The Fight against Jihadist Terrorism: Safeguarding Fundamental Freedoms and Human Rights

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> "Terrorism is fundamentally the denial and destruction of human rights, and the fight against terrorism will never succeed by perpetuating the same denial and destruction."[1]
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> - Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, 2017

The latest terrorist attacks were mostly perpetrated with unsophisticated weaponry: trucks—as seen in Nice (2016) and Berlin (2016). At the same time, suicide bombings were carried out by "untypical", "unsuspicious" agents such as young children (Lake Chad Region[2]) and entire families (Surabaya in 2018). Since 2013, an unprecedented number of voluntary fighters have travelled to Syria and Iraq in order to join Jihadist militias. Consequently, many states have started to revise and reinforce their home security regulations, introducing new policies to prevent radicalisation. These new measures are a cause of concern among activists in Europe, who fear that they will have a negative effect on society; namely the weakening of fundamental freedoms and the strengthening of sectarian stigmatisation. The history of contemporary Islamist movements shows that human rights violations, especially torture, have increased the determination of thinkers like the Muslim Brethren Sayyid Qutb in Egypt and Sayyid Hawwa

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in Syria to call for violent action. Global Jihadist and Islamist groups such as Daesh or Hizb ut-Tahrir share a discourse that portrays Muslims as perpetual victims and a persecuted minority. Similar to Qutb's concept of *jahiliyya* (the dark age before the advent of Islam), for these groups, *dar al-kufr* (the house/land of unbelief) is to be found everywhere and needs to be brought down, to be then replaced by a perfect virtuous Islamic state or caliphate. Consequently, newly adopted preventive actions in the fight against terrorism that may be considered arbitrary and discriminatory will enhance the Islamist discourse of victimhood and open the doors for more converts to this ideology. Therefore, it is vital for all measures intended to prevent radicalisation to safeguard the fundamental freedoms and human rights in place in most democratic countries. At the same time, prevention policies have to consider the main claims and accusations voiced by Islamists, which seem to be convincing increasing numbers of people around the world. This article intends to explore some of the main lines of argument shared by different Islamist ideologies to argue that their demand of a totalitarian social and political structure cannot be tolerated within liberal democracies and plural societies. The fight against this new form of totalitarianism, however, should not be conducted as an armed "counter-jihad", but rather as a "counter-*dawa*" that opens up the minds of people to tolerance.

Islamist Extremism: A Totalitarian Ideology

The latest empirical studies on Islamist radicalisation have shown that poverty and the lack of education are not the main causes of this phenomenon. One study from Jordan shows that among radicals, the most extremist views were to be found among the more educated and that among the young interviewees without a formal education there were no tendencies towards extremism.[3] When poverty levels were taken to be the

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[3] According to a survey quoted by the International Center for the Study of Extremism, 67% of the Jordanian adult population found al-Qaida to be a legitimate resistance movement. This support fell, according to the same study, to 6.2% in December 2015 after the Amman hotel bombings. Since then, popular support has showed similar extreme fluctuations. However, according to the numbers quoted in the same analysis, the steady support for extremist/terrorist groups seems to be around 7%. These supporters are seemingly young men (18-24 years old) with a middle class background and higher education. Braizat, Fares, Speckhard, Anne, Shajkovci, Ardian, and Sabaileh, Amer, *Determining Youth Radicalization in Jordan*, International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism, 21 November 2017, http://www.icsve.org/research-reports/determining-youth-radicalization-in-jordan/.

main indicator of support for extremism, similar results were displayed: the young Jordanians who answered the questionnaires and came from families with higher income displayed more radical ideas than poorer interviewees. Statistics from Germany, based on research analysing the background of people who left the country in order to join Jihadist militias in Syria and Iraq, also highlighted how these men, women and minors came from different social strata and were not necessarily socially deprived people with criminal records.[4] Not only the new recruits appear to come from educated and diverse social backgrounds, the two present leaders of the most important international terrorist networks, Ayman az-Zawahiri and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, both achieved the second highest level of education possible in their fields: Zawahiri as a surgeon and Baghdadi as a theologian. It could be argued then that giving people more education does not keep them away from radical thinking. This is consistent with data from studies on revolutionary movements which show how students have always been among the most revolutionary men and women throughout history. It is therefore not necessarily the lack of access to education, food and basic needs that makes people rise up, but the belief and the adherence to a specific ideology.

If the migration movements towards Syria and the terrorist attacks perpetrated worldwide are taken into account, it seems obvious that Daesh has been propagating an ideology that can easily be adopted by men, women and minors who come from very different cultural backgrounds and may be Muslims by birth or conversion. One Daesh video features a French convert, Abu Suhayb al-Faranci,[5] a man in his fifties, softly spoken and clearly educated, who provides a reasoned reflection on how he converted to Islam and why he joined Daesh in Syria. He mentions that, as a young man, he had a spiritual encounter in a church. Since that particular moment, he became deeply convinced that there is a God and only one God. In the video Faranci explains that he then joined a seminar in order to become a Catholic priest but did not find the answers to his existential

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4   No author indicated, *Analyse der Radikalisierungshintergründe und -verläufe der Personen, die aus islamistischer Motivation aus Deutschland in Richtung Syrien oder Irak ausgereist sind*, Bundeskriminalamt, Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Hessisches Informations- und Kompetenzzentrum gegen Extremismus, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

5   Al-Hayat Media Center, *Récits de la terre de la vie, Histoire de la vie de Abu Suhayb al-Faranci*, 7 March 2015, http://jihadology.net/2015/03/07/al-ḥayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-stories-from-the-land-of-the-living-abu-ṣuḥayb-al-faransi/.

questions. His quest for truth and his job as a businessman took him to many countries, until he finally found truth in the Quran, went on *hajj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca and met "brothers" who had done jihad. He tried to ask different preachers about the nature and the obligation of jihad. According to Faranci, all of them were afraid to talk and told him that he should be quiet because he could risk a prison sentence for such indiscreet questions. Despite the evasive answers of established theologians, Abu Suhayb became convinced that jihad was an Islamic obligation and travelled to Syria. The film about this French convert clearly shows that the Daesh ideology can very well affect experienced people of a certain age, who are highly educated, have travelled the world and who do not spontaneously decide to seek adventure in Syria. The overall appeal of Islamic extremism suggests that it is a popular ideology with totalitarian features; everyone shall have an essential and clearly defined role in the ultimate ideal Islamic reign.

It is possible to compare the political order that Daesh has put in place with the Nazi and Stalinist regimes, structures that Hannah Arendt found to be those of the ideal totalitarian state. According to Arendt, the main elements of totalitarian rule are the alienation of people through the removal of common social ties, the heavy propaganda machinery, the terror regime, the adulation of one central leader and the bureaucratic structure.[6] When looking at Daesh through Arendt's analysis, certain things become clear. For example, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani spoke on various occasions of the need to kill people, even close family members, if they were *kuffar*.[7] Consequently, the "natural ties" in society were broken in favour of a supreme totalitarian community, the Daesh version of the Islamic *umma*. Daesh propagandists also aimed to seduce Islamists—and were extremely successful in doing so—by using the latest technology and social media. Seventy years ago, Arendt showed how terror became worse in established totalitarian regimes in order to keep people silent and alienated. The same happened in the Daesh caliphate, where executioners slaughtered people in public and crucified or displayed corpses, among many other barbaric acts. There is also an easily recognisable Daesh-"Führerprinzip",

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[6] Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Penguin Modern Classics, Penguin Books, UK/USA/Canada/Ireland/Australia/India/New Zealand/South Africa, 2017.

[7] Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, "Say, Die in Your Rage", Daesh audio, 26 January 2015, https://archive.org/details/SayDieInYourRage.

an obligatory adulation of a central leader, to whom people have to pledge allegiance. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi combines institutional, charismatic and divine legitimacy because he holds a PhD in Islamic law from the University of Baghdad, he is a recognised leader of a Jihadist militia in Iraq and he claims to be a descendent from the Prophet Muhammed. Even the highly bureaucratic structure of the ideal-typical totalitarian regime can be found within Daesh, particularly when it ruled over a big part of Iraqi and Syrian territories. Aymenn Jawed al-Tamimi collected many administrative orders and publications on his blog,[8] demonstrating that Daesh acted in a highly bureaucratised manner. The organisation issued all kinds of permits and certificates, even one that confirms that the person who holds it is not an apostate.[9]

To declare one's disagreement to totalitarian structures, such as Daesh, is easily done from afar. Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, al-Qaida, the Taliban and many more hardcore Jihadists rejected the foundation of a caliphate by Daesh on 29 June 2014. However, are the totalitarian core elements of their ideologies not essentially similar to the ones of Daesh? Is it not all about the establishment of a perfect Islamic state? Sometimes this request comprises more local than global aims in the beginning. However, it never fails to call for the conquest of al-Quds (Jerusalem) for "the Muslims" even when it is voiced in faraway Kandahar.[10] An Islamic state or caliphate shall always favour the perfect Muslims, eliminate the apostates as well as the polytheists and "protect" (i.e., oppress) the people of the book. Sometimes there are nuances when it comes to the decision on how elements that appear to be potentially dangerous to the perfect Islamic community shall be punished or eliminated. Nonetheless, there is a general agreement among Islamists that people who do not comply with the sharia have to be punished severely. For example, most Islamists, unlike Daesh, would not ask for homosexuals to be pushed from rooftops. However, a lot of them agree that homosexuals need to be punished and segregated from the community. Yusuf al-Qaradawi says the following:

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[8] Al-Tamimi, Aymenn Jawad, *Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents (cont.)*, 11 January 2016, http://www.aymennjawad.org/2016/01/archive-of-islamic-state-administrative-documents-1.

[9] Lohlker, Rüdiger, *Theologie der Gewalt, Das Beispiel IS*, Facultas Verlags- und Buchhandels AG, Wien, 2016, p. 89.

[10] Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, *Part 3 of the Series from Life in Jihad*, June 2018, https://jihadology.net/2018/06/04/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-emirate-of-afghanistan-life-in-jihad-3/.

> "Muslim jurists hold different opinions concerning the punishment for this abominable practice. Should it be the same as the punishment for fornication, or should both the active and passive participants be put to death? While such punishments may seem cruel, they have been suggested to maintain the purity of the Islamic society and to keep it clean of perverted elements."[11]

Consequently, even the famous Islamist TV-preacher Qaradawi, who mostly rejects violence (whenever it is not directed against Jews) and the struggle for jihad, asks his followers to "maintain the Islamic society pure". Is this not exactly the argument which has justified most genocides? The Nazis wanted to keep their perfect Aryan race clean of homosexuals, gypsies and Jews too.

We may conclude that most Islamist and especially Jihadist ideologies show totalitarian tendencies that advocate a complete submission of the individual to an Islamic state, the repeal of fundamental freedoms and the abolition of human rights as man-made regulations, in favour of divine law, which is considered to be all-inclusive, indisputable and eternal.

The Jihadist Cause

In order to establish a working counter-terrorism policy, it is important to understand why terrorists are fighting. In a Daesh publication from 2014, released shortly after the foundation of the new caliphate, the anonymous author writes: "there shall be no more fake nationalistic border to divide the Muslims."[12] What sounds like a fight for independence against the last remains of European imperial rule later reveals clear imperialist aspirations itself. A picture shows the estimated extension of Daesh territory in 2020 which would include Damascus, Amman, Medina and Kuwait.[13] In case the picture is not clear enough, the author describes Daesh aspirations of power in the following words: "the aim of the Islamic State is to bulldoze all the Sykes-Picot borders which divide the Muslim world, to remove the puppet-rulers and to establish a global Caliphate."[14] First, the "puppet

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[11] English Fatwa Bank, Living Shari'a, *Homosexuality and Lesbianism: Sexual Perversions*, Islam Online, no date indicated, https://archive.islamonline.net/?p=828.

[12] The Islamic State, *The Revived Caliphate*, 1435 hijri/2014 CE, p. 76.

[13] Ibid., p. 79.

[14] Ibid., p. 75.

rulers" in the Muslim world will be removed, followed by the seizure of Iran and Europe (Rome is defined as its capital) and finally Jerusalem because: "whoever rules Jerusalem, rules the world."[15] Finally yet importantly, the Daesh text instigates international conquests based on a hadith taken from Sahih Muslim, which is quoted as follows:

> "Allah's Messenger said: You will attack Arabia and Allah will enable you to conquer it, then you would attack Persia (Iran) and He would make you to conquer it. Then you would attack Rome (Italy/Europe) and Allah will enable you to conquer it, then you would attack the Dajjal (in Israel) and Allah will enable you to conquer him."[16]

Although the ebook—its structure, spelling and grammar—has many defects when compared to, for example, the technically outstanding *Dabiq* magazine, the core message is present. People ("the Muslims") will fight for the establishment of a global caliphate, understood not only as a requirement from God to men, but also a predetermined outcome of the final battle of *Dabiq*, which will take place by the end of time.[17] In order to achieve this goal, one group may want to start with a small-scale Islamic State first while others may target the "far enemy" directly, mostly defined as "the head of the Crusaders" (the United States).[18] In both cases, the motivation is similar: the foundation of a state where sharia rules and the Muslim *umma* will be united. The main elements of this ideology, which may be defined as totalitarian following Arendt's concept, have been preached for nearly two centuries.[19]

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[15] Ibid., p. 75.

[16] Ibid., p. 81. The following references are provided by the Daesh author: Sahih Muslim—Kitab al Fitan (Book of Tribulations) - Chapter: Conquests Of The Muslims Before The Appearance Of Ad-Dajjal - Sahih Muslim 2900 - http://sunnah.com/muslim/54/50.

[17] No author mentioned, "Reflections on the Final Crusade", *Dabiq, The Failed Crusade*, nr. 4, Dhul al-Hijjah, 1435 (September 2014).

[18] Abu-Yahya al-Libi, in Khansa_Media, *silsila asirat al-umma*, first episode, minute 9:59 and ff.

[19] I therefore only partially agree with Guido Steinberg's hypothesis in which he claims that the internationalist ideology and scene of the Jihadists only developed after 9/11. The "Pan-Islamist" ideology has been internationalist since its very foundation by Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh in the late 19th century and even if Arabs dominated al-Qaida in its beginning, it already had internationalist aspirations. I do agree that there was a change in strategy of the Islamist movements after 9/11 and that it adapted to exogenous as well as endogenous causes, proving to be very flexible when doing so. I think, however, that the "totalitarian" elements of the ideology have been present since 1884. See: Steinberg, Guido, *German Jihad*, Columbia Studies in Terrorism and Irregular Warfare, Columbia University Press, New York, 2013.

Recently, with the global participation of many men and women in the Syrian conflict, it has become clearly observable that the Islamist ideology has borne its fruits all over the world. As highlighted by Emmanuel Sivan and many others, Islamist thought developed in different stages.[20] The aforementioned totalitarian elements, however, are strikingly similar to all Islamist movements, whether they first appeared as a Palestinian resistance against Israel or as a social movement whose members were radicalised in jail by their Pan-Arabist-Socialist hangmen. Let us examine Hizb ut-Tahrir, which firmly criticises and rejects the Daesh version of a caliphate. Despite this, the "liberation party" is convinced that the caliphate is mandatory (by God) for Muslims as well as for the rest of the world. Dr. Abdul Wahid states in an article on the Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain Website: "The scope of the *Khilafah*—and Islam generally—is not only the problems in the Muslim world—but also problems that confront the world as a whole, because the scope of the Islam is the whole of humanity."[21] What about the Muslim Brotherhood? Hassan al-Banna said: "We believe that Islam is an all-embracing concept, which regulates every aspect of life, adjudicating on everyone its concerns and describing for it a solid and rigorous order."[22] Whereas al-Banna remains vague on what will happen to non-Muslim as soon as true Islam gets to rule, he is very clear about jihad:

> "Allah has imposed jihad as a religious duty on every Muslim, categorically and rigorously, from which there is neither evasion nor escape. He has rendered it a supreme object of desire, and has made the reward of martyrs in His way a splendid one, for He has conjoined with them in their reward only those who have acted as they did, and have modelled themselves upon them in their performance of jihad."[23]

He also corrects "young people of his time" who argue that the fight against the enemy has to be considered "the lesser" jihad and that the greater jihad is the one carried out by the spirit,[24] saying that there is nothing like supreme martyrdom and the ones who strive for it on God's

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[20] Sivan, Emmanuel, *Radical Islam*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2013.

[21] Wahid, Abdul, *5 Reasons Why We Must Talk about Khilafa*, Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, 25 July 2017, http://www.hizb.org.uk/viewpoint/5-reasons-why-we-must-talk-about-khilafah/.

[22] International Islamic Federation of Students Organisation, *majmu'at rasa'il al-Imam al-shahid Hasan al-Banna*, no date indicated, p. 83.

[23] Ibid., p. 217.

[24] Ibid., p. 259.

path.[25] Consequently, Abdullah Azzam was not the first one to proclaim jihad *fard al-'ayn* (a duty for all Muslims) during the fight against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Hassan al-Banna had said it before him. The struggle for an Islamic caliphate is not a goal "invented" by Hizb ut-Tahrir or Daesh. Right after the abolition of the caliphate in 1924, many Islamist thinkers tried to find a substitute. Rashid Rida proposed an Islamic State ruled by Turkish militias and governed intellectually/theologically by the Arabs.[26]

The considerable movement of people to the zones of *ribat*, the frontline between *dar al-kufr* and *dar al-Islam*, should please the preachers from the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Saudi-sponsored Wahhabis. Their strategy to work bottom-up to bring people back to religion through massive efforts in *dawa* (proselytism) has proved successful! At least in Germany, all people who travelled to Syria and Iraq became first radicalised in so-called Salafist circles.[27] Why is this surprising? Why should people who are open to the reasoning of sects who preach intolerance, religious exclusivity, hatred, war and the blessings of martyrdom not go and fight the enemies of their religion?

Most terrorist attacks are not perpetrated in Europe. According to the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, in 2016, "at least 11,000 terrorist attacks occurred in more than 100 countries, resulting in more than 25,000 total deaths and 33,000 people injured."[28] Three quarters of terrorist attacks are perpetrated in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Nigeria. The highest representative of the UN also stated that "terrorism is fundamentally the denial and destruction of human rights, and the fight against terrorism will never succeed by perpetuating the same denial and

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[25] Ibid., p. 261.

[26] Rida, Muhammad Rashid, *al-khilafa aw al-imamat al-'uzma*, matb'a al-manar, 1922.

[27] At the autumn conference of the German Federal Criminal Police, Wiebke Steffen concluded that: "even if within the purist peaceful threads of thought violence is rejected and not legitimised, Salafism endangers the principles of democratic coexistence." Wiebke, Steffen, *Internationaler Terrorismus: Wie können Prävention und Repression Schritt halten?*, BKA-Herbsttagung, 18-19 November 2015, p. 9. Marwan Abou-Taam voices similar concerns: "Salafism is in clear contradiction to the German constitution, which includes respect for human dignity and guarantees the equality of all people regardless of their religious beliefs." Abou-Taam, Marwan, "Daesh Radicalisation and Responses in Germany", in *Countering DAESH Extremism, European and Asian Responses*, Panorama: Insights into Asian and European Affairs, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, RSIS, February 2016.

[28] Guterres, Antonio, *Secretary-General's Speech at SOAS, University of London*, "Counter-terrorism and human rights: winning the fight while upholding our values" [as delivered], 16 November 2017, United Nations, Secretary-General. https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-11-16/secretary-general%E2%80%99s-speech-soas-university-london-%E2%80%9Ccounter-terrorism.

destruction."[29] I am not sure whether terrorism can be simply defined as a denial and destruction of human rights. Most "terrorist groups" call themselves freedom fighters and have clear guidelines on how to treat the "civil population". Ayman az-Zawahiri issued his *Guidelines for Jihad* in 2013, Hamas amended their *Charter* four years later and the Taliban are proud of their *Layha*.[30] Nevertheless, I completely agree with Guterres on his second point; if the fight against terrorism undermines human rights, it will not succeed and it will further strengthen the Islamist discourse of victimhood.

The Discourse of Victimhood

Islamist ideologies strongly rely on a discourse of victimhood. In this worldview, unbelievers have attacked Muslims and Islam ever since the revelation and the Prophet Muhammad's escape from Mecca to Yathrib (Medina). In contemporary history, all wars and armed conflicts that in-cluded Muslims as a party are seen through this lens and interpreted as wars of religion. As Muslim lands are under constant attack, all Muslims have to come together to fight jihad and expel the non-Muslims from their lands. Ayman Az-Zawahiri, the present global leader of the al-Qaida net-work, said in a recent audio message, in early June 2018:

> "Oh Muslim Umma, the battle in Palestine and the battles that are simi-lar to it in Cairo, Riyadh, Grozny, Kabul and ash-Sham [greater Syria] are not battles restricted to local fighters. It is a battle of the Muslim Umma against the big criminal international system headed by such criminal heads of state like the ones in Moscow, Peking and Delhi. And it is a long, multilateral and violent battle."[31]

In this Islamist worldview, the unbelievers have been assisted by the so-called *tawaghit* (sing. *taghut*), the Muslim tyrants who do not rule accord-ing to sharia and oppress Muslims. Since Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's first

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Such rules established by terrorist groups may be the point of departure for a debate about human rights according to the strategy of certain NGOs and scholars. See: Parker, Tom, "Redressing the Balance: How Human Rights Defenders Can Use Victim Narratives to Confront the Violence of Armed Groups", in *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 33, nr. 4, The John Hopkins University Press, November 2011.

[31] Az-Zawahiri, Ayman, *min an-nakba wa-l-naksa li-l-nahda wa-l-'azza*, As-Sahab Media, 1439 (June 2018).

official excommunication of the Saudi royals in the 1980s,[32] a lot has been written against different *tawaghit.* Finally, all rulers in the Islamic world were blamed for having rejected their religion and leading their countries away from true Islam. In June 2016, for example, Daesh released a video entitled *Toghut* which showed the Malaysian Daesh fighter Mohd Rafi Udin (called Abu 'Aun al-Malayzi in Arabic) decapitate three alleged spies with two other combatants. The Malaysian Daesh fighter then threatens his home country, especially the police, promising to carry out attacks after his return.[33] The police are understood to be direct representatives of the *taghut* rule in Malaysia and must therefore be attacked according to Daesh reasoning.

The direct attack against the police leads us to consider another two vital elements of the Islamist discourse of victimhood: prison and torture. Zaynab al-Ghazali's *ayyam min hayati* (days of my life) may be considered an early classic of this genre. In the text, the author describes her imprisonment and torture during the Nasser era in Egypt. By doing so, she stresses her resistance as a pure Muslim woman who quotes from the Quran and endures pain heroically.[34] Prison narratives, describing the ordeal and torture, are shared on Islamist and Jihadist internet sites on a daily basis. In early June 2018, for example, a pamphlet by al-Hikmah Media (based in the UK) called upon Muslims to fight "the aggression of Hindu fundamentalists."[35] The text accused a specific person at Kashimpur Central Jail of torturing the fasting and non-smoking Muslims by placing these prisoners in solitary confinement and forbidding them to pray in congregation. The pamphlet goes as far as to state that not even in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and Indian prisons have there been such "heinous

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[32] Wagemakers, Joas, "A Purist Jihadi-Salafi: The Ideology of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2, August 2009.

[33] Editor, "Daesh Announces Asia Pivot in Video Targeting Malaysia, Philippines", *AlahedNews*, https://www.english.alahednews.com.lb/essaydetails.php?eid=33775&cid=551. Editor, "Malaysian ISIS Fighter From Negeri Sembilan In Beheading Video Warns Bukit Aman On Attacks", *Malaysian Digest*, 24 June 2016, http://www.malaysiandigest.com/news/618402-malaysian-isis-fighter-from-negeri-sembilan-in-beheading-video-warns-bukit-aman-on-attacks.html.

[34] Al-Ghazali, Zaynab, *ayyam min hayati*, Dar ash-Shuruq, Cairo, 1981.

[35] Al-Hikmah Media, *Heinous Aggression on the Fasting-Muslim Prisoners in Bangladesh: A Call for the Muslims to Rise-up*, Telegram, June 2018, https://jihadology.net/2018/06/01/new-statement-from-al-%e1%b8%a5ikmah-media-heinous-aggression-on-the-fasting-muslim-prisoners-in-bangladesh-a-call-for-the-muslims-to-rise-up/.

example[s]".[36] It seems obvious that the terrible abuse of prisoners by American soldiers in Abu Ghraib is still a popular topic among Islamists. The Daesh ebook about the revived caliphate explains that the leaders of al-Qaida in Iraq were caught and exposed to torture similar to that carried out in Abu Ghraib. To help the reader visualise this, two of the infamous pictures are reproduced: one of a detained person standing on a box with wires tied to his hands and a hood over the head; and one of Lynndie England holding a naked prisoner on a leash.[37] I therefore agree with Guido Steinberg that the present-day internationalist form of jihadism is the result of both; foreign intervention in Muslim states and the increasing attractiveness of the internationalist jihadist ideology among young Muslims.[38]

Within the discourse of victimhood, the plights of male prisoners and their families are vital to the narrative itself. The stories of female prisoners, however, become even more relevant to the call for violent action. Women like Hayla al-Qasir, a Saudi national sentenced for sponsoring al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia, have uncensored fan communities on YouTube who rally for their release and attacks against the prisons where they are detained.[39] Even the Daesh poet Ahlam Nasr wrote a poem decrying Hayla al-Qasir's suffering.[40]

In a Daesh video, which recycled a movie by al-Qaida's as-Sahab Media, the fate of another prominent female Islamist detainee is discussed. Abu Yahya al-Libi, one of the most important al-Qaida ideologues and leaders, states that Dr. Aafia Siddiqui was abused physically and mentally by American soldiers in Bagram and sentenced to more than 80 years in prison.[41] The film then introduces a whole series about "imprisoned sisters"

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[36] Ibid.

[37] It is interesting to note that in its early stages, Daesh still published the full picture of a woman soldier without blurring her face and body. The Islamic State, *The Revived Caliphate*, 1435 hijri/2014 CE, p. 20.

[38] Steinberg, Guido, *German Jihad*, Columbia Studies in Terrorism and Irregular Warfare, Columbia University Press, New York, 2013.

[39] For example, the video *utluqu Hayla al-Qasir*, uploaded on 22 November 2012 by a user with the nickname "kathrful", with 22,994 views on 25 July 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOet2MHAHi8.

[40] Ahlam Nasr published a poem also called *utluqu Hayla al-Qasir* on her blog in April 2014, https://ahlam-alnasr.blogspot.de/.

[41] Abu-Yahya al-Libi, in Khansa_Media, *silsila asirat al-umma*, first episode, minute 9:59 and ff.

in Arab countries and the Sind. The terrible fate of Muslim sisters who are allegedly raped and ill-treated in jail are not only discussed by the most important global terrorist organisations. Hizb ut-Tahrir also uses this reasoning to support its call for a caliphate.

Consequently, any preventive strategy against Jihadist terrorism has to respect the rule of law and human rights to be successful. Failing to do so will jeopardise the fight against terror and reinforce arguments of victimhood used by the Islamists and Jihadists. A person who is detained without a court sentence, ill-treated and tortured, and who eventually dies in custody will be venerated as a martyr by his or her followers.

Prevention Strategies

On various occasions, Daesh called upon "Muslims" to either emigrate to the caliphate or kill *kuffar* wherever they may fight them. In September 2014, *Dabiq* published the following announcement: "Every Muslim should get out of his house, find a crusader, and kill him."[42] Additional advice is provided. For example, the attack should be kept as simple as possible in order not to raise any suspicion. Daesh seems to label this the "4th generation warfare introduced to Iraq in 2004-2006" where "hidden fighters" are used.[43] In the ebook about the revived caliphate, the Daesh author mentions that families would be "the hidden fighters". The perpetrators of the Surabaya attacks followed this strategy.

Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, the late official Daesh spokesman, also called upon the "the monotheists" in Europe and elsewhere in the unbelieving "West" to "trigger the crusaders in their own countries, wherever they could find them."[44] He concluded, "We will speak up to God against every Muslim who had the opportunity to shed a single drop of crusader

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[42]   No author indicated, "Reflections on the Final Crusade", *Dabiq, The Failed Crusade*, nr. 4, Dhul al-Hijjah, 1435 (September 2014), p. 44.

[43]   The Islamic State, *The Revived Caliphate*, 1435 hijri/2014 CE, p. 18. He adds that scholars like Yusuf al-Uyayri, the first leader of Al-Qaida in the Arabic Peninsula, gave justifications for "martyrdom-operations" (suicide attacks). Yusuf al-Uyayri justified such suicide attacks with the Sura al-Buruj (Quran, 85) and the "Boy and the King Story" quoted by Sahih Muslim. The Daesh author explains that following Uyayri's fatwa, men, women, couples, children and entire families were allowed to attack the enemies in "martyrdom-operations".

[44]   Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, "Say, Die in Your Rage", Daesh audio, 26 January 2015, https://archive.org/details/SayDieInYourRage.

blood and did not do it, be it with a bomb, a knife, a car, a stone or even a boot or a fist."[45] Consequently, anyone who does not join Daesh or kill people at home has to be considered an apostate and has to be killed, which makes Daesh terror clearly totalitarian, as nobody can trust anyone. Even the Daesh follower who is secretly fabricating a bomb in the basement of his house must fear death by a "lone wolf" determined to kill apostates living among the non-believers.

According to Daesh strategy, everyone can be a terrorist, even the shaved young man in tight jeans and the happy mother of four with the colourful headscarf. This represents a new challenge for prevention and security strategies. The German journalist Florian Flade summarised this in a comment: "the enemy got armed by disarming. Tools of daily use such as kitchen knives or cars have become weapons. Attacks are committed without long planning and without trainings in terror camps."[46] The fight against terrorism will therefore have to effectively address this new dimension.

According to Jean-Loup Samaan and Andreas Jacobs, three categories of conventional anti-terrorism policies have so far been implemented: "a military-oriented policy that aims to prevent, deter and retaliate against terrorists; a regulatory policy that strengthens the legal and judicial resources to address the terrorist threat; [and] a diplomatic approach that focuses on negotiations, and sometimes accommodation."[47] The authors conclude that Germany has so far opted to sustain its traditional regulatory approach.

Since 2015, different laws have come into force in order to fight terrorism in Germany. There were amendments made to the penal code to penalise travelling abroad to join terrorist organisations. Preventive coercive actions were legalised, such as the confiscation of personal

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[45]   Ibid.

[46]   "Der Feind hat aufgerüstet, indem er abgerüstet hat. Alltagsgegenstände wie Küchenmesser oder Autos werden zu Waffen. Die Anschläge finden ohne langfristige Planung und oft ohne Ausbildung im Terrorcamp statt." Florian Flade, "Wir brauchen jetzt Lösungen gegen den islamistischen Terror", in *Die Welt Digital*, Meinung, 6 June 2017, https://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/article165257496/Wir-brauchen-jetzt-Loesungen-gegen-den-islamistischen-Terror.html.

[47]   Jacobs, Andreas and Samaan, Jean-Loup, "Countering Jihadist Terrorism: A Comparative Analysis of French and German Experiences", in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2018, p. 2, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2017.1415891.

identification documents belonging to people who pose a terrorist threat and are expected to leave the country. At the same time, intelligence services and the police have been reinforced and their remit enlarged. In the world of diplomatic relations, more flexible ways of sharing data with international partners and especially between the European Union (EU) member states are also being attempted. These are all important measures which will enhance the ability of security agencies to fight terrorist plots in the making.

But what about the root causes of Jihadism? Can they be erased with tighter security standards? What about Islamist totalitarian ideologies? Are they addressed by such measures? What will a radicalised student write on the Jihadist forum after having his passport confiscated? Most probably, he will complain that the *kuffar* are discriminating against him as a Muslim and, for this reason, he cannot join the caliphate. He might then open one of the *Dabiq* magazines and find a converted woman from Finland who writes: "As for those people who cannot perform hijrah, I advise you to attack the Crusaders and their allies wherever you are, as that is something you are able to do."[48]

Germany still has no nation-wide prevention strategy. In November 2016, representatives of the Green party submitted a proposal to set up such a strategy, which was discussed in the Bundestag (parliament) in February 2017. The representatives asked the government to develop a concept for such a strategy and demanded the establishment of a national centre for prevention. At the same time, they pressed for an evaluation of the capacity within mosques and religious associations to detect radicalisation. In addition, they asked for official religious education to be introduced in all German schools, more youth-centred social work for Muslims and Muslim religious counselling in jail.[49] The last three points seem to be especially important and will have to be carried out by Muslim communities who are part of German society and fully respect the constitution, fundamental freedoms and human rights. They are the only ones who may convince their radicalised peers that Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance and does not require a totalitarian state.

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[48] Umm Khalid al-Finlandiyyah, "How I Came to Islam", *Dabiq, Break the Cross*, nr. 15, Shawwal 1437 (July/August 2016), p. 39.

[49] Antrag 18/10477.

German history has shown how important it is to have citizens accept the presence of cultural and religious "otherness" within society. People have to be respected because they are human beings and not because they belong to a specific religious community. At the same time, women and men must be free to make their own choices. As soon as the understanding of the intrinsic value of human life and personal freedom has become a social habitus shared and defended by everyone, no totalitarian ideology will ever be successful. However, as the latest processes of radicalisation and polarisation in European societies have shown, the liberal, democratic concept of freedom truly needs defence.

While the internet was left unregulated, it became a badland where anonymous writers felt free to produce hate speech and share gory videos of torture and executions. Is there an internet user who has not been insulted in ways that would never happen in public, where people have to actually come forward and reveal their identities? The Law for the Improvement of Law Enforcement in Social Media Networks in Germany appears to have been successful,[50] so much so that an American Jewish woman registered on Twitter using a fake German location to escape anti-Semitic comments in the United States.[51] Consequently, monitoring the internet and shutting down Jihadist and Islamist forums and websites should be the primary goal of all preventive strategies.

Muslim communities, however, remain the most important allies in the fight against totalitarian Islamist ideologies. Liberal and modern Islam has to be propagated massively as a counter-*dawa* to Islamist preaching. Discourses which engage in excommunication and discussions about what level of medieval punishments should be applied to the people who are considered apostates are not leading towards more tolerance or pushing people away from extremism. To give a graphic example, after Daesh published the infamous film showing the immolation of the Jordanian pilot in February 2015, the Shaykh of al-Azhar, Ahmad at-Tayyib, issued an official statement which said people who did such a thing were not Muslims and should be crucified and have their limbs cut off. While the anger is completely understandable, this statement by an internationally respected

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[50] NetzDG, Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Rechtsdurchsetzung in sozialen Netzwerken, in force since 1 October 2017.

[51] Heffernan, Virginia, "In 'bad wild bad' fühle ich mich wie im Himmel", in *ZEIT Wissen*, Nr. 4/2018, 12 June 2018.

representative of Sunni Muslims comes awkwardly close to the arguments of those he wants to distance himself from.

Conclusion

Jihadist terrorism is based on a totalitarian Islamist ideology which is spread by followers who may define themselves as non-violent. The present-day terrorist attacks that have been widely encouraged by Daesh in its inter-cultural, international publications do rely upon "hidden fighters" who may be entire families or people who do not look like Salafists at all. Consequently, the ideology is one of the most important issues to be addressed by any prevention strategy. While it is important to physically protect society against potential aggressors, including the detainment of potentially dangerous plotters, this cannot be done in ways that further increase the claim of injustice against Muslims. It could be argued that Jihadism is the single most important global movement to show how torture and extrajudicial detention do not destroy the movement but clearly reinforce it. The active promotion of radicalism—a Saudi policy since Juhayman al-Utaybi's siege of the Grand Mosque in 1979—does not seem to have protected countries from terrorist attacks either. The only secure way out of a long spiral of violence and hate, therefore, is the propagation of values such as tolerance and respect. If societies start to polarise, thus neglecting fundamental rights, armed conflicts could arise and push countries towards the desired direction of al-Qaida and Daesh strategists: complete chaos. Violent anarchy, Jihadist strategists reckon, would ultimately favour the introduction of a totalitarian state that promises to bring back order and safety.[52]

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[52]   Naji, Abu Bakr, *idara at-tawhhush* (management of savagery), 2004.