comes to institutions, is it crucial – in the French context – to assess whether some French institutions have tolerated, or even incentivised radical Islam over the years.

After the local elections of 2014, an increasing number of books[63] and articles in the press alerted the general public about possible links deliberately created between local politicians – especially mayors – and grassroots organizations or individuals whose goal was the separation of Muslims from the rest of society and the dissemination of the Islamist ideology.

[58] "De 2013 à 2018, la France au rythme des attentats", *Le Monde*, March 30th 2018, available at: https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2018/03/30/de-2013-a-2018-la-france-au-rythme-des-attentats_5278453_3224.html, last visited 24th August 2018.

[59] Kepel, G., interview at *The Wake Up Call Conference*, April 24th, 2016.

[60] The French government defines *Laïcité* on its website as "based on three core principles: freedom of conscience and freedom to express one's convictions as long as it does not cause a public disturbance, separation of church and state, and equality for all in the eyes of the law, no matter what their beliefs and convictions may be. *Laïcité* guarantees that both believers and non-believers are accorded the freedom to express their convictions. It also protects those who wish to practice a religion or to practice none at all, to convert from one religion to another, or to disavow religion altogether. It guarantees religious freedom as well as freedom from religion – no citizen in a secular republic can be coerced into following a particular religious dogma or creed."(Personal translation) Available at : https://www.gouvernement.fr/observatoire-de-la-laicite

[61] Kepel, G., *'Terreur dans l'Hexagone. Genèse du Djihad français'*, Gallimard, December 2015, p.222.

[62] Gauron R., "Abou Moussab al-Souri, l'inspirateur des attentats de Paris", *Le Figaro*, 23th November 2015.

[63] Such as Véliocas, J., *Ces maires qui courtisent l'islamisme, Tatamis*, January 2015.

The most famous example of political-religious cronyism at the local level is surely Mölenbeek, Belgium, where strong *jihadist* cells have been established for more than 20 years, and where local elected officials used Salafists to preserve a form of social cohesion.

Several cases in France have shown similarities to Mölenbeek, although on a smaller scale. In March 2016, Patrick Kanner, then Minister of Cities, Youth and Sports, made a controversial statement, saying that "around a hundred areas in France could be seen as similar to Mölenbeek". [64] This comparison certainly needs to be taken with a pinch of salt [65], since Mölenbeek includes several elements that are not all present in France on the same scale. However, several cases of cities presenting a high level of radicalisation and complacency of local elected officials were reported.

In Sevran, Saint-Denis, Trappes, Clichy-sous-Bois and Cergy (as well as areas outside of the Parisian region such as Lunel in the Herault department), radicalisation was so prevalent that several of their inhabitants left to join the *jihadist* cause in Syria and other places. [66] As explained by Professor Kepel, in some areas, mayors or candidates made deals with religious groups, and let them manage certain parts of the population that the mayors perceived as reluctant to recognise public authority. Moreover, these mayors thought that religion could prevent people from adopting criminal behaviours. [67]

In 2017, President Macron has recognised that the French Republic has been somewhat implicated in the partial abandonment of certain underprivileged districts. "I will never conflate several thousand radicalised individuals with the millions of innocent people living in our working class neighbourhoods" he insisted. But, "in many neighbourhoods like these, radicalisation effects thousands of our young people (…). This phenomenon should naturally lead us to question our own responsibility in the matter," he added. "Radicalisation has established itself in the Republic's absence." [68]

It is even more unsettling that the Republic has been absent at the local level, as pointed out by President Macron. This absence has only compounded the internal failures of some of our most important institutions.

The police and the *gendarmie* - under authorities of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Defence repectively seem to have also started to be infiltrated by radical Islam ideology. This threat is taken extremely seriously by the French authorities, for obvious reasons. A policeman could provide his accomplices with intelligence, arms, names, and addresses of colleagues, to say the least. [69] Hence, the most recent law on homeland security includes provisions to ban radicalised individuals more easily than in the past. [70]

Earlier in 2016, a specific unit of IGPN (The police internal investigation section) was created to survey religious practices amongst policemen. [71] Indeed, the increase in dangerous

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[64] Kanner P., interview on *Le Grand rendez-vous Europe 1-Itélé-Le Monde*, 27th March 2016 (Personal translation).

[65] See Kepel, G., Interview on *BFMTV*, 28th March 2016.

[66] See Khosrokhavar, F., *Le nouveau Jihad en Occident*, Robert Laffont, March 2018, p.422 to 425.

[67] Kepel, G., interview at *The Wake Up Call Conference*, April 24th, 2016.

[68] President Emmanuel Macron, speech on 11/14/2017, Tourcoing, France (Personal translation).

[69] Vidalie, A., « La police traque les radicalisés dans ses rangs », *L'Express*, 31st January 2018, available at: https://www.lexpress.fr/ actualite/societe/la-police-traque-les-radicalises-dans-ses-rangs_1980582.html, last visited 24th August 2018.

[70] Law reinforcing homeland security and the fight against terrorism (Loi renforçant la sécurité intérieure et lutte contre le terrorisme), adopted on October 30th, 2017, article 11, available at: https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/ affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000035932811&categorieLien=id

[71] T. Chevillard, "Loi antiterroriste: la radicalisation de policiers dans le collimateur du gouvernement", *20 Minutes*, 29/09/2017, available at: https://www.20minutes.fr/societe/2141867-20170929-loi-antiterroriste-radicalisation-policiers-collimateur-gouvernement

individuals in the police force is further accompanied by a rise in religious practices in police stations. These practices are considered troublesome, and contradict the principle of Laïcité [72]. Daily prayers or external signs of religiousness such as dress are included. These also range from religious songs, to refusals to participate in minutes of silence, protect synagogues, or even online incitement to carry out terrorist attacks. An internal note which was leaked to the press revealed that the numbers rose especially in 2014.[73]

To experts, the phenomenon is not new - several cases were already known in 2012 – and the numbers of both policemen and *g endarmes* under scrutiny because of their suspected radicalisation that are often cited by official sources are underestimated.[74]

In September 2016, Director of *gendarmerie* Richard Lizuret estimated that ten *gendarmes* were suspected of radicalisation [75]. However, the army seems to have been infiltrated in larger proportions. According to a National Assembly Defence Committee report, published at the same period, in June 2016 [76], around fifty individuals were under prioritised scrutiny amongst its ranks. Some former soldiers have even reportedly joined *jihadists* cells in Syria and Iraq. [77] This phenomenon is still very much at play today, and has led to the recent creation of new judicial tools to ban radicalised soldiers or officers from the army. [78]

These practices are considered to be troublesome, and contradict the principle of *laïcité*. Daily prayers or external signs of religiousness such as dress are included. Other examples include singing religious songs, refusing to participate in minutes of silence, refusing to protect synagogues and online incitement to carry out terrorist attacks. An internal note, which was leaked to the press, revealed that incidents which impeded upon *laïcité* rose in 2014. [79]

It is not new that radicalisation in prisons has become a growing concern. More and more individuals who have had a history of active *jihadism* have been detained. In 2018, around 500 people were detained for terrorist activities,[80] whereas there were "only" around 150 detained in 2014. [81] This phenomenon is taken very seriously by French authorities; Public Prosecutor François Molins even called French prisons "incubators" for terrorists. [82]

In addition to prisoners being radicalised, prison staff themselves are not immune to radicalisation. This was recognized as a reality by the Minister of Justice in 2016. [83] Unions are

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[72] The French government defines *Laïcité* on its website as "based on three core principles: freedom of conscience and freedom to express one's convictions as long as it does not cause a public disturbance, separation of church and state, and equality for all in the eyes of the law, no matter what their beliefs and convictions may be. *Laïcité* guarantees that both believers and non-believers are accorded the freedom to express their convictions. It also protects those who wish to practice a religion or to practice none at all, to convert from one religion to another, or to disavow religion altogether. It guarantees religious freedom as well as freedom from religion – no citizen in a secular republic can be coerced into following a particular religious dogma or creed." (Personal translation) Available at: https://www.gouvernement.fr/observatoire-de-la-laicite

[73] Pelletier, E., « Radicalisation, la police n'est pas épargnée », *Le Parisien*, 9th March 2016, available at : http://www.leparisien.fr/faits-divers/radicalisation-la-police-n-est-pas-epargnee-09-03-2016-5610617.php, last visited 24th August 2018.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Lizuret R., Interview on *RTL*, 29th September 2016, available at : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGKu0osz3Cg

[76] Available at : http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/rap-info/i3864.asp, last visited 24th August 2018.

[77] "Soldats français, ils sont devenus djihadistes ", *Le JDD*, 22nd January 2015, available at : https://www.lejdd.fr/Societe/Des-anciens-militaires-francais-ont-rejoint-des-reseaux-djihadistes-en-Syrie-et-en-Irak-714028

[78] "Radicalisation dans les armées : la radiation désormais possible grâce à un décret ", *BFMTV*, 1st March 2018, available at: https://www.bfmtv.com/politique/radicalisation-dans-les-armees-la-radiation-desormais-possible-grace-a-un-decret-1385501.html

[79] Pelletier, E., "Radicalisation, la police n'est pas épargnée", *Le Parisien*, 9th March 2016, available at : http://www.leparisien.fr/faits-divers/radicalisation-la-police-n-est-pas-epargnee-09-03-2016-5610617.php, last visited 24th August 2018.

[80] De Sèze C., "La prison est-elle un "incubateur "de la radicalisation islamiste?", *RTL*, 23th January 2018, available at: https://www.rtl.fr/actu/debats-societe/la-prison-un-incubateur-de-la-radicalisation-islamiste-7791948539, last visited 24th August 2018.

[81] Fournier C., "Islamisme radical: plongée au cœur des "services secrets" de la prison", *France Info*, 16th February 2015, available at : https://www.francetvinfo.fr/faits-divers/attaque-au-siege-de-charlie-hebdo/islamisme-radical-plongee-au-coeur-des-services-secrets-de-la-prison_811549.html, 24th August 2018.

[82] Molins F., interview on *RTL*, 23th January 2018, available at : https://www.rtl.fr/actu/politique/francois-molins-est-l-invite-de-rtl-7791944518

[83] Urvoas J-J., interview on *RTL*, 21st September 2016, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ma76FyR3p4

said to have warned public authorities, and in 2016, to have reported 10 to 30 cases of individuals becoming radicalised, out of the 27,000 French prison wardens. [84]

In their book published in 2017, Eric Pelletier and Chistophe Dubois estimated that in total around a hundred radicalised individuals may have infiltrated some Regalian ministries (Defence, Interior and Justice). [85]

In its most recent plan released in February 2018, entitled "Prevent in order to protect", the government took this phenomenon into consideration and flagged the need to investigate public officials who hold positions of national sovereignty, as well as to ban any officials suspected of radicalisation, especially those in contact with young populations. [86]

There is no doubt that in trying to subvert our democratic institutions from within, Islamists hope to damage our societies at their very core. As explained by the French sociologist Dominique Schnapper, our societies are political in nature, meaning that they are organised by a collective willingness to live together and to respect common rules. [87]

It is important to stand up for our values when they are challenged by radical Islamist ideology. But it is also as important to understand that defending our institutions is a central part of our spirit of defence.

How can we then defend our democratic institutions?

The public outcry after the terrorist attacks of January 2015, as seen in the unprecedentedly large gatherings in Paris on January 11th 2015, was a real wake-up call for French citizens. It revealed a strong support for French institutions, notably through the support for the police. Phrases such as "Je suis Charlie" (I am Charlie), "je suis Jiu" (I am Jewish) but also "Je suis flic" ("I am a cop") and even "Je suis la République" (I am the Republic) were written on posters.

We should therefore ask ourselves if the moments of reaction after the attacks can be followed by a stronger willingness to defend our national interests, and what the cement for national cohesion should be, given that there is no current collective and organised response that could keep our unity from falling apart.

The erosion of national cohesion is exactly what the Islamist strategy aims at. Not long after the 2015 attacks in France, ISIS's propaganda magazine *Dabiq* presented a vision of the world divided into two camps – IS and the West – with no possible grey zone in between. In this view, Muslims in the West have no other choice than to join one or the other camp [88]; and fanning the flames of negative attitudes of the public against Muslims is certainly part of this strategy.

Hence, opposing divisive forces, including the extreme right, are an essential piece of the puzzle in maintaining national unity. This implies that no intellectual vacuum should be left to extremists who play with people's fears when it comes to issues related to national identity, integration, and secularism.

French public debates amongst the elite have focused on these issues for years, but they have paradoxically proven inadequate so far to ease tensions between Muslim communities and the

[84] Piquet C., "La délicate question des surveillants radicalisés", *Le Figaro*, 22nd September 2016, available at: http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2016/09/22/01016-20160922ARTFIG00148-la-delicate-question-des-surveillants-radicalises.php

[85] Pelletier, E., Dubois, C., *Où sont passé nos espions?*, Albin Michel, January 2017.

[86] "Prévenir pour protéger". Plan national de prévention de la radicalisation. 23th February 2018, p.13, available at: https://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/contenu/piece-jointe/2018/02/2018-02-23-cipdr-radicalisation.pdf

[87] Schnapper, D., Interview: "Il faut défendre les institutions démocratiques", *Ouest France*, available at : https://www.ouest-france.fr/societe/dominique-schnapper-il-faut-defendre-les-institutions-democratiques-5508285, last visited 24th August 2018.

[88] 'Dabiq VII Feature Article: The World Includes Only Two Camps – That of ISIS and That Of Its Enemies', *Memri*, February 18, 2015.

rest of French society, as demonstrated by the controversy over the 'burkini ban' in the summer of 2017.

When it comes to such debates, there is a real need to stand firm on our principles and to avoid the temptation to intellectually compromise our democratic values. In this context, thought leaders have decisive roles to play.

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PART 6

A Long March Through the Institutions? Islamists and British Democracy

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Radical Islam has presented a multiplicity of challenges for Western societies. Most immediately pressing is the threat of violence and loss of life caused by Jihadist terrorism. No less visible, has been the growth of ultra-conservative Salafism, with its conscious effort to foster cultural isolation and to undermine integration and cohesion. Far subtler than these two, and perhaps therefore the most difficult to grapple with is non-violent political Islam; the Islamism of the Muslim Brotherhood and Jamaat-e-Islami. This is a movement that actively wishes to pragmatically engage with the existing political processes, to become involved with the institutions of wider civil society, while still pursuing what is often an illiberal and theocratic programme.

For the founding thinkers of modern political Islam – such as Hasan Al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and Abul A'la Maududi of the South Asian *Jamaat-e-Islami* – non-Muslim cultures and manmade law are inherently inferior. Islam, they insisted, offers an all-encompassing way of life that comprehensively answers all needs, with no requirement for drawing on other belief systems. As such, the establishment of an Islamic social order to replace fallible secular government becomes not only a priority, but as Maududi saw it, a religious obligation upon all devout Muslims.

The non-violent Islamist scene in Britain is wide and varied. While Muslim Brotherhood-linked groups have been guarded about the precise nature of their objectives, it appears few believe they are directly working for the establishment of Islamic government in any immediate sense. That said, several groups operating in the UK had as part of their foundational vision the pursuit of the eventual imposition of Islamic government in Britain. The United Kingdom Islamic Mission (UKIM) was founded in London in 1962 with a clear Maududist ideological orientation. [89] At the time the group was primarily concerned with promoting its views on Islam in the West, which included distributing English translations of Maududi's work, with Maududi even addressing UKIM's 1976 annual conference. [90] The objectives were stated clearly in UKIM's founding documents, which stated that "Islam is a comprehensive way of life which must be translated into action in all spheres of human life" and that the group wished to "establish the social order of Islam for Muslims and non-Muslims living in Britain." [91] As Maududi himself put it in his 1976 address, "there is no reason why the rest of humanity are not persuaded to embrace Islam today". [92] Like other Maududist groups in Britain, UKIM has since distanced itself from these earlier sentiments. Nevertheless, some of the youth groups that grew out of UKIM have produced figures and initiatives that would become prominent on Britain's Islamist scene.

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[89] Vidino, L., *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (2010) p.116.
[90] Bowen, I., *Medina in Birmingham, Najaf in Brent: inside British Islam* (2015) p.84.
[91] Vidino, L., *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (2010) p.116.
[92] Ibid.

More politically significant is the Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE). [93] This group, which similarly has its ideological origins in the Bangladeshi equivalent of *Jamaat-e-Islami*, was created in 1988. [94] An early IFE document stated that the group "strives for the establishment of a global society, the Khilafah … comprised of individuals who live by the principles of … the Shari'ah". [95] More recently, in 2009, a transcript from an IFE training course recorded a speaker saying the group sought to "create the True Believer, to then mobilise those believers into an organised force" that would ultimately seek to implement Islamic law and bring about social change for creating an Islamic order. [96]

While examples of grandiose expressions of this kind can be found, for the most part British Islamists have focused their efforts on more mundane concerns. Often of more immediate interest has been capturing the leadership of certain Islamic institutions. Where successful, this allows Islamists to promote their brand of social conservatism, political activism, and narrative of "Islamophobia" as a means to discourage integration and to entrench an identity that is distinct – and often hostile – to wider non-Muslim society. In the more extreme instances this has taken the form of preachers linked to Maududist aligned mosques openly encouraging British Muslims to live as a parallel society, as a state within a state. [97]

From an Islamist perspective, capturing key Muslim institutions also allows these groups to present themselves to the UK authorities and government as the legitimate representatives of British Muslims. The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), a group which has been accused by the government of being dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood, could be viewed as one expression of this effort. [98] More prominent is the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), [99] which it has been repeatedly alleged has had leading figures with links to both Jamaat-e-Islami[100] and Muslim Brotherhood-aligned groups. [101] During the period of the Tony Blair government, and particularly in the years immediately following the 9/11 attacks, the MCB appeared to have been accepted by Whitehall as almost the sole representative of British Muslims, and, as such, for a time became particularly influential.

As seen during the demonstrations in Britain during the Rushdie Affair, Islamists will seek to rally the wider Muslim community, lobbying government on specific issues as part of a broader effort to persuade the authorities to uphold – or at the very least not interfere with – their hard line and more illiberal brand of Islam. Islamist community groups and campaigners have particularly focussed on dissuading government from implementing measures that might impede conservative Islamic practices or the spread of their message to British Muslims through the control of mosques and educational institutions. Particularly insightful has been the reaction from activists to the disruption of attempts to implement a conservative Islamic programme in certain state schools in Birmingham; the so-called Trojan Horse Plot. Not only have certain Islamist-linked groups denied that such a failed attempted

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[93] Hussain, D., 'Bangladeshis in east London: from secular politics to Islam', *Open Democracy*, 7 July 2006, available at: https://www.opendemocracy.net/faith-protest/bangladeshi_3715.jsp

[94] Bowen, I., *Medina in Birmingham, Najaf in Brent: inside British Islam* (2015) p.84.

[95] Gilligan, A., 'IFE: not harmless democrats', *The Guardian*, 4 March 2010, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2010/mar/04/islamic-forum-europe-dispatches-gilligan last visited 20th August 2018.

[96] Ibid.

[97] 'Undercover Mosque', Channel 4 Dispatches, first broadcast January 2007.

[98] Ramesh, R., 'UK groups deny government claims they are linked to possible terrorists', *The Guardian*, 12 January 2016, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/12/uk-groups-deny-government-claims-linked-possible-terrorists-muslim-brotherhood last visited 20th August 2018.

[99] *Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings*, House of Commons, 17 December 2015, available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486948/53163_Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_-_PRINT.pdf

[100] Bowen, I., *Medina in Birmingham, Najaf in Brent: inside British Islam* (2015) p.108.

[101] Abbas, T., '"The Islamist": a radical journey', *Open Democracy*, 21 June 2007, available at: https://www.opendemocracy.net/conflicts/democracy_terror/islamist_journey_around_faith_nation

takeover ever took place, but they have levelled charges of "Islamophobia" against those stating the simple fact that it did.[102]

The Islamophobia charge has been widely employed by campaigners to oppose counter extremism programmes that seek to tackle Islamist ideology. Non-violent Islamist movements may fear that counter-extremism schemes will limit the opportunities for advocating their politicised, illiberal and anti-Western Islam. As such, they have often adopted the claim that terrorism in the West from Muslim extremists is actually driven by Islamophobia and foreign policy grievances. The argument becomes conveniently self-reinforcing; that certain British Muslims are driven to violence because of Islamophobia and that any attempt counter this by targeting Islamist ideology would also be regarded as Islamophobic, thus driving more young people to violence.

The claim about foreign policy is equally significant for Islamist campaigners in Britain, who have as a key objective a change in Britain's foreign policy, particularly with regards to opposing Western military intervention in Muslim countries, campaigning against Israel and supporting militant Palestinian factions, particularly Hamas. A clear point of contention between the MCB and the UK government following the 2005 London bombings was not only the claim that British foreign policy in particular had to be addressed to prevent terrorism, but also the apparent sympathies[103] for Hamas[104] among those in the group's leadership.[105] Matters came to a head in 2009 when the government broke ties with the MCB after one of its senior figures signed the pro-Hamas Istanbul Declaration which gave support for attacks on Jewish communities and potentially the Royal Navy.[106] On the part of the MAB, the focus on foreign affairs has at times been even more apparent, particularly during the Iraq invasion, when the MAB worked closely with the far left campaign Stop the War Coalition.[107]

Closely associated with this same network was the Respect Party, established in 2004 when the anti-war movement was at its height. The party might be viewed as one of the most concrete expressions to date of the alliance between the far left and Islamist elements, with the party being led for a period by Salma Yacoob who had come up through Young Muslims UK; a group which has its origins in UKIM and the wider Jamaat-e-Islami milieu.[108] Yacoob came close to winning a Parliamentary seat in Birmingham, while Respect for a time held seats in other areas with large Muslim communities such as Bethnal Green and Bradford. Indeed, the IFE was also involved with promoting Respect in east London at the time of the party's electoral victory there in 2005, even if the group did have to concede on its website that the Respect candidate was "unlikely to establish khalifah in East London".[109]

The possibility of achieving political objectives via Britain's electoral process is one that lies open to Islamists with no obstacle in their way other than the relatively small number of voters currently open to backing their programme. There have been attempts to mobilise a potential constituency nonetheless. In 2010, the south London preacher Sheikh Suliman Gani[110] gave a

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[102] Timothy, N., 'Trojan Horse is being dragged back into our schools: it must be stopped", *The Telegraph*, 1 November 2017, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/11/01/trojan-horse-dragged-back-schools-must-stopped/ last visited 20th August 2018.

[103] 'Transcript: John Ware on Muslim Council of Britain', *BBC News*, 14 July 2005, available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4681857.stm

[104] "No One to Talk to", *The Economist*, 18 October 2014, available at: https://www.economist.com/britain/2014/10/18/no-one-to-talk-to

[105] Vidino, L., *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (2010) p.126 and p.133.

[106] Blears, H., 'Our Shunning of the MCB is not grandstanding", *The Guardian*, 25 March 2009, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/mar/25/islam-terrorism

[107] Bowen, I., *Medina in Birmingham, Najaf in Brent: inside British Islam* (2015) p.108.

[108] Ibid p.96.

[109] Hussain, D., 'Bangladeshis in east London: from secular politics to Islam', *Open Democracy*, 7 July 2006, available at: https://www.opendemocracy.net/faith-protest/bangladeshi_3715.jsp

[110] Shipman, T., 'Labour's Khan joined radical Imam at rallies', *The Times*, 14 February 2016, available at: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/labours-khan-joined-radical-imam-at-rallies-zfsndp99nxg

speech on voting in Islam in which he warned his listeners that the failure to vote had led to "very moderate" Muslims being elected to Parliament.[111] Gani argued that there was a need to be able to challenge legislation that would affect Muslims living in Britain, and expressed particular concern about laws protecting homosexuality, alcohol and gambling.[112] The prominent cleric Sheikh Haitham al-Haddad of the Islamist website Islam21c has also spoken about the need for Muslims to vote. Haddad has stated that they are permitted to do so because in fifty years' time this might bring Muslim rule to Britain.[113] Until such a time, Haddad has advocated that they should seek to have a bloc of twenty "good Muslims" – as opposed to some of the anti-Muslim Muslims he currently sees in Parliament – and that is bloc should specifically be there to represent their own communities, and expressly not other communities.[114] This notion overturns a longstanding democratic principle whereby Members of Parliament seek to represent all those living in their constituency, and not only those of the particular religious or ethnic group that they themselves belong to.

Under the current First-Past-the-Post voting system, to have any chance of electoral success, Islamist activists would have to focus their efforts on those areas with the greatest concentration of Muslim voters. But this is precisely what appears to have happened. Islamist groups have attempted to both direct "the Muslim vote" in key areas, while also presenting themselves to politicians as the ones able to deliver them victory in these areas, if certain policy demands are appeased. Lorenzo Vidino, an expert on Islamism in Europe and North America, has noted that as early as the 1980s, Maududist groups were already seeking to mobilise Muslims to support more "Islamically acceptable" candidates, and named the efforts of the Muslim Education Trust as an early instance of this activity.[115]

More recent and overt examples of this engagement with British democracy might include the actions of the IFE in East London. In 2010, undercover investigations claimed that that group was seeking to gain influence through existing political structures[116], with a Labour MP warning that individuals from IFE were trying to infiltrate his party at the local level.[117] More serious allegations concerned the election of Lutfur Rahman as Tower Hamlets Mayor between 2010 and 2015, with claims that Rahman's political career had been assisted by the IFE and that Tower Hamlets council had essentially come under the IFE's control.[118]

At the time of the 2010 investigations, one prominent IFE employee, Azad Ali, had been recorded saying; "Democracy, if it means at the expense of not implementing the sharia, of course no one agrees with that".[119] Later, Ali would go on to work as a key figure at the campaign group IEngage,[120] which later became Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND). By the time of the 2015 national elections, MEND was heavily involved with the campaign to get

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[111] 'Suliman Gani's hate-filled remarks on Ahmadis – "Voting in islam debate"', *YouTube*, 21 April 2016, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2q0aYhg5JE, last visited 20th August 2018.

[112] Ibid.

[113] 'London Mayor Election – The Muslim Vote pt 1 | The BIG Discussion', *YouTube*, 4 May 2016, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akWCVq2i8AA, last visited 20th August 2018.

[114] 'General Election 2017 | Islam21c Big Discussion | Sh Dr Haitham al-Haddad | Azad Ali ! Dr. Salman', *YouTube*, 14 May 2017, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vraPL1uP2yk, last visited 20th August 2018.

[115] Vidino, L., *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (2010) p.123.

[116] Dispatches: Britain's Islamic Republic, *Channel 4*, 2010.

[117] Gilligan, A., 'Islamic radicals "infiltrate" the Labour Party', *The Telegraph*, 27 February 2010, available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/labour/7333420/Islamic-radicals-infiltrate-the-Labour-Party.html, last visited 20th August 2018

[118] Gilligan, A., 'Radicals with hands on the levers of power: the takeover of Tower Hamlets', *The Telegraph*, 28 February 2010, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/labour/7333537/Radicals-with-hands-on-the-levers-of-power-the-takeover-of-Tower-Hamlets.html, last visited 20th August 2018.

[119] Gilligan, A., 'IFE: not harmless democrats', *The Guardian*, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2010/mar/04/islamic-forum-europe-dispatches-gilligan, last visited 20th August 2018.

[120] Kennedy, D., 'Extremist Leads Muslim lobby group', *The Times*, 10 April 2017, available at: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/extremist-leads-muslim-lobby-group-7q2hg30zc

Muslims voting, and was even recognised by the Electoral Commission as an official partner in doing so.[121] Notable among the religious leaders featured in MEND's video encouraging Muslim's to vote was Haitham Al-Haddad.[122] More revealing too were comments made months earlier by MEND's CEO, Sufyan Gulam Ismail, who explained to a Mosque audience in 2014[123] that because Muslims are concentrated in certain constituencies they could offer a political party up to thirty seats, and that with close elections expected, Muslims could be the "kingmaker" who politicians would have to listen to if they wanted to secure a majority.[124]

To what ends such influence is intended for remains uncertain. Clearly, many of these campaign groups have sought to further a set of community concerns that might seem to have little immediate impact on wider society. Still, it is difficult to forget the ideological legacy that much of this movement springs from and it is apparent that there are those who still harbour visions not so far removed from Maududi or Qutb. The reality is that at various times, in various places, there has been an effort by those in Britain's Islamist networks to gain an ambitious degree of political influence. That is not to say that it has been either a coordinated or consistent endeavour, and determining the degree to which any of this might have been impactful is not easy at this stage. Nevertheless, we should be aware that Islamists have been seeking to use the existing political process for their own purposes and will likely continue to do so. Left unchecked, there are those who propose using liberal democracy for clearly illiberal and undemocratic ends. At the very least, we can say that their vision for the future is one the vast majority of the country would reject utterly.

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[121] Wilson, T., 'Mend: Islamists Masquerading as Civil Libertarians', *The Henry Jackson Society*, October 2017, available at: http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/HJS-Mend-Report-2.pdf, last visited 20th August 2018.

[122] 'The baroness, Islamic extremists and a question of free speech', *The Telegraph*, 22 March 2015, available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/11488175/The-baroness-Islamic-extremists-and-a-question-of-free-speech.html, last visited 20th August 2018.

[123] Khan, S., *The Battle for British Islam: reclaiming Muslim identity from extremism* (2016) p.68 and p.66.

[124] 'Muslim group with links to extremists boasts of influencing up to 30 seats at the election and acting as "kingmaker"', *Daily Mail*, 4 April 2015, available at: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3025812/Muslim-group-links-extremists-boastsinfluencing-30-seats-election-acting-kingmaker.html, last visited 20th August 2018.

Islamist use of the UK's Education and Charitable Sectors

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Building various institutions and organisations is a marked feature of Islamism in Europe. [125] These provide a number of advantages, including access to vulnerable, young or impressionable members of the general public. With a relatively small network of individuals founding a large number of institutions, they inflate their influence disproportionately, create a veneer of credibility and are able to present themselves as representative bodies or legitimate partners. [126] Indeed, a 2016 ICM poll found that only 2% of British Muslims felt that the Muslim Council of Britain was their 'main route to engage with' government. [127]

As recognised by the UK government's 2015 Counter Extremism strategy, schools, universities and charities are known to be easy prey for extremists, and therefore require additional safeguards to protect them from abuse. [128] The cause of this is both strategic and ideological. As well as exploiting Islam's emphasis on giving to charity, [129] some prominent Islamist movements – such as the Muslim Brotherhood – place specific importance on education as a means to spread their message. [130] What follows is an overview of recent cases of Islamist abuse of the UK's education and charitable sectors.

Schools and Universities

Universities and the government have paid increasing attention to the targeting of university campuses by extremist speakers and groups, particularly since 2015 when it became a statutory duty under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) for specified public bodies, including schools and universities, to have due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. [131]

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[125] Early examples in the UK include Muslim Brotherhood-established groups such as the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS), the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), Jamaat-e-Islami established UK Islamic Mission (UKIM) and the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB). For more examples see, for example, Vidino, L., *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (Columbia University Press, New York, 2010); Bowen, I., *Medina in Birmingham Najaf in Brent* (Hurst & Company, London, 2014); Peter F. and Raphael Ortega (eds), *Islamic Movements of Europe: Public Religion and Islamophobia in the Modern World* (I.B.Taurus, New York, 2014).

[126] Vidino, L., *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West*, pp.1-16.

[127] Gilligan, A., 'Home Office tries to renew links with Islamic "hardliners"', *The Times*, 28 January 2018, available at: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/home-office-tries-to-renew-links-with-islamic-hardliners-vzs582hqp, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[128] The UK's 2015 Counter-Extremism Strategy recognised charities and the education sector as two key vulnerable institutions; see: 'Counter-Extremism Strategy, *HM Government*, October 2015, available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[129] Home Secretary Amber Rudd, 'Extremism: Written Statement – HLWS40', 12 July 2017, available at: https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2017-07-12/HLWS40/, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[130] For example, Rosen, E., 'The Muslim Brotherhood's Concept of Education', *Hudson Institute*, 11 November 2008, available at: https://www.hudson.org/research/9881-the-muslim-brotherhood-s-concept-of-education, last visited: 3 September 2018. Turkish Islamist group Milli Gorus, which has less of a presence in the UK compared to other Western European countries, has also shown increasing involvement in the Dutch education sector; see: Kuiper, R. and Janny Groen, 'Yusuf Altuntas vertelt waarom islamitisch onderwijs zo belangrijk is', *de Volkskrant*, 3 November 2017, available at: https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/yusuf-altuntas-vertelt-waarom-islamitisch-onderwijs-zo-belangrijk-is-b336da49/, last visited: 3 September 2018; 'HOLLANDA'DA EĞİTİM MASAYA YATIRILDI', Milli Gorus Nederland, available at: http://www.milligorus.nl/nl//2012-egitim-toplantisi, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[131] Section 26 (1), Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/section/26/enacted, last visited: 3 September 2018.

Instances of students travelling to join Islamic State in Iraq and Syria over the past five years while enrolled at UK higher and further education institutions have served to highlight the need for universities to safeguard students against extremist influences. [132] The Henry Jackson Society's project Student Rights has been highlighting extremist activity on university campuses for many years, and a number of the groups that continue to appear frequently at universities are connected with UK-registered charities, such as the Islamic Education and Research Academy (iERA), [133] a charity told by the Charity Commission to distance itself from extremism after allegations of anti-Semitic, homophobic and extreme comments made by the iERA's leaders. [134]

The new challenge facing universities is how to adapt policies to deal with those who may not explicitly make extreme statements on campus but use their presence to meet students. A good example of a group using this more subtle strategy is Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND), described as "Islamists masquerading as civil libertarians", which used campaigns such as the Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM) to increase its presence on campus and mainstream extreme narratives. [135]

While schools have received relatively less attention than universities, this is beginning to change. The potential for schools to be targeted by Islamists entered the public consciousness with the Trojan Horse Scandal (2014–2015), after several schools in Birmingham were subjected to a "co-ordinated, deliberate and sustained action … to introduce an intolerant and aggressive Islamic ethos". [136] Recent Islamist-inspired attacks and plots in the UK that have brought to light connections between key violent extremists and schools, as well as unsettling discoveries by the main schools inspectorate Ofsted, have shown that the problem of extremist influence in schools continues, and is varied.

Examples include, but are not limited to, violent and non-violent extremists seeking teaching or non-teaching employment at schools, who may seek to recruit children to commit violent acts; schools being run by unsuitable individuals, organisations or individuals connected with Islamists; [137] schools or school staff fundraising for extremist causes or charities connected to extremists; and intolerant and extremist literature being kept on school property, primarily libraries.

Examples of Extremist Literature Found in Schools, 2017–2018

2017–2018 saw increased attention and media reporting of extreme Islamist literature in schools. Ofsted's new Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, has taken a strong line on issues

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[132] Webb, E., 'Spotting the Signs: Identifying Vulnerability to Radicalisation Among Students', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2017, available at: http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Student-Fighters-Project.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018, pp.77-79.

[133] For example, Black, R., 'Extreme Speakers and Events: In the 2016-2017 Academic Year', *Student Rights*, 2017, available at: http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Extreme-Speakers-and-Events-in-the-2016-17-Academic-Year-Final-1.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018; 'Extreme or Intolerant Speakers on London Campuses between September 2015 and January 2016', *Student Rights*, 2016, available at: http://www.studentrights.org.uk/userfiles/files/Extreme%20or%20Intolerant%20Speakers%20in%20London%20FINAL(1).pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[134] Turner, C., 'Leading Islamic charity told by watchdog to distance itself from extremism', *Daily Telegraph*, 12 November 2016, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/12/leading-islamic-charity-told-by-watchdog-to-distance-itself-from/, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[135] Fox, E., 'Profiting from Prejudice: How Mend's "IAM" Campaign Legitimised Extremism', *Student Rights*, 2018, available at: http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/HJS-Profiting-from-Prejudice-Report.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[136] 'Counter-Extremism Strategy, *HM Government*, October 2015, available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018, para.22.

[137] As is the case with the schools run by the Al Muntada Trust; see: Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, available at: http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Wolves-in-Sheeps-Clothes.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018, pp.42-45.

relating to the treatment of female students, segregation, integration and British values in faith schools.[138] As a result, both she and Ofsted have received pressure and threats from Islamist extremists and the Far Left.[139]

In 2018 reports were made public of inappropriate literature found in one school, Al Hijrah School in Birmingham, which contained derogatory comments and incited violence against women, including condoning marital rape and telling girls not to use tampons.[140] Concerns had already been raised in late 2017 about the school's segregation policy and the disadvantaged position of girls.[141] The struggle between Al Hijrah and Ofsted over the issue of gender segregation is ongoing. Spielman has insisted that such schools must uphold British values in the face of "increasing hostility" towards inspectors from schools that are influenced by "the most conservative religious groups".[142]

A discovery of similarly inappropriate books was reported in 2018 at a private Islamic school in Luton. Inappropriate literature had already been found at the school in 2014, including some promoting stoning, lashing and execution. Other books at the school included a work advocating the hitting of children who do not pray, and another praising those who "loved death more than life in their pursuit of righteous and true religion".[143]

In a speech at Policy Exchange on 9 July 2018, Spielman notably said, "We see in some of the more extreme cases that religious group identity and authority are being systematically built up and used to limit individual liberties, such as the right of the girl to enjoy the same opportunities as a boy.".[144] Indeed, we have seen schools being run by charities connected to extremists,.[145] as well as Islamist groups such as MEND repeatedly holding events at schools.[146]

Violent Extremists and Charitable Connections

Recent attacks and plots in the UK have revealed interesting connections within both the education and charitable sectors, including the cases of Khuram Butt, the ringleader of the attack on London Bridge on 3rd June 2017,[147] and Umar Haque, sentenced to life in prison after he planned to create an army of children to carry out acts of terrorism.[148]

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[138] For example, 'Amanda Spielman's speech to the Policy Exchange think tank', *HM Government*, 9 July 2018, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielmans-speech-to-the-policy-exchange-think-tank, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[139] Hurst, G., R. Sylvester and A. Thompson, 'Extremists target Ofsted over faith schools', *The Times*, 16 December 2017, available at: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/extremists-target-ofsted-over-faith-schools-ruling-2z25f00kh, last visited: 3 September 2018; 'Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman received "venomous" abuse after questioning faith schools', *Independent*, 16 December 2017, available at: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ofsted-latest-amanda-spielman-chief-inspector-venomous-abuse-questioning-faith-schools-a8114036.html, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[140] Chandler-Wilde, H., 'Birmingham Islamic school accused of warning girls not to use tampons', *Birmingham Live*, 12 May 2018, available at: https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/birmingham-islamic-school-accused-warning-14649347, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[141] 'Statement on Al-Hijrah school judgement', *Ofsted*, 13 October 2017, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-al-hijrah-school-judgement, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[142] Walker, J., 'School inspectors defend sex-segregation battle against Al-Hijrah School', *Birmingham Post*, 11 July 2018, available at: https://www.birminghampost.co.uk/news/regional-affairs/school-inspectors-defend-sex-segregation-14894187, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[143] Turner, C., 'Islamic primary school had books written by banned extremist, Ofsted report finds', *Daily Telegraph*, 16 January 2018, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2018/01/16/islamic-primary-school-had-books-written-banned-extremist-ofsted/, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[144] 'Amanda Spielman's speech to the Policy Exchange think tank', *HM Government*, 9 July 2018.

[145] As is the case with the schools run by the Al Muntada Trust; see: Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, pp.42-45.

[146] Fox, E., 'Profiting from Prejudice: How Mend's "IAM" Campaign Legitimised Extremism', *Student Rights*, 2018.

[147] Osborne, S., 'London Bridge attacker Khuram Butt buried in secret "after 130 imams refuse to perform funeral"', *Independent*, 24 July 2017, available at: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/london-bridge-attacker-khuram-butt-buried-secret-funeral-muslim-imams-refuse-islam-a7856551.html, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[148] 'Men sentenced for terrorist attack plot', *Metropolitan Police*, 27 March 2018, available at: http://news.met.police.uk/news/men-sentenced-for-terrorist-attack-plot-300368, last visited: 3 September 2018.

Despite not having the appropriate qualifications, Khuram Butt taught Quranic classes to young children at Eton Community College, formerly Ad-Deen Primary, in Ilford. Butt reportedly told students that "the worst creatures are the kuffar" and that it was acceptable for them to lie to their parents in a "state of war".[149]

The proprietor of the school was Sophie Rahman, who has now been indefinitely banned from teaching. Though she initially tried to cover it up, she is the ex-wife of Sajeel Shahid,[150] who, in addition to being a member of the now proscribed group Al-Muhajiroun, reportedly established a terrorist training camp in Pakistan and has alleged connections with terrorist plots in the UK.[151] Like Shahid, Butt had connections with members of Al-Muhajiroun, and consequently even featured in the 2016 Channel 4 documentary *The Jihadist Next Door*.[152]

Shahid managed a gym in Ilford attended by extremist individuals, including those behind the London Bridge attack.[153] It was also clear that Rahman did not agree with the government's Prevent duty, calling the policy "racist, politicised and highly dubious" and stating that it has "been used to marginalise and silence Muslims from speaking out against State structured discrimination".[154]

Ad-Deen school also had connections with the charitable sector. The school rented property from a community centre owned by the charity League of British Muslims. According to the charity's chairman, notorious Al-Muhajiroun founder Omar Bakri Mohammed had used the centre to give talks until the charity "had to throw him out".[155] While the proprietor is ultimately responsible, and Ofsted inspections should pick up on this sort of abuse, the charity also has a duty to ensure that its property is not used for extremist purposes.[156]

In addition, evidence from its social media accounts shows that the school had raised money for two charities connected to extremism: Al Fatiha Global[157] and Aid4Syria.[158] Aid4Syria is known to have named one of its emergency vehicles after convicted terrorist Aafia Siddiqui.[159] Moreover, Alan Henning, a British aid worker who was kidnapped and executed by Islamic State, had travelled with an aid convoy organised by Rochdale Aid4Syria and Al Fatiha Global, though there is no suggestion that they bear any responsibility or have links with Islamic State.[160]

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[149] 'Ms Sophie Rahman: Professional conduct panel outcome', *Teaching Regulation Agency*, June 2018, available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727578/Rahman__S_Web_decision.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018; Peachey, P., 'Britain's teachers of terror: How extremists infiltrated classrooms', *The National*, 28 July 2018, available at: https://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/britain-s-teachers-of-terror-how-extremists-infiltrated-classrooms-1.754728, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[150] Peachey, P., 'Britain's teachers of terror: How extremists infiltrated classrooms', *The National*, 28 July 2018.

[151] Ibid.

[152] 'Ms Sophie Rahman: Professional conduct panel outcome', *Teaching Regulation Agency*, June 2018, p.4; 'London terrorist Khuram Butt appeared on TV documentary The Jihadis Next Door and "tried to go to Syria"', *Daily Telegraph*, 5 June 2017, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/05/london-terrorist-appeared-channel-4-jihadi-documentary-tried/, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[153] Peachey, P., 'Britain's teachers of terror: How extremists infiltrated classrooms', *The National*, 28 July 2018.

[154] 'Ms Sophie Rahman: Professional conduct panel outcome', *Teaching Regulation Agency*, June 2018, p.20.

[155] Peachey, P., 'Britain's teachers of terror: How extremists infiltrated classrooms', *The National*, 28 July 2018.

[156] 'Chapter 5: Protecting Charities from abuse for extremist purposes' in 'Compliance Toolkit: Protecting Charities from Harm', *Charity Commission*, January 2013, available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572853/Chapter5.pdf, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[157] For more details on Al Fatiha's links to terrorism, see: Gilligan, A., '"Terror link" charities get British millions in Gift Aid', *Daily Telegraph*, 29 November 2014.

[158] For more details on these connections, see: Addeen Primary School, @addeenprimary, *Twitter*, 19 December 2013, available at: https://twitter.com/addeenprimary/status/413759344770301953, last visited: 3 September 2018; Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, pp.37-40.

[159] Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, p.38.

[160] Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, p.37.

Butt attended Ripple Road Mosque in Barking, where he is believed to have known Umar Haque who taught Islamic Studies at the mosque.[161] Haque was sentenced to life in prison in May 2018 for his role in leading a plot to weaponise children to carry out a terrorist attack in the UK.[162] Before his conviction, Haque worked as an administrator at Hafs Academy in Newham, worked at Lantern of Knowledge School in Leyton, which was rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, and reportedly taught at Hafs Academy in Stratford, rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted.[163]

As its social media shows, the Hafs Academy in Stratford had also raised money for two concerning charities. In July 2016, the school was tagged in a Facebook post by Muslim Aid,[164] which was raising money at the school. Muslim Aid has links to the Muslim Brotherhood and was formerly part of the Union of Good, an umbrella organisation proscribed by the United States because it was believed to be funding Hamas.[165] It also appears to have raised money in December 2015 with the As Suffa Institute.[166] The Chairman of the As Suffa Trust – which runs the Institute – is Zahir Mahmood,[167] who famously stated, "Hamas are not terrorists, they're freedom fighters."[168]

One of the reasons for the far-reaching connections between Islamist abuse in the education and charitable sector is that a small network of individuals is disproportionately involved in a large number of the UK's Islamist organisations.

Islamist Networks and the UK Charitable Sector

In addition to the benefits described above, charities have one additional advantage: not only do extremist groups use this status to create an air of credibility, but they also use it to obtain access to taxpayer money through Gift Aid.[169] Indeed, research by The Henry Jackson Society (2017) revealed that charities with extremist connections received more than £6 million from the British taxpayer in the 2015–2016 financial year alone.[170] A report by the Middle East Forum found that one of the largest of these concerning charities, Islamic Relief (IR), has received more than $80 million from taxpayers in the West over the past ten years.[171] In 2016 alone, IR received more than €2 million from the European Commission for humanitarian aid.[172]

[161] Evans, M., 'Teacher tried to raise army of jihadist children at school rated outstanding', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 March 2018, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/03/02/islamic-school-teacher-tried-raise-army-jihadist-children-judged/, last visited: 3 September 2018; Spillett, R. and D. Gardham, 'ISIS-obsessed religious teacher is found guilty of training "army" of more than 100 pupils as young as 11 to unleash car and knife attacks on Big Ben, Heathrow and Westfield', *Daily Mail*, 2 March 2018, available at: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5422811/Islamist-trained-100-youngsters-attack-London.html, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[162] 'Men sentenced for terrorist attack plot', *Metropolitan Police*, 27 March 2018.

[163] Spillett, R. and D. Gardham, 'ISIS-obsessed religious teacher is found guilty of training "army" of more than 100 pupils as young as 11 to unleash car and knife attacks on Big Ben, Heathrow and Westfield', *Daily Mail*, 2 March 2018; Evans, M., 'Teacher tried to raise army of jihadist children at school rated outstanding', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 March 2018.

[164] Muslim Aid, *Facebook*, 19 July 2016, available at: https://www.facebook.com/Muslimaid/posts/1191555080889131, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[165] Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, p.63.

[166] Usman Rana, *Facebook*, 31 December 2015, available at: https://www.facebook.com/usman.rana.5855594/posts/10208422837472275, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[167] 'As-Suffa Trust', *Charity Commission*, available at: http://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1106270&subid=0, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[168] 'Palestine event dominated by extremist speakers', *Student Rights*, 18 February 2013, available at: http://www.studentrights.org.uk/article/2036/palestine_event_dominated_by_extremist_speakers, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[169] Kennedy, D. and K. Gibbons, 'Charities linked to extremism get £6m', *The Times*, 26 February 2018, available at: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/islamic-charities-linked-to-extremism-get-6m-xtbrnn6vl, last visited: 3 September 2018.

[170] Kennedy, D. and K. Gibbons, 'Charities linked to extremism get £6m', *The Times*, 26 February 2018; Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018.

[171] Based on multiple Western countries over a 10-year period. More information on this calculation can be found in: Westrop, S., 'Islamic Relief: Charity, Extremism & Terror', *Middle East Forum*, 20 June 2018, available at: https://www.meforum.org/articles/2018/islamic-relief-charity-extremism-and-terror, last visited: 4 September 2018.

[172] 'Islamic Relief – Financial Transparency System', European Commission, 2016, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm, last visited: 10 September 2018; Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, p.65.

As shown by our research, a small number of individuals forming a network were involved in multiple charities and organisations. These individuals, with backgrounds in the Muslim Brotherhood, Jamaat-e-Islami and Salafism, have established organisations; companies; charities; online, broadcast and media outlets; and also produce *dawah* literature.[173]

Two of these organisations, Islamic Research Foundation International (IRFI) and Islamic Dawah Centre International (IDCI), are particularly problematic. IRFI funds Peace TV, the channel of the charity's chairman Dr Zakir Naik, a well-known Islamist preacher who was banned from entering the UK in 2010 for concerns relating to extremism.[174] Meanwhile, IDCI continues to provide the bulk of *dawah* literature for stalls and university fairs around the country. This literature includes works by Naik as well as by other renowned Islamists such as Syed Abul Ala Maududi, Sayyid Qutb and Bilal Philips. Some of the works by these individuals have been banned from UK prisons because of their extreme content, including the IDCI leaflet *Towards Understanding Islam* by Maududi.[175]

Despite receiving more powers, the UK Charity Commission is struggling to rid the sector of extremism, partly because it is unable to deregister charities. Naik remains chairman of IRFI, and other examples, such as the statutory inquiries of the Charity Commission into iERA and Islamic Network, show relatively few results. iERA continues to involve many of the same individuals as before the investigation, though a few have recanted their positions, while Islamic Network continued to host extreme speakers after the statutory inquiry.[176]

Conclusion

The exploitation of the education and charitable sectors will continue to pose a formidable challenge to the UK government and civil society in the coming years. In the education sector, rethinking policies and training will be required to ensure safeguarding procedures meet the evolving challenge, so that, for example, those inspecting schools are as astute as those seeking to abuse them. In the charitable sector, in addition to maximising the legal powers currently available to the Charity Commission, there must be serious discussion on a national level about the domestic funding of extremism and what future legislation may be introduced to curb the threat within the sector.

With regard to the powers of the Charity Commission, which were increased by the Charities Act 2016, it is unlikely that more legislation will be introduced in the near future, and the Commission is far from being given the power to deregister Islamist extremist charities. In the meantime, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) should ensure that taxpayer money does not support Islamist extremist charities, and fundraising platforms should not aid their fundraising efforts by hosting them. In addition, a more robust approach is needed across the education sector to identify and limit the access such groups have to students, either in person or through their literature.

Often hamstrung by the limits of their powers, regulatory bodies and the government continue to play catch-up with the UK's Islamist networks, and it will take creative policy and legislative thinking to transform this futile dynamic.

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[173] Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, p.4.

[174] Ibid, p.48.

[175] Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, pp.45-48; Iqbal, S. and Noel Titheradge, '"Extremist" books remained in prisons despite warning', *BBC News*, 28 July 2016, available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-36774358, last visited: 4 September 2018; *Towards Understanding Islam, Islamic Dawah Centre International* (IDCI) Shop, available at: http://idci.co.uk/Towards-Understanding-Islam-3045-d#.W4aD4uhKjIU, last visited: 4 September 2018.

[176] Both statutory inquiries by the Commission were opened in 2014; see: Webb, E., 'Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Islamist Extremists Exploit the UK Charitable Sector', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2018, pp.52-56.

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About The Henry Jackson Society

The Henry Jackson Society is a think-tank and policy-shaping force that fights for the principles and alliances which keep societies free, working across borders and party lines to combat extremism, advance democracy and real human rights, and make a stand in an increasingly uncertain world.

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