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# Epilogue

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## Introduction

This concluding section reflects the arguments advanced by the contributors and aims to bridge the edited volume's aims with each chapter's conclusions, putting them in various orders to clarify how they interact. The collection rested on primary data, including (a) the PRIME Youth European Research Council (ERC) project interviews conducted with self-identified Muslims and natives in Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, (b) the interviews conducted in Germany under the scope of the project *Peer Pressure on Defectors from Extreme Right-wing Scenes*, (c) the interviews conducted with migrant-origin Muslims in Turin, Italy, and (d) ethnographic research conducted in the Netherlands on Muslim activists and organisations. In this volume, there were also theoretical and conceptual discussions introduced by researchers who have been working on radicalisation for long. In this part, our findings will be summarised based on four bullet points, including (1) the conceptualisation and typologies of radicalisation, (2) the peculiarities of nativist-populist and Islamist radicalisation, (3) the main drivers and facilitators behind such radicalisation processes, and (4) the possible remedies for radicalisation. As the co-editors of this volume, we appreciate the advantages of complexity and cherish the range of ways in which the contributors recognised the intricacies of the notion of radicalisation, currently located at the Centre of the European studies.

## Typologies of Radicalisation

All chapters combine one another ultimately to address interdisciplinary literature dealing with the concept and the types of radicalisation. While elaborating on numerous cases in which policymakers, academics, and practitioners use the word radicalisation, this edited volume demonstrated how radicalisation, as a concept, should go beyond the connotations of violence, extremism, and terrorism. This volume asserts that overcoming the term's negative connotations could be possible by applying the fundamental,

domain-specific theoretical frameworks that were in place before the term “radicalisation” was politicised and securitised. In sum, the contributors often underlined a kind of co-radicalisation and/or relational radicalisation.

Ayhan Kaya’s contribution situated the concept of radicalisation on Calhoun’s three-fold classification, philosophical radicalism, tactical radicalism, and reactionary radicalism. Highlighting all of them, Kaya concludes that the radicalisation of Dresdeners towards heritage populism fits into reactionary radicalism provoked by the “perils” of capitalism, globalism, and transnationalism. Kaya demonstrates how the past and heritage appeal to those who feel socioeconomically, spatially, and nostalgically deprived in the present.

Wetering and Hecker’s research scope is extremism, inclusive partly of what Kaya classifies under radicalism. Distinguishing between the types of extremists, Wetering and Hecker compare and contrast streetfighters, political soldiers, and politicians on the right-wing extremist scene, particularly in the NPD. According to them, political soldiers aim to differentiate themselves from the street-fighting extremists, who reduce the ideology to a “fighting body”, and the politicians, who limit themselves to elitist and mainstream organisations.

Kinvall, Capelos, and Poppy identified a “third position” beyond radicalism and extremism. Despite living in “pressurised” environments, the individuals in the third position refrain from committing violence and supporting “anti-social” groups and actions against the majority society. In line with the arguments on co-radicalisation in the broader literature, Badea described the interaction between Islamophobia and the attacks in France as a process of relational radicalisation. According to her, this process masks that young self-identified Muslims identify with the national group and desire to be recognised as its members. Badea’s chapter pursued the ties between segregationism and Islamophobia as key components of relational radicalisation. Wetering and Hecker emphasised individual anecdotes whereby right-wing extremism was tempted firstly against migrants grouping on the street or in the schoolyard.

Martijn de Koning problematised deradicalisation policies by zooming in on Muslims that actively seek confrontation with the state. Accordingly, the current practices of governing and, meanwhile, racialising counter-radicalisation in the Netherlands misses how the confrontational Muslim organisations may submit to the rule of law against discrimination. Metin Koca explored the non-violent radicalisation processes among migrant-origin Muslims, which contradict the imaginations of violent radicalisation and the analogous deradicalisation policies in Europe. One claim Koca problematised is that migrant-origin Muslims radicalise under the religious indoctrination of their countries of origin. In contrast to this prediction, Koca argued that many young Muslims in Europe develop alternative knowledge claims despite socialising at mosques funded by their

countries of origin. While engaging with a globally circulating repertoire in seeking religious purity, many individuals refuse to identify with the national values constructed for them in Europe. This process does not alienate them from Europe since they refashion (deterritorialise and reterritorialise) the online sources in liaison with their interlocution processes and needs in Europe. Analogously, Olivier Roy identifies the need for a climate of intellectual and religious freedom against the bureaucratic visions of “good Islam.” Koning, Koca, Ricucci, and Roy shared the argument that more attention should be paid to the microcosmic organisations where young Muslims participate.

### **Peculiarities of Nativist and Islamist Radicalisation**

The collection acknowledges that the ideological dimension of each radicalisation process adds to the complication of the concept. In this vein, we embrace and extend what Isaiah Berlin argued about defining populism:

I think we all probably agreed that a single formula to cover all populisms everywhere will not be very helpful. The more embracing the formula, the less descriptive. The more richly descriptive the formula, the more it will exclude. The greater the intension, the smaller the extension. The greater the connotation, the smaller the denotation. This appears to me to be an almost a priori truth in historical writing.

(Berlin, 1967: 6)

Our contributors were not in an effort to offer a single formula to cover all radicalisations. That said, there was an assumption shared by all the contributors: all radicalisations are local. Hence, the radicalisation was examined in the context of its manifestation among specific populations. At times, this level of in-depth examination involved in the study of contextual peculiarities in certain time periods among groups of people who manifest comparable tendencies of radicalisations. One way of doing this, as Benevento and Badea followed, is to find a shared element in the particularity of groups many would put in distinct cultural or civilisational clusters. Both touch upon processes leading to the nativisation of radicalism and the Islamisation of radicalism from a social-economic, political, and/or psychological point of view. In doing so, their chapters express compassion to seek elements amongst groups of people, seemingly opposed to each other yet similar in their interpretations of social-economic, political, and psychological deprivations. Benevento combined them together and argued that young self-identified Muslim and right-wing native women in Belgium value having freedom of choice in regard to personal decisions. In other words, the two groups’ narratives on their values intersect despite their little opportunity to contact each other.

Having a unifying approach, Badea was also interested in the divergence of radicalisations in European majority societies as well as Muslim minorities. She divided the first group into two: those that oppose the religious practices of Muslims with sentiments particularly against Islam, and those committed to a form of secularism that limits religious practices for all other groups, including Christians. On the flip side, Muslims' radicalisation has also diverged. Among them are those with a withdrawal of national identity and those that still claim membership in the national group.

Beyond studying these populations on an equal foot, the other chapters rested on each of their more specific problems with state policies, structural difficulties, and dominant ideologies. Supporting this position in his commentary, Roy distinguished Islamist radicalisation from that of the "right" and the "left," for mainstream Islamism and Jihadism do not represent a couple between moderates and radicals. Given the extensive focus on Islamism in the literature as well as state policies, the volume brought forth four chapters that attempted to critically re-evaluate the conventional wisdom regarding *the Islamisation of radicalism*, as Roy puts it. These chapters by Koning, Lahlou, Koca, and Roy analysed both violent and non-violent radicalisation processes, with the (dis)connections between them.

Since the 1970s, many Muslim-origin immigrants and their descendants have been encouraged to mobilise themselves socially, politically, culturally, and economically within their ethno-religious frameworks by constructing isolated communities to protect themselves against threats they perceive. The construction of isolated parallel communities has brought about two important consequences in Europe. On the one hand, it has reinforced ethno-religious boundaries between majority societies and migrant-origin groups leading to different forms of ethnic competition in the urban space, especially among the working-class segments of local communities. On the other hand, it has strengthened the process of alienation between in-groups and out-groups, leading to the decline of intergroup contact. The decline of intergroup communication provides a fertile ground for the spread of Islamophobic sentiments and Islamist radicalism.

Islamic parallel communities are present in European countries such as France, Germany, England, Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Their preferences for isolation are not necessarily the result of the conservatism of Muslims but rather a reaction to the structural and political mechanisms of exclusion. In other words, part of what shows itself in the form of a religious revival is the structural problems such as racism, discrimination, Islamophobia, xenophobia, injustice, poverty, deindustrialisation, unemployment, and humiliation. In this vein, Koca's chapter explained anxiety as a booster of religious socialisation for migrant-origin individuals. Lahlou identified the factors behind Moroccan-origin Muslim youths' radicalisation with the increase in poverty, the deepening of wealth inequality, youth unemployment, high illiteracy with a burden especially on women, and the

weak health system. Connectedly, our contributors emphasised structural difficulties in their analyses. Although it is without a doubt that social and class tensions erupt from such structural problems, some states, administrations, populist parties, the media, and even intellectuals misdiagnose or misrepresent the issue to the public, which in turn makes it almost impossible to solve.

The processes of deindustrialisation, starting from the late 1970s, and the rise of inequalities in politics, education, the labour market, health services, and the judicial system alienate Muslims from the majority societies. Hence, they have come to hold on to religion, ethnicity, language, and tradition – whatever they believe cannot be taken away from them. Discrimination in everyday life has become common for many Muslim individuals and communities in Europe. Right-wing populist political parties across Europe indulge in deliberate misreadings, which result in the syndrome depicting Muslims as the “enemies within” to be eliminated. Given the problematic representation and statisticalisation of immigrants and Muslims in the media and political sphere, the issue runs into a dead-end. When all the misinterpretations and misevaluations add up, it is easy to see how smoothly the “neighbours next door” can be turned into the “enemies within.”

Ayhan Kaya’s chapter supported the argument that populist parties and movements often exploit the issues of parallel communities, migration, and Islam. They portray them as a threat to a nation’s welfare and social, cultural, and even ethnic features. Populist leaders also tend to blame parallel communities of Muslims for some of the major problems in society, such as unemployment, violence, crime, insecurity, drug trafficking, and human trafficking. This tendency is reinforced by racist, xenophobic, and demeaning rhetoric. The use of words like influx, invasion, flood, and intrusion are just a few examples. Many public figures in Europe have spoken of a “foreign infiltration” of immigrants, especially Muslims, in their countries. Some political leaders even predicted the coming of *Eurabia*. This mythological future continent will allegedly replace modern Europe, where children from Norway to Naples will allegedly learn to recite the Quran at school while their mothers stay at home wearing *burqas*. Some populist political party leaders such as Éric Zemmour, Marine Le Pen, Thierry Baudet, Alexander Gauland, and Viktor Orbán even talk about the “Great Replacement” conspiracy in Europe. Referring to the growing visibility of Muslims in the European space, some right-wing populist leaders effectively deploy the fear of Islam as a great danger in the foreseeable future. Referring to a white-supremacist slogan coined by a right-wing French writer, Renaud Camus (2011), such right-wing populist leaders simply want to make their followers believe that a global elite is actively replacing Europe’s white population with people of colour from non-European countries.

Some right-wing populist politicians began to unmask the immigration of Muslims as an integral part of a deliberate strategy of Islamification.<sup>1</sup>

To support such a claim, such politicians may refer to a whole range of Arabists, orientalist, political scientists, journalists, and politicians who may boast a reasonably solid reputation, such as Bat Ye'or, Bernard Lewis, Oriana Fallaci, Samuel Huntington, Hans Jansen, Pim Fortuyn, and Ayaan Hirsi Ali. Such populist politicians have also openly criticised Islam by aligning themselves with the liberal and civilisational attitude towards certain cultural issues, such as the emancipation of women and homosexuals. It is also known that a growing number of political parties in Europe exploit and encourage fear of Islam and organise political campaigns, which promote simplistic and negative stereotypes concerning Muslims in Europe and often equate Islam with extremism and terrorism.<sup>2</sup>

### **Drivers of Radicalisation**

Another aim of the collection was to identify the main drivers of radicalisation. While identifying several ways in which distant times and spaces penetrate the present, we limited our geographical scope to the European continent to reach comparable findings from similar historical and political contexts. All in all, we investigated the connections between radicalisation and economic disparities, feelings of discrimination, cultural alienation, and various individual and social-psychological factors. The local conditions and the in-group contexts play various roles. It can be challenging to determine what exactly constitutes a kind of radicalisation, and it is frequently impossible to track a single person's radicalisation over time. Therefore, numerous conceptual models arise in literature, but very few cross-sectional or longitudinal findings are helpful in monitoring the radicalisation processes. Thus, meaningful patterns of differences and similarities that emerge among people with hyphenated identities located in distinct localities (e.g. AfD supporters in Saxony, veiled Muslim women living in cosmopolitan cities of Belgium, Moroccan-origin Muslim youth in France) have the potential to depict how radicalisation is a distinct psychological process anchored in the social milieu in which it occurs.

Gender was among the themes discussed often by various contributors in the volume. For instance, focussing on both self-identified Muslim women and right-wing women from Belgium, Benevento argued that the global financial crises and the subsequent redistribution of social wealth had an immense impact on the gender order. Accordingly, the global recession and the erosion of the welfare state led to a discursive shift from collectivist senses of belonging and duties to individual needs and responsibilities. The latter renders women "agents of care" in the family.

The causes of Islamist radicalisation were also discussed in the volume. Despite distinguishing between the external and internal factors, Mehdi Lahlou argued that both play a role in the Moroccan-origin youngsters' radicalisation. Accordingly, the external factors served as an opportunity

for “Wahhabis” and “Salafists” to affect Moroccan society under the banner of the protection of Islam. The factors such as the Iranian Revolution and the end of the Cold War played a role in the process. The internal factors combined with these developments were poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy, which Lahlou described as the seeds of religious and social conservatism that allow the maintenance of long-standing political structures in most Arab countries, including Morocco. Bringing together the external and internal factors, Lahlou described “Jihadists” as marginalised, impoverished, unemployed, and without much hope for the future. In contrast with this reading, Roy maintained that “Salafists” and “Jihadists” do not form a continuum. Questioning the alternative explanations of violent radicalisation, Roy dismissed the theories that explain the current wave of violent radicalisation in terms of political protests, social movements, socioeconomic conditions, social exclusion, or racism.

Anxiety, anger, fear, and hatred were some notions often used in different contexts. Koca’s focus was centred on internalising problems that migrant-origin individuals experience in their meetings with the majority society. Anxiety led by feelings of discrimination plays a fundamental role in reproducing their ties with the religious communities funded by their countries of origin. As both Koca and Roy identify, this is not a risk factor for violent radicalisation, given that no known violent extremist came from the organisations such as Milli Görüş.

Anger and anxiety mattered in the right-wing milieu as well. Wetering and Hecker pointed to the remaining influence of the former social environments and identities for individuals who try to disengage from the right-wing scene. According to the authors, disengaged individuals’ relationship with the social environment continues to be marked by anger, hatred, reactive and appetitive aggression, and outbursts of violence. Kaya directed the same question to the populists of Dresden with the caveat that “all kinds of populisms, radicalisms, extremisms and fundamentalisms are local.” He concluded that the destabilising effects of deindustrialisation, depopulation, and unemployment pushed young generations to generate nostalgia, where they imagined better job opportunities, better governance, cultural homogeneity, and prosperity.

### **Possible Remedies for Radicalisation**

All contributions have arguments on or, at the very least, implications for the “solutions” to radicalisation. As the previous bullet point makes evident, employing thorough and locally sensitive methodologies is vital in the study of radicalisation. Up to this point, research-driven and government-led projects have combined education, training, cultural exchange, and religious dialogue to help minority communities integrate into the majority society. The initiatives that are blind to the socio-cultural norms and the local economic and political realities risk widening the trust gap between those

people and authorities. Therefore, approaches focussing on local and intersectional contexts would be helpful for those who aim to go beyond profiling radical groups and individuals. Having combined such efforts, we contend that the chief deradicalisation strategy would be to develop programs that alleviate the feelings of anger and anxiety led by unemployment, discrimination, and the other factors behind marginalisation.

The governance of religion plays a crucial role in this endeavour. Emphasising the principle of secularism among French citizens, Badea argued that constructing a common national identity based on shared civic values could be an effective intervention to improve intergroup relations within the same society. She made the caveat that interventions are needed with both young members of the mainstream group and Muslim minorities in order to bring all citizens together in the national group. Also focussing on France, Kinvall et al. point to the need to address French Muslims' integration challenges. Failing to foster a genuine or natural allegiance to the nation, assimilationism leads to a "superficial" adherence at its best. In the same vein, Koca argued that people who feel discriminated against would not accept the terms imposed by the state authority that, they think, shares the blame. Therefore, structuring *national Islams* following the words of European state officials is likely counterproductive for the self-identification of migrant-origin individuals. Roy concluded that "good Islam" is built from an authoritarian and vertical approach in both Europe and the Muslim world. These contributions identified the solution as the saturation of the religious field with intellectual and religious freedom, through which non-violent religious radicalisms, autonomous from the state religions, including that of migrants' countries of origin, will take precedence.

Koning crystallised the lack of genuine deradicalisation or integration goals. Current policies give Muslims the message that "they are still not, and perhaps never will be, 'quite like us.'" The P/CVE approaches turn a racial-security gaze onto Muslims. In turn, some Muslims are also mobilised in order to engage with this gaze. This double feature, Koning argued, defines the regime of surveillance and racialisation. Ricucci offered inclusive intercultural policies, which would drive the parties to abandon the explosive immigrants-citizens dichotomy. She examined how Turin became one of the first Italian municipalities to generate inclusive practices, projects and experiences based on dialogue, social interaction, and mutual exchange. Communication between those social groups (native and migrant-origin) who have been so far left apart from each other seems to be one of the remedies of co-radicalisation.

Benevento concluded that the focus of deradicalisation should shift from "lecturing troubled individuals" to assisting them in sharing their stories, through which they can express their feelings of exclusion, marginalisation, and isolation. In this endeavour, Benevento introduced the concept of compassionate curiosity. Wetering and Hecker sketched a roadmap to

successful therapy for disengaged individuals. The authors urged Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET) for forensic offender rehabilitation (FORNET) to be integrated into the professional deradicalisation work.

The defence of tradition, culture, religion, and past by religious, nationalist, nativist, or populist individuals has become a radical stance today. This radical stance can be interpreted as a reactionary form of resistance against the perils of modernisation and globalisation experienced by both self-identified Muslims and natives. Muslims in minority contexts often believe they are discriminated against, alienated, humiliated, and socio-politically and economically excluded in everyday life. Labelled as far-right extremists in Europe, many native individuals have similar sentiments. It is primarily these socioeconomic, political, psychological, and spatial forms of deprivation that prompt these groups of people to generate radical stances to express themselves politically and thus to be heard. In this regard, both Islamist revival and right-wing populism can be regarded as outcries of those who feel pressurised by the perils of modernisation and globalisation. Then, one could also assess these protests and forms of expression as *struggles for democracy* rather than threats to democracy.

Radicalisation provides socioeconomically, politically, spatially, and nostalgically deprived groups with an opportunity to build an imagined home away from the one that has become indifferent, alienating, and even humiliating. In other words, radicalisation becomes a regime of justification and an alternative form of politics for many to protect themselves from day-to-day discrimination, humiliation, and neglect. They believe that speaking from the margins might be a more efficient strategy to be heard by those in the centre who have lost the ability to listen to the peripheral ones. As Robert J. C. Young (2004) pointed out, it is not that *they* do not know how to speak (politics), “but rather that the dominant would not listen.”

## Notes

- 1 The term “Eurabia” was first introduced by Bat Ye’or, whose real name is Gisèll Littman, an Egyptian-born British citizen and key figure in the UK-based Counter-Jihad Movement, who is now living in Switzerland.
- 2 See The Council of Europe Resolution 1743 (2010), <http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17880&lang=en>

## References

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