

# **Discursive Framing of the Islamist Threat in Europe and the Trivialisation of the Far-Right: Reconciling Perception and Facts**

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## Abstract

The basis of this thesis resides on Timothy Shanahan's argument that terrorism should be seen as tactic and free of any morality issues when being defined. In line with this the thesis argues that since 9/11, terrorism has been constructed according to four discursive strands. These strands i.e. Orientalism, 9/11, Civilisational threat and Quality and Quantity, have helped depict Islamic terrorism as the biggest threat to the west vis-à-vis the far-right. Instead, the far-right threat has been not disregarded and down-played, so that it is no longer worthy of the "terrorist" label. To demonstrate this, the media narrative for four European countries namely France, Norway, Spain and the UK, has been analysed and evaluated. The findings clearly prove the initial statement as all countries show evidence of all four assumptions. Furthermore this thesis seeks to highlight the important implications that this has on Muslim communities as well as white westerners.

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## Introduction

Terrorism. Is there at present, a more contested and debated term within the realm of International Relations? Is there a more controversial one? Probably not. Much has been written about terrorism, particularly in the last fifteen years. So, to narrow the background and to attempt to put this paper into perspective, the author will discuss some of the more interesting and relevant contributions. It must be noted in advance that when referring to the west, the author means Western Europe, as the US and Canada were not within the scope of this thesis. Moreover, this paper does not attempt to define terrorism. Many have already established that defining terrorism is futile, as there is no definition that will satisfy everyone or that will be interpreted by everyone equally. Instead, this thesis takes Shanahan's view of it, which states that terrorism should be seen for what it is, a tactic, and that no moral discussions should accompany the definition, for doing so allows for biases and misinterpretations.<sup>1</sup>

After 9/11, the main priority for most western governments and state leaders has been terrorism, in particular that perpetrated by Islamic extremists. Much has been attempted to prevent similar attacks and to destroy organisations like Al-Qaeda. It may well be that some of the tactics have worked, and that Al-Qaeda is no longer as strong as it used to be. It may also be that the terrorists have merely shifted tactics and that instead of working in large groups they now work in very small ones or even alone, and independently of any larger organisation i.e. lone wolf tactic.<sup>2</sup> A tactic that has become more popular recently but, which has been used by terrorists for many years. Perhaps for this reason, it cannot be identified as the fifth in

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Shanahan, "Betraying a certain corruption of mind: how (and how not) to define 'terrorism'", *Critical Security Studies on Terrorism*, 3 no2 (2010):173-174

<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Lone Wolf Terrorism: Understanding the Growing Threat* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2013): 23-24

Rapoport's *Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*,<sup>3</sup> because it has existed throughout all four that is; the anarchic wave, the anti-colonial wave, the new-left wave and the religious wave.

Experts argue that lone wolves are now the main threat to western countries due to the fact that they are self-radicalised, home-grown and act alone<sup>4</sup>. Although the lone wolf tactic has now become more relevant because recently Islamic terrorists have been using it, terrorists of the far-right have done so for many years. Moreover, experts also claim that right-wing terrorists and white supremacists continue to pose a threat to the west,<sup>5</sup> and the terrorist attacks in Norway in the summer of 2011, where a right-wing extremist killed seventy-seven people, prove this. Yet even after Norway, the far-right has received much less attention than it deserves. Pete Simi and Michele Bentley have suggested that the reason for this is that the west has become so focused on Islamic terrorists that it has neglected all other forms of terrorism, especially acts committed by the far-right.<sup>6</sup> If one takes those assumptions to be true, then one wonders why the focus on Islamic terrorism is so strong. The simple answer is that the west suffers from Islamophobia.<sup>7</sup>

The concept of islamophobia can be broken down into four different strands. The first is what Edward Said and later Ziauddin Sardar call Orientalism, which argues that the west has always had a negative view of the Middle East and the Arab people, thus constructing an image of the Arabs as inferior, barbaric, backward and inherently violent.<sup>8</sup> This would explain why they engage in terrorism and why the west is justified in its fear of it. The second explanation

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<sup>3</sup> David Rapoport, *The Four Waves Of Modern Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004)

<sup>4</sup> Simon, 36,184

<sup>5</sup> Pete Simi, "Why Study White Supremacist Terror? A Research Note". *Deviant Behaviour* 31 no3 (2010): 252. Michele Bentley, "Recognition Masking response: Preventing Right-wing Extremism And Radicalisation". In *Counter-Radicalisation Critical Perspectives*, ed. (London: Routledge, 2014) Note: Bentley's chapter was read by the author before the book was published (as Bentley was a professor where the author did her BA) the page numbering is based on the chapter alone, hence the first page of the chapter will be numbered 1

<sup>6</sup> Simi, 252 Bentley, 4

<sup>7</sup> Islamophobia is generally thought to mean the "fear of Islam" (or Muslims).

<sup>8</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books,1979):5. Ziauddin Sardar, *Orientalism* (Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press,1999):14,26

is presented here as the 9/11 effect. Essentially it is an aggravated and modern form of Orientalism initiated by the Bush Administration after 2001. Through a careful choice of language it links Islamic terrorism to evil. As Salaita explains, it presents a rhetoric which has equated Islam to evil<sup>9</sup> and since everyone fears evil, everyone should fear Islam. The third explanation is based on Huntington's *The Clash of Civilisations*, which claims that the west will fight the Muslim world not for ideological, but for cultural and religious reasons.<sup>10</sup> With radical Islamists seeking to create a Caliphate under Islamic Sharia law, the west sees this as an existential threat to its territorial integrity and more importantly to its core values and beliefs. The last assumption is based on the amount of attacks committed in the name of Islam, and the virulence with which they are perpetrated. This creates a permanent sense of fear, exacerbated by the traumas of New York, Madrid and London.

Ironically these explanations do not seem to apply to right-wing terrorists. In the case of Orientalism because they are not from the Middle East and therefore, not violent by nature, in the second case because they are not "Islamic" and hence, not evil. As for the third case, they are not a threat to western culture and norms, because they are westerners and so part of the same civilisation. Finally, because they have not been able to instil the levels of fear that Islamists have, and people do not constantly think of the far-right as being able to strike anywhere at any time. This thesis argues that since 9/11, terrorism has been constructed according to these discursive strands, hence depicting Islamic terrorism as the biggest threat to the west vis-à-vis the far-right, which has indeed been disregarded. It further argues that this has led to an exclusion of the far-right as a form of terrorism and has relabelled it extremism instead.

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<sup>9</sup> Steven Salaita, "Beyond Orientalism And Islamophobia: 9/11, Anti-Arab Racism, And The Mythos Of National Pride". *CR: The New Centennial Review* 6 no2 (2006):249

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Huntington, "The Clash Of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72 no3 (1993):32-33

In order to prove the above, the author will look at the discourses prevalent in western media. Since not all western media could be covered, this thesis will focus on Europe as many have already looked at this issue in a US context. The main French, Norwegian, Spanish and British newspapers will be analysed when reporting both right-wing and Islamists incidents to show that most, if not all the theories are present. We will find that not only is the media exaggerating the Islamic threat, but is downplaying that of the far-right to the point where it is no longer seen as terrorism.

This “obsession” of the west with Islamic terrorism, at the expense of neglecting and trivialising the far-right, has important implications. It is for this reason that is crucial to understand the discourse and the reasons as to why the dangers of the Islamic threat are being exaggerated. If the west wants to avoid events like those seen in Oslo and Utøya in 2011, wants to create a secure environment for its citizens and wants to build a system that treats all people equally, then it needs to reconsider some of its actions and assumptions towards terrorism. It is key to remember that the intention of the author is to find out how it has been possible for the west to over-exaggerate the Islamic terrorist threat vis-à-vis the far-right, and given this, what the implication are and can be.

In an attempt to do all the above, this thesis will be set out in the following manner: The author begins by discussing the literature that has been covered, with a particular focus on both the dangers of the lone wolf tactic and the potential threat of right-wing terrorists. The next chapter gives a detailed explanation of what the four different assumptions mean and entail, as well as how they may apply to Islamic terrorists. This is followed by a section on how and why they do not apply to the far-right. A brief explanation of the methods used in the research and analysis of the discourse containing the reasons for the choices of sources and countries follows thereafter. Chapter three deals with the findings of the analysis and contains a section for each assumption, where how the findings relate to them is discussed. A subsequent



section highlights the effects on the findings on right-wing terrorism, if any. There is then a section which states the implications of the findings, and specific examples will be discussed and evaluated. Finally, the conclusion will attempt to summarise the main points and findings of this thesis, and will also make suggestions for future research.

## Chapter 1 – Understanding the terrorist threat

### 1.1 Terrorism as a tactic

Many have sought to describe terrorism by taking into consideration different sets of criteria such as ideology, goals, targets and motivations, however, as Simi points out when referencing Silke, Merari and Schmid, these are just assumptions constructed and interpreted by others and can be misleading and inaccurate.<sup>11</sup>

Ramon Spaaij, Timothy Shanahan and Thomas Badey, among others, have argued that the definitions of terrorism within the field of International Relations (IR) vary according to the needs and desires of the person, state or organisation defining it, so as to suit their interests or beliefs.<sup>12</sup> To use the most common analogy, “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter.” This has been the case in the past and indeed continues to be so, leading to a variety of consequences and implications. This is why a definition of terrorism which rids us of any moral connotation must be employed, one that looks at the act merely for what it is, a tactic. This thesis, hence adopts Shanahan’s definition because it seeks to analyse terrorism as a tactic. Shanahan and Badey argue, quite rightly, that by defining terrorism as immoral and unacceptable, rather than for the act itself, we inevitably allow for certain ideas to be constructed.<sup>13</sup> According to him, three main issues arise: firstly, by attributing the terrorist label, we are already implying that the act committed is morally wrong. Analysing the actual morality of it is not necessary because, by associating it to terrorism we already deem it as morally incorrect and no further evaluation is needed.<sup>14</sup> In this way, states and leaders can label

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<sup>11</sup>Simi, 252

<sup>12</sup> Ramon Spaaij, *Understanding Lone Wolf Terrorism: Global Patterns, Motivations and Prevention* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2012):15. Shanahan 174. Thomas Badey, 'Defining International Terrorism: A Pragmatic Approach'. *Terrorism And Political Violence* 10 no1 (1998): 90-107

<sup>13</sup> Shanahan 173-174, Badey, 95-96

<sup>14</sup> Shanahan, 187

similar acts differently according to the perpetrators and based on what their own interests are.<sup>15</sup> This, Shanahan says, leads to the second issue, which is that defining terrorism on moral grounds is exclusive, and hence acts that are similar, when committed by for example are morally permissible and cannot therefore be categorised as terrorism.<sup>16</sup> Finally, not only does this allow some to “pick and choose”, but it justifies the use of extreme measures against it so that if we fight evil, all means deemed necessary are permitted. With this in mind, we can move on to differentiating between the different strands within the terrorist tactic not based on their morality, but on their different characteristics.

## 1.2 The four waves of modern terrorism

Amid everything that has been written on the different types of terrorism, David Rapoport’s contribution is probably the best all-encompassing summary of the distinct phases we have seen throughout history. Although he begins with the Anarchists in Russia, this is by no means the first type or evidence of terrorism, but it is the first demonstration of a trend that affected more than one nation and so had international implications.<sup>17</sup> According to him, there have been a number of waves, four to be precise, and the different types of terrorism in terms of general criteria that several organisations meet have covered each of these.<sup>18</sup> One may argue that they are perhaps too broad and that there is some overlap between the different waves, nevertheless they provide us with a solid basis to work with. He describes the waves in the following manner: The first wave is that of Anarchic terrorism, which started in Russia but which expanded throughout Europe, affecting Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom among many other countries. The second wave, is the anti-imperialist one like that of EOKA in Greece, the FLN in Algeria and the IRA in Ireland. These were mainly groups who believed to be

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Badey, 90

<sup>16</sup> Shanahan, 187

<sup>17</sup> Rapoport, 46-69

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 47-50

fighting an oppressor or foreign power, also referred to sometimes as “freedom fighters”. The Marxist/ separatist wave, would be the third, and again many European nations were victims to it. Some of the main organisations of this type include the RAF in Germany, the Red Brigades (*Brigate Rosse*) in Italy and the still present ETA (*Euskal Ta Akatasuna*) in Spain. The final wave is that based mainly on religious goals / ideologies under which Hamas, Hezbollah and similar organisations fall.<sup>19</sup> This will be the most important to us, as it is one that brings “Islamic terrorism” into the picture, and hence is crucial in any post 9/11 discussion about terrorism. Naturally, groups such as Al-Qaeda, those linked to it and the Islamic State (ISIS) fall under this category.

There have been attempts to predict what the fifth wave is or might be,<sup>20</sup> and some have put forward the idea of lone wolf (LW) terrorism. This opinion has been contested, as LW terrorism seems to have been in place throughout all the phases (especially the first wave) and so cannot really be established as a category of its own. However, as I will explain below, it has been pointed out that the LW terrorism strategy has indeed become a trend and a very common tactic in recent years, employed by a variety of individuals with a variety of ideologies.<sup>21</sup> If it is not a wave, then we certainly can argue that it is a “trend” in between waves.

### **1.3 Lone wolf, leaderless resistance, leaderless Jihad**

Within the fourth waves mentioned above, we have moved from groups like Hamas to larger, more powerful organisations like Al-Qaeda or even ISIS, a somewhat even bigger threat, which is determined to root out all signs of western influence from the Middle East and

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<sup>19</sup> Rapoport, 47-63

<sup>20</sup> Jeffrey Kaplan, *Terrorist Groups And New Tribalism*. (Abingdon, Oxon [England]: Routledge, 2010)

<sup>21</sup> Spaaij, 37

to create a Caliphate under Islamic Sharia law.<sup>22</sup> Yet, since after 9/11, terrorism has developed and adapted further, much as it tends to do. Now, we do not only fear groups and organisations but also small independent cells and so called lone wolves (LWs), in what George Michael calls a “leaderless resistance” trend, in his book *Lone Wolf Terror And The Rise Of Leaderless Resistance*. These are mainly individuals or small groups, whose beliefs and ideology might be in line with those of some extremist movements or terrorist organisation, and who commit acts of terrorism, not necessarily ordered by any group but in agreement and defence of its ideology.<sup>23</sup> In the case of Islamic terrorism, this is known as “leaderless jihad”<sup>24</sup> and examples of this are the London 2005 bombings, the murder of soldier Lee Rigby in 2013 in London and the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris seen earlier this year (2015) among many others. In fact, as many note, lone wolf terrorism is not a new tactic, far from it, it is as old as terrorism itself and throughout history we have seen it.<sup>25</sup> Individuals such as Ted Kaczynski, known as “The Unabomber” in the US, David Copeland in 1999 in the UK and Peter Mangs in Sweden (2009-10)<sup>26</sup> are only a few examples. And, as old a tactic as it may be, it is now a trend, which seems to be rapidly increasing.<sup>27</sup>

With LW terrorism becoming a common tendency, with more and more attacks being perpetrated by these individuals, the west may need to re-think its status in both national and international political agendas, as many experts recommend.<sup>28</sup> Over the last years, Spaaij, Simon and Michael have written extensively on how the threat posed by lone wolves is growing

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<sup>22</sup> Kepel G. and Milelli J.P. 2008. *Al Qaeda In Its Own Words* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009): 199

<sup>23</sup> George Michael, *Lone Wolf Terror And The Rise of Leaderless Resistance* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012):1

<sup>24</sup> Forest J. *The Terrorism Lectures* (Santa Ana, CA: Nortia/Current, 2012) 111

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 382

<sup>26</sup> Spaaij, 103-116

<sup>27</sup> Michael, 1

<sup>28</sup> BBC News, 'Lone Wolf' Terror Threat Warning' February 7, 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-16920643>. Simon, 18, Spaaij 32,

and how nations are not addressing the issue properly.<sup>29</sup> The problem seems to be that this tactic has been predominantly used by white supremacists and right-wing extremists more than it has been used by Muslims<sup>30</sup> and perhaps for this, has been slightly overlooked. Initially, and for a long time, LWs were seen merely as crazy fanatics, lonely lunatics or were thought to be mentally ill.<sup>31</sup> Although as Spaaij argues, this may be true of some, it is not true of all, and the number of those mentally ill is low.<sup>32</sup> Cases such as that of Franz Fuchs,<sup>33</sup> who suffered from severe depression, was suicidal and was actually admitted into a psychiatric hospital, are rare.<sup>34</sup> Lone wolf terrorism has, by definition, distinct characteristics and hence poses different complexities and challenges,<sup>35</sup> which cannot be dealt with in the same way organisations are lone wolf terrorism has, by definition, distinct characteristics and hence poses different complexities and challenges,<sup>36</sup> which cannot be dealt with in the same way organisations are. So, countries are becoming more aware of the threat that lone wolves, particularly those that are home-grown pose, especially, since the west is seeing how many of its citizens are now leaving for Syria and Iraq to join ISIS.<sup>37</sup> Individuals that could pose a threat to western nations when returning from fighting abroad, where they will have been radicalised and will have gained knowledge of weapons and explosives.<sup>38</sup>

There is a set of criteria which makes lone wolf terrorism different to group terrorism, which are in turn what make this tactic tempting for radical individuals to employ. Jeffrey

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<sup>29</sup> Michael, Simon and Spaaij (books as noted earlier)

<sup>30</sup> Spaaij, 37

<sup>31</sup> Simi, 255

<sup>32</sup> Spaaij, 49-54

<sup>33</sup> Franz Fuchs (1949-2000) was an Austrian terrorist of right-wing, xenophobic ideology who assassinated 4 between the years 1993 and 1997.

<sup>34</sup> Spaaij, 50

<sup>35</sup> Simon 41

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>37</sup> Harriet Sherwood et al. "Schoolgirl Jihadis: The Female Islamists Leaving Home To Join Isis Fighters". *The Guardian*. September 29, 2014 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/29/schoolgirl-jihadis-female-islamists-leaving-home-join-isis-iraq-syria>

<sup>38</sup> BBC News, 'Lone Wolf' Terror Threat Warning'. *Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST)*. (London: Home office,2011):5

Simon gives a thorough explanation of what these are: LW's tend to operate alone or in very small groups, which means that tasks such as monitoring, identifying and infiltrating are more complex if not impossible,<sup>39</sup> which is why this tactic is becoming more suitable as the individuals can be harder to catch. They are empowered by the media and especially the internet. It puts them in touch with like-minded people and it provides information on weapons, targets and tactics,<sup>40</sup> whereas generally in organisations, individuals are recruited, trained and/or allocated according to their knowledge in these fields. Finally, another key characteristic is that they tend to be self-radicalised and can therefore be more unpredictable than individuals who operate as part of a group.<sup>41</sup> These are the main features of a tactic, which has long been a favourite of the far-right.

#### **1.4 The far-right and the lone wolf tactic**

Right-wing and white supremacist terrorism or extremism have long existed too. Organisations such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) are clear examples, and experts like Cas Mudde, George Eatwell, Pete Simi, Vidhya Ramalingam and Michelle Bentley have been trying throughout the years to insist on how much of a risk they still represent.<sup>42</sup> In the post fascist world, there have been several right-wing groups as for example the German National Socialist Underground or NSU (*Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund*), or the Militia Movement in the United States and the Polish group named Blood and Honour. These perhaps have never constituted one of Rapoport's waves either, because they too have existed throughout all the different waves and have acted more on an individual basis than as a group (a bit like Lone wolves). Nevertheless, they have managed to plan and commit violent attacks in almost every

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<sup>39</sup> Simon, 36

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 29

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 184. Vidhya Ramalingam, "Old Threat, New Approach: Tackling the Far-right Across Europe" *Institute for Strategic Dialogue* (2014):7

<sup>42</sup> These sources by these authors are fully referenced throughout and when addressing specific claims each of them has made.

single western country including the UK, the US, Canada, Norway, Germany, Poland and many others. These have on many occasions taken the lives of innocent civilians as seen in Germany throughout 2000 and 2007 or in Norway in 2011.<sup>43</sup> Although these organisations are rare, the far-right is known for its lone wolves. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, they have been more prone to the use of this tactic than most.<sup>44</sup> According to the list drafted by Spaaij,<sup>45</sup> between 1968 and 2010 at least 24 out of 88 lone wolves were right-wing extremists (only 15 were Islamic Fundamentalists).<sup>46</sup> In fact, most of the people named above had more far-right inclinations than anything.<sup>47</sup> Many, as for instance Timothy McVeigh perpetrator of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombings, were found with copies of *The Turner Diaries*, which advocates for a world ruled by a racially pure elite, and refers to Hitler as the “Great One.”<sup>48</sup> Some also spoke explicitly in their manifestos about their hatred for immigrants and Muslims, and were found in possession of swastikas or posters of Hitler.<sup>49</sup>

Perhaps as Goodwin suggests, the most frightening fact is that in the west and, especially in Europe, we are seeing an ever growing support for right-wing groups and parties. This inclination has been very present in Denmark, Holland and France where in 2012 the far-right party secured almost 6.5 million of the votes.<sup>50</sup> The author believes that an increasing support for right-wing beliefs and parties, combined with an increasing trend in lone wolf terrorism, could be recipe for disaster. There are several reasons which demonstrate and push experts to consider right-wing terrorism as a real danger for western nations. First of all, their

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<sup>43</sup> Breivik killed seventy-seven people and the NSU 10 and were responsible for the 2004 Cologne bombings

<sup>44</sup> Spaaij, 37

<sup>45</sup> This list includes: Austria, Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, USA and UK.

<sup>46</sup> Spaaij, 103-116

<sup>47</sup> Forest, 380

<sup>48</sup> Ball T. and Dagger R. “Inside The Turner Diaries: Neo-Nazi Scripture”. *PS: Political Science And Politics* 30 no4 (1997):717-718

<sup>49</sup> Both Breivik and McGee explicitly mention their hatred for immigrants, particularly Muslims (Simon 29) and the police found videos in McGee’s room, of someone being beheaded under a swastika

<sup>50</sup> Matthew Goodwin, “Europe and the Ongoing Challenge of Right-Wing Extremism” *World Politics Review*. January 22, 2013, <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12654/europe-and-the-ongoing-challenge-of-right-wing-extremism>



ideology has been present for a long time and throughout all the waves. All along, groups or individuals who adhere to far-right beliefs (including anti-abortion, racism and radical Christians) have committed acts of terrorism all around the world.<sup>51</sup> As shown by the data provided by Spaaij, most of the lone wolves seen through history, upheld in fact some strand of far-right ideology.<sup>52</sup> What is more, some of the most devastating attacks perpetrated by lone individuals in the West were committed by right-wing extremists. These include the Oklahoma City Bombing of 1995, which killed 168 people, and the Norway attacks, which ended with seventy-seven deaths. Even more worrying is that as Bentley points out, up until now, terrorists known to have used or attempted to use biological or chemical weapons have been those of the extreme right.<sup>53</sup> Both McVeigh and Breivik built their own bombs using fertiliser / chemicals, and of the seventeen far-right extremists imprisoned in Britain,<sup>54</sup> several were actually imprisoned “for stockpiling chemical explosives.”<sup>55</sup>

Yet, even with all the information provided above, which clearly shows that lone wolf terrorism is becoming more and more dangerous, and despite the fact that it is used by individuals with diverse ideologies, especially by right-wing extremists, the focus of western state leaders, media and indeed societies, seems to lie on Islamic terrorism. Other types of terrorism, are being neglected and downplayed as is the case with white supremacists and far-right extremists, with important and severe consequences.<sup>56</sup> This is what Michael suggests is happening in the US,<sup>57</sup> and what Simi elaborates on. Simi argues that, since 9/11 the focus has been solely on Islamic fundamentalism and that this has been at the expense of right-wing terrorism. He also suggests that in doing so, we allow for people to continue to see terrorism

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<sup>51</sup> Spaaij, 37-39

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 103-116

<sup>53</sup> Bentley, 3

<sup>54</sup> This data was true in 2013 as stated by Bentley

<sup>55</sup> Bentley, 3

<sup>56</sup> Simi, 252

<sup>57</sup> Michael, 2

as something perpetrated by others, and so excuse our own.<sup>58</sup> Michelle Bentley also insists on this, as Heath-Kelly explains, and says that there is clear imbalance between the attention that Islamic terrorism is given and the attention that the right-wing receives.<sup>59</sup> She argues in fact that limited attention is given to the far-right because all efforts are set on tackling Islamists.<sup>60</sup>

It is here that the focus and contribution of the thesis lie, in trying to decipher what the causes for the exaggeration of the Islamic threat are. This thesis argues that since 9/11, terrorism has been constructed according to a number of discursive strands, which depict Islamic terrorism as the biggest threat to the west vis-à-vis the far-right, which been disregarded. It further argues that this has led to an exclusion of the far-right as a form of terrorism and has relabelled it extremism instead and that this has important implications. How is it otherwise, that despite the fact that experts insist on the risks and threats that both lone wolf terrorists and consequently right-wing terrorists pose, the west is focused solely on Islamic terrorism? Regardless of the fact that Islamic terrorism has been somewhat late to adopt the lone wolf tactic, it is still seen as the main threat by the vast majority of western governments.<sup>61</sup> How is it possible that despite all the above, the definition of terrorism has been distorted the way it has been?

Many have suggested a variety of reasons as to why Islam is being portrayed the way it is, and the aim of the thesis is to demonstrate that these reasons are evident in the narratives found in western nations. These theories and assumptions suggested by scholars will be dealt with in the next section in detail. However, it is essential to briefly outline what they entail. The explanations and justifications for the focus or almost “obsession” of the west with Islamic

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<sup>58</sup> Simi, 252-254

<sup>59</sup> Charlotte Heath-Kelly, Baker-Beall, Christopher and Lee Jarvis. *Counter-Radicalisation*. (London: Routledge, 2014): 9

<sup>60</sup> Ibid

<sup>61</sup> *Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST)*, 4, “Counter Terrorism – SIS (MI6)” Sis.gov.uk. Accessed 16 April, 2015, <https://www.sis.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/counter-terrorism.html>.

terrorism, and why western leaders and media have managed to construct it into the threat that we now believe it to be, fall under the broad category of “Islamophobia”. The term will be broken down into different categories, which are here briefly introduced in the order that they will be addressed: The first explanation (a) will be based on Edward Said’s theory of Orientalism,<sup>62</sup> followed by (b) what the 9/11 effect, which involves the rhetoric set by the USA under Bush straight after the attacks, then by (c) the view of Islamic terrorism as a threat to western civilisation, and finally (d) the Quality and quantity section, which looks at the attacks actually committed by Islamic terrorists.

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<sup>62</sup> Said, *Orientalism*

## Chapter 2 – Perceptions of Islam vis-à-vis the far-right

The importance of treating terrorism as tactic and trying to view it independent of morality was highlighted above, only thus can we attempt to be unbiased and balanced when talking about it. It is obvious that lone wolf terrorism has become so prevalent as a tactic, that it could now be seen as the fifth wave in Rapoport's *The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*, and if not, it is certainly a steady trend. It is precisely for this reason that right-wing terrorism is more important and worrying than many think. The far-right has long been adopting the lone wolf strategy and continues to do so, it is their area of expertise. So why is it that overall, right-wing terrorism continues to be down-played and gets very little attention? Clearly since 9/11 Islamic terrorism has been of utmost importance to the west, but other risks should not be ignored because of this. Moreover, bearing in mind that right-wing terrorism is a reality and is a danger, how has it been possible to construct the meaning of terrorism in such a way that hyper-exaggerates Islamic terrorism vis-à-vis the far-right?

The explanations below can be linked together under the concept of “Islamophobia” (the fear of Islam), which is the general answer to why the Islamic terrorist threat is being magnified. However, for analytical purposes this concept has been divided into four different categories. This will help us better understand what has led to the repudiation of Islam by the west, but also and in turn, what has led to an extreme fear of terrorism committed by Muslim fundamentalists. As the different academics explain, these have aided to construct Islamic terrorism as the biggest danger that the west faces, whilst neglecting other kinds of terrorism, namely that by the far-right.<sup>63</sup> These four categories will later be analysed and evaluated when looking at how the western media and governments have portrayed Islam (particularly after 9/11) vis-à-vis right-wing terrorism. We will see that all four categories are indeed prevalent.

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<sup>63</sup> Bentley, 4. Simi, 252

This thesis argues that since 9/11, terrorism has been constructed according to the discursive strands below, hence depicting Islamic terrorism as the biggest threat to the west vis-à-vis the far-right, which has indeed been disregarded. It further argues that this has led to an exclusion of the far-right as a form of terrorism and has relabelled extremism instead. This has had serious implications, which will be discussed at a later stage.

## **2.1 Orientalism: “us” vs. “them”**

As mentioned above there are indeed different reasons as to what has led to an exaggeration of the Islamic terrorist threat. This has created a bias against Muslims, which has led to a discriminatory behaviour by western leaders, media outlets and societies. Edward Said’s work on Orientalism is at the core of this, for it shows that the west has always had certain ideas and misconceptions about the Middle East. Orientalism essentially claims that the Middle East is generally seen and portrayed by the west as uncivilised, barbaric, backward, as extremely religious (almost fanatical), and as a region that needs to be educated, through what would seem like white western domination<sup>64</sup>. As both Edward Said and Ziauddin Sardar illustrate, the Middle East in general, and Islam in particular, have been seen through a negative lens and have been depicted as detrimental for the advancement of liberal and forward ideologies and beliefs that is, the opposite to what the west thinks of itself.<sup>65</sup> These ideas are thought to be so engrained in people’s mind that it is difficult to detach oneself from them.

Even today many of these ideas persist, the Middle East continues to be an exotic place, which although attractive and interesting, is different to the west in culture, tradition and beliefs and therefore inferior.<sup>66</sup> A separation is created between “us”/ “we” and the others (i.e. “them”). This separation does not merely represent that they come from a different country or territory,

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<sup>64</sup> Said, 5. Sardar, 2

<sup>65</sup> Said, 1-2, Sardar, 28

<sup>66</sup> Said, 7

but they are inherently different to “us”. Whereas the Middle East is everything that seems bad and immoral, the West is not. It is superior in that it is more forward and more enlightened, hence the things that take place there do not take place in the west.<sup>67</sup> It seems that it meets certain criteria whilst the west does not, and the use of barbaric tactics and indiscriminate violence is one of them.

Historically, Europe’s negative view of Islam worsened when the Arabs started conquering parts of its territory, and they began to fear it. As a result, Islam came “to symbolise terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians” in Said’s words.<sup>68</sup> Said here uses the word *terror* and he is not the only one to do so, Sardar describes the Arab expansion seen by Europeans as a “Present Terror of the World.”<sup>69</sup> In fact, it is here that Orientalism contributes to the exaggerated perception of the Islamic terrorist threat. According to Simi, we focus on Islamic terrorism and encourage a bias against it to purposefully neglect the far-right. In this way, we can state that terrorism is “foreign” and that the cause of it “resides in a Middle Eastern population of exotic others.”<sup>70</sup> Since for long the Middle East has been depicted as violent, it is easy to make a farther connection with terrorism. Islamic fundamentalists, as portrayed by Orientalist ideas, are by nature more savage and violent and it is therefore no surprise that they are prone to use violent means such as terrorism.

Simi however, is not the only one to make this connection. Steven Salaita’s research also showed how much earlier than 9/11, some of the newspapers in the USA already referred to this innate violent trait that is found in Muslims. He quotes Martin Peretz, editor of the *New Republic*, as stating the following “that there is a convulsion in Islam, whose particular

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 59

<sup>69</sup> Sardar, 27

<sup>70</sup> Simi, 252

expression is terror.”<sup>71</sup> In a paper published a year later Salaita reiterates, this time in his own words, the idea that the West, particularly the US, sees violence as being an inherent pathology in the behaviour of Muslims.<sup>72</sup> It seems quite obvious that the notions of Orientalism have formed the way many still see the Middle East. Novels, plays, poems and accounts have helped create the Arab world and the religion of Islam as the opposite of what the West is, and since the west is good, then the Middle East must be bad. In addition, it should be no surprise that Muslims are terrorist, for it seems that they are aggressive and murderous by nature.

## **2.2 The 9/11 effect: new forms of “us” vs. “them”**

The second argument, to an extent intertwined with the above, is the 9/11 effect. This is not just in terms of the devastation and the number of lives lost, which will be discussed in the last (d) explanation, but in terms of the rhetoric that the Bush administration and the American media first set-up, hereby influencing European discourse too, after the attacks. To a certain degree, it can be viewed as new and updated version of Orientalism but perhaps taking it a step further, this is what Salaita suggests in his article *Beyond Orientalism And Islamophobia: 9/11, Anti-Arab Racism, And The Mythos Of National Pride*.<sup>73</sup> There are two ways of evaluating the 9/11 effects, one (perhaps the most important) is by looking at the Bush rhetoric and the media discourse, which portrayed Muslims as bad. The other is by looking at the impact that the event had on the American and later European society.

Many studies and analyses have been conducted on the speeches made by former US President George W. Bush following the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks and key patterns in the wording have been found. Whether implicitly or explicitly Bush establishes another “us” vs. “them”

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<sup>71</sup> Steven Salaita, “Ethnic Identity And Imperative Patriotism: Arab Americans Before And After 9/11”. *College Literature* 32 no2 (2005): 158

<sup>72</sup> Salaita “Beyond Orientalism And Islamophobia,” 260

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 245

scenario, a clearly defined one, illustrated by his speech in September 2001 “Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”<sup>74</sup> Here Bush forces his audience to take sides and establishes the beginning of what would later become a west versus Islam discourse that would prevail for years. In speeches to follow, the words Islam, evil, and terror are present in the same sentence on a regularly, thereby implicitly associating terrorism and violence to the Middle East. Moreover, Bush depicts the terrorists as standing in the way of all those ideas that the west defends, such as democracy and freedom,<sup>75</sup> which enables us once again to construct the image of the uncivilised and backward Middle East. This negative image was cleverly constructed through the use of specific language and by mentioning and referring to it uniformly and in every speech,<sup>76</sup> so that it would become engrained in the media discourse as well as in people’s minds.

Furthermore, Bush is successful at making evil a reality by personifying it that is, evil is no longer something abstract but it is real and is depicted as a person or group of persons such as Saddam Hussein or Osama Bin Laden.<sup>77</sup> This leads others to follow and make the same connection that is, evil can be a person, a person from the Middle East, therefore a Muslim. Once evil has a face, and in this case the face of Islam, the process is contagious and almost unstoppable. If not, then why did countries like the United Kingdom and Spain, decide to join the US in its “war on terror”? After all, the attacks in Madrid and London had not yet taken place. Perhaps they were persuaded, as many, that Muslims were indeed evil and that they posed a real threat to the west.

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<sup>74</sup>George W. Bush “Address To A Joint Session Of Congress And The American People” Speech, Washington D.C., USA. September 20 2001 <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>

<sup>75</sup>George W. Bush “The President’s State Of The Union Address”. Speech, Washington D.C., USA. September 29 2001 <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>

<sup>76</sup> Robert Ivie, “The Rhetoric Of Bush’s War On Evil”. *KB Journal* 1 no1 (2004)

<sup>77</sup> Ekkehard Eggs, “The Production Of Emotions In Political Discourse: The Rhetorical Techniques Of Bush And Obama”. *Version: La Experiencia Emocional Y Sus Razones* 26 no6 (2011): 23



In terms of the effects it had on society, Carol Khawly, as quoted by Salaita in 2006, stated that:

“The horrific attacks of September 11 have had a severe impact on our nation’s traditional openness to immigrants and non-immigrants...immigrants from the Arab or Muslim worlds experienced an unprecedented backlash in the form of hate crimes, discrimination...”<sup>78</sup>

This suggests that after 9/11 the prejudice toward the Muslim community increased. An article published by the CNN in January 2010 also makes reference to the fact that post September 11, there has been an exaggeration of the “Muslim threat”, and even suggests that this fear is unfounded.<sup>79</sup> But this was not just the case in the US, many Muslims in the UK admitted to feeling discriminated not merely by large parts of the British society but by the law itself.<sup>80</sup>

### **2.3 Threat to civilisation: against the western State and values**

The third factor which we see as having contributed to the idea that Islamic terrorism is the biggest and most dangerous threat is the fact that Islam is seen as a civilisational threat. This can be best understood with Huntington’s *The Clash of Civilisations* in mind. He divides the world into a set of societies (or civilisations) and argues that in a post-cold war era, the difference in culture and religion would be the cause of war between societies.<sup>81</sup> Conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims due to cultural and religious differences should therefore not surprise us.<sup>82</sup> Since radical Islamists are seen as embodying a range of ideas and beliefs that go against what the west defends, then it follows that violence arises.

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<sup>78</sup> Salaita, 256

<sup>79</sup> CNN, “Study: Threat Of Muslim-American Terrorism In U.S. Exaggerated” January 6, 2010, <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/US/01/06/muslim.radicalization.study/>

<sup>80</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Radical Islam Rising*. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005):ch2

<sup>81</sup> Huntington, 22-49

<sup>82</sup> Huntington, 32-33

First of all they are a threat to the political institutions and the nation-state concept that the west upholds, for, as Aubrey states, they see this principle as contrary to the “sovereignty of Allah.”<sup>83</sup> Those who profess the Caliphate are against capitalism and in favour of religious autocratic and authoritarian regimes, hence rejecting liberal democracies and secular systems. By actively and publicly calling out for this and making these claims, the west inevitably sees Islamic fundamentalists as directly attacking the foundations of its political ways and institutions. Secondly, these claims, if real, would not only entail a change in the political system, but a change of central western values. Under a Caliphate, notions such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, gender equality and democracy would crumble. Many countries in the Middle East have rejected the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),<sup>84</sup> precisely because in including the above it contradicts Sharia law. A Caliphate dominated world would be empty of these rights, hence Islam is a threat to the west’s traditions.<sup>85</sup>

By looking at Ole Wæver’s definition of securitisation we can understand why the above has led to a magnification of the Islamic terrorist threat. According to Wæver, for something to be considered an existential threat it must represent a danger to the nation’s integrity and sovereignty, and this can be caused by “situations that undermine the rules, norms and institutions that constitute those regimes.”<sup>86</sup> The issue, Wæver proceeds, can only become securitised if the receiving audience (i.e. western society) decides to accept it as a major threat.<sup>87</sup> According to Cesari and Fisher this is in fact what has happened in the West.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Stefan Aubrey, *The New Dimension Of International Terrorism*. (Zürich: Vdf Hochschulverlag an der ETH, 2004): 69

<sup>84</sup> The UDHR was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948

<sup>85</sup> Saudi Arabia and Iran have heavily criticised the UDHR as they saw it as representing “universal rights” understood by westerners and incompatible with Sharia Law

<sup>86</sup> Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, and Jaap H. de Wilde. *Security*. (Boulder [u.a.]: Rienner, 1998):22

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 25

<sup>88</sup> Jocelyne Cesari, 2009. “The Securitisation Of Islam In Europe”. *Challenge: Liberty & Security*, Research Paper no15 (2009):1. Kathryn M. Fisher “From 20Th Century Troubles To 21St Century International Terrorism: Identity, Securitization, And British Counterterrorism From 1968 To 2011”. PHD, The London School of Economics and Political Science (2012).

This whole process, by which Islamic terrorism and the potential threat of it has been constructed in such extraordinary ways is what Cas Mudde calls “the securitisation of everyday life and the Islamisation of security.”<sup>89</sup> He suggests an “obsession” with Islam when talking of security. Mudde and others such as Noam Chomsky have been very critical of what they see as a “double standard” being used (and abused) by western leaders toward the Muslim community when talking of terrorism.<sup>90</sup> Simi, as noted earlier, suggests a direct link between this and the neglect of the far-right.<sup>91</sup>

So, Islamic terrorism is a threat to the state because it seeks to destroy its political institutions and the concept of capitalism. It is a civilisational threat because it rejects ideas like democracy, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and basic human rights. It is therefore no surprise that Islamic terrorists are seen as dangerous, they seem to have come to destroy the west. They continuously call for the establishment of a Caliphate, for a world under Islamic Sharia Law where women remain uneducated and are the property of their husbands, and this, they are prepared to achieve through violent means. The question then is should not all other individuals or groups who call for the same be considered just as much of a threat? Should radical violent Christians and anti-abortionists who believe women should have no rights and who would prefer to live under an authoritarian regime where only white Christians exist, not be a threat to civilisation as well? Perhaps, as Ramalingam reminds us, right-wing terrorism needs to be securitised too.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Cas Mudde, “9/11: More Security, Less Secure”. *Opendemocracy*. September 10, 2011 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/cas-mudde/911-more-security-less-secure>

<sup>90</sup> Travis Gettys, “Noam Chomsky: Charlie Hebdo Outrage Demonstrates West’s Double Standard On Terrorism”. *Raw Story*. January 20, 2015, <http://www.rawstory.com/2015/01/noam-chomsky-charlie-hebdo-outrage-demonstrates-wests-double-standard-on-terrorism/>.

<sup>91</sup> Simi, 252

<sup>92</sup> Ramalingam

## 2.4 Quality and quantity: the spectacle of Islamic terrorism

The last explanation under which the fear of Islamic terrorism is founded is perhaps a more pragmatic and practical one mainly based on hard evidence rather than interpretations. The number of attacks perpetrated in the name of Islam, the number of lives taken by Islamic terrorists, the level of destruction and the show that Islamists “put on”, are what lead people to believe that this is the form of terrorism most threatening to the west. Almost 3000 people died in 9/11 in the worst attack ever on US soil. Only three years later, Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for a number of bombs in Madrid, which killed over 200 people. A year later a similar scene could be seen in London, where over fifty people died after several bombs exploded. The devastation and periodicity of these incidents has clearly caused many to view Islamic terrorism as the main enemy and the main threat.

Moreover, in recent years we have seen a number of smaller attacks committed by home-grown LWs or cells taking place in several European countries. In 2010 a suicide bomber blew himself up in Stockholm, in 2013 a soldier was brutally murdered in London and earlier this year (2015) there was a shooting in Denmark, all committed by Islamists. The viciousness of the attacks, are what instils fear. Lee Rigby, for instance, was murdered in broad daylight. He was run-over by a car, after which the killers attempted to behead him. They then asked passer-byes to record them whilst covered in blood, calling for Jihad and an *eye for an eye*. They have learnt from organisations as ISIS or Al-Qaeda which do not just kill and ensure that others watch. They ensure that it is a sadistic spectacle that creates disproportionate levels of repulsion, and judging by how people see Islamic terrorism, their technique works.<sup>93</sup> With the exception of Anders Breivik, most right-wing terrorists have been unable to instil the levels of

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<sup>93</sup> Yuval N. Harari, “Yuval Noah Harari: The Theatre Of Terror”. *The Guardian*. January 31, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jan/31/terrorism-spectacle-how-states-respond-yuval-noah-harari-sapiens>.

fear that Al-Qaeda does. Breivik himself talked of his admiration for this revolutionary organisation, from which he drew inspiration to plan his attacks.<sup>94</sup> In fact, initially police forces thought that the Norway attacks had been perpetrated by Islamists because of how they were staged.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to the above, we can look at the data published annually by Europol for the period of 2006-2013).<sup>96</sup> Europol keeps a record of all failed, foiled and completed attacks committed by different types of terrorists (i.e. left-wing, right-wing etc.) and the number of people arrested in connection with terrorist activity (see Appendices 1 and 2).<sup>97</sup> Although the information is provided voluntarily by each country, (i.e. data for certain states may be unavailable), the data collected from 2006 until 2013 seems to support the argument that Islamic terrorism poses the biggest threat. Except for 2009, every single year saw either the same or more Islamic than right-wing terrorist attacks in Europe. Additionally, the number of arrests for Islamic terrorism from 2006-2010 was 934, whilst those arrested for right-wing terrorism amounted to 82.<sup>98</sup> Bearing this in mind, it is no surprise that Islamic terrorism is perceived as the largest threat. However, one crucial point must be noted, several Europol reports state the following:

Right-wing extremist violence is a serious, increasing problem in a number of Member States. However, **reporting on right-wing terrorism is random as**

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<sup>94</sup> Enrique Muller, "Breivik: 'Sí, Volvería A Hacerlo'". *El País*. April 17, 2012, [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2012/04/17/actualidad/1334651550\\_554528.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2012/04/17/actualidad/1334651550_554528.html).

<sup>95</sup> Tom Coghlan, "Simultaneous attacks bear the hallmarks of al-Qaeda; Norway; No one admits responsibility but sophisticated nature suggests expert planning" *The Times*. July 23, 2011, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>96</sup> Data for 2014 has not yet been published. In addition the number of states vary according to where the attacks were committed. States where no attacks of any type were prevented or committed are not be included. Tables included in Appendices 1 and 2

<sup>97</sup> "EU Terrorism Situation & Trend Report (Te-Sat)" Europol/Europol.europa.eu. Accessed April 15, 2015, [https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest\\_publications/37](https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest_publications/37).

<sup>98</sup> See Appendix 2.

**right-wing violence and other politically motivated crimes are mainly investigated as right-wing extremism and not as terrorist offences.**<sup>99</sup>

This means that terrorist attacks perpetrated by right-wing individuals, may not show on the data because they are not being categorised as terrorists, but as extremists. This, inevitably forces us to question the accuracy, reliability and most importantly, the bias of the data.

So, if roughly all the data shows that most attacks are committed by Islamists as opposed to far-right terrorists, and that most arrests are in connection with Islamic terrorist activity (financing, propaganda, etc.), and Islamic extremists are better and instilling fear and “putting on a show”, then it would seem rational and obvious to conclude that this is the biggest threat to the west. But is the data accurate?

## **2.5 Relating perceptions to the far-right?**

The issue with all the above mentioned strands in relation to right-wing terrorism, is that they seem not to apply. In the case of Orientalism this seems obvious because, the problem is the culture into which these people were born, or the country where they were raised and educated. White westerners who become extremists were supposedly not brought up in any such environment, so they cannot be all those “repugnant” things that the Arab world embodies. Since white westerners do not grow up in barbaric, backward and inherently violent environments – these are only found apparently in the Middle East – this theory does not apply to them. In the case of the 9/11 effect, the situation is not dissimilar. If terrorism is evil and terrorists are inherently evil then it might be difficult to apply the terrorism label to some; white, middle-class individuals. If the “others” (i.e. Muslims) are evil and therefore terrorists, then giving the same label to a white westerner would come to mean that they are inherently

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<sup>99</sup> Europol, “*EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2007*” (The Hague, Netherlands: Europol,2007): 35 [https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest\\_publications/37](https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest_publications/37). (bold for emphasis, not in the original)

evil too. Yet, this cannot be because if “we” are with Bush then “we” are not with the terrorists and so “we” are good. Those that are like “us” are more difficult to tag as evil whilst it is much easier for those that are alien to be labelled so.

Apparently, the third assumption, which sees Islamic terrorism as an existential threat to civilisation does not apply to the far-right either. Far-right individuals, as noted before, are born into open, democratic and multicultural societies which value freedom of religion or speech. They do not call for a world under Islamic Sharia law, and hence can be said to not pose a threat. Two critiques must be made: firstly, that these individuals are a threat to those values too in so much as they oppose them. Breivik was anti-Muslim and was against multiculturalism and Mangs and McGee hated immigrants. This demonstrates that they are against what the west says to defend, and that it does not solely apply to Muslims. The second point to raise is that, the narrative of many radical Christian groups is actually parallel to that of Islamic fundamentalists. The Christian Identity Movement (CIM) for instance, calls for an Armageddon and a rebirth, where the governing system will change and where the white race will rule.<sup>100</sup> This is essentially what the Caliphate is, only those ruling are different. One could perhaps argue that the amount of right-wing terrorists who profess such ideas are few, and that it is normally groups rather than LWs which believe in a complete change of the system.

Finally, and with regards to the theatrics, one can argue that attacks perpetrated by Islamic extremists have been more sadistic and atrocious than right-wing ones. We have witnessed men being burnt alive, or men being beheaded in broad day light, all by Islamists. Perhaps it is true that right-wing radicals have been more discreet or have been less attention seeking. But even here, one could argue that the situation is changing. The Breivik attacks were on par with any Islamic attack, shooting at teenagers in cold blood and detonating a bomb in

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<sup>100</sup> George Hough, “American Terrorism And The Christian Identity Movement: A Proliferation Threat From Non-State Actors,” *Int. J. Appl. Psychoanal. Studies* 3 no1 (2006): 83

central Oslo. As noted earlier, he himself suggested that Al-Qaeda had been an inspiration to him.<sup>101</sup> So yes, generally and broadly all strands seem to excuse white westerners, but when looking at it closely one can see that there are grey areas too and that in some cases these assumptions, can apply to right-wing terrorists too.

The interpretations described above, show how different experts have found different reasons in order to explain why Islamic terrorism is being depicted the way it is, while right-wing terrorism is not. Said's account of Orientalism would blame the long-standing misconceptions of the west vis-à-vis the Middle East and the Arab world. The post 9/11 rhetoric could be interpreted as a more intense version of Orientalism, where Islam becomes a synonym of evil. From there we move on to the civilisational threat that Islam poses to the west in terms of culture, religion and values. Finally the data and theatrics, which seem to show that the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalists is not just a perception, but a reality. These four explanations, especially when combined, are indeed what has aided in constructing the Islamic terrorism as the greatest threat.

## 2.6 Discourse Analysis

As has been mentioned previously, one of the main goals of this thesis is to show that the theories described above are what has led to the exaggeration of the Islamic terrorism threat. To see how certain images are created and constructed, the narratives and depictions in the main sources of information for the public must be observed. They are what ultimately shapes and influences the opinion of the broader public. It is precisely for this reason that the appropriate method for achieving this paper's goal is that of analysing and evaluating the discourse. Having previously analysed in detail what the four different explanations, namely: (a) Orientalism, (b) The 9/11 effect, (c) Civilisational threat, (d) Quality and quantity: the

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<sup>101</sup> Muller, "Breivik: 'Sí, Volvería A Hacerlo'"



spectacle of terrorism entail and what the characteristics are, we can move on to the process of evaluating how prevalent these are in western discourse. This method for analysing will not just show that these messages and portrayals are very present, but also how they may help in down-playing other threats and the implications thereafter. In particular, this thesis seeks to demonstrate that the existence of these discourses are what makes the west neglect right-wing terrorism. Investigating how the media and politicians report and depict Islamic terrorism vis-à-vis the far-right is therefore the appropriate method.

### *Selecting Sources*

The analysis focuses especially on newspapers and written press, not only for its broad access, but also because many read the press, whether it be printed or online. This means that they have a strong influence on how people see certain situations and figures, as they are guided by what is reported and shown to them. In order to make the analysis of the discourse more balanced as well as less predictable, those media outlets which are known to be very radical in their views (be it from the right or the left) or which adhere to some sort of extremist ideology were excluded. However, the newspapers selected range from centre-left, to centre-right and include liberal and conservative so as to ensure a wide variety of ideas and most importantly, to see if there existed a pattern in the depiction of Islamic terrorism regardless of political ideology. Another important criterion for the selection of sources, was that these be widely read newspapers or tabloids, because these are the ones that, to some extent, influence larger sections of the population.

In addition to sources such as *The Times*, *The Independent*, *El País*, *El Periódico*, *Le Figaro*, *Agence France Press* or *the Norway Post*, some relevant government reports such as the Norwegian report on the Breivik case were evaluated too.<sup>102</sup> Some of the counter-terrorist

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<sup>102</sup> *Rapport Fra 22.Juli -Kommissjonen*. Oslo: NOU August 13 2012  
<http://www.sintef.no/globalassets/project/nexus/01--report-22-july-gjorv-commision->

strategies published by governments and accessible to the general public have also been consulted, as they too can help us understand how the different types of terrorism are being viewed and portrayed.

### *Selecting countries*

Unfortunately, it has not been possible due to time constraints to evaluate all those countries deemed to be western. This thesis will focus on four western European countries, namely France, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom. These have, naturally, not been selected at random but rather because they met a set of conditions that were linked to the issue being discussed. Firstly, all these countries are considered to be western nations, and since the goal is to look at the discourse in the west, this choice seems obvious. It was important that they were democratic to ensure that press and speech were mostly free and uncensored<sup>103</sup>. The third and perhaps most important requirement was that they be countries which have experienced both Islamic and far-right terrorism (whether the attacks were successful or not) in the last 15 years (i.e. since 9/11). The reason for this was that in having experienced both, the author believed a more balanced and informed reporting would exist. Finally, and for practical reasons, they had to be countries which either had English versions of their main media outlets and press (as with Norway), or were in a language that the author could understand to a high level (as with English, Spanish and French). Neumann argues that familiarity with the culture, when undertaking this type of analysis is not only useful, but necessary<sup>104</sup> and the author has resided or spent long periods of time in France, Spain and the UK.

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[summary english version.pdf](#). An investigation on law enforcement reaction was conducted by the Norwegian Government after the terrorist attacks by Breivik on July 22, 2011.

<sup>103</sup> Spain post-Franco era

<sup>104</sup> Iver Neumann, 'Discourse Analysis'. In *Qualitative Methods In International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008):64

Consulting all these sources for all these countries was going to be very challenging given the time constraints and word limit, so in order to delimit the number of texts but still keep the information to be analysed relevant and useful, a decision was made to look at how these sources reported key attacks not just in their own countries but also in others. Reporting in post-attack environments is in fact very relevant, as it highlights the media's immediate reaction, and it has a greater impact on the audience who are more sensitive and susceptible to it, when the event is recent. The incidents selected are either successful or failed attacks perpetrated by both Islamic and right-wing lone wolf terrorists. This of course is in line with the objectives of this thesis which looks specifically at both types of terrorism, specifically in the lone wolf context. The incidents looked at include: the assassination of two immigrants by Peter Mangs in Sweden, an Islamic suicide bomber in Stockholm in December 2010, the attacks in Norway by right-wing fanatic Anders Breivik in July 2011, the murder of soldier Lee Rigby in London in May 2013 by two Islamic extremists, the arrest of far-right soldier Ryan McGee for building a bomb in November 2013 and the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January 2015 by Islamic fundamentalists.<sup>105</sup>

It must be noted that all the events looked at were those perpetrated by LW's or small cells, so as to follow the argument put forward earlier, that it is a trend, and that it is widely used by right-wing terrorists. Furthermore, the coming section will reveal the findings to which the analysis of the different sources and different countries led to, after which further conclusions will be reached.

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<sup>105</sup> Listed in chronological order.

### Chapter 3 – Depictions of Islamic terrorism vis-à-vis the far-right

As mentioned in the previous chapter the author engaged in the endeavour of analysing the portrayal of Islamic terrorism by western media and western governments, so as to demonstrate that the exaggeration of the radical Muslim threat can indeed be justified through a number of theories that experts have developed through time. This analysis also shows that these reasons help explain why right-wing terrorism is being neglected and even down-played.

This chapter will go over the results and findings that the research process has led to. A brief explanation of specific terminology and its meaning is included to clarify those expressions which can lead to confusing or ambiguous interpretations. The larger part of the chapter will of course focus on the results and findings themselves, which will be divided into sections so as to facilitate the task of the reader. Each of the four theories will be dealt with separately and for each an attempt will be made to show, based on the data and sources retrieved and evaluated, whether it is particularly prevalent. The effects (if any) that it has on the depiction of far-right extremism will also be indicated. There will be a few paragraphs with some general comments on the findings after which, the findings will be summarised briefly, before giving an overview of what the results mean and what the implications and consequences are. It is worth noting the following, when referring to political inclination or affiliation in this section, the reader should understand it to mean the different parties which politicians belong to, or which the different media outlets support or more closely adhere to. General remarks will apply to all four countries, when referring to a specific state or source, the state or source in question will be alluded to.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Several translations will follow in the next section, note that all were done by the author unless otherwise indicated.

### 3.1 Orientalism

Looking at the rhetoric in European media, we find clear evidence and good examples of the Orientalist view on the surface of the language and the deeper meaning of certain phrases too. In terms of the more obvious aspects, we see that in general most newspapers describe terrorist attacks perpetrated by radical Muslims, and the perpetrators themselves, as barbaric. This term is consistently used by politicians and the journalists themselves. For instance, after the *Charlie Hebdo* and the Lee Rigby attacks, David Cameron was quoted on the Spanish press describing the event as a “barbaric act”.<sup>107</sup> Islamic extremists are also regularly referred to as religious fanatics, both the *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* used this term when referring to Al-Abdaly, the Swedish suicide bomber.<sup>108</sup> Both these terms (barbaric and fanatic) are rarely used when speaking of right-wing terrorism, in fact the author was unable to find any examples where they were said to be barbaric and only one, where Breivik was called a fanatic. These terms of course, are directly connected to the claims that Sardar and Said make in their Orientalist theory.

There is also reference, whether explicit or implicit, to the fact that the Middle East is a backward place with old-fashioned and outdated traditions and beliefs. When reporting the *Charlie Hebdo* events, *The Sun* makes clear remarks to that effect, stating that the perpetrators are “throw-backs from the Middle Ages” who “live by an outdated code”.<sup>109</sup> The *Daily Mail* is

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<sup>107</sup> El Mundo, “Cameron: ‘Es Un Acto De Barbarie Espantoso” May 25, 2013, <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/05/22/internacional/1369249294.html>. El Pais, “Hollande: ‘Ninguna Barbarie Terrorista Podrá Con La Libertad”” January 8, 2015, [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2015/01/07/actualidad/1420636136\\_108346.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2015/01/07/actualidad/1420636136_108346.html).

<sup>108</sup> Anthony France, and Simon Hughes. “UK Bomber Called His Son Osama”. *The Sun*. December 14, 2010, <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/3275023/UK-bomber-called-his-son-Osama.html>.

<sup>109</sup> The Sun, “The Islamist Barbarians Sought To Crush Freedom Of Speech Yesterday. Last Night’s Moving Protests In Paris And London Showed It Will Never Happen” January 2015, [http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/sun\\_says/6248518/The-Sun-Says.html](http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/sun_says/6248518/The-Sun-Says.html).

perhaps less explicit, when it notes how shocking it is that such an incident would take place in a civilised, modern European society,<sup>110</sup> thereby suggesting that such situations only arise in places that are the opposite of what Europe is (uncivilised, backward etc.) that is, the Middle East.

This last idea is one that is widespread among all the countries analysed. In fact, when describing their surprise and incredulity at certain terrorist attacks, including those perpetrated by right-wing extremists, we read lines such as “this looks like Baghdad” in the aftermath of Breivik shooting in Utøya.<sup>111</sup> Relating death, violence and consequently terrorism to the Middle East is a recurring pattern, *La Vanguardia* compares the Lee Rigby attack to the sort of terrorism that one sees in some of Africa’s worse conflicts,<sup>112</sup> and AFP is even more specific and insists that incidents of this nature are something one witnesses in places like Pakistan, Iraq or Somalia.<sup>113</sup> This obviously leads us back to the Middle East being depicted as a violent place, which of course leads us straight back to Edward Said. The orientalist approach seems to suggest that the west believes that Muslims are violent by nature, that it is an inherent trait of their character. An example of this was found in *The Telegraph*, where the journalist, when discussing the attacks in Paris in January 2015 and describing the perpetrators, argues that “jihadists kill because that is what they do”, he then goes on to say that it does not matter who one is (a child, a journalist), jihadist just kill.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Daily Mail, “Daily Mail comment: A Murderous Attack On Western Freedoms” January 8, 2015, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2901368/DAILY-MAIL-COMMENT-murderous-attack-Western-freedoms.html>.

<sup>111</sup> Gemma Saura, “Terror En Noruega”. *La Vanguardia*. July 23, 2011, <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2011/07/24/pagina-6/87243885/pdf.html?search=oslo>.

<sup>112</sup>Rafael Ramos, “Nunca Estareis Seguros”. *La Vanguardia*. May 23, 2013, <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2013/05/23/pagina-3/91958834/pdf.html>.

<sup>113</sup>AFP, “World leaders, media groups condemn ‘barbaric’ Paris attack.” January 7, 2015, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Inacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Inacademic).

<sup>114</sup>Padraig Reidy, “We Must Stop Blaming Ourselves For Islamist Terror”. *The Telegraph*. January 7, 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11330479/We-must-stop-blaming-ourselves-for-Islamist-terror.html>.

There is undoubtedly a strong reflection of what Said and Sardar argue, in the western media. Some sources may be more explicit than others, but in some way, they all portray the Middle East and the Arab society as Said already suggested in 1979. This also helps in creating a negative vision of Muslims that entire societies are presented with. It also means that those that are not “different”, namely right-wing extremists are not portrayed similarly.

### 3.2 The 9/11 effect

In terms of the post 9/11 rhetoric, there is solid evidence of this too in several forms. As with Orientalism there is a clear intention to separate the west from the terrorists (us vs them) and this can be done by accusing the attackers of committing acts against “us”, suggesting an attack not just on the victims but on the entire nation and even the whole of the western society. When Al-Abdaly blew himself up in Stockholm, AFP reported Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* described the event as “an attack on us all” (i.e. “us” as in “us the west”)<sup>115</sup>. *La Vanguardia* does it in what may seem like a more subtle way, the headline after the *Charlie Hebdo* incidents read “freedom or terror”<sup>116</sup>, here we find similarities with Bush’s “you are either with us or with the terrorists”, again “us” vs. “them” narrative. Following America’s narrative, French newspaper *Le Figaro* claims that “France is at war with terrorism,”<sup>117</sup> this resonates with Bush’s war on terror in 2001. Lastly, another form of “them” appears, where not only are these people different, but they want to attack us because of this. This was very obvious in the Al-Abdaly case because the suicide bomber blew himself up in a shopping centre on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December, a time where people would be doing their Christmas shopping. This aspect was to an extent, blown out of proportion by both the *Daily Mail* and

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<sup>115</sup> AFP, “Swedish bomber planned Christmas carnage: investigators” December 13, 2010, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>116</sup> *La Vanguardia*, “Libertad O Terror” January 8, 2015, <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/2015/01/08/pagina-18/94846263/pdf.html>.

<sup>117</sup> *Le Figaro*, “La France ‘En Guerre Contre Le Terrorism’” January 9, 2015 <http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2015/01/09/97001-20150109FILWWW00082-la-france-en-guerre-contre-le-terrorisme.php>.

*The Sun* claiming that it was the “first of Xmas terror wave” and a “...warning that other bombers are planning Christmas massacres follows a pattern of previous Islamist attacks”<sup>118</sup> so that “Xmas shoppers” would be targeted.<sup>119</sup> This of course is not merely an attack on people, but an attack on a festivity cherished by most westerners. The target, here is a ‘peaceful’ celebration which westerners adhere to.

Another key aspect of the 9/11 effect is the ease with which the word evil is used when referring to Islamic terrorists, and here Islamic should be emphasised, because the research revealed that right-wing individuals were hardly ever described as evil. They were naturally given other negative adjectives and were certainly not depicted as good, but they were not evil. The British press in particular seemed to be very fond of the term, *The Sun* for instance described Al-Abdaly as a “hate-filled”<sup>120</sup> individual and when talking about the assassination of Lee Rigby referred to it as the “epicentre of evil”.<sup>121</sup> If this were not enough, after the attacks in Paris it states that Muslims “must steer their kids away from evil”<sup>122</sup>. These quotes, and in particular the last one seem to insinuate that if not stopped, Muslim children have a tendency towards evil. If *The Sun* is perhaps a tabloid known for its controversial and politically incorrect comments, we need only look at other sources to see the same pattern. Both *The Times* and *The Independent* use the word evil too when referring to Lee Rigby’s murderers, “easy to remember that terrorism is evil”<sup>123</sup> or the killer “had a look of pure evil”.<sup>124</sup> Moreover and interestingly

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<sup>118</sup> Daily Mail, "Stockholm bomb 'first of Christmas terror wave'" December 16, 2010, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>119</sup> The Sun, "Sweden suicide bomber from UK; Xmas shoppers targeted. Security chiefs to probe fanatic dad's past." December 13, 2010, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>120</sup> The Sun, "Sweden suicide bomber from UK".

<sup>121</sup> Stephen Moyes, "Epicentre Of Evil". *The Scottish Sun*. May, 2013, <http://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/scotsol/homepage/4940294/Cleric-Killer-my-pupil-but-cops-wont-nick-him.html>.

<sup>122</sup> The Sun, "The Islamist Barbarians"

<sup>123</sup> The Times, "After Woolwich The Murder Of Drummer Lee Rigby Was Despicable. The Response, By All Of Us, Should Ensure That It Was Also Futile" May 24, 2013, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/leaders/article3773587.ece>.

<sup>124</sup> Paul Peachey, "Lee Rigby Murder Trial: Killer 'Had Look Of Pure Evil As He Hacked Body'" *The Independent*. December 2, 2013, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/killer-of-gunner-lee-rigby-had-look-of-pure-evil-as-he-hacked-body-8978725.html>.



enough, we do not have to associate this terminology with Bush, or even Tony Blair, since the AFP quotes even US President Obama referring to the *Hebdo* attacks as evil. Finally, AFP and the Spanish *El País*, indicate that the cause of this evilness and radicalisation, lies on the fact that Lee Rigby's murderer went from being a Christian to being Muslim.<sup>125</sup> This seems to suggest yet again, that it is Islam that is evil.

It goes without saying that the 9/11 effects strand is present in discourse of western media, especially in that of Britain. The Norwegian press seemed a bit more cautious in their choice of words, but the Spanish media was more in line with the UK one. All in all however, the strand is present and mainly when referring to Islamic extremists as opposed to those of the far-right. They, apparently, are many things but not evil.

### 3.3 Threat to civilisation

With regards to Islamic terrorism as being portrayed as a threat to (western) civilisation, we find a match too. Most of the sources observed an inclination to depict Islamic terrorism as a threat to the western concept of the nation-state and western values. Some reports referred to it as a threat to the state in a more physical way. For example *The Telegraph*, when narrating the *Charlie Hebdo* incident used the following headline “Want to see what a 'threat to our freedom' looks like? Turn on your TV” as well as “war on freedom”<sup>126</sup> and the *Daily Mail* joined in saying it was “a murderous attacks on western freedoms”.<sup>127</sup> All of these seem to indicate that it is through physical violence, and the physical extermination of westerners that Islamic fundamentalists see Islam as prevailing. This is too what *The Independent* suggested

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<sup>125</sup> Patricia Tubella, “Dos Islamistas Británicos, Culpables Del Asesinato Del Soldado Rigby”. *El País*. December 19, 2013, [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2013/12/19/actualidad/1387464323\\_278918.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2013/12/19/actualidad/1387464323_278918.html).

<sup>126</sup> Dan Hodges, “Charlie Hebdo Attack: Want To See What A ‘Threat To Our Freedom’ Looks Like? Turn On Your TV”. *The Telegraph*. January 7, 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11330649/Want-to-see-what-a-threat-to-our-freedom-looks-like-Turn-on-your-TV.html>.

<sup>127</sup> Daily Mail, “DAILY MAIL COMMENT: A Murderous Attack”

after the murder of Lee Rigby, that the UK security services had long been fighting a battle against Islamic terror, and this seems to have been a physical one.<sup>128</sup>

There seems to be a fear of Islamic culture and belief taking over and infiltrating the western way of life. Mazen Darwish, a Syrian journalist imprisoned in Damascus, stated that we (the west) are “finding ourselves the main victims of the obscurantist ideology now infiltrating our homes and our cities”.<sup>129</sup> Apart from the fact that he victimises the west and portrays it as defenceless, he talks about Islam spreading and taking over entire cities. This seems alarming, and signals that we should be weary of this force which wants to take over the west.

However, the message that the media most adamantly send is that Islamic terrorism is a threat to western values and norms be they democracy, freedom of speech etc. Some seem to link the west with Christian values too, even implying that Christianity is peaceful whereas Islam is not. After Lee Rigby was murdered, it was revealed that the killer’s family was Christian and that he had converted, AFP seems surprised as to why the killer turned out the way he did when his mother “raised him as a Christian with good manners and respect” and the headline of that article makes clear reference to the fact that he was a Muslim convert.<sup>130</sup> Other information sources follow this example and declare that those Christian values instilled in the killer disappeared and gave way to disgusting outcomes.<sup>131</sup> This seems to infer that had he not converted, he would have not become a killer. Even putting religion aside, the cultural disparities are reflected upon in the discourse within sources in all four countries stating that

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<sup>128</sup> Kim Sengupta, "Sickening, Deluded And Unforgivable: Horrific Attack Brings Terror To London's Streets". *The Independent*. May 23, 2013, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/sickening-deluded-and-unforgivable-horrific-attack-brings-terror-to-londons-streets-8627647.html>.

<sup>129</sup>Reidy, “We Must Stop”

<sup>130</sup> AFP, "London attacker: Muslim convert from Nigerian Christian family" May 23, 2013, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Inacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Inacademic).

<sup>131</sup> Cahal Milmo, “Family: A Strict And Loving Upbringing-But Then The Teenage Michael Adebolajo Went Off The Rails”. *The Independent*. May 23, 2013, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/the-family-a-strict-and-loving-upbringing---but-then-the-teenage-michael-adebolajo-went-off-the-rails-8630177.html>.

the attacks in Paris were an attack on values such as freedom of speech, democracy and openness.<sup>132</sup> *The Daily Mail* summarises the meaning of the above perfectly when it claims that the attack “was targeted at one of the very foundations of the Western way of life”, adding that this makes the attack even worse<sup>133</sup>. What the above quotes highlight is that Islamic terrorism is here to counter western culture, hence it is no surprise that people fear it so much.

Indeed AFP conveyed the ideas that the two civilisations are different and, from the Islamic fundamentalist perspective, incompatible, which is why they target secular societies who ridicule and mock their beliefs and symbols. It is not difficult to see, how this discourse reflects Huntington’s idea of a *Clash of Civilisations*. The media consistently depicts Islamic terrorists and even Islam as being incompatible with western norms and culture.

### 3.4 Quantity and Quality

As for the last assumption, which states that the numbers and theatrics of Islamic terrorism speak for themselves, for they seem to succeed at instilling fear within the population, there is evidence of it too. Maybe the evidence is not as obvious or concluding as that which was observed for the other strands, but it is present nonetheless. The Breivik case is a perfect example: Anders Breivik detonated a car bomb in Oslo killing eight people and then proceeded to the island of Utøya, where dressed as a police man, to inspire a false sense of trust, shot sixty-nine people in cold blood.<sup>134</sup> As soon as it took place the worldwide media accused Islamic fundamentalist (possibly Al-Qaeda) for the attacks, which they thought was a revenge for the publication of some cartoons of Muhammad the prophet. Norwegian online newspaper

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<sup>132</sup> Roy Greenslade, “What The UK National Newspapers Said About The Charlie Hebdo Attack”. *The Guardian*. January 8 2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2015/jan/08/what-the-uk-national-newspapers-said-about-the-charlie-hebdo-attack>.

<sup>133</sup> Daily Mail, “DAILY MAIL COMMENT: A Murderous Attack”

<sup>134</sup> Tony Paterson, “Terror Returns To Hit Norway” *The Independent*. July 23 2011 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/terror-returns-to-hit-norway-2319030.html>.

*The Foreigner*, for example, asked the question “Is this Norway’s 9/11?”<sup>135</sup> Experts agreed that the *modus operandi* resembled that of other attacks by Muslim radicals, such as the Al-Abdaly bombing in Stockholm.<sup>136</sup> *The Times* even suggested that it bore the hallmarks of Al-Qaeda due to the careful planning and sophisticated nature of the attack.<sup>137</sup> What all of this means, is that an attack of those proportions was automatically thought to have been committed by radical Muslims because that is how they normally thought to act.

A further example of this was when *Le Figaro* reported the death of an elderly woman in London who had been found beheaded in her home<sup>138</sup>. This article had an automatic connection with terrorism and claimed that UK authorities and citizens thought it could potentially be an Islamic terrorist attack. The hints that led to that conclusion, ridiculous as they may seem, were that a year earlier Lee Rigby had been assassinated in London and the killers had tried to behead him. Eventually the entire article turned into a discussion about Islamic terrorism and nothing more was said about the woman.<sup>139</sup> What this demonstrates is the level of trauma that some sadistic events have and the constant fear of societies that these will repeat themselves. Islamists have managed to create this sense of fear.

Moreover, most sources also reported that in Norway the population although shocked, was not that surprised. They had seen what had been happening around the world (i.e. New York, Madrid and London), and knew that at some point it could come to them too.<sup>140</sup> This is because 9/11 as well as the Madrid and London bombings are still fresh in people’s minds, the

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<sup>135</sup>John Price, “Britain Reacts To Oslo Attack” *The Foreigner*. July 22, 2011, <http://theforeigner.no/pages/news/britain-reacts-to-oslo-attack/>.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid

<sup>137</sup> Coghlan, "Simultaneous attacks"

<sup>138</sup> Le Figaro, “Une Femme De 82 Ans Décapitée à Londres” September 4, 2014, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2014/09/04/97001-20140904FILWWW00422-une-femme-de-82-ans-decapitee-a-londres.php>.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>140</sup>Paul Harris, “Norway's 9/11: At Least 80 Feared Dead In Double Attack On Norwegian Capital And Holiday Island”. *Daily Mail*. July 24, 2011, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2017902/Norway-attacks-At-80-feared-dead-double-attack-Oslo-Utoya.html>.

number of deaths and the degree of devastation traumatised entire societies. This is what Islamic terrorists have managed to achieve that right-wing ones have not. To instil the permanent fear of an attack that can happen anywhere and at any time. Hence, the violent and vicious nature of certain attacks, and the fact that they seem to repeat themselves has led to a degree of fear which makes societies over-exaggerate and misrepresent the danger that Islamic terrorists present.

### **3.5 Relating depictions to the far-right?**

So how does this relate to the far-right? Where does it leave it? The answer is quite simple, there is not much room here for the far-right. As noted earlier, in terms of the Orientalist approach, it is not possible to create a white-westerner as the “other”, he/she has not been born in those countries which are violent and backward and so does not meet the criteria. Yet in doing this, we neglect far-right individuals and give them less attention, or what is worse, when they commit barbaric act, we initially blame others (i.e. Islamists) for it, or they fail to accuse them of terrorism. With regards to the 9/11 effect we see how the adjective evil is easily given to Islamic terrorists but not to far-right extremists. This is not to say that white supremacists are not described in ways that have negative connotations, but they are not described as evil. Since Bush used this term regularly to describe Al-Qaeda terrorist, it seems that only Islamists are worthy of it. The problem with this is that it means that right-wing extremists will not be seen as being as dangerous and bad, for they are not evil.

As for right-wing terrorism posing a civilisational threat, there is no reference to that. Following Huntington’s argument, this seems reasonable because right-wing extremists are westerners and so belong to the same civilisation, they cannot pose a threat. However, Breivik’s killing spree was motivated by his opposition to multiculturalism, a value that the west says to uphold, which make one wonder whether he was not posing a threat to western values too. Yet,

none of the sources refer to these individuals as posing such a threat. For the last explanation dealing with the spectacle of terrorism, the implications for the right-wing are clear too. They have not been able to instil within societies, a constant fear of large and sadistic attacks, this is why Breivik is somewhat of an outlier, and yet even after Breivik, people still fear Islamists more than they fear the right-wing.

### 3.6 Further findings

Overall the analysis revealed some general trends which I would like to point out. Firstly, in terms of when and how events were reported. Arrests and acts committed by right-wing terrorists (except Breivik) were rarely reported outside the country where they took place. British soldier Ryan McGee was arrested after police found a home made nail-bomb in his room alongside posters of Hitler, videos of beheadings under a swastika and other weapons.<sup>141</sup> This incident was not reported by any of the newspapers for France, Norway and Spain. In fact, Spain only reported this a year later, when McGee was sentenced to two years in prison.<sup>142</sup> Moreover, the largest British newspapers did not report the event until five days after it had occurred, even though the police had released details, for the local newspaper for Manchester reported the incident on the same day.

This pattern of ignoring right-wing incidents is obvious again in the Peter Mangs case. Mangs was accused and convicted for the murder of two people in Malmo, Sweden (police think him responsible for more). Regardless of these acts the international media thought it unimportant. In fact the Spanish press only reported it on several sports newspapers long after the attacks had taken place. The reason for the media attention, was that Mangs revealed in his

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<sup>141</sup> Lindsey German, "Two-Tier Terrorism". *Morning Star*. December 7, 2014, [http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-4d40-Two-tier-terrorism#.VUPmCZP\\_qYf](http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-4d40-Two-tier-terrorism#.VUPmCZP_qYf).

<sup>142</sup> El Confidencial,. "Cárcel Para Un Soldado Británico De Ultraderecha Por Fabricar Una Bomba" November 28, 2014, [http://www.elconfidencial.com/ultima-hora-en-vivo/2014-11-28/carcel-para-un-soldado-britanico-de-ultraderecha-por-fabricar-una-bomba\\_431690/](http://www.elconfidencial.com/ultima-hora-en-vivo/2014-11-28/carcel-para-un-soldado-britanico-de-ultraderecha-por-fabricar-una-bomba_431690/)

memoirs that he had wanted to murder football player Zlatan Ibrahimović.<sup>143</sup> The UK instead mostly spoke of him after the Breivik attacks, because he mentioned Mangs in his manifesto and described him as a fellow soldier.<sup>144</sup> Instead, all incidents looked at involving Islamic extremists seemed to be reported immediately by both national and international press. Furthermore, when the cases of right-wing terrorists or suspects were reported they were given half a page and were not found on the first pages of the newspaper. The *Charlie Hebdo* bombings instead had six pages dedicated to it in Spanish newspaper *El Periódico*, the Mangs case had only a small section of a page in both *AS* and *Sport.es*. Perhaps, as mentioned earlier this is because the number of deaths generally caused by Islamic fundamentalists is higher, or because of the show they “put on”, which gets people’s attention (i.e. killing many at once), yet Mangs had the blood of many on his hands. By not reporting these events equally, the media already sends the message that one is more important than the other, and that right-wing terrorism is not as much of an issue.

Another problem to be noted is the language that was generally used by the media. Firstly, whenever the individual is a European or white- westerner far-right extremist, they suggest that he might be mentally unstable, or might have some kind of psychological disorder. *El País* for instance spoke of Breivik’s “schizophrenic personality,”<sup>145</sup> whilst the *Daily Mail* called him a “madman”<sup>146</sup> and *Agence France Presse* (AFP) states that Mangs suffered from Asperger’s disease<sup>147</sup> and that the police were taking his handicap into account<sup>148</sup>. This we do

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<sup>143</sup> AS, “Un Psicopata Revela Que Quiso Asesinar A Ibrahimovic.” May 15, 2015, [http://futbol.as.com/futbol/2015/05/10/internacional/1431272437\\_471248.html](http://futbol.as.com/futbol/2015/05/10/internacional/1431272437_471248.html).

<sup>144</sup> Daniel Fisher, “Norway Killer Anders Behring Breivik Trial: Day Two Live” *The Telegraph*. April 17, 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/norway/9208311/Norway-killer-Anders-Behring-Breivik-trial-day-two-live.html>.

<sup>145</sup> Muller, “Breivik: ‘Si, Volvería A Hacerlo.’” (Translated)

<sup>146</sup> Daily Mail, “Pictured: The Blond Norwegian, 32, Arrested Over 'Holiday Island Massacre' And Linked To Oslo Car Bomb Blasts” January 24, 2012, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2017709/Anders-Behring-Breivik-arrested-holiday-island-massacre.html#ixzz3acHO3OxN>

<sup>147</sup> Asperger is a form of autism

<sup>148</sup> Agence France Presse (AFP), “Suspected racist sniper remanded in custody in Sweden.” November 9 2010, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

not see in any of the cases researched which involved Islamic fundamentalists. Their sanity was never questioned. Indeed most sources seemed quite reluctant to call any right-wing extremist a terrorist, except for Breivik. They are normally referred to as murderers or perpetrators of the attacks or even, as with Mangs “racist sniper”, but rarely a terrorist.<sup>149</sup> Muslim extremists on the other hand were always called terrorists and a reference to their religion was always made, AFP says “Islamist attackers” or “Muslim killer”.<sup>150</sup> Only in one instance was the religious affiliation of any of the white supremacist attackers mentioned and that was when *El País* called Breivik a “Christian fundamentalist fanatic.”<sup>151</sup> Finally in terms of the language the emphasis that the western media put on describing (or constructing) western nations as peaceful, open and happy places is worth mentioning. This was particularly obvious when the Islamic terror attacks took place in nations as Sweden, France or Norway, which were constantly defined as peace-loving and open societies<sup>152</sup>. This of course leaves room for the creation of the opposite that is, the peace-hating and backward terrorists.

Last is the tendency of governments to focus on Islamic terrorism and to insist that it is a priority. The counter-terrorism strategy for the UK states exactly this, and the MI6 homepage does the same.<sup>153</sup> The first thing anyone will read upon opening either, is how Islamic terrorism is the biggest threat and the top priority. The message is clear. The Norwegian government published a report in August 2012 stating that Breivik could have been stopped and suggesting that perhaps law enforcement were looking elsewhere and missed some crucial hints.<sup>154</sup> This implies that Muslim radicals had been the top priority too.

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> AFP., "Muslim killer of British soldier in London gets life sentence." February 26, 2014, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic). AFP., "Islamist attackers 'were known to British agents'." May 23, 2013, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>151</sup> Muller, “Breivik: ‘Si, Volvería A Hacerlo’ (Translated)

<sup>152</sup> AFP., “Norway mourns 92 victims of ‘hell on paradise island.’” July 23, 2011, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic). El País., “Noruega En Datos” July 22, 2011, [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2011/07/22/actualidad/1311285611\\_850215.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2011/07/22/actualidad/1311285611_850215.html).

<sup>153</sup> *Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST):4* and “Counter Terrorism – SIS (MI6)”

<sup>154</sup> *Rapport Fra 22.Juli –Kommissjonen*, 11,16



The findings above clearly demonstrate, that these four assumptions are present in the discourse of western media, and that terrorism has been constructed in accordance to them. The way certain comments are phrased show a connection with Orientalism where Muslims terrorist are depicted as inherently violent, as backward and barbaric. We also see a connection with the post 9/11 effect, sometimes very explicitly, where Islamic terrorists and their acts are constantly referred to as evil. Also present are comments and judgements on the differences in culture and how religion and difference in norms are a cause of concern. This of course leads to the idea of civilisations clashing with each other. Finally, we see the link to the spectacle of Islamic terrorism and how people have come to belief that it is more violent and brutal than others, (perhaps because they succeed at “putting on show”) and hence the fear of it is extreme. Whether one is more prevalent than the other is difficult to say, it is obviously the combination of them all which helps depict Islamic terrorists as a much bigger threat. Moreover, the effect that this has on right-wing terrorists is also clear. The research and analysis showed that they are not portrayed in the same way, that they are not seen as evil and that they are also not seen as a threat to western culture and norms even when their actions suggest otherwise. They are given the benefit of the doubt and sometimes are excused by suggesting that they suffer from some sort of mental disorder. The coverage that the media gives to one as opposed to the other was also blatantly obvious. The McGee case was only covered by UK’s main newspapers five days after his arrest, whereas all those involving Islamists, even outside Britain were reported immediately. Which leads us to question what the consequences of this are.

### **3.7 Implications**

The findings discussed above have severe implications. By focusing mostly on Islamic fundamentalists and potential Islamic terrorist we disregard and even downplay the threat that

right-wing terrorism actually presents.<sup>155</sup> This means firstly that we allow for our systems to give different treatment to people who commit similar acts, based on whether they do so in the name of Islam or not. Secondly that law enforcement and intelligence agencies may miss potential threats because their attention is set elsewhere. Thirdly, that we have turned the term “terrorism” to mean almost exclusively “Islamic terrorism”.

Soldier Ryan McGee was arrested in Manchester in late November 2013 after police found a nail bomb in his house, alongside other weapons and far-right paraphernalia which as mentioned earlier included videos of people being beheaded under a swastika flag, EDL flags.<sup>156</sup> He had also attended EDL events, had dressed up as KKK member and owned a diary full of drawings of weapons and comments on his hatred towards immigrants, who he wanted to drag down to hell<sup>157</sup>. McGee was sentenced to two years in prison a year later but was not charged with terrorism and was said to be merely “an immature teenager”.<sup>158</sup> At the same time, two Muslim teenage brothers, Mohommod and Hamza Nawaz, were arrested for being in possession of videos of beheadings in the name of jihad, and having attended a training camp in the Middle East (even when established they never fought). They were sentenced to four years in prison and were charged with terrorism. Two failures must be noted here: First that McGee was only caught because the police suspected his brother of having child pornography and therefore raided his home. Had this not been the case, he might still be free. Second, although the acts committed by the brothers were different, the difference in treatment seems obvious. Mohommod and Hamza, even though younger than McGee, were not immature teenagers, they were terrorists.

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<sup>155</sup> Simi, 252

<sup>156</sup>English Defence League: Far-right islamophobic protest movement.

<sup>157</sup>Vikram Dodd, “Soldier Jailed For Making Nailbomb Avoids Terror Charge”. *The Guardian*. November 28, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/nov/28/soldier-jailed-nailbomb-ryan-mcgee-manchester-bomb>.

<sup>158</sup> German, “Two-Tier Terrorism”

The next example takes us back to the Breivik case. A report came out in 2012 with regards to the actions taken by law enforcement in the case. The main conclusion was that Breivik could have been stopped, and not only by police arriving earlier at the island (as suggested then) but even before the attacks occurred. Breivik was present in many far-right chat rooms and blogs and although he was never explicit about the acts he sought to commit, his ideas seemed quite radical. He also bought fertiliser online from Poland so as to make the bomb that would later kill eight people in Oslo. Through the monitoring and surveillance of the internet, the police were made aware of the purchase and briefly questioned him about it. Breivik said the fertiliser was to be used in the farm he owned and law enforcement were persuaded,<sup>159</sup> when in fact he had recently rented the farm in order to plan the attacks there. There was no follow up and in July 2012 Breivik killed seventy-seven people, most of them teenagers. The report insinuates that had law enforcement been more attentive, this could have been avoided.<sup>160</sup> It also suggests that perhaps, the focus was elsewhere and that some threats were underestimated vis-à-vis others.<sup>161</sup>

Thirdly the west is changing the term terrorism to mean Islamic terrorism. It was stated earlier by Europol, that right-wing attackers are being categorised as extremists instead of terrorists. So, taken from Shanahan's viewpoint, where a supposedly neutral term lacking moral symbolism has been transformed in such a specific and exclusive way, so that it no longer applied to the far-right. This can be seen by looking at Government reactions to those leaving to fight abroad. They keep trying to prevent Muslims from going to fight abroad by either making it illegal to join ISIS or by threatening to withdraw their passports. Nobody seems to be using those same measures for individuals who have joined the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The different sides of the conflict have groups with nationalistic and right-wing ideologies

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<sup>159</sup> *Rapport Fra 22.Juli –Kommissjonen*, 16

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 11,13,16

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 11,16

which can potentially radicalise returnees, who will have also been trained in use of weapons. In fact, Kuzio reported that there are more Europeans joining this conflict, than there are joining ISIS.<sup>162</sup> Are they not potential terrorists too? Perhaps they are just potential extremists.

The implications and consequences are clear enough, by exaggerating the Islamic terrorist threat we neglect the far-right and find ourselves giving unequal treatments, outing societies at risk and seeing how one man murders seventy-seven people in only a few hours. What is worse, we have even stopped considering certain acts perpetrated by the far-right as terrorism.

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<sup>162</sup> Taras Kuzio, “Far More Europeans Join Separatists In Donbas Than Isis In Syria”. Blog. *Ft.Com/Beyondbrics*. March 27, 2015, <http://blogs.ft.com/beyond-brics/2015/03/27/guest-post-far-more-europeans-join-separatists-in-donbas-than-isis-in-syria/>.

## Conclusion

The main goal of this thesis was to demonstrate that since 9/11, terrorism has been constructed in accordance to a set of discursive strands, which portray Islamic terrorism as the biggest threat to the west vis-à-vis the far-right, whose threat is being disregarded. This has led to an exclusion of the far-right as a form of terrorism, which seems to have been relabelled extremism instead. Obviously this has serious consequences for many.

It would be wise to recapitulate quickly the assumptions that have been established and the findings that have been revealed. The author first began by reviewing the broader terrorism literature that has contributed to the field of IR, by agreeing with Shanahan's idea that terrorism should be seen as tactic, and moral considerations should not be allowed for when defining the term. When going over the types of terrorism that have covered different periods of time, it was suggested that perhaps lone wolf terrorism could be if not the fifth wave in Rapoport's *Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*,<sup>163</sup> a strong trend in between waves. This suggestion stems from the author's conviction in terms of the great threat that lone wolf terrorist pose, due to the particularities of the strategy, which make it challenging to tackle and prevent. What was also clear from the contributions made by many, was the reality of the danger that right-wing terrorism poses to the west, and the fact that it has been down-played and disregarded due to the focus on Islamic terrorism. Simi, Bentley, Mudde and to a lesser extent Michael, all seem

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<sup>163</sup> Rapoport

to agree that western governments have shifted their focus on Islamists at the expense of neglecting the far-right.

In an attempt to comprehend why this has happened, and how it has been possible to construct Islamic terrorism the way it has been, so that we believe it to be the greatest threat to the west, several assumptions were considered. Some experts had already put forward justifications so as to explain why the west finds it easier and natural to consider Islamic terrorism as the biggest danger to it. First we looked at Orientalism, which claims that westerners have long seen the Arab world as barbaric, backward and inherently violent and so find it easy to link it to terrorism. The 9/11 effect, which goes a bit further and insinuates that Islam is evil and bad for the west, hence Islamic terrorists are the worse form of evil and the biggest threat. Thirdly, the idea that we face a *Clash of Civilisations*, where the west and the Muslim world are incompatible. Their cultures and religions being so different that they cannot coexist peacefully. Finally, that the number of attacks committed by Muslims and the ferocity with which they are committed creates an extremely high sense of fear in the population. This thesis acknowledged that these assumptions, could not possibly apply to right-wing extremists because they were westerners born in civilised, democratic and peaceful nations, hence were not a threat to its culture and beliefs. Also because they have not managed to instil the level of fear that Al-Qaeda and ISIS have.

To prove that this was the case, the author engaged in the task of analysing the discourse in four western European nations. The main newspapers and press were evaluated for France, Spain, Norway and the UK after both Islamic terrorist attacks and right-wing terrorist attacks had occurred, to see if the ways in which the two distinct types were portrayed actually differed. The findings clearly supported the argument that all four strands are present in western media. The United Kingdom was perhaps the country that showed greater evidence of this, especially in terms of depicting and describing radical Muslims as evil and barbaric. Norway was the

country which showed the greatest caution with its use of language when describing Islamic extremists. Nevertheless, all the different sources from all four countries, whether conservative, liberal or centre-left, showed clear signs of adhering to these assumptions. On the other hand, the treatment given to right-wing terrorist was very different to that given to Islamists. Right-wing extremists were often given the benefit of the doubt, were somewhat excused with suggestions that they were mentally ill, and were referred to in less disagreeable ways. Moreover, there were inconsistencies in the amount of attention and follow-ups of the incidents depending on who had committed them. Right-wing incidents were often overlooked, whereas Islamic ones were constantly being reported even if simply to add a small details to the update.

Establishing the narratives present in most media outlets was the first task, the next, was looking at the consequences and implications that this has and has had. In “obsessing” with Islamic extremists, the west has alienated and marginalised Muslim communities, which has led to the radicalisation of some individuals too. It has led to unequal treatment and punishments of those under surveillance, arrest or those awaiting trial, benefiting white-westerners. And, in Norway, it led to the death of seventy-seven people, because law enforcement and intelligence services were focusing their attention elsewhere. Taking this into account, as well as the variety of points made by Bentley, Hough, Mudde, and Simi, that show the level of threat that the far-right still presents, the author wonders whether the west should reconsider its position toward terrorism, and more importantly toward counter-terrorism. This will be crucial when those citizens who have joined the different sides of the Russia-Ukraine conflict return, potentially radicalised and with newly acquired skills in the use of weapons. Will the west take action the way it has done with those leaving to fight with ISIS?

It is obvious that more research and investigation are needed to answer the above question and to make any further predictions or generalisations. Potentially the discourse in other European states should be studied and analysed too, in order to see if the pattern as

revealed by this thesis is consistent throughout the continent. It does seem obvious from the research undertaken though, that the four western countries evaluated show very similar tendencies in their portrayal of Islamic terrorism vis-à-vis the extreme right. The only exception found, was the Breivik case. Maybe this was because initially most people thought the attacker would be an Islamic terrorist or perhaps because the tactics used by Breivik resembled those of Islamists, yet, given the far-right's expertise in the LW strategy, should it not be the other way around? Are not Islamic extremists copying those who used this strategy in the past? It might be interesting to look at how the right-wing has or can evolve and whether it is here to stay.

The possibilities for research are endless and it is evident that this thesis has not been able to cover everything. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the findings revealed speak for themselves. That there is a clear bias in the west against the Muslim society, and that when it comes to terrorism we have allowed state leaders and media outlets to construct the threat they pose in a way that makes us think there is no other danger. This has unfortunately been at the expense of trivialising the far-right and down-playing the threat that it poses to western societies. As discussed earlier, perhaps western leaders need to alter their priorities and modify their counter-terrorism strategies.



## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Failed, foiled and successful terrorist attacks in the EU (2006-2013)

| YEAR | ATTACKS BY ISLAMIC TERRORISTS | ATTACKS BY RIGHT-WING TERRORISTS** | TOTAL NUMBER OF COUNTRIES |
|------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006 | 1                             | 1                                  | 11                        |
| 2007 | 4                             | 1                                  | 9                         |
| 2008 | 0                             | 0                                  | 7                         |
| 2009 | 1                             | 4                                  | 6                         |
| 2010 | 3                             | 0                                  | 9                         |
| 2011 | *0                            | 1                                  | 7                         |
| 2012 | *6                            | 2                                  | 7                         |
| 2013 | 1                             | 1                                  | 5                         |

\*For 2011 and 2012 the attacks were categorised as religiously motivated terrorism, not all may be Islamic.

\*\*Note that some of the right-wing incidents do not include those that countries labelled as extremist.

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### Appendix 2. Arrests in relation to terrorist activity in the EU 2006-2013

| YEAR | ARRESTS FOR ISLAMIC TERRORISM | ARRESTS FOR RIGHT-WING TERRORISM | TOTAL NUMBER OF COUNTRIES |
|------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006 | 257                           | 15                               | 14                        |
| 2007 | 201                           | 44                               | 16                        |
| 2008 | 187                           | 0                                | 13                        |
| 2009 | 110                           | 22                               | 13                        |
| 2010 | 179                           | 1                                | 15                        |
| 2011 | *112                          | 5                                | 18                        |
| 2012 | 159                           | 10                               | 17                        |
| 2013 | *216                          | **3                              | 14                        |

\*For 2011 and 2013 the arrests were categorised as religiously motivated terrorism, not all may be Islamic

\*\* A Muslim man was killed in the UK by a white supremacist but the arrest is not included as the UK did not charge the man with terrorism.

Source: Europol.europa.eu,.2014. 'EU Terrorism Situation & Trend Report (Te-Sat) | Europol'. [https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest\\_publications/37](https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest_publications/37) (Accessed 2015/05/18)

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