

Kirsti Tajet Høigård

Ways In and Ways Out

An Analysis of Radicalization and
Deradicalization: Right-Wing Extremism
versus Islamist Extremism

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To SL, with the hopes that you will someday deradicalize as well

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“A young boy’s destiny is determined of who he hangs out with”

(Saying from the East in Husain 2009: 31).

1.0 Introduction

Terrorism has during the last ten years received a lot of attention, much as a result of 9.11 2001. Since then, Islamist extremists have been considered the most important threat to international security, also in Norway (PST 2012). However with the attacks in Norway last summer, the Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) has started to pay attention also to other extremist groups, in particular Right-wing extremists (Ibid 2012). Also elsewhere in Europe there is a growing awareness concerning Right-wing extremism (Kuhlish 2011).

The 22th of July events and other terror attacks put prevention of terrorism at top of the political agenda (Justis & Politidepartementet 2011). However, until recently the main focus has been on how to catch most terrorists and extremist and send them to prisons (Bjørge & Horgan 2009: 1). As this strategy proved to have little effect, a growing awareness emerged on the need to look beyond the security measures when dealing with terrorists and extremists. The focus changed, and alternative solutions in preventing radicalization, extremism and in the worst case terror attacks, emerged (Rabasa, Pettyjohn, Ghez & Boucek 2010). This has become known as various *deradicalization programs* (Ibid 2010), and in recent years we have seen a growth in number of organizations dealing with deradicalization efforts, partly due to the growing awareness around these issues within the United Nations, The United States and The European Union (Bjørge & Horgan 2009: 1-2).

Despite the increased focus and attention on radicalization-processes as well as deradicalization, much research in this area is still needed. In particular as good and available data across countries, groups and programs are missing, making systematic comparison next to impossible. What causes some people to join radical/extremist groups to begin with? And how can the community help these people leave their extremist views behind? These are core-questions in this thesis. Moreover, to what extent are the pathways to radicalization and deradicalization the same for different types of extremists? Does religion put a new and more complex dimension to these processes? Are Islamists extremists harder to deradicalize than Right-wing extremists? The purpose of the research is threefold:

1. What Explains Ways Into Extremism?
2. What Explains Ways Out of Extremism?
3. Are these processes different or the same for Islamists extremists as for Right-wing extremists?

The three research-questions are investigated and attempted answered, and a general overview of radicalization and deradicalization is given. The latter two research-questions are however given the main emphasis, as a similar analysis between groups on deradicalization is lacking in the literature and because it is particularly interesting to see if religion makes it more difficult to withdraw from a radical group as this possibly could be interpreted as also leaving their religious beliefs behind.

Based on the literature on radicalization and deradicalization I expect to find factors like lack of identity, political grievance and personal victimization as central for the processes. In regard to this I have made several hypotheses that will be presented in the text.

To answer my research-questions and answer the hypotheses, I have interviewed nine (former) Right-wing extremists that all have been through some sort of deradicalization programs (efforts). I have also interviewed three experts on Islamist extremism Hanif Qadir (former member of Al Qu'ida) Rashad Ali (former member of Hizb ut-Tahrir) and Pat Parry¹. In addition I am relying on secondary data-material that was given to me from Rashad Ali².

First in this thesis I go through what terrorism is and how much of a problem terrorism is today. I also describe the radicalization process and which factors that is most relevant in this process, before I look at ways that can lead to deradicalization, as well as how deradicalization can be “measured”, success. I then move over to present the qualitative research design, its strengths and weaknesses and my own data, before I continue to the analysis. In the end I draw a summary and conclude.

The main findings in this thesis indicate that the religious aspect of ideology does not make it harder to deradicalize Islamist extremists. The Right-wing extremist ideology can be as all-encompassing as religion if they have been members long enough. This finding is an

¹ Hanif Qadir works at Active Change Foundation, Rashad Ali works at CENTRI and Pat Parry works at EMCCU, all in the United Kingdom.

² I describe the interviews and the data material in section 5.0.

important step forward in the research evolving deradicalization.

2.0 Terrorism and Counterterrorism

2.1 Terrorism and Extremism

Since September 11 2001 the focus on terrorism has been highlighted all over the world, and there is a growing consensus among countries that something has to be done in order to deal with the problem of terrorism (Fink & El- Said 2011).

Terrorism is a wide term and countries in the world today struggle to agree upon a common definition (Fink & El-Said 2011: 24). However, some *components* with the term are agreed upon, for example that terrorism is a pejorative term that refers to the enemy or someone who have different opinions than you. Terrorism can also refer to a variety of situations, and is used when referring to school massacres and suicide-bombers as well as people that kill doctors that work on abortion clinics, The Army of God. Terrorism can be both political and less political (Davies 2008: 5-6). In this thesis the focus lays on the political part of terrorism. Alex Schmid (2011) defines terrorism as:

“Terrorism refers on the one hand to a doctrine about the presumed effectiveness of a special form or tactic of fear-generating, coercive political violence and, on the other hand, to a conspiratorial practice of calculated, demonstrative, direct violent action without legal or moral restraints, targeting mainly civilians and noncombatants for its propagandistic and psychological effects on various audiences and conflict parties”

(Schmid 2011: 86).

Terror, fear, dread and panic are central in terrorism and are shared by those who have similarities to the victims or identifies with the victims. Victims of terrorist attacks are mostly people who do not have any responsibility for the conflict that resulted in the terrorist attack, and are often civilians and defenseless people (Schmid 2011: 86). They are not the main target, but function as a propaganda based on fear, spread through the media. Terrorist attacks are mostly political in character and terrorists` goals are to achieve power by terrorizing a target population, but their motivation can be broad, from revenge, punishment and revolution, to the promotion of ideological, religious, political, social or national aims. Terrorists operate to create a state of fear, and attacks are rarely committed just one single time. The fear in the society that is formed when “expecting” or “waiting” for more attacks,

can create a climate in which manipulation of the political process gets easier for the terrorists (Ibid 2011: 86-87).

Since Schmidts` definition is somewhat broad I will rely on the definition from the The Norwegian Police Security Service; PST, who defines terrorism as:

“Illegal use of, or the threat to use, power or violence against people or property, in an effort to put pressure on the countries authority or population or the society as a whole, to achieve political, religious or ideological goals”

(PST 2012).

Terrorism is closely connected to the term *extremism*. Extremism is not pointing towards any specific political direction, but is rather a term to explain the tools that people can use to reach their political goal, these tools are very often of a violent character and are legitimized by the group (Handlingsplan Regjeringen 2010: 7). Desmond Tutu defines extremism as:

“When you do not allow for a different point of view; when you hold your own views as being quite exclusive; when you don`t allow for the possibility of difference”

(Desmon Tutu in Davies 2008: 4).

Extremism is therefore not only to take a certain thing to the extreme; it is also to deny other realities (Davies 2008: 4). Extremism is often connected to the acceptance of violence, threats or force to achieve political goals or to promote specific cases. This methodology can create fear and insecurity in a population (PST 2004). Extremism must however not be mixed with terrorism, every terrorist could be said to be an extremist, but not all extremists are terrorists (Davies 2008: 5).

“Beware of extremism in religion; for it was extremism in religion that destroyed those who went before you”

(The Prophet Mohammed, 570-632, in Husain 2007).

2.1.1 Types of Extremism

Even though different kinds of extremism³ have in common their extremist views of the world, there are many different groups that exist within a state of extremism (Alsen 2005). The focuses in this thesis are on the Islamist extremists and Right-wing extremists.

In *Islamism* Islam is the big motivator and the ideology takes religion as its starting point. The common denominator is the aim to establish a state where the sharia laws are central. There are both non-violent and violent activists that struggle to reach this goal, but in this thesis the focus is laid on Islamists that use violent methods in their struggle to establish an Islamic state (Handlingsplan Regjeringen 2010: 10). In other words you can say that an Islamist is a person who wants the state and the states religion to be one unit, no separation of politics and religion (Rabasa et al 2010: 2).

Right-wing extremists on the other hand, have traditionally not used religion in their ideology⁴. Across Europe Right-wing extremists have, to some extent, come to mean different things, and a Right-wing extremist group in one country can have very different characteristics compared to a Right-wing extremist group in another county (Merkl & Weinberg 2003). However, the Right-wing extremists have certain features that can be similar between many of the groups, regardless of which country they are from. Right-wing extremism is for example often characterized by nationalistic, racist or Nazi attitudes, and some of them threaten to use, or use violence to achieve their goals (PST 2012).

Many of the groups do also have members that are involved only for social reasons, and these members stay away from the violent part. The groups often have a hierarchical organization, and members can strive to climb in the hierarchy (Bjørge 2009: 30-31). Common for extreme Right-wing extremists is also the opposition against immigration (Merkl & Weinberg 2003).

In sum, extremism exists in different shapes and forms, yet the flavor of it is oftentimes the same, as is the potential threat these groups pose to the society at large. Thus, in the next section I look at how much of a problem these types of groups consists of, in cases where they chose to take it to the extreme, and revert to terrorism.

³ In this thesis extremist and radical are used interchangeably, this means that extremist and radical in this thesis refers to the same thing; a person who accept the use of violence to reach different goals (PST 2012).

⁴ Anders Behring Breivik could however mark a change in this as he could be called a Right-wing Christian terrorist as much as Osama bin Laden could be called a Muslim terrorist (Juergensmeyer 2011). However, the people that I have interviewed in this thesis belong to the “old” version of Right-wings. This does not mean the really old Right-wing and their causes dating back to 50-75 years ago. It rather means the typical “skinheads” that can embrace a variety of different causes (Merkl & Weinberg 2003: 23), without including religious aspects. The ultra- nationalism could rather be one of the main driving forces for them (Ibid 2003).

2.2 How much of a Problem is Terrorism Today?

The threat posed by extremist and terrorist groups can be affected of the international situation. We are entering a time with huge international changes, both in terms of economic decline in Europe, and regime changes in countries in the Middle-East. A number of countries can in the years to come experience an increase in poverty which again can lead to social instability in many countries (Alsen 2012). However, these effects have not come to affect the situation in Europe to a great extent, yet (Ibid 2012).

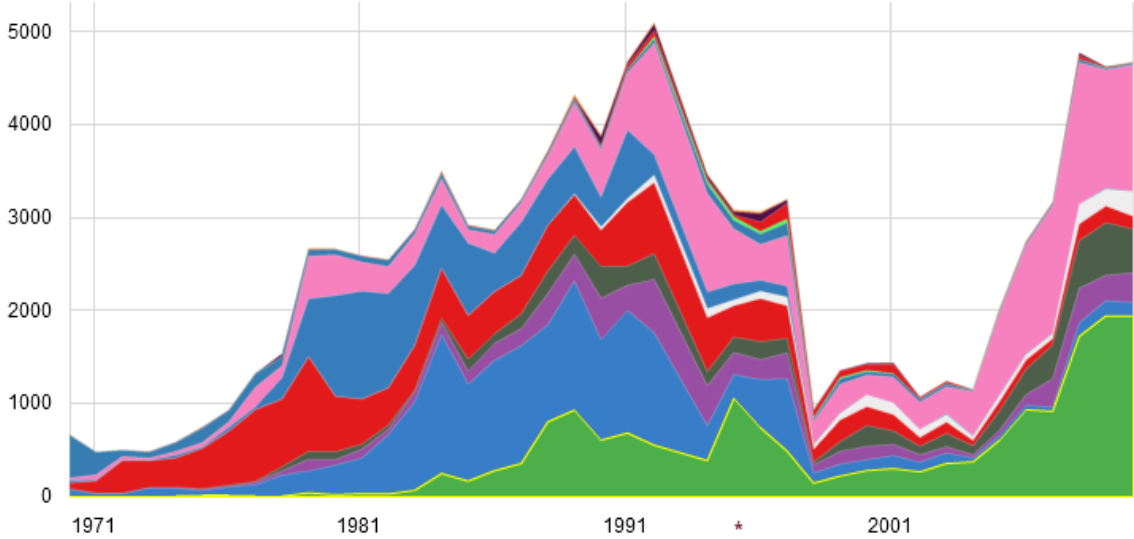
Today European countries seem to focus most on the threat posed by Islamist extremists as these groups have compromised the largest threats during the last years. Threat statements posted by Islamic terrorist groups indicate that these groups have a clear intent to commit attacks within countries in Europe (Te-Sat 2010). Increasing cooperation among terrorist and extremist organization in and outside Europe are also causing worries, in 2010 clear links were for example found between ETA (Basque Fatherland and Liberty) and FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia), and online communication makes the cooperation among such groups easier (Ibid 2010).

Despite the fact that the Islamist extremists have compromised the largest threats, other groups have also shown increased activity, for example Right-wing extremists. These groups have shown the will to enlarge and spread their ideology and are seen as a threat in many European countries (Ibid 2010).

Much effort is put on countering terrorism and in 2010 611 individuals suspected for terrorism activities were arrested in Europe, many of them were planning attacks in different European countries (Te-Sat 2011). Despite the efforts on countering terrorism 240 attacks were committed in different European countries during 2010, a total of seven people were killed in these attacks, which is a small number compared to the deaths caused by terror attacks in countries outside of Europe (Ibid 2011). However, if not a major problem Islamist extremism is still seen as the greatest threat to European countries in terms of terror groups, and the recruitment to some of these groups are increasing (Alsen 2012).

To get a better look at how big a problem terrorism is in the world today I present a general model with terror incidents per year grouped after regions in the world, from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD 2012).

Model 1: Terror Incident per Year Grouped by Regions in the World



Middle East & North Africa		18638
South America		17563
South Asia		17357
Western Europe		14784
Central America & Caribbean		10548
Sub-Saharan Africa		6400
Southeast Asia		6004
North America		2849
Russia & the Newly Independent States (NIS)		1925
Eastern Europe		906
East Asia		687
Australasia & Oceania		232
Central Asia		219

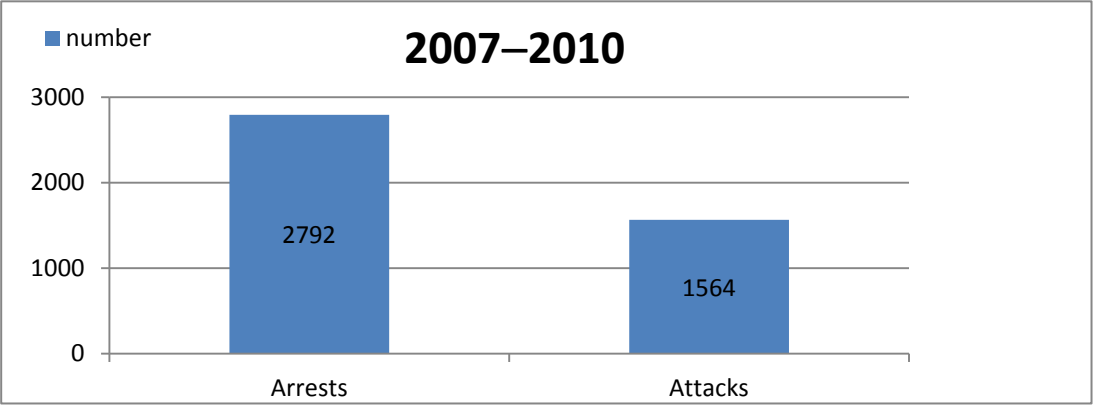
Source: Global Terrorism Database Data Rivers (GTD) 2012

As we can see from this model there were a rise in terror incidents after 2001, and this can explain why the focus on countering-terrorism have been higher after 2001. The rise of events was greatest in the Middle-East and in South-Asia. Despite the growing attention of terrorism within media and among policy-makers all across the world since 9.11.2001, the figure actually shows that Western-Europe – are seeing less terror-incidents now than during the 1980s and 1990s. The latter two years have seen a slighter increase though.

As the focus in this thesis is on extremist groups in countries within Europe, I present below more specific statistics from Europe in the period 2007–2010, showing the number of attacks and arrests in EU-member states in this period (Model 2) as well as a model showing

the most active terror-organizations (Model 3) in the same period. Both models are based on the Te-Sats reports from 2006–2011.

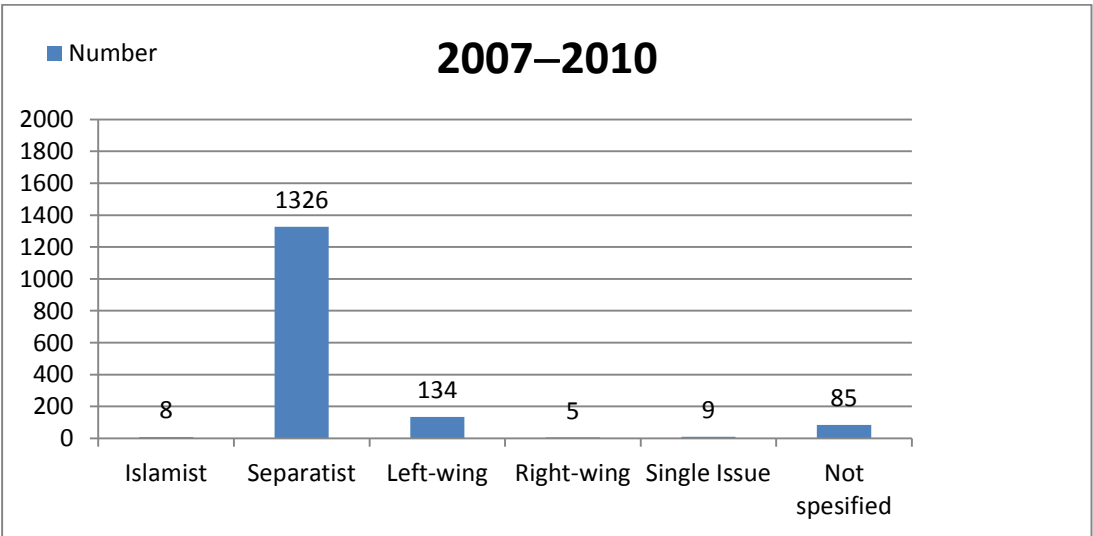
Model 2: Number of Failed or Successful Attacks and Arrests in EU-member States from 2007–2010



Source: Te-sat EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2006–2011.

In model 2 we see how many people which were arrested for terrorism related activity in the EU-member states from 2007–2010. 2,792 people were arrested, while 1,564 attacks were carried out in this period (Te-Sat 2007–2011).

Modell 3: Number of Failed or Successful Attacks per Group in EU- Member States from 2007–2010



Source: Te- sat EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2006– 2011.

Even though the focus in Europe seems to have been on Islamists since 2001 we see from model 3 that Separatist and Left-wings committed most of the attacks in Europe in the period 2007–2010. Attacks committed by Separatists happened mainly in Spain and France. ETA was one of the major groups. The focus on Islamist extremist groups in Europe can therefore be questioned as the Islamist groups comprises one of the groups with fewest attacks (8 attacks). However, the attacks from the Islamist extremists often turn out to be the deadliest (Te-Sat 2006-2011).

Despite the high number of attacks carried out in Europe in this period, especially by the Separatists, most of these attacks only caused material damages and few were badly injured or killed as a consequence of these attacks (Te-sat 2006-2011).

As we see from these models major terror attacks are not that common in Europe, at least not attacks with high death rates. Nevertheless, there is a great focus on countering terrorism all over Europe since the threat could be rising. In the next section I look at reasons for why we want to counter terrorism and deradicalize those involved in extremist movements.

2.3 Counterterrorism: Why We Want to Deradicalize Extremists

To use terror to govern is something that began at the very first beginning of organized society, and throughout history power has wielded through terror by inflicting fear (Chaliand & Blin 2007). Examples of this can be violent extremism as massacres and the crusades (Davied 2008: 2).

Also in the 20th century many countries were plagued by terror in different forms like the fighters in the anticolonial struggles, revolutionary left-wing and right-wing terrorists and ethnic separatist groups (Frey, Luechinger & Stutzer 2007: 1).

Despite terrorism and violent extremisms long history there have been a change in this area the last couple of year's due to more advanced technology, and the increased speed of communication. There are new ways of spreading information and extreme ideas can reach out to whoever might be interested in no time. This can increase the likelihood for more international terrorism (Davies 2008: 2-3) and to counter terrorism is important because extremism and terrorism have both economic and social disadvantages, and;

“Individual and collective disengagement from terrorism may reduce the economic, social and human costs of terrorism”

(Bjørngo & Horgan 2009: 247).

Extremism and terrorism can in a democracy be a threat to the democracy itself, as well as it can affect the national security and threaten different groups in the society (Handlingsplan Regjeringen 2010: 7). Terrorism is also indiscriminate;

“[...] aiming to cause mass casualties, regardless of the age, nationality, or religion of the victims [...]”

(HM Government 2006: 1).

The increase of threats from extreme Islamist organizations have led many European countries to address the need for preventive strategies in order to cope with the problem before it gets any bigger, and many countries have developed deradicalization strategies aimed at Islamist extremists (Handlingsplan Regjeringen 2010). Especially the United Kingdom has a well- developed strategy to prevent radicalization and to help those who are already radicalized into extreme Islamists milieus to get out (CONTEST 2011).

In Norway the main focus has been on “preventive conversations” with people in the “danger-zone” for being radicalized into terror milieus and organizations and the police have had an increase in such conversations during the last couple of years (Strøm-Gundersen 2011).

Below I look at some of the efforts that have been done in some European countries in order to counter terrorism.

2.3.1 Deradicalization Programs

A wide range of programs have emerged in different countries the last couple of years, some with great success, others with more unclear success rates (Ibid 2010).

Very few people are radicals, extremists or terrorists their whole life. Sooner or later people get tired of a life as an extremist and seek out of the milieu. To speed this process and make sure that the person who decided to leave the group does not reunite with it, the government can use different tools in the process (Bjørge & Horgan 2009: 1). These tools are the deradicalization programs. Some of these programs have loose goals and are poorly organized and others are well organized with clear goals. Most programs have extremists and ex-extremists as their main target group (Ibid 2009: 5). The programs mentioned here will be of that kind.

The core in the deradicalization programs is the aim to get people with extremist thoughts and practices out of their “unhealthy” environments, and the goal for most programs are the wish to make people that choose the wrong “track” with violent activities and unhealthy ideologies to disengage from these, and become “normal” and well-functioning people in the society (Fink and El- Said 2011: 1).

However, the programs vary after what kinds of problem they wish to resolve, but many of the main strategies are the same, mostly to get people to see for themselves that their views might be wrong, and help them to create a new understanding of life, as well as giving them support to establish a new life with a place to live and maybe a place to work (Handlingsplan Regjeringen 2010).

The programs can include many factors to help people disengage or deradicalize. Network-groups have been and are central in many of the programs. In these groups people can meet other people that are in the same situation. “Preventive conversations” with the police are also central in many of the programs (Ibid 2010).

To constitute a good deradicalization program, they have to have a “staff” that are well-educated or know the situation well, for example former extremists, so that the extremists will gain respect for the people working there. It is also important that deradicalization programs are comprised of affective, ideological and pragmatic factors that is followed up after the individual leaves the program. Many programs sees the importance of including the extremists family as well, so that they can be a part of the process and help the individual after he/she is finished with the program (Rabasa et al 2010).

Europe

Many countries in Europe have programs that have been aimed at Right-wing extremists, as this has been one of the main problems in European countries. Today there is however an increasing establishment of programs aimed at Islamist extremists since this group is of growing concern in many European countries. In the establishment of the “new” programs experiences from the “old” ones are used (Handlingsplan Regjeringen 2010).

In Norway one example of a deradicalization program is the Exit-project. The Exit-project is a Norwegian program from 1997 that was aimed at Right-wing extremists, and many good experiences were made with this project (Ibid 2010).

The Exit project offered help to people that had a wish to get out of extreme environments. Through the Exit program the participants got individual guidance as well as they could meet other people that had a wish to establish a more “normal” life and disengage from the

unhealthy environment they were members of. One of the main factors in the program was to try to create a new environment for the people that wanted to disengage. It is important that the people, willing to disengage, gets a new social network so that they do not fall back to “old friends” when they are finished with the rehabilitation. It is also important to establish contact with the public authorities so that they can make sure that the disengaged person will get a job and maybe a place to live (Ibid 2010).

In developing deradicalization programs countries are drawing on experiences from each other, and Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands borrowed the ideas from the Exit program, which was basically developed in Norway (Handlingsplan 2010).

The Exit program started as a consequence of the increasing number of young people in Europe joining violent and right-wing extremist organizations during the 1990s (Bjørgero, Donselaar & Grunenberg 2009: 135). Concerned parents in Norway contacted the police and they worked together with professor Tore Bjørgero to establish the Exit project in Norway (Ibid 2009: 136). The main thoughts behind the Exit project was to make more awareness and to develop strategies and methods among people who could be “nearer” to the young people, as teachers, youth workers, child welfare officers and police officers. During the first three year period of the Exit-project more than 700 practitioners got trained in how to approach to different violent and racist youth groups (Ibid 2009: 136).

The parental network groups were one of the most successful parts of the Exit. In this network group concerned parents could meet with others parents who were in the same situation and they could share experiences on how to put restrictions on the youths and how to get them to disengage from the violent or racist environments (Ibid 2009: 136-137).

In 2003 the Norwegian police, the Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) and Exit started a new project, “preventive conversations”. In this project the youths that were involved in violent or racist groups could meet with the police and have conversations with them about how to disengage and why disengagement was important ⁵ (Ibid 2009).

In Sweden they borrowed the Norwegian Exit idea to establish their own deradicalization programs. In Sweden the main idea was that people who wanted to disengage could contact the Exit organization on their own initiative, in contrast to Norway where much effort was put in tracking target-people “down”. Many of the volunteers in the Swedish Exit are former extremists, and they use their own experiences and their knowledge about the different violent

⁵ The “preventive conversations” was especially aimed at the racist organization Vigrid (Bjørgero, Donselaar & Grunenberg 2009: 138).

and racist organizations to help people disengage. Exit in Sweden also works close to the police, teachers, social workers and therapists (Ibid 2009: 138).

Germany also used the Exit program as inspiration for deradicalization programs for right-wing extremists. In Germany they established “Exit-Deutschland”. As in Sweden this programs main goal is to get extreme Right-wings to contact the organization themselves. Exit-Deutschland has a high focus on getting known through the media so that extreme young people will know where to go if they want to disengage/deradicalize (Ibid 2009: 142-143).

The “Muslim World”

In the “Muslim world”, one the other hand, most of the programs are aimed at radical Islamists. These programs takes place in prisons, where there is a high focus on theological dialogue as many of the Islamist have got a wrong understanding of Islam (Ibid 2010). These programs often combine assistance from psychologists and social workers, as well as theological dialogs and vocational training (Handlingsplan Regjeringen 2010).

Many of the countries in the “Muslim world” have also been quick to address the need for such programs, especially after September 11 2001; as a consequence many of the countries have got well established programs, which could offer guidance and re-education to the radicals. Former radicals are often included in this work, as they have a special insight into the radicals’ situation (Barret & Bokhari 2009: 170-173).

Countries in the “Muslim world” are also drawing on experiences from their neighboring countries and other countries with the same types of problems. It has also been important to focus on individuals and groups that are not yet terrorists, but are on their way into bad environments, and many countries have “preventive conversations” aimed at people in the “danger-zone”. The family is of special importance in this process with seeing “signs” of radicalism in a son or daughter. To discover people that are one their way to radicalization if of special importance since it is easier to deradicalize people that are not yet that committed (Ibid 2009: 173-175).

Even though many deradicalization programs exist today there have been problems to agree upon a common platform regarding measurement of success (Rabasa et al 2010). Below I look at the programs in the countries most relevant for this thesis and how successful they claim to be.

2.3.2 How Successful are the Programs?

Measuring success with different deradicalization programs can be hard. Every program is designed in a special context and with different goals at eye, and can as a consequence be very different with different measurements for success, this will however be further explored later in this thesis.

Since Norway, Sweden and the UK are the main focus in this thesis I present more detailed information about their programs and how successful they have proven to be below.

“If a man reverts to violent extremism having been giving everything by the state, he attracts little if any public support, whereas if a man returns to violence because he has been tortured or otherwise mistreated he is likely to take others with him”

(Prince Mohammed of Saudi-Arabia in Fink & El-Said 2011: 14).

Norway

As we have seen the Norwegian Exit project was established to deradicalize and disengage Right-wing extremists and people with connection to racists` milieus. In the project three different agents constituted the main program. This was the rehabilitation of radical youth that wanted to get out of the radical and extreme milieu, the parental network groups and the teaching of personnel in how to handle radical youths and the distribution of experiences and materials (Exit sluttrapport 2001).

The rehabilitation of youths was meant as a form of aid, to help the youths establish a “normal” life, a place to live, a job and new friends (Ibid 2001).

Parental network groups was also one of the components that constituted Exit. These network groups turned out to be a successful effort. From 1995-2000, 130 parents representing 100 youths were involved in these networks. In 2000 only ten of these youths were still active or members of radical and extreme groups and milieus. Not all of these youths left the milieu because of the parental network group, but this were probably one of the main reasons for several people (Bjørngo, Donselaar & Grunenber 2009: 136-137). The

In the Exit project there was also a focus on the need to educate people that were in daily contact with the youths. The need for information turned out to be large and this effort was a successful one in the case that people learned more about what to do, what to look for and how to handle youths with connection to extreme milieus (Exit sluttrapport 2001).

To summarize, the Norwegian Exit- project enabled to put extremism and the disengagement/deradicalization from it more on the agenda. It is however not possible to say how many people that have left extreme and radical movements as a consequence of the Exit project, this is impossible due to both fundamental and organizational causes. The goal was nevertheless that people would leave the groups before they got very involved in them, and before they committed any crimes. The ideas behind the Exit-project have caused interest in Sweden, Demark and Finland where they have tried to establish similar projects (Ibid 2001).

Sweden

In Sweden they borrowed ideas from the Norwegian Exit-project to establish their own exit-program in 1998. The main thoughts are the same as in Norway but the Swedish model is different in the sense that individuals to a higher degree have to make contact with the program themselves. The “target” individuals in the Swedish program are mainly right- wing extremists, and if they contact the program they can get assistance in leaving their group and help to establish a “new” life. In 2008, 600 people had been through the program since its start in 1998 (Bjørgo, Donselaar & Grunenbergs 2009: 138-139).

The Swedish exit has been able to disengage many people, but as with many of the deradicalization programs the participants are not followed up closely enough after leaving the program, so it is not possible to say for sure if all of the participants managed to stay disengaged/deradicalized (Ibid 2009). There is no data on how many people who left different Nazi-movements for good, but there are many indications on that people stay away from the former group, as disengaged people often are looked upon as betrayers by the remaining members of the group (Sandgren, Wikstrøm, Nur & Hallal 2010). There have also been a lack of competent people in the work with Exit in Sweden, the work staffs have lacked relevant experience and education, and this has caused some problems, nevertheless, Exit in Sweden seems to be functioning well, and much work is done to develop and improve the program further (Ibid 2010).

The United Kingdom

The United Kingdoms` counterterrorism strategy is called CONTEST, and is one of Europe`s most developed strategies for deradicalization, and is aimed at Islamists extremists. The strategy is built up by four components; prevent, pursue, protect and prepare and was developed in 2005. The prevent part of CONTEST covers the deradicalization area, the deradicalization programs (Rabasa et al 2010). In prevent the police works together with local

authorities and NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations) to find those who are vulnerable to radicalization and those who are already radicalized. The goal is to find them and challenge their ideas and views (Ibid: 2010).

The prevent part seeks to avoid that people get radicalized and join extreme milieus as terror groups. Assistance and support are given to those who are in such milieus to help them leave and establish a new life. The prevent is a cooperation between many sectors like criminal justice, education, charities, the internet and the health sector (CONTEST 2011).

The prevent part of CONTEST have had over 1000 people go through the program, and there are no indications that these people have returned to extremism or re-joined extremist-groups, which is seen as one of the indications of success in this thesis. The government in the UK is working to develop the whole CONTEST strategy further (Ibid 2011).

On the street level there is organization as Active Change Foundation who is an organization that works to prevent violence between gangs and try to prevent people from engaging in violent extremism. ACF works close to young people in the community to prevent and confront violent extremism. They work to draw people out of violent radical milieus and provide new perspectives and a positive lifestyle (ACF 2012).

As we see the different programs can be hard to compare as they are somewhat different. This puts the collection of comparable data across countries, programs and groups at the forefront of the research agenda. As a modest and first attempt in this direction I have interviewed extremists from three different countries across two different extremists' camps. Before moving into the more empirical part of this thesis, it is important to have a solid theoretical understanding of what leads to radicalization in the first place, which is the topic of the following section

3.0 Radicalization

A decision to join a radical movement can on the surface seem irrational as participation involves risks, especially if the movements are of a violent character (Wiktorowicz 2004).

Yet, radicalization does happen within all types of totalitarian views of life and political ideologies from the extreme left to the extreme right (Berg 2012).

Radicalization is defined as a process where a person approaches and gets new and extreme ways of thinking about the society and the world, at the same time the limit for the use of violence to achieve what is looked upon as the "goal" gets lower and accepted (Rabasa et al 2010: 1). How does this process happen? How can individuals take the step to support and

facilitate violence? What we know is that it is much easier to get involved in a group with extremists views than to disengage from it (Horgan 2009: 31), and many factors can lead to radicalization, but there are some factors that are more central than others as the radicalization process often follows a fixed pattern (Valk & Wagener 2010). Below I present different pathways to radicalization.

3.1 Pathways to Radicalization

There is no single root-cause which leads into radicalization (Bjørger 2011), and there has been a lack of agreement in the literature about which factors and causes to give the most emphasis. However, some claim that young people with low income are often found to be more vulnerable to radicalization. Those who have experienced discrimination, racial or religious harassments, and people who see themselves as in conflict with other cultural groups are also found to be more vulnerable to radicalization (Roots of violent radicalization 2010).

To get a good overview over some of the factors that are most frequently mentioned in the literature about radicalization, I mostly rely on McCauley and Moskalekos study on mechanisms of radicalization from 2008.

There have been trends to focus more on *them* – the radicals– rather than the context they are in, or the context they believe they are in (McCauley & Moskaleko 2008). McCauley and Moskaleko (2008) try to see the non-state actors in their context, and have identified twelve mechanisms that can lead to radicalization (Ibid 2008). Of these twelve mechanisms three are about radicalization of the “*masses*” (for example mobilization to war), these are: Jujisu politics, hate and martyrdom. Five concerns radicalization at *group levels* (for example the radicalization within an organization) these are: Extremity shift in like-minded groups, extreme cohesion under isolation and threat, competition for the same base of support, competition with state power and within-group competition. The last four concerns *individual* motives for radicalization, these are: Personal victimization, political grievance, joining a radical group and joining a radical group for reasons of love (Ibid 2008).

I have from McCauley and Moskaleko (2008) chosen the factors that are most relevant for my thesis to show how radicalization can occur. I have chosen factors mainly from the individual level as this is the level that is most relevant for this thesis, the factors are: *Personal Victimization, Political Grievance and Radicalization in Joining a Radical Group*.

In addition I have also included two factors from Munton, Martin, Lorenc, Marrero, Guillamon, Jamal, Lehman, Cooper & Sexton (2011) since these factors, *Identity Seeking and Rewards, Monetary and Status* are found to have relevance for radicalization into both Right-

wing extremist groups and Islamist extremist groups. To clarify the factors leading to radicalization into both Right-wing extremism and Islamist extremism I present them in a model.

Since Identity Seeking may be the factor that has the greatest relevance this will be presented first.

3.1.1 Identity Seeking

Every human has a need to feel that they belong to a group, basic group identity. Isaacs (1976) claim that basic group identity is important for two main reasons for every individual; “[...] *his sense of belongingness and the quality of his self-esteem*” (Isaacs 1976: 34). Isaacs further claim that this need for self-esteem and group pride can emerge into social and political clashes (Isaacs 1976: 36).

Common for both Right-wings and Islamists extremists when getting radicalized is the search for identity. Membership in different groups can reduce uncertainty about beliefs, feelings and behavior among the members and group identification is important for the establishment of social identity (Herriot 2007).

This need to seek a social identity can emerge after a personal event or crisis, where individuals are reevaluating their identity. Immigrants who have problems integrating into the new culture can for example have a need to reestablish their identity and can as a consequence join a radical group (Munton et al 2011). Joining a radical group can be a way to establish a new identity in both the sense that the individuals adopt the group’s views and thoughts and also in the way that they get a new social network (Horgan 2009).

When social networks within a group grows this can create an impression among the members that they are similar to each other, and this can again create a connection to the group and a stronger social identity (Herriot 2007).

When individuals are bound to a group they also compare their group, “in-group”, to other groups “out-groups”, and especially if there is competition between the two groups, negative feelings can evolve in connection to the out-groups (Dyrstad, Ellingsen & Rød 2012). A threat from the outside, out-groups, can further strengthen the unity in the group, the leader can gain more respect and an idealization of the norms in the group arises. In larger groups this cohesion is replaced with in-group identification, patriotism and even nationalism, but the threat from the out-group is the same as in small groups. This was especially the result after the 9/11 attacks in the United States with increased patriotism, increased support for the president and increased focus on American values (McCaully & Moskalenko 2008: 427). This

again enlarges the gap between the two “groups”, and can lead to radicalization. If conflicts between in-groups and out-groups escalate and involve prolonged violence there is a tendency that the groups become more extreme in the negative perception of each other, this tendency can escalate to the stage where the groups dehumanizes one another (Ibid 2008: 427-428). One example of this can be found in Anders Behring Breiviks statement in relation to his trial when he was explaining how he became radical, he said;

“In many of these cases I could have chosen to take the law in my own hands and hurt many of these Muslims, but I thought that it was not adequate, I looked at these people as animals”

(NRK 2012).

When negative feelings escalate the social identity within the group can become further strengthened, and the group can start to see itself as in conflict with the other groups. In conflict situations the identity within the group is strengthened more and the group wants to distinguish themselves further from other groups (Herriot 2007: 104-105).

This can be said to have been the case during the United States invasion in Iraq in 2003, Bush’s “war on terror” and the invasion resulted in a massive mobilization of radical Islamist movements. Radicals from other countries started coming to Iraq, and in the autumn of 2003 Iraq had to admit that the US lead invasion had resulted in a flourishing of militant Islamism and a larger terrorism-threat in the country (Knutsen 2005: 263).

If a conflict grows the enemy becomes more general, everyone else outside of the group is the enemy, this can strengthen the social identity to become so strong that it becomes the only identity the individuals in the group knows (Herriot 2007: 104-105).

Right-wing extremists and Islamist extremists are united in the identity-seeking (Skjeseth 2012). As for the Right-wings a search for identity could be important for engaging in the milieu. Very few are drawn to the milieu as a consequence of ideology alone, the social aspect is bigger and the feeling of belonging to something, group identity, as well as a will to rebel against the society. In the Right-wing milieus newcomers are also warmly welcomed and appreciated something that can make them feel that they finally are accepted and the identity and connection to the milieu starts to grow (Fangen 2001).

Islamists can also join radical organizations as a consequence of identity seeking; this is the case especially for home grown terrorists⁶ which are the focus in this thesis. Second and third generation immigrants living in different European countries can have problems in sorting out their identity, they do not feel European as well as they do not feel a strong identification to the country where they have their roots. They can decide to join a radical group in their search for the identity that they feel they are lacking (King & Taylor 2011).

From the Identity Seeking factors I have created my first hypothesis:

H1: Individuals that get recruited to extremist movements lack a clear identity.

For both Right-wing extremists and Islamist extremist joining a group also means making different ties, and the longer a person stays, the stronger these ties become, and exit from the group becomes more difficult. Even though a person joined a radical group mainly for social and identity reason, the group's ideology will be indoctrinated to the individuals, and they accept it because they have made social ties in the group. (Rabasa et al 2010: 42). This can apply to both groups, but most things fundamentally separate them, and religion is one of those things.

In times of modernization and changes in well-established social routines identities that used to be well-established can shrink. This creates a need to re-define one's identity and new ones are established (Huntington 1996) Religion can in many cases provide a good foundation for people searching for their identity;

“Whatever Universalist goals they may have, religions give people identity by positing a basic distinction between believers and non-believers, between superior in-group and a different and inferior out-group”

(Huntington 1996: 97).

Religion also provides answers and can offer membership in small communities (Huntington 1996: 97). The radicalization of young Muslims can in that way be a religious seeking that is also shaping their identity (King & Taylor 2011). Religion as a source for identity has a bigger potential to result in conflict than other forms of identity “sources”. This is because religions

⁶ Home grown terrorists is a term referring to people, often second or third generation's immigrants, who are radicalized and want to commit terror-attacks in the country that they live in (King & Taylor 2011).

have in it a locked system of beliefs, and sees the belief system in other religions as threatening at all times (Ellingsen 2005: 313). Huntington (1993) claimed that religious differences are far more fundamental than differences in political ideologies (Huntington 1993).

Religious differences have also been found to increase the likelihood for conflict. It is easy to see the differences between yourselves and others if religion is central to your identity, as well as the believers in the specific religion are afraid that other religions can pose a threat to their religion (Ellingsen 2005: 312-313).

Since religion can be a way of seeking identity as well as religion is a big part of the ideology in Islamist extremist groups I will take a look at the differences between the ideology in the two groups.

In Islamist extremist groups' religion is a central part of the ideology, this is in opposition to Right-wing extremist groups where religion is not part of the ideology. Ideology represents the thoughts, categories, concepts and the mental framework different groups use when they see the society and the members of the society and how they are organized and function, and can be very important in a group (Valk & Wagener 2010). For the Islamist extremist religion constitutes a great part of this ideology, religion is defined as;

“Religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations in human beings by formulating conceptions of general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic”

(Schmid 2011: 180-181).

3.1.2 Ideology

Groups or organization are mostly bound and motivated by an ideology. This ideology can be both political and religious, like Hamas for example (Drake 1998).

A very radical ideology tends to have an unrealistic view of the past as well as the future; this has however proved to be effective in the mobilization and indoctrination of members to the groups that holds that radical ideology. This happens because the radical ideology has a

huge comparative advantage over the ideologies that are more moderate, so in specific circumstances and frameworks mobilization proves to be easier⁷ (Steponova 2008).

Ideology can provide motivation for action in a group, as well as it can justify the use of violence in the way that the responsibility for the violent actions are put on the people or groups that are seen as the enemy, in that way the violence are justified by the ideology (Drake 1998).

An extreme ideology can unite different groups and cells in a society, and with different structural and organizational capabilities a precondition is made for the commitment of terrorist attacks by the militant non-state actors (Steponova 2008: 25-27). Since ideology can be a way of seeking identity I look at the ideology on the two groups below.

3.1.3 Right-Wing Extremists and Their Ideology

The Right-wing extremist milieus are in Norway today characterized by a lack of leader-figures and a common ideology (Alsen 2012). The milieus do not have one common ideology but are united in racist, nationalistic or Nazism attitudes, where the most extreme of them are willing to use violence to reach their goals (PST 2012). They are also united in the opposition against immigrants who is said to “steal the nation’s future” and some believe that the white race can be extinguished if white and black people “mix” (Eiternes & Fangen 2002: 79-80). To prevent this some can mean that it is important that people stay in their own countries so that ethnic homogeneity is maintained. They can claim that they do not have anything against people with different skin-colors, but they do not want them within their country’s borders as this can cause disagreements among the different ethnic groups. Some of the most extreme movements can also claim that people have an instinctive and aggressive conduct against people with a different race than themselves, and in that way violence is something natural that can rise in confrontations among different ethnic groups, and to excuse violence is therefore not necessary (Fangen 2001: 156-168).

The Right-wing extremists are divided into many groups that can have different ideological orientations and lifestyles. They have different characteristics that are special for the different groups. Some can be very militant, some find each other through music and others are united primarily through the ideology (Fangen 2001: 76).

Even though there is a lack of a common ideological platform, there are in the most extreme milieus ideologies and theories that can come to be extremely dangerous. Extremely

⁷ “i.e. in the framework of asymmetrical confrontation at the localized or transnational levels” (Stepanova 2008: 21).

committed Right-wings can have an ideology that can reach very deep and be so all-encompassing that it eventually escalates into an extreme conviction; this could especially be the case for believers in the ZOG theory (Eiternes & Fangen 2002). The ZOG, Zionist Occupation Government, theory is a theory that is based on the belief that Zionists are ruling and controlling the world. To understand this theory the Right-wings claim that you need to study it deeply, only after a period with long studies one can see how everything is bound together. When this theory is fully imprinted the Right-wings sees everything, from news to different kinds of information, in the light of the theory (Eiternes & Fangen 2002: 60-61).

The ZOG theory can become a strong theory for some of the Right-wing extremists and some believers in the theory can be so committed that they are willing to die for the cause. A strong belief in the cause can also take away the barriers for the commitment of violence. The ZOG theory is creating a view among the Right-wing extremists that everyone is in opposition to them and that they are in war with the rest of the society, they can develop a large suspicion against everyone and everything. The Right-wing milieu creates a collective notion among the members that they belong to something that is in opposition to the rest (Eiternes & Fangen 2002: 62), conflict with an out-group.

If one comes to believe in an ideology such as the ZOG theory, the belief can become a conviction as one has used so much time learning about it and getting convinced by other members. If the conviction is extreme enough Eiternes and Fangen (2002) claim that it can be as strong as the conviction to those that are religious fundamentalists (Eiternes & Fangen 2002: 60). This is however not the most common situation when believing in Right-wing extremist ideology as supporters of these different ideologies often are less aware of the ideology than they give impression of. Ideology can for them be something not-formulated and not- admitted (Fangen 2001).

To become a member of a Right-wing organization there is no demand that you know much about the ideology and can argue well for it, the only thing that is demanded upon membership is that the person sees herself/himself as a nationalist or national socialist (Fangen 2001). But there can be a certain pressure to accept the ideology without asking questions about it. Many of the new members do so to get socially accepted (Eiternes & Fangen 2002: 95), but in many of the milieus the extreme thoughts and ideas are not even well established or even well thought through. Among the members there is often a lack of knowledge around Right-wing extremist ideologies, and in Valk & Wagenaars (2010) analysis they found that not one of the people they interviewed in their analyses joined a

Right-wing movement only as a consequence of the group ideology, others factors had much more to say, like the social aspects (Valk & Wagenaar 2010).

In the milieus there are also surprisingly few discussions around ideology and it is impossible to find a common ideological platform for the whole Right-wing milieu (Fangen 2001). The limits for getting accepted in the different groups are very low, something that enables people with a poor social network to become fully accepted members (Fangen 2001: 134). There is also room for many different “isms” in the organizations, this enables the groups to get more support, as they accept many different kinds of people, and fight against what seems to be the most important issue; different antiracist and communist groups. The community and the group identification are to a large extent formed by the different groups that the Right-wings are in opposition to (Ibid 2001).

The Right-wings ideology are in continually change, and they can change their meaning to suit better what the media writes about them for example (Ibid 2001). Despite their common extremist character the Right-wing extremist and the Islamist extremists have very different ideological perspectives.

3.1.4 Islamist Extremists and Their Ideology

There has, during the last couple of years been a tendency in the Muslim world to connect ones identity to that of religion instead of territorial and ethnic criteria's. Gilles Kepel (In Huntington 1996) states;

“Re-Islamization ‘from below’ is first and foremost a way of rebuilding an identity in a world that has lost its meaning and become amorphous and alienating”

(Huntington 1996: 98).

When the identity is connected to that of religion an individuals' core values are shaped by the religion, which defines what is good and bad. The believers can also see their religion as superior to other religions, which again can increase the likelihood for conflict between holders of different religions (Scott 2000: 1-2).

Religion is an ideology (Ibid 2000: 2) and Islamists extremists mix both political and religious aspects in their movements (Vogt 2005).

These Islamic movements can take a wide range of forms, most often the movements are socio-political that strives to get reform in their own country. Some Islamic movements, like

the Muslim Brotherhood or Jamaat-e-Islami, are willing to work within their own state and the system to change and reform it, other more radical Islamic organizations are willing to use “violent jihad” (holy war) to achieve their goals. Among the Islamic movements the focus and priorities can be different and the alternative with holy war is a priority for relatively few groups (Stepanova 2008: 61). The most radical groups and movements are however the focus in this thesis.

There are many common features among the movements, many of the Islamic organizations are for example marked by disruptions and are weakened by poor leadership and lack of agreement, however many extremist groups are gaining new strength and are united in the ideology and the ultimate goal about the Islamic state (Vogt 2005).

The goal about the Islamic state is a central point in the ideology. The state is to be bound by religious rules, the *sharia* laws and critic against democracy has been common among ideologists, but this can vary among different groups. The goal is not only an Islamic state, but also to develop an Islamic economy and to develop Islamic science (Vogt 2005).

During the last couple of years there has been a growth in the Islamic world when it comes to political ideology that is inspired by Islam. The ideology absolves terrorism as a mechanism for achieving what is seen as the ideological goals, and is often spread through the internet. The internet also enables indoctrination and training. (Schmid 2011: 4). People inspired by this ideology are not united in one large organization, but they feel solidarity for each other due to their common vision, and they share the political thoughts as well as the violent methods (Knutsen 2005: 252).

For some Islamic movements the Islamic ideology can get so all-encompassing that they go to the step to commit acts of terrorism to achieve what they see as Islamic goals (Rasch 2005). The preachers of the ideology in these movements claim that it is the rest of the society that has moved away from the main principles in the faith and strives for a return back to the “old” and original values and practices. The way back to the original principles would be a road with stricter religious rules, and for extremists this road can be shortened by using the means of “holy war” (Stepanova 2008: 62).

This kind of radical ideology is not bound to any specific geographic area; the ideology is a non-state ideology that only distinguishes between believers and non-believers. For believers in the radical ideology God is the only ruler in the world, and this includes all national-states whether they are Muslim or not. The religious ideology can therefore not be associated with nationalism (Stepanova 2008: 156). Acts of violence and terrorism are glorified throughout the faith, and even defeat can, with basis in the ideology, be seen as a

spiritual triumph, because even entering the battlefield is seen as a victory and a contribution to the jihad (Stepanova 2008: 98-99). Abdullah Azzam who has been an Islamist activist and supporter of global militant jihad and is also said to be the founder of Hamas, said this about how militant confrontation in name of religion should be; *“Jihad and the rifle alone: no negotiations, no conferences, and no dialogues”* (Esposito 2002: 7).

The radical religious ideology can among Islamist extremists groups have a huge appeal and can be spread to different movement all over the world. The ideology inspires people throughout the world to join different radical cells that can use violence and in extreme cases self-sacrifice to get closer to their goal (Stepanova 2008: 154). Such radical religious and fundamentalist cells can achieve great political impact in the way that they can reshape social, personal and public behavior (Huntington 1996: 96).

The interdependence between the radical organizations and their extremist ideology is also a relatively extraordinary one. The Islamist ideology has a huge structural effect on the movements, much greater than the movements have on the ideological structure. In the movements with the most radical ideology all aspects of structure is tightly bound to that of its ideology (Stepanova 2008: 161).

It is not so that Islamic extremists and terrorists exploit their religion for political achievements; it is more so that they use politics to obtain a religious goal (Rasch 2005) and to defend ones faith is a religious duty and some can sacrifice their life for their religious beliefs. To preserve the faith it can be necessary to kill those who are in opposition to it (Herriot 2009).

When ones identity is strongly bound to Islam, opposition and especially attacks on the religion is by the believer seen as an attack on him/herself as a person, and creates a need for them to defend themselves (Ibid 2009). A terror attack can in that way be justified by upgrading the attack to a faithful action and an action of revenge (Stepanova 2008: 64). Islamists are in these cases acting on the behalf of God. The status as a martyr and reward in heaven is central and can be seen as a motivation for people to become hijackers for example (Herriot 2007).

Even if religious extremism and fundamentalism establish the base for the ideology in many radical Islamic movements, the religious extremism can go beyond theology and religion to make room for political, economic and social aspects in the ideology, this is the case especially for Islamic extremists as they strive for a societal organization where politics, religion, the state and the society are one unit (Stepanova 2008: 59). However there is a rule among Islamist movements about not distinguish between politics and religion, this reflects

the all-encompassing character of Islam, where all aspects of life are covered in a much greater extent than in other religions (Ibid 2008: 66).

For people active in terrorist networks their ideology seems to be more indoctrinated, than for people in other extreme organizations, and they are truly committed to their ideology and willing to sacrifice their lives in terrorist attacks for the case they believe in. However, the ideologies tend to be less advanced and sophisticated, and its followers do not understand all the aspects of their extremist ideology (Ibid 2008). The ideology becomes first and foremost the members identity and people that struggle to define themselves are drawn to the fundamentalist and radical movements, Huntington (1996) claims;

“Fundamentalist movements, in particular, are a way of coping with the experience of chaos, the loss of identity, meaning and secure social structures created by the rapid introduction of modern social and political patterns, secularism, scientific culture and economic development”

(Huntington 1996: 98).

The fundamentalist movements that best can respond to these feelings of chaos attract most people, and these movements are often able to answer basic human questions (Huntington 1996: 98).

In these fundamentalist movements anger and fear of the West, allied in an religious and inspirational ideology can motivate anyone, from a farmer in the Middle East to a PhD student, to commit violent attacks to defend their religion and to do what is seen as their religious duty (Harriot 2009: 84). But the religious ideology goes further than just a confrontation with the West; the ultimate goal is to;

“[...] establish the Sovereignty and Authority of God on earth, to establish the true system revealed by God”

(Stepanova 2008: 155),

and to achieve this, “jihad” could for some of the most radical Islamists be seen as a solution (Ibid 2008: 155).

Movements that holds an ideology that is inspired by religious extremism also has a much clearer picture of who the enemy is than other kinds of extremist groups that do not hold an

ideology that is inspired by religion (Stepanova 2008: 65). It is easier to spot the ones that are different from themselves, Huntington (1996) said;

“Religion gives people identity by positing a basic distinction between believers and non-believers, between superior in-group and a different and inferior out-group”

(Huntington 1996: 97).

Movements that hold an ideology with religious extremism can for example wish to “fight all the infidels”, this can apply to all people that do not believe in the same as they do, Arabs or non-Arabs, nationals or foreigners, in that way it is painted a very clear and wide picture of who the enemy is, mostly all that do not share the movements belief. The enemies are not reduced to certain groups or a handful of people⁸, but can be the West or the whole world of infidels (Stepanova 2008: 65).

The relevance of ideology for terrorist groups has during the last couple of years increased as a consequence of changing structural patterns and especially the spread of networks and their features. For different networks and their structures, a shared ideology with common goals plays a significant role, and tie different networks together as one movement in the unification of one shared ideology (Stepanova 2008).

This ideology is to a large extent of a religious character. Huntington (1993) claimed that religion is likely to fill the place of a missing identity-feeling when economic modernization and social change in the world are splitting people from what used to be their identity. Religion in this form is more likely to be of a fundamentalist character⁹ and those who subscribe to it are often young, highly-educated and middle-class people. Religion creates the basic platform of identity that unites people across national boundaries (Huntington 1993: 26).

When identity and ideology is bound to religion it is also easier to get an “us” versus “them” view of people belonging to other religious groups (Huntington 1993: 29), and this can again increase the chances for conflict (Herriot 2007).

⁸ This is in clear opposition to the Right-wing extremists that usually hold special groups like immigrants or the Jews for hatred (Fangen 2001).

⁹ Fundamentalist Islam is distinguished from mainstream Muslim faiths in the way that the fundamentalists see a closer connection between religion and politics; they want the state to be religious and the implementation of the *sharia* laws (Herriot 2009). They follow the *holy book* directly but are *selective* in what parts they choose to give most emphasis. Different ideas are chosen as more important (Ibid 2009: 2). Fundamentalist groups are often characterized by their opposition to modernity and democracy, theocracy is preferable (Ibid 2009: 3-4).

The longer the people are members of the radical group the more radical their ideology becomes (Munton et al 2011: 15). To cope, weakening or undermining such an extreme religious ideology there is a need for an ideology that is as strong and powerful as the religious ideology and has in it the power of persuasion. The ideology of state actors tend however to be modernized, passive and moderate compared to radical religious ones, and competition between them is therefore hard. So in matters of ideology the international system and the state can lose compared to the radical ideology (Stepanova 2008: 153-154).

In connection to this section I have made my second hypothesis:

H2: Ideology can be a good source to identity.

3.2 Political Grievance

Individual radicalization can also happen as a consequence of political events or trends (McCauley & Moskalenko 2008). The political grievance can for Islamist extremists be anger towards the West, especially anger towards the United States and its role in the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq¹⁰ (Munton et al 2011).

Political grievance can also be connected to situations involving jobs. Henrik Urdal (2006) finds that if young people with high education do not get jobs, this could especially be the case in countries with economic decline, it could lead to anger and radicalization becomes a “solution” to the problem for the well-educated, but unemployed people (Urdal 2006).

This leads me to the term *relative deprivation*. Relative deprivation is a term that can be connected to grievance in the way that individuals could have a mismatch in what they believe they can “get” and what they actually “get”, if what they get is not as good as they hoped for, it can create a state of frustration and grievance (Gurr 1970).

It is however important to note the difference between unrealized ambitions and unrealized expectations. Where the unrealized ambitions create feelings of disappointment the unrealized expectations will result in feelings of deprivations, which is harder to take than a feeling of disappointment. Deprivation is often intolerable, and can have more severe consequences. The individuals that experiences the deprivation feels impelled to remedy, by whatever means are available, the material and psychic frustrations is produced in the individual, and can create aggression. Deprivation can in that way serve as a catalyst for revolutionary action (Ibid 1970).

¹⁰ Criticism and anger against the West and the US, and their foreign-policy, is not in any case unique for Muslims or extremists (Munton et al 2011: 17).

Relative deprivation can cover a wide range of issues from welfare values, economic issues, power and status (Ibid 1970: 25-27).

The economic issue can be relevant for the point made by Urdal (2006): individuals with high education that do not get jobs, can feel a growing frustration that eventually can escalate into aggression (Urdal 2006). If the aggression grows further it can result in violence. However, this does not mean that frustration must lead into violence; it is only if the frustration is felt over a long period of time that the likelihood for aggression emerges (Gurr 1970: 36-37).

Political grievance in connection to relative deprivation can also be the ability to vote, to take part in decision making and the ability to participate in the political elite. If the society is an unstable one, these abilities can be lacking and this can escalate into frustration (Gurr 1970: 25-26).

The chances for a violent result of the relative deprivation increases in relations to the intensity of the discontent, and in situations where the discontent is very large it can result into mass violence or revolutions (Ibid 1970). From this I have created my third hypothesis,

H3: Experiences of grievance can make it easier to get radicalized.

3.3 Personal Victimization

In the psychological literature there exist evidences that supports both individual characteristics and situational factors in shaping individuals behavior, and in the literature regarding radicalization there is an agreement on that situational factors, of negative character, to some extent shape how individuals think, which ultimately can lead to radicalization (King & Taylor 2011). Especially if people have been in situations where they have experienced violence, traumatic loss of family members or bad personal experiences in matters of treatment it can make them more susceptible to embracing violent ideology (CENTRI 2012). This can result into the wish to revenge (McCauley & Moskaleiko 2008).

The Chechen Black Widows are seeking revenge against the Russians due to experiences of death and rape among their menfolk. Another example is the Palestinian suicide terrorists that can seek revenge over IDF, Israeli Defense Force, for their attacks on their homes and loved ones. Grievance can in this sense shape and harden people so that they decide to use violence as a political tool (McCauley & Moskaleiko 2008: 418). Personal victimization can also be felt by immigrants living in the West that experiences racist attitudes and oppression against them, the urge to revenge can then become central to them (Munton et al 2011: 18).

The urge to revenge may also arise as a consequence of how individuals, ethnic or national group are treated (McCauley & Moskalenko 2008). Immigrants can for example see the worldwide oppression against Muslims and consequently feel an urge to revenge (Munton et al 2011).

Earlier experiences and traumas are also dealt with in Dyrstads (2012). In this article Dyrstad finds that people that have had traumatic experiences and as a consequence developed Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), appear more authoritarian than others. These authoritarian values can be clear several years after the traumatic incidents, or in Dyrstads (2012) example, after the war. This indicates that how a person are able to deal with traumatic events to a large extent affects persons value orientation later in life, and if the traumatic events are not dealt with this can lead to authoritarian value orientation (Dyrstad 2012).

I have now presented some examples as to how personal victimization can happen. However, data is lacking on the area and how many terrorists and suicide bombers who joined the cause due to personal victimization are hard to come across, nevertheless, victimization is an important factor on the way to radicalization (McCauley & Moskalenko 2008).

In connection to this section I have formed my forth hypothesis:

H4: People that have experiences with personal victimization can easier get radicalized.

3.4 Radicalization in joining a radical group

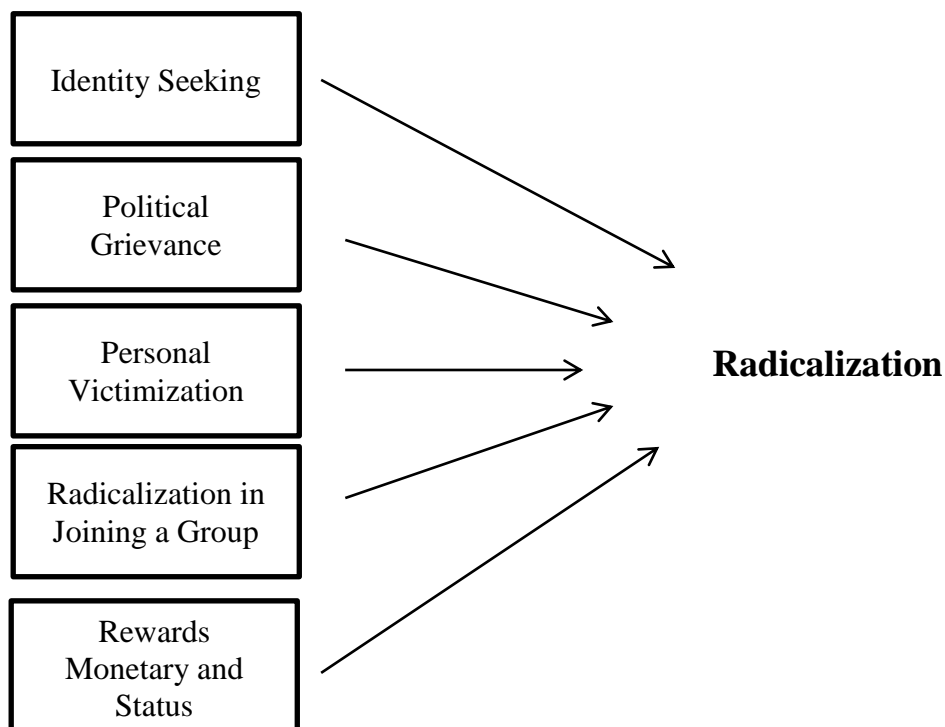
Joining a radical group is the path to radicalization that has got the most attention in theorizing about terrorism. It means that individuals are recruited to terrorist groups or other radical groups. This recruitment often happens by friends, lovers or families since the ones that recruit want to recruit people that they trust (McCauley & Moskalenko: 2008). The factors romantic and comradely love can be a very strong factor in the process of joining a radical group; it can even be as strong as the political aspect. When friendship is strong this can lead to a group of friends joining the radical group together. After joining a radical group the love for friends within the group and their common goals and threats increases and the group cohesion is enlarged. Group solidarity and a common goal are found to be one of the strongest factors holding radical groups together (Ibid 2008: 421-422). In addition to this I have formed my fifth hypothesis,

H5: Prolonged membership in a radical group makes the individuals more radical.

3.5 Rewards, Monetary and Status

These are factors that have been found to have relevance for the radicalization process, especially for Islamists. Rewards can create motivation for further involvement. The rewards are common for members in terror networks and can be salaries, rewards when operations are successful and money for the member's family. The rewards can also take form as high status in the community, honor, power and the promise for a good afterlife in paradise for the individual and his/hers family (Munton et al 2011). Status is a factor that is mentioned in relation to radicalization of both Right-wing extremists and Islamist extremists. Especially for the Right-wings status can be important in the way that they, when entering the radical milieu, experiences that people who could bully them before now are afraid of them (Exit sluttrapport 2001). From these factors I have created a model.

Model 4: Main Factors Leading to Radicalization into Right-Wing Extremism and Islamist Extremism¹¹.



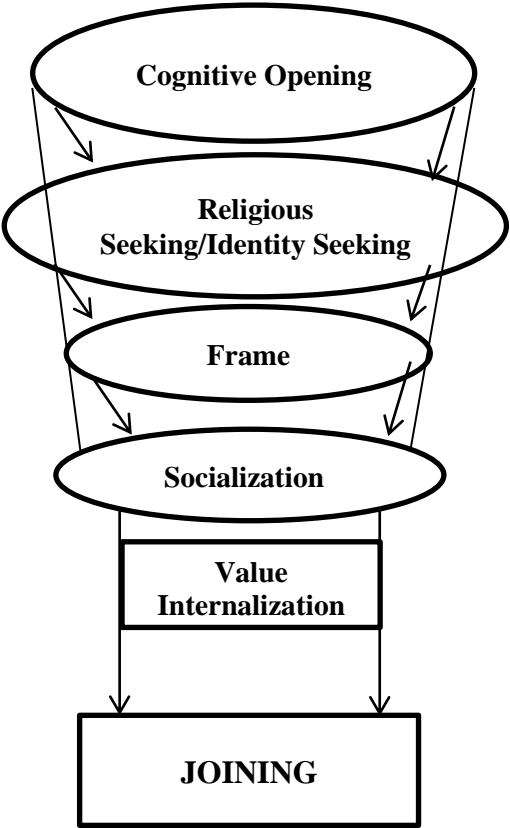
¹¹ Radicalization in joining a group and Rewards, monetary and status are factors that also can increase radicalization after involvement in a radical group.

The factors for radicalization presented here are not the only ones that have relevance for radicalization. There are several and diverse pathways active in the process with radicalization and these pathways can change among different individuals (McCauley & Moskalenko 2008: 429).

To get an even better understanding of the processes at work in a radicalization process I take a closer look at factors that are relevant in the process and decision to join a radical group, some of these are overlapping the factors I have already gone through, and some not.

Wiktorowicz (2004) identifies four main processes for an individual to join a radical group. Wiktorowicz processes are based on studies of Islamist extremists, but I have developed his points and his diagram to apply to both Islamist extremists and Right-wing extremists. I present the diagram below.

Diagram1: Key Processes for Joining Radical Groups



Developed from Wiktorowicz (2004).

People do not awake with a sudden will to join a radical group, instead they have been experiencing a socialization process and an exposure to the groups thoughts and ideas, and

even experimentation with other groups, which eventually leads them to embrace one certain radical group (Wiktorowicz 2004).

Diagram 1 shows processes that are involved in such a decision. The two first processes are essential for further commitment and socialization, that means that if an individual is not open-minded to new ideas, do not meet or rejects the movement's message, he or she will miss the activities necessary to embrace the ideology and eventually join the group (Wiktorowicz 2004).

Cognitive Opening: The diagram starts with cognitive opening which implies that an individual becomes aware of new ideas and other ways to look at the world, as well as getting exposed to the movements' message. A crisis can be central in the cognitive opening. This crisis can be of economic (losing a job), social/cultural (racism, humiliation) and political (repression, torture, political discrimination) character (Wiktorowicz 2004: 7-8). The political point can be connected to the Grievance factor in model 4.

Religious Seeking/Identity Seeking: A cognitive opening can lead to religious seeking where individuals can be searching for meanings in religion. Wiktorowicz (2004) argues here that the greater role religion has on one's identity, the greater chance for the individuals to respond to the cognitive opening through religious seeking (Wiktorowicz 2004: 8). Religious seeking is a form for identity seeking. But identity seeking is not only of religious character. Individuals can be reevaluating their identity after personal events or crisis and they can establish a new identity by joining a radical group (Munton et al 2011).

Frame alignment: The seeker finds sense in the thoughts and practices of a radical group, and becomes interested in learning more about the group (Wiktorowicz 2004).

Socialization: When the frame alignment has taken place, deeper socialization can occur. At this point the newcomers to the group are willing to learn more about the group in general and the ideology. The individual goes through activities and lessons that facilitate identity-construction and value change (Wiktorowicz 2004: 10). They also get to know other people in the group as the movements encourage social bonds that could create a new social networks (Ibid 2004), and the newcomers get socialized and may see that the group is not that extreme, as the media could have given the impression of, after all and they get pleasantly surprised (Fangen 2001).

In the end of the model is **Value Internalization** which implies that the individual has embraced the new thoughts and values, and then decides to **Join** the radical group. When the individuals has taken the final decision to join the group, they will get further sight into the

groups ideology, and this again will tie the members identity closer to the group, and they get further radicalized (Wiktorowicz 2004).

In this part we have seen that many different factors are at work in a radicalization process. The Identity seeking factor could be of special importance, and the ideological aspects could be seen as a way of identity seeking, especially ideologies that are of a religious character.

The next question then is, once a person has become radicalized, what can be done to make him/her turn away from radical movements (Bjørgero & Horgan 2009), leaving extremism, political violence and terrorism behind - what is deradicalization? Is it just radicalization in reverse?

4.0 Deradicalization

Since radicalization is a process where a person can approach extreme thoughts, deradicalization has come to mean somewhat the opposite. *Deradicalization* is the process where the extreme thoughts and practices slowly fade away and are replaced by a more “normal” sight of the society. It is also the process where one accepts that violence is not a good way to solve problems. This whole process of deradicalization is a slow one, and it is easier to be radicalized, than to deradicalize (Rabasa et al 2010: 1-2), it is also easier to get disengaged than deradicalized (Horgan 2009), there is however some problems connected to the measurement of success with deradicalization, this will be explored below. But first I look at what disengagement has come to mean today, and then discuss the differences between disengagement and deradicalization.

4.1.1 Disengagement

When leaving a radical group the main goal is for the individuals to get deradicalized, but several only gets to disengagement. Before I go into pathways that can lead to deradicalization I will describe what it means to be disengaged since many of the radicals end up in this “category” when they leave a radical group. The problem with being “only” disengaged is that disengagements may not result in any reduction in radical ideological support (Horgan 2009).

Horgan (2009) suggests in “Leaving terrorism behind” that there is a difference between psychological disengagement and physical disengagement. In psychological disengagement a person can feel that the ideas thought to represent the organization are not the same as he/she thought it to be, and he/she starts to feel insecure about the ideology in the movement. There

can also be disagreements within the group that can lead to a growing insecurity about the movement. Disagreement on political and ideological issues within the group can also lead to psychological disengagement. Psychological disengagement can also happen if a person get kicked out of the movement, and if a person feel that it is time to change his/her life style and priorities. Psychological disengagement is more likely to happen early in the engagement in the movement, rather than later when the people are more indoctrinated into the movement (Horgan 2009: 20- 22).

In physical disengagement other factors are relevant for the disengagement. First you can simply leave the group by your own free will. You can also get kicked out of the movement. Disengagement can also refer to a change in the roles in the movement. Jail and death stands for the most dramatic ways of leaving a movement (Ibid 2009: 25). The factors from both the psychological and the physical disengagement are core components in the disengagement process, but there is an urgent need to collect more data on factors that make people disengage (Ibid 2009: 27-28).

One other factor that has proven to be effective in the process with disengagement, is if the people in the radical group or organization experience something that can be seen as a trigger for disengagement, like a violent incident within the "gang" for example. This incident can function as a trigger to either disengage or to get more involved. It is important that an intervention takes place after the incident, so it makes it more likely that people will disengage, rather than getting more involved (Rabasa et al 2010: xiii-xiv).

In the disengagement process it is also important that to disengage is looked upon as something "attractive" and motivating. A strategy compromised of both hard and soft components has proven to be the best way to get people to start on the disengagement process. When people has been through a disengagement process it is also important that they are assisted in how to get back to the society and helped to get a job and a place to live. In addition the former extremist should stay away from his earlier group, organization or gang and make an effort to be part of what is viewed as the "normal" society. Whether the disengagement process is successful or not, has very much to do with the person's commitment to the group or organization. If a person has a high position it is harder to disengage. Level of commitment in the group has also very much to say. If a person has been a member of that specific group or organization for many years he/ she can feel that the life "outside" is unknown, and be afraid of leaving the well- known group and the friends within the group (Ibid 2010: xiv- xv).

Bjørgero and Horgan (2009) discuss some similarities and differences in how people on their own initiative can leave different extremist groups and factors that in different groups can be an obstacle for leaving. In youth gangs and groups age is an important factor. When people get older they want other things like family and a more stable life, these factors can make it easier to disengage. Violence can also make it easier to disengage from a youth group, especially if a person experiences violence close to himself or his friends (Bjørgero & Horgan 2009: 7).

How long an individual has been a member of the group has also something to say for disengagement, long-time members have a harder time disengaging than people who have only been members for a short period. In youth gangs stigmatization from the society can make it harder to disengage because they will meet people out in the society that are judgmental because of the ex-members past. Leaving a gang or a youth group can be similar to joining it; there are certain steps that you go through. But it is more complicated and harder to leave the group than to join it (Ibid 2009: 7-8).

According to Bjørgero and Horgan (2009) there can be great problems for people who want to disengage from religious groups or sects as many of these groups or sects are accused for brainwashing, as well as the members feel a great degree of stigmatization when they re-enter the society (Ibid 2009: 8-9) Rabasa et al (2010) also claims that disengagement from religious groups could be particularly difficult compared to other extremists groups (Rabasa et al 2010). I have therefore constructed my sixth hypothesis (H6) in relation to their claim,

H6: Deradicalization/disengagement could be especially difficult for those in groups with a religious ideology.

There is however many similarities in the disengagement from religious groups and racist groups. When disengaging from racist or Right-wing groups, people can also experience stigmatization from the society, and this can be a barrier to leaving. What is different in the disengagement in racist or Right-wing groups is that there is a great risk of getting punished by the groups when leaving. Other racist groups can also get involved in the punishment of the disengaged person. Religious groups do not practice violent punishment (Bjørgero & Horgan 2009: 9-10).

As mentioned disengagement is not the ultimate goal in assisting people to withdraw from their radical movements, deradicalization is what is aimed for.

4.1.2 Deradicalization and Disengagement- the Tricky Difference

Deradicalization is the goal in deradicalization programs, but it is possible to be disengaged even though you are not deradicalized. A person can still have the same thoughts and ideas after being through a deradicalization program, but he/she can be less active in the former group. What is important is whether this person is likely to participate in violent actions and terrorist attacks (Horgan 2009: 27-28).

In *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* (2010) deradicalization is looked upon as the process where there is a huge change in persons' beliefs. Were the old and radical mindset is changed with more nuanced ways of looking at the world (Rabasa et al 2009: 5).

Disengagement on the other hand has much to do with behavior and is seen as the process where a person changes his/hers behavior and turn away from violence and radical organizations where this kind of behavior is normal. But disengagement does not only refer to leaving a group, disengagement can also mean the changing of roles inside a terrorist organization, but it often implicates that the person that disengages do not execute any violence. Disengagement refers to the behavior part and deradicalization refers to the whole process of changing ones beliefs and thought in a fundamental way, deradicalization is in that case a much bigger step for the target persons as this process is more all-encompassing (Ibid 2009: 6).

A successful deradicalization program should be a program where both disengagement and deradicalization are part of the process. The goal is to change both the mindset and the behavior. The problem here is that one often can see that the radicals' behavior can change, but the way of thinking and the beliefs are constant and unchangeable (Ibid 2009: 6-7).

It is very important to know whether a person is deradicalized or only disengaged. To find indications on this, observation and analysis of the individuals actions and words could be possible, but this is not a method that is hundred percent reliable, especially with Islamist extremists this has turned out to cause problems as the Islamist extremists often get tempted by the benefits that comes with being deradicalized, in first case their freedom and second, jobs and a place to live (this is especially the case with the well-developed programs that have a good after-care system). This can make the Islamist extremists, that have been through a deradicalization program, create an impression that they are deradicalized, when they really are just disengaged (Ibid 2009: 6-8). However, it is more important to do something about violent behavior than changing the whole mindset of individuals, meaning, disengagement is after all better than being a radical (Bjørgero & Horgan 2009: 3).

4.2 How to Measure Success?

There are some problems with measuring success in deradicalization programs. First of all the programs are relatively new, and that makes it hard, if not impossible, to find the long-term results. Secondly, many programs have a huge lack of reliable data or statistics about the success of the programs since many governments are afraid of being criticized as a result of data-collection and publishing of the results (Rabasa et al 2010).

It is also hard to get in contact with so called reformed extremists. Sometime after finishing the programs the reformed extremists are “watched” by the programs, but after a period the focus on them stops and is put elsewhere, and it is hard to say what happens with the ex-extremists then, if they re-join a radical group or if they stay on the “right” side. Another problem in measuring success is the discussion I have mentioned before about disengagement and deradicalization. A person can be disengaged, but not deradicalized, and that is an obstacle for measuring success (Ibid 2010).

The measurement for success can also change from country to country and from program to program. In many programs success has been defined as disengagement, this implies, as we have seen, that ex-extremists do not commit violent attacks or re-join a radical movement. Even though there are no common measure for success, most programs use as a minimum definition for success that most participants in the programs gets and stays disengaged (Ibid 2010: 41).

However, there is an ongoing debate about whether deradicalization should be the ultimate goal for the programs, and what really should be included in the term deradicalization, or if disengagement is enough, an expert on the issue said;

“You’ll find a lot of deradicalized jihadists, the ones who abandon political violence, they’re not really liberals, so they’ll still have misogynist views, xenophobic views, homophobic views, and so forth on and so forth”

(Fink &El- Said 2010: 24).

Because of the lack of agreement among countries in measuring success, it is challenging to compare different programs as they lack a common platform. But recidivism is a measure that is used by many of the programs as a measurement for success (Ibid 2010: 24). But how low should the recidivism rate be to be called a success? The lack of agreement is evident also here (Ibid 2010).

And, is it really a need for a common measurement for success when the countries that are using the programs are as different as Norway, Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia? A solution can be that every country has their own indicators for success that can function as a platform for comparison among countries (Ibid 2010: 24).

What is agreed upon on the other hand is that when a person joins a radical movement, many ties are made, like friendship. For a deradicalization program to be successful these ties must be broken, so that the individuals do not rejoin the group to meet their friends when they are finished with the program. To be successful deradicalization programs should also challenge individual's beliefs and destroy individual's affective connection with the movement as well as creating new interests for the individuals (Rabasa et al 2010: 42-43).

As we have seen no common measurement for success with the programs exists today, but there is nevertheless many factors with success that are agreed upon. The question is whether there is a need for a common measurement or not. Many of the countries that have deradicalization programs are so different that a common measurement can be challenging to create (Ibid 2010). I have nevertheless chosen the criteria's that are the most agreed upon in the literature and made a model with them.

4.3 Model for Success

It would have been convenient if there were a "best practice" model for how to run deradicalization programs. Unfortunately this is not the case, much because of the different social and political context extremism exists in. The programs are formed by the context in which they exist and as a consequence there are different measures for success (Bjørge & Horgan 2009).

Even though deradicalization programs are context specific there are some factors that are often mentioned in the literature as minimum criteria for success. Based on these criteria's I have made a model over factors that should be fulfilled when a person deradicalizes and for the program to be called successful.

Model 5 lists factors that should be fulfilled for a deradicalization program to constitute success. The factors are based on the literature found in Rabasa et al (2010) and Bjørge & Horgan (2009). The factors are:

1. Most of the programs see it as a success if the participants in the programs do not commit acts of violence or terror attacks, in their own country, after finishing the deradicalization program (Rabasa et al 2010: 41). This criteria is also found in Bjørge

& Horgan (2009) to be one of the criteria's for a deradicalization program to achieve success, and is important for disengagement for all groups (Bjørgero & Horgan 2009: 250).

2. For success to be achieved the ex-militants should also stay away from engaging in their old organization or other extremist organizations, this criteria is important in the disengagement for Islamist extremists (Rabasa et al 2010: 41), as well as in the disengagement for Right-wing extremists (Bjørgero & Horgan 2009).
3. The last criterion is also important for the deradicalization for both groups, the non-involvement with people that are still members of radical and extremist organizations (Bjørgero & Horgan 2009: 250).

Even though not all programs sees full deradicalization as necessary to constitute success, participants of different deradicalization programs should disengage as well as deradicalize, as deradicalizing refers to the changing in ones believes and values. When deradicalizing both the ex-militants ideology and in some cases also the organization in which the person was a member, is weakened (Rabasa et al 2010: 41-42).

The three criteria's listed here should be fulfilled for the programs to call themselves successful, but it is also important that each program set clear goals for what they want to achieve (Bjørgero & Horgan 250-251).

Model 5: Factors that Should be Fulfilled for a Successful Disengagement

No execution of violence or violent attacks	No re-joining of the radical organization	Non-involvement with members of the radical organization
V	V	V

Having clarified the difference between disengagement and deradicalization and having explicitly presented factors that should be involved for a program to be considered a success, I now move over to explain pathways which can lead to deradicalization.

4.4 Pathways to Deradicalization

Most radical people withdraw from their group at some time or another, and many factors can be important in the decision to leave (Bjørgero 2009: 36). These factors can be conceptualized as functioning either as “push” or “pull” factors. (Morris, Eberhard, Rivera, Watsula 2010: 4). The push factors relate to disadvantages with staying in a radical group, such as negative social forces and circumstances (Bjørgero 2009: 36). The pull factors are factors that can attract a person to deradicalize from the group due to different “rewards” connected to exit, such as career possibilities and marriage (Ibid 2009: 36). The factors I have included in this section are; *Negative social sanctions*, *Disillusionment* and *Acts of violence* which are push factors, and *Rewards* which is a pull factor. In addition I have included *Burnout* in the model.

4.4.1 Negative Social Sanctions

Negative social sanctions are a factor that is found to be of special importance for exit from Right-wing extremism. Negative sanctions from people outside of the milieu can make some of the radicals reconsider their involvement in the extreme group. Such sanctions are more likely to affect the individuals if they are relatively new members (Bjørgero 2009: 36). From this I create my seventh hypotheses:

H7: Negative social sanctions are of special importance for deradicalization for Right-wing extremists.

4.4.2 Disillusionment

Disillusionment is a factor closely connected to the deradicalization process, and is very important for exit from Right-wing extremism as well as from Islamists extremist groups (Disley et al 2011). Disillusionment can arise when a person find that the ideas he/she thought to represent the group and involvement in it, are not the ones they thought it to be, that the individual feel some sort of disappointment with the group.

Those who became members of the group especially for ideological and political motivations may experience disillusionment when they see that the group does not work that “hard” for the population they claim to fight for after all. For example if an individual joined to fight for the Muslims it can be troubling that, according to some estimates, around eight times more Muslims than Westerns are killed in Al Qu´ida attacks (Bjørgero 2011: 5). From this factor I have constructed my 8th hypothesis,

H8: Disillusionment is one of the most important factors for deradicalization for both Right-wing extremists and Islamist extremists.

4.4.3 Acts of violence

Acts of violence or a dramatic event often starts the process that can lead to exit and deradicalization from groups. This event can function as a trigger for the exit processes in a way that it is a realization that the group is something the individual don't want to be a part of (Rabasa et al 2010). Acts of violence can also be required of the individuals as a criterion for further involvement, and this can make people start considering the process with leaving (Morris et al 2010: 4).

4.4.4 Rewards

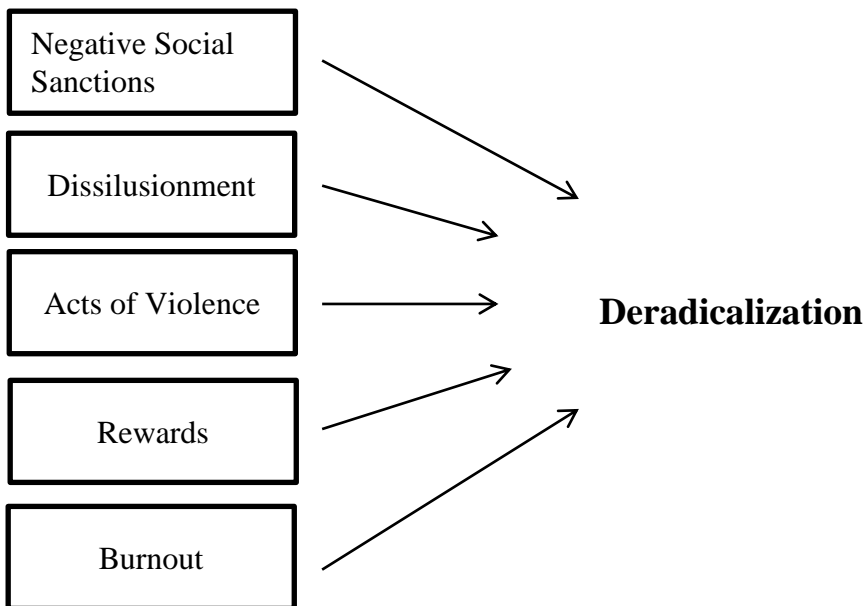
Rewards are connected to different benefits with leaving the radical groups; this could be factors that are connected to future career prospect which is of special importance for the Right-wing extremists (Bjørge 2009). The individuals can realize that if they are to get a career later in life it is important to deradicalize from the radical milieu and take an education before it is too late (Ibid 2009). Positive social ties can also be included under rewards and is relevant for both Right-wing extremists and Islamists (Disley, Weed, Reding, Clutterbuc & Warnes 2011). Marriage and having children are seen as changed social ties and can in a large degree function as a trigger for exit (Horgan 2009). The "longing for freedom of a 'normal' life" (Bjørge 2009: 39) can be significant here. The individuals start to get tired of the life in the radical group with constant paranoia and insecurity as to whom to trust within the group; they can start to wish for a "normal" life and someone to share it with (Bjørge 2009). From the reward factor I create my ninth and last hypothesis:

H9: Rewards is important for deradicalization for both Right-wing extremist and Islamist extremists.

4.4.5 Burnout

Burnout is also a factor that could have relevance for deradicalization, but is more important for the Right-wing extremists than for the Islamists, and is therefore not included in the model above. Burnout refers to situations where members in the groups are frozen-out by the other members and are no longer wanted as members in that particular organization. Burnout can in that way function as a trigger for exit (Disley, Weed, Reding, Clutterbuc & Warnes 2011).

Model 5: Factors that can Lead to Deradicalization from Right-Wing and Islamist Extremist Groups



There are many factors that could be active in the process of deradicalization, but due to a lack of data material in the area it is hard to say which factors are the most important (Vank & Wagenaar 2010). I have tried to mention the ones that are the most frequently mentioned in the literature on disengagement and deradicalization, this implies that there are alternative factors that are not listed here, but could also be found to have relevance.

As the theoretical part of this thesis is now presented I will summarize the hypotheses that are established before I move to the Methodological section of this thesis. The hypotheses:

H1: Individuals that get recruited to extremist movements lack a clear identity.

H2: Ideology can be a good source to identity.

H3: Experiences of grievance can make it easier to get radicalized.

H4: People that have experiences with personal victimization can easier get radicalized.

H5: Prolonged membership in a radical group makes the individuals more radical.

H6: Deradicalization/disengagement could be especially difficult for those in groups with a religious ideology.

H7: Negative social sanctions are of special importance for deradicalization for Right-wing extremists.

H8: Disillusionment is one of the most important factors for deradicalization for both Right-wing extremists and Islamist extremists.

H9: Rewards is important for deradicalization for both Right-wing extremist and Islamist extremists.

5.0 Methods and Data

5.1 Qualitative versus Quantitative Research Design

Method is a way to collect information about the reality (Jacobsen 2000). This collection of information is either qualitative or quantitative. Quantitative research method is based on numerical data which enables description of the reality based on numbers and tables. Qualitative research gives information in the form of textual descriptions that often are collected through interviews (Ringdal 2007: 22).

There are benefits and disadvantages with both the two ways to collect data. In qualitative research you have emphasis on understanding rather than explanation, being close to the individuals that are included in the research is also important and the material that is collected is often collected after deep interviews, something that enables better understanding (Tjora 2010). A disadvantage with qualitative research is that there is no room for as many informants as in quantitative research. Quantitative research can include larger selections of the population something that enables better casual explanations (Ringdal 2007).

In the beginning of this project the intention was to find data material from different efforts and programs that said something about success with the programs or the repetition rate of the participants. Unfortunately it became clear that very few countries have collected data in the aftermath of different deradicalization programs, and therefore it is hard to say something about how successful the programs have been. The programs are also relatively new in most countries, something that also makes it harder to measure success and long-term effects. Reformed extremists are also hard to track down in order to measure how well they have “ended up”. (Rabasa et al 2010: 40-41).

As a consequence of the lack of data I decided to use qualitative method in this thesis, and to interview people from different radical groups that had been through some sort of deradicalization effort or had other insights into the field¹².

¹² The thought was to interview Right-wing extremists from Norway and Sweden and Islamists extremists from the UK and Denmark. As it turned out to be very difficult to find people in both Sweden and Denmark, I decided that I needed to limit it down to Right-wing extremists from Norway, and some from Sweden, and Islamist Extremists from the UK.

5.2 Interviews as Data Collection

How data is collected can have impact on the results in a survey (Jacobsen 2000: 131). The research interview is the most common form for data collection in qualitative research. This form of data collection is useful if one is interested in opinions, attitudes and experiences. When doing research interviews there is an interest for how the informants have acquired different opinions and their understanding of reality on the background of experiences they have had in their life (Tjora 2009: 56-57).

When doing such interviews one seeks to understand issues from the subjects` point of view, to go deeper into their experiences and understand their lived world prior to scientific explanations (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 1). The research interview is a professional conversation and is based around aspects of the daily life. However, the interview conversation is not one between equal partners; the researcher has the control over the situation (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 2-3).

There are different forms of interviews. Personal interviews, face to face or over telephone, and group interviews are the most common forms. In individual interviews the researcher can get detailed information about the informants and the data that are collected are sentences and stories (Jacobsen 129-130).

The best thing is to meet the person that is interviewed face to face because it is easier to get real information in that way. Body language has much to say, as well as the researcher to a bigger extent can give response to the informant, and it is easier to speak about sensitive issues face to face. Personal interviews are however often expensive and takes time. Telephone interviews can reduce these costs. But there are some disadvantages with telephone interviews. The informants can easier tell things that are not totally true in telephone interviews and if many of the questions are “open” it can be more difficult to start a good conversation over telephone. The chance to observe the informant is also lost when doing telephone interviews and this form of interview can take a very anonymous character. However, the benefits with low costs and no travel expenses is a very positive side to this form of interview (Jacobsen 2000).

In the collection of data to this thesis I have used a combination of telephone interviews and personal interviews. Due to informants that were spread all over Norway, and Sweden, I have interviewed most of the Right-wing extremists over telephone. One of the interviews was personal and one interview was done over Skype. Even though this method is not optimal, I had long telephone interviews, most of them 45-80 minutes and I felt I got the information that was needed for this survey, mostly why they became involved in the groups,

why they withdraw from the group, combined with their thoughts around the ideological aspects¹³.

In England I had two personal interviews that both lasted over one hour. I also had one interview over Skype. In the interviews from both sides, I tried to look for how committed the people were in their organizations, why they decided to deradicalize/disengage, how big a part the different deradicalization efforts played in the disengagement process and how central the different ideologies were to them. These questions are not of very “open” character and it is therefore easier to ask them over telephone than if the questions had been more open (Jacobsen 2000).

5.2.1 Right-Wing Extremists

Finding the informants for the interviews was not done over-night. I contacted several organizations and a lot of people that have been working in this area. Since the plan in the beginning was to have more informants from Sweden I have contacted several instances there as well.

In Norway I first tried to contact Adults for Children, VFB (Voksne For Barn), as they were the ones hosting the Exit project in Norway from 1997 (Bjørge, Donselaar and Grunenberg 2009: 136), but they could not provide information about previous participants in the programs. I also contacted the people that worked with the EXIT project, including Tore Bjørge and Yngve Carlsson. In addition I contacted the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), The Norwegian Police University College, The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST), different local police stations, different researchers at universities, the Norwegian Correctional Services (Kriminalomsorgen) and different Right-wing organizations directly to hear if they could provide some assistance. The different local police stations helped me in the way that they contacted relevant people for the interviews and asked if they were interested in participating, if the people contacted were interested their contact information were given to me.

In Sweden I contacted “Fryshuset” since they are the ones hosting EXIT Sweden. I also contacted The Swedish Security Service (Säpo), Hall-prison as well as different Right-wing organizations. Out of the contact that was made I was able to find nine people that were willing to get interviewed; however, they do not constitute a representative sample of the population.

¹³ See Appendix for interview guide.

The radical organizations that are represented on the Right-wing extremists side is; “Vigirid”, “Viking”, “Svenska Motståndsrörelsen”, “Eskiltuna NS”, “Hvit Arisk Motstand” (White Aryan Resistance) and “Boot Boys”.

When finding informants it had to be a criterion that the Right-wing extremists had been through some kind of deradicalization efforts. In Norway these effort has mainly been conversations with the police, “preventive conversations”, and support for those who wanted to disengage, especially through the Exit-project (Bjørge, Donselaar & Grunenbergs 2009: 136). Of the nine people that I have interviewed there were some variations in how much support they were given in regard to deradicalization. This could have an impact on the answers they gave me.

Due to problems finding informants, I have interviewed seven people from Norway and two people from Sweden. The two people that are interviewed from Sweden have also gone through preventive conversations or/and involvement in EXIT in Sweden. There was no criterion that the informants had to be fully deradicalized, because it is interesting to see the reason why someone stayed in the radical groups even after they had been through deradicalization efforts. Of the nine people I have interviewed, seven of them are today totally deradicalized (withdrawn from the groups as well as changed views) from their previous milieus, and they do not want to be symbolized with their earlier activism. The two others are still active in their milieu, even after efforts from the Norwegian Police Security Service, PST, to make them deradicalize/disengage, preventive conversations. Of the people I have interviewed seven were men and two were women, eight of them were in the age 25-40, one was over fifty.

The informants had different degrees of commitment and involvement in their (former) groups, not all of them were members for such a long period of time that they became fully radicalized as extremists (that means accepting the use of violence (PST 2012)).

5.2.2 Islamist Extremists

For this thesis to be as balanced as possible the best thing would have been to have the exact same source of information with regard to the interviews and the collection of data-material in Norway and the UK. The plan was to interview former Islamist extremist in the UK and Denmark that had been through some sort of deradicalization. This group turned however out to be hard to find and the sensitive character of it did not make it any easier.

As in Norway and Sweden I contacted a lot of organizations to try to establish the contact. Some of the ones that I contacted were: Quilliam Foundation, Active Change Foundation, Ed

Husain, European Muslim Research Center, Demos, Street, Wormwood Scrubs prison, Home Office, Bringing Communities Together, Faith Matters and different professors at Universities in England. My request for finding people was also posted on the webpage to the new network “Against Violent Activism”, AVE; which is a network where reformed terrorists and ex-violent radicals can get in touch with each other. In addition I also contacted several instances in Denmark. Some of the ones I contacted in Denmark were; Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), The Danish Ministry of Justice and “VINK” Denmark.

Despite a hard effort to find people in the UK and Denmark that were willing to get interviewed and at the same time met my requirements, I ended up with only three people from the UK¹⁴. This was Hanif Qadir, Rashad Ali and Pat Parry. Unlike the Right-wing extremists these people are not anonymous as all three of them agreed to be named in the thesis.

Hanif Qadir is a former member of Al-Qu`ida and founder of Active Change Foundation, ACF. ACF is based in London and works to counter extremism, help those involved in street and gang crimes out of the milieu, help with chaos management, faith and racial issues. ACF works close to young and vulnerable people, in that way they can easier spot signs of radicalization (ACF 2012).

Rashad Ali is a former member of Hizb ut-Tahrir¹⁵, and later one of the founders of Quilliam Foundation, he now works at CENTRI. CENTRI stands for Counter Extremism Consultancy, Training, Research and Interventions and they work to deliver evidence-based counter-extremism solutions. They are specialized in Islam and they provide information to national, regional and local governments, the police, universities, the media and different religious institutions. In addition they offer training to those who are to work with counter-extremism (CENTRI 2012).

Pat Parry do not have a radical background but have been active in the work with deradicalization of both Islamist extremists and Right-wing extremists in an organization called EMCCU. EMCCU is a multi-agency organization working to help people that may be vulnerable to violent extremism. They focus on understanding peoples' needs before they look at solutions to their problems (EMCCU 2012).

Both Hanif Qadir and Rashad Ali have been active in radical groups; they had however not gone through any deradicalization program. This is a potentially problem because it makes the

¹⁴ I did not find anyone willing to get interviewed in Denmark.

¹⁵ Hizb ut-Tahrir is a radical Islamist political party with connections worldwide. They strive to establish a worldwide Islamic caliphate and are against democracy. They are also known for the promotion of hate and encouraging of terrorism (Akershaug & Talseth 2010).

two groups different, but because of problems getting it in another way, it had to be done like that. They withdraw from the groups without any assistance, but due to their previous involvement in radical groups and because they are both working with deradicalization today, I decided to interview them because of their great experience in the field. From the interviews with them I am relying on both their statements in regard to their personal experiences, as well as their experience in the work with deradicalization of radical people.

The interviews with Hanif Qadir and Rashad Ali were personal and were carried out in London, they lasted around one and a half hour each. The interview with Pat Parry was done over Skype. Both Hanif Qadir, Rashad Ali and Pat Parry works with deradicalization today and have great insight into this field. When doing the interview with Hanif Qadir I was also showed around at the Active Change Foundations center in Waltham Forest in London.

In addition I include some secondary data material in the analysis. The data I got access to is collected by CENTRI¹⁶ during the last two and a half years and was handed to me from Rashad Ali. The data is a written document, secondary data material, formed after conversations with people that were in the process of disengaging from their radical groups. The people in the data are mostly men and a couple of women in the age 16-28. The material is based on conversations with the people that were held in the periods where they were disengaging from extremist milieus. The focus was to help them to deradicalize so the data-material focus on intellectual, emotional and behavioral changes that took place. Because of this, I can find relevant information in this data that is also answering some of my most relevant questions¹⁷.

The extremist organizations that are represented from the Islamist extremist side is: Al Qu'ida, Hizb ut-Tahrir and Al-muhajiroun.

Since I am also relying on secondary data material in this thesis, I will explain the use of this method in the following section.

In qualitative analysis the best thing is that the scientist collects the data material himself/herself. But in some cases this is not possible and there is a need to use secondary data to go through with the analysis. It is however important to be aware that not all qualitative data are enabled to be reused and that some shades will be lost (Tjora 2010: 152-153).

¹⁶ Counter Extremism Consultancy, Training, Research and Interventions, <http://www.centri.org.uk/CENTRI/Home.html>

¹⁷ The use of secondary data material is not an optimal method as the data from the two groups compared should be as similar as possible, but this was the only possible way to carry out a comparison in this thesis.

There are many problems with secondary data. First of all the data that is collected could have been meant to suit another purpose, a different problem (Jacobsen 2000: 124-125). The data may therefore not suit the new project, and this makes it harder for the scientist to get all he/she wants out of the data-material (Jacobsen 2000: 124-125).

Second, some of the control over the data-material is also lost when using secondary data material. Information about how the data was collected can be missing, as well as a lack of information in regard to who collected it; if it is possible one should clarify who collected the data, how it was done, when the data is from and how the data material was registered. This makes it easier to say something about how reliable the data material is (Jacobsen 2000: 152-153).

In many cases secondary data is the only available data. Secondary data can include many sorts of material, from diaries to newspapers and data collected during interviews (Ringdal 2007: 97-98). If one is aware of the lacks that can occur when using secondary data it is possible to use data collected by others several times (Tjora 2010: 152-153).

5.3 Quality in Social Science

In social science three criteria's is often used as indications of quality. These are generalizability, validity and reliability. Tjora (2010) also mentions two additional criteria's for quality; these are transparency and reflexivity (Tjora 2010: 175). In this section I go further into these five terms, and explain why they are important to be aware of when doing qualitative studies. I also describe the importance of being aware of ethical aspects when doing qualitative research.

Generalizability (Extern Validity)

Generalizability is to put the theoretical understanding that is achieved in a project into another context, in that way a survey can establish a more general understanding of the issues (Thagaard 1998: 184). When generalizing in a study there is a need to have a representative selection of the population, this means that there have to be a certain amount of people that participates in the study and that they are chosen in a specific way (Jacobsen 2000: 65). The selection of people in a qualitative study can often be skewed because they do not stand for a representative selection of the population¹⁸ (Jacobsen 2000: 214).

¹⁸ Population means all the investigation units that are relevant to say something about. This unit will always be limited (Jacobsen 2000: 64).

Generalizability is not the ultimate goal in all surveys, some surveys wish to give an understanding in that specific context that the survey is done in (Thagaard 1998: 184). This is the case for this thesis, as the groups that are studied makes it almost impossible to have a representative selection as the people are hard to reach, and since the confidentiality around people that have been in contact with the police, because they wanted to disengage from radical milieus, is high. The support for Right-wing extremists milieus have also always gone in waves during the last thirty years and even in their “heydays” the members in Norway were just above 300 people (Lunde 2012). The unstable memberships also make it harder to get a representative selection.

The informants used in this thesis do not stand for a representative selection of the population, or the groups that they represent; Right-wings or Islamist- extremists. The findings can therefore not be generalized, something that deserves criticism, the findings can however function as an indication as to whether deradicalization is harder for specific groups and also point out some differences in regard to ideology between the two groups. In addition as Jacobsen (2004) claims; the findings can enable better understanding of the phenomena found in the survey (Jacobsen 2000: 214).

Validity

Validity is about the evaluation of the answers we find in science and if these really answer the questions asked. Validity can be strengthened by explaining the different choices that were made in a survey (Tjora 2010: 179).

When doing interviews one may however not always get the truth about the given issue, but the different statements may nevertheless express a person’s experiences and views (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 252), and this is the case for this thesis. Since the two investigation units in this analysis has been collected differently it can make it harder to compare them as the comparison basis gets different, this can be problematic and can also affect the validity of the research.

To verify the interpretation made would have been desirable to increase the validity, instead the answers given can only be seen as indications and cannot be taken as a verification of the interpretations, something that deserves criticism. Because most of my informants also are anonymous it makes it harder for others to test the verifiability, something that also affects the validity in this thesis.

However, this thesis is carried out within the frames of social science and previous research is used both in matters of theory, and also in the formation of the approach to the problem, this is also an important source to high validity (Tjora 2010: 179).

Reliability

Reliability is about how much we can rely on the data that appears in a survey (Jacobsen 2000). No research is done in vacuum. The scientist will always have some sort of engagement in the project and it is important to find out what kind of position the scientist has in relation to the research. To strengthen the projects reliability it is important to reflect over whether one has anything in common with the informants or if one has special knowledge about the issue, and if this could affect the result in the analysis. To use quotes in the analysis can be a way to give the informants his/hers own voice in the analysis without any reformulation by the scientist, in that way the reliability to the survey can be strengthened (Tjora 2010). I have therefore used several quotes in the analysis part of this thesis.

To strengthen the reliability it is also important to inform about the context the survey is done in, and to explain if the results would have been the same if they were done by another scientist in another context (Tjora 2010: 175-178).

Transparency

When presenting a research material it is important to explain how the survey is done, what kind of choices that were made, different problems that occurred along the way and what kind of theories that were used, and how these worked (Tjora 2010: 188). This is important so that the reader of the survey understands how one gets to the interpretations (Mason 2002: 192). It is important that the reader gets a good insight into the research so that it is possible to decide the research credibility. To make a research transparent is to register choices and changes while doing the research (Tjora 2010: 188). In this thesis I have presented how I have been working along the way, how data was collected, different problems that occurred and also why different choices were made, this should therefore meet the criteria for transparency.

Reflexivity

In qualitative research many things can affect the data that is collected. In an interview situation people can for example behave different since they know that they are the ones “investigated” (Jacobsen 2000: 221). We must also be aware that the interpretation of the data is formed by our own political, cultural, theoretical and cognitive opportunities and

surroundings. It is important to be aware of this so that the credibility to the survey increases. Reflection around the collected data is also important, so that the reader of the survey know how different interpretations were made (Tjora 2010: 88-189).

Ethical aspects

When doing quantitative analysis with few investigation units, it can be easier to recognize people that have participated in the survey, especially if many details were shared by the informants. This is something the researcher must be aware of when doing the analysis (Jacobsen 2000: 396).

The ethical aspects around interviews are bound up to how the data material is presented in the analysis. This is especially important if the informants can take any harm of the information that he/she has shared, especially when the shared information is of very personal character (Tjora 2010: 141). It is common today that informants are anonymous, this can however be problematic when it comes to the materials reliability as it is not possible to make a quality check of the presented material. However, anonymity for the informants is of special importance if the informants used to be bound up to any criminal milieus and if the milieus are small and easily recognizable. The informants should not under any circumstances take harm by getting involved in the study (Thagaard 2003: 24-27). If the information that is collected is of very sensitive character it is important to secure the privacy to the individuals that is investigated (Jacobsen 2000: 395).

Because of the complex character of the Right-wing milieus and because most of my informants do not want to be symbolized with their previous gangs or milieus all of my informants from the Right-wing milieu are anonymous¹⁹. This makes it hard for other researchers to test the verifiability in the survey, but is in some cases necessary (Jacobsen 2000). The three informants from the Islamist extremist side are however presented with names as they agreed upon that.

Details that can be connected to the informants, as their gender combined with age, which organization they were members of and geographical area, where they were active, is not relevant for this thesis and is therefore not included together. I mention the different organizations that are represented, but this information is not combined with any other details that can reduce my informant's anonymity.

¹⁹ Anonymity means that it is impossible to connect information to the people's identity (Jacobsen 2000: 396).

All of the participants are aware that the participation was voluntary and are also aware of the risks and gains that such participation can lead to, informed consents²⁰ (Jacobsen 2000: 393). The survey is reported to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).

6.0 Analysis

In this section the answers that were given to me during the interviews and the answers that come from the material I got from CENTRI are presented. The answers are presented under different sections so that it will be easier to spot the differences. The sections are divided after which order the questions had in the interviews and ways in and ways out are divided after the radicalization and deradicalization factors from the theory. The radicalization and deradicalization factors will also be mentioned in other parts, if they have relevance. To document general findings I have used quotes from the interviews. The interviews with the Right-wing extremists were done in Norwegian, so the quotes are translated from Norwegian to English²¹.

6.1 Ways In: Right-Wing Extremists

It is not so that all people that are drawn to Right-wing extremist milieus have a bad childhood or background, but common for many of them is that they do not have a wish to take higher education or make a working career (Fangen 2001: 133). In this section I look at reasons for engaging in the milieus for Right-wing extremists found in the interviews.

In the interviews it became clear that many factors were active in the process of getting involved in a radical group, but some factors recur.

The Relevance of the Ideology

All of my informants from the Right-wing side, apart from two, said that ideology had little to do with the involvement in the radical groups. Several said that ideology had nothing to do with the engagement at all, that they could have become members of anything at the moment. With the involvement in the radical groups there often raises a stigmatization from the media and the local society calling the people in the radical groups Right-wing extremists;

“After some time you have heard so many times that you are a Right-wing that before you know it, you are one”.

²⁰ See appendix for the information paper that was given to the informants.

²¹ See appendix for quotes in Norwegian.

This can lead to acceptance of an ideology that the individuals are not really that familiar with.

Even though few mentioned ideology as a driving force for engagement, many of them had a fascination to radical milieus and a radical mindset. One informant said that the ideology was less important, but that he had a fascination for Norse Mythology and Tor and Odin.

Negative views against immigrants were also common for many of the informants. Especially in the starting phase this was one of the driving forces;

“There was a reception center close to where I lived, there were a lot of riots there and I wanted people to join the team against the “niggers”.

This can be seen as an example of *conflict with an out-group*, the threat from outside strengthens the unity in the group.

With the involvement in the different radical groups, ideological perspectives also started growing, and most of the informants claimed that the ideological perspectives were something that came after they had been members for a while. One said:

“It is more about feelings than about ideology when you become Right-wing extremists. The Right-wing milieu becomes an emotional valve; you have different negative feeling in your body and these needs to get out one way or another”.

Some told that they after some time in the group started to read the literature connected to Right-wing extremism to get a better clue, as well as people that knew the literature got more respect in the groups.

Some of the informants thought when they became members that they had a clear picture of the ideology, but they saw in the aftermath that this was just something they said to convince themselves that there were no other reasons for joining. One of my informants said;

“The truth is... that ideology had little to say, I think I could have joined anything. At that time I thought it was the ideology that was the driving force. Honestly, I think I could have become a Satanist or started hanging with people doing drugs, or getting into a religious cult, if I at that time had met a charismatic person who saw me and showed me that I was welcome”.

Some also told that they did not give the ideology much though in the beginning, that it was much more a way to seek excitement, and that they eventually started adopting the group's views, and agree with the group on everything, *radicalization in joining a group*. One woman said that she repeated everything her boyfriend said and that he brainwashed her to believe in the ideology;

"I just repeated things that he said, that he had printed in my head, it was not me who talked it was him".

After some time several of the informants developed a relatively strong ideology, especially those who were in the most hardcore milieus and were much involved in violent activities. These are good example of that *joining a radical group* can increase radicalization, friends in the group and common goals can make them more radical than they were in the beginning.

Just two of the informants said that ideology was important for becoming a member, the two that are still active in the milieus, one of them said;

"I could never have gone into an organization that did not share my national socialistic views, I believed in the ideology and that is also the reason for why I became a member".

Identity Seeking

A majority of the informants told about problems with aggression and the need to just feel that they belonged somewhere; this can be connected to the *identity seeking* factor in the way that they wanted to belong and that they joined a radical movement to established a new identity. Several of my informants also mentioned a lack of affiliation as one of the reasons for engaging in the milieus. One of them said;

"An unstable home had much to say, I had much aggression in me, extremely negative thoughts about myself, I couldn't fit in, I was frozen out and bullied at school, I walked around alone, wishing that I had friends".

Several told about this need to be seen and to get attention;

"If you throw swastika in people's faces you are seen and you get a lot of attention".

Others also told about the need to just belong to a place;

“I needed a place to be and rather than going to buy a gun, I found it beneficial to take contact with someone that had a clue...”

The Right-wing radical movements became in that way a place where they could “get” a new identity and a place where they felt that they belonged.

Political Grievance

Political grievance was mentioned by several of my informants, some said that they had had negative experiences with immigrants and that this made them more skeptical against immigration, and that they wanted to do “something” to prevent that the “traditional” society got ruined”. One said;

“When the power-elite in the country wants to extinguish Norwegians as an ethnic group, we have to create a balance so that we can get back Norway”.

Some informants also told that they saw that immigrants could have nice cars and nice clothes, and they got angry as a consequence, relative deprivation.

Even though political grievance was mentioned by several, this was not the most relevant factor found in the interviews with the Right-wing extremists.

Personal Victimization

A majority of my informants describes troublesome relations at home as one of the reasons why they became involved in extreme milieus, that they had bad personal experiences, *personal victimization*. Violence and alcohol problems were central. Problems adapting to school were also a factor that some of my informants mentioned as central for getting into a radical milieu, as well as lack of confidence and few friends. Some of them also experienced being bullied at school.

Radicalization in Joining a Group

Some also told that they were driven by curiosity and the excitement of being involved in such a gang;

“I searched excitement and affiliation”.

Others came into the milieu because of friends or because they had a boyfriend or girlfriend that were already a member. One of my informants told that she became a member because her boyfriend wanted her to join the same milieu as him. This can also be connected to *radicalization in joining radical group* as recruitment to such groups often happens through family, friends or boyfriends/girlfriends.

One of the informants said that a further radicalization can happen after some time spent in the milieu;

“It happens a radicalization, things that you thought were unthinkable when you first got committed to the group eventually become more normalized, to begin with there were some barriers”.

Several people told that the more they got exposed to violence the more common it became and that they at some point started to care less and feel less sorry for the victims of the violence, one said;

“We were going to a concert and saw an African man, one of the guys just hit him brutally down, and we walked away, the only thing we thought was; cool, when I think about it now it is horrible, but at that time there were no thoughts of regret or discomfort”.

Rewards, Monetary and Status

The status aspect was relevant in the process of radicalization for some of the informants. Especially if they had been bullied or had few friends at school they longed to get higher status. One of them said this about joining the radical group;

“What I think they offered me was a feeling of being superior. That was a feeling that I really needed”.

Many of the factors that were found in the radicalization process with Right-wing extremists were also relevant for the radicalization of Islamist extremists.

6.2 Ways In: Islamist Extremists

Many factors were also active in the process with radicalization for the Islamist extremists, and some of the factors had different relevance for the Islamist than for the Right-wing extremists.

The Relevance of the Ideology

From the material from CENTRI it turned out that the ideology and the religious dimension played a big part for why people became members. For some the political part was important, this could often be anger especially over the West, and the religious dimension fitted this framework.

Hanif Qadir on the other hand said that when he became a member the ideology did not cross his mind at all. He was angrier over the situation in Afghanistan and the loss of innocent lives there, than anything else, he said;

“It did not cross my mind [the ideology], I got involved, and the anger started growing when I saw American soldiers standing on top of dead women and children, I agreed that the war of terrorism was wrong, but what happened there was a war against Muslims”.

Rashad Ali on the other hand said that for him the ideology was fundamental when deciding to join the movement, and that the ideology was primarily religious.

Identity Seeking

Rashad Ali said that Hizb-ut Tahrir were recruiting at schools, and that they contacted him. He said;

“Identity, politics and religion compromises a package [in the movements]. The ideology defines who you are and I agreed upon the whole package”.

The ideological aspect can be drawn to the *identity seeking* factor. Rashad Ali said that all the three components had equally much to say for him when getting radicalized.

From the interviews it became evident that people that get radicalized into Islamist extremism, if immigrants, can be struggling with their identity. They can see themselves as both citizens of a European country as well as their identity is connected to the country where

they were born, or where their parents were born. This can lead to an identity seeking that in the “worst” case can lead into radicalization.

Political Grievance

Most of the Islamist extremists (from the CENTRI material) came in contact with the organizations because these were active in their community. The different organizations often distributed material outside the Mosques after prayers. Some of these people were relatively new to Islam and some were converts, they were guided by the different organizations and “helped” to embrace the ideology as the religion of Islam. Many of these people could have a feeling of frustration when it came to the West and its role in the world, this can be seen as *political grievance* and Hanif Qadir meant that in the cases that he is working with today this is a big motivating factor for radicalization. The young people could see how American soldiers, for example, are (were) threatening people in their original home countries, this can lead to frustration and anger over the situation and a will to revenge.

Personal Victimization

Pat Parry said that in the cases he has been working with, many of the people that gets radicalized comes from dysfunctional families and that this is one of the greatest reasons for radicalization. When they get radicalized they are also relatively young, the most common age group is from 13- 20, which implies that they are easier to affect.

Hanif Qadir also told about a case he had been working with where a boy in England experienced that people were always pulling his mother’s hijab and calling her a “terrorist”, this eventually lead him to become radicalized, this case is a good example of *personal victimization*, the boy experienced that people close to him were threatened bad and he eventually felt the urge to revenge as a consequence.

Radicalization in Joining a Group

Hanif Qadir, in his own experience, told that people came to him to recruit him to Al Qu’ida. Initially people came to see him about helping orphans in Afghanistan. He agreed to support them as he thought the humanitarian situation was bad there. He said;

“I was angry at the soldiers that killed the children”.

He decided to go to Afghanistan to help, and when he came to Afghanistan he saw that the group, Al-Qu`ida, was much tougher and used harder methods than he thought when he became a member, however he also got more angry when he came to Afghanistan and saw the situation with his own eyes, and anger can lead to further radicalization, *radicalization in joining a group*.

Rewards, Monetary and Status

From the data material collected from the Islamist extremists, rewards, monetary and status was not mentioned by anyone as a factor that had relevance for their radicalization. These factors could however have relevance for this group, and is frequently mentioned in the literature.

6.3 Degree of Commitment: Right-Wing Extremists

The informants had very different degrees of commitment to the groups they were members of. Four of them had leader positions in the groups, one hardly knew who the other members were and the rest were regular members. All of them, apart from one, tell that there was a lot of violence in the milieu. One of the people that had a leader position told that he urged other members to commit violence against the “blacks”. Many of the demonstrations also have a tendency to escalate into violence. One person told that if you were unafraid and tough, wearing symbols in the street and threatening people with violence, it was easier to get high status in the group and it was easier to gain respect from the other members, to get acceptance from the boys at the top was important for the status in the group, and when the status is high the individuals could feel a stronger commitment.

When asked about degree of commitment, few of the informants started to talk about ideological perspectives, how active they were in spreading the group’s message and how dedicated they were in what the group actually stood for. Status and violence were more central and they told more about the relationship they had to other people in the group than the actual commitment to the ideology. Only two started to talk about actions the group had hold in order to spread its message. One of them said that the group for the moment is at war with the rest of the society.

6.4 Degree of Commitment: Islamist Extremists

The people from CENTRIES data material had different degrees of commitment, some were very committed, and others were just involved and committed to the groups for a few months.

Rashad Ali said that Hizb-Ut Tahrir had an elected committee and that he was in the leadership of the group, that he had a high degree of commitment. Hanif Qadir also said that he was committed to the group and the cause. As he got angrier his commitment went further. He felt humbled;

“One Taliban commander wrote to me and accepted me as a supporter of the cause. I felt happy and humbled and did more for the cause”

Hanif Qadir.

6.5 Ways Out: Right-Wing Extremists

When asked about reason for why they disengaged from the radical groups many of my informants told about how exhausting they felt that the membership became after some time. Some told about the constant feeling of paranoia, believing that the police were constantly watching them and the group. Growing feelings of discomfort related to the group’s members and activity were also mentioned by some of the informants, as well as the feeling that no one in the group really trusted you. One said;

“One of the people I knew best came to me and said that he trusted me 20 percent, God Damn, I had burnt all bridges, I had no one on the outside, and I was stuck with losers that couldn’t read and did not trust me”.

Negative Social Sanctions

The consideration to their families was also mentioned by several of the informants as one of the reason they started to doubt, *negative social sanctions*. They saw that their involvement was not only affecting them but also their families, especially when they were active in small communities where all people knew each other.

Disillusionment

Some also told about how they started to doubt the group, especially after different experiences with people outside of the group, this can be seen under the factor *disillusionment*, the group is not what they thought it to be. One of them told how he met an African man;

“He bought me a beer; I thought that it was poison in the beer, but I started to talk to him”.

This person told about how he in the beginning was very reserved and suspicious when it came to the African, but that he eventually started to let it go, and that he after this experience was left with many questions about the worldview that he had had earlier on.

When it comes to the role of the ideology in the process of leaving some of them said that they started to doubt the ideology. One said;

“I started reading ‘Mein Kampf’, very boring, I understood that this never, never, never will happen, war between races, ideologically you feel that you are on the loser’s team”.

Acts of Violence

Despite much violence in the movements few of my informants mentioned acts of violence as a direct reason for why they withdraw from the group. This could rather be a trigger in the process but other aspect had more to say for the decision to leave.

Rewards

Several of my informants also mentioned the wish for a family of their own as one of the reasons they decided to withdraw. Others said that they understood that the chances of getting a good education and a normal job started to decrease if they stayed in the movements.

Two of my informants also mentioned military service as one of the reasons why they disengaged. In the military they were isolated from their radical milieu, and this enabled them to start to think in new ways. One of them also said that with the military service he gained more competence since he was a good soldier, he said;

“I think I felt a sense of competence that I did not feel in school. It was an important thing in my life then”.

Even though my informants mentioned many reasons for disengaging the most central reasons were that they got exhausted of being in such movements and that they felt a lack of trust in the milieu, that people were talking behind each other’s backs, and the large paranoia

that existed within the movements. Many of them also felt that they were tested by the other members all the time, to see if they were still committed to the group and to the cause.

Burnout

Burnout was not mentioned as a direct reason for leaving by any of the informants, but the feeling that no one trusted each other within the group was strong for many of them.

6.6 Ways Out: Islamist Extremists

Many factors were active for the Islamist extremists in the process of leaving as well. Special for them was that several saw the ideology as a core-problem and wanted to disengage mainly as a consequence.

Negative Social Sanctions

The Islamist extremists could also experience *negative social sanctions*, especially by family members who saw that they were getting involved in radical movements. But in the data material from CENTRI and the conversations with Hanif Qadir, Rashad Ali and Pat Parry it became evident that negative social sanctions are not one of the main reasons for why the Islamist extremist withdraw from the groups.

Disillusionment

Disillusionment on the other hand turned out to have much more to say for Islamist extremist disengagement. CENTRI found that when you make the radicals realize that the ideology they believe in is false it is easier to get them to deradicalize. It is also important to make them realize that the religious dimension is incorrect and falsely based upon misreading of the scripture. Realizing that what they used to believe in was colored by disillusionment was important for many of the radicals in the decision to leave, they were challenged on their views and started to have thoughts of doubt in regard to the radical group or gang, and the ideology in it.

Rashad Ali said that the same three things that lead him into the group, lead him out, religion, identity and politics. He started reflect on these issues and as a consequence he started to doubt Hizb ut- Tahrir and their ideology. He said;

“The politics you realize is a utopian idea, Totalitarian”.

He also realized that the connection between the religion and the politics was very week. He said;

“You have these debates and discussions and you start to realize things”.

He started to question the ideas of morality, and he understood that the group was not able to deal with that. As a consequence he decided to leave and in the process he also talked to several others in the group and made them leave as well.

Acts of Violence

Hanif Qadir had an experience when he was in Afghanistan that can be connected to both *disillusionment* and *acts of violence*. Hanif Qadir said that when he came to Afghanistan he saw the tactic behind Taliban and Al-Qu`ida, and how they influenced young people. Hanif Qadir saw that they treated young children bad. Al-Qu`ida, was not the ones he thought them to be, he said; “[...] *it was not humane or according to Islam*”.

He had an argument with people in Afghanistan, which were connected to the group, on how the Taliban treated people as they were worthless. He understood that the two side were wrong, the Taliban and Al Qu`ida as well as the Americans. He decided to leave Afghanistan, and withdrew as a consequence from the radical milieu.

Rewards

Rewards are in the literature found to have relevance for the decision to leave, but from the material from CENTRI and the people I interviewed rewards was not mentioned as an important factor.

Burnout

Burnout was not mentioned by any of the informants or in the data material from CENTRI as relevant for the process of leaving the movement.

6.7 The Relevance of the Deradicalization Efforts: Right-Wing Extremists

From the interviews it became clear that if people had negative experiences with the police earlier they had a more negative base when the police started having preventive conversations with them. They were used to the police as being the enemy and had troubles with changing

this view. Some of them went into the conversations with the police with very negative attitudes. One of the informants said;

“I couldn’t take them seriously. The conversations had nothing to say, they contributed to me staying longer [in the group]. I didn’t want to be pressured by the police”.

This person had had very negative experiences with the police earlier, he had experiences where he felt that the police did not help him, when he was very young, and this affected his will to cooperate during the conversations. Despite this person’s negative experience with the conversations, the person later disengaged from the milieu.

The two people that are still active in the movements, despite involvement in deradicalization efforts, both said that the deradicalization effort they were put through did not “work” for them. Both these people must be said to have relatively indoctrinated views, and when asked about the ideology they gave the impression that they had read a lot and that they “knew” what their group stood for. Both must be said to be very committed to their group, and this could be some of the reason for why the deradicalization efforts did not work on them.

Of the nine people interviewed, five of them said that the preventive conversation and other deradicalization efforts were helpful. The two people that are still active in their movements and the person with negative experiences with the police said that the deradicalization efforts did nothing for them in regard to staying or leaving, one of them proclaimed that he even stayed longer as a consequence of it.

Common for many of the informants was that they had already started a process with doubt before they got involved in deradicalization efforts. Two of them took contact with the different efforts themselves, EXIT, to get assistance to get out of the movements. One of them told;

“I was already on my way, but what supported me was talking to people that had been in the same situation and [EXIT use some people that have been involved in radical movements themselves to make others disengage] not be judged and seen as someone that is crazy. To be met with respect and understanding was important”.

Others told about how the police kept an eye on them and that they after some time started to develop a relation to them;

“I understood that they were nice, that they wanted to help me and not take me, they wanted the best for me...If they hadn't been nice and showed that they were there to help me, I would have hated them...”

Many of the informant's mentioned how the conversations with The Norwegian Police Security Service, PST, made them reflect on issues with the ideology without attacking them because of what they stood for, but rather start a reflection around the issues and get a discussion about it. This was important since discussions in the movements often did not happen, and there were also a certain chance for getting frozen out when starting a discussion about sensitive issues. An informant said this about the preventive conversations; *“It opened my eyes; I'm going down in the ditch. It is possible to get out. It started a process”*.

Others also told that the help that they got were crucial for getting them back into society, both the preventive conversation and other kinds of support from EXIT;

“Exit helped me; I was already on my way, what supported me was talking to people that had been in the same situation”.

When doing the interview several told about the need to feel that the police are someone you can talk to and trust, instead of feeling that they are attacking you because of what you believe in. The people that felt, during the preventive conversations, that they were attacked somehow had more negative experiences in regard to the whole deradicalization effort.

Some of them also told about the importance of getting followed up in the aftermath of the disengagement;

“When you are to establish a so called “normal” life it appear as very boring, zero excitement, zero crime... It took some time to get to know normal “people” it is such emptiness, now what? We were jerks, but maybe it was better to be there”?

Few of my informants said that the preventive conversations were the only reason for why they disengaged; many components were involved in the process. Nevertheless, of the nine people I interviewed seven of them meet the three factors over a successful deradicalization

program, 1. No execution of violence 2. No re-joining of the radical organization 3. Non-involvement with members of the radical organization.

6.8 The Relevance of the Deradicalization Efforts: Islamist Extremists

Hanif Qadir, who had not been through a deradicalization program himself, but are today working with people that are on their way to disengaging, said that religion plays a big part in the deradicalization process, and that it is important to use religion in this process for it to be as successful as possible. If people are showed that what they used to believe in is wrong they will change their views because you cannot believe in something that you know is not the truth.

Hanif Qadir said that in his experience what can make them deradicalize is to make them realize that they have misunderstood religion. If you get them to realize this, the deradicalization efforts can be very helpful. The Koran can be used to make them see where they got it wrong; you actually have a place to point at, the right answer. When the radicals realize that they have got it wrong it is easier for them to withdraw from the milieu, and in Hanif Qadir's experience many of them are able to withdraw after being guided at places like the ACF, and the majority of them will meet the criteria's for success with deradicalization programs used in this thesis; 1. No execution of violence 2. No re-joining of the radical organization 3. Non-involvement with members of the radical organization. But first of all the radicals must have a willingness to see things in another way.

Pat Parry said that there is a bigger success rate with the people that gets into deradicalization efforts early in their radical "career", that it is easier to change their radical views if these are not that indoctrinated yet.

7.0 Ways In and Ways Out

In this thesis processes with radicalization and deradicalization has been explored, with a main focus on the difference between Right-wing extremist and Islamist extremist in the process of disengaging/deradicalizing. I created nine hypotheses and with basis in the data material I can verify hypothesis, H1: *Individuals that get recruited to extremist movements lack a clear identity.* The identity aspect turned out to be important for radicalization into both groups, as many of these people often are young people that can feel that they do not belong. The radical movements can provide an identity for them.

The second hypothesis, H2: *Ideology can be a good source to identity*, is also verified. As seen people that are searching for their identity can “find” it in ideology, this is especially evident for the Islamist extremists, which can find identity in religion. The third hypothesis in this thesis, H3: *Experiences of grievance can make it easier to get radicalized*, is also verified. This hypothesis was found as relevant for radicalization for both extremist groups, but was found to be of special relevance for the Islamist extremists.

Found in this thesis to have relevance for the radicalization process was also personal victimization, therefore the fourth hypothesis is also verified, H4: *People that have experiences with personal victimization can easier get radicalized*.

The fifth hypothesis also gets verified, H5: *Prolonged membership in a radical group makes the individuals more radical*. In both groups there were signs that prolonged membership made the radicals even more radical, much as a growing unity and friends in the group. The sixth hypothesis, H6: *Deradicalization/disengagement could be especially difficult for those in groups with a religious ideology*, is the first hypothesis to get falsified. This falsification is however drawn with caution due to the different data collection that was done in this thesis, that the information from the two groups was collected so differently. However, from the data I collected and the data from CENTRI it became evident that the differences in deradicalization between the two groups may not be that great after all. The individuals in the groups believe in different versions of the reality and these versions can be equally indoctrinated despite the fact that one of the ideologies inhibits religious factors.

The seventh hypothesis gets verified, H7: *Negative social sanctions are of special importance for deradicalization for Right-wing extremists*. Negative social sanctions could have relevance for Islamist extremists as well, but according to the data collected it was more important in the process of leaving for the Right-wing extremists than for the Islamist extremists. Several of the Right-wing extremists mentioned it as very important for why they started the process of withdrawing.

The eighth hypothesis also gets verified, H8: *Disillusionment is one of the most important factors for deradicalization for both Right-wing extremists and Islamist extremists*.

Disillusionment was found to be one of the most important factors for both groups when they decided to withdraw from the groups. For the Islamist extremists this factor was especially important.

The ninth hypothesis is falsified, H9: *Rewards is important for deradicalization for both Right-wing extremist and Islamist extremists*. This falsification is however done with doubt as rewards were found to have importance in the process connected to leaving for the Right-

wing extremists. It was however not found to have relevance for the Islamist extremists in the process of leaving and must as a consequence get falsified.

7.1 Concluding Remarks

The mission of this thesis has been threefold. The three research questions were:

1. What Explains Ways Into Extremism?
2. What Explains Ways Out of Extremism?
3. Are these processes different or the same for Islamists extremists as for Right-wing extremists?

I found that many components are active in the process of getting radicalized into extremist movements; the most important factors found in this thesis were, Identity seeking which showed to be important for both Right-wing and Islamist extremists in the decision to join a radical group. Relevant in the identity seeking process lays also the ideological perspectives, which were found to be of special importance for the radicalization of the Islamists extremists. Political grievance was also found to have relevance for both groups, again was this factor of special importance for the Islamist extremists. Personal victimization was also found to have relevance for both groups. Joining a radical group can also be easier if people know other people that are active in the group. If they establish a “good” network within the group it makes it even harder to withdraw from it; this was found in both groups. Rewards, Monetary and status was also found to be relevant for radicalization, but this factor was not found to be the most relevant, and it was only some of the informants from the Right-wing extremists that mentioned it as important and then in connection to status.

In the ways out of the radical movements I found several factors that can be relevant in the process. From my data material I found that the Right-wing extremists seems to withdraw from the groups due to positive social ties, the wish to get a family and establish a “normal” life, in a bigger extent than the Islamists extremists. Disillusionment, that they start to doubt what the group believe in, seems on the other hand to be relevant for leaving from both groups, and if they are given assistance in the process of disillusionment the chances increase that they will leave. The disillusionment could appear after spending time with the group, as in Hanif Qadirs case, after different personal experiences, like the informant that met the African that bought him a beer, and also in the beginning of the deradicalization efforts when

the radicals are challenged on their views. Burnout from the movements was not found as relevant for the deradicalization in any of the movements

Found in both groups in the process of deradicalization was also the importance of deradicalization at an early point, both in matters of age and involvement in the groups. The younger they are (Pat Parry said that the age-group 15-25 were easier to deradicalize) the easier it is to guide them in the right direction, and the earlier they are “taken” in the radicalization process the more likely it is that they will deradicalize. Pat Parry also said that it is important to deradicalize them before they get extreme in the sense that they are willing to commit terror attacks for example, this counts for both groups.

In deradicalizing extremists it has also, on both sides, proven to be effective to use people that have a past in radical milieus themselves. These people have a unique insight into the milieus and can easier gain respect from the radicals. For those who are working with the deradicalization of Islamist it can also be of special importance that they are familiar with Islam, that they are Muslims themselves.

Similarities or differences between the two radical groups has been the third focus of this thesis and from the people I have interviewed and from the data material from CENTRI I do not find any indications for that religion makes it harder for Islamist extremists to deradicalize²².

The people in the two radical groups are all bound by an extremist mindset, and extremism's nature is the same, regardless of religion, whether they see themselves as Muslims or Christians, Islamists or Right-wings (Davies 2008). Huntington (1993) claim that religious differences are more fundamental than differences in political ideologies (Huntington 1993), but does that imply that people that are involved in radical groups with a religious ideology have a harder time withdrawing from it? Both sides, Right-wing extremists and Islamist extremists, are extreme and accept extreme methods to reach their goals. When it comes to religious extremism, is it just convenient for us to blame religion? And is it convenient for those groups to hide behind a religious agenda? For most extreme groups it is a struggle for power, stemming from perhaps greed or fear, or both. They both believe in versions of something, and as Pat Parry said, these versions can be equally indoctrinated in each group, no matter if the versions takes its starting point in religion or not. If these versions are equally indoctrinated, is it then a difference in withdrawing from the groups? With the right help and assistance, there may not be such a huge difference in withdrawing from the

²² It is however important to keep in mind that the radicals have gotten different degrees of assistance in the process of leaving their groups, this could have relevance for the answers that they gave.

groups after all, for as Eiternes and Fangen (2002) claims; the Right-wing extremists conviction can be as strong as the conviction to religious fundamentalists (Eiternes & Fangen 2002: 60).

The difference between them is more about what kind of tools that could be used in the deradicalization process, and how effective these tools prove to be. Hanif Qadir meant that deradicalization actually could be easier when you have religion to use to show the radicals where they got it wrong. Hanif Qadir said that religion is a huge advantage in the deradicalization of Islamist extremists. He meant that religion can make it easier in a deradicalization process since it is possible to listen to the radicals views and point directly to where they got it wrong using the Koran. In the deradicalization of Right-wing extremists there is no such advantage and Hanif Qadir meant that this can make it harder in the process with deradicalization.

Pat Parry said that in his experience what made a difference in deradicalization or not had nothing to do with what group the radicals were from, factors like age and degree of commitment in the groups had much more to say.

If one assumes that the radicals from each side have the same level of commitment in the group and are given the same help to disengage, there are no factors that indicate that deradicalization should be harder for the Islamists extremists.

This is much to my surprise as I when starting writing on this thesis actually expected the opposite to be true. I read Rabsasa et al (2010), where they claim that it is harder to deradicalize Islamist extremists than other radical groups, believing they had already got the right answer. Now, I wonder whether this is a “false” assumption or not. When doing the interviews it appeared clearer and clearer to me; it does not seem like it is harder for Islamist extremist to deradicalize than other extreme groups. Where is this possible “false” assumption coming from? Is it convenient to blame religion? Do we fear religious extremism more since they tend to get the most attention? Although the data gathered here is much too small to give any definite answer, I feel the following hypothesis needs to be thrown out: the nature of extremism is the same, and withdrawing from it is also the same, no matter if God is included or not – thus is the process of leaving it behind.

7.2 Policy Implications

If one is to believe the different reports evolving terrorism, for example Te-Sat, extremism and terrorism threats are not decreasing; it is therefore a need to explore ways leading to deradicalization further. In this analysis I found that certain factors are associated with

radicalization, where the lack of identity seems to be of particular importance. Thus efforts at an early stage – preventing feeling of loneliness, awkwardness, “out-group-ness” should be high on the political agenda. Deradicalization programs and especially the conversations, preventive conversations, have had an effect when used both at Right-wing extremists in Norway and Sweden and Islamists extremist in the UK. In both the groups I found that the radical people often needed someone to talk to and that they during such conversations were challenged on their views, potentially starting a reflection process for them.

Found just as important for both sides when doing preventive conversations was that the conversations were not of a judging character. It is very important to make the individuals understand that they may have got some wrong perspective, without attacking them and blaming them for being stupid and naive. These findings were relevant both for the people I spoke to in Norway, Sweden and the ones in the UK.

In addition to having non-judgmental but challenging conversations, alternatives to the extremist routes also seem to be important. Networks of friends, family and a job or a place to stay aside from the extremist group are very important to get people out of these milieus.

A wide range of countries are today already drawing on experiences from each other when it comes to the deradicalization programs, and several of the above mentioned factors are present (Regjeringen Handlingsplan 2010). Yet, more systematic cooperation across countries and groups are needed if we want to truly understand the mechanisms behind both the ways in –as well as- the ways out of these organizations, and potentially differences between various types of extremism. This leads me to the final section: further research.

7.3 Further Research

“One of the most glaring gaps in the literature is the failure to examine the similarities and differences between Islamist militants and other types of extremism and to determine the implications of these findings for the process of disengagement and deradicalization”

(Rabasa et al 2010: 26).

This thesis has been a modest and first attempt in that regard. There are however still tremendous needs to do more research in this area, since the issue is of such a big character, and since we want to prevent extremism and terrorism in the future. To discover even more

reasons for why individuals eventually choose to cut the thread to their radical groups is of great importance because this can enable further development of deradicalization programs, and with them hopefully more people will get deradicalized.

As of today there is a huge lack of comparable data on the field, and efforts to collect more are needed, especially data material over success with the programs, how big the repetition rate is and which factors that has the most effects in the processes. In that way it can get easier to compare the different programs as well as seeing what components that works and which do not and in what settings. In that way it could also be easier for countries to borrow ideas around deradicalization from each other.

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9.0 Appendix

Information Paper

I am a student in political science at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. I am writing my master thesis about deradicalization of extremists, whether it is harder to deradicalize Islamists versus Right-wing extremists. I am interviewing people that have been through different deradicalization programs, have been radicals or are working with deradicalization in Norway and the United Kingdom. The interviews are essential for my thesis. I can guarantee full anonymity for my interview objects. The interview will take around 30-45 minutes.

Information that is collected

The information that is collected is based on the different people's entry and exit into and from different radical milieus. The main goal is to find out what characterizes deradicalization from different groups. The information that is collected is to be used in the analysis part of the paper.

The interviews are personal and will last from 30 – 60 minutes. There will be taken written notes during the interviews. The informants can withdraw from the project any time without giving a reason for it, as long as the study is in progress. The survey is reported to Norwegian Social Science Data Services, NSD.

For more information I can be reached on telephone: +4747051954 or email: hoigard@stud.ntnu.no. My supervisor at NTNU can also be contacted, telephone +47 73 59 19 00 or email: Tanja.Ellingsen@svt.ntnu.no

Best regards, Kirsti Tajet Høigård

Informasjonsskriv

Forespørsel om å delta i intervju i forbindelse med masteroppgave

Om prosjektet

Jeg er en student i statsvitenskap ved Norges Tekniske og Naturvitenskapelige Universitet. Jeg skal skrive masteroppgave om avradikalisering av ekstremister, og sammenligne om det er vanskeligere å avradikalisere en Islamist i forhold til en høyre-ekstrem. I den sammenheng trenger jeg å gjennomføre intervjuer av personer i Norge som tidligere har vært tilknyttet høyre-ekstreme miljøer, og som har vært gjennom ulike former for avradikalisering. Opplysningene som innhentes vil brukes i min masteroppgave som er tenkt ferdig i mai/juni 2012.

Opplysninger som innhentes

Opplysningene som innhentes vil basere seg på de ulike personenes inntreden til de ulike miljøene og hvordan og hvorfor de trakk seg ut, og om de fremdeles har noe kontakt med miljøet. Hovedformålet er å måle hvordan avradikalisering fungerer og hva som kjennetegner avradikalisering fra ulike grupper. Personidentifiserende informasjon er ikke vesentlig i intervjuene, og vil heller ikke bli vektlagt. Opplysningen som innhentes skal brukes i analysedelen i min masteroppgave.

Innhenting av informasjon vil foregå ved personlig intervju som vil vare fra 15-45 minutter, eventuelt telefonintervju. Det vil muligens bli brukt lydopptaker ved intervjuene hvis informantene synes dette er greit. Det vil og bli tatt skriftlige notater. Opplysningene fra intervju lagres på bærbar pc. Det vil under intervjuene ikke bli innhentet data som er av personidentifiserbar karakter, derfor vil heller ikke slik data bli lagret noe sted. Intervjuobjektene kan når som helst og uten grunn velge å trekke seg så lenge studien pågår. Undertegnede er underlagt taushetsplikt og prosjektet er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

For nærmere opplysninger kan jeg kontaktes på telefon: 47051954 eller mail: hoigard@stud.ntnu.no. Min veileder ved NTNU kan og kontaktes på telefon: 73 59 19 00 eller mail: Tanja.Ellingsen@svt.ntnu.no

Vennlig hilsen Kirsti Tajet Høigård

Interview Guide

About the Thesis

I am a student in political science at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. I am writing my master thesis about deradicalization of extremists, whether it is harder to deradicalize Islamists versus Right-wing extremists. I am interviewing people that have been through different deradicalization programs, have been radicals or are working with deradicalization in Norway and the United Kingdom. The interviews are essential for my thesis. I can guarantee full anonymity for my interview objects. The interview will take around 30-45 minutes.

Questions:

1. Name, gender and age. (Do not need to answer this)
2. What organization were you a member of?
3. How did you get in contact with the group?
4. Why did you become a member?
5. How important was the ideology/religion for becoming a member?
6. What kind of views did you agree with the group on?
7. How long were you a member?
8. How committed were you in the group? Status in the group and commitment of violence?
9. What lead to your disengagement from the group?
 - Family
 - The Police
 - Deradicalization programs
 - Preventive conversations
10. Have you changed your values and thoughts after leaving the group?
11. Do you still have contact with the group you were active in?
12. Do you still have friends in the group?
13. Could you become a member again?
14. How helpful were the programs in the process of leaving?
15. What in the programs were useful?
16. Did your religion make it more difficult to leave the group?
17. Have your religious belief and values changed after leaving the group?

18. Do you have anything else to say about the membership and the leaving process that you want to add?

Additional questions to those working with deradicalization:

1. What is the challenge in deradicalizing Islamist extremists?
2. What is important to do so that people stay disengaged?
3. Does religion play a big part in the Islamist extremist's ideology? Or is politics as big?
4. Do you think extremists that are bound to religion as ideology have a harder time deradicalizing?

Quotes from the Interviews in Norwegian

“Det jeg tror de tilbød meg var en følelse av å være overlegen. Det var en følelse jeg virkelig trengte”.

“Jeg trengte et sted å være”.

“Heller en å gå og kjøpe en pistol, fant jeg ut at det var bedre å ta kontakt med folk som hadde peiling”

“Hvis man slenger hakekors opp i trynet på folk blir man sett, da får man masse oppmerksomhet”.

“Ustabil hjemme hadde mye med saken å gjøre, hadde mye aggresjon i meg, dårlig selvbilde, ekstremt negative tanker om meg selv, klarte ikke å passe inn, fryst ut og mobbet på skolen. Gikk mye rundt for meg selv og ønsket at jeg hadde venner”

“Jeg søkte spenning og tilhørighet”.

”Hvis hele samfunnet sier at det som gjøres i gruppa di er voldelig, når mediene sier at det bare er tapere der, da kommer de voldelige taperne til deg”.

”Jeg kan huske at noen sa at det bare var tapere der, jeg tenkte at der passer jeg inn”.

“Etterhvert hører du så mange ganger at du er en høyre-ekstrem at før du vet det, er du en”.

“Det var et asylmottak i nærheten av der jeg bodde, det var mye opptøyer der og jeg ville at folk skulle være med på laget mot svartingene”.

“Det handler mer om følelser enn ideologi når man blir høyre-ekstrem. Miljøet blir en følelsemessig ventil, man har ulike negative følelser i kroppen og disse må ut på en eller annen måte”.

“Fakta er at ideologien spilte veldig liten rolle, jeg tror at jeg ville blitt med i hva som helst. Den gangen trodde jeg det var ideologen som drev meg. Helt ærlig, jeg tror at hvis jeg ble kjent med satanister eller noen som drev med dop hadde jeg sikkert begynt å henge med dem i stedet eller en religiøs sekt, hvis jeg hadde møtt en karismatisk person som så meg og viste at jeg var velkommen”.

“Gjentok bare ting han sa, som han hadde printa inn i hodet mitt. Det var ikke jeg som snakka, det var han”.

“Jeg kunne aldri blitt med i en organisasjon som ikke deler mitt nasjonal sosialistiske syn, jeg tror på ideologien og det er derfor jeg ble medlem”.

“Det skjer en radikaliseringsprosess, ting man trodde var utenkelig når man først ble medlem i gruppa blir etterhvert normalt, i begynnelsen var det noen barrierer”.

“Vi skulle på konsert og så en afrikansk mann som hvor en av de jeg kjente bare liksom, slo han ganske brutalt ned, da var vi liksom.. vi forvant videre.. det eneste vi tenkte var så kult, når jeg teker på det nå er det helt jævlig, men den gange var det ingen tanker om anger eller ubehag ved å være vitne til det”.

“En av dem jeg kjente best kom og sa at jeg stoler på deg 20%, fy faen liksom, jeg har brent alle broer, jeg har ingen på utsiden, og så er det bare losers som knapt kan lese og som ikke stoler på meg”.

“Han kjøpte en øl til meg, jeg tenkte at det sikker var gift i ølen, men jeg begynte å snakke med han...”

“Når makteliten i landet vil utrydde nordmenn som etnisk gruppe, må det skapes en motvekt slik at vi kan få tilbake Norge”.

“Jeg begynte å lese mein kamp, utrolig kjedelig, jeg skjønnte at dette aldri aldri aldri kommer til å skje noe, rasekrigen osv. også ideologisk sett, du føler at du er med på taperlaget, dette er utopi, jeg hadde tanker om tvil”..

“Jeg klarte ikke å ta dem seriøst. Samtalene hadde ingenting å si, de bidro heller til at jeg ble lenger i gruppa. Jeg ville ikke bli presset av politiet”.

“Jeg forstod at de var hyggelige, at de ville hjelpe meg og ikke ta meg, de ville det beste for meg... Hvis de ikke hadde vært snille og vist meg at de ville hjelpe meg, ville jeg ha hatet dem...”

“Fikk øynene mine opp. Her er jeg på vei ned i grøfta. Det er mulig å komme seg ut. Satte i gang prosessen”.

“Når man skal lage seg et såkalt vanlig liv, fremstår det som veldig kjedelig, null spenning, null kriminalitet... det tok tid å bli kjent med vanlige mennesker, det blir en sånn tomhet, hva nå? Vi var duster, men kanskje det var bedre å være der”?

Quotes from the Media, translated from Norwegian to English

“I mange av disse tilfellene kunne jeg valgt å slåss tilbake og ta loven i egne hender og skadet mange av disse muslimene, men jeg tenkte at det ikke var hensiktsmessig, jeg så på slike mennesker som dyr” (Behring Breivik 2012).

